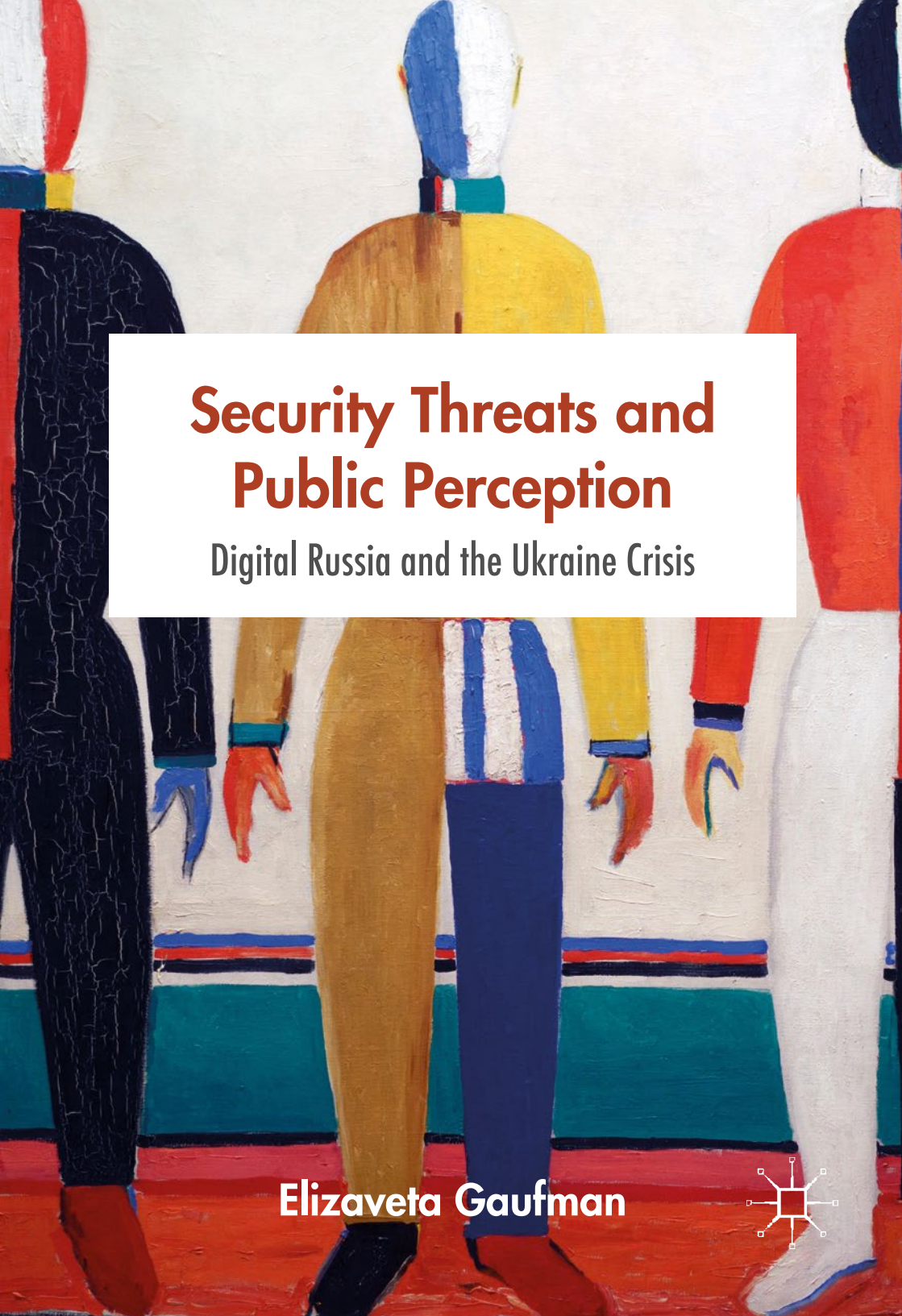

Security Threats and Public Perception

Digital Russia and the Ukraine Crisis

Elizaveta Gaufman

New Security Challenges

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The last decade has demonstrated that threats to security vary greatly in their causes and manifestations and that they invite interest and demand responses from the social sciences, civil society, and a very broad policy community. In the past, the avoidance of war was the primary objective, but with the end of the Cold War the retention of military defence as the centrepiece of international security agenda became untenable. There has been, therefore, a significant shift in emphasis away from traditional approaches to security to a new agenda that talks of the softer side of security, in terms of human security, economic security, and environmental security. The topical New Security Challenges series reflects this pressing political and research agenda.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In September 1941, Leningrad found itself completely surrounded by German enemy forces in what would be the start of a bitter three-year siege during World War II. Famously, the headline of the *Leningrad Pravda* on 16 September read *vrag u vorot*,[1] commonly translated as 'enemy at the gates'. To many in the West, this expression is associated with William Craig's bestselling book *Enemy at the Gates: The Battle for Stalingrad*, or the Hollywood adaptation starring Jude Law. In Russia, however, the expression *vrag u vorot* is indelibly imbued with a sense of urgency, danger, and the siege of Leningrad: a country on the brink, surrounded by foes who pose an existential threat to its very survival, and where nothing short of extraordinary measures and heroic sacrifices are required. To combat this existential threat, a black-and-white worldview is arguably helpful: it clearly differentiates friend from foe, ally from enemy.

World War II, commonly referred to in Russia as the Great Patriotic War, is remembered as the country's most traumatic episode in its recent history (Gudkov 2005; Oushakine 2013). It is also one that remains to this very day a powerful image in the popular imagination, which is frequently used to conjure up shared memories of deathly danger. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that 70 years after the war, at a time of growing isolation, military conflicts, border disputes, and economic sanctions, the

[1] All translations in the following text are mine, unless otherwise stated.

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existential threat narrative—the proverbial enemy at the gates—should resurface. One way to gauge the public perception of existential threats is via public opinion polls. And according to Levada (2013), there is not one, but many threat narratives—enemies both internal and external—that threaten Russia's core identity and survival as a state. The enemies have already burst through the gates.

Even a cursory analysis of the contemporary Russian media landscape and political debates reveal that existential threat narratives and enemy images, endorsed and cultivated by the government and state-controlled mass media, permeate the discourse. Exorbitant levels of anti-Americanism and anti-Ukrainian sentiments, reported by public opinion polls (Levada 2014, 2015), paint a worrisome picture of fearmongering politics. And yet an observer of the 2004 Orange Revolution, a series of protests against election fraud that led to a revote, might express genuine surprise at the intensity of these anti-Ukrainian sentiments: why would an audience suddenly 'buy' a narrative when only ten years ago it did not?

In 2004, the Orange Revolution swept away the pro-Kremlin President elect Viktor Yanukovych in Ukraine. Russia remained mostly on the sidelines. In 2014, Yanukovych was yet again ousted from power following the Euromaidan protests. Shortly thereafter, following a referendum Russia annexed Crimea and supported separatist rebels in Eastern Ukraine. These two similar incidents (one in 2004 and the other in 2014), neither of which seemed to threaten Russia militarily, elicited a vastly different response both from the Russian population and from the two Putin administrations. The first incident was received tepidly by the Russian population, and the second elicited feverish passion. How can one make sense of this seeming paradox? The neorealist school (Mearsheimer 2014; Walt 2015) may point to the changing international environment, the European Union (EU)'s and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO)'s expansion, and the successful support for partially recognized states controlled by separatist governments, such as Abkhazia's and South Ossetia's breakaway from Georgia in 2008. This, however, does not account for how support for the 2014 military support for the self-proclaimed Ukrainian republics or Crimea takeover was so successfully drummed up among the Russian population.

The concept of securitization was originally devised by Ole Wæver, who argued that security should be construed as a speech act, where the emphasis is placed on how certain issues are socially constructed as

threats. The Copenhagen School of academic thought is based on Barry Buzan's book *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (1983). Its emphasis is on the social aspects of security. Securitization means that a particular phenomenon is represented through a discursive process as bearing an existential threat to a referent object, that is, 'as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure' (Buzan et al. 1998, 23–24). The existential nature of the threat legitimizes the use of extraordinary measures to deal with it. The Copenhagen School moved beyond the traditional understanding of security in terms of military capabilities and expanded this notion to sectors usually not taken into consideration in security studies, such as the environment, society, or economics (Buzan et al. 1998). According to securitization theory, security pertains not only to the survival of a state, but also to the survival of group identities (Buzan 1993, 43).

By 'selling' a particular phenomenon as an existential threat (such as terrorism after 9/11), the political leadership can adopt otherwise unacceptable measures, such as circumventing the democratic checks and balances in the system—as exemplified by the post-9/11 security politics in the USA when the Patriot Act was passed even though it violated constitutional and civil rights of the citizens, for example. Securitization's strength lies in this ability to address the question of how support for extraordinary measures, such as war, comes to pass.

However, even in this increasingly popular theoretical framework there are some unresolved theoretical and methodological challenges. While securitization theory does offer insights into policy legitimization, there are debates about what felicity conditions are required for a successful securitization move. The Copenhagen School securitization framework is limited in its ability to address questions such as why a certain audience accepts the articulation of a phenomenon as a threat or what the mechanisms are that trigger the acceptance of a narrative as an existential threat.

For the most part, the securitization framework pays only limited attention to the audience of a securitization move, concentrating mostly on the performative side of the process (see Hansen 2011, 2015; Vuori 2014; Stritzel 2014). This deficit of attention to the audience has been highlighted by a number of scholars and is attributed to the different securitization frames studied at the expense of proving that an actual securitization

took place (Bourbeau 2011) or to over-emphasis on self-referentiality (Léonard and Kaunert 2010).

This book argues that exploring the audience level offers more validity to theoretical discussions on felicity conditions and strengthens threat discourse analysis—another aspect not sufficiently theorized in the securitization framework (apart from the attempt to divide the concepts of existential threat and risk). Lastly, the Copenhagen School defines a successful securitization process as one that is accepted by the audience. The audience level, however, is not conceptualized in a meaningful way, and represents a theoretical and methodological limitation of the framework. The acceptance of the audience is a complicated concept: securitization scholars do not always put forward indicators and do not specify who the target audience is.

The following question guides this book: Under what conditions are threat narratives successful? By this, I mean what types of media, stories, and other narratives create a sense of threat among the citizens of a country. Or, why would an audience accept a certain threat construct? The success of the securitization process hinges on its grounding in an existential threat and personification, which are stored in the collective memory of the citizens and promulgated on the governmental level—a different theory of the nature of an effective securitization process than proposed by other theorists (Balzacq, Stritzel, and Guzzini). In other words, an abstract threat is easier to frame if it is attached to a person or a group of people (personification) and if it threatens your very survival (existential nature). Moreover, this narrative is supposed to resonate with previous threat constructs (collective memory) and broadcast on the governmental level in order to be successful. This book uses three components provide a foundation for analysing threat narratives: securitization, enemy image research, and memory studies.

There are other approaches that can analyse threat narratives. Eriksson and Noreen in *Setting the Agenda of Threats: An Explanatory Model* (2002) draw a line between '*what is threatening* (the subject of the threat image) and *what is perceived as threatened* (the object of the threat image)'. For example, nuclear warheads in Cuba in 1962 would be considered 'what is threatening', while the US civilian population are 'what is perceived as threatened'. In securitization terms, it is a difference between the threat phenomenon and a referent object. However, Eriksson and Noreen do not discuss the caveat that items in their model, such as 'events', 'identity',

or 'political context', are themselves a subject of perception and framing (Eriksson and Noreen 2002, 19).

Another framework found in constructivist literature is the concept of othering. How might we understand seemingly puzzling foreign policy decisions? According to Hopf (2002, 2012), this calls for the deconstruction of how a country historically sees itself and how it perceives the Others, both external and internal. The internal and historical Others can be easily externalized. The branding of NGOs in Russia as 'foreign agents' because they receive funding from abroad is a case in point. However, what unites internal and historical Others is their representation as something the self-identity is diametrically opposed to.

What also supports Hopf's argument is the predominant use of enemy imagery in domestic discourses. The emergence of a new unified Other is a result of growing antagonism and radicalization in society (Laclau 2000). Under such circumstances, all Others get lumped together, and branded as evil. Contrary to Laclau's focus on abstract Others, this book centres on concrete, personified narratives of the Others that are easier to manipulate. This is even more so as, according to securitization theory, security pertains not only to the survival of a state, but also to the survival of societal, or group, identities (Buzan 1993, 43) that Others threaten.

It is a familiar concept that an adversary may be a political opponent whose values and claims are legitimate but contrary to one's own values. Having an adversary is one way to define oneself. We see the enemy's perspective as morally wrong and illegitimate (see Morozov 2009, 129). But the relation to the enemy is not that straightforward. By identifying threats to the Self, it is possible to describe the referent object as well: what are its defining features that are supposedly in danger? Is it physical integrity? Moral values? Status? Financial security? Consequently, enemy image research can be partly regarded as Self-exploration, by defining oneself in opposition to the enemy.

Even though the Cold War is long over, Soviet-style rhetoric about foreign agents trying to rock Russia's stability includes a variety of threatening Others. These encompass fascists, foreign agents, migrants, blasphemers, and homosexuals on a quest to destroy Russian culture and values, as well as bloodthirsty Americans seeking to adopt Russian orphans in order to torture and kill them. There is nothing left for the embattled Russian government to do than to combat these threats with decisive political measures ranging from a ban on foreign adoptions to the protection of 'religious feelings'. These are highly illustrative cases of successful

existential threat narratives, where the securitization process led to the adoption of political measures (Buzan et al. 1998), and where the felicity conditions, that is, set of conditions that encourage successful securitization, under which a phenomenon is successfully securitized have been met (Stritzel 2007; Balzacq 2011).

The literature that studies enemy images emphasizes the role of the audience through the study of prejudice (Weller 2001; Satjukow and Gries 2004). Existing prejudice is considered a necessary condition for successful enmification, that is, the process whereby an Other is constructed as an enemy. This felicity condition is known in securitization as 'embeddedness', whereby a discourse is 'planted' in similar discourses and is regarded as something familiar, but also lends some understanding to the notion of audience—it is the general public's perception that needs to be taken into consideration. Another central point that scholars of enemy images offer is the study of visuality and, with it, the importance of personification. Visuality has also been taken up by securitization scholars (Heck and Schlag 2013; Hansen 2015), but embeddedness was not integrated into their theoretical framework, nor was the notion of the audience problematized.

How can one theorize 'existing discourses' and their presence in society? I suggest remedying this by introducing the concept of collective memory (Halbwachs 1992; Winter 2006), which is defined as a 'shared pool of information held in the memories of two or more members of a group' (Halbwachs 1992; Winter 2006). The pioneer of memory studies Maurice Halbwachs argued that memory is socially constructed through the action of groups and individuals, and is derived from their social experience (1992). Memory is thus a subject of mediation and change (Assmann 2011; Rutten et al. 2013), but it has crucial importance for the identity-building process. Moreover, the significance of mnemonic security, that is, protecting a certain flow of historical narratives, was noted in the *Security Dialogue Journal* (Mälksoo 2015), which underlines the importance memory plays in legitimation strategies.

I rely on the securitization framework to analyse the enmification process and its focus on threats. In addition, I use the decades of experience of enemy image research and memory studies to expose the enemy image structure and show how previous enmification constructs are recycled. I unite several theoretical approaches and create a framework of analysis that includes reinterpreted felicity conditions of existential threat personification, collective memory embeddedness, and governmental rhetoric. This

framework could be applied to a range of cases, including cases that deal with othering, threat narratives, and their rearticulation at the audience level, which are prerequisites for political measures used by governments even in authoritarian contexts (Vuori 2008, 2014).

The question is, as it is always in an authoritarian regime setting, whether the population is in sync with the official discourse promulgated through state-controlled media. Does the audience accept the articulated threats? Is securitization actually successful? As Vuori notes (2008), even in China it is necessary to persuade the public so that implementation of governmental measures would face less resistance at the grass-root level. According to the Levada sociological service, Russian Channels One (*Pervyi Kanal*) and Two (*Rossiya*) are the primary sources of information for 96 % of Russian citizens (Volkov and Goncharov 2014), which makes it a likely scenario. Opinion polls could offer some insight, but in the case of threat narratives it would be difficult to trace their sedimentation among the audience only by means of opinion polls: they employ certain discursive constructions that will inevitably force test subjects to answer using the same categories (cf. Levitt and List 2009). For example, if a professor asks a test subject whether he or she considers the USA to pose a threat to Russian security, this phrasing already establishes a dichotomy the test subject is forced to take into consideration.

It is also possible to study the general public's acceptance on a different level. According to Plugotarenko, director of the Russian Association of Electronic Communications, Russia's Internet audience represents 48 % of the Russian population or 68.7 million people, of which 56.3 million go online on a daily basis (2014). This is a significant segment, which accounts for Russia's key demographic (TNS 2013). In order to complement traditional sources of information on public perception, it is necessary to conduct a digital anthropology, that is, to study the behaviour and responses of people in one of their by now natural habitats.

The Russian segment of the Internet can be thought of as a Foucauldian power/knowledge battlefield, where competing narratives collide and a large amount of budgetary allocations is spent on promoting pro-governmental discourses on social networks (Karimova 2012; Gunitsky 2015). Nevertheless, social networks in this case represent a perfect petri dish for the study of the existing existential threat narratives, where the researcher is not influencing his/her test subjects (cf. Levitt and List 2009). Moreover, social network data can help narrow down the list of threats proposed by public opinion polls as they allow the tracing of the

threat narratives that have been accepted by the audience—cases of successful securitization.

Digital discourses and digital memories (van Dijck 2007) have become a prominent field of research and the role of social networks in digital memory mediation has been theorized and operationalized (Rutten et al. 2013; Garde-Hansen et al. 2009; Cameron and Kenderdine 2007; and Kalay et al. 2007). In the context of this book, I analyse digital discourses of the general public and use these discourses as a prime indicator for the audience's acceptance of the securitization move. Thus, it provides an adequate tool to conceptualize embeddedness at the audience level, while offering some insights into the use of specific memories by agents (so-called memory entrepreneurship) and mediation of the discourse online (cf. Rutten et al. 2013).

The case study of this book is centred on Russia because it provides remarkable sociological data, seldom researched and interpreted by international relations (IR) scholars. The tendencies for enmification rhetoric have been specifically observed since the electoral protests in 2011–2012 (Morozov 2013; Bode and Makarychev 2013) and reached its apogee during the events in Ukraine in 2013–2014 (Laruelle 2015; Gaufman 2015). The Ukraine crisis amplified a number of existing threat narratives and put them back on the agenda, despite the absence of Russia's own 'Maidan', that is, Russia's own mass-scale movement that led to a regime change. Thus, this book focuses on the time period between 2011 and 2015, covering the discursive struggles around electoral protests, resurgent anti-Americanism with its adoption ban and foreign agents legislation, the Pussy Riot trial, debates on sexuality, the fascism discourse in relation to the Ukraine crisis, and anti-migration narratives. This book is the first study of this scale to investigate the conditions for the success and failure of securitization narratives using social network data and problematizing the notion of audience and embeddedness of the securitization discourse.

1.1 Organization

Chapter 2 will discuss theoretical approaches to the study of threat narratives, fleshing out an improved version of the securitization theory. The theoretical framework will refocus the attention of securitization on audience acceptance and political measures as success criteria, as well as personified existential threat narratives, embeddedness, and governmental rhetoric as felicity conditions.

Chapter 3 will work out a methodology to address the objectives mapped out in the theoretical chapter, addressing the issues of case selection for threat narratives under consideration, challenges to digital discourse research, discourse analysis methods, and visual semiotic analysis. It will also discuss the so-called visual turn in security studies.

Chapter 4 will narrow down the threat list employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. Each empirical chapter (Chaps. 5–9) will follow the methodological considerations laid out in Chap. 3. In other words, each chapter will be subdivided into an audience acceptance part, which establishes the rearticulation of threat narratives and their significant presence on social networks; and then analyse the collected material according to felicity conditions: on personification of existential threats, collective memory embeddedness, and the government's enmification.

Chapter 5 will analyse the biggest and most substantial threat cluster related to the USA, paying special attention to the resurrected tropes and frames from the Soviet era that have become ubiquitous in the current Russian political landscape. This chapter will inter alia discuss the discursive struggles around the ban on adoption by American couples (so-called *Dima Yakovlev* law) and 'foreign agents' legislation that arguably led to a witch hunt among NGOs and Russian intellectuals (Meduza 2015; Nemtsova 2015).

Chapter 6 will deal with one of the arguably best-embedded existential threat narratives—the fascism discourse and its connection to the events in Ukraine.

Chapters 7 and 8 will address the more challenging clusters of threats that are related to 'spiritual bonds' and 'sovereign morality' (Sharafutdinova 2014). The discussion will be centred on feminism as an attack on gender hierarchy (cf. Sjoberg 2015) and will be illustrated by debates around the Pussy Riot trial.

Chapter 8 will discuss an issue that is technically connected to the discussion of feminism but evolved into a separate threat of 'deviant sexuality' that is supposedly threatening Russian children and the Russian state as a whole.

Chapter 9 will analyse an issue familiar to many Western countries—the threat of migration. It will show that due to the multi-ethnic character of Russia, the anti-migration sentiments are part of a wider problem of xenophobia that stems from Soviet-era ethnic politics.

Chapter 10 will review lesser threats and establish the plausibility of felicity conditions. Finally, I will summarize theoretical and empirical findings and discuss the contribution and limitations of the theories and arguments presented.

Note

1. The Russian expression itself is a paraphrase of *Hannibal ante portas*.

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CHAPTER 2

Defining Securitization, Enemy Images, and Memory

In this chapter I begin to examine three approaches to the study of threat narratives that are used in this book: securitization, enemy image research, and memory studies. Even though securitization provides the list of felicity conditions that are supposed to map out the success or failure of securitization as a process, it has a number of limitations with regard to the audience and analysis of threat narratives. Thus, securitization provides a detailed account of political processes but does not address the classification of threats, even though the latter is an intrinsic notion within the securitization framework. An attempt to categorize different types of securitizations on the basis of threats has been carried out by Sjöstedt (2010), who distinguished between actor-based versus non-actor-based threat images. For example, Al-Qaeda would be considered a threat image linked to an actor (personified), whereas climate change would be an example of a threat image that is not associated with one (non-personified). This factor can be roughly conceptualized as the personification of the threat (Sjöstedt 2010, 14).

One of the challenges with enemy image research and the probable reason for its decline is the absence of a *clear-cut algorithm for the political process*. In the securitization framework, this is represented by the following sequence:

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1. Securitization move to conceptualize a phenomenon or an event as an existential threat
2. The acceptance by the audience of the phenomenon as an existential threat
3. The adoption of extraordinary measures to tackle the existential threat

The body of enemy image research literature does not adequately address the political implications of enemy image creation. In peace studies they were considered an ideological injection that was an obstacle for peace, that is, enemy images were seen as a discursive justification for an aggressive foreign/domestic policy. This muddled approach towards enemy image creation fails to distinguish between cause and causality: an enemy image would be considered as a tool used both to induce and to sustain an aggressive policy. As a result, enemy image research was locked in a vicious circle with enemy images themselves serving as a cause and as a consequence of political processes.

The concept of collective memory is barely addressed in political science, and is mostly used in cultural and Slavonic studies. Yet, the notion of collective memory seems to be a compelling tool to theorize embeddedness in securitization (Gaufman 2015), as it works with similar processes and actors: securitizing actors can be likened to memory entrepreneurs (Mink and Neumayer 2007). If securitizing actors need to 'sell' a particular policy by scaring the audience and selecting a threat narrative that would buttress this framing, memory entrepreneurs select a specific collective memory reference that would fit their line of argument. For instance, when talking about the crisis in Ukraine, some commentators compared reaction of the world community to President Putin's actions to appeasement of Hitler, while others likened the EU's association agreement with Ukraine as Europe's search for Lebensraum. Obviously, a memory entrepreneur who uses these kinds of references is consciously trying to persuade his audience by picking and choosing a memory that is needed to advance the point she is making.

Therefore, I integrate the insights and tools from three fields of study:

1. Securitization, which introduces the concept of existential threats and the securitizing agent, is supposed to conceptualize a phenomenon as a threat.
2. Enemy image research, which analyses personification, discursive, and visual representation of threats.

3. Collective memory, which explores how enemy images and threat narratives are stored and embedded in society.

Putting all these together, existential threats that work through personification are stored in collective memory. The latter is described in securitization by embeddedness or resonance, while securitizing agents or memory entrepreneurs can appeal to collective memory through enemy images in store. Thus, enemy images can be returned back to life by skilful manipulation and appeals to collective memory.

Next, I briefly examine the existing literature in these three fields, to provide some background and foundation for the convergence of securitization, enemy image research, and collective memory.

2.1 Some Background on Securitization

Crucial components in the securitization framework are the securitizing actor(s), the referent object, the constructed threat, and the audience that accepts the threat as such. Several scholars have identified the lack of study of the audience in the securitization process. Boubeau argues that different securitization frameworks failed to prove whether securitization took place (2011). The 'voice' of the audience in the securitization process has been largely neglected and the acceptance of the securitizing move has so far been presumed based on the authority of the security speaker, or conceptualized through performativity (cf. Hansen 2011). More importantly, the securitization framework was one of the first to lay out the political implication of placing a phenomenon within the bounds of security: once a phenomenon is described as an existential threat (securitizing move) and this description is accepted by the audience, the securitizing actor receives legitimization for the extraordinary measures proposed to deal with the existential threat (cf. Roe 2008; Williams 2003; McDonald 2008). In securitization, 'a recognized agent' constructs a threat using 'patterns of heuristic artefacts' (Balzacq 2011, 63) in such a way as to provoke a specific range of emotions that would blur all reasoning except for the survival rationale. The so-called Paris school of securitization would argue that it is the everyday security professionals (Bigo 1994, 2001) and not necessarily politicians that can be considered as 'recognized agents', who 'enact' security on an administrative and practical level and not through 'heuristic artefacts' such as images, metaphors, stereotypes, emotions.

This book, however, regards the administrative measures as 'customized political acts', that is, the result and indicator of successful securitization.

A key step in the securitization process is the audience persuasion. Balzacq, one of the leading securitization scholars, emphasizes this stage in securitization as he considers it a crucial part of securitization's success. Later chapters closely examine the audience acceptance in order to prove that an actual securitization took place. Balzacq also noted the importance of the 'customized political act', which was meant to deal with the threat. Thus, the securitization process is incomplete without the final stage of the political measures that are intended to combat the existential threat. Securitization can be thought of as representing a spiral: the government (or other securitizing actor with positional power)[1] articulates an existential threat narrative, the mass media rearticulates it (or not), and the audience accepts them (or not) through rearticulation and action. Then the government adopts extraordinary measures, or in Balzacq's terms 'customized political acts', to combat the threat; the adoption of the measures legitimizes the threat narrative as such and launches another round of enmification, which, in turn, leads to further political measures.

The process of existential threat construction can be thought of as a continuous spiral starting from the political act (see Fig. 2.1). After all, discursive constructions in legislative acts are easy to reference and they can serve as a starting point for the next cycle of securitization process as already established and, consequently, more credible categories. This means not only that the audience is supposed to 'absorb' the constructions filtered through mass media, but also that the audience co-constructs the threat by accepting and rearticulating it, which in turn warrants (or not) extraordinary measures. Taking this a step further, the below schematic

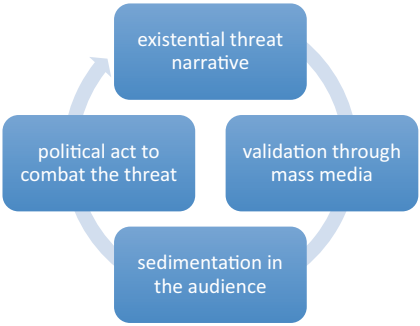

Fig. 2.1 Vicious circle of securitization

should be seen more as a spiral of threat perpetuation, as the feedback loop legitimizes enemy image constructions and allows for extraordinary measures, while the adoption of extraordinary measures begins another cycle of existential threat construction. This kind of vicious circle or spiral of securitization can lead to dramatic consequences: political measures that identify a threat serve as an additional tool to reinforce the threat narrative construction that is promulgated by the media and, if it resonates with the audience, leads to another push for political measures further delineating and singling out the threat.

What Foucault (1980, 194) referred to as a 'dispositif', that is, a 'heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions', underscores the importance of exploring different manifestations of securitization. Yet, it is important to establish governmental modality towards a specific phenomenon, or, as Dean (1999, 23) puts it, 'an analytics of government takes as its central concern *how* we govern and are governed within different regimes, and the conditions under which such regimes emerge, continue to operate, and are transformed [original emphasis]'. It is also important to track the audience's attitude that falls in Foucault's range of 'dispositif'.

The normative domain is an important component: 'It is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one' (Wæver 2004, 13). Given that securitized phenomena can be treated outside of normal politics, often bypassing democratic procedures, securitization can indeed pose an ethical conundrum. While Taureck argues that the 'securitization theory is instead a theoretical tool of analysis with which the analyst can trace incidences of securitization and de-securitization' (2006), Aradau encourages scholars to take a closer look at the processes of desecuritization as emancipation and avoidance of the main securitization risks (2004). This book makes a normative statement that deconstructing the existential threat narratives contributes to the desecuritization of enemy images. If one can realize, for instance, that neo-Nazi supporters of Euromaidan represent a small fraction of the Ukrainian population, this person might not join the separatists in South-East Ukraine.

2.1.1 Threat and Personification

It is generally accepted that securitization involves going beyond the realm of 'normal politics', which begs the question of what constitutes 'normal politics'. When does securitization start and end? Degrees of securitization are often referred to as a middle ground between successful and unsuccessful securitization (Adamides 2009). A definition provided by Diez et al. (2006, 567) deals with 'the extent to which individual attempts to securitize (so-called securitizing moves) gain acceptance by other members of the group or society, the frequency with which securitizing moves occur, and the extent to which society perceives the threat of the Other as "existential"'. Still, there remains a lack of understanding of how particular degrees of securitization can be conceptualized. Is a securitization process incomplete if the audience does not accept the framing of the threat as existential?

Identity is at the centre of the securitization framework (Buzan 1993, 43). Pinning down a definition of national security is a form of identity construction (Hansen 2006, 34). Enemy images provide one of the possible building blocks. For example, by labelling a country a member of the 'Axis of Evil', one automatically self-identifies with the 'Axis of Good'. In this context, the othering process is perceived as a progression where the potential for enmification exists as long as there is room for prejudice in society (Satjukow and Gries 2004; Nelson 2009). As Campbell observed, 'the logic of identity requires difference, the potential for the transformation of difference into otherness always exists' (1998, 69). According to this argument, the potential is intrinsically linked with discourses of fear and danger.

However, the securitization approach pays almost no attention to the threat component. What is known about the threat and at what point does it become existential? Buzan and Wæver (1998, 35–44) do not mention threat as a unit of analysis, apart from the fact that it should be framed as an existential one. There are several studies that connect securitization and othering, but they mostly deal with the securitization of migration (Ibrahim 2005; Huysmans 2000) and do not conceptualize the threat as a unit of analysis.

There is a growing body of literature that concentrates on the redundant necessity of othering in the process of identity construction (Abizadeh 2005; Rumelili 2004; Diez 2004), although these studies single out the EU as a unique case of inclusive identity where states see 'each other as

an extension of self rather than as other' (Rumelili 2004, 28). But even accepting securitization as an extreme othering process does not provide the basis on which the othering process is conducted. At the same time, enemy images may be the unit of analysis that securitization was lacking, as the enemy image approach can help single out the personified threat narratives or enemy image structures that are based on more resistant and historicized patterns of enmification such as prejudice (Allport 1954; Nelson 2009; Satjukow and Gries 2004).

Some scholars distinguish between two types of othering—geopolitical and temporal (Diez 2004; Rumelili 2004; Prozorov 2011[2]). Geopolitical othering is an exclusive type of identity, while temporal is inclusive. In temporal othering, the Other is part of the self, an incarnation of the past. The Other is discursively construed as a bad (i.e., old) incarnation of the self. While temporal othering is a comparatively harmless type of othering because the identity it creates is an inclusive one based on self-reflection (Diez 2004, 321), a geopolitical othering tends to be much more antagonistic and violent (Diez 2004, 320). Geopolitical othering is precarious because of its potential to deflect aggression based on primordial principles, devoid of self-reflection, and necessarily entails an object of hatred. It is not possible to hate 'climate change', but it is possible to hate the owners of the corporations that contribute to global warming. Successful othering usually combines the abstract temporal negation with the concrete reality of someone or something to negate (Prozorov 2011, 1273). In other words, temporal othering requires a personified threat to rely on, not an abstract Other.

Securitization scholars point out that securitization discourses can personify threats, which can have dangerous consequences for society (Ortega Breton 2010; Jackson 2007). These include mass hysteria and prejudice against certain population groups. Scholars have rarely tackled threat personification in securitization theory, even though it may be the most flammable instance of securitization/enmification on a psychological level (cf. Plous 2003; Ostrom et al. 1993). The case for studying personification of the threat can be found in terrorism studies (Joffé 2008) and in migration research (Ibrahim 2005; Huysmans 2006), where the threat, although diffuse, can be easily identified with migrants of different culture and appearance.

What differentiates counterterrorism discourse from the myriad of other threats constructed through risk-averse thinking is its personification and immediacy compared with theoretical, long-term risks. Both these aspects facilitate emotional expression and communication by providing oppor-

tunities for identification, fantasy, and the communication of anxiety and fear. In news and broader political discourse, a fearing gaze focuses on an imagined (but not fictional) network of individuals: Al-Qaeda, Islamic extremists, and Muslim terrorists (Ortega Breton 2010, 6–9).

Ortega Breton also emphasizes that the function of personification is to 'other' our own cultural uncertainty, constructing meaning in the face of ontological insecurity. Both terrorism and migration represent a diffuse threat (Galli 2008; Fauser 2006), while personification of the threat comes when discrimination is involved (Leonard 2011). The problem with studies about threat personification is that they focused almost exclusively on terrorist studies and migration, the latter being allegedly an opportunity for terrorists to infiltrate a country.[3] The phenomenon of threat personification was hardly researched in the securitization theory (apart from indicating the difference between actor-based threat and non-actor-based threat). The enemy image literature can help establish a new paradigm for securitization studies, as enemy image research works almost exclusively with the projection of prejudice-laden constructs.

When it comes to discursive representations of enemies in enemy research literature, there are several patterns that have been identified (cf. Nelson 2009; Weller 2001; Satjukow and Gries 2004; Frei 1985; Rieber 1991). Most authors point out the following elements are needed to identify an enemy:

1. As a condition of success, an existing negative preconception (prejudice, for example) should be available in society in order for the enemy image to be created.
2. Generalization is a common part of identity construction and allows for an 'us' versus 'them' approach, or creating an in-group and out-group.
3. Differentiation or othering shows what set of qualities makes us different from them; this is a step that Campbell considers inherent in identity construction, but that also leads to a threat construct.
4. Negative attributes merge with old prejudices and negative stereotypes.
5. A full-blown enemy image involves a threat, and given that the in-group has already been created, this threat gets personified. For a more compelling enemy image, a visual representation would also be useful, for instance, having several faces or looking evil (Satjukow and Gries 2004).

This summary of how to construct an enemy image can also be applied to the securitization process. While the stages of enemy construction can be seen as a product of enemy image research, the resonance condition was also explored in the securitization theory. That is where the identity construction problem that McSweeney identified comes into play (McSweeney 1996). Securitization scholars do not explore security/prejudice narratives on the societal level because it is an a priori thought that society cannot 'speak security'. But in order for a security speaker's argument to be bought, it needs to be congruent with what society has to say about security as well.

This logic represents a progressive scale of the securitization process starting from Guzzini's dispositional condition (Guzzini 2011, 335)—existing prejudice, through the stages of othering (generalization, differentiation, negative attitudes, threat) to the successful securitization (enemy image as a personified existential threat). Contrary to securitization, an enemy image gives a more cohesive understanding of the threat identity and through it of self-identity. Identity scholars note that identities are construed in terms of what the self is not (Diez 2004; Morozov 2009; Morozov and Rumelili 2012). This progression also explains how the 'original' securitization/enmification process was built on the evolutionary drive for survival that determined the initial friend/foe categorization. I will concentrate on the last stage of the othering process that involves an enemy image, which is a combination of threat and personification, while keeping in mind that previous stages of othering also have the potential for enemy image development.

Is it possible to desecuritize an enemy image? According to Huysmans (1998), strategies of desecuritization are objectivist, constructivist, or deconstructivist (Huysmans 1998, 588, see also Fako 2012). To deconstruct an 'alien' or enemy identity, one goes beyond the Schmittian logic of exclusion to create a 'plurality of daily human practices' (Huysmans 1998, 588). In this book, I engage in a similar process by pointing out the constructed nature of threat narratives, which creates a normative push to perceive the phenomena already accepted by the audience as existential threats in non-securitized terms.

2.1.2 Felicity Conditions Versus Indicators of Securitization

When is securitization successful? Or, how does one get from an existing prejudice to an enemy image?

Successful securitization processes have three felicity conditions:

1. The grammar or plot of security
2. The social capital (authority) of the enunciator
3. Conditions related to the threat (cf. Wæver 2000, 252–253); Balzacq adds a fourth felicity condition:
4. Conditions related to the audience of securitization (cf. Balzacq 2005).

However, this discussion did not lead to the development of indicators, which can prove that a particular phenomenon is perceived as securitized by the audience. There are a limited number of studies (Bourbeau 2011) that analyse the way security practices can prove the existing process of securitization, that is, success of securitization according to the Paris School concept, and still concentrate on the securitizing actor. Moreover, there seems to be some confusion regarding conditions and indicators of securitization: how can an audience be a felicity condition if, according to the Copenhagen School, it is supposed to indicate the success of the securitization process?

If we look at the securitization process in general, there are several components that could be enhanced to make the securitization successful. The presence of a securitization actor, existential threat, and referent object can be considered as a felicity condition in and of themselves: it is what Wæver would describe as the 'grammar plot' of security. The felicity conditions that go along with it are related to the positional power of the securitizing actor and embeddedness of the threat narrative. Audience acceptance and implementation of extraordinary measures are not necessarily part of securitization, but more an indicator of its success (cf. Adamides 2009). Another important innovation to the success of securitization can be viewed through a feminist perspective. Even though most securitization scholars do not take the theorization of referent objects into consideration, according to enemy image scholars (Keen 1991; Satjukow and Gries 2004), this is one of the most effective tools. Notably, enemy image scholars emphasize that constructing a referent object as a woman or child is a frequently used tactic. In other words, the referent object is feminized and presented as an entity in need of rescuing, both in verbal and in visual form (the so-called 'damsel in distress' trope). At the same time, feminization could be an effective tool for othering that eventually boils down to an enemy image (Gilman 1993; Yuval-Davis 1997), with femininity constructed as a threat to a patriarchal/heteronormal society.

The discussion about the success of securitization is not limited to the above factors. For instance, Guzzini emphasized these two felicity conditions:

> Facilitating conditions' for the success of (de)securitization include (1) the way certain arguments are 'empowered' through the mobilization of a bias within existing foreign policy discourses and identities (dispositional) and (2) the validity that accrues to an argument by 'force' of the reputation and positional power of the agent (relational). (Guzzini 2011, 335)

Guzzini's dispositional condition can be compared with Stritzel's (2007) 'embeddedness' as they both emphasize that the securitizing move should resonate with existing discourses and practices, that is, the discursive construction of reality. Most importantly, securitization scholars concur that securitization is only successful when it resonates with existing identity constructions. Even though the embeddedness or resonance argument is quite popular with the securitization framework, little empirical work has been done in this field. This can be contrasted with enemy image research, which has always tried to link the contemporary enemy images with past experiences (Satjukow and Gries 2004). That being said, neither field sufficiently dealt with the concept of collective memory, the pool from which both enemy images and securitizing moves can feed.

One of the main challenges to securitization exists in the question of 'who can speak security to whom'—the above-mentioned 'social capital' or 'positional power' of the security speaker. There is a certain hierarchal division between the securitizing agent who is in a superior position to securitize a phenomenon and an audience that is supposed to accept it (Wæver 2000). Therefore, one of the conditions for the success of securitization should include the narratives articulated with positional power—in most cases on the government's side. The securitizing actor in this case adds agency to the 'rearrangement' of discourses in such a way as to present phenomena as threatening, but the audience still needs to accept this construction. Léonard and Kaunert (2011, 58) argue that the Copenhagen School's position on audience is contradictory because on the one hand the audience is assigned an important role on the grounds of securitization being an intersubjective process, while on the other hand Buzan and Wæver posit that it is the securitizing actor that decides whether an issue should be handled as an existential threat.

In this respect, the Copenhagen School leans more towards self-referentiality than intersubjectivity (Balzacq 2005, Stritzel 2007, Léonard and Kaunert 2011), which can explain the underdeveloped nature of the audience concept. There are also no concrete illustrations of possible audiences, just a vague reference that the 'audience is those who have to be convinced in order for the securitizing move to be successful' (Wæver 2003, 11–12) and that there is a large variance of audiences, without specifying which ones. The Copenhagen School becomes tautological when it concerns the explanatory power of securitization: we know about the acceptance by the audience once the policy can be pursued; thus they are not directly scrutinized. However, it is unclear who needs to accept the securitizing moves and to what degree: is the audience limited to decision-making bodies such as parliaments or cabinets? Or could it also include the general public, which is more logical as securitization often works as a legitimation strategy (Diez 2013, Lorenzo-Dus and Marsh 2012)?

There is a further limitation of the securitization framework: it mostly lacks indicators for securitization's success. In the classic understanding of securitization the introduction of extraordinary measures is the main indicator for a successful securitization, but Salter (2011, 118) argues that 'the process of securitization must be taken as dispersed, iterative and interactive'. I argue that the adoption of extraordinary measures is not the only way to measure the success of securitization. A more precise method is to trace the securitizing discourses on the audience level and if they are rearticulated on the audience level then securitization is successful. It is not possible, based solely on the application of extraordinary measures, to argue that securitization did not get accepted on a particular level and cannot move forward at some point in the future, because the securitizing discursive constructions are existent and can be employed in a different situation once again.

Accordingly, from the felicity conditions, those 'related to the threat' have not been theorized sufficiently, and the conditions that have been included in the securitization framework have not been empirically researched. As enemy image research goes beyond the official realm—just like the contributions in securitization theory suggest—and studies not only mass media (cf. Vultee 2011 in securitization research), but also popular reactions illustrated by numerous studies on prejudice among different groups of people, there is a much-needed emphasis on the societal level. Thus, enemy images can provide empirical validity for the theoretical

discussion on felicity conditions in securitization, especially on issues like threat, audience, and successful securitization.

2.2 Enemy Image Literature

In the discussion of securitization, the emphasis was on the referent object and political measures, but enemy image research is focused on the identity of the threat. This distinction echoes the discussion in Eriksson and Noreen (2002) about 'what is threatening (the subject of the threat image) and what is perceived as threatened (the object of the threat image)'. An enemy image in this respect is 'what is threatening'. In this section I review some of the enemy image literature that is most pertinent, as well as the most poignant topics and findings.

Enmification research that spanned the end of World War II to the end of the Cold War has fallen into a state of desuetude. In English-speaking literature, researchers pointed out the demise of the 'arch enemy Soviet Union' and a surprisingly fast reprogramming of American foreign policy towards the enmification of Saddam Hussein and the Arab world. German-speaking literature, which focused on 'enemy image Communism' and was generally peace-research-motivated, morphed into the prejudice-inspired enmification research of Islam and immigration. The absence of an obvious *existential threat* led to the absence of enemy image construction (Schrage 2012, 230, emphasis added). Thus, scholars postulate the constructed nature of enemy images, but at the same time state that a threat is necessary to sustain them. Conversely, it is not the threat that is needed; it is the *threat discourse* that brings an enemy image alive—a key point in securitization theory.

The theoretical framework of enemy images has effectively reached a dead end, circling around the same social psychological approaches related to prejudice and misperception that have dominated the field for decades. No fresh theoretical framework has been injected into the ailing field. Even the emergence of securitization as one of the mainstream approaches in political science did not reinvigorate enmification research.

Finally, there is a surprisingly modest amount of interdisciplinary and international research done in the field: the limited cross-pollination of social psychology with peace research and the limited integration of non-English-language literature on enemy images into mainstream political science have inhibited the study of enemy images.

Even the emergence of the concept of 'enemy images' is subject to debate. The political concept of an 'enemy image' was arguably first explored by Carl Schmitt in his book *Der Begriff des Politischen* where he claimed that an enemy image (*Feindbild*) is necessary as long as there is a need for an Other (*der Fremde*). Weller (2001, 12) argues that the notion 'enemy image' in English-speaking literature is a direct translation of Senghaas' 'Feindbild'[4] that was not commonly used before the late 1980s. However, Boulding (1959) does make reference to 'enemy images' as a category, and in general Weller's assumption is not entirely correct, as 'enemy image' was used in American psychology studies and in particular political psychology and prejudice research. Accordingly, both strands of enemy image research ran largely in parallel, converging mostly in the field of prejudice, and in the enemy that they were studying: the Soviet Union.

The enmification process was analysed generally in two converging fields of study: (social) psychology and peace research. Social psychology usually accepted enemy images as an 'anthropological constant' and tried to come up with explanations for this inevitable phenomenon: it was connected to the psychological foundations of individuals. Accordingly, stereotyping and thus casting others in a particular group—especially as conducive to survival or dangerous to survival—is an essential habit humans and other animals developed over millennia. In the meantime, peace research largely based its assumptions on the existing social psychological literature and concentrated on political consequences of the enmification process such as enemy images in schoolbooks (Hessian Foundation for Peace and Conflict Research (HSFK) Project), enemy image as an obstacle to disarmament/arms race (Frei 1985), thus representing a critique of ideology.

A precursor of enemy image research is related to the propagation of enemy images, that is, the 'consciously induced conceptions'.[5] This field of study mostly focuses on the way messages come across, analysing the actions of state and non-state actors involved in the enemy image construct (cf. securitization's securitizing actor), as well as the techniques employed (Silverstein 1989). Obviously, the more extreme cases of enemy image propagation constitute the main body of existing scholarship—the study of Nazi propaganda although scholars also explored state-run propaganda in less extreme cases such as Soviet bloc countries (Satjukow, Gries 2004), the USA (Cull 2008; Snyder 1995), or Western Germany (Lißmann et al. 1976).

Silverstein's research (1987) connected both enemy images and propaganda in a democratic context, as opposed to an authoritarian one.

The fact that enemy image construction was also present in democratic states during the Cold War was pointed out by Weller (2001), who, like Silverstein (1987), built on psychological advertising-like techniques that were employed in constructs, which to some extent have found their use among government-affiliated spin doctors and in public relations (Moloney 2006).

In German peace research, enemy images were a form of prejudice that fulfil the function of letting out aggression potential in comparison to 'real' and 'actual' perceptions (Vilmar 1971, 384, 386). This means that they are misperceptions (*Fehlwahrnehmungen*) that are introduced by the ruling elite (Weller 2001, 11). Thus, peace research often restricted itself to correct and incorrect perceptions, not discussing their intersubjective nature. Prejudice serves a double function—a society offers prejudice and stereotypical perception patterns and an individual uses them because they fulfil specific needs (Nicklas et al. 1978, 366). In other words, a friend/foe dichotomy is useful for societal unity in order to unite against an enemy, while the enemy figure also provides a unique target to project frustration and problems and to deflect aggression (Nicklas and Ostermann 1980, 538).

It is difficult to think of the government causing misperceptions without the 'pre-existing condition' of enemy images in society. Enemy images should be construed as a form of prejudice or negative conceptions about a particular group. For example, an enemy image is 'an ensemble of negative conceptions that describes a particular group as an adversary' (Satjukow and Gries 2004, 16), but later the authors list as one of the main characteristics of the adversary its aggressiveness and aggravated emanating threat (Satjukow, Gries 2004, 31), which shows once again that threat is a constituent element in an enemy image. Thus, going beyond the political, psychological, and sociological reasoning for enemy images, the only factor remaining omnipresent is the representation of the enemy as a threat to the Self—the cornerstone of the securitization framework. Therefore my working definition of an enemy image is *an ensemble of negative conceptions that describes a particular group or a person as threatening to the referent object*. In the following analysis I will present a brief evolution of enemy images across various disciplines and also examine the elements that make up the structure of the enemy image.

2.2.1 Evolution of Enemy Images Across Disciplines

When it comes to enemy image research the interdisciplinary approach to their study was present, but not very successful: psychology and sociology overlapped on a number of points, with recent complementary studies in neuroscience, while political science joined in later. While neuroscience and psychology pointed to the biological grounding of enemy images (Nelson 2009; Flohr 1987), Rieber (1991, 11–12) observed three points of conversion in psychological literature on enmification that are also echoed in sociology:

1. Enmification is a part of self-inflation (Adler's fictions, Jung's persona, and Freud's identification with the father).
2. Enmification is communicable through emotional contagion, while self-reflection is not.
3. The internal organization of a society, its authority structures, and legitimizing myths can be decisive in the process of enmification.

The first argument found an echo in sociology and later political science. It was further developed within the framework of social identity theory, as well as other approaches that stressed the need for a group's self-inflation while denigrating outsiders. Social identity theory and the literature on conflict development have always referred to this approach, describing it as a consequence of in-group and out-group logic, while in political science this effect was captured, for instance, in the 'rally-around the flag' phenomenon (dramatic spikes in the popularity of the president) (Baum 2002; Oneal and Bryan 1995; Chapman and Reiter 2004; Lee 1977) and in theories on diversionary foreign policy (DeRouen 2000, Smith 1996, Levy 1988).

An offshoot of social identity theory, intergroup threat theory (ITT), is very common in social psychology (Stephan et al. 2009). ITT posits that there are certain conditions under which members of one group believe that another group is in a position to cause them harm (Stephan et al. 2009), either actually or symbolically. Even a cursory look at this approach reveals interesting similarities with the securitization theory. ITT, however, is much closer to the cognitive studies in this respect: one of the basic prerequisites of threat perception is a high value for the in-group (cf. social identity theory), which in turn leads to emotional reactions such as fear, anxiety, and anger (Stephan et al. 2008). The fact that ITT makes threat

the bedrock of negative stereotyping is critical in understanding prejudices and enemy images.

Analysis of enemy images in social psychology is bound to the study of prejudice as one of the most discernible examples of the othering process. In American English even the word 'prejudiced' is often used as a euphemism for being racist. That explains a particular vector of the prejudice literature in the USA—even empirical studies of the origins of prejudice or functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) experiments on prejudice were based on the perception of Afro-Americans by Caucasians and vice versa (Amodio and Lieberman 2009).

Negative stereotyping was defined as 'knowledge structures that serve as mental pictures of the groups in question…[And are characterized by] inaccuracy, negativity and overgeneralization' (Stangor 2009), which also echoes the enemy image definition in German literature—probably because Allport's work was referenced in both countries (cf. Nicklas and Ostermann 1980). Nevertheless, American research in this respect delivered remarkable results in regard to the connection between perceived threat and prejudice (Amodio and Lieberman 2009; Dovidio et al. 1997; Fendt and Fanselow (1999); Harris and Fiske (2006), Lieberman et al. 2005). As prejudice is usually taken as a starting point for an enemy image it is crucial to point out the intrinsic connection that exists between the association of threat with enemy image. Accordingly, it is even more surprising that securitization scholars have never picked up on his connection.

The fact that enemy images are supposed to resonate with existing prejudice-laden narratives ('resonance argument') has also been one of the pillars of enemy image research. Satjukow and Gries (2004) discuss the problem of enemy images in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and they come to the conclusion that the enemy images in GDR are based on images originating from Nazi propaganda. In order to plant the concept of Western Germans as enemies, the government resorted to techniques from the Nazi past: the image of Western capitalism corresponding with 'Jewish capital' and 'Jewish conspiracy' was conveyed through the derogatory visual representation of Jews (Gilman 1993, 1999) as the agents of Wall Street Imperialism (Satjukow and Gries 2004, 40; Duchkowitsch 1990). This evidence, although appalling, is actually in line with propaganda logic: it would be impossible for the GDR government to inject a new form of enemy image without a reference to a previous hate-inciting discursive representation.

In general, the peace research study of enemy images was characterized by theoretical eclectics and a strong normative imperative (Weller 2001) that certainly drew on social psychology. However, it is the discipline that progressively united different understandings of enemy image and included a very significant political component. In early German enemy image research the notion of enemy images was closely related to prejudice and stereotypes in order to connect them to the everyday speech and practices (Schäfer and Six 1978, 13). At the same time, in English-speaking literature the study on prejudice went largely parallel to the political science view of the enemies in international relations (Christiansen 1959; Finlay et al. 1967), until fairly recently (Herrmann, Fischerkeller 1995; Holsti 1986). In general, the meaning of 'enemy images' was understood as a 'specific from of societal prejudice [that] unites cognitive, evaluative and conative elements in an image of a real or imagined "enemy" and are—as prejudices in general—especially resistant to change through experience… a friend/foe dichotomy represents an in-group/out-group relationship' (Nicklas in Zoll et al. 1977: 90).

Enemy image as a result of misperception is either based on prejudice (Nicklas et al 1978) or a result of propaganda (Weller 2001). Consequently, misperception was never employed in enemy image research as a separate category. According to peace research scholars, misperception was largely a result of a prejudiced *Weltanschauung* (Nicklas et al 1978, 370) and included the normative component: as an enemy image is a *mis*perception, it should be corrected. Thus, when an enemy image is construed as a misperception and poses an obstacle to peace, the solution lies in deconstructing the enemy image to correct it. It is not a robust theoretical framework that facilitates the study of enmification. Furthermore, the presence of enemy images was directly linked to the arms race and the possibility of nuclear holocaust (Frei 1985), while the studies on enemy images were supposed to 'stimulate mutual understanding…and empathy' (Frei 1985, 13). The notion of enemy image was not defined per se, but was represented as a conglomerate of images relating to the worldview, adversaries, and self-perception (Frei 1985, 16).

Sam Keen (1991) is one of the few researchers to come up with a classification of enemy images that was inter alia based on visual enemy image propaganda. According to Keen, there are the following categories of enemy images: Enemy as a Criminal (Torturer), Enemy as Death, Enemy of God, Enemy as a Barbarian, Greedy Enemy, Enemy as a Beast, Abstract Enemy (Technology), Enemy as Rapist and Desecrator of Women and

Children. But even in this kind of classification the element of threat is omnipresent; it is just reinterpreted in different types of securities: physical security (torturer, death, rapist), economic security (greedy enemy), military security (abstract enemy), and societal security (enemy of God). These categories might be applied as successful securitization in different sectors of security (Buzan et al. 1998), for instance, economic security (greedy enemy) or human security (rapist or torturer).

Keen's emphasis on the analysis of visuals and the types of threats that are embodied in them is a useful segue to the integration of visuality in peace research and security studies—in a later case carried out by Lene Hansen's project on visuals (2015). According to Warburg (1939), '[a picture] becomes a hieroglyph, not meant simply as a picture to look at, but rather as something to be read—an intermediary stage between image and sign'. Visuals play a critical role in evoking emotions, because emotional memories are stored and induced more easily. As Johnson (2012, 4) notes, 'rather than turning to narrative, memory often figures the past with the immediacy of images'. This is especially so with their psychological evocation, which Warburg called *Pathosformel* (educing pathos), that fixates the 'qualities of the threatening force' (Efal 2007, 221).

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Thus, enemy image being *an ensemble of negative conceptions that describe a particular group or an individual as threatening to the referent object* has different origins: prejudice, misperception, and propaganda. In securitization terms these origins are the embeddedness of the grammar plot, the acceptance by the audience who is ready to rearticulate the othering discourse, and the securitizing move. These origins can be connected to the frameworks of securitization and collective memory. Prejudice is sustained through collective memory, while propaganda works through threat representation and resonance with previous imagery—a process that can otherwise be described as securitization. Social psychology and peace research introduced new dimensions to enemy image research by pointing out the psychological need for self-inflation through discrimination of others and the normative drive for enemy image deconstruction. More importantly, enmification research explained that enemy images are building upon a certain structure of threat and personification that is supposed to be embedded in the previous discourse in order to be successful. Thus, when analysing a successful enemy image, one has to look for a set of features: culture specific representation of an existential threat,

personification, and reference to an enemy image in collective memory (embeddedness).

To measure the success of an enemy image, it is necessary to look at the extraordinary measures, but also to establish the acceptance by the audience, that is, if the enemy image is debated on a popular level. Securitization as an algorithm of political processes is a compelling addition to enemy image research, which previously dealt only with propaganda as a source of general enemy image dissemination. Thus, the actual process of securitization starting with the securitizing move may also be a starting point for enemy image construction—or in Balzacq's terminology 'contextually mobilized patterns of heuristic artefacts' with an 'unprecedented threatening complexion'. According to enemy image research, unprecedented threatening complexion can be achieved through the personification of the threat. Yet, both enemy image research and securitization involve a concept of discourse embeddedness at the societal level—whether that means historicized patterns of enmification such as prejudice or the necessity of discourse resonance as a felicity condition in securitization. Where do both enemy images and securitizing moves draw from? The notion of collective memory provides the missing link in both cases due to its inherent constructivist nature.

2.3 Understanding Collective Memory

The working definition of collective memory used here is a 'shared pool of information held in the memories of two or more members of a group' (Halbwachs 1992). Modern research emphasizes the dynamic nature of collective memory (Winter 2006), or as van Dijck states, 'memory has become an interesting amalgamation of preservation and creation' (van Dijck 2007, 173), pointing out the constant process of memory mediation. Collective memory is an intrinsic part of a national and individual identity because it is a part of who we are and how we want to see ourselves. As pointed out in the enemy image research section earlier in this chapter, the logic of self-inflation, and by default, negative stereotyping of the others, is the same logic that works in social identity theory and ITT. Another point of intersection is in the constructivist nature of memory: it depends on social interactions and confirmation, just like enemy images and securitized phenomena.

There is a broad academic discussion regarding different types of collective memory and their functions (Rutten et al. 2013; Etkind 2009;

Assmann 2011; Assmann 1992; Vermeulen et al. 2012). At the dawn of memory studies, Halbwachs made a distinction between collective memory and historical memory, where the former ensured the collective identity and the latter was supposed to even it out (Halbwachs 1992). The same framework was shared by Pierre Nora, who also drew a line between memory and history, the latter being objective and devoid of identity (Nora 1989), but recently the notion of collective memory has become much more holistic, emphasizing its globality (Vermeulen et al. 2012) and technological advances that allow for a more complex process of discourse mediation:

> Once verbalized, the individual's memories are fused with the intersubjective symbolic system of language and are, strictly speaking, no longer a purely exclusive and unalienable property…they can be exchanged, shared, corroborated, confirmed, corrected, disputed—and, at last but not least, written down. (Assmann 2006, 3)

More recent contributions to memory studies unite different concepts of memory, or, as Aleida Assmann states, 'there is no such thing as historiography without some form of memory work; whether overtly or not, it cannot wholly avoid interpretations, partiality and identity' (2011, 123). Even though Assmann tried to blur the line between historiography and collective memory, she did make a distinction between functional and storage memory, with the former being 'future-oriented' and actively used, while the latter an 'amorphous mass' of unincorporated memories. Following Rutten et al., this book considers all collective memory to be functional, especially because in the digital age 'unincorporated memories' can easily be accessed (cf. Garde-Hansen et al. 2009). Collective memory is a holistic notion and it does not benefit from subdivision into components that share the essence of collective renegotiation.

The functions that Assmann assigns to functional memory apply to the discussion of collective memory in this book and involve *legitimization* (immediate concern for official or political memory), *delegitimization,* and *distinction*. While the first two tasks are relatively straightforward, Assmann clarifies the 'distinction':

> All symbolic forms of expression that help to create the profile of a collective identity…[That is] perpetuated and renewed by rituals and festivals. These memories consolidate references to a common foundational history. (Assmann 2011, 128)

In this way, the distinction process can be interpreted as a form of self-inflation put forward in enmification research and the idea of propaganda that represents a foundation for understanding an enemy image. This is relevant for both securitization and enemy image research because collective memory represents a pool of knowledge that both approaches are supposed to draw from. In the securitization framework, collective memory is useful for analysing the embeddedness of the discourse, and enemy image research is useful for the sources of existing enmification structures. Thus, collective memory provides the much-needed emphasis on the societal level where the audience's role in rearticulating discourses should be explored.

Another important part of collective memory is popular culture (Lipsitz 1991; Fowler 2005), which plays an intrinsic role as it equips the population with narrative tools. Cinema is identified as a crucial element in popular culture (Kuhn 2002) due to its accessibility and visuality, with the latter being a source of personification and visual 'icons' (cf. Hansen 2015). Cinematic sources are especially relevant in Russian studies (Lawton 1992; Taylor 1999), where popular culture narratives and (visual) memes are defined through Soviet movie aesthetics.

Soviet cinematic works are important for the contemporary Russian popular culture. These films prove to be a valuable source of collective picture memory, accessible for most Russian citizens. In the case of Russian cinema, it is a crucial tool for discourse embeddedness, as cinematic narratives from Soviet movie hits contain the visual component that is so essential in contemporary storytelling. It is worth noting that Soviet cinema has been analysed in cultural studies but has rarely been incorporated into political science studies that deal with Russia.

2.3.1 Memory Entrepreneurs

The audience is central to the process of memory: it is the audience who participates in and co-creates memories (Garde-Hansen et al. 2009) through mass media (Erll and Rigney 2009) and new media (Huyssen 2003). However, there is another role left to play—the one for memory entrepreneurs, who 'are convinced that they have a sacred mission' (Pollak 1993, 30). Memory entrepreneurs are simply political opportunists who use memory to achieve their immediate political goals (Mink and Neumayer 2007). Thus, memory entrepreneurs can be compared with securitizing actors in the securitization framework because they influence

the next generation through statements, legislation, popular culture, and historiography.

Efforts by state memory entrepreneurs in Russia are aimed at reviving the memory of the Great Patriotic War in the collective memory (Etkind 2013; Gudkov 2005; Zhurzhenko 2007; Pääbo 2011).

> Only when war-time experience is appropriately shaped and consolidated, when it has become technically reproducible, when it is inscribed into, or at least correlated with the collective framework of events past and present, does it become a society's (or individual group's) and war veterans' historical 'memory'. Without such mechanisms (and a purposeful media policy) that specially maintain, organize, and stage 'memory' and its rituals, without making a performance out of the war theme, even such a significant past rapidly disintegrates and vanishes. (Gudkov 2005, 6)

Gudkov's analysis shows that state memory policy is crucial in shaping collective memory: state broadcasts of particular 'patriotic' films and programmes, mass commemorative events that usually involve school children, and other similar events create a sense of a religious ceremony (cf. Assmann 2011) and of belonging to a group. Gudkov also points out that memory events can be defined as 'a re-discovery of the past that creates a rupture with its accepted cultural meaning' (Etkind 2013, 178). For example, a public commemoration of holiday or even a football game that brings certain memories to light could be considered a memory event (Gaufman 2014). In this case, a memory event implies an agency that is absent from the definition, but in this book, it is interpreted as a category similar to a securitizing move, where memory policy takes place through contextual mobilization.

In Russia, memory politics is still an important phenomenon (Zhurzhenko 2007; Etkind 2013), which involves building upon the Soviet memory politics—for instance, emphasizing primary foundation events like the commemoration of the Great Patriotic War, or the commemoration of the October Revolution, which was then turned into the 'Day of People's Unity', which now commemorates the expulsion of Polish–Lithuanian forces from Moscow in 1612. All these elements of memory politics involve large-scale commemorations accessible to a large number of Russian citizens. In this context, Warburg's concept of picture memory, and especially pathos formula (Warburg 1939; Efal 2007),

emphasizes visual images and the importance of traumatic experiences that usually involve an existential threat narrative.

Memory politics is a decidedly important component of the enmification process, but one of the crucial factors in this book is that the settling of enemy images into the minds of the audience and the analysis of memory politics cannot give insights into the enmification process. Therefore, the way to investigate the collective memory is to investigate the societal, that is, audience level and its impact on the enmification process.

2.3.2 Digital Discourses and Memories

The most common way to investigate society's perceptions are public opinion polls, but according to some behaviourist studies (Levitt and List 2009), most people are unlikely to behave or to answer the questions truthfully. However, the Internet allows for anonymity and enhances the likelihood of participation in debate, and discussions tend to be more frank (Albrecht 2006, 27; Gauntlett and Horsley 2004). Consequently, the Internet provides a useful platform to observe human behaviour in its natural 'habitat', and the study of the online discourse or *digital memory* can provide useful insights into the way memories are renegotiated in real time using previous historicized patterns of enmification. Digital memory is the epitome of collective memory because it is the digital arena where the mediation of memory, or actively stored memory, takes place. It is nearly impossible to conceive of an important 'offline' event that would not have its ripple marks in the digital space. As Hoskins pointed out,

> The construction of memory in everyday life is 'imbricated' not only in digital recording technologies and media but also in the standards and classifications resulting from their growth that inevitably and often invisibly regulate our sociotechnical practices. (Hoskins 2009, 95)

Even the events that took place in the past are actively renegotiated and mediated online in a sort of public space (Etkind 2013; Rutten et al. 2013). One of the drawbacks of digital memory for researchers is the fact that it is 'more vulnerable to manipulation, but its potential to be rediscovered in future times is very much reduced in comparison with the materiality of its hard-copy predecessors' (Hoskins 2009, 102). On the other hand, it represents an enormous opportunity to follow a more comprehensive process of memory construction, as the attempts of memory

entrepreneurs in this case are met with the active participation of web users. In a sense, the investigation of the online discourses becomes a sort of 'digital anthropology' (Coleman 2010; Boellstorff 2012, 514), which has been advocated by Boellstorff as

> [Digital anthropology] permits addressing that object of study in its own terms (in other words, not as merely derivative of the offline), while keeping in focus how those terms always involve the direct and indirect ways online sociality points at the physical world and vice versa. (Boellstorff in Horst and Miller 2012, 40)

There are several important reasons to study digital discourse in Russia. While television is the major information source for the overwhelming majority of Russians, there are also around 68.7 million Internet users in Russia, 56 million of whom use the Internet on a daily basis (Ministry of Communication 2014). Given that Russia is currently ranked in 148th place on the World Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders 2014), thereby increasing the significance of alternative online media, and given the rapid (7 % annually) and ongoing growth in the number of Russian Internet users and social media users in particular (Plugotarenko 2014), it would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of new media in the Russian context.

Another reason is the fact that Russian authorities have spent an enormous amount of money to regulate and infiltrate the Russian blogosphere. Judging by the legislative measures that have been adopted with a view to controlling online media in Russia,[6] and the massive resources that have been invested in regulating and penetrating the Russian blogosphere (Smirnov et al. 2012), the Russian leadership is also keenly aware of the influential role played by new media in shaping public opinion. The government's attitude towards new media would appear to be encapsulated by the famous phrase used in early 2012 by Stanislav Govorukhin, then head of Putin's election campaign staff, who described the Internet as 'a rubbish-dump controlled by GosDep [the US State Department]'. During the 2011–2012 elections, Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) attacks on oppositional websites, seemingly with state involvement, were registered by numerous independent organizations (Mikhaylova 2012).

The 2012 'Kremlingate' scandal also showed that the Russian authorities had in fact gone much further than merely obstructing oppositional media, and that millions of roubles had been spent by the government

with the aim of channelling online discussions in the desired direction (Karimova 2012, RFERL 2015). The hacked correspondence between then head of the Agency for Youth Affairs Vasilii Yakemenko and his deputy Kristina Potupchik demonstrated that a significant amount of budgetary funds were being spent on paying an 'army of bots'—people paid to write 'correct' online comments and posts on themes of interest to the government. These online warriors reportedly take their cue at least in part from the current discourse on *RT (Russia Today)* and *Pervyi kanal* (Delovoi Peterbrug 2014). Pro-Kremlin paid Internet commentators are the frequent butt of jokes; for example, a caricature by Yolkin shows an Internet user measuring his online speed based on the number of 'kremlin-bot' comments appearing on a particular post (Radio Svoboda 2014). The amount of financing that went and is still going into paying for pro-Kremlin commentators and bloggers shows that the Kremlin considers the online public sphere an important battlefield.

Assmann (2011) alluded to types of memories that are not actively stored anymore, but in the digital age memories can be easily reactivated. Marianne Hirsch introduced a notion of *postmemory* that is quite useful for the digital collective memory, as

> Postmemorial work…strives to reactivate and re-embody more distant social/national and archival/cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression. (Hirsch 2008, 111, original emphasis)

The notion of postmemory is particularly relevant to the process of enemy image construction: postmemory works through the adoption of traumatic experiences of others as a process of identification, imagination, and projection (Hirsch 2008, 114) and that makes it a ready-made algorithm for identity construction, whether it is through securitization's embeddedness or through the resonance of enemy images. While Hirsch mostly worked with the memory of Holocaust and the way traumatic experiences of the previous generation were adopted by the generation that had never lived through the same trials, a similar process can be observed in different situations. As Peter Burke rightfully pointed out:

> It is often said that history is written by the victors. It might also be said that history is forgotten by the victors. They can afford to forget, whereas the losers are unable to accept what happened and are condemned to

> brood over it, relieve it, and reflect how different it might have been. (Burke 1989, 106)

Burke's comment could be easily applied to numerous historic events and revanchist movements, most notably in the Weimar Republic (Kailitz and Umland 2010). For the Soviet-born and -educated Russian elite, the fact that modern Russia is viewed as a loser in the international arena creates a psychological challenge that often leads to an enmification process: unfortunately, collective memory is still full of enemy images that can be easily transformed to fit the same rival. Lev Gudkov calls it a 'neurotic crisis of identity' (cf. the concept of ontological insecurity) that is compensated through aggression and a demonstrative (often through foreign policy) search for enemies (Gudkov 2004, 23). What is important is to examine not only the demonstrative foreign policy dimension but also the collective memory at the societal level, which allows for enemy image construction.

2.4 Theory Synthesis

The three theoretical approaches to threat narratives discussed in this chapter have several parallels: all three of them talk about the embeddedness of the discourse as a felicity condition. In the case of securitization, the securitizing move should be constructed in a way that speaks to the existing menace discourse in the audience; in enemy image research it is referred to as an appeal to existing prejudice in society that emphasizes the otherness in a certain group; in memory studies, the whole idea of collective memory revolves around placing a certain discourse in connection with commemorative practices and celebrations that piece together the postmemorial events with the current events.

The threat motif is another poignant theme: while in enemy image research it is a less straightforward topic that rose to necessity in an enemy image, in securitization the threat condition was the indispensable basis of the theoretical framework. Threat as a category is not prominent in memory studies; the importance of emotionally charged discourse is crucial with memory construction. The terms 'securitizing agent' and 'memory entrepreneur' are similar both in their function as an agent of discourse 'filtering' and in their construction, while in enemy image research the agency of enemy image propaganda is less evident, apart from cases of state-run propaganda. The topic that does not often come across in securitization but is quite prominent in enemy image research is personification—an intrinsic part of the enemy image that provides the target for the emotionally charged

reaction. Securitization scholars would describe it as actor-based threat (cf. Sjöstedt 2010), which makes an enemy image a tangible unit of analysis.

Even though different scholars explored various roots of the enemy image concept, quite often the seemingly different origins of the enemy image were united under the same umbrella definition that included a political element in a very similar fashion as securitization. Just as the justification during the Cold War for nuclear annihilation was predicated on the enmification of the Other, securitization, that is, defining a phenomenon as threatening to a referent object, necessitates a certain set of (political) measures. Moreover, in securitization framework a securitizing actor is valued for the social capital that makes them authoritative enough to speak security; while in enemy image research the authority to define an enemy can also be a function of society, because it is the level to which prejudice is consigned; the government or any other actor who is in a position to engage propaganda tools can give an old prejudice a new life.

Another important convergence is the notion of audience both in securitization and in enemy image research. It has been a part of the framework, because the existence of an enemy image largely rested on the 'popularity' of the prejudice related to the enemy in a given society. Thus, while in securitization theory the securitizing move has often been considered having a largely performative function (Hansen 2011; Hansen 2015; Vuori 2014), propaganda of enemy images, which is a process akin to securitization, has always been based on the societal ability to reproduce them. Even though Balzacq (2011) refers to the 'conditions related to the audience of securitization' as a felicity condition, the audience in fact is a part of the definition for securitization's success. In other words, securitization is successful if the existential threat narrative is accepted by the audience and addressed by political measures; hence the audience is not a felicity condition, it is a measure of success.

That in turn is a function of existing enemy discourses that the new enemy image is supposed to resonate with. In securitization theory vernacular, this process is described as one of the felicity conditions—resonance with existing narratives—the so-called dispositional facilitating condition (Guzzini 2011, 335) or Stritzel's embeddedness (2007). Or, as Thierry Balzacq writes, 'to move an audience's attention toward an event or a development construed as dangerous, the words of the securitizing actor need to resonate with the context within which his/her actions are allocated' (Balzacq 2005, 182).

As noted by enmification scholars, it would be impossible to inject a new form of enemy image without a reference to a previous hate-inciting discursive representation. This observation can be easily married with both memory

studies and securitization: an enemy image is possible to build on a structure of threat discourse, personification, and embeddedness. The concept of collective memory is responsible for discourse resonance, while in securitization studies the felicity conditions include embeddedness of the discourse that is impossible without the appeals to collective memory as well.

When it comes to enemy image 'injection', both securitization and memory studies can provide similar concepts: the securitizing actor and memory entrepreneur (Pollak 1993, but also Abou Assi 2010; Brown 2012; Rolston 2010), which alludes to the role certain actors play in memory construction. The notion is particularly important in this context because unlike a securitizing actor, memory entrepreneurs' social capital is more imperative, as they have immediate access to the memory politics, such as history books, memorial complex, and commemorative celebrations that can significantly alter the perceptions of certain events (Stone 2004; Winter 2006; Leggewie 2009), be it erasing them of collective memory or reinterpreting them in a brand new way.

This book uses an integrated conceptual apparatus—a theoretical framework of securitization, enemy images, and collective memory. The actual process of securitization is the primary point of reference when analysing enemy images. It is a securitizing move (which is in a way a memory event as well) that pedals an existential threat narrative through embeddedness in collective memory and asks for extraordinary measures to deal with it. This way a certain self-perpetuating spiral of enmification is created, which is difficult to break.

Chapter 2 shows the mechanisms of successful existential threat narratives that exist in Russian society and that a threat narrative is indeed associated with an enemy image. In order to do so, it is necessary to analyse the enemy image structures that consist of personified existential threats. A successful enemy image is supposed to be embedded in collective memory and be promulgated by securitizing actors/memory entrepreneurs on a governmental level. There are several conditions for a successful securitization process, which correspond to Guzzini's, Balzacq's, and Stritzel's felicity condition arguments as examined above. The conditions are (a) a grammar plot of the security becomes in my case a dyad of personification and threat; (b) dispositional condition/embeddedness in my theoretical framework is a collective memory reference; (c) social capital/positional power of speaker corresponds to the governmental and mass media levels of analysis. Acceptance by the audience (level of analysis of public opinion polls and social networks in my study) is, contrary to Balzacq (2005, 2011), an indicator of success.

Notes

1. In my previous research I argued that positional power is not inherent to government, but can also be characteristic of a large-scale popular movement or a media outlet (cf. Gaufman 2014).
2. Prozorov (2011) refers to these categories as 'spatial' and 'temporal'.
3. This rhetoric is particularly visible in the light of the Syrian refugee crisis, where numerous pundits in Europe and the USA proposed to close the borders in order to prevent the ISIS fighters from entering disguised as refugees.
4. Senghaas (1969, 1972) discussed the problem of enemy images in several of his books, but he did not consistently use the notion 'enemy image' (*Feindbild*).
5. Following Silverstein (1987), I am using the word 'propaganda' in a very broad sense denoting any kind of governmentally induced conceptions, conscious manipulation of information, censorship and the like, not necessarily in a totalitarian state.
6. For example, Federal Law No. 97-FZ, 5 May 2014 (in force from 1 August 2014), requires all Internet uses with over 3000 followers daily to register with Roskomnadzor. See also Federal Law No. 139-FZ, 28 July 2012, "On Amending the Federal Law 'On Protecting Children from Information Harmful to Their Health and Development' and Other Individual Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation on the Issue of Limiting Access to Unlawful Information on the internet".

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CHAPTER 3

Identifying Threat Narratives

The factors that define the success of existential threat narratives are their acceptance at a popular level and political measures aimed at combatting the threats. Using these factors, I will analyse a list of threat narratives in detail. First, I disaggregate the threat narrative into its parts, that is, establish if the threat has significant traction on the audience level and if this audience discussion makes references to personified threats—enemy images. Second, I determine whether the threat has a collective memory component. Finally, I establish whether existential threat narratives and personification rhetoric are also promoted at the governmental level.

Because it is impossible to track down all threat narratives in a society, I will examine threats identified by public opinion polls that meet seven objectives as shown in Table 3.1: The threat is

1. Widely shared among the population.
2. The success of securitization is defined through the adoption of political measures (Buzan et al. 1998), so I will select threats targeted by legislation.
3. I will identify whether the threat narrative is indeed accepted by the audience.

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The success of threat narratives depends on the following felicity conditions that will be tested on the threat narratives:

4. An enemy image structure (existential threat + personification).
5. Threat narrative is referenced in collective memory.
6. The rhetoric on the governmental level upholds the securitization discourse.

To eliminate a selection bias, I create a cluster of lesser threats:

7. That were not tackled by extraordinary measures, but still feature prominently in society on a discursive level or were targeted by political measures but are no longer perceived as posing an existential threat.

Thus, the method for analysing threat narratives presupposes seven objectives that include their own methods as shown in Table 3.1.

There are two methodological challenges arising from this theoretical and methodological framework. First, there is a range of enemy images that is not intensively debated in the mass media or on the blogosphere, that is,

Table 3.1 Objectives and methods

Identify the objective	*Using this method*
O1: Establish the list of threats in popular opinion	M1: Merging the data from opinion polls and mass media monitoring
O2: Establish the groups/persons that were targeted by legislation	M2: Discourse analysis of legislation
O3: Establish acceptance by the audience (significant presence on social networks)	M3: Scraping[a] of social networks
O4: Establish the existence of enemy image structure (existential threat and personification)	M4: Discourse analysis
O5: Establish embeddedness (collective memory references)	M5: 'Archaeology' of enemy image: Historical overview of an enemy image
O6: Governmental rhetoric	M6: Discourse analysis
O7: Lesser threats: Establish the list of threats that are not targeted by legislation and/or not debated on a popular level	M7a: Opinion polls (population) and mass media M7b: Social network scraping M7c: Discourse analysis

[a]Scraping as a method refers here to computer software technique of extracting information from websites

routinized enemy images or ones that exist on a prejudice level (e.g., anti-Semitism). Thus, the sedimentation of enemy images can be expressed in the fact that they are used matter-of-factly by the mass media, as I will elaborate later on in the 'lesser threats' chapter. To address this challenge, I will carry out an elaborate filtering process with the help of public opinion polls and mass media monitoring in order to find out what kinds of threats are debated by the mass media and identified by the population. Moreover, as the government largely controls the mass media, a number of securitizing moves are carried out according to the 'party line'. Sedimentation in the audience, that is, audience's consistent reproduction of the target narratives, will be checked at stage three of the methodology (see Objective 3 in Table 3.1).

Second, a threat might not necessarily have an enemy image involved. This is particularly challenging, as threats may be popular in the mass media and/or public opinion polls, but on the grass-root level they may fail to produce significant materials for enemy images, that is, personification and visuals. I address this challenge by establishing the existence of threat personification (Twardzisz 2013) and via the iconographic analysis of visuals. As Heck and Schlag (2013) note, security studies have had a significant visual turn, and without a consistent securitizing visual narrative a securitization process is hardly possible or is less successful. The same applies to enemy image literature (Satjukow and Gries 2004; Wagenlehner 1989): visual aids are crucial for the enmification process and methodologically this issue can be addressed through iconographical and iconological analysis.

3.1 Threat Filter: Establish Threats in the Popular Opinion

What kinds of enemies are debated in a society? Russian political scientists and sociologists (cf. Verkhovsky 2009; Rogov 2013) find that the most reliable of all the public opinion centres in Russia is the Levada Centre for the study of public opinion. The Levada Centre is a non-governmental, non-profit research organization that was founded by sociologists who left the government-owned All Russian Centre for the Study of Public Opinion (WTsIOM) in 2003.[1] It is one of the biggest and most renowned research centres of its kind in Russia.

But even Levada has a certain level of bias in its research. On the one hand, a number of studies that the centre is carrying out are longitudinal, so the questions show a change and continuity in public opinion. On the other hand, even though certain themes cease to be relevant, respondents

are supposed to answer them anyway. Therefore, there is a risk that respondents will identity a phenomenon as a 'threat' on a questionnaire simply because it is listed. Some respondents may be afraid to answer truthfully to the agency, as there is a degree of distrust towards governmental and non-governmental institutions.

In order to eliminate the bias, the research for this book distils the threat list that is identified by Levada's analysts in a two-stage process. First, threats are selected that are debated in the mass media through Integrum's World Wide software. This software is the largest database of Russian mass media that registers the frequency in which certain terms are mentioned, which can reveal sedimented threats at the mass media level. I concentrate on threats because an enemy image is a narrower category that is more difficult to tease out from an opinion poll. A threat is also a more 'nodal' discourse that can be operationalized not only as a threat, but also as phenomena that are 'othered' or disliked as a group, and have the potential to become enemy images.

The governmental-level rhetoric or legislation may not necessarily be based on popular support, while securitization studies have been carried out in authoritarian contexts as well (Vuori 2008). Even though Russia is a difficult case in terms of identifying the mechanism of public influence on governmental decisions, an enemy image would only be successful if it has a popular base. Second, the research for this book uses only public opinion polls that deal with threats to Russia as a state and/or Russia as a cultural entity and create a matrix of phenomena that are considered by Russians as threats. I compare the number of times these threats are mentioned in the mass media (including online media) to prove whether the threat identified by an opinion poll is actually a subject of debate and sedimentation on the popular level.

The next stage of analysis provides for key search terms for nodal discourses on threats.

3.1.1 Public Opinion Polls

One of the limitations of Levada's research is the repetition of featured threats in both the 2013 and 1998 polls, forcing respondents to identify the proposition in a threat/non-threat discourse. For example, a question is formulated as 'Tell us, please, what kind of threat does the following item represent to Russia's security?' Respondents were required to rate

threats from 1 to 5, 1 representing 'no threat' and 5 representing 'a very big threat' (Levada 2013). See Table 3.2.

A separate set of questions devoted to the USA in the same dataset on threats to Russia revealed that 65 % of Russians agree that Western culture (or the West in general) has a negative impact on Russian life, 79 % of Russians think that Russia should strengthen its ties with other countries to counteract America's growing influence, and 77 % of the respondents think that the USA is using internal difficulties in Russia to turn it into a second-tier country, just a resource supplier for the West.

Other studies by the Levada Centre confirm that 55 % of Russians dislike or are annoyed by migrants and 73 % of Russians want to deport migrants (Levada 2013). Other negative attitudes include blasphemy (56 % consider the two-year prison sentence in the Pussy Riot trial justified), homosexuality (73 % of Russians think that the government should prevent any public display of homosexuality), and 'foreign agents legislation' (53 % of Russians support it). Other threats were relevant in 2007 or 2008, like Estonia (the Bronze Soldier controversy[2]) or Georgia after the Russian–Georgian war, but are no longer debated by the mass media. Since then, public opinion polls have tended to view Georgia and Estonia in a more favourable light (Levada 2013).

Negative attitudes do not necessarily mean that a phenomenon is viewed as a threat, but it does have a potential to turn into one, which corresponds to the argument by Campbell (1998, 50) that self-identity is secured through discourses of danger, and otherness is a key factor that is a starting point for a threat discourse. Moreover, this argument is one of the

Table 3.2 Estimated urgency of threats to Russia (in % of the population)

	No threat at all				*Very substantial threat*	*Hard to say*
	1	2	3	4	5	
Spreading of Islamic fundamentalism/Muslim movements						
2013	3	7	15	29	42	4
Inter-ethnic conflicts inside of Russia						
2013	2	7	18	33	38	3
China's attempts to spread its influence on other countries/Chinese expansion						
2013	3	8	24	28	31	7
Western investment in Russian economy						
2013	3	13	28	21	23	11

Source: Levada Centre 2013

key tenets in enemy image research, where negative stereotyping is particularly cogent in enemy image construction. Still, according to Levada experts, the identified negative attitudes are also indicative of a potential for an enemy image.

3.1.2 Integrum World Wide Application

Integrum World Wide enables the tracing of key terms, phrases, and stories in mass media publications by regions, time span, circulation, readership, and other criteria. It also enables users to visualize the balance between positive and negative publications in diagrams and tables. This software will help determine which threats are debated more often than others.[3] Also, it registers the mentions on state TV channels and this is the mass medium that has the largest coverage and audience in Russia (Volkov and Goncharov 2014).

The pattern that emerges from this quantitative analysis is that 'China' scores consistently high together with 'the USA', 'Terrorism', and 'the West' as substantial threats. Other threat spikes actually correlate with certain incidents that received media attention—such as the Pussy Riot trial (2012), the homosexuality debate sparked by the 'propaganda' law (2012–2013), terrorism spiked after the terror attack in the Moscow underground (March 2011), while Georgia became a threat during the Russian–Georgian war (2008). The wording in public opinion polls that I used in the Integrum analysis indicates that 'Inter-Ethnic conflict' is associated with migrants. Another clarification is required regarding the threat of 'Islamic fundamentalism'. Given that Islam is one of the main religions in Russia (second largest after Orthodox Christianity), the othering of Islam is only viable in conjunction with the discourse of terrorism and migration. Thus, even though it is viewed as a separate threat, it is still personified through the figure of a (internal) migrant, especially from the North Caucasus area (Levada 2014).

The political situation in Russia and Ukraine in 2014 warranted an additional Integrum monitoring. Quite unexpectedly, the threat of fascism actually boosted the Western threat to a record high, by far overshadowing all other threats with the exception of a relatively brief spike of the term 'terrorism', related to the Charlie Hebdo attack in January 2015.

It is visible from Integrum data, however, that fascism seems to overpower some other threats, such as interethnic conflict, blasphemy, and homosexuality. Even more interesting is the fact that 'the West' as a threat is dominating

Table 3.3 Debated threats

Threats	*Public opinion poll*	*Mass media*
Islamic fundamentalism	X	X
Interethnic conflict (migrants)	X	X
Terrorism	X	X
Western investment	X	0
The USA	X	X
Homosexuality	X	X
Blasphemy	X	X
Foreign agents	X	0
China	X	X
Estonia	0	0
Georgia	0	0
The West	X	X
Jews	0	0
Fascism	X	X

the mass media discourse. After the public opinion poll and Integrum monitoring, the following threats emerge, which are listed in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 indicates threats identified by public opinion polls and rearticulated by the mass media. As noted previously, mass media also act as securitizing agents. Given the situation with the freedom of the press in Russia, the mainstream mass media habitually represent the government's point of view (Bonch-Osmolovskaya 2015; Toepfl 2013). So in a sense, this selection shows a certain range of inconsistencies: some countries (Georgia and Estonia) that were previously viewed as threats are no longer debated by the mass media and the attitude towards them has changed (Levada 2013). Some threats that are viewed on their own (foreign agents, Western investment) also do not score high on the board and yet if viewed together with others (the West, the USA) may be considered as viable candidates. This research concentrates on threats that scored on both parameters to determine whether they are associated with an enemy image on a popular level.

3.2 Establish Threats that Were Targeted by Customized Political Acts

Which groups of people/persons are targeted by legislation? Those groups constitute another factor in defining the success of the securitization process. These large-scale securitization processes are investigated

in this book; these are the 'customized political acts' (Balzacq 2011) that are supposed to deal with the threat but are limited to legislation. However, when one moves away from the governmental level, it could involve other measures. Enemy image dynamics are possible on different levels: on a governmental level it can be legislation; on a media level it can be silence (cf. Hansen 2000); on a societal level it can be violence, denigration, or exclusion. In other words, a government can deny certain rights to a group of people, while a nationalist gang can beat them up, but both would qualify in the analysis as a set of measures. This book concentrates on legislation as expression of measures, but in order to use the described framework for a different case, one just needs to operationalize the 'set of measures' through a different manifestation of it, for example, violence.

Even though the 'customized political act' is supposed to be an indicator of securitization's success, it also has a function of reinforcing the enmification narrative as it both demarcates the referent object from the threat and specifically delineates the group targeted by legislation. In essence, it is another securitizing move that launches another spiral of securitization/enmification. For example, the Russian legislation on 'non-traditional sexual relations' can be seen as yet another example of silencing of the discourse that Foucault discussed in *La volonté de savoir*, because non-traditional sexual relations are not specified in the law, and the silence here is supposed to be interpreted by the law-enforcement agencies and is understood as homosexuality without it being explicitly mentioned (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2 July 2013). The same applies to blasphemy legislation. The legislation itself is supposed to 'protect religious feelings' and does not mention blasphemy as a category, but the majority of the population considers the Orthodox feelings as being those in need of protection, especially after the Pussy Riot trial where they were accused of inciting religious hatred and blasphemy.

Government measures constitute one of the indicators for a successful securitization process. Therefore, the next filtering step involves exploring existing legislation to combat the threat in question. Table 3.4 shows the overview of threats that were targeted by legislation between 2011 and 2014.

Table 3.4 gives an overview of threat categories that have been counteracted with extraordinary measures.

Table 3.4 Extraordinary measures taken to combat particular threats, 2011–2014

Threat	*Measures*
Interethnic conflict	Law No. 376-FZ (21.12.2013) that includes administrative and criminal responsibility for violation of registration legislation
The West	Law No. 121-FZ (20.07.2012) amendments to the law on non-commercial organizations (the so-called 'Foreign Agent' legislation) that forces 'foreign agent' status on NGOs that are engaged in political activities on the territory of the Russian Federation Law No. 272-FZ (28.12.2012) 'On Sanctions for Individuals Violating Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms of the Citizens of the Russian Federation' ('Dima Yakovlev bill' or anti-Magnitsky law)
Blasphemy	Law No. 142303-6 that amends article 148 of Russian Penal Code, on the Protection of Religious Feelings 'in order to counteract the offences to religious conviction and feelings of citizens' (so-called Blasphemy law)
Sexuality	Law No. 135-FZ (30 June 2013) 'On amendments to article 5 of Federal law' 'on protection of children from information that harms their health and development' and other legislative acts of the Russian Federation in order to 'protect minors from information that denies traditional family values' (the ban on 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations')
Fascism	Permission for President Putin to use Russian armed forces in order to 'normalize the societal–political situation in Ukraine' on 1 March 2014 (official deployment of Russian armed forces in Ukraine)
Terrorism	Law No. 308-FZ 'On Amendments to the Federal Law on counteraction to legalization (laundering) of proceeds from crime and terrorist financing'

1. Restriction of movement has been a topic that the government has played with since the Manezhnaia riots in 2010. Though most nationalists want to introduce a visa regime with Central Asian Republics, President Putin decided not to take this route, but legislation restricting the freedom of movement inside the Russian Federation has been introduced by President Putin to the Parliament for consideration.
2. The Western threat has been tackled by several legislative initiatives that centred on two personifications: foreign agents and the USA as a country. 'Foreign agents' legislation evolved after a number of NGOs exposed electoral fraud during the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2011–2012. Several high-ranking politicians produced statements, slamming the election monitoring NGOs as 'paid for' by the American State Department and posting the videos

of fraud on websites 'hosted in California' (i.e., YouTube, Live Journal [LJ]). According to this legislation, the NGOs that receive grants from abroad are supposed to be labelled 'foreign agents' and mark their print production as such. As Putin said, 'we have seen attempts by the secret services to make use of NGOs. NGOs have been financed through secret service channels. No one can deny that this money stinks […] this law has been adopted to stop foreign powers interfering in the internal affairs of the Russian Federation' (Topping and Elder 2012).

(a) The USA has been in the background as an enemy image ever since the Cold War, but also as an epitome of NATO since the war in Yugoslavia (Tsygankov 2013). One of the highlights was the adoption of the so-called Magnitsky list in the USA—the list of Russian officials who are allegedly involved in the death of the Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who died in a Russian prison. Russia adopted the 'anti-Magnitsky legislation that among other things bans the adoption of Russian orphans by American couples. Moreover, the USA is also linked to the other enemy images as well, including foreign agents, in the discussion around blasphemy legislation and non-traditional sexual relations.

3. One of the main triggers for blasphemy legislation was the infamous Pussy Riot trial where a punk group was convicted to two years of hard labour after performing 'a punk prayer' in the Christ the Saviour Cathedral, where they accused the current Russian Patriarch Kirill of close ties with Putin and the KGB (USSR's Committe of State Security). The law itself has serious conceptual problems, as it is supposed to prosecute the insults of religious feelings of religions that are historically part of Russian culture, but among the present religions in Russia their mere existence can be viewed as an insult to one another (e.g., Prophet Muhammad to Orthodox Christianity, misrecognition of the Koran to Islam, or the recognition of Jesus to Judaism).
4. The ban on 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations' came out of several legislative initiatives on the regional level 'banning propaganda of homosexuality', but on the federal level it was expanded to ban all non-traditional sexual relations that contradicted 'family values' and is likely to be supplemented with amendments that deny custody of children to parents who 'practice non-traditional sexual relations'.

The discourse around the 'non-traditional sexual relations' legislation is a classic Foucauldian clash between the deployment of alliance and the deployment of sexuality (Foucault 1976, 141). In other words, it is a contradiction between affirming the affinity to the state and the affinity to personal (sexual) freedom. One of the most common arguments for the legislations involves the reproduction and survival of Russia as a nation, as well as the 'alien' Western tolerance to different sexualities.

5. Fascism as a threat was an unexpected addition to the dataset due to the political crisis in Ukraine. Clashes between supporters and opponents of Ukraine's European integration escalated during the winter of 2013 into a governmental breakdown with President Yanukovych fleeing to Russia. 'Fascism' was a notion ubiquitously used by Russian mass media and governmental officials to describe the Euromaidan movement (i.e., pro-European forces). On 1 March 2014, Russian Parliament granted President Putin the permission to use Russian armed forces in order to 'normalize' the situation in Ukraine, even though most experts concede that Russian armed forces were deployed in Ukraine before that date and participated in the organization of the referendum on the Crimean peninsula that led to its annexation to Russia (Bacon 2015).
6. Russia has suffered many terrorist attacks and their number has been rising steadily (Tsygankov 2014). The 2006 legislation was probably the most significant that also gave a lot of power to the FSB, Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, but it was in 2011 that the government decided to punish the financing of terrorist activities as well. In addition, there is a very questionable law on extremism (25 July 2002 #114-FZ with amendments in 2014) that is supposed to tackle terrorism as well, but the law has been widely reported to target civil society organizations and religious minorities (European Parliament 2012). In Russian popular opinion the terrorist threat is primarily associated with the North Caucasus and is often discursively connected to migrants (Verkhovsky 2009, 2014). Thus, after the filtering process it is possible to establish the threats that are to be analysed in this book. It is noticeable from this list that 'the West' once again dominates the othering and securitization discourse in Russian politics (Morozov 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2015). Given that 'the West' is a complex notion that involves different personifications and narratives, it is necessary to establish several clusters of threats. The Western cluster will contain the USA, homosexuality, blasphemy, and

fascism, while the non-Western cluster will deal with interethnic conflict and terrorism. All threats will be analysed textually and visually around the dates of the adoption of their respective pieces of legislation. The operationalization of categories in enemy images will be carried out through visual and textual analysis, while threats will be analysed along their culturally specific and embedded representations.

3.3 Establish Acceptance by the Audience

This analysis of acceptance by the audience investigates the sedimentation of enemy images on a popular level, concentrating on Russian Cyrillic segments of most popular social networks. On the societal level, the discourse analysis will proceed first with a quantitative 'sieve': I scrape the data from social networking websites such as Twitter (micro blogging worldwide service), LJ (online diary platform), and Vkontakte.com (VK) (Russian social network with more than 300,000,000 users). Facebook is significantly less popular in Russia, and there are some challenges in scraping it due to its privacy settings.[4]

On VK, the enemy terms among the communities, that is, public pages that unite social network users based on a certain interest, represent a conflation of different genres, including visuals, posts by users, and music that provide a large pool of material for analysis. The material scraped from those communities is then processed through word-frequency software and the most frequently used terms are analysed in context in which they were used. It is important to identify any government-produced imagery that is sedimented on the societal level. This approach also applies to LJ, which specifically allows for a search function that includes communities, users, commentaries, and visuals. According to TNS Russia, one of the leading market research companies in post-Soviet space, Twitter is one of the most actively used social networks among Russians (TNS 2013). At the same time Twitter is also favoured by the Russian state officials, so even the use of non-offensive terms identified by Levada would yield data showing whether certain threats have enemy images associated with them. One of the interesting functions of Twitter in the context of this book is the ability of users to retweet other users' posts, which could potentially serve as an indicator for the dissemination of posts and their popularity.

The Internet is not a completely benevolent open forum for all sides of the debate. As the Director of the MIT Comparative Media Studies

Program Henry Jenkins mentioned, 'it would be naïve to assume that powerful conglomerates will not protect their own interests as they enter this new media marketplace, but at the same time, audiences are gaining greater power and autonomy as they enter into the new knowledge culture' (2002, 80–81). Thus, power struggles over opinions posted online mirror those offline as well; only Jenkins' quotation will be more suitable to apply to Russian government interests online, as a large amount of budgetary allocations is spent, for example, to promote pro-governmental hashtags, which makes it akin to a Foucauldian power/knowledge battlefield.

The issue related to the Internet's darker side is the level of governmental involvement in social network activities. According to several journalistic investigations (Delovoi Peterburg 2014; RFERL 4 April 2015), there is a special 'troll army[5]', that is, a team of fake Internet bloggers who are hired to promote pro-Kremlin discourse. After the leak of the 'bot manuals', even a regular Internet user is able to track identical comments that pollute social networks (Gunitsky 2015) with Pervyi Kanal or Russia Today[6] rhetoric as an example to follow. Unfortunately, social network scrapers are unable to isolate bot influence on word frequency. However, if a certain term appears in the visualization, it is possible to close-read the comments that it was used in and identify if it is an identical comment that is being retweeted or reposted by empty accounts (which is usually a sign of a bot/Kremlin troll).

Routinized securitizations/latent enemy images are an interesting facet of enemy images. One species of enemy images that can still be seen, for instance, is anti-Germanism. Ever since World War II and the creation of two German states, there has been a form of 'doublespeak'. Eastern Germany was a socialist brother inhabited by German resistance movement members, while Western Germany was regarded as a successor state to the Third Reich, where supposedly all the Wehrmacht and former National Socialist Party members retired. In contemporary Russia, Germany no longer has an enemy status; neither is it regarded as a threat, but around Victory Day celebrations the remnants of the old enemy image come to life in various forms, such as Soviet war films, where Germans could only be depicted as Nazis. Another curious form is putting bumper stickers on cars produced in Germany that say that it is a 'war trophy' or that the car is going 'to Berlin' (a slogan that was used in the 1944 military offensive).[7] Thus, enemy images do not dissolve by themselves and continue to exist on a societal level, with the potential to resurface.

One disadvantage of the analysis of social networks is that because the media landscape is so volatile, data can change virtually every minute and

the results of scraping at one particular moment can be very different the next moment. At the same time, discourses by their nature are unstable and fluid, so capturing a snapshot of digital discourse is epistemologically not that different from regular discourse analysis. Thus, the present analysis is still an approximation of public opinion of social network users, which is in any case prone to change.

3.4 Establish Embeddedness in Collective Memory

One of the crucial conditions for a successful securitization/enmification process is the embeddedness of an existential threat. Guzzini's dispositional condition (2011) or Stritzel's (2007) 'embeddedness' both refer to the fact that the securitizing move is supposed to resonate with existing discourses and practices. In memory studies this kind of process is referred to as 'postmemory', which emphasizes the importance of reactivating previous traumatic experiences.

Thus, both existential threat and personification of the threat are supposed to be embedded in collective memory in order to be successful. In most cases, including Russia, these collective memory references include allusions to religion (Herzog 2011) and to nation-building historic events. In order to establish the embeddedness of the given enemy image, it is necessary to conduct a sort of 'archaeological' excavation of the enemy image in the recent history of the studied society. It could also be described as 'discursive iconography', that is, I will be looking for the traditional discursive representations of the phenomenon at hand. In the case of each threat narrative, I examine how it was constructed in the Soviet era popular culture, mass media and official statements, especially given that Soviet tropes are still ubiquitously used in mass media (Meduza 21 July 2015). Thus, every enemy image will receive a sort of 'biographical' note about its previous incarnation in society.

Visuals are a crucial part of memory construction. As one of the leading picture memory scholars Johnson notes, 'rather than turning to narrative, memory often figures the past with the immediacy of images' (2012, 4), especially with their psychological evocation, which Warburg called *Pathosformel*. The images that are used in creating and sustaining an enemy image are all invested with the 'pathos formula' that helped them remain in the European 'picture memory'. In Efal's words,

> 'The "Pathos Formula", which expresses this traumatic encounter between man and the world, is a result of a visual fixation, the source of which is a process of mimicry of some of the bearable (biomorphic) qualities of the threatening force, that then becomes petrified and fixed as an image'. (Efal 2007, 221, emphasis added)

Warburg's pathos formula for the image memory is especially visible in the context of the present analysis: the images that usually make it to the identity narratives are the ones that have a significant traumatic component. Thus, the picture memory, at least in its European context, is a sequence of often violent, harrowing visuals that are reinterpreted and recycled in an identity construction process that is often bent on reliving and revitalizing the traumas of the past.

3.5 Establish the Existence of Enemy Image Structure

An enemy image represents a specific set of features: it is a personified existential threat that is embedded in collective memory. However, existential threats can be interpreted differently according to specific cultural contexts and especially through different referent objects; in the Soviet Union/Russia an existential threat is more about the existence of the Russian state as an entity, while in the USA, for instance, the threat is often about the destruction of the American way of life. Personification is another important element in the enemy image structure that is about pinpointing and anthropomorphizing quintessential Evil with a particular group—it could be a reference to Satan, but also to the more recent embodiment of 'Satan', Hitler and Nazism[8] with such poignant features as ugliness and dark colours (cf. Satjukow and Gries 2004). One of the ways to analyse this is to establish whether the visuals associated with a given threat have a personified component, that is, whether the threat is represented as a person and ascribed anthropomorphic characteristics, either visually or linguistically (cf. Twardzisz 2013).

For instance, Eisenstein's 1938 movie *Alexander Nevsky* presents a fictionalized story of the 1242 triumph of Russian Prince Alexander over the knights of the Teutonic order (i.e., Germans). This was a highly successful piece of propaganda that made a reference to a previous and successful battle against German invaders, which in the realms of the Great Patriotic War was perceived as a battle for survival. In the movie, Prince Alexander

tells the imprisoned, obviously ugly, Teutonic knights that 'Whoever comes on our land with a sword will die from a sword!' which is a paraphrase from the Gospel of Mathew—another embedded reference, which the Tsarist-born Soviet population was perfectly aware of.

This kind of visual and textual combination is an ideal way to construct a durable enemy image: it includes personification through the Teutonic knights, a threat that is conveyed through the immediate (or pre-iconographic) depiction of the battle, but also through the ugly, inhuman look of the Teutonic knights themselves. The 'Teutonic threat' was obviously reinterpreted through the modern antagonism between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union and embedded through historic references to a similar antagonism between the ancient Russian Empire (Kievan Rus') and the Teutonic order. No wonder Alexander Nevsky as a historical figure in its Stalinist interpretation is still quite popular among Russian nationalists, who seek to protect Russia from 'the West'.[9] It is also symptomatic that the recently built church on the premises of Moscow State Institute for International Relations (MGIMO), the leading diplomatic school, was dedicated to Saint Alexander Nevsky.

At the same time, the Teutonic threat narrative may have been lost on, for instance, a German or American audience. That's why it's important to study ways in which a target audience can be affected by a (visual) message. The way enemy images sediment in the target society can be examined using discourse analysis, which strives to highlight 'the processes by which the social world is constructed and consolidated. Discourse analysis focuses attention on the role that language, texts, conversations, the media and even academic research have in the process of creating institutions [i.e., the established social order] and shaping behaviour' (Burnham et al. 2008, 249–250).

Discourses are open, unstable, and always in the process of being articulated (Doty 1996, 6), because discourse analysis reveals the foundation of these common assumptions, such as how to respond to particular events or crises, and shows how they relate to the interests of society (Burnham et al. 2008, 250). Of equal importance is the 'combination of interdiscursive analysis of texts (i.e., of how different genres, discourses and styles are articulated together)' (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 10), as the context of discursive articulation and its genre may have major significance. This book examines two corpuses of texts: governmental rhetoric and personal statements of the public, where the 'bases of these common assumptions' and their context can be traced and revealed.

Norman Fairclough, one of the founders of critical discourse analysis, identifies the following categories of objects: the emergence of discourses, relations of contestation between them, their dissemination, and operationalization (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 464). While Fairclough concentrates his research on discourse dissemination and reconceptualization, this book takes a more 'archaeological' approach by examining all four stages in the 'life' of a discourse. In the case of Russian threat narratives, it is particularly interesting to monitor the

> Shift […] from being just representations and imaginaries to having transformative effects on social reality, being operationalized—enacted as new ways of (inter)acting, inculcated in new ways of being (identities), materialized in new instruments and techniques of production or ways of organizing space. (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 464–465)

The threats identified by means of public opinion polls serve as 'nodal discourses', that is, 'discourses that subsume and articulate in a particular way a great many other discourses' (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 463). Consequently, a nodal discourse corresponds to the notion of threat: threat is not only a crucial component of an enemy image, but it is also an overarching notion that includes them. Thus, in each case study with the identified nodal discourse (interethnic conflict, for instance), one needs to search for the term itself on the popular level (VK, LJ, and Twitter) and track the governmental rhetoric on the same issue.

Discourse analysis identifies enemy image structures in the narratives, that is, identifying the combination of threat and personification in a textual/visual source. Thus, discourse analysis is carried out on two levels: governmental and societal. On the governmental level, discourse analysis is more qualitative, that is, close reading of transcripts of debates in Parliament (*Gosudarstvennaya Duma*), bills, and foreign policy statements and also the activities of pro-Kremlin groups that often reflect a straightforward governmental stance. For this governmental analysis, the main selection criteria are (1) the positional power (Balzacq 2010) of the speaker, that is, his or her affiliation with the government; and (2) the theme of the statement, that is, whether or not the statement/bill/interview involved the topical threat.

Visual Turn of Security Studies

The concept of 'enemy image' already has a visual aid in the notion, but in general a visual in this respect is a perfect vehicle for personification of

the threat and/or of the referent object because it literally gives a 'face' to the otherwise faceless or multifaceted threat, and personifies the referent object most often depicted as a victim. Images are conceived of as

> Complex and unstable articulations, particularly as they circulate across topics, media, and texts, and thus are open to successive reconstitution by and on behalf of varied political interests, including a public interest. (Hariman and Lucaites 2003, 37–38)

A visual represents a perfect channel for personification of an enemy image, as it literally gives a 'face' to a threat (i.e., personification). A substantive part of this book is devoted to the study of actual visual images. Discourse is obviously not limited to linguistic articulation; it can also be manifested through visuals with spectators projecting a 'voice' to the image (Mitchell 2005, 140; Hansen 2011, 54; Campbell 2004, 62). The image can be studied as an image itself, its immediate inter-text, the wider policy discourse, and the texts ascribing meaning to the image (Hansen 2011, 53). As pieces of news are usually accompanied by a visual, such as a photograph or a caricature, it makes sense to include an analysis of visuals in the discourse analysis to make its study more comprehensive.

Semiotics interprets the visual as more than itself and its inter-text. As Roland Barthes (1977) noted in 'Rhetoric of the Image', the signifiers in an image have their own second-tier meanings or connotations that refer to specific messages. A more relevant method to the present study was developed in another offshoot of semiotics—iconography and iconology (Panofsky 1955), where iconographic analysis is aimed at discerning who is depicted and iconological at why it is depicted in a particular way. This method can be applied not only to Renaissance art as Panofsky suggested in his works (Panofsky 1955; Hasenmueller 1978), but also to the analysis of contemporary 'icons' and artistic objects (Musvik 2003; Holly 1984, 87). Panofsky gives three levels of meaning in art: pre-iconographic (primary or natural meaning), iconographic (conventional, i.e., based on conventional knowledge), and iconological (intrinsic, i.e., related to a particular nation, period, and choice of medium).

Iconographic and iconological meanings in visuals represent the key markers of an identity. In order to connect iconographic analysis in semiotics (which Panofsky himself compared to ethnographic observations [Holly 1984, 167]) to the theoretical framework of this book, images are interpreted through embeddedness of the particular artistic motif in

collective memory. Certain motifs evoke cultural associations: pasta and tomatoes represent Italy (Barthes 1977), toothbrush moustache is a reference to Hitler (which can easily be proven by googling 'toothbrush moustache'), bears and cold weather are characteristically Russian, and so on. In other words, 'icons' refer to specific tropes in visual art that have come to represent certain phenomena in their ideal–typical culturally specific representation.

Heck and Schlag also point out the similarity between iconological approach and Lene Hansen's (2011, 53–55) discursive framework of image analysis:

> Although iconology is first and foremost a method used to analyse art, […] iconology is highly compatible with a discursive approach, as advocated by Hansen […]. While iconography helps to understand the specific stylistic aspects of the image itself and its practical context, an iconological approach enables us to see how images symbolically perform how we see what we see. It is the systematic focus on visuality in its iconic, social and historical context that makes iconology a valuable methodology far beyond the work of art historians. (Heck and Schlag 2013, 899)

Images are created in a cultural context and are inextricably linked to it. Thus, in order to interpret them, a close look at the cultural context that they were created in is needed because if the image is separated from its cultural content, the image will mean something completely different (Cf. Panofsky 1955). To paraphrase Alexander Wendt, images are what people make of them and certain symbolism can be lost on an audience. Therefore, a successful enemy image can only play on resonant symbolism that will affect the target audience.

After identifying the cultural codes of the image, the composition and other elements of the image are essential (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001):

> Most accounts of visual semiotics have concentrated on what might be regarded as the equivalent of 'words'—what linguists call 'lexis'…our visual 'grammar' will describe the way in which depicted elements—people, places and things—combine in visual 'statements' of greater or lesser complexity and extension. (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001, 1)

Thus, using iconography and iconology is important to the way the composition of an image is structured. For example, different parts of the image can represent different areas of polarization: top versus bottom (ideal versus

real) and right versus left (given versus new), and, according to Kress and van Leeuwen, most images are structured along these space divisions. An example of this visual division can be found in Cold War propaganda posters and caricatures, but it is important to note that this framework is characteristically from the 'West' in its application because of the left to right writing unlike Arabic (right to left) or Japanese (top to bottom).

Soviet-era posters and caricatures are frequently 'recycled' both in political debate and in commercial use. The amount of anti-American and anti-German posters from the Cold War and World War II provides a truly colossal archive and source of 'inspiration' for 'Russian patriots' and copywriters. Soviet-era posters and caricatures represent a type of 'icons' in itself being often ideal–typical representations of the self and others in the Russian context, as is also the case with American wartime propaganda—even President Obama's first election campaign slogan was recycled from Howard Miller's war time propaganda 'We can do it!' poster.

Visuality in the context of enemy image research is significant also because 'Kremlin trolls' use an extensive and wide library of imagery in order to promulgate pro-governmental discourses (Walker 2015; RFERL 4 April 2015). The vast arrays of images are styled in a satirical and/or racist way playing on famous movie and Internet memes, presenting Putin as the alpha male of international politics, while denigrating other political leaders.

The analysis of visuals in this book is based on the iconographic and iconological meaning of the elements in the visuals, as well as their composition. Iconography represents in this case a perfect tool to interpret visuals because iconographic and iconological meanings in visuals are based on the collective memory references that create embeddedness. The criteria in visual othering are closely associated with the textual criteria, that is, the trinity of threat, personification, and embeddedness that are easily deduced from visual sources (especially personification). In visual analysis, it is also often easier to identify 'the other' because of text markings—the enemy is sometimes clearly identified in the caption, or as in Soviet caricatures, a symbol (dollar sign) or even Latin script (therefore foreign by default) leaves little doubt as to who the enemy is.

3.6 Governmental Rhetoric and Positional Power

On the governmental level, the securitization process is filled with rhetoric that reinforces the enmification process from the vantage point of positional power and this viewpoint is often reinforced via the mass media.

Apart from legislation that singles out certain groups of people, there is a need to analyse rhetoric on the governmental level. Discourse analysis is one way to evaluate statements of parliamentarians and government members, and to establish the modality of the governmental discourse. Sources for analysing discourse include transcripts from the Russian Parliament—Duma—sessions, as well as statements made by President Putin and the reports from Russian state-controlled TV channels—*Pervyi Kanal* and *Rossiya*. The significance of Russian TV as a source for empirical research has been justified by a number of scholars (Hutchings and Ruyolva 2009; Burrett 2010), and scholars note TV's massive influence in shaping the Russian public opinion (Gudkov 2005; Dubin 2011; Miazhevich 2014). The significance of TV is even more striking given that the relationship between the Internet and TV in Russia represents a continual loop, affecting each other (Cottiero et al. 2015).

Unlike the classic Copenhagen School approach, this book views 'customized political acts' as a discursive construction, rather than as separate acts, that pinpoints the threat. Legislation is, in a sense, another securitizing move because it reinforces the collective understanding that a phenomenon is a threat and needs to be dealt with. Consequently, discursive struggles around legislation offer a rich pool of information, which is aimed at combatting the threat and registering the presence or absence of existential threat narratives.

3.7 Lesser Threats

The threats that scored high in opinion polls and/or Integrum World Wide monitoring will be analysed to make sure that there is no enemy image related to it, even if there is no legislation targeting the threat. This analysis highlights the necessity of the governmental involvement in creating and maintaining an enemy image in the securitization framework. Thus, the threats that did not score high in the filtering will receive the same enemy image analysis treatment as the ones that did in order to establish the plausibility of the felicity conditions for the successful securitization process. The chapter on lesser threats will explore the existence of felicity conditions in these cases: whether there is a personified existential threat, embeddedness in collective memory, and antagonistic governmental rhetoric. The next chapters will take a closer look at the threat narratives and apply the theoretical and methodological framework laid out above.

Notes

1. Levada provides sociological and marketing studies of public opinion, and publishes its own academic journal and annual reports.
2. See Chap. 9 for details.
3. A similar free software was used by Russian search engine Yandex and was called 'Blogosphere's Pulse', but it was closed down in 2008 allegedly after publishing a graph that indicated that the word 'Putin' fared less well than the words 'happiness' and 'sadness'.
4. One should note here that there is an excellent study that analyses the spreading of conspiracy theories on Facebook (Del Vicario et al. 2016).
5. Internet troll is an Internet user who tries to provoke his counterparts into an emotional reaction and/or promotes a specific point of view that is supposed to elicit a specific reaction of the audience. (See also Zvereva 2012.)
6. Pervyi Kanal is a state-run Russian-language channel that serves as a source of information for 96 % of the Russian population. Russia Today is a multi-language TV channel that is primarily geared towards an international audience in order to promote a Russian perspective on the events in the world.
7. VKontakte Page 'Stickers for the 9th of May' » http://vk.com/nakleiky_9maya (accessed 20 July 2015).
8. In the Russian context the word 'Nazism' is replaced with 'fascism' when referring to German National Socialism due to the fact that during the Soviet times, and especially during World War II, the state propaganda was reluctant to use the word 'socialism' in relation to Hitler's regime to avoid confusion. Hence, the term 'fascism' is not used in Russian language to describe Mussolini's dictatorship.
9. Alexander Nevsky is considered to be a quintessential 'Eurasianist' who was bent on forging an alliance in the East and combatting Western expansion, according to Lev Gumilyov and his followers.

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CHAPTER 4

The USA as the Primary Threat to Russia

The 'reset' of Russian–American relations is attributed to the period after the election of Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev in 2008, and was supposed to usher in a period of warmer relations between the two countries, including a new START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) treaty, joint anti-terrorism efforts, among other bilateral initiatives. However, according to Levada polls, 82 % respondents expressed negative attitudes towards the USA in 2015. Despite the reset policy and obvious decline of unilateralism in America's foreign policy, such as the withdrawal from Iraq and its 'no boots on the ground' policy in Syria and Libya, the USA continues to dominate Russia's enmification discourse. As Morozov notes, there is a complicated relationship between Russia and the West that oscillates between attraction and repulsion, where an inferiority complex and the feeling of spiritual superiority plays major roles (Morozov 2009a, 247).

Although most sociological studies point to the rising perception of the West and the USA as threatening to Russians (Dubin 2011; Levada 2013, 2014), it is problematic to disaggregate the actual threat message that emanates from these 'actors'. As Dubin notes, 'the West' is a kind of empty signifier with a negative overtone that is mostly used for internal purposes in Russia (Dubin 2003). Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish two main vectors that are related to the anti-Western threat discourse: a geopolitical and a cultural one. The geopolitical threat is related to the existential threat to Russia as a state entity, while the cultural one is related

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to the 'spiritual bonds' (examined more closely in Chap. 6). Both threat discourses use 'the West' as the personification of the said threats. In this context, the USA has been singled out as a geopolitical threat, while the EU is mostly responsible for the cultural one (Dubin 2011; Levada 2014).

A challenge in analysing the perceived threat of the USA is that it is enmeshed in practically every threat discourse in this book, as a personification of something negative, conspiratorial—be it homosexuality, fascism, or blasphemy. It is difficult to distinguish what is worse in the eyes of the general public, but the EU is mostly seen as a minor offender, an American-influenced actor in international relations. The threatening potential of the EU is therefore more often exemplified through deviant values (see Chaps. 6 and 7 on blasphemy and homosexuality) and not necessarily in terms of geopolitics. Even though the geographical threat vector originates from the same direction, the EU is denied autonomy, it is a mere adopter of the perverse values that America espouses.

Katzenstein and Keohane (2007) argue that there are four types of anti-American discourse: liberal (when the USA is criticized for not living up to the ideas it spreads, such as defending human rights in other countries and maintaining Guantanamo prison); social (too much liberalism, not enough welfare state); sovereign (the USA has too much political power, emphasis on sovereignty, US actions are detrimental to sovereignty); and radical anti-Americanism, denoting the USA as 'hostile to furtherance of good values, practices, and institutions elsewhere in the world' (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007, 33). Radical anti-Americanism does not necessarily advocate violence, but it is bent on weakening and transforming the USA. Even though the authors present different country cases to illustrate varieties of anti-Americanism, such as France, China, or the Arab world, all four types of anti-Americanism intertwine in one case—Russia. The typology of anti-American discourse helps structure the barrage of anti-American rhetoric that surfaces on social networks and on the governmental level, singling out the specific narratives and threat vectors.

During the Soviet era, the emphasis of anti-American rhetoric was on its liberal and social aspects—pointing out the evils of American society through Jim Crow laws or the 'bare teeth' of capitalism that cause unemployment and inequality (Jones in Benson 2011). Meanwhile, in contemporary Russia, the focus has since shifted to a more radical sovereign type, pointing out American attempts to undermine Russia's 'sovereignty'.

4.1 Russian Anti-Americans

Russian social networks provide an abundance of visual material for the study of enemy images. Vkontakte.com (VK), a Russian clone of Facebook with more than 300,000,000 registered users, is a perfect petri dish for the study of enmification breeding. VK allows its users to found 'communities' (akin to Facebook groups) where users can post statements, photographs, collages, and music that relate to the topic of the community. Communities can be closed (moderators review the joining request and deny it if they want) or open (anyone can join by clicking the button). By searching keywords related to enemy images, one can quickly identify a whole slew of anti-American, anti-gay, and anti-liberal communities that use visual aids to get their message across. Notably, most of the anti-American groups have large 'albums' hosting collections of photographs of Russian weaponry (mostly missiles and other phallic-shaped military production). In a sense, it is another self-construction as a powerful virile identity that can battle the enemy represented as an heir to fascism. This constructs come from the Soviet tradition of depicting the USA as an imperialist state with fascist tendencies (cf. Benson 2011).

Both the West and America were among Twitter's most popular datasets, VK and Live Journal (LJ). Discussions involving America and the West peaked during the protest movement after the Russian parliamentary elections of 2011–2012 and then again following the escalation of the situation in Ukraine beginning 2014. The broader media context is also at play: if mainstream Russian mass media outlets, particularly television, are imbued with anti-American critiques, social media users tend to spill over into radical anti-Americanism, with the help of securitizing agents from the state Duma (a Russian assembly with advisory and legislative functions).

The wave of demonstrations against electoral fraud led Russian officials to declare that the protests were initiated and paid for by the Department of State, with former US ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul 'giving instructions' (Vzglyad 2012) to Russian 'aggressive liberals', claiming that the USA is on the quest to destabilize Russia and 'bring it to its knees'. The electoral fraud created quite a divide on social networks, which was itself a tool that helped mobilize protesters.

A pro-Kremlin youth group video that went viral in 2011—'Why Kaddafi must be killed'—is a typical example of this kind of rhetoric. In this video, the locations of 'Arab Spring' uprisings in the Middle East

and North Africa were marked in orange (reminiscent of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine), while Obama was represented wearing a Kaddafi mask against a backdrop of the American flag, symbolizing a puppet-president Kaddafi that sells Russia's riches to America. The video itself argued that the protests were paid for in dollars to destabilize the countries and Russia would be the next target of American provocations.

A popular Internet meme—the State Department's cookies ('pechen'ki GosDepa')—appeared in social media after a TV documentary 'Anatomy of protest'. Cookies were meant here both literally and metaphorically as lavish dinners at the American Embassy where members of the Russian opposition were hosted and allegedly paid for their oppositional activities alongside the Georgian government (NTV 2012). The catchphrase 'State Department's Cookies' has been routinely used by pro-governmental commentators to accuse Russian opposition of sabotage, but American diplomats embraced it to such an extent that they started to hand out cookies and pastry at public protest events in Russia and Ukraine (Lenta.ru 18 December 2014). This is a repetition of the narrative that a genuine protest is impossible in Russia, unless it is sponsored by the USA in an attempt to destabilize Russia. Social networks could be seen as a resonator for a moderate discourse: fuelled by mainstream less radical discourse, social media users feel free to reproduce a more extreme version that will still be in line with the pro-government stance.

The monitoring of Twitter yields anti-American rhetoric at almost any point in time, but anti-Americanism spikes are usually visible around major geopolitical upheavals and substantial protest demonstrations in Russia (Fig. 4.1).

The word cloud in Fig. 4.1 appeared on Twitter and represents an interesting conflation of popular culture, Olympic Games, and geopolitical conversation. For example, the word 'hockey' is a remnant of the winter Olympic Twitter discussion on the epic match between Russia and the USA, which Russia lost. 'Captain' was a reference to the release of *Captain America* in Russian cinemas, which was incidentally not advertised as 'Captain America', but as the *First avenger: A different war* showing either fears of low turnout due to 'America' in the title or self-censorship on behalf of the film providers (hence also the word 'movie' in the dataset).

Symptomatic is also the names of Obama and Putin and the word 'sanctions', even though in March 2014 the impact of these leaders was yet to be seen. The situation in Ukraine is also present in the sample with words

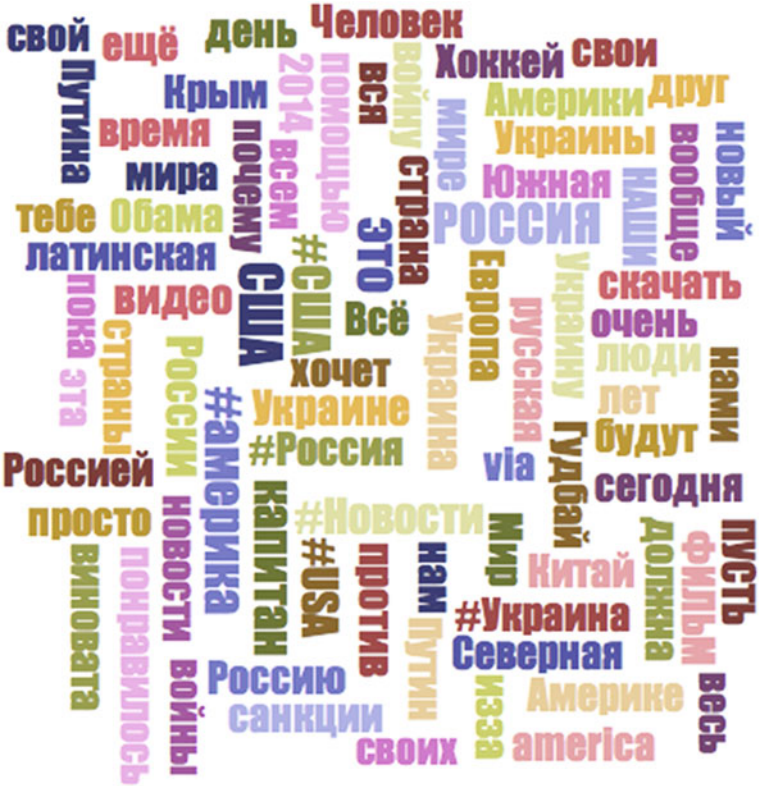

Fig. 4.1 ScraperWiki's word cloud with tweets matching the USA

like 'Crimea', 'Ukraine', 'wars', 'Europe', but the latter is much less statistically significant than the mentioning of the USA. Even more drastic is the dataset involving 'the West' as a keyword (see Fig. 4.2).

In this case, the threat discourse is even more alarming with the presence of 'Right Sector', 'Maidan', and 'the US', while the statistical significance of the word 'guilty' (which was also present in the previous dataset) shows the importance of the blame game in the Ukrainian crisis. Needless to say, 'the West' is blamed for the escalation on Maidan (the central square of Kiev in the Ukraine) and the west of Ukraine is identified as the important reason for the start of the protest movement in Ukraine. As for personalities, apart from Putin, the names of Ukrainian politicians (Yanukovych, Kravchuk, Yushenko, and Timoshenko) are quite visible as

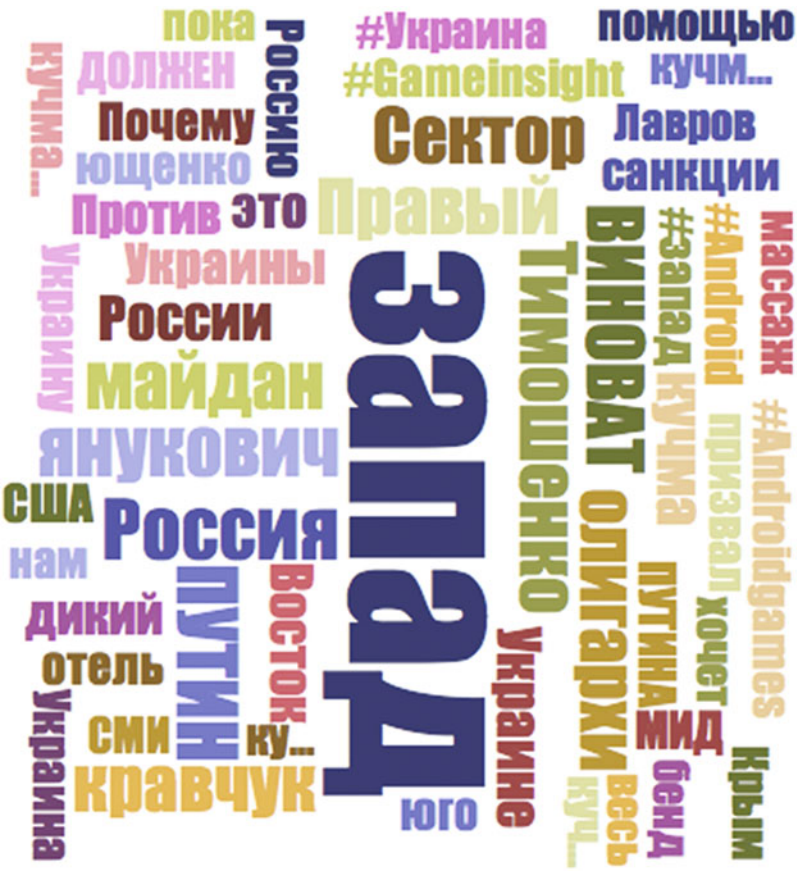

Fig. 4.2 ScraperWiki's word cloud with tweets matching the West

well, showing the tracing of the discussion on Ukrainian politics all the way back to the dissolution of the USSR.

Social networks reveal a plethora of anti-Americanisms, and they vary from audience to audience, for example, in VK the most popular groups with American themes are about America as a travel destination, work and travel, green card, American clothes; but sliding down the popularity ladder are the nationalist and radical anti-American groups that may profess their anti-Western sentiment, but focus chiefly on the USA. VK features a lot of popular groups such as 'We are against the US regime' (https://

vk.com/usabitch), 'Group for those who hate the United States, the European Union and NATO, who are against terrorist UN resolutions!' (https://vk.com/againstthewest)—again emphasizing the geopolitical component in the threat discourse. There is also a range of groups plainly insulting the USA, such as 'America is shit' (https://vk.com/amerika.govno) and other more derogatory terms, but usually these groups tend to emphasize American unilateralism in foreign policy. The Ukrainian crisis added another dimension to anti-Americanism adding the 'anti-Maidan' addition to the group names: 'Fuck the us—no to US foreign policy/Anti-Maidan' (https://vk.com/f_t_u),[1] rearticulating the belief that the protest movement is paid for and organized by 'GosDep' (Russian slang for the US State Department).

LJ reveals about 2,700,000 queries to a search term 'America' and, as in VK, it has a lot of posts about life in the USA, while at the same time there are posts about America preparing for World War III, about its 'Russophobe projects', its support for terrorism, and its internal rotting ('*zagnivaushiy*'—a very common metaphor during the Soviet era regarding the West). LJ dynamics are different from Twitter due to the platform's specificity. Given that popular posts can be listed as the day's 'top blog post' and therefore gain far greater visibility, this is the arena where the 'Kremlin trolls'[2] manage to exercise a lot of influence by driving certain blog posts to the top.

Fig. 4.3 (**a**) shows a swastika imposed on an American flag. (**b**) The Obama/Hitler caricature reads 'Barack Obama's regime calls on the Ukrainian army not to interfere in the conflict because it prevents US henchmen from seizing power'. (**c**) reads 'Demonstration to support Russians in the Ukraine, 10 of March, 14.00, Pushkinskaya station'

The 'battle for the hearts and minds' usually rages in commentaries on popular entries that can include polarizing points of view. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe a certain dynamic in the audiences of particular blogs: in the oppositional ones like *lj avmalgin, lj dolboeb*, or *lj drugoi* the key words of the opposition/American-themed posts most frequently do not necessarily include enemy image constructs on a massive scale. At the same time, more Kremlin-oriented blogs yield a more hostile environment, including more swear words as well.

More importantly, it is interesting to see how verbal discourse by the government mouthpieces is transformed into visual acceptance by the audience: *Pervyi Kanal* would talk about connections between the USA and fascists using visuals. The image on the far right in Fig. 4.5c is a recycled 'Be vigilant' (*bud' bditel'nym*) poster by Josef Serebryanyi that called on catching fascist agents in 1930s—yet another existential threat palimpsest.

Thus, the West corresponds to a whole cluster of enemy images that are associated with it, with the USA being the ultimate enemy image personification. Yet, there are many threats that are associated with the West's enemy image including homosexuality, intervention in internal affairs, world domination, and so on. These threats are all based on collective memory constructions from the Soviet era and are still readily employed not only by government-sponsored mass media, but also on a popular level.

During the protest against electoral fraud after the Russian elections of 2011–2012, the white colour became symbolic of opposition to the Putin administration: protestors took to the streets carrying a white ribbon, which President Vladimir Putin derided as 'condoms' (Izvestia 2011). The white ribbon was supposed to symbolize a movement for clean elections. Among pro-governmental supporters, the 'white ribbon' became a swear word for those who dared to criticize the government, with some people defining a white ribbon as 'a symbol of capitulation and treason… that is forced upon [us] by foreign political strategists' (Lenta.ru 2012). This type of discourse also alludes to the 'foreign agent' personification discussed in more detail in the next section.

4.2 Building an American Enemy Yet Again

The USA is a symbol of the West, but in itself the representation also follows several alternative depiction patterns. In general, it follows a (Russian) tendency to anthropomorphize nations as entities with fundamental cultural differences (Morozov 2009a, 328). Personification of the USA follows conventional avenues: through state leaders (caricatures of Barack Obama), state symbols and monuments (Statue of Liberty, American flag, bald eagle) and also through the 'foreign agents' that are supposedly acting on America's behalf. A very common geopolitical threat personification is 'GosDep', which alludes in government rhetoric to a mastermind manipulator, pulling strings behind popular uprisings all over the world. Foreign agents represent, on the other hand, a very useful characteristic of enemy image construction that has been called the ability of an enemy to have many faces (Satjukow and Gries 2004).

The securitization actor creates an atmosphere of paranoia in the target society: as an enemy cannot be identified by skin colour, for instance, it is necessary to always be alerted to some clandestine harmful activity that can theoretically be perpetrated by anyone. Or, as Putin puts it, a person might have a Russian passport but work for the benefit of a foreign country (Rossiyskaya Gazeta 2011). Psychological studies show that the climate of hostility and fearmongering creates a stressful environment that is conducive to phobias, anger, blindly obeying powerful leaders, and even violence (McDermott and Zimbardo 2007), which theoretically can also explain the soaring approval ratings of the Russian president.

The 'foreign agent' construct is a relic of the Soviet enmification mechanism: given that travelling to and especially from the Soviet Union was a highly restricted and regulated activity, the actual number of undercover Americans 'undermining' the Soviet Union would be negligible, so saboteurs had to be home-grown. Now, however, even with the liberty of movement, the old constructions of home-grown 'saboteurs' ('*vrediteli*') have been resurrected—in large part thanks to governmental rhetoric and the pro-Kremlin's youth movement camps on the lake Seliger. Even in 2010, before the events in Ukraine, the Kremlin youth movement would put the 'heads' of oppositional journalists and politicians on sticks crowned with Nazi uniform hats. This 'exercise' is repeated annually, albeit in a less provocative form (Ridus 2014).

This shows the frightening potential of the enmification process. In this particular case, the liberal opposition to the government is not described

as an abstract 'fifth column': it actually has the faces and brief biographies of the people who are considered enemies. It also displays an execution motif with the 'heads' of oppositional leaders impaled on stakes. This might be considered a mere discursive/performative exercise, if not for the murder of one of the 'enemies' from the list in February 2015: Boris Nemtsov (Novaya Gazeta 2015). Widely considered and portrayed by the anti-opposition forces as a traitor to Russia, Nemtsov was assassinated several hundred metres away from the Kremlin. Even though the contract killers that murdered Nemtsov have been caught, the organizers of the murder remain at large at the moment of writing.

With President Barack Obama's two presidential terms, personification slid into racist territory as well. Mr Obama is often referred to as an ape and not just by the general public. One of the Duma parliamentarians and an Olympic figure skating champion Irina Rodnina caused quite a stir on social networks when she posted the following collage (Fig. 4.4) on her Twitter account:

The image in Fig. 4.4 is a common racist slur implying that President Obama and his wife are apes, thus making the US president inferior to 'white' Russians. Similar images using a banana in conjunction with President Obama to imply that President Obama and his wife are primates are also extremely common in the Kremlin troll image library (RFERL, 4 April 2015), which indicates a narrative of Russian superiority in pro-governmental discourse is conveyed primarily through the motif of racial superiority.

At first Mrs Rodnina accused critics of the collage of being in the employ of opposition leaders, but then suddenly stated that her Twitter account had been hacked and that she deeply respected the Obama family. Nevertheless, denigrating the American president this way has become commonplace among the pro-Kremlin crowd, including a 'laser show' on the facade of the American embassy with Obama swallowing a banana and numerous collages on social networks, especially in VK, where those collages are used as visual aids in different anti-American groups. The existential threat message is often secondary to a self-inflation mechanism, but it often serves as a vehicle for the securitization message as well.

Do the images that compare Obama with an ape constitute an existential threat? It could be argued that these images are an othering tactic. Yet, it may serve as methods to justify extraordinary measures as the 'threat' is identified as subhuman. Racist slurs also extend to gender categories. Putin's 'machismo' is often juxtaposed to the supposedly more effeminate

Fig. 4.4 Twitter screenshot

Barack Obama (Sperling 2015). The trend towards the masculinization of Russia's image has reached a new level when the Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin published a photo of President Putin with a leopard next to a photo of President Obama with a fluffy dog and the words 'We have different values and allies' on Twitter.

Fig. 4.5 'We have different values and allies'

The representation of President Putin as more masculine is juxtaposed with President Obama through the comparison of their 'pets', with Putin preferring a more dangerous, wild animal, while Obama is holding a 'feminine' dog. Notable is also the number of retweets (2579) and favourite additions (1051): in the former case it does not necessarily indicate support, but it definitely shows the widespread popularity of the tweet.

4.3 Collective Memory of an 'American Enemy'

America and the West provide the second most extensive collection of collective memory references among all datasets, only lagging behind the threat of fascism. Remnants of the Cold War propaganda are ubiquitous. Even though the USA was a Soviet ally during World War II, during the Cold War the Soviet propaganda machine made sure that this fact was airbrushed from Soviet collective memory. Lend-lease and other forms of cooperation during the war were taken out or belittled in history books, while caricatures and mass media made sure to connect the USA with Nazi Germany. Even a cursory look at the visual material from the Soviet era provides a whole slew of examples of visual representations of Americans as Nazis or allied to them (Fig. 4.6).

The conflation of the Western enemy with fascism is not a technique unique to post-Soviet Russia. The American merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia has been described in an American understanding of totalitarianism (Adler and Paterson 1970). American Cold War history books also mentioned the Soviet contribution to World War II rather sparingly (Walker 1995). Numerous Soviet caricatures tried to create a visual connection between fascism and the USA by putting Americans in seemingly Nazi uniforms and identifying the American nuclear threat with fascism and Hitler in particular. Given the extensive memory politics work during the Soviet era, the identification of the USA as a 'force of evil' associated with fascism is not surprising.

Popular themes in Russia's representations of the USA included imperialism, colonialism, capitalism, warmongering, and racial discrimination, leaving a lasting impression on the Soviet population (Shlapentokh 1988). The threat connected to the USA is mostly related in geopolitical terms, thus relying on military threat discourses (bombs, rockets, NATO, saboteurs, agents, etc.), because the memory of an imminent threat of a direct military confrontation stems from the Soviet era. The image of the USA as an aggressive imperialist power with nuclear capabilities subjugating

Fig. 4.6 'Overseas dish' caricature by Kukryniksy, Krokodil Journal #5, 20 February 1955

'smaller' countries is still fresh in the Russian collective memory.[3] Phallic symbols of rockets, bombs, and military uniforms, often with Nazi insignia, were the typical components of Russia's American image, which is emblematic of a geopolitical threat.

The accusations of imperialism as part of the discourse, that is, the ability to buy the means to dominate the world, was represented in ubiquitous dollar signs and money signifiers that denoted a consumer-oriented, non-spiritual society (cf. Jones in Benson 2011). This frame is also very much present in the anti-American discourse, just without the 'imperialist' label (apart from the Russian communist party rhetoric). The only positive press was given to the Civil Rights movement, a few left-leaning organizations in the USA itself, and some left-leaning activists such as Angela Davis.[5] The Soviet press always made the distinction between ordinary working-class 'good' Americans and the 'evil' elite property owners, which included decadent intellectuals (Kukharkin 1974; Shiraev and Makhovskaya 2007).

A Soviet hit movie *Circus* (1936) with Soviet star Lyubov Orlova told the story of an American performer who flees to the Soviet Union to escape lynching in the USA for having a black baby. She ultimately stays in the country that accepts 'people of all colours, even with polka dots'. The final credits of the film show a lullaby sung in different languages by different ethnic groups to the baby and Orlova marching in the First of May Parade, singing, 'I don't know another country where a man can breathe so freely'.[5]

Even though the movie was made in the 1930s (and subsequently edited multiple times to excise some 'enemies of the people' who were featured in the film), it was one of the all-time favourites in Soviet cinema (Radio Svoboda 1990). *Circus* is still frequently broadcast on Russian TV, and is available on YouTube's Mosfilm[6] channel. The theme of 'American' villains was especially popular after Churchill's Fulton speech in 1946, both in political cartoons and in the cinema. Given that Stalin valued cinema as one of the main tools of propaganda (Kenez 2001) it is not surprising that between 1946 and 1950, 45.6 % of on-screen villains in Soviet films were either American or British (Shaw and Youngblood 2010, 40–41).

A Soviet/Russian spin on liberal anti-Americanism took a form of 'Whataboutism' (*The Economist*, 31 January 2008), that is, critiquing the United States whenever there is a critique of Russia. The Russian 'answer' to every American critique of Russia in the Soviet era comes from the following joke:

> A caller to a radio program asks, 'What is the average wage of an American manual worker?' A long pause ensues. Then the answer comes: 'U nikh negrov linchuyut' ('Over there they lynch Negroes'). (Shturman and Tiktin 1985)

This answer can be considered a catchphrase for this type of discourse among the Russian leadership and general public; only with time, Russia replaced Afro-Americans in this joke with Yugoslavians, Iraqis, or people from Guantanamo prison. Visual representation of 'bad' Americans was an extension of the canons of enemy image construction: Americans in caricatures were represented as very ugly, fat (or on the contrary very thin), with a heavy use of black uniforms; as having several faces/masks (cf. Satjukow and Gries 2004); with allusions to Hitler, the devil, or death—the latter ones representing more or less the same thing in Russian collective memory.

'Picture memory' is emblematic in the 1953 cartoon related to the fabricated 'Doctor's plot' when a number of ethnically Jewish doctors were accused of poisoning high-ranking Soviet politicians. All Soviet passports featured an ethnicity box; thus, 'Jewish' in Soviet Union was an ethnicity, not a religion.[7] The cartoon in Fig. 4.7 from the satirical journal *Krokodil* shows the mask of a good doctor that hides an evil face, dollars falling out of his pockets and 'Anglo-American intelligence officers' sticking out of a top hat in the corner with the inscription 'Joint' on it. This is a reference to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and highlights the anti-Semitic nature of the Doctor's plot campaign. Moreover, American-paid Soviet Jewish saboteurs working in the interest of foreign intelligence for dollars are a narrative strikingly reminiscent of the current 'foreign agents' discourse exemplified by the 2012 legislation on non-commercial organizations, with the anti-Semitic narrative somewhat toned down in the official discourse.

4.4 Governmental-Level Discourse

Even though on the governmental level Russian officials meet regularly with US representatives, and both President Putin and Prime Minister Medvedev state that Russia aims at cooperating with America (albeit criticizing it along a 'liberal anti-American' narrative according to Katzenstein and Keohane's categorization), the domestic rhetoric is quite different. The irrational part about the anti-American legislation is that legislators who propose those bills often argue that the USA has similar legislation. This shows the conflicting nature of Russian anti-Americanism: on the one hand, Russia is supposedly fighting what the USA stands for, but on the other hand, it is adopting the practices that are supposedly the sign of a developed society, so it's both an example to follow and to reject (Morozov 2009a).

Fig. 4.7 'Traces of crimes', caricature on Doctor's plot by Kukryniksy, Krokodil, No. 3, 1953

Today, the biggest concentration of anti-Americanism (apart from the Kremlin's main pundits on state TV such as A. Leontyev and D. Kiselyov) can be found in the Duma, where parliamentarians seem to compete at inventing anti-American conspiracy theories, manoeuvring among liberal, social, sovereign, and radical types of anti-Americanism. The bulk of neo-traditional anti-American 'protection' legislation was sponsored by United Russia as a response to the Magnitsky list, electoral fraud protests (so-called Bolotnaya Square protests or white ribbon movement), and events in Ukraine. The legislation included the new NGO law (foreign agents law), the law on public demonstrations, 'the Dima Yakovlev law' (ban on adoption by American families), and several other laws regulating freedom of speech on the Internet and restricting mass media regulations.

On 13 July 2012, 'amendments to the law on non-commercial organizations' obliged Russian organizations to register as 'foreign agents' in case they were involved in 'political activity' (even through funding) and received funding from abroad. As one of the defenders of the law stated on prime-time television and in line with the usual liberal anti-American narrative and a conspiracy theme:

> The purpose of the law is to reduce the influence of foreign countries on the policy. Thus, our law is much softer than the one in the US […]. And at the same time if you engage in politics, that means fighting for power, you must inform the Russian citizens. Those who oppose this law, do this for two reasons: the first— they want to seize power in Russia in the interests of foreign states and against the interests of Russia, and the second—they get Western money and want to steal it. (S. Markov in an interview to the Pervyi Kanal's political commentary to the news segment [Odnako 2012]).

The new legislation on rallies, enacted on 9 June 2012, which followed directly after the May 2012 electoral fraud protests, increased the fines for the violation of public rallies law to up to a million roubles for legal entities. One of the authors of the rally law—'Just Russia' member Sidyakin—at first stated that the law was supposed to prevent the 'Ukrainian scenario', but then deleted his tweet and emphasized that there was 'no direct relation' to Ukraine (Sidyakin, 31 March 2014). Communist Party and Liberal Democratic Party members warned the then President Medvedyev about the 'orange plague' and that nobody 'wants to go back to the 90s' and the President should not let an 'Orange Revolution' take place in Russia (Kommersant, 14 December 2011).

Putin's rhetoric was notoriously scant about the new rally legislation and his reaction to the electoral fraud protests was revealed during his annual teleconference 'Direct Line with Vladimir Putin' on *Pervyi Kanal* on 15 December 2011. He denied the connection between Russia's white ribbon movement and the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and thought that the demonstration was 'for a healthy way of life' (Pryamaya Linia s Putinym, 15 December 2011). However, later during the Direct Line, he remarked that he was sure that some of the people went to the protest 'in a foreign country's interest and for a foreign country's money'. The notorious usage of the singular as opposed to the plural was telling—the country in question was not named, but it was clear for the audience that he was talking about the only country that could afford financing a protest in Russia—the USA. President Putin also called the opposition members 'Bandar-logs',[8] which instantly became an Internet meme.

Pervyi Kanal responded to the Direct Line with lightning speed and three days later on Sunday prime-time news there was a segment on 'the history and spread of coloured revolutions', where it was stated that there is a special American think tank that is active in countries where the USA 'is interested in changing the regime'. One of the *Pervyi Kanal*'s experts emphasized that 'there are many symbols and concepts, but the aim and the sponsor is the same—the USA' (Pervyi Kanal, 18 December 2011). Thus, the Soviet frame about American dollars buying instability and wars was time and again rearticulated both by state officials and by TV personalities, building on the collective memory and picture memory.

Despite Putin's jokes about condoms and Bandar-logs, some of the May 2012 protests participants received harsh sentences for 'organizing mass disturbances', ranging from 2.5 to 4.5 years of prison sentences. Despite numerous statements about the fabricated nature of the trial by various human rights watchdogs (Amnesty International 2014, Human Rights Watch 2014, Memorial 2014) Putin was notoriously silent about the Bolotnaya case during the session of Human Rights and Civil society Council (4 September 2013), even though several members of the Council brought up the political nature of their imprisonment. Putin denied the fact that Russia has political prisoners and compared the electoral fraud protest with the 1917 revolution (Kremlin, 21 November 2013), emphasizing that Russia did not need those kinds of upheavals again. This discourse once again underlined the existential nature of the threat of protesters: according to Putin they were trying to shake the state and send it into the turmoil of revolution.

The legislative measures that addressed the USA as a target of Russia's displeasure included the so-called Dima Yakovlev bill that banned adoption of Russian orphans by American families. Even though at first it was supposed to be an answer to the Magnitsky list, the discussion of the bill veered into the 'nationalist-sovereign' anti-Americanism territory, where the main focus of the legislators was on the fact that Americans were supposedly killing and torturing Russian babies—a spin on the blood libel construction, identifying an enemy with a physical harm to the future of the nation.

> The fate of Russia, its successful democratic development worries the Russians themselves far more than the US Congress, and democracy is, among other things, the ability to build their lives, their destiny based on the will of their own people, not governments or parliaments of other countries, it is the ability to protect the life of their citizens. Nobody will determine for Russia, for united Russia its destiny! We—the country that has the ability to bring peace and the ideals of freedom, justice, dignity, honour, esteem, faith, the country that is able to live in peace with itself and with the rest of the world! They called it the Magnitsky law. The faction 'UNITED RUSSIA' offered to name the law after Dima Yakovlev, the two-year kid who they burnt alive in Purcellville, Virginia. This law is in memory of you […] and many others who cannot be brought back to life—it's our children; it is our citizens killed by American adoptive—allegedly—parents. (Nikonov, United Russia, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 11 December 2012)

Here apart from the blood libel type of rhetoric—emphasis on the active voice of 'burning' the boy in the car—the speaker emphasizes the word 'allegedly' in regard to the adoptive parents, implying that there was another purpose to the adoption, embracing a conspiracy discourse. Nikonov also professes Russia's subjectivity and its independence from American influence. Sovereign anti-Americanism is also at play with all the characteristics of an independent self-sufficient state (freedom, justice, faith, etc.). The grand master of conspiracy theories, Vladimir Zhirinovksy, offered another spin on blood libel:

> Why would one take a freak from Russia and bother first teaching him English, and then treating it, why?! Because they are smart kids, and even the sick, by the way, would be smarter than the healthy ones, as a rule. Americans need exactly Russian blood, because they have a country of shopkeepers. If they take up all the children from Russia, then in America they will have their own Academy of Sciences. (V. Zhirinovsky, Liberal Democratic Party, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 15 January 2013)

In this excerpt, Zhirinovsky presupposes a grand conspiracy to aid the supposedly ailing American knowledge production system. He employs a traditional Soviet frame of an updated imperialistic perception of the USA as a consumer-oriented talentless nation (country of shopkeepers) in need of smart citizens, while engaging in the self-inflating rhetoric of describing the Russians as a superior race (Russian blood).

> [The topic of human rights] is loved by our partners in America, in the West. Do you remember when we adopted the NGO law, the law on rallies, 'the Dima Yakovlev law', law on the protection of religious feelings of citizens, banning promotion of homosexuality among minors in order to protect traditional family values, how much screaming and critique there was, and different opinions on the part of individual countries, about special concern for human rights in our country in which we live, raise our children to respect our values and abide by our, and not some other laws. And today we see how Western powers, the US authorities are cynical in their approach, and no human rights violations, colleagues, become an obstacle to the implementation of the most infamous political adventure. Here are the facts of human rights violations in Ukraine […]. (M. Markelov, United Russia, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 12 March 2014)

This quotation is a typical example of flipping the argument, failing to answer charges with accusations akin to the aforementioned joke: 'and you lynch Negroes in your country'. It also combines the sovereign anti-Americanism with a liberal one: usually when the USA is (rightfully) accused of a cynical approach to the topic of human rights Russian parliamentarians point out the same problem in Guantanamo prison (like the United Russia member O. Batalina, on the 14 December 2012 session) or the disregard for the human rights violations during the 1999 NATO Yugoslavian operation, or the lack of American criticism of the Ukrainian 'Anti-Terrorist Operation' carried out by the P. Poroshenko government in summer 2014. It is worth noting the list of laws pointed out by Markelov. It is not clear how the restriction of NGOs, protests, and a ban on adoption are supposed to protect traditional family values, but the number of legislation pieces to that end is remarkable. To top all these bills, several other laws were introduced that limited freedom of speech on the Internet (that was part of the legislation on 'protecting children from harmful information'), and limitation of foreign capital participation in Russian mass media that again seems to target 'foreign influences' on society (RBC 15 October 2014).

One of the most recent US-related statements by Putin shows the diplomatic ambiguity that does not portray an anti-American sentiment to a casual outsider, but for an internal listener—a sovereign type of anti-American discourse is clear:

> It was necessary to make a reasonable reconstruction, adapt to the new realities of international relations system. However, the United States have declared themselves winners in the Cold War, arrogantly, I think, thought that this is simply no need [to adapt to the new realities] […] I did not say that the US is a threat to us […] a risk factor is the internal instability of individual states, especially when it comes to the countries located at the junction of the geopolitical interests of major countries, or on the boundary of the cultural-historical, economic, civilizational 'continents'. (Putin, 24 October 2014)

This statement also shows that the international system is still regarded as a 'clash of civilization' with the USA being one of the civilizations that are trying to attract other countries in its orbit. It is an updated Soviet frame, where the USA was portrayed as an imperialistic power trying to subjugate 'non-major countries'. Without the communist division of 'communist' and 'imperialist', the United States is portrayed as a civilization Russia is inevitably supposed to clash with—an inevitable enemy.

4.5 Conclusion

A threat coming from the West is probably one of the most collective memory-rich threat discourses in Russia. Ample visual material from Soviet times only helps to bring the enemy image back to life. Government officials seem to be giving a fresh spin on the old anti-American frames, accusing the USA of undermining Russia's stability and being hypocritical ('cynical') about human rights. Thus, the anti-Americanism in Russia is a blend of its liberal (through Whataboutist rhetoric) and sovereign species (through opposition to unipolarity). A radical version of anti-Americanism is visible on Russian social networks in its conspiratorial version, as well as in speeches of several politicians and pundits (such as Zhirinovsky or Kiselyov).

Judging by the material collected for this book, both on the governmental and on the public side, it is possible to agree with Dubin, who stated that,

> It is not about imposing on or the notorious 'zombification' of the population by official or semi-official journalists, and political experts, but it is about semantic permission, if you will, the blessing and the additional symbolic reinforcement of the attitudes and stereotypes that are already among the masses, but in a non-condensed, vague, non-articulated form. Responsibility for information evaluation, and the consequences of such a 'negative consolidation' with reliance on enemy images carry both sides: communicators and the public. The first are disgusted, but broadcast; the second grumble but watch. (Dubin 2011, 331)

Visual material is quite remarkably based on 'picture memory' dating back to the Soviet Union. Apart from the obvious recycling of Soviet-era posters, social network users are creating collages using the same tropes of American alliance with Nazi ideology, making extensive use of personification through the figure of the American president and state symbols (flag, the bald eagle). In order to contribute to the self-inflation of the figure of the Russian president, a lot of social network users (some of them quite high-ranking in the government hierarchy, such as parliamentarian Rodnina) allow themselves to stoop down to racist denigrations.

The attitude towards America as a personification of the existential threat is ambiguous. It's not only a threat in itself, it is also a personification of a general 'Western influence' that is supposed to corrupt Russia. Given the multitudes of existential threats associated with the USA, it can be argued that a unified abstract Other is in the making as described by Laclau (2000). However, given the strong personification tendencies, it is likely the USA will remain on the enemy image radar, especially in view of fulfilled felicity conditions that include strong collective memory embeddedness. The next chapter parses out the particular importance of collective memory on contemporary existential threat construction, as it deals with the most traumatic event in Russian history—the Great Patriotic War.

Notes

1. These groups and public pages tend to have about 60,000 + strong membership. Anti-Maidan groups with anti-American rhetoric usually have roughly 200,000 members.
2. 'Kremlin trolls' or 'Kremlin bots' is the term for the social network users who are working for organizations that are supposed to promote a particular type of discourse on social media, often referred to

as '50 ruble commentary'. They can be regarded as low-level pro-governmental memory entrepreneurs.

3. To be fair, very similar techniques were used to represent the Soviet Union during the Cold War in the USA, e.g., Lyndon B. Johnson's presidential ad with the girl counting the petals before a nuclear explosion.
4. 'Freedom to Angela Davis' was a popular slogan in Soviet Union that even survived until modern days.
5. 'Ya drugoy takoy strany ne znayu, gde tak vol'no dyshit chelovek!'
6. Mosfilm was one of the biggest cinema studios in Soviet Union.
7. For more on history and perceptions of ethnicity see Chap. 8.
8. Putin pretended to be the boa constrictor Kaa from Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*, trying to hypnotize the Russians 'funded from abroad' to join him in the dialogue.

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CHAPTER 5

Fascism and the Ukraine Crisis

Fascism is often considered synonymous with existential threat, and with a historical Other. As a corollary, fighting fascism is equated with a higher moral ground, and not only in Russia. The narrative of a fascist existential threat is inextricably linked to the memory of World War II, which is remembered differently in Russia than it is in the rest of the world. The 'Great Patriotic War', as it is known, commemorates not just the defeat of fascism, but also the survival of the nation of Russia in the face of extinction. It is also the most important heroic and unifying event in recent Russian history and is now actively used in nation-building efforts (Gudkov 2005; Kucherenko 2011). Hitler and Nazi Germany represent an almost universal symbol for an existential threat in the Russian collective memory and these symbols are often used to show who is 'on the wrong side of history'.

This conceptualization of fascism came in handy in 2014. The events in Ukraine have become a litmus test for the mainstream Russian media, where Russian 'memory entrepreneurs' resorted to this powerful collective memory reference. Apart from calling the people on Maidan 'fascists' (associating them with an existential threat), mainstream Russian media made a connection between both the USA and the EU as aggressors and fascists—a common Soviet technique (see Chap. 5) especially popular in Soviet-era caricatures and rhetoric. Most Russians are familiar with the Great Patriotic War through education, transmission of family memories,

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literature and film, as well as through extensive commemoration rituals that usually start in kindergarten (Krylova 2004). This makes the Great Patriotic War a post-memory phenomenon (Hirsch 2008), particularly prone to being recounted in a mythologized narrative that started to take root under General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev in the late 1960s (Gudkov 2005). Almost all cities have a World War II monument dedicated to the Unknown Soldier, or an Eternal Flame Monument. Thus, the Great Patriotic War is a narrative that is deeply embedded among Russians. Moreover, government-sponsored discourse on fascism is visibly present on social networks, as we shall see.

5.1 World War II 2.0

The events in Ukraine dominated news reports in Russia throughout 2014, which were followed closely by most Russians (Levada 2015b). The main themes in social networks are rearticulated information shown on state television, often in a more aggressive reincarnation, for instance, using swear words and calling on the physical elimination of Ukrainians. As in most cases, even the choice of words can clearly identify the side that the speaker supports. The pro-Russian military units in South-Eastern Ukraine call themselves *opolchency* (militia men)—the term that is also used by the Russian media. Discursively, this term is associated not only with World War II and popular resistance to fascism, but it also refers to the militia of Kuzma Minin and Dmitry Pozharsky in seventeenth-century Russia who fought against the Polish–Lithuanian invasion. This kind of 'memory model' (Etkind 2013) creates a positive image of people who are fighting against foreign invaders.

Another reference to the struggle against fascism was the hijacking of St. George's black and orange ribbon by pro-Russian paramilitary groups in South-Eastern Ukraine. The ribbon used to be a part of a medal awarded under Tsarist Russia, which then became one of the visual victory symbols in the Great Patriotic War due to its use in the Soviet Medal 'For the Victory Over Germany in the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945'. This ribbon was actively used as a part of self-identification with anti-fascism and 'anti-banderovism',[1] that is, denying the legacy of Stepan Bandera. Thus, a discursive string of logic was created: a person who wears the ribbon is not only a supporter of pro-Russian forces in Ukraine, he/she is also against fascism and, consequently, in opposition to the current government in Ukraine.

The Russian social networks have also paid considerable attention to the involvement of the USA and the EU in the Ukrainian crisis in a form of conspiracy theory. In other words, the USA is constructed as the underlying source of the 'fascist' existential threat, with the US and EU officials sponsoring people on Maidan in order to bring Ukraine under the control of the West. This notion of the USA as a crypto-fascist state can be traced back to the Cold War era, when it was a prominent trope in Soviet propaganda. In the post-war period, caricatures by the KuKryNiksy group[2] and other artists featured propaganda images of 'West German fascists' in cahoots with the American military, occupying an important place in the 'picture memory' of Russians. Meanwhile, the role of the USA as part of the anti-German coalition and one of the victors of the war is mostly ignored.

In the Cyrillic segment of Live Journal (LJ), as one might expect, the Ukrainian conflict is a highly divisive topic. Even a brief mention of Ukraine in a post can sometimes be sufficient to (albeit temporarily) elevate a blogger from obscurity into the ranks of the most popular LJ authors, perhaps partly because 'Kremlin-bots' pay such close attention to any discussion on this theme. Indeed, the so-called 'Top LJ' ranking system, where the most popular posts are ranked on the basis of total number of views, surely serves to further polarize opinions among LJ users, as even users with no interest in the topic of Ukraine cannot avoid seeing it in their newsfeed. Nevertheless, the 'Top LJ' authors (their LJ names are in parentheses) consistently represent a reasonably wide spectrum of opinions on the Ukrainian crisis, from a prominent oppositional journalist Mal'gin's harsh critique (lj avmalgin) and condemnation of the militia's activities in South-Eastern Ukraine (lj mi3ch, lj drugoi, lj dolboeb) to 'patriot' posts (lj miss_tramell). The 'patriotic' segment of the spectrum also ranges from support for Russia's annexation of Crimea (lj fritzmorgen) to conspiracy theories about the Western colonization of Ukraine (lj colonelcassad, lj el-murid).

Some top LJ bloggers tried to take a more objective stance on the Ukrainian crisis and limited themselves to journalist-style reports. For example, Artemy Lebedev (aka lj tema) was the author of a report about the Maidan, and Ilya Varlamov (aka lj zyalt) made a series of photo stories about Ukraine, including a chronology of the Euromaidan and coverage of presidential elections. Nevertheless, even if the views expressed by the bloggers were relatively neutral, comments to posts about Ukraine displayed a strong pro-Russian penchant. For the February report about the

Maidan in 2014 by lj zyalt, the most frequently used words of the commentators included 'revolution', 'power', and 'Russia', that is, the commentators discussed the situation in the Ukraine without any reference to 'fascism', although in comments to other popular blogs that are more pro-governmental, 'fascism' often moved to the fore.

Twitter data reveals in what context the word 'fascism' was used in the Cyrillic segment of Twitter (in this case, in May and June 2014). Figure 5.1 shows the most frequently associated words are related to the situation in Ukraine: 'Maidan', 'Russian spring', 'genocide', 'propaganda'. It is worth noting that the word 'fascism' seems to be used both by pro-Russian and by pro-Ukrainian bloggers, the difference being that pro-Russian bloggers are talking about 'Ukrainian fascism' and genocide

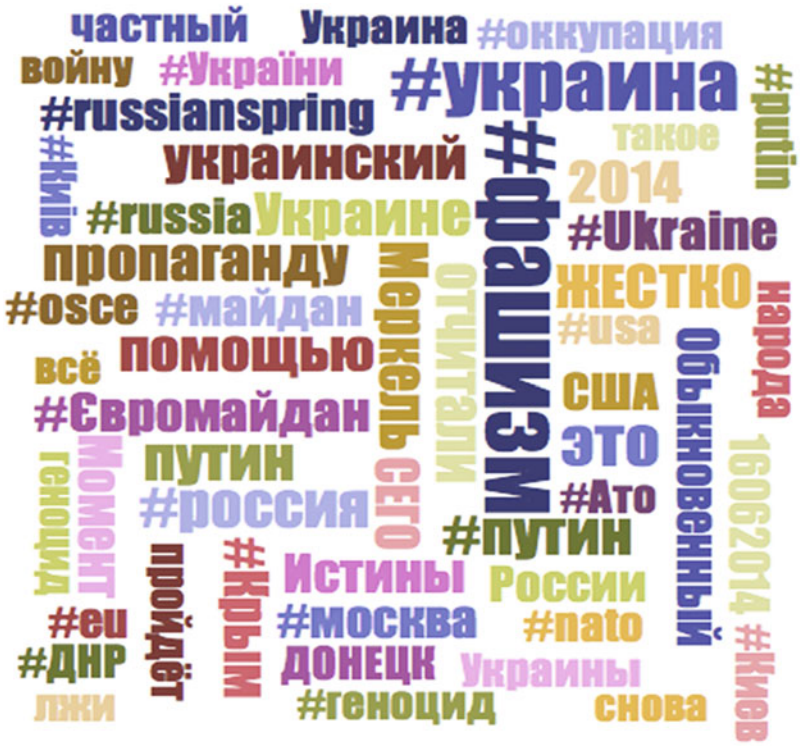

Fig. 5.1 Tweets matching 'fascism' in May and June 2014

committed by the Ukrainian army, and pro-Ukrainian bloggers are ascribing fascism to President Putin and Russia. The above-mentioned dash of conspiracy theories is present in the Twitter data here as well through hash tags #nato, #usa, and #eu.

President Putin's name was used in the pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian contexts. This indicates that both sides perceive President Putin as a personification of the conflict. Pro-Ukrainian commentators drew parallels between Putin and Hitler while ascribing fascism to him—a technique that has long been tested in the Russian opposition discourse, where Putin is often called 'Putler' and the pro-Kremlin organizations, especially 'Nashi' ('Ours'), 'Young Guard of United Russia', are frequently referred to as Putin-Jugend (Lurkmore 2014). Pro-Ukrainian commentators have also used the word 'Rashism' (conflation of 'Russia' and 'fascism') to emphasize the aggressive intentions of Russia. Another word that is often used by 'militia men of Novorossia' is *karatel* (punisher). This word is also borrowed from the Great Patriotic War vocabulary and was often used in combination with Schutzstaffel ('SS') in military reports and, later, to describe Nazi brutalities in occupied territories (Maksimov and Karyshev 1987). This usage creates additional discursive parallels with fascism.

The words 'ukry', 'ukropy', 'ukropiteki', 'ukrofashisty' are also quite frequently used by a number of pro-Russian bloggers, but because of the variance of the use of these terms it is difficult to see them on the word cloud visualization. These kinds of terms are often employed in anti-Maidan groups or in the military reports of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, as well as other anti-American/anti-Western VKontakte communities. A number of 'epithets' about the supporters of Euromaidan are related to the modification of the word 'Maidan' ('maidanutye'—fucked in the head with Maidan; 'maidauny'—conflation of Maidan and Down syndrome), or a modification of the word 'svidomye' (former Soviet nickname of Ukrainian Nationalists), which in blogs often turns into 'svidomity', an attempt to create an association with 'sodomites'. A similar technique is used, for example, in Russian conservative circles, where the words 'tolerasty' or 'liberast' (conflation with the word 'pederast'). Such linguistic constructions are linked through word formation and refer the reader not only to the sexual abnormality and lack of masculinity of the pro-Ukrainian ideologues, but to the inherent deviance of the Ukrainian ideology.

As noted by Yakovlev (Yakovlev 2014), pro-Russian commentators from Ukraine usually rally online in public groups on social networks

(Vkontakte.com [VK], Facebook) commonly referred to as 'Anti-Maidan', that is, indicating their non-alignment with the Euromaidan movement. Russians who support the separatists in the unrecognized republics of Donetsk and Luhansk are not necessarily united in 'Anti-Maidan' groups: a majority of the statements in favour of Russian military involvement in Ukraine and support for *opolchency* (pro-Russian militia) is expressed in right-wing/nationalist groups, anti-American groups, not to mention the page 'Reports from the militia of New Russia', which at the time of this writing, had more than 500,000 subscribers. Cartoons and posters related to the Ukrainian crisis, for the most part, play up the theme of World War II and Nazism and/or conspiracy discourse on the role of the USA in the organization of Euromaidan.

5.2 Resurrecting Stepan Bandera

Given the strong influence of the Great Patriotic War memory, it is not surprising that one of the main tools for constructing the personified existential threat of Euromaidan was the figure of Stepan Bandera ('Banderovites' as the Euromaidan supporters were often called), who in the Soviet and Russian historiography is clearly regarded as an accomplice of fascism (Fredheim et al. 2014), but who is often viewed by Ukrainian nationalists as a fighter for Ukraine's independence. Bandera's figure is particularly controversial also because he was both imprisoned in a German concentration camp and received financial, material, and personnel support for his Ukrainian Insurgent Army that carried out massacres of Poles and Jews in the western parts of Ukraine. In Russia, the figure of Bandera does not carry the controversy it does in Ukraine. In Russia, he is universally derided as a fascist; calling someone a 'banderite' (*banderovets*) was tantamount under the Soviet Union to calling him/her a fascist and, consequently, of invoking an existential threat narrative.

Another route that used personification was the Russian television *Pervyi Kanal,* which used visuals of the right-wing extremist group Right Sector. The visuals for the news stories feature black and red colours together with 'Bandera's trident'. The role of the Right Sector in the Euromaidan movement was frequently exaggerated by the Russian mass and online media, to the point where the Right Sector armed gangs became a common video sequence for the federal TV channels' Euromaidan coverage. This kind of personification harkened back to the numerous movies about the Great

Patriotic War, where the Nazi soldiers are represented as violent, merciless, fire-torching groups, with noticeable Nazi insignia (Norris 2007).

Memory of fascism was also actively employed in visuals pertaining to the Ukrainian crisis. One of the most popular tools for signifying one's position in social networks is to decorate their avatars, online photographs, and visuals with St. George's ribbon. Another visual narrative is to equate European integration with the Third Reich occupation (see Fig. 5.2).

The example in Fig. 5.2 is a 'demotivator' poster (Golikov and Kalashnikova, 2010), which shows an actual photograph of German prisoners of war led by Soviet soldiers in Kyiv in 1944. The photo makes a discursive connection with the Nazi attempt to conquer the Soviet Union. Moreover, it underlines the forced nature of European integration and

Fig. 5.2 Demotivator visual from Anti-Maidan group. The caption reads: March of euro integrators in Kyiv 1944: Natural finale of the forced euro integration during World War II. *Source*: Republic of New Russia, Anti-Maidan group in social network 'VKontakte' http://vk.com/the_republic_of_new_russia (accessed 20 August 2014)

equates it with the Russian narrative of fascism: EU's need for *Lebensraum* (additional territory they consider as necessary for national survival), subjugation of neighbouring countries, and atrocities committed on civilians.

One of the common narratives found during this research included a combination of conspiracy theories with fascism discourse and was mostly based on the assumption that the USA is trying to undermine regimes around the world to install American-friendly heads of state. This kind of rhetoric was already employed by the pro-Kremlin youth movement 'Nashi' (Lipsky 2007), but reached a new level during the Ukrainian crisis. During several demonstrations in Moscow that called for the Russian military intervention in Eastern Ukraine, pro-government demonstrators carried posters that read 'Fuehrer Obama, get your bloody hands off Novorossia' or referred to Washington as 'Fascington' (Echo Moskvy 2014). Caricatures of Obama with Hitler's toothbrush moustache were also rampant on the social media even before the events in Ukraine.

The visual example shown in Fig. 5.3 was circulated in 'anti-Maidan' and anti-American public pages on VK. In this case, the memory of the Great

Fig. 5.3 'In spite of enemies, to the delight of my mother'

Patriotic War is conveyed through the image of the statue 'Motherland calls' located on the memorial complex in Volgograd (Stalingrad). The statue beheads Lady Liberty with a caption that reads: 'in spite of enemies, to the delight of my mother'—yet again a conflation of anti-American and anti-fascist discourse. Thus, the symbol of Russia in this interpretation is the symbol of the struggle (and victory) over fascism that also happens to be a victory over the USA. Noteworthy is also the phallic nature of the Russian statue that looks bigger, more masculinized not only by her weapon, but also through the victory over her opponent. Another attempt to reinterpret the events in Ukraine in pro-Russian and positive narrative was the use of the term 'Russian Spring', which is a positive spin on the analogous 'Arab Spring', often considered by pro-government circles as having been inspired by the West.

The use of St. George's ribbon as a key marker for pro-Russian positions led to the invention of another meme: *kolorady*, a pejorative term used to refer to supporters of the pro-Russian side referring to the colours of the Colorado pest beetle. This designation, which was reportedly coined by Russian oppositional LJ blogger Andrei Mal'gin, essentially operates in the same way as the anti-Ukrainian labels discussed above; that is, it serves to dehumanize the Other, and to construct the Other as an existential threat. References to insects are used to dehumanize and are very commonly used in constructing enemy images (Keen 1991). Beetles and other insects are of course generally viewed with disgust in the European cultural space, and, more narrowly, in Russia. The Colorado beetle, of orange and black colouring, is frequently used by pro-Ukrainian commentators to deride pro-Russian separatists and those that support their position.

In Fig. 5.4, the personification of the memory of fascism is quite clear: Russia is identified through the statue 'Motherland calls' from the Stalingrad memorial complex, which calls on all men 'from the Russian world' to fight the 'American–Banderite fascism now in Novorossia' to secure the future of their countries. The image of the statue was very popular on different kinds of posters that called on Russians to fight fascism in Ukraine. Unfortunately, both the memory of fascism and conspiracy get conflated in the minds of social network users, which is particularly problematic on a platform conducive to the spread of conspiracy theories (Mocanu et al. 2014).

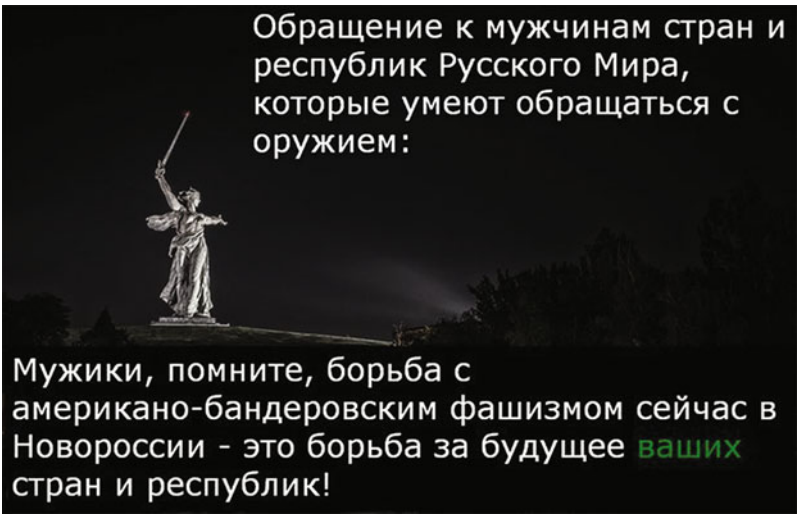

Fig. 5.4 The caption reads: 'An appeal to men of the countries and republics of the Russian World who can handle guns: Guys, remember, the fight against American–Banderite fascism right now in Novorossia is the fight for the future of your countries and republics!' *Source*: VKontakte Group Yugo-Vostok/Novorossia http://vk.com/soutukraine (accessed 22 August 2014)

5.3 War Trauma in Collective Memory

As one of the few events in Russia's history to unite the vast majority of its people (Oushakine 2013; Dubin 2011; Etkind 2013), the memory of the Great Patriotic War is both pervasive and prominent. It was possibly for this reason that this memory was actively used in the construction of a new Russian identity in the second half of the 1990s and early 2000s (Rutten et al. 2013). The revival of a victory parade in Red Square, numerous actions carried out by pro-government organizations, the use of the St. George's ribbon, and a large number of cinematographic works about the war (Norris 2007) reveal the increasing importance of the memory of the Great Patriotic War, which is emphasized by 'memory entrepreneurs' in Russian authorities.

For the majority of Russians, fascism is an almost universal reference to an existential threat. Nazi concentration camps, Plan 'Ost' for the Nazi post-war management of the conquered Soviet Union, brutal treatment of

the civilian population in the occupied territories, mass executions—such associations would be common for average Russians. Even if they had not studied history at school, they would have at least watched a few movies about the war. Thus, the memory of the Great Patriotic War in Russia can mainly be attributed to the phenomenon of post-memory; that is, Russians are familiar with World War II through the prism of memories of their relatives and predominantly through artistic works about the war (Afanas'yeva and Merkushin 2005).

Victory Day was institutionalized and sacralized during the time of Secretary General Leonid Brezhnev. According to Lev Gudkov, if, immediately after the war, there had been a so-called tacit knowledge about the war,

> After more than 15 years […] a certain matrixing of mass representations of the war started to take place. Marked by the beginning of an official, demonstrative honouring of veterans, the advent of the lyrical tone of the descriptions of war (primarily in memoires) and various state rituals, this process combined the stereotyping of collective experience […] with the relevant state-historical notions of sovereign history, national culture, moral assessments of privacy and views on the limits of its autonomy. (Gudkov 2005).

The majority of Russians are familiar with World War II in a lyrical mythological form. With active nation building comes a certain mythologizing of consciousness and the glorification of the past (Yablokov 2012). The memory of the Great Patriotic War in Russia is gradually taking on the traits of a myth: numerous laws that prohibit criticizing the Great Patriotic War and questioning the outcome of the Nuremberg Tribunal (BBC Russian 2013). Numerous war movies, created in Soviet times, have been supplemented by modern movies and mini-series. The German component of fascism in contemporary mainstream discourse is hardly considered apart from the above-mentioned supposedly humorous bumper stickers on German cars. The vector of fascism in contemporary Russian discourse, according to the users of social networks and governmental officials, comes from the Ukrainian nationalists ('banderovites') and the USA that support them, which again is another proof of the success of a collective memory entrepreneurship in the Soviet Union and in modern Russia.

In the opinion of President Putin, the collapse of the Soviet Union was 'the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century' (Putin 2005). Putin's statement can be regarded as the moment in history that

the Russian political elite and many Russians are 'doomed' to experience again and again. That is why events in the post-Soviet space, and especially the shift of former Soviet republics to the Western sphere of influence are perceived so painfully in Russia.

In the case of Ukraine, this attitude was manifested for the first time during the Orange Revolution, which in Russian pro-government circles was dubbed 'orange plague' (Novaya Gazeta 2012). One of the activities aimed at countering the 'plague' was the rise of a pro-government youth movement—'Nashi' or 'President's messenger'—which called for the establishment of a 'team to protect the country' from 'fascists, fringe politicians, fugitive former oligarchs, pro-Western "liberals", extremists of all kinds' and, of course, from the 'voracious predator' of the USA, who are trying to capture 'our resources' (Lipsky 2007).

Although St. George's black and orange ribbon became a symbol for pro-Russian support during the Ukrainian crisis, its use was actually popularized in the mid-2000s by the pro-government 'Nashi' movement. This is probably why Russian oppositional figures, such as Mal'gin, are reticent to accept it as a symbol. The ribbon itself was first introduced by Catherine the Great during the Turkish–Russian war of 1768–1774, and was later used following Russia's victory against Napoleon during the Patriotic War of 1812. Building on its symbolism for heroism and glory, the ribbon was later used during the Soviet era on medals 'For the Capture of Berlin' and greeting cards for Victory Day. This too, perhaps, was a deliberate attempt by Soviet memory entrepreneurs to bind the ribbon with the collective memory of the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945 and Patriotic War of 1812. During the events in Ukraine, St. George's ribbon was monopolized by pro-Russian separatists in South-Eastern Ukraine in order to show their commitment to the victory over fascism; consequently, it was supposed to show that the political system after the defection of Viktor Yanukovych to Russia is, in fact, the fascism against which South-Eastern Ukraine is fighting.

5.4 Anti-Fascist Rhetoric in the Russian Government

In order to establish the modality of the governmental-level discourse, one can turn to statements made by President Putin, transcripts of the parliamentary sessions, and news coverage from *Pervyi Kanal*—the

government-controlled Kremlin mouthpiece. Even though President Putin never explicitly called the government in Ukraine fascist, in most cases he structured his speeches by drawing parallels between the Ukrainian crisis and the Great Patriotic War, thus implicitly emphasizing the threat of fascism. For instance, he would mention the importance of the Russian role in defeating Nazism and then stress the unacceptability of Nazism in any country. One of the few derogatory/judgmental remarks on Ukraine was when he called the interim government a 'junta'—a term that was readily picked up by pro-Russian separatists and netizens on social networks. The example below is a typical illustration of 'Putinist' discourse:

> We are on the eve of the 69th anniversary and the next year will mark 70 years of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War—a victory over the Nazis, over fascism. This topic does not cease to be relevant today. And we see it. Now I will not give many examples. This is a real problem […] We talked a lot today about Ukraine. On the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Odessa: [there was a parade of] war veterans, and all kinds of scum threw rotten eggs on them and so on, insulted our collective memory, insulted the people who brought them freedom. And on the same day they desecrated a Jewish cemetery and painted swastikas on the graves. (Putin, 24 April 2014).

The excerpt shows that Putin does not explicitly call Ukrainians fascists; he emphasizes the importance of collective memory and the existentiality of the fascist threat. Moreover, while portraying the fascist narrative he employs the whole range of frames, including anti-Semitism. In general, apart from calling the interim government in Ukraine a 'junta' during the same press conference, Putin seemed to avoid explicit insults towards Ukraine. However, in August 2014 during the Youth Forum on the Lake Seliger (Kremlin, 29 August 2014b), he compared the situation in Ukraine with 'fascist armies surrounding our cities, for example Leningrad… [They] shot away the civilian population at point-blank range'. This kind of rhetoric is an exception rather than the rule.

Russian parliamentary discourse can be viewed as Putinist discourse on steroids: whatever Putin says implicitly is explicit in the Duma speeches, regardless of the political party the politicians belong to: calling the regime in Ukraine fascist, identifying the government with the 'Right Sector' neo-Nazi party (Shekhovtsov and Umland 2014), graphic descriptions of violence, calls for urgent political measures with, of course, a dash of conspiracy theory. Below are several examples from Duma sessions:

> Unfortunately, today the ideology of collaborationism, the ideology of decadence, revision of history, breaking the root of the fundamental cultural basis in Ukraine are the most striking examples, the clearest evidence that bringing up the younger generation with the new values of these ideas leads to the revival of the ideology of fascism, and, therefore, to new forms of aggression and violence—direct analogy with what the Nazis did during the Second World War. This is a direct threat to the modern world and security, so the actions of our state, our Parliament should be directed to take timely legislative measures in the context of international law on the protection of peace and security similarly what other countries did. (Yarovaya, United Russia Party, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 28 February 2014c, emphasis added).

The excerpt from the speech of Irina Yarovaya is almost a textbook example of securitizing rhetoric. Fascism is construed as an existential threat coupled with violence and aggression (i.e., emphasis on human security). The modern world is a referent object and there is a call for political measures, albeit within the framework of 'international law'. In addition, Yarovaya suggests that a whole generation in Ukraine is brought up with fascist ideology and a revisionist bent with regard to the memory of the Great Patriotic War—yet another appeal to collective memory. Yarovaya is a member of Putin's ruling 'United Russia' party, so it might seem appropriate that her statements tow the party line, but statements from other political parties are even more extreme.

> There is a policy of double, triple standards…why do they allow fascism in Ukraine and in Europe, of course, it's impossible. I believe that if we altogether, along with politicians and diplomats do not call in the nearest time to convene the Yalta Conference 2.0, if we don't solve these problems today, not after May 25—of course, God forbid—there will be trouble! (Nilov, Just Russia party, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 28 February 2014c)

Nilov is a member of supposedly oppositional 'Just (as in justice) Russia' party, but his rhetoric is hardly different from that of Yarovaya. Moreover, a 'Yalta 2.0' conference actually did take place in Yalta in August 2014 (Kremlin, 14 August 2014a). Apart from emphasizing the threat of fascism, he implies that it is Europe that supports the fascist groups in Ukraine adding a conspiracy overtone to the narrative. However, a whole new level of conspiracy can be seen in the statements of the supposedly oppositional Communist party:

> Conflict on the territory of Ukraine did not come all of a sudden; it has been long and systematically inflated by the architects of *nezalezhnost* [Ukraine's independence]—political adventurers and financial speculators. By themselves, without the patrons from the West, they are nothing, and the purpose of the Maidan was not only redistribution of power and property—Ukraine became a bargaining chip in the global political game and now they are trying to make a crowbar out of it, which can be used to break Russia's sovereignty. That is why the Nazis in Europe are raising their heads and in the twenty first century the heirs of [Stepan] Bandera and OUN[3] are in demand again! (Novikov, Communist Party, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 13 May 2014a)

Here the referent object is Russia's sovereignty, and existential threat is personified through Stepan Bandera and 'the West'. The illegality of the Ukrainian government and its geopolitical insignificance is also emphasized through metaphors like 'bargaining chip' and 'crowbar', making Ukraine a tool in Western hands. Another spin on the Western conspiracy is provided by the Liberal Democratic Party.

> What kind of unity are we talking about when the country lost millions of lives in the Great Patriotic War in the struggle against fascism, neo-Nazism goes rampant, when at the slightest disagreement with this regime people are given to the mercy of the 'Right Sector'?! All this is happening, unfortunately, with the continued support of the West, and thus comes monstrous defamation of Russia in the global political and information space. (Slutsky, Liberal Democrat Party, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 13 May 2014a)

The evocation of the collective memory of the Great Patriotic War is clear in this example as well. In the case of Liberal Democratic Party parliamentarian Slutsky, the personification of the fascist threat runs through the 'heirs of Bandera', the neo-Nazi group 'Right Sector', and the fascist threat is transposed to the whole Ukrainian government. Moreover, Slutsky also repeats the narrative of Western support of fascism and the conscious effort at discriminating against Russia in the media space. However, as the fighting in the Eastern Ukraine became more severe, so did the rhetoric in the Duma, with parliamentarians putting more emphasis on the extraordinary measures that Russia is supposed to take.

> We Communists believed and believe that it is better to die on your feet than live on your knees! Under these circumstances, our group considers it nec-

> essary to officially recognize the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. We demand that the President of the Russian Federation protect the civilian population, provide effective military assistance to Novorossia! Inaction of Russian authorities is fairly assessed by our Ukrainian brothers in the south-east as betrayal. For twenty years the West pretended to be our friend and now they finally revealed all their hatred of Russia. […] Terrible events in Ukraine have shown what we, the communists, constantly warned Russian adherents of Western democracy, and we should never forget it. Long live the heroic Novorossia! Fascism is not to be on Russian soil! (Nikitchuk, Communist Party, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 17 June 2014b)

Keywords like 'fascism', 'the West' and the call for military intervention in South-Eastern Ukraine are clear signs of the securitization paradigm, bringing in 'Western democracy' as the root of evil in Ukraine. Russia's lone responsibility to stop the bloodshed perpetuated 'by the West' is not only self-inflationary but also effective in the creation of the quintessential evil image. Readiness to die for the idea in addition to calls for independence and military intervention are revealing signs of extraordinary measures that need to be taken to protect the referent object—'our brothers in South-East Ukraine'. The same narrative follows suit in the speech of A. Pushkov, not only a United Russia party member, but also the Chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs.

> We should clearly see with whom we are dealing with in Ukraine. Here all of the claims to be a democracy to be European and so on—have clearly been rejected. Ukraine has formed a nationalist dictatorship with an obvious Nazi colour. Only people sharing these kind of ideas can sing the national anthem of Ukraine when in the House of Trade Unions in Odessa they killed, strangled, shot—not even the military personnel, civilians!—And when they hear the heart-rending cries the only people sharing such ideas can boast their Nazi views and daub swastikas on the walls in Kyiv and the Russian Embassy! (Pushkov, United Russia, Gosudarstvennaya Duma 17 June 2014b)

Even though Pushkov did not explicitly call for the adoption of extraordinary measures, at the end of the speech he spoke about 'a different kind of policy' towards Ukraine. The graphic description of violence in Odessa, the visual references to fascism (swastikas) coupled with calling Ukrainian government a Nazi dictatorship; all these play on Russia's collective memory of Nazi Germany. Thus, a visible narrative regarding Ukraine is obvious across party lines.

One of the main features of the coverage of the protest movement in Ukraine was the exaggerated role attributed to right-wing movements in Euromaidan—as exemplified by the rhetoric of Russian governmental officials. This is especially evident in reports by *Pervyi Kanal*, which showed images of armed men in military uniforms and armbands, emphasized the role of the 'Right Sector', displayed graphic pictures of violence, and so on. However, the fusion of 'regime change' and 'fascism' discourses was not invented exclusively for Euromaidan. In 2011 *Pervyi Kanal* showed a 'documentary' film called 'Orange children of the Third Reich' with the subheading 'How to make champions of democracy out of punishers [*karateli*—a very popular word to describe Ukrainian army member] and pathological chauvinists' (*Pervyi Kanal* 2011).

The modality of the news coverage changed after the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of the 'anti-terrorist operation' in the south-east of Ukraine. Terms such as 'Novorossia', 'People's Republic of Donetsk' (DNR), and 'Lugansk People's Republic' (LNR) appeared in the lexicon of *Pervyi Kanal* (*Pervyi Kanal* News 2 July 2014b). However, references to those republics disappeared for a while after the Malaysian Boeing was shot down (*Pervyi Kanal* News 18 July 2014a), which took place 'over Ukrainian territory' (though at that time the territory of the crash of the Boeing was in the hands of supporters of the DNR). After the proclamation of the DNR's and LNR's independence, news coverage from Ukraine assumed the character of military reports.

References to fascism almost invariably accompanied news reports of TV channels *Pervyi Kanal* and *Rossiya* in covering the events in Ukraine, and it is not surprising that users of social networks have picked up on this construct. If one looks at Integrum Word Wide, there is a marked surge in the frequency of the word 'fascism' almost from the beginning of Euromaidan, although in previous years similar bursts were usually associated with the celebration of the Victory Day, or commemoration of the start of Operation Barbarossa (Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941). In January 2014 the term 'fascism' almost reached the level of June (i.e., months in which the attack of Nazi Germany on the Soviet Union is traditionally mentioned). Another surge of the term 'fascism' has already occurred in March, that is, at the time of the annexation of Crimea by Russia in April–May, and the armed conflict between pro-Russian supporters and Ukrainian military. In fact, variations in the frequency of use of 'fascism' can be associated with the dynamics of the conflict in Ukraine, with Russian military activity correlating with bursts

of the frequency of 'fascism'. The language of the 'extraordinary measures' adopted by the Russian government also appears wrought with securitization: President Putin proposed to deploy Russian armed forces in Ukraine in order to 'protect the lives' of Russian citizens and army men. The threat, however, was not identified in the document, apart from the 'political instability' in Ukraine itself.

5.5 Conclusion

Fascism is a convenient existential threat signifier for the post-Soviet space. With the larger role of the Great Patriotic War in Russian identity, it is an effective way to stir up a sense of 'otherness' in a variety of constructions. It is not surprising that a successful enemy image reappeared out of the media representations of the Ukrainian crisis: fascism has a very solid grounding in collective memory, and received widespread attention both by high-ranking politicians and by state mass media that reverberated on social networks. Personification of the threat was also relatively easy as it relied on the picture memory of fascism and accessibility of conspiratorial, enemy image-based discourse. Thus, the enemy image of the 'Ukrainian fascist' dominated not only the official discourse, but also the social media, that is, the audience level.

The conflict in Ukraine was largely framed in the Russian social media as a next reinstalment of the Great Patriotic War: the Russians are yet again fighting fascism, but this time its reincarnation is in Ukraine. Fascism as a narrative is deeply embedded in Russian collective memory as an existential threat discourse, so it is rather easy to manipulate public opinion into the necessity of taking extraordinary measures that effectively led to the breakdown of the post-Cold War security system.

Euromaidan was mostly branded as a Nazi movement, while the 'anti-terrorist operation' conducted by President Poroshenko's government in the south-east of Ukraine was presented as a war against the civilian population. Two of the indicators of the public's acceptance of this kind of formulation is the unusually high rating of President V. Putin—up to 88 % according to Levada sociological service (Levada 2015a)—and the popularity of the 'fascist' discourse on social networks. Nevertheless, some variability of different online audiences should be noted. While the Russian Twitter featured the conflict in Ukraine framed as a battle between fascist and anti-fascist movements, social networks VK and LJ offered a much wider range of opinions, including the more radical pro-Russian (anti-

American, right-wing racist), as well as more neutral or pro-Ukrainian stances.

The discourse of fascism dominated social networks, which integrated the usual narratives associated with it: attacks on civilians, brutality, swastikas, anti-Semitism, personification through the figure of Stepan Bandera or through external actors who are working along the same lines, epitomizing the Cold War-era siege mentality and conspiratorial mindset (see Chap. 4 on the West/USA). When not explicitly calling Ukraine fascists, social network users resorted to other derogatory remarks mostly feminizing Ukraine as a whore or homosexual. The latter point makes an interesting connection to the discourse of sexuality as an existential threat to Russia (see Chap. 7) and the importance of 'spiritual bonds' that were supposedly under attack by the punk band Pussy Riot (as discussed in the next chapter).

Notes

1. After Stepan Bandera, a controversial figure in World War II history, which will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.
2. A group of artists famous for their caricatures.
3. Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

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CHAPTER 6

Blasphemy: Threats to Russia's 'Spiritual Bonds'

By narrating post-Soviet identity as different from a 'Western' one, political differences were not sufficient to articulate the uniqueness of Russia. Acting in the name of the moral high ground was especially potent in governmental attempts to marginalize the Russian protest movement in 2011–2012. This chapter investigates threat narratives and enemy images associated with Russian culture and so-called sovereign morality (Sharafutdinova 2014), which has replaced 'sovereign democracy' (Morozov 2008). Sovereign morality in this regard defines a new moralizing stance taken by the Russian leadership in order to consolidate legitimacy on the basis of conservative values.

The term 'blasphemy' is used here to denote the renaissance of discussions pertaining to acts that are (un)acceptable in Russian society as a cultural entity, and to Russia's 'spiritual bonds', the moral values that hold society together. 'Feminism' had become the word of the day in Russia, and to many it stood more for blasphemy than for 'gender justice' (Sperling 2015, 221). As Morozov notes, 'the origin of Putin's Russia is rooted in the historical narrative of the Soviet golden age' including an 'idealized image of the Soviet modernity' (Morozov 2008, 163). This idealized narrative is related not only to the narrative of industrial achievements, but also to the mythologized view of Soviet society, as a spiritual, virtuous, 'most well-read' nation, unlike the corrupt, sexualized, and stupid West.

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The threat to the cultural makeup of Russia, according to Levada opinion polls, is not only personified through the feminist punk rock group Pussy Riot. The West as a threat in this case makes its appearance as a personification as well. While the USA is more in charge of the geopolitical threat coming from the Occident, the EU in this case is 'responsible' for the cultural threat, continuing the centuries-long framing of the 'vile Latin influence'. Controversy around the staging of Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser* in Novosibirsk (the third most populous city in Russia) in early 2015 (RIA-Novosti 2015) proved that, despite the Russian mass media's fixation on the Ukrainian crisis, blasphemy as a threat has remained potent since the Pussy Riot trial.

Within a context of Russian authorities stressing the multicultural and multireligious nature of the country, blasphemy is more than solely an un-Christian act (although many right-wing organizations would argue that a true Russian is also an Orthodox Christian); blasphemy is used here in a broader sense denoting the questioning of established society norms. Moreover, apart from government officials, there is another important group of securitizing actors that belong to the Russian Orthodox Church, whose interests are often aligned with those of the Russian authorities (cf. Sperling 2015, 284). These attacks on 'spiritual bonds' can be discursively traced back to the Soviet era and were characterized as 'anti-Soviet' behaviour.

6.1 Pussy Riot on Social Media

Since the case selection for this book, there have been certain shifts in public perception of the threats to Russia (as exemplified by the threat of fascism that suddenly reappeared on the radar). At the same time, threats to 'sovereign morality' reappear on social networks in different personifications, for example, Pussy Riot faded to the background in light of the Ukrainian crisis in 2014–2015, which took centre stage over debates surrounding 'blasphemy'.

Figure 6.1 shows that discussions surrounding events in Ukraine draw from topics that were completely unrelated to it. The word cloud is related to the (possibly staged) incident of Pussy Riot members being whipped by Cossacks in Sochi when the former attempted to film a new video (hence the terms in this word cloud, 'Olympiad', 'Cossacks', 'clip' [i.e., video clip], and Sochi). Some of the commentators sympathized with the punk band ('postradali'—suffered, 'izbili'—beaten up), but many commentators called them 'traitors' (predateli) and connected them to

Fig. 6.1 ScraperWiki's word cloud with tweets matching 'Pussi'

Navalny—an oppositional politician. The figure of Putin was also present, as the song that Pussy Riot performed was 'Putin will teach you how to love your motherland'. The USA was mentioned in this Twitter sample because of the highly retweeted story about the US ambassador to the United Nations who met the punk band, and the alleged payment and organization of the performance by the USA (the usual touch of conspiracy theory). Even though the denial of feminist values is not straightforward here, numerous messages about the lack of 'spanking' of Pussy Riot members that would 'put them in their place' show that violence is considered to be an appropriate method to curb female activism.

The attack on Charlie Hebdo provided another opportunity to voice support for conservative values and their protection. Charlie Hebdo—the French satirical weekly magazine, which prides itself in its provocative pieces, was the target of several terrorist attacks, the one in early 2015 having left 12 journalists dead. The mainstream position on social networks voiced disgust with the caricatures and argued that Europe brought this terror on itself. Conspiracy theories that usually sprout on social networks during terrorist attacks made it to the mainstream media surprisingly quickly. The front page of the newspaper with the biggest circulation in Russia, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, featured a cover asking its readers, 'Did the Americans commit the terrorist attack in Paris?' (Komsomolskaya Pravda 2015).

Other common reactions to the Charlie Hebdo attack included invitations for terrorists to deal similarly with Russia's liberal opposition. These exhortations turned out to be ominous, as one month later Boris Nemtsov, one of Russia's oppositional politician and a supporter of the 'Je suis Charlie' action, was murdered in the centre of Moscow, just a short distance from the Kremlin (Baunov 2015).

The Ukrainian crisis managed to penetrate the topic of 'spiritual bonds' as well. Euromaidan for many pro-Russian commentators became synonymous with not only fascism, but also other Western 'evils'. It is unsurprising that social networks reflected the intensified references to 'Gayropa'—according to the definition by Riabova and Riabov, this term was adopted for the 'designation of European gender deviance and Europe as a whole and even to refer to European values and European democracy' (Riabova and Riabov 2013). Although the term 'Gayropa' is frequently encountered on social networks, which is to be expected in an informal setting, its appearance in the official media, according to Integrum World Wide, gained traction in late 2014. A similar intensification of mentions of 'Gayropa' in the media was noticeable during the Pussy Riot trial, which is another symbol of 'liberasty'—a derogatory term for people who are deemed too liberal. Thus, while the USA is discursively often connected to a geopolitical threat, Europe (and the EU in particular) is seen as a cultural threat to Russia.

Among the most popular bloggers who commented on the Ukrainian crisis and clearly expressed their pro-Russian stance was a 'fitness blogger' called Elena Mironenko. She compared Ukraine with a loose woman who sells herself to the 'Atlantic syndicate of thieves' and 'international

community of perverts'. Russia in this 'essay' is represented as her older brother who is tired of 'the organized brothel' in his apartment (Myro, 26 May 2014). Interestingly, the post-Soviet space seems to be described as a flat that big brother Russia owns—a not-so-subtle reference to Russia's dominant role over the ex-Soviet republics. The kind of narrative that equates Ukraine with a whore—a usual method of feminizing an opponent—is frequently encountered at the colloquial level and on other social networks:

Figure 6.2 is from Vkontakte.com (VK)'s group 'Anti-Maidan' and describes the relationship between Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine as three sisters living in the same home, with Ukraine explicitly called a whore who 'dragged a negro to our home' (most likely a reference to Barack Obama). This narrative is very similar to the one used by Myro. The narrative continues, calling Ukraine stupid for 'rejecting the family' and believing the 'negro's' promises about la dolce vita in Europe. Remarkably, the text acquired 3318 'likes' and 571 shares in half a day. This kind of discourse does not create an existential threat narrative or even mention fascism, but it does establish Ukraine in a subordinate position, while inflating Russia's image.

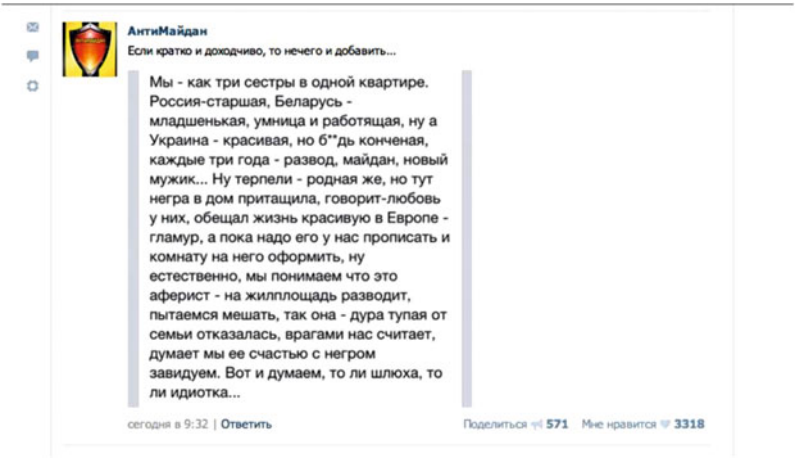

Fig. 6.2 Anti-Maidan's three sisters' story

6.2 Female Threat

The threat of an active, assertive woman is being transformed into an existential one given the sexualization and masculinization of Russian politics since the advent of Putin (cf. Sperling 2015). Given that the whole system of political legitimacy is built around a patriarchal understanding of Putin as a 'real man' (Riabova and Riabov 2013), there is no space for a woman in this setting, where men are supposed to decide the fate of the country and women are supposed to be responsible for taking care of children and family household and not be politically active.

No wonder that the personification of the threat often took female and/or feminized forms with Pussy Riot providing a very convenient vehicle for the enmification process. Images of the Voina group and footage of the performance with the frozen chicken of 2010 when they tried to steal one from a supermarket by putting it into their female member's vagina (NTV, 18 July 2012) dominated the *Pervyi Kanal* coverage of the Pussy Riot case. Deviant behaviour unworthy of a woman was connected to the existential threat to the 'spiritual bonds'—a Putinite term that quickly signified 'traditions' ranging from Orthodoxy to a ban on homosexuality, and from a proposed ban on abortion to 'respect of host traditions'.

It was usually female spokespeople who were seen as incompetent representatives of the State Department during the press conference (*rzhaki over Psaki*—laughs over Psaki). These women also tended to be viewed as physically inferior representatives of 'the West'. Popular chauvinistic narratives of sexual unattractiveness of Western female politicians were brought up on Live Journal (LJ) and VK and were connected with their professional activities as State Department representatives, that is, due to the fact that men are not attracted to these women, they are forced to sublimate their sexual dissatisfaction in politics.

This narrative is not unique to Russia and was used, for example, to illustrate the threat of suffragettes to American and British societies (Collins 2013). By creating such posters Internet users perform a significant action of 'topping' (Sperling 2015), that is, establishing a higher hierarchal position both sexually and politically, and putting the Western (female) representatives into a submissive position, based on their gender, but also based on the perceived lower intelligence and unattractive looks of these women. This narrative is not specific to foreign politicians. In fact, it's is also quite common to deride Russian female oppositional politicians in the same way. Thus, as long as a woman's political stance is oppositional to the Kremlin,

she is either sexually unattractive or too sexually active, but in either case not a 'real woman', the way a woman is supposed to be (see Fig. 6.3).

The demotivator mentioned in Fig. 6.3 from the Anti-Maidan Vkontakte group depicts a prominent Russian and Soviet dissident Valeriya Novodvorskaya (1950–2014), who was a famous journalist. Novodvorskaya was very vocal in her criticism of the Putin regime and was routinely verbally attacked by pro-Kremlin supporters, who criticized her looks and the absence of family. This particular caricature is supposed to remind Anti-Maidan users that even a Russian man would never be able to drink enough in order to have sex with Ms Novodvorskaya. A small Israeli flag is supposed to show the users where the oppositional motivation comes from, piling up a conspiracy theory on top of misogynism.

Another prominent issue in this regard is internalized misogyny (Wonderzine 2015), that is, women shaming women. Being part of a macho patriarchal culture is hard, so a lot of women side with the desirable

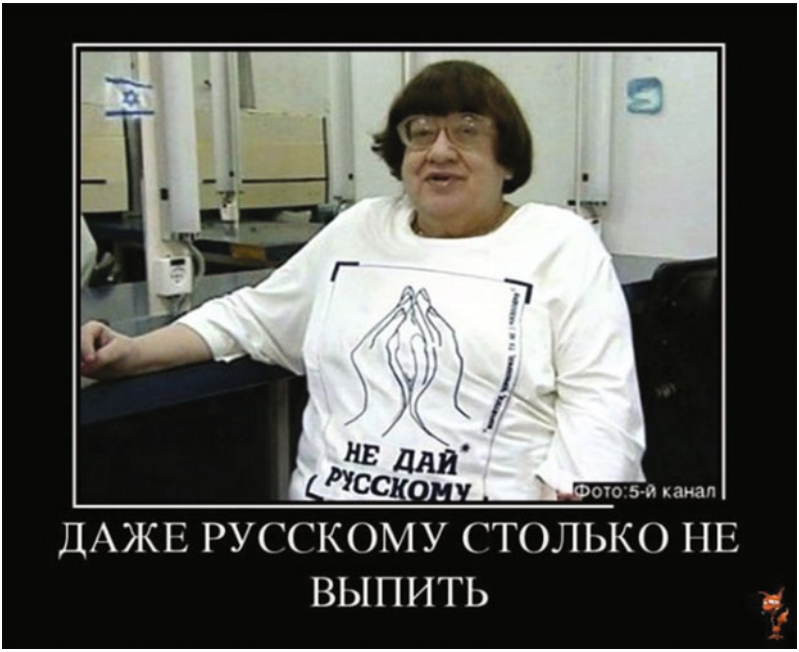

Fig. 6.3 Demotivator poster 'Even a Russian wouldn't drink as much'

and hierarchically higher in-group—men—and reaffirm female objectification and disparagement. The above-mentioned popular LJ top blogger Lena Myro is a perfect example of women shaming, where a supposedly female author constantly engages in rants about 'inferior' women, whom she calls 'kuricy' (hens), who are intellectually challenged and primarily concerned with marriage. Especially telling in this case is an animal metaphor: women are ranked even lower than primates.

Lower hierarchal position of women is not only visible online; it has a very disturbing offline evidence. Statistics of violence against women are quite alarming, despite the legacy of feminist policies during the Soviet era. Additionally, violence against women is heavily underreported and typically involves victim blaming. The hash tag #samavinovata—it's your own fault—is a common refrain on social media. Apart from the physical violence, there is a general discursive tolerance towards violence against women—Rancour-Lafferiere would probably connect it to the 'cult of suffering' (Rancour-Lafferiere 2003) or violence directed at self. Rancour-Lafferriere, however, does not attribute 'moral masochism' uniquely to Russia; he puts it at the heart of Christian morality and culture (Rancour-Laferriere 2003). Even women who suffered from domestic violence usually tend to justify it or reconcile with their offenders and continue to tolerate the abuse (Ekaterina Crisis Centre 2006), especially due to societal pressure. In this context, if one blames the victim for violence they automatically side with the male, the 'correct' role in the culture, and contribute to their own aggrandizement (self-inflation in psychology).

6.3 Western 'Pestilent Influence' and Feminism in Soviet Culture

Collective memory of Russia's spiritual superiority over other (Western) countries can be traced back to the Middle Ages. The perception of the dangerous 'Latin', that is, Western, influence on Russia's mores was pointed out in a number of works (Morozov 2009; Nefedov 2010; Tselikovsky 2014). The famous Russian émigré philosopher Berdyaev noted in his *The Sources and Sense of Russian Communism* (1937) that the reason that remnants of the Russian Empire were easily adapted to the communist belief system was because it was founded on the existing narratives—what I would call collective memory—of the 'special Russian way' and prophecies anticipating 'Moscow as the Third Rome'. The Soviet

regime, despite its explicit atheist policies, still managed to galvanize the whole spiritual narrative as well: representations of the West usually built on its consumerist nature, suggesting that Russians had more to offer than a plain desire for material objects.

The Soviet Union also had a long tradition of persecuting dissidents and protecting the hegemonic narratives: 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda' used to be a criminal offence throughout the existence of the USSR. The first Soviet Criminal Code of 1922 already provided punishment for 'counter-revolutionary crimes' associated with the spread of unwanted information. The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic Criminal Code of 1960 (Article70) listed the following crime and punishment:

> Agitation or propaganda carried out with a view to undermine or weaken Soviet power or to commit certain particularly dangerous crimes against the state; the spread for the same purpose of slanderous fabrications discrediting the Soviet state and social system, as well as distribution or manufacturing or storage of the literature with the same content—shall be punishable with imprisonment from six months to seven years, or an exile to a term of two to five years.

Article 190-1 provided for similar punishments for 'false oral fabrications discrediting the Soviet state and social system'. The language of the criminal code is quite unambiguous: the spread of 'slanderous fabrications' was equated to crimes against the state. For example, the expression *tletvornoe vliyanie zapada* (Western pestilent influence) is a term that was used, albeit in a tongue-in-cheek way, in a Soviet blockbuster comedy *The Diamond Hand* (*Brilliantovaya ruka*) (1969). This popular comedy, frequently shown on Russian TV, especially on New Year's Day or other holidays, follows the story of a simple Soviet citizen who gets accidentally entangled in a ploy by smugglers who are trying to get precious stones into the Soviet Union, by taking a cruise on (presumably) the Mediterranean Sea. The protagonist, more of an archetypical schlimazel, helps to bring the smugglers to justice in the movie despite his clumsiness. The phrase about the Western pestilent influence was used by *Upravdom* (the head of the house committee), who mostly spied on the inhabitants of the apartment block where the family of the protagonist lives. As a demonstration of this pestilence, she lists going to restaurants, excessive drinking, having a mistress, and practical jokes.

Other caricatured evil characters in this film include an effeminate man who works as a model, a violent brute who speaks broken Russian, and an overly sexual woman who tries to seduce the protagonist with a striptease (also, undoubtedly un-Soviet behaviour). These 'enemy images' of women—the single bitter woman and sexual criminal—represent two common tropes portraying the female in the Soviet Union. A single woman that has nothing to do other than spy on her neighbours (a prerequisite for the contemporary concept of a 'feminist' that is unlucky with men) and prostitute are juxtaposed to the ideal wife, a mother and working woman—who 'happens' to be the wife of the protagonist. This categorization is very similar to the gender stereotypes discussed by Sjoberg and Gentry (2007): a positive image of a woman is supposed to be passive and mostly defined through motherhood. An active position threatens the heteronormal society and is therefore wrong, despite the fact that early Soviet propaganda encouraged female emancipation (see Fig. 6.4)

The caricature shows a hapless man who is supposed to take care of the household chores while his wife is going to a meeting of local govern-

Fig. 6.4 'I am going to the Council…', Krokodil 1923, #2

ing body. The caricature was supposed to show a new reality of a Soviet family (hence the man on the right), but the woman had already taken care of dinner, for example (she instructs her husband to warm it up in the byline), and judging by the baby who is stretching his arms towards his mother, she takes care of the child while the husband is away. Satirical journal Krokodil also contributed to mocking of emancipated women, when it published a caricature of Alexandra Kollontai, a famous Soviet politician and diplomat, with a headline 'Men and women should channel their sexual energy into community' (Krokodil 1925, #10), suggesting that only asexual woman would be that interested in politics.

The argument that a woman can only be fulfilled as a man's companion features quite prominently in a seemingly feminist Oscar-winning Soviet hit *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* (*Moskva slezam ne verit*) (1979) (Boym 1994; Kaganovsky 2009). The main heroine Katerina is a single mother who worked hard to become the director of a textile plant. Even though she is very successful professionally she still cries herself to sleep because there is no man in her life. At the end of the movie, she falls in love with Goga, an engineer who knows how to cook, helps old ladies on trains, and can win in a street fight. Goga, despite his household skills, is a typical 'macho' who tells Katerina that he 'will be the one making the decisions, simply because [he] is the man'. Towards the end of the movie, he dumps Katerina because she makes more money than he does and he considers that unacceptable. Eventually, Katerina has a nervous breakdown, and Goga has a bout of drinking. But the movie still has a happy ending with Goga coming back to Katerina.

Despite being seemingly feministic and glorifying Katerina's professional achievements, *Moscow Doesn't Believe in Tears* paints a deeply flawed picture of relationships: a successful female professional apologizes for her professional success and lets a man denigrate her. These gender relations represented a model for millions of Russian women who believed that a woman could not be happy without an alcoholic man who probably served time in prison, and is manipulative liar (cf. Etkind 2013). The movie is also an example of the so-called double burden that Soviet and Russian women ended up with (Sperling 2015). A woman is supposed to work, but she is also supposed to take care of all the house duties—Goga's one-time cooking venture was understood to be an exception to the rule. As a Russian journalist, Vera Gaufman, states, 'you can have all the career you want, but the borscht should be on schedule' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 2015a).

Another popular narrative in the Soviet Union, which found its way to post-Soviet Russia, is that of the 'stupid American'. Usually it is exempli-

fied by the monologue of a stand-up comedian M. Zadornov, who berated the inability of Americans to understand 'Russian' logic with exclamations '*Nu typye*!' [how dumb are they!]. This comedy act has become a meme, and has deep roots in collective memory references of Russian 'spirituality' (as opposed to Western 'materialism'). It also celebrates Russia's image as 'the most well-read country in the world', an achievement ascribed to communist rule (Lovell 2000: 21). This is an additional source of self-inflation, which is represented on social networks by the previously mentioned Rzhaki nad Psaki, and on TV with the popular evening programme *Psaki na noch* (*Psaki for the night*) (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 2015b).

At this point, one may wonder where the embeddedness of 'religious feelings' comes from. The importance of religion as an embedded narrative in Russia has its roots in the Perestroika and its aftermath in post-Soviet Russia. During and after the glasnost era there was a substantial popularity of Tsarist Russian traditions that included religion as a counterpoint to communist values (Batalden 1993; Knox 2004). This tended to emphasize the popular appreciation for religious life in general, and the Russian Orthodox Church in particular (Levada 2012). This process could be viewed through the paradigm of temporal othering (Diez 2004), which was successful in Russia at creating an atmosphere of religious supremacy over secular values (Verkhovsky 2002). Thus, post-Soviet Russia merged in its 'spiritual bonds' not only the remnants of 'proper' Soviet behaviour based on conservative values, but also the religiosity that came to the fore in the immediate aftermath of the Perestroika.

6.4 Foundations of Morality: Government Discourse and Pussy Riot

Vladimir Putin, commenting on the Pussy Riot group in October 2012, said that 'one cannot undermine the foundations of morality, and destroy the country'. According to him, the Pussy Riot activists 'began to spin' and the case 'came to court'. 'A court slapped them with a 'dvushechka' (two-year sentence). Putin said, 'I have nothing to do with it. They wanted it, they got it' (Lenta.ru, 19 December 2013). At a different press conference Vladimir Putin expressed regret for the fact that Pussy Riot participants 'reached the state when they became shocking, degraded women'. According to the president, the performance in the Christ the Saviour Cathedral 'crossed the line', but it was the court that chose the punishment for them.

While President Putin seemed to have expressed a sort of *Schadenfreude* (pleasure derived from someone else's misfortune) with regard to the Pussy Riot members, mainstream politicians exhibited much more indignation that was not only connected to the performance in the Christ the Saviour Cathedral, but also to their behaviour, unworthy of a respectable woman, to which Putin also alluded:

> 'Pussy Riot' was nominated for another music award […] That is, again, they are trying to bend us[1]: Khodorkovsky was not enough, Magnitsky was not enough and, now 'Pussy Riot'! 'Pussy Riot' was not enough—here are the orphans[2]! But in 'Pussy Riot' there are three hooligan girls. Not one of them remembered she had a son when she got to the prison colony in Berezniki, and when she left him and ran all around Moscow, undressing there…I do not know, they chained themselves on Lobnoe Mesto [a monument on the Red Square in the centre of Moscow], shouting, squealing—why, then, did she not remember her son? He needed you, as a mother, and now you're asking in the colony to waive punishment, so as to stay with your son until he turns fourteen. That is, every time—cunning tricks, and all the press show them, as if there are no other girls [in Russia]. (Zhirinovsky, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 22 January 2013a)

Zhirinovsky refrained from his usual conspiracy theory. He concentrated this time on the appropriate female behaviour that Pussy Riot members failed to display. Clearly, for Zhirinovsky, as well as for other nationalists (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997), the most important social role for a woman is motherhood, taking care of reproduction, with Pussy Riot members being—erroneously—engaged otherwise in political activism. This point of view resonates quite well with the masculinization of Russian politics (see Sperling 2015 for an overview) that sees women only as attributes of a successful male. Obviously, Pussy Riot caused a rupture in the traditional understanding of femininity, and given that 'feminism' is already considered a 'bad word' in post-Soviet Russia (cf. Sperling 2015), its identification with Pussy Riot through official discourse and TV framing did not create good press for feminism. Instead, feminism was connected to the threats of regime stability and even issues of human security, as seen in this statement by parliamentarian Nilov.

> 2012 showed a number of outrageous, blasphemous, horrible, devilish [mrakobesny] situations and events. We are all sick with the well-known story about 'Pussy Riot'. All this time there have been cases of desecration

> of icons in different cities in different regions of our country, swastikas, satanic symbols, various inscriptions in churches and synagogues. There were two high-profile terrorist attacks in Tatarstan and Dagestan, that killed and injured people, the spiritual leaders of the Muslims […] The situation reached the point that social networks are covered with ads with price-lists, which say how much people are willing to pay money for sawing down a Cross—they offer 6,000 roubles—for graffiti, for the desecration of religious rites and religious symbols. Dear deputies, this is incitement to religious hatred. All this is destructive, provocative, aimed at destabilizing the situation and inciting hatred in our society. The State Duma in this regard cannot remain silent, cannot be silent. (Nilov, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 25 September 2012b)

Mr Nilov also made a connection between spiritual and physical security: in his speech he emphasized that the attack on religion usually correlates with murder. He connected the 'incitement to religious hatred' and to the 'destabilization of the situation' in the whole country, making it clear that Pussy Riot was symptomatic of a larger threat to Russia. Mentioning swastikas and satanic symbols also contributed to the framing of Pussy Riot and other 'blasphemous acts' as a threat akin to fascism. Mr Nilov's reference to social networks and the suggestion that ads were offering money to destroy crosses indicates that the parliamentarian engages in conspiracy theory.

To be fair, there were several members of the Duma that expressed their disagreement over the Pussy Riot affair, but their voices were literally silenced by the Chairperson:

> The detention of the girls from the group 'Pussy Riot' and keeping them in a cage—it's just a mockery! Nothing like that ever happened in the history of the world: never the performance of songs anywhere, even in the most holy places, was anybody imprisoned…We are talking just about performance, about nothing else, they did not bother anybody, did not throw objects, did not abuse citizens, so it's amazing that…(Microphone turned off.) (Mitrofanov, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 20 March 2012a)

The unusually liberal position of Mr Mitrofanov was echoed by Mr Gudkov, but they were a clear minority among the parliamentarians. The mainstream perspective, which is taking legal action against blasphemy or, as it was later phrased 'protection of religious feelings', was articulated by Mr Markelov, a United Russia member and co-author of the legislation who made the following statement:

> A number of representatives of public institutions questioned the necessity of the bill that required the adoption of the law, and the hooliganism of the now famous band 'Pussy Riot' can serve, in particular, as a reason to change the legislation…It's just not our problem; they also have it in the countries that have always been proud of their tolerance, their high level of culture and enlightenment…
>
> As for Russia, in recent years the statistics of religious intolerance in a variety of aggressive acts, including vandalism of cemeteries or, for example, displays of intolerance towards the representatives of the Jewish faith, have been disappointing. There are also more frightening, colleagues, facts—attempts on the lives of religious leaders of traditional religions…Of course, one might ask, what does the protection of religious feelings have to do with it? But it is the representatives of traditional faiths that bear the basis of faith, preserve religious objects, multiply the historical heritage of the peoples of Russia, who are targeted by extremists and radicals of various stripes…Colleagues, according to opinion polls, 80% of Russians support the adoption of measures aimed at protecting the religious feelings of citizens. (Markelov, United Russia, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 9 April 2013b)

Mr Markelov connects protecting religious feelings and protecting the lives of the clergy, whom he holds responsible for maintaining the heritage of 'traditional religions', that is, excluding the 'non-traditional' ones. Thus, he makes an attack on religion an attack on the cultural fabric of the society with the extremists as the villains bent on destroying Russia as a civilization. The reference to the 'tolerance' of Western countries (he mentions France in his speech) is construed as a wrong approach to the preservation of cultural identity.

The wording of the legislation itself is also a classic example of the securitization rhetoric: it is centred on the protection of religious feelings. Even though 'insulting the religious feelings of citizens or the desecration of venerated objects, signs and emblems with ideological symbolism' already belonged in Article 5.26 of the Administrative Code, the 2013 addition provided for criminal liability in the form of imprisonment for 'public actions, expressing obvious disrespect for society and committed to insult the religious feelings of believers' (Art. 148 of the Criminal Code). The discussion of this legislation was discursively firmly linked to the word 'protection' (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 26 June 2013a), with Putin being the 'protector-in-chief' (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 30 June 2013b). The rhetoric of the Russian Communist Party is a good example of the anti-Western rhetoric with a communist spin. The whole concept of 'human rights' is

deemed a 'project from over the ocean', while the revival of the 'truth about the Great Patriotic War' is considered a bedrock for 'conservative Soviet values' (Obukhov 2011).

When it came to the Charlie Hebdo attack, it was portrayed in the Russian media as a reason to gloat over the deficiency of Western mores. Perhaps the most glaring manifestation of Russia's attitude towards the Charlie Hebdo attack was the absence of Vladimir Putin in the march for the freedom of speech that united a number of world leaders on 11 January 2015. However, Putin could not have been there due to his ideological stance: despite his unequivocal condemnation of terrorism, the narrative of spirituality that is supposed to be more important than freedom of speech permeated the official reaction to the events in Paris. As the government's mouthpiece *Pervyi Kanal* reported:

> As a result, many were faced with a false and partly imposed choice—between 'I am Charlie' or 'I am not Charlie', with all the ensuing epithets and accusations. Meanwhile, this choice does not exist. The murder of unarmed people is a terrible sin and a felony that has no justification. A magazine like 'Charlie Hebdo' is not possible in Russia by law. We legally forbade insulting the feelings of believers, and it makes no difference whom—Christians, Muslims or Jews…Authorities in Europe are well aware who are really to blame for the fact that Muslim teenagers, who were a few years ago setting cars on fire in the poor suburbs of Paris, are bursting now with guns into publishing houses of central Paris. For years, the West has been using Islam to solve its geopolitical problems, first in the East, and then in Europe itself. The current intensification of radical Islamists here is a direct consequence of the mishandling of Islam by those who have nothing to do with it. (Pervyi Kanal, 18 January 2015)

This news report from *Pervyi Kanal* could be viewed as an example of governmental rhetoric on the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack. *Pervyi Kanal* emphasizes the 'friendship of the peoples' discourse that all religions are equal under the Russian law, even though the fact that murder is firstly a sin, and only secondly a felony, underlines the spiritual dimension of the legislation. Moreover, by pointing out that it was the West that was responsible for the attack by nurturing radical Islamists, *Pervyi Kanal* adds a conspiratorial touch that can be extrapolated to terrorist attacks that happened in Russia proper over previous years. Despite the continuous ethnocentricity of Russian politics (see Shnirelman 2011 and Chap. 8 on migration in this book), during the Charlie Hebdo attack, Russia

presented itself as a model of inter-ethnic harmony that can also be exemplified with the Facebook post by the head of Russia Today, where Ms Simonyan opined:

> Is there another country in the world, where in one city there are half a million people praying to Allah at a demonstration 'We love Mohammed', and in hundreds of other cities another half a million jump in icy water to praise Jesus? And both events are shown on state TV. This is, by the way, real tolerance. (Simonyan 2015)

Ms Simonyan is referring to the 'march of the million' in Chechnya's capital that was conceived as a counter strike against the Parisian march for the freedom of press. Roughly half a million Chechens walked to the mosque in 'The heart of Chechnya' with signs 'we love Muhammad' on their working day (possibly, with some 'encouragement' from Chechen authorities) to protest the blasphemy of caricatures that usually appear in Charlie Hebdo. The date of the march coincided with the celebrations of Theophany by Orthodox Russians, who commemorate this holiday by open-air bathing to symbolize the baptism of Jesus.

The fact that feminism was viewed as a threat to spiritual bounds in conjunction with Pussy Riot was also visible in statements made by the head of the Russian Orthodox Church Patriarch Kirill. In his speech in 2013 he stated that 'feminism could lead to destruction' and 'a woman should be focused inwards, towards her children' and in case she doesn't comply, it could lead to the destruction of the 'motherland'. The concluding statement of the 'Ecumenical Russian People's Council' of 2012, whose president is Patriarch Kirill, discussed the geopolitical struggle where the 'sovereignty of humanitarian space—the space of sense, spiritual symbols, social-cultural development' needed to be 'protected from defamation' through the protection of fundamental spiritual values, including the memory of the Great Patriotic War (Patriarch Kirill 2012).

6.5 Conclusion

The cluster of enemy images in this chapter is consigned to the attacks on the 'spiritual bonds' of Russia; that is, the cluster of threat narratives is rather centred on the referent object. Thus, despite the geopolitical considerations in Chap. 5 on fascism, threats to the cultural makeup of Russia

gain quite substantial traction on social networks and are frequently voiced by leading politicians. Social network users, regardless of their gender, resort to patriarchal narratives, either denigrating women and condoning violence against them or affirming 'traditional' life choices for women, such as motherhood in lieu of political activism.

The case of Pussy Riot illustrates the neo-traditionalist turn probably at its full, as the Western reaction to the case was seen as an intervention into the Russian fabric of society. Apart from attacking 'spiritual bonds', the Pussy Riot threat was also constructed through inappropriate female behaviour: by assuming too active a political position, the members of the punk band performed the unacceptable 'topping' (Sperling 2015) of male 'power vertical', with Putin being its chief embodiment. The emphasis on the French journalists' guilt in the attack on Charlie Hebdo supports the argument that Russia's 'outlawing' of insults to religious feelings made the country safe from terror attacks, which also implicitly supports the crackdown on the freedom of press. The Charlie Hebdo attack was framed to signify Russia's moral superiority over the West, which allows such provocations. The next chapter will show how the Pussy Riot trial and a discursive focus on conservative values created a fruitful basis for discursive struggles around varieties of threats to 'spiritual bonds', which culminated in the enmification of homosexuality.

Notes

1. Zhirinovsky used the word 'nagibat', which implies forced intercourse in a female position; that is, Zhirinovsky is implying that 'the West' is trying to get Russia to submit through these appeals.
2. He is referring to the international outcry about the ban on adoption of Russian orphans by American couples.

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CHAPTER 7

Sexuality Must Be Defended

The Russian law banning 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations' brought media attention to the social significance of sexuality not only in Russia, but also internationally. Many Western countries threatened to boycott the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, and there were numerous jibes against Russia participating in the 'World Homophobic Olympic Games' (The Daily Show with Jon Stewart 2014). Russian officials are not alone in explicitly condemning homosexuality: the Republican Party in the USA also has high-ranking politicians, such as Michele Bachmann, who declare homosexuality a product of Satan (Harris 2011). Russian media personalities on state television have argued that the meteorite in Chelyabinsk fulfils the biblical prophecy of fiery rain because of the Russians' depraved lifestyle, and have suggested that 'the hearts of homosexuals should be burned and buried in earth because they're unsuitable for life' (Komsomolskaya Pravda, 12 August 2013). Once again, this is not altogether different from comments made by a number of Christian conservatives in the USA, who blame deviant behaviour for a variety of events, ranging from 9/11 to Hurricane Katrina. One case in point is Pastor John Haggee of San Antonio, Texas, who commented that 'God caused Hurricane Katrina to wipe out New Orleans because it had a gay pride parade the week before and was filled with sexual sin' (Salon 30 October 2012).

Similar statements about homosexuality are unfortunately very common in the Russian mainstream and nationalist environment, where non-

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heterosexuality is seen as an existential threat to Russia as a nation and as a state, which makes Russian homophobic discourse quite similar to the far-right parties in Europe and many right-wing Republicans in the USA. However, from the standpoint of many Russians, homosexuality is an alien element introduced into Russian society by 'Gayropa' (Cf. Riabova and Riabov 2013) to corrupt Russia, and eventually lead the country to extinction. Thus, homophobia is presented as part of the 'cultural code' of Russians, as a way of constructing a Russian identity that is distinct from a European/Western one (cf. Putin 2014). In Russia, 'homosexualism' is often used as an umbrella term for all issues related to the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer community, without making significant distinction among these different types of 'non-traditional sexuality'.

In most pre-modern countries sexuality was only interpreted through a cultural lens (Foucault 1976) where sexuality has always been of interest to the state and the church, as it is related to demography, moral character of citizens, and the ability to control them. Age of consent for sex, contraception, abortion, gay marriage, surrogacy are manifestations of the so-called *dispositif* [or deployment, according to J. Butler] of sexuality. According to Michel Foucault, deployment of sexuality contradicts the state's established power in their attempt to be the knowledge-bearers about sex and sexuality. Foucault states that the '*dispositif* of alliance [...] has the task to reproduce the interplay of relationships and to maintain the law that upholds them' (Foucault 1976). In other words, the *dispositif* of alliance has a homeostatic effect on society, which in turn the *dispositif* of sexuality does not have.

Thus, from the perspective of Foucault, the 'unfolding' or 'deployment' of sexuality may have negative consequences for existing power structures (usually state and/or church), as it undermines their monopoly on knowledge about sexuality and, consequently, their power over people who no longer accept this knowledge. Foucault's theory of the traditional state in the context of this book can be seen as a model for understanding homophobic rhetoric, the adherents of which in the pursuit of 'traditional values' deny, for example, evolution and contraception, that is, to some extent negate the achievements of modernity.

If protecting a nation's territory, its cultural and spiritual values, and its sovereignty is the main task of citizens from a nationalist point of view (Calhoun 2006, 30–31), the main task of a patriot from the perspective of sexuality is reproduction, and alternative forms of sexuality prevent this task. Non-heterosexual orientation is then contrary to traditional

notions of the role of men and women that can be seen by many as a threat to the nation's spiritual values as well, as it undermines patriarchal and religious traditions. Sexuality can also be constructed as a threat to the nation on all fronts, including a potential loss of sovereignty, especially if male homosexuality is equivalent to the position of subordination (cf. Kon 2010). From a pre-modern perspective, sexuality can only be aimed at the support of the state, that is, at least at holding 'historic' territory by maintaining a sufficient population with adequate reproduction. Thus, sexuality is considered 'deviant' or is viewed in the context of an existential threat.

How is the impression of an 'existential threat' created with regard to non-traditional sexuality? By linking homosexuality with paedophilia, not only at the level of nationalist discourse, but also at the state level. Having built a synonymous connection between homosexuality and the 'violation of sexual integrity of minors', securitizing actors not only construct homosexuality as a perversion that is already anchored in Western/Russian collective memory, but they also give it an existential threat vector. This kind of link has already been tested in other countries (cf. Rubin 1984, see also Alcoff in Hekman 1996, 111–116), where anti-gay legislation was also linked to the dangers of paedophilia. As children are viewed as a universal symbol of procreation and of the future, the attack on children becomes a euphemism for an attack on the state. A similar mechanism could be observed during 'blood libel' cases, which were pretexts for organizing Jewish pogroms: the killing of Christian babies and the 'use of their blood' during Passover is a time-tested mechanism to incite hatred. The fact that children 'martyred by Jews' are still revered as saints in the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) gives evidence that blood libel, that is, the postulation of the threat to the future of the nation, is one of the most resistant constructions of enemy images.

7.1 Homosexuality as an Enemy of the State in Russia's Social Media

Levada conducted a public opinion poll in May 2015 concerning 'homosexualism'—a term which, despite its false etymology, seems to be a prevailing linguistic norm in the population instead of 'homosexuality'. The poll revealed the following results:

- 37 % of Russians consider 'homosexualism' to be a disease that should be treated;
- 26 % consider homosexuality a result of bad upbringing;
- 13 % think homosexuality results from sexual abuse;
- only 11 % think that homosexuality is a sexual orientation equal to heterosexuality;
- 14 % of respondents did not know how to answer the question 'what is homosexualism?' (Levada 15 May 2015).

This poll also indicates that respondents believe that homosexuality dominates the lesbian–gay–bisexual–transgender–queer (LGBTQ) vocabulary and is primarily associated with emasculation. But is sexuality, or rather 'deviant' sexuality, a popular discussion topic in the mass media? Based on a research with Integrum World Wide it was less popular than fascism or the USA, but still ranked among the highly debated topics, so it was not surprising that it yielded a lot of data for analysis from all three social networks. Just a cursory look at the list of most frequently used words associated with 'homosexualism' include *paedophilia*, *perversion*, and *sadism*, which suggest that homosexuality is a securitized issue.

Research began with scraping Russia's largest social network VKontakte, which yielded 176 communities that address 'homosexualism', only 12 of which included non-homophobic content. In other words, only about 8% were non-homophobic. Most of the communities were either reiterating governmental-styled rhetoric directly:

- 'Let's say no to propaganda on homosexualism';
- 'Fans against propaganda of homosexualism';
- Or indirectly:
- 'No to homosexualism and zoophilia';
- 'Against Paedophilia and Homosexualism'.

All of these communities had a 100–2000 strong membership. 'Anti-pederast' groups (Russian equivalent *pidoras* is much more derogatory than its English equivalent, and is not tantamount to a medical term in any way) are more numerous (almost ten times as many) and numbered 1876 but have lower membership rates (up to 1600). In their case the usage of the word 'pederast' already indicates an extremely negative attitude and is used as a common swearword.

Vkontakte.com (VK) also has another large swathe of communities that deal with the topic of homosexuality in an even more aggressive way. Most ultra-right communities have a significant homophobic component even if it is not mentioned in the name of the community. Nationalistic groups typically have a much larger audience (between 1000 and 70,000 members) and there are more of them (4019). While nationalist groups do not spearhead the topic of homosexuality, it is debated in their communities where visual imagery of homosexuality is posted in blogs, and where homosexuality is viewed as one of the major threats 'to ethnic Russians'. In VK communities one can often find images of 'choice' between 'love, family, chastity' and 'defilement, distortions and perversions' with the corresponding photograph of two men hugging each other, highlighting the 'perversion' being discussed. In the nationalistic discourse an equal 'crime against the race' could also be a woman having sex with 'Caucasians' or 'Kikes', so being a homosexual, according to nationalists, is a much lesser offence. It is notable that the word 'Caucasian' in Russian only means people from the North Caucasus, who are considered 'black', that is, non-ethnic Russians by Russian nationalists.

According to my research of Russian Twitter material, the audience accepts the construction of homosexuality as a perversion as exemplified by the most frequently used terms as shown in the word cloud (Fig. 7.1). Words like 'perversion', 'propaganda', 'paedophilia', 'sadism', 'masochism', 'threat', 'kids', 'disease', 'violence' are all used in conjunction with 'homosexualism'. After close reading of the comments, it is evident that this community believes homosexuality is synonymous with an existential threat to children.

The word *propaganda* has a negative connotation in Russian and implies a centralized effort at promoting a certain sexuality that caters to the conspiracy theory minded. In other words, a number of commentators in Russian social media connect the idea of 'propaganda of homosexuality' with conscious attempts of certain actors to undermine the Russian state from within. It must be noted, however, that a number of tweets used the terms 'propaganda' and 'deviation' in a sarcastic way; thus the share of negative comments on Twitter was much lower than it appears at first glance. This way, social network users attempted to show that it was not possible to 'propagate' homosexuality and reinterpreted the governmental discourse in a non-threatening fashion.

The most often retweeted visuals, according to ScraperWiki data, were a quotation from Maxim Gorky that equated homosexuality with fascism

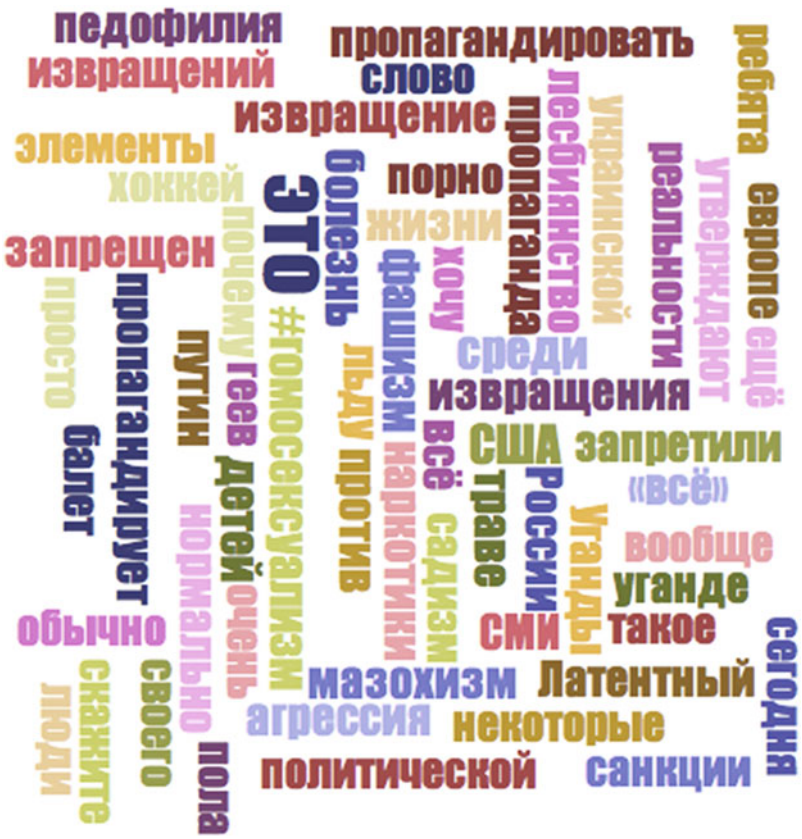

Fig. 7.1 ScraperWiki's word cloud with tweets matching 'homosexualism'

(see the section on embeddedness in this chapter), but also screenshots of homophobic exchanges on Twitter involving Russian businessman Tinkov and a 'before and after' image that supposedly showed one of Russia's anti-gay activists and Member of the Legislative Assembly of Saint Petersburg—Milonov—as being very effeminate (i.e., supposedly homosexual) in his youth. These two examples show that the Twitter audience might not be unanimous in their condemnation of homosexuality as a threat, because both images were accompanied with sarcastic or indignant commentaries in opposition to those who were condemning these two figures. However, the majority of the comments involved negative attitudes

towards homosexuality, putting it in the same context as paedophilia, drug use, and 'other perversions'.

Another Russian social media outlet, Live Journal (LJ), revealed a similar landscape. Overall, LJ communities include many gay-friendly posts, but single blog posts and individual commentaries usually reveal a very hostile attitude. Like VK, LJ nationalist communities that do not have homosexuality as a main theme go all out in supporting a pro-governmental position on 'propaganda'. Commentators on LJ tend to be homophobic: pejorative synonyms for homosexuality are rampant, as well as more commons insults that are used to put down anyone with a different point of view.

At the time of this writing, there were 304,872 posts that mentioned the term 'homosexualism' and approximately 152,039 commentaries with the same mention. Scraping LJ for a pejorative 'pederast' yielded 189,641 posts and 245,025 commentaries, which in the Russian language is a swearword that does not inherently include homosexuality. In the arguably more 'civilized' discussion that did not involve swearing, the exchanges were geared towards a securitized paradigm as well. Posts that mentioned homosexuality usually put it in the same niche as drug addiction, suicide, paedophilia, and violence, which is exemplified by this comment: 'Juvenile drug addiction and alcoholism, paedophilia, homosexuality—all this is a sign that people have no values'. The majority of bloggers expressed indignation about the 'propaganda of homosexuality' in Western countries and were content that Russia is one of the few countries that 'has zero tolerance' for it.

One of the frequently reposted bloggers on the topic of homosexuality is Deacon Kuraev. He noted that 'of course homosexualism and paedophilia are different problems, and the latter is much more serious, but isn't it obvious that tolerance to homosexualism prepares fruitful ground towards a similar attitude to paedophilia?' (Kuraev 2014). Deacon Kuraev is quite representative of the general Russian Orthodox religious discourse and equates homosexuality with sin, which does not elicit disagreement from his ample readership.

Another example of religious rhetoric comes from the movement 'God's Will' that is built around an Orthodox activist Dmitry Enteo (Tsorionov) who has a large VK following. 'God's Will' has been cooperating with the ROC and has sometimes resorted to violent means of protest (the 'Occupy Pedofilyay' movement, for instance, conducts physical attacks on suspected homosexuals). 'God's Will' restricts sexuality on a whole range of issues as understood by Foucault. Dmitry Enteo supporters picket in

front of clinics where abortions are performed, oppose contraception, and reject alternative sexuality based on their religious views.

'God's Will's position on homosexuality can be illustrated by their posters 'The more churches, the fewer homosexuals' and 'The more churches, the less paedophiles'. Yet again these are examples of purposeful construction of synonymy between homosexuality and paedophilia that brings in the existential threat component. Such constructions also resonate in terms of collective memory: if in the Soviet Union homosexuality was designated as a product of bourgeois society, then, accordingly, in a healthy socialist society homosexuality could no longer exist. In the case of 'God's Will,' 'healthy socialist society' turns into a churched society in which homosexuality is eradicated.

Naturally, there are also more reasoned commentators who point out that homosexuality is not a disease and that the legislation on 'propaganda' is harmful to the adolescents whom this legislation is supposed to protect, but these kinds of comments are 'drowned' in an avalanche of insults and obscene language. This chapter may give the impression that intolerance to an alternative sexuality exists only at the level of discursive structures, but according to the analytical centre Sova, attacks on persons suspected of non-traditional sexual orientation became rampant in 2013, while more radical groups are actively engaged in 'hunting' for alleged 'gay paedophiles' (Alperovich and Yudina 2014). Thus, radical nationalists have long linked homosexuality with paedophilia in the construction of an existential threat and it is disturbing that this discursive construction has been taken up on the governmental level.

7.2 Constructing Deviancy as an Existential Threat

In order to establish the existence of an enemy image, it is necessary to point out whether there is an enemy image structure that involves threat and personification. One of the ways to do this is to establish if visuals that are associated with the given threat have a personification component, that is, represent a threat as a person, ascribe it anthropomorphic characteristics, either visually or linguistically (cf. Twardzisz 2013).

Linguistically the scraped material provides an abundance of personification examples: not only is the threat ascribed actor potential, there is also a very significant personification of the referent object—

children. As the search term in this case is a phenomenon ('homosexualism'), most of the personification examples are carried out through visuals, although linguistically most comments/posts carry out a double personification such as 'Homosexuality is a disease. They [orphanages] will send kids to live with those and condemn them to the same fate'. One of the motives in the discussion on homosexuality is related to conspiracy theories such as 'if we disapprove of homosexuality, it means that American Jews will support "gay rights"', implying that American Jews are conspiring to bring Russia's downfall. Thus, homosexuality is also construed as a disease that is 'sent' to Russia from outside by other actors.

There are several tendencies in visual representation. Major motives involving anti-gay images use (1) Soviet-era posters with an updated caption ('be vigilant—unmask a paedophile' instead of 'unmask a fascist'); (2) motif of sin; (3) image of a heterosexual couple/family as an opposition to homosexuality; and (4) a reference to prison slang that describes a man who is forced to sexually satisfy other men in prison as a 'rooster' or 'opushennyi', which is a very common insult in Russia (Fig. 7.2).

Even though in Fig. 7.2c the threat of homosexuality is represented through an animal and not a person, the linguistic specificity of the usage of the word 'rooster' plus the exaggerated behind of the animal make it another instance of a personified threat. Also, dehumanization and the reduction of people to an animal level is a common enmification mechanism.

Visuals which associate homosexuality with drug abuse or homosexuality with paedophilia are common. Moreover, homosexuality is also put in

Fig. 7.2 **a**, **b**, and **c**: Homophobic group avatars on vk.com, 'Unmask a pedophile', 'Love against homosexualism', 'No to gay parades'

Fig. 7.3 The caption reads Eurovision 2014 (song contest). They (the women on the *left*) represent Russia and this (woman on the *right*) represents one of European countries. So where is civilization?

a Huntington-esque 'clash of civilizations' context, with Russia being 'on the right side of history'. The Eurovision Song Contest of 2014 added to the personification of homosexuality with its non-heteronormal winner that fuelled a 'righteous indignation' in Russian online forums over the decline of Europe. One of the common personification examples is from a VK Scrape and shown in Fig. 7.3.

The linguistic details in the caption are also notable: Conchita Wurst (Fig. 7.3, photo on the right) is described as *eto* or 'it' in Russian, which suggests that its referent does not have a soul.[1] Thus, the personification of a 'homosexual threat' caters also to the discussion of Russian identity as opposed to the European, that is, a corrupt one. Moreover, in the comments surrounding the song contest, words like 'Gayropa' and claims that Europe is trying to propagate 'this' (i.e., homosexuality) in Russia are also ample.

Personification in the rest of the imagery is usually manifested through representations of effeminate men, images of men kissing men (but not

of women kissing!), which is an indicator that homosexuality is primarily viewed as an insult to masculinity. One of the underlying fears in Russian society is the loss of 'masculinity', with masculinity being of ultimate value, while feminine qualities are less valued. Also, personification of homosexuality as a threat is channelled through photographs of supposedly unattractive same-sex couples with children (ugliness as a notable mechanism for enemy image construction), which yet again echoes the governmental rhetoric about the protection of the young.

In sum, the threat of 'deviant sexuality' that is usually exemplified by 'homosexualism' on Russian social networks correlates significantly with visual representations of feminine men, which personifies the threat related to emasculation. A significant proportion of the commentators personify not only the threat, but also the referent object which, according to my theoretical framework, makes the enmification process more effective as it is associated with an enemy image on the one side and a self-image on the other.

7.3 Taboo in Collective Memory

A successful construction of an enemy image requires an existential threat but also a reference to a similar discursive structure in the collective memory of society. In the case of sexuality, collective memory in the post-Soviet space does not provide such a vast archive of collective memory embeddedness, as, for example, fascism. It is rather a 'Little Mermaid's silent dilemma', to apply Lene Hansen's metaphor to the silence in security discourse (Hansen 2000): inability to discursively engage with an issue does not mean that it does not exist. The area of sexuality was a taboo topic in mainstream Soviet society yet was rather available in 'bare life' communities, such as prisons (Cf. Agamben 1999; Kon 2010). Nevertheless, it does represent a fertile ground for the resurrection of an enemy image especially due to its previous taboo status from a linguistic point of view.

Homophobic rhetoric may even be connected to the historical roots of obscene vocabulary in the Russian language (Zhel'vis 1997; Dreizin and Priestley 1982). According to numerous studies, taboo Russian vocabulary has a very strong gendered dimension, which describes the relationship between master and slave. Thus, putting the recipient in the 'female' position, the agent legitimizes a higher hierarchical position than the recipient, which indicates the supposed loss of masculinity by the recipient

(Kon 2010). Homosexuality in this context is a kind of 'feminine' quality and therefore undesirable for men, which linguistically subordinates men.

Among the later constructs of homosexuality, the Soviet campaign against 'pederasts' is most notable. Here follows a few quotations from the 1930s to assess the level of discourse when 'sodomy' was criminalized. It is notable that Soviet criminal practice operated with the term 'muzhelozhstvo', a legal term adopted from the Tsarist penal code of 1832, which is usually translated as 'sodomy'. In a memorandum prepared by the chairman of the OGPU (Joint State Political Directorate), precursor of the KGB, in 1933 for Josef Stalin, G. Yagoda talks about organized homosexual spy cells, and that 'homosexuals were recruiting and corrupting healthy Soviet youth' (quoted in Kon 2010, 254). Even Maxim Gorky wrote an article for the newspaper *Pravda* where, under the slogan of proletarian humanism, he offered to destroy homosexuality, which according to him was the cause of fascism (Gorky 1953, v. 27, 238). The Gorky quote reappeared on Twitter in contemporary Russia with a portrait of the writer.

One of the reasons for the relatively quick return to the understanding of homosexuality after a brief period of sexual freedom in the 1920s was the Orthodox Christian legacy of religious prohibitions and taboos regarding sex life in the collective memory of Soviet citizens (Kon 2010). Thus, homosexuality as a perversion was construed as a 'sin' against socialist society, which resonated well with the image of homosexuality in the collective memory of most of the population of the USSR. Moreover, in the Soviet discourse on 'sodomy' a state security motif was ever-present: homosexuals were considered an easy target for foreign intelligence services; thus homosexuals were construed as a threat to national security and as a channel of *tletvornoe vliyanie Zapada* [pestilent Western influence].

In the USSR, from a medical point of view, any sexual orientation other than heterosexuality fell into the category of 'sexual perversion'—'disorders of focus of sexual attraction or the conditions for its satisfaction', as specified in the *Manual for General Practitioners* (Spravochnik 1983, 448). In addition to the author of this article mentioning a dubious 'treatment' for this 'sexual perversion', the article also stressed the importance of proper sex education among adolescents and abuse prevention. Even now, the majority of the Russian population uses the term 'homosexualism', not 'homosexuality', that is, defining it as a disease—a relic of Soviet-era linguistic norms, whereby alternative sexuality was considered by medical practice as a disease or perversion acquired from the outside.

Another collective memory reference is the Soviet-era definition of homosexuality taken from the Ozhegov Dictionary, which is a standard Russian reference dictionary available in virtually every household. In February 2014, the outdated definition of homosexuality taken from the Ozhegov Dictionary was one of the most retweeted in Cyrillic Twitter. Needless to say, the definition from the Soviet era defined homosexuality as a 'sexual perversion of being attracted to the same sex'. However, the appeal to the Ozhegov Dictionary is like a reference to the Webster's Dictionary in the USA and can be quite effective as an authority.

Collective memory references are also present in visuals such as Soviet-era propaganda posters that depict spies or Nazis, or have the Great Patriotic War as their theme. In these types of cases, the concept of existential threat is easily personified by the enemy image. The Pathos formula (Efal 2007) previously used to describe a war with Nazi Germany is restyled visually as a crusade of Western values against Russian identity. Even though for most Russians the Great Patriotic War is a post-memory (see the section 'Collective Memory' in Chap. 2), its traumatic effect is often sacralized in Russian society, especially by governmental officials who misuse it for political reasons.

7.4 Governmental Guardians of Morality

Homosexuality was decriminalized in Russia in 1993 and only in 1999 was it depathologized, that is, Russia adopted the Classification of Diseases from the World Health Organization, where there is no such disease as 'homosexuality'. As noted by Kon, 'Why terrible "sexual perversion" suddenly became a normal option, no one, even the doctors were not really educated on. Some poorly educated psychiatrists and sexologists who were vexed about the loss of power and money took the demedicalization of homosexuality in a hostile way and instead of explaining to the public the essence of the case, continued to make homophobic statements that were not properly rebuffed among medical specialists' (Kon 2007).

The first attempts to recriminalize homosexuality after the abolition of the criminal code article on sodomy were made at the local and federal levels: some subjects of the Russian Federation have banned the 'propaganda of homosexuality' in 2006, while the State Duma deputy Alexander Chuev brought a similar bill four times between 2003 and 2009. Among the subjects of the Russian Federation that have endorsed a similar law at the time of writing are Saint Petersburg, Arkhangelsk, Kostroma,

Ryazan, Novosibirsk, Magadan, Samara, Kaliningrad, the region of Irkutsk, Krasnodar krai, Chukotka Autonomous Area, and the Republic of Bashkortostan, while in different versions of the law homosexuality was linked with paedophilia, the 'promotion of homosexuality, bisexuality and transgender', or 'homosexuality and bisexuality'. All laws mandate the prohibition in order to protect minors, as a referent object.

An explanatory memorandum to the Russian federal law in 2013 states that 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations' should be understood as 'purposeful activity and uncontrolled dissemination of information that could harm the health, moral and spiritual development, including forming misconceptions about social equivalence of traditional and unconventional sexual relations'. None of the laws adopted create criminal liability for 'propaganda', in most cases, the laws create administrative responsibility. Thus, criminalization as such did not happen, but there is a tendency to pathologize homosexuality, coupled with the promotion of a discourse of existential threat through 'the ability to inflict harm' on children.

Pro-government organizations mostly have relatively moderate views, but intolerance for alternative sexuality, either as part of the discourse on 'friendship of peoples' (Hutchings and Tolz 2011) or with a religious (often Orthodox) angle, is almost constant in their rhetoric. The trial of the punk band Pussy Riot participants, oddly enough, can be seen as one of the causes of the discussions about sexuality, adding in the debate about the 'moral values', feminism and women's role in modern society. In the next paragraphs are a few examples of pro-government organizations that somehow touched on the theme of sexuality in their activities.

The movement 'Essence of Time' (Sut' Vremeni) organized by political scientist Sergey Kurginyan and supported by President Putin outlines the threats to Russia quite extensively, and the topic of sexuality is present in several forms. The 'Essence of Time' classifies homosexuality and 'feminization' of Russia, which are considered, in this context, synonymous with homosexuality. This categorization corresponds to the argument proposed by Kon on the rejection of the concept of 'feminine', that is, passive position in the history of Russia. If we connect this debate to the trial of Pussy Riot (who, incidentally, are also one of the threats) and discussions about feminism, feminization becomes understood, according to Kurginyan, as a kind of 'vagina dentata', which is a folktale where a woman's vagina was said to contain teeth, which is a euphemism for the threat of loss of male

dignity. To be fair, other threats to Russia also include Harry Potter, Lars von Trier, and postmodernism, so homosexuality might not necessarily be a priority.

An outrageous form of homophobia as an existential threat to Russia can be seen in the movement 'Russian Mothers', headed by Irina Bergset and supported by governmental child rights ombudsman Pavel Astakhov (Rossiskaya Gazeta 2011). Initially opposed to the administration of juvenile justice in Russia, Mrs Bergset moved to more general attacks of the 'Western' way of life that, in her view, includes homosexual violence against minors, supposedly raised to the rank of tradition in Norway (sic). In one of the many interviews given by Mrs Bergset, she talks about alleged episodes of homosexual violence against her children, who were dressed in a 'Putin costume' (!) (Lenta.ru 2 March 2013), which, in the interpretation of Mrs Bergset, indicates that homosexuality not only is an existential threat that precludes violence against children, but is also connected to the desacralization and humiliation of Russia's manhood.

The rhetoric of the 'Russian Mothers' movement is consistent with the theoretical justification of the enemy image: an existential threat in the form of a combination of homosexuality, paedophilia (which is consistent with the construction of homosexuality as a perversion, along with paedophilia, on the state level), and Western values is ever-present. In an effort to strengthen the existential threat motif on flyers for participation in a 'Russian Mothers' demonstration, a poster 'Red Army Soldier, Save!' by V.B. Koretsky (from the Great Patriotic War) was used. This famous wartime poster depicted a mother and child huddled together and threatened by a bayonet with a Nazi swastika. This palimpsest is an effective reference to an enemy image in the Russian collective memory.

Most Russian politicians follow the party line and condemn homosexuality as a threat to child development and Russia as a nation. Parliamentarian Elena Mizulina (who became a source of numerous jokes on the Russian blogosphere) even accused Wikipedia of being ruled by a 'paedophile lobby' because Russian Wikipedia criticized the legislation on homosexuality (Slon.ru 2012). One of the typical ruling party examples of rhetoric on homosexuality is represented by Sergey Dorofeyev from the 'United Russia' party:

> Propaganda of homosexualism in Russia is extremely ubiquitous […] It is conducted through the media, and by public campaigns promoting homo-

> sexuality as normal behaviour. It is especially dangerous for children and youth, who are still unable to critically assess the avalanche of information that falls on them every day. […] Family, Motherhood and Childhood in the traditional understanding passed on by our ancestors are the values that provide a continuous change of generations, act for the preservation and development of the multinational people of the Russian Federation, and therefore require special protection from the state. (Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 25 January 2013)

In this case, an existential threat vector is pointed not only at children, but also at Russia as a multinational state, which conforms to my hypothesis of children being a pretext for governmental interests in security. Moreover, the emphasis on *propaganda* implies a concerted effort at injecting a specific type of information into Russian society, which has a conspiracy theory undertone. At the same time, Mr Dorofeyev emphasized the fact that the punishment is only for the promotion and not for homosexual orientation of an individual—which is curious from a linguistic point of view because in the same statement he used the mutually exclusive concepts of 'homosexualism' and 'homosexuality'.

Other parliamentarians underlined the fact that 'homosexual behaviour' is dangerous and that putting it under control is a European practice, referring to the European Court of Rights case of 1981 and continuing the synonymy of homosexualism and paedophilia:

> A democratic society requires a certain control over homosexual behaviour, including preventing the defiling of persons who are particularly vulnerable—primarily children and youth. (Gosudarstvennaya Duma 25 January 2013)

It is surprising that the final variant of legislation did not include the word 'homosexuality' at all, even though it was the operative notion that the parliamentarians understood under 'non-traditional sexual relations'—the term that ended up in the final version of the law to protect children. In earlier discussions of this legislation, homosexuality was also put in the same context as 'propaganda of drugs, alcohol propaganda, propaganda of other unhealthy things' (Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 8 January 2009). It is also notable that the term 'propaganda of homosexuality' appeared in Duma sessions as early as 2004 (Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 20 February 2004).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, President Putin put the discussion on homosexuality within the context of 'civilizational code' and 'spiritual bonds'. In his extended commentary about homosexuality Putin noted that

> In all European countries and in Russia there is a big problem with the population, a demographic problem. Fertility is low, Europeans are dying out…Same-sex marriages do not produce children. Do you want to survive at the expense of migrant workers? […] But let us make our own choices, as we see it for your own country'. (Kremlin, 19 September 2013)

Putin put the debate on homosexuality in the European context and brought the survival of Europe as a civilization to the fore. In his statement, he construed Russia as a part, yet a distinct part, of Europe with similar problems, and his answer was much less harsh than the statements made by the members of United Russia Party members or other officials such as Pavel Astakhov who cursed people who support same-sex marriage. However, Putin even condemned the USA for outlawing homosexual relations in certain states, while emphasizing Russia's approach:

> We do not have a ban on non-traditional forms of sexual interaction between people. We have a ban on the promotion of homosexuality and paedophilia. I want to emphasize this. On propaganda among minors. [These are] different things—a ban on certain relationships or to promote these relations. (RIA Novosti, 17 January 2014)

However, linking homosexuality with paedophilia not only directs the threat vector on children, but it also constructs a threat to the country's future as a state. Moreover, some organizations with religious affiliation that condemn homosexuality and feminism can harken back to almost a 1000-year tradition of religious taboos about sexuality and attacks on reproductive choice. Legislation banning 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations' creates a new cycle of enmification and concludes this discussion of the conditions that facilitate a successful enemy image, especially in the interpretation of nationalist and radical nationalist groups who use this legislation to justify violence against people who identify as LGBTQ.

7.5 Conclusion

Sexuality is a perfect medium to channel an enemy image: by coupling alternative sexuality with the threat to children and personifying it with pictures of kissing men or famous gay pop idols the enemy image is sedimented in the population even on the linguistic level. At the same time, Soviet practice provides a large pool of collective memory references to 'sins' against socialist society that are now transformed into religious discourse. Moreover, governmental rhetoric maintains the existential threat vector directed at children by coupling homosexuality with paedophilia.

According to my analysis, homosexuality as a threat fulfils the felicity conditions in order to function as a viable enemy image; it involves personification of an existential threat and an abundance of visual material; it has deep-rooted embeddedness through extensive collective memory references to Soviet era and beyond. And finally, the Russian government provides an unequivocally negative construction of homosexuality that includes discriminatory political measures that are aimed to 'protect' children.

Scraping Cyrillic segments of three main social networks proved that homosexuality as a threat is discussed widely on social networks. There is also a lot of evidence that pejorative synonyms or the word 'homosexual' in Russian are rampant as insults online. Personification, that is, anthropomorphizing of the threat, is also quite common, which functions through visual representation of supposedly unattractive same-sex couples, references to prison slang, motives of sin, and juxtaposition with 'healthy' heterosexual couples. Personification functions through embeddedness as well, because anti-gay activists use Soviet-era wartime posters and caricatures to indicate an existential threat by referencing fascism, spies, and villains in Soviet popular culture.

Moreover, scraping of social networks provided abundant material that indicates the deep-rooted perception of homosexuality as a disease, which is also a vestige of Soviet-era linguistic usage, pathologizing it as 'homosexualism'. Also notable is that visual materials are rearticulating governmental rhetoric, which also suggests another level of acceptance of the threat by the audience.

Construction of homosexuality as an existential threat to Russia not only is based on collective memory but does draw heavily from it: the persecution of 'degenerates' and promiscuous people in 'people's courts' and the criminalization of homosexuality were common practice in the Soviet

Union. Moreover, this kind of construction is also linked to a more comprehensive Russian uniqueness discourse: a discussion of 'who we are not' helps those who, from the time of the debate between Slavophiles and Westerners in nineteenth century, were looking for signs of the collapse of the West, and finally found it in sexual liberalism, which is opposed to truly Russian spiritual values and 'bonds'. Additionally, such a construction of sexuality draws from the tradition of depicting moral depravity as a channel of foreign influence and thus alien to patriotism.

Governmental rhetoric completes the cycle of enmification; even though on the highest level it is acknowledged that sexual orientation should not be punished, putting homosexuality on the same level with paedophilia confirms the construction of homosexuality as an existential threat. Unfortunately, governmental support to homophobic organizations and banning propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations reinforces Russia's view that homosexuality is construed as an existential threat to Russia as a country, and most Russians are ready to accept this kind of rhetoric.

Note

1. All Russian nouns are divided into animate ('soul-having') and inanimate ('non-soul-having'). With the neutral demonstrative pronoun 'eto', the author of the poster reduced a person to a status of an inanimate object.

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CHAPTER 8

Migration

Anti-migrant sentiments are part of a wider problem of nationalism in Russia. These sentiments are directed not only at international migrants, but also at Russian citizens who come from the North Caucasian republics such as Chechnya or Dagestan or, plainly, do not look 'Slavic enough' (Sevortian 2009, 19). Soviet-era vernacular referred to these clashes as 'inter-ethnic strife' (*mezhnatsionalnaia rozn*) (Hutchings and Tolz 2011, 7), but unfortunately this anti-migrant sentiment reflects a general tendency to reduce the 'essence of a Russian' to a phenotype.

According to opinion polls and sociological research in Russia, people who state their ethnicity as 'Russian' regard ethnicity as a vital marker, while also tending to consider violence as a possible tool to combat 'injustice towards their own folk' (Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences 2011, 211; Levada 2014). The Russian people, government, and media engage in several competing discourses that refer to different ways of representing (often internal) migrants in Russian society: (1) friendship of the peoples, (2) ethnic criminality, (3) culture conflict/inter-ethnic strife, (4) conspiracy of power (Hutchings and Tolz 2011). I will add a fifth discourse: terrorism. Terrorism can also be applied to internal migrants and is partly responsible for their representation as bearing a threat.

The most widespread discourses that are propagated in the Russian mass media are *ethnic criminality, culture conflict,* and *friendship of the peoples* (Hutchings and Tolz 2011). All of these discourses, however,

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have the same points of references: even the supposedly politically correct *friendship of the peoples* discourse that describes the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups includes distinctions grounded in physical appearance, emphasizing the otherness principally in racist terms with long-lasting consequences. Even when attempting to conform to the *friendship of the peoples* discourse, the Russian mass media often devolves into *ethnic criminality* and *culture conflict* discourses by representing 'Caucasians' as an organized group involved in criminal activity or by accentuating religious/cultural differences. The term 'Caucasians' in the Russian language only denotes people from the Caucasus mountain area in the south of Russia, not a skin tone.

The fact that ethnic criminality and culture conflict discourses are so well sedimented in Russian society can also be attributed to the two Chechen wars when the Russian government led a military campaign in order to regain federal control over Chechnya and Dagestan in 1994–1996 and 1999–2009. This discourse was further strengthened following terrorist attacks carried out in Russia since the 1990s (Verkhovsky 2009, 96). In addition, most terrorists declared themselves to be Muslim, which inexorably sparked a wave of Islamophobia reminiscent of Europe in the aftermath of 9/11 (Allen and Nielsen 2002; Verkhovsky 2009). By emphasizing the origin of migrants and associating territoriality with threat, these types of threat narratives fell on fruitful ground. In this case, the pre-existing terrorism discourse acted as a felicity condition for the infiltration of narratives of ethnic criminality and culture conflict.

The discourses of *terrorism, ethnic criminality, culture conflict*, and to a large extent *friendship of the peoples* are very suitable for the othering process. They all provide an out-group and represent categories along the lines of which the othering process should proceed. This othering process reproduces pre-existing ethnic divisions and in the end enables securitization by representing the out-group as threatening to the in-group—through criminal activities (ethnic criminality), alien cultural influences (culture conflict), or physical danger (terrorism).

The discourses have different referent objects: with terrorism and ethnic criminality the referents are ordinary citizens. In the case of culture conflict and conspiracy of power, the referent object is the community of (ethnic) Russians, that is, group identity (classic securitization understanding of a societal threat), while in the case of friendship of the peoples, the state is the referent object, or, to be precise, indivisible Russia in its present borders. When these discourses are employed, its speakers have

different referent objects in mind. For instance, nationalist proponents of 'Stop Feeding the Caucasus' slogan (Lenta.ru 24 October 2011) are very likely to disregard Russia's territorial integrity for the sake of building a culturally homogenous society.

8.1 Audience's Ethnic Other and Russian Identity

In general, migration as a threat has faded away in light of the Ukrainian crisis, even though it had been high on the agenda until recently. The instances of inter-ethnic clashes in the Karelian city of Kondopoga and Manezhnaia square in Moscow sparked debate on the topic in the mass media and, by extension, in social media (Alperovich and Yudina 2014). The overshadowed threat of migration also shows up in the monitoring of Integrum World Wide: just before the Sochi Olympic Games in 2014 migration as a threat scored quite high, but after the events in Ukraine the threat of migration faded into the background, eclipsed by the threat of fascism in Ukraine. However, the theme of the migrant threat remained in the background and a spike in the threat level was registered by Integrum following the inter-ethnic clashes in the Moscow suburb of Biryulyovo in October 2013. As in previous similar cases (Manezhnaia, Pugachyov, Kondopoga), the reason for the pogroms was the murder of a local (ethnic Russian), which inhabitants attributed to a migrant.

Generally speaking, the narratives employed by social network users in the case of Biryulyovo were similar to the narratives used in the aftermath of Manezhnaia riots (Gaufman 2014): culture conflict was emphasized by the photographs of kneeling Muslims in the streets of Moscow, ethnic criminality was underlined through alleged murder, phenotypical difference was brought to the fore even by the police forces describing the 'non-Slavic looks' of the perpetrators. The difference between this and Manezhnaia, however, was that the migrants in question in 2013 were explicitly described as labour and illegal, thus slightly deviating from the usual discourse of culture conflict, when internal migrants are derided for bringing 'alien culture' to Russian heartland.

In the Biryulyovo case, the victim, Yegor Scherbakov, was allegedly knifed by a 'non-Slavic-looking person' (Newsru.com 2013), 'a Central Asian or Caucasian citizen'. The Moscow police emphasized that the alleged killer was 'not a citizen of the Russian Federation' but rather a citizen of Azerbaijan. As in previous cases, Biryulyovo locals with support

from nationalist groups and football fans (as in the case of Manezhnaia) protested in front of the police department and then spontaneously moved to devastate the vegetable market *Sadovod* under the slogan 'Russia for Russians'. The participants of the pogrom beat up 'non-Slavic-looking' people on the way, torched cars, smashed some shops presumably held by migrants, and crashed another market *Pokrovskaya* (Vesti.ru 2013). Although the main threat of the Manezhnaia riots was framed as internal migration, in the Biryuyovo case the migrant was already framed as an external threat, which is similar to the far-right Western rhetoric (Huysmans 2000; Ibrahim 2005) that concentrates on inflow of ethnic others that bring diseases and economic hardship.

As with the Manezhnaia riots, pogroms in Biryuyovo were widely discussed on social networks. Figure 8.1 shows the online discussion that ensued around the events.

Here the most frequently used words indicate an extremely othered context: words like 'mosque', 'illegal', 'fight', 'Russian language' show that migrants are associated with an alien culture and criminality. Also, the hashtag #MGD (acronym for Moscow City Duma) and FMS (Federal Migration Service) show that a lot of tweets expressed dissatisfaction with the authorities' inaction with regard to 'migrant criminality' in the vegetable market. Hashtag #Sochi2014 is a remnant of discussions around the construction of the Olympic Village, which was primarily carried out by a hired foreign labour force—often underpaid.

Vkontakte.com (VK) users reacted with similar narratives, talking about threats of swelling migrant population illustrated by photos of Muslims celebrating Kurban Bayram, a Turkish name by which the Muslim holiday of sacrifice, Eid al Adha, is known in Russia. Noteworthy is that although the individuals kneeling on the streets of Moscow during the festival are likely Muslim, they are not necessarily migrants; thus, there is a frequent conflation of 'migrant' and Muslim identity. Variations of images that depict praying Muslims in the streets of Moscow are very popular on social networks and are not only supposed to emphasize their 'difference', but they are also aimed at portraying the Other in a submissive position. This represents a milder version of a narrative that derides Muslims from the North Caucasus as being homosexuals (Kon 2010). After the Biryulyovo riots, however, this narrative shifted from a sexual one to a narrative emphasizing economic considerations: availability of jobs and economic security.

The Ukrainian crisis overshadowed most discussions on Live Journal (LJ), but anti-migrant sentiments came up in the discussions around

Fig. 8.1 ScraperWiki's word cloud with Tweets matching 'Migrants' included the words 'illegal', 'fight', 'Moscow State Duma', and 'labour'

Chechens fighting in the east of Ukraine (mostly among the pro-Ukrainian audience) and also while discussing 'Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West' (PEGIDA), a German political movement based in Dresden. Since October 2014 PEGIDA has been organizing public demonstrations aimed at the German government, against what it considers to be the Islamization of Europe.[1] During and in the aftermath of the Biryulyovo riots, LJ was also a platform for intense discussion. A highly popular LJ blog post on the pogroms was provided by lj zyalt (the same

blogger that provided the coverage of Manezhnaia riots), where discussion veered off into conspiracy theories.

Among the most frequently used words in the comments was 'Jews' (even 'Caucasians' paled in comparison), which arose following a conspiratorial discussion on 'who was benefitting from ethnic clashes between ethnic Russians and Caucasians'—the above-mentioned 'conspiracy of power' discourse from Tolz/Hutchings. A non-conspiracy-related comment to the events in Biryulyovo typically went as follows: '[Russians are] not Nazis, Russians could even get along with Martians, but they had enough of *ethnic* criminality and are fed up of the state's inaction, the local people have simply been driven to the edge' (Comment to Zyalt's post, 13 October 2013, emphasis added). Thus, average commentators were emphasizing the ethnic criminality discourse in conjunction with a conspiracy of power discourse.

Alexey Navalny, a Russian oppositional opinion maker who has been continuously silenced by the Russian authorities (Laruelle 2014), largely sided with the pogromists and blamed the inaction of authorities in prosecuting the original murder (like in the Manezhnaia riots case), all the while heavily criticizing Russia's migration policy:

> Russia has to be clear and has to have a clear policy in this field: (1) we aim to reduce the number of migrants, (2) we introduce visa regimes, and (3) we are implementing a strategy to raise labour productivity, (4) only highly qualified workers can freely come, (5) We all fight against the emergence of ethnic ghettos (like this vegetable market). (Navalny 13 October 2013)

Navalny in this case represents a relatively moderate version of nationalism compared to the far-right opposition (Moen-Larsen 2014) and comparatively moderate stance on the inter-ethnic clashes, both in the ethnic criminality discourse aspect and in the conspiracy of power discourse. He does not mention terrorism in his post, which is mostly focused on human security (the murder of the ethnic Russian). But given his popularity in the liberal opposition, his views can be considered a dangerous inclusion of far-right rhetoric to the otherwise *friendship of the people*-oriented discourse, which dominates among the liberal opposition.

Navalny's audience mostly agreed with him: 'and what do people have to do now, if in your area it is dangerous to go out? Putler [conflation of Putin and Hitler] will never introduce a visa regime; the Interior Ministry and the FMS will lose their money. Migrants are very useful for the govern-

ment, otherwise they would have long dealt with the matter' (Comment on Navalny's post, 13 October 2013). Conspiracy of power is visible in this comment, which accuses Russian authorities of deliberately inundating Russia with migrants. More extreme commentators extrapolated the murder of Yegor Scherbakov to a 'genocide of Russians' on their own territory—a clear reverberation of Putinesque discourse on the 'genocide of Russians' in Chechnya. Thus, even with the migration threat, a very diverse discursive landscape is visible: various Others are being interchangeably antagonized, reflecting the public's and government's confusion regarding Russian identity.

8.2 Roots of Migrant Threat: Soviet 'Friendship of the Peoples' and Terrorism

Even though the Soviet regime, an 'affirmative action empire' (Martin 2001), glorified 'internationalism' and supressed manifestations of nationalism, 'its nationality policy pervasively institutionalized…territorial *nationhood* and ethnic *nationality* as fundamental social categories. In doing so, it inadvertently created a political field supremely conducive to nationalism' (Brubaker 1996, 17, original emphasis), as each ethnic group was related to a particular territorial entity and was only recognized as such in relation to a subject of the federation (Martin 1998). As Morozov notes, 'ethnicity was institutionally and discursively embedded through the system of "national" autonomies and the organic idea of ethnicity as the only "real" foundation for nationhood' (Morozov 2008, 167).

Thus, the notion of nationality, which is bound in Western Europe to the concept of citizenship, derives in Russia from a Soviet atavism that included *natsional'nost* (ethnicity) in the vital passport data—the so-called 'fifth box' passports (Simonsen 1999) that indicated the *natsional'nost* of each citizen and allowed to represent each ethnicity in governmental institutions in a proportionate way (Simonsen 1999, 1072). The imprecise use of the term *national'nost* in Soviet and post-Soviet terminology is symptomatic of the ambiguous policy and language concerning nationality/ethnicity in the USSR (Hutchings 2011). Soviet picture memory also inadvertently created a basis for a phenotypic differentiation: 'friendship of the peoples' discourse was often manifested through posters with different ethnicities in their traditional costumes (see Fig. 8.2).

Fig. 8.2 Poster 'Great Stalin is the symbol for the friendship of the peoples in the USSR!' by V. Koretskiy, 1950

Soviet cinema also contributed to the perception of ethnic minorities as 'noble savages' that have their own traditions and culture in their own enclaves. This narrative could be explained partly by the almost ubiquitous knowledge among Russians of Russian nineteenth-century literature on the Caucasian war (Tolstoy, Pushkin, Lermontov, etc.), where local Caucasians were romanticized in their otherness (cf. Russell 2005). A notable example is a Soviet favourite comedy *Kidnapping Caucasian Style* (*Kavkazskaya Plennica*), where Nina—a 'sportswoman, Komsomol member [communist youth organization], and a beauty'—attracts the attention of a local bureaucrat who 'buys' her as a wife from her uncle for the price of a herd of sheep, a fridge, and certificate of honour. The 'ritual' kidnapping goes awry when a non-Caucasian student gets caught up in the situation and rescues Nina from the forced marriage. Even though the movie is a comedy and a spoof on outdated mores, it emphasized seemingly Caucasian traditions such as arranged marriage, female inferiority, and blood vengeance. The overblown visual representation of 'savages' makes them look less threatening, but is still based on tourist perceptions of how Caucasians are supposed to look.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 that was preceded by several bloody inter-ethnic conflicts, especially in Central Asia, Caucasus, and Baltic countries (Tishkov 1997), inter-ethnic relations in Russia took a turn for the worse. On the Russian territory proper, one of the worst conflicts erupted in Chechnya, where an independent republic was proclaimed in 1991. The ensuing two Chechen wars left more than 25,000 people dead on both sides (Krivosheev 2001). Apart from the military victims, there were heavy civilian casualties, and while most Western outlets emphasized the loss of civilian life on the Chechen side (Cornell 1999), Russian officials adopted a different narrative.

In July 2000, Russian President Vladimir Putin, referring to the reasons for the wars in Chechnya, said that 'in recent years in Chechnya, we observed large-scale genocide against the Russian people, against the Russian-speaking population. Unfortunately, no one responded' (Putin 2000). The use of such strong words as 'genocide' was obviously intentional and was probably aimed at justifying the use of force in the protracted conflict. Moreover, the narrative of the 'Khasavyurt capitulation'[2] in the first Chechen war, where Russians were killed and expelled en masse, and the absence of measures to protect them, fit well with the narrative of the economics and political turmoil, and loss of great power status that characterized the 1990s (a period known as *likhie devyanostye* [tumultuous 90s] in Russia). It is in contrast to this painful period that President Putin is trying to set his presidential terms (cf. Morozov 2008, 161).

Terrorism is another issue that contributes to the framing of migration discourse in security terms. Major terror attacks in Russia were carried out by terrorists from the North Caucasus—the Beslan school hostage crisis in September 2004 (Milashina 2007) or the Nord-Ost hostage crisis in October 2002 (CNN 2002). As in Europe after 9/11 (Allen and Nielsen 2002), terrorist attacks spurred a wave of xenophobia in Russia (Verkhovsky 2009), especially towards so-called Kavkazcy—a pejorative generalization of Russian citizens from the North Caucasus.

Television coverage of terror attacks, especially the hostage taking in the theatre during the musical 'Nord-Ost', which left 174 dead, used truly disturbing footage showing the perpetrators in black masks and veiled women. As the terrorists demanded the withdrawal of troops from Chechnya, Chechen wars and Islamic terrorism were merged in the same threat discourse. Given that Chechnya is in the North Caucasus, predominantly Muslim, and was a location of war hostilities and a source of terror-

ism, it is not surprising that the North Caucasus in general is associated in post-Soviet collective memory with multiple threats related to human and cultural security.

One of the latest boosts to collective memory of the migrant threat came in 2010 with the Manezhnaia race riots. On 6 December 2010, a group of Muscovites, including two fans of Spartak, one of Russia's famous football clubs, got into a row with another group of people, later identified as 'Caucasians'. The circumstances of the events are still unclear, but the verbal exchange of invectives led to a physical confrontation that left Yegor Sviridov, a prominent member of Spartak's fan community, shot dead and four of his friends wounded. Shortly afterwards, the police arrested a group of six young people, including Aslan Cherkesov, who were identified by five witnesses as participants in the fight, with Cherkesov carrying the gun that shot Sviridov. The police, allegedly under the influence of the 'Caucasian diaspora', released five of Cherkesov's co-accused (Nizamov 2010). These actions immediately created an outcry among Spartak's fan community. 'Fratria' published an online statement saying that their 'brother' was killed by 'eight Caucasian bandits' (Petrov 2010).

On 7 December 2010 a group of Spartak fans protested in front of the police station that set free Cherkesov's companions. According to the footage of the march, the crowd was chanting 'Russkie vpered!' (Russians, forward!), 'Za eto ubiistvo otvetyat vashi deti' (your children will answer for that murder), and 'Rossiya dlya russkih, Moskva dlya Moskvichei' (Russia for Russians, Moscow for Muscovites) (Shmaraeva 2010). Initially, the mainstream media did not react to this event, as Sviridov's murder was but one out of on average of 19,000 murders registered annually in Russia (Sherbakova 2011), but as the perpetrators were let go and the fan community was quick to organize, the demonstration forced the TV channels to respond to the situation. In general, the racist undertones were censored, but it was after this demonstration that the police issued arrest warrants for Cherkesov's acquaintances who had also participated in the fight but had been let go earlier on. Several commemorations followed, including a peaceful one organized by the Spartak football club on the morning of 11 December 2010 on the street where Sviridov was killed (Egorov 2010). However, on the same day, violence erupted in the centre of Moscow near the Kremlin, on Manezhnaia Square, leaving 29 wounded, most of them members of the police forces who tried to counteract the riots. Several victims of racially motivated violence refused to be taped by the state TV and remained anonymous. The police arrested

65 offenders, but most of them were let go and none of the perpetrators of racially motivated violence went on trial (Sokovnin 2011). In the end, Cherkesov was sentenced to 20 years in jail.

8.3 Personification of Migrants

Even though migration is categorized as a diffuse threat (cf. Aradau 2004), migrants can easily be othered through personification mechanisms. Derogatory terms like *kavkazcy* (Caucasians), and *chyornye* (blacks) have become ubiquitous in everyday speech in Russia (Kozhevnikova 2007) while Russian mass media (Lenta.ru 2010) employs euphemisms such as 'litsa neslavyanskoy vneshnoti' (non-Slavic-looking people) when it comes to the identification of crime suspects. A xenophobic discursive representation of migrants applies to non-Slavic-looking individuals irrespective of their citizenship, even though former USSR citizens can seek Russian nationality under a simplified naturalization procedure, according to the Federal Law on Citizenship (Federal law No. 62 'On Citizenship of Russian Federation', 2002).

Phenotypical and cultural differences are easy to portray visually. One of the hit TV shows in the 2000s—*Nasha Rasha* ('Our Russia') followed, among other storylines, the lives and work of a couple of labour migrants (*gastarbeitery*) from Central Asia, Ravshan and Dzhamshut. The TV show was so popular that the name 'Dzhamshut' has become a popular term to describe labour migrants from Central Asia in spoken Russian. Excessive facial hair, poor Russian language skills, a lack of professional training, and a total disregard for hygiene—these are the usual qualities associated with migrants even in a less confrontational setting (*Nasha Rasha* was, after all, a comedy show). However, the same qualities are usually listed in much more sinister threat personification instances. After Kurban Bayram, there are numerous reports of Muscovites' outrage about 'Muslims slaughtering sheep on the streets of Moscow' (Mayantseva 2010).

A typical headline in a Russian newspaper about a street fight would involve 'Caucasians brutally beating up' somebody 'without any reason' (Akhtyrko 2011; Mironov and Pchyolkina 2010). After the riots on Manezhnaia, a number of blog commentators complained that the mob 'did not beat up the right guys, they did not speak with an accent and two of them looked definitely Russian'—a clear sign of sedimentation of these perceptions. In the Biryulyovo case, similar 'non-Slavic' differentiation was at play as well, with the alleged criminal being from a foreign country

Table 8.1 Juxtaposed identities of ethnic Russians vis-à-vis migrants

(Ethnic) Russian	*Migrants (Caucasus and Central Asia)*
Civilized	Barbarian
Controlled	Violent
Developed	Underdeveloped
Christian	Muslim
Literate	Illiterate

Cf. Hansen 2006, 42

in the Caucasus. Thus, in the case of Russia, examples of competing juxtaposed identities are listed in Table 8.1. In other words, if an ethnic Russian newspaper reports a fight that involves a Russian citizen, the fight would be blamed on the 'violent' migrant.

The descriptions in Table 8.1 suggest a comparison between ethnic Russians and migrants, both internal and external, as internal migrants from Russia's North Caucasus are often construed as 'foreign'. The media often emphasizes that migrants speak with an accent (illiterate, underdeveloped), are engaged in criminal activities or incite violence for no reason (violent), or celebrate their 'alien' holidays on the streets by cutting animals (Muslim, barbarian). These binary oppositions resonate with competing discourses, especially in the ethnic criminality discourse, which draws directly from the usual designation of 'Caucasians' as an organized group of criminal offenders, and clash of cultures discourse, which differentiates foreign from ethnic Russian traditions. Both discourses betray the perceived threat to ethnic Russians, whether it is physical or societal.

8.4 Governmental Response to an 'Overflow of Migrants'

The Biryulyovo riots and the overall inter-ethnic situation should be viewed in conjunction with the Manezhnaia riots as the most significant inter-ethnic clashes in Russia to date (Hutchings 2013), and they show exceedingly similar discursive patterns. During the Manezhnaia riots, Russian authorities initially refrained from any public comment concerning the riots, apart from a confused statement by the Minister of Interior who promised to punish those who break the law. The riots were initially hushed up and presented as a minor outbreak of violence provoked by a radical minority (Hutchings and Tolz 2011). The official line, preserved

initially in the mass media, was aimed at downplaying the magnitude of the Manezhnaia riots.

In the Biryulyovo case, the official mass media was quick to react and presented the pogrom as a consequence of the 'overflow of migrants' that were the source of criminality in the area (Pervyi Kanal, 20 October 2013). Thus, unlike the Manezhnaia riots, where friendship of the peoples' discourse was dominant and mainstream media talked about fringe groups inciting violence, in the 2013 pogrom coverage the fault of the migrants was brought to the fore through the discourses of ethnic criminality and the emphasis on the large migrant community vis-à-vis the locals. Thus, the blame for the pogroms was shifted by the official mass media towards the migrant community that was overwhelming the native (*korennye*) population.

In the case of the Manezhnaia riots, President Medvedev tried to be neutral, but Prime Minister Putin adopted a considerably more biased approach. One of his first actions was to meet with the heads of the football fan communities on 21 December 2010, where he emphasized the 'lack of diaspora's oversight' and the possible 'tightening of migration regulation' because of the 'weakened immunity against xenophobia'. In an attempt to explain the violence on Manezhnaia, Putin compared the 'punishment for disrespect' in Central Russia and in the Caucasus and that he 'would not give even ten kopeks for the health of a person' who would go to the Caucasus and start disrespecting the Koran. For the disturbances he also blamed 'destructive elements' who were acting in 'lucrative, political interests', in order 'to shake the country'. After the meeting, Putin went to the cemetery to place flowers on Sviridov's grave (Lifenews 21 December 2010).

By evoking the parallels of Russians behaving badly in the Caucasus and getting punished for it, Putin practically justified the riots at Manezhnaia. According to his logic, by misbehaving the 'Caucasians' brought the violence on themselves, and by talking about respecting the host traditions, he borrowed from the *culture conflict* discourse vernacular. In addition, the repeated promises of tightening migration regulation speak for themselves: not letting migrants from other regions into Central Russia and especially Moscow seemed to be a direct response to the measure the Manezhnaia mob asked for. Hutchings (2011) also notes that one of the most important reactions of the authorities was Putin's commemoration of Yegor Sviridov's grave and his meeting with the fan communities. So, even though both Putin and Medvedev were talking about the friendship

of the peoples, Putin clearly sent a message that his allegiance lay with the protesters from Manezhnaia and not the victims of the mob violence who were never even mentioned. This is an important signal sent from the authorities indicating that the mob's actions were taken seriously.

Later activity initiated by the government was in line with the protesters' slogans. Putin identified the 'national question' (in this case, ethnicity) as one of his presidential campaign focal points and proposed tightening of migration regulation and increased punishment for its violation. This indicates that the threat comes from the migrants and not from the mob chanting 'Russia for Russians'. Vladimir Putin's article on nationalism in Russia (Putin 2012) captures these attitudes by proposing to tighten migration regulation by banning illegal migrants from entering Russia for ten years. More disturbingly, in a section of the article on internal migration, he called for criminal punishment for the violation of domicile registration. The Russian Penal Code does provide for criminal punishment of illegal migration and organization, but it only refers to international migrants.

Shortly after Putin's article was published, the head of the FMS K. Romodanovsky also proposed to issue wanted notices for Russian citizens who are absent from their registered domicile for more than three months and strip them of their registration (RIA-Novosti 2012)—a flagrant anti-constitutional initiative that was proposed after a meeting with Putin. This measure, if introduced, will contribute to a stricter control over the movement of the population—exactly what the mob on Manezhnaia demanded. Even though Romodanovsky did not refer to specific Russian regions and spent most of his speech discussing punishments for international offenders of migration law, the proposed measure speaks for itself.

In the case of the Biryulyovo pogroms, one of the first responses of the police was to arrest the pogromists and then close down the Manezhnaia Square (the memory of Manezhnaia riots was, obviously, still very vivid). Then, the FMS conducted a check on the vegetable market and arrested illegal migrants. Thus, the authorities responded to the message of the rioters who demanded a clampdown on illegal migrants in the area. President Putin's reaction to the Biryulyovo pogrom was markedly toned down compared to his Manezhnaia response and remained within the friendship of the people discourse. He noted that such conflicts arise on the domestic level: 'these clashes, if they involved people of different nationalities are instantly used by extremist, radical associations, and certain people increase ethnic tension and of course, for their own selfish political ends' (ITAR-TASS 2013).

Duma members often discuss the 'migrant problem', and these discussions frequently slide into racist slurs. In the direct aftermath of the Biryulyovo pogrom, there were several legal measures proposed to mend the situation, including introducing a visa regime with the Central Asian Republics (even though the convicted perpetrator and impetus for the pogrom originated from Azerbaijan). One of the proposed initiatives emphasized the banning of work permits for foreigners on Russian territory:

> Do not be afraid, nothing terrible will happen without migrants! Before we built houses, cleaned courtyards, collected garbage, worked in enterprises, nursed in hospitals and so on and so forth—we did it all ourselves, and nothing terrible happened, and, moreover, we received higher wages. Now we do not have decent wages, no jobs, no good mood, as you know—why? Because everybody only promises to deal with migrants, but they do not do anything now that billions are at stake! Anyone who thinks about the Russian people, about Russia as a country in the end…We, by the way, have crazy unemployment in the Caucasus—why don't we bring people from the North Caucasus, and we bring them from Central Asia? So the one who thinks about our country has to vote for the bill [denying work permits for foreigners in Russia] without any excuses, who does not think about it—please let us again say that the idea deserves evaluation, application, reflection, but for now let migrants work until we get an unhealthy socio-political and social environment. (Ivanov, LDPR, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 16 October 2013a)

The speech by the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) member Ivanov represents a milder version of the anti-migrant narrative and is more reminiscent of European-style anti-migrant rhetoric (migrants stealing jobs from locals). However, it does have a securitized aspect to it, as the number of migrants is supposed to lead to negative social consequences for ethnic Russians and for Russia as a country. The party even proposed a bill to counter these threats by freezing work permits issued to foreigners (the bill was rejected after all, with 83.1 % (!) of the parliamentarians not participating in the voting). During the same session a ruling party member, however, voiced an opinion that echoed popular concerns as well:

> Do not flatter yourself, no one will go away, they just won't work as hired workers, they will work, for example, as volunteers. And you know, I'll tell you a paradoxical thing: today internal migration is much more dangerous

> and has a much uglier form than external migration—unfortunately, it is the case (Markelov, United Russia. Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 16 October 2013a)

Mr Markelov alluded in his remark to the otherness that internal migrants are bringing with them to central Russia and the threat of terrorism that is well sedimented in the Russian audience and is associated with Chechen/North Caucasian citizens. The fact that a member of the ruling party frames internal migration as a threat to Russia also echoes the post-Manezhnaia narrative where the perpetrator was a Russian citizen from the North Caucasus.

Even between cases of inter-ethnic strife the tensions around the migratory debate in the Duma run quite high. For example on 21 March 2012 during a report given on migration in Russia by the head of FMS, Konstantin Romodanovsky emphasized that labour migrants constitute only 7 % of the employed workforce (Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 21 March 2012). Following his comment, one of Just Russia parliamentarians expressed her indignation to the head of the FMS in the following way:

> Are there any of your subordinates in the Moscow markets? After all, you cannot hear the Russian language there, only Caucasian and Central Asian talk [sic], even though there are legal acts for setting quotas for sellers. And how will a farmer, for example, from the suburbs of Moscow, get to market and sell their products? Tell me, is it possible in markets in Azerbaijan or Tajikistan, for Russian people to dominate in such a way? When will you begin to put things in order here? Why is no one initiating legislation limiting the dominance of migrants in the markets? It is also a question of food security for our citizens, and the issue is urgent, while no one has taken into account the cash flows. And then we see that terrorism is born. What you do in this direction is very important for the residents of the city of Moscow, and throughout Russia. (Goryacheva, Just Russia, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 21 March 2012)

Here the progression of different migrant-related threat discourses is visible: Mrs Goryacheva starts with culture conflict (different language), then suggests threats to job and food security, and finishes up with terrorism. The language here is also very indicative. Dominance of migrants is a very common way to describe 'hordes of barbarians' and shows that the understanding of otherness is closely tied to the threat of terrorism.

> But they have continued to advance and already claim their rights: see, now the Union of Migrants did not like the 'Russian March'! That is, they have finally become arrogant—Russians in Russia itself are not allowed to be called this way! Then they do not like the ringing of bells, and then they do not like too many Russians and so on. I believe that the authorities should not give in to such provocations. If they threaten to conduct Islamic marches, migrant marches, let them do that—you need to cordon off all such events, check the documents and send away all illegal immigrants and those who broke the law! Our proposals also include the establishment of the Federal Migration Service troops. We advocate cleaning of the same markets, vegetable bases and concentrations of suspicious elements. Federal Migration Service employees with their certificates and in their cherry capes cannot do anything, and migrants, especially from the southern countries and from the East, are aggressive, they are armed, and they respect neither the law nor the authorities. (Degtyaryov, LDPR, Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 23 October 2013b)

This quotation from Degtyaryov is a quintessential securitization text that even includes extraordinary measures (FMS troops). The speaker emphasized cultural differences through juxtaposing Christian Orthodox (ringing of bells) with Islamic culture, the threat of being outnumbered, their arrogant, aggressive manner, the fact that they are armed and illegal and don't follow the law (ethnic criminality discourse). When Degtyaryov was talking about 'cleaning the markets' he also used the word 'zachistka', which refers to the purging of terrorists with violence. The notion of respect for the host tradition vaguely echoes Putin's reaction to the Manezhnaia riots and shows the deeply ingrained Soviet understanding of ethnicity as linked with specific territory. The Russian law No.376-FZ (21 December 2013) that includes administrative and criminal responsibility for violation of registration legislation showed that the Biryulyovo mob managed to do what the Manezhnaia mob failed to do: to securitize the issue of migration enough for the government to take a tougher stance on internal migrants as well.

8.5 Conclusion

There is an established othering discourse that is applied to migrants and is usually promulgated by the Russian mass media. The current research identity construction in Russian TV by Hutchings (Hutchings and Tolz 2011) identified several patterns that are common to all major networks

and conform to the binary process of 'othering' that has been identified by most discourse scholars (Milliken 1999; Hansen 2006; Burnham, et al. 2008). The topic of migration is a very diverse discursive landscape, where several types of discourses compete, each advancing its own primary antagonism. The official position has evolved, but it continues to juggle several contradictory discourses, combining incompatible elements as a result, such as presenting Russia as a home for peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups, but tightening migration regulation.

One of the most common ways of referring to migrants is 'litsa neslavyanskoy vneshnosti' (non-Slavic-looking persons), which already presents migrants as an out-group, defines the in-group as 'Slavic', and adds a negation 'ne', which draws a line between in-group and out-group based on appearance. This reference, however, is usually thought of as a politically correct way of identification (Hutchings and Tolz 2011). Another method of referring to migrants is based on their origins. Even if they are from Russia their territorial link is kept: 'lica kavkazskoy nacional'nosti' (persons of Caucasian ethnicity)—a term that transforms the territorial reference into a non-existent ethnicity.

Collective memory of Chechen wars and terrorist acts created a recent pool of information for the embeddedness of the migrant threat. Even though the threat of terrorism is not significantly present in the descriptions of migrants, the othering processes employ the usual dichotomies of representing an Other through negative qualities such as illiteracy, alien culture, and diverging phenotype. Soviet collective memory contributed to the territorial understanding of ethnicity that is supposed to be settled within its legal 'habitat' and *natsional'nost* (ethnicity) as one of the main markers of a citizen.

The Biryulyovo riots showed a slight transformation of the migrant threat discourse. In addition to the culture conflict, ethnic criminality, and terrorist threats, there is a new addition of an economic security paradigm, especially among governmental memory entrepreneurs. In general, the enemy image of the 'migrant' represents a cluster of threats that are related to a single, 'non-Slavic-looking' personification. It is not only culture conflict and terrorism; it's also ethnic criminality and, most recently, economic security. Conspiracy of power discourse was not part of the response to the Manezhnaia riots, but is much more visible on social networks with regard to the migrant threat in Biryulyovo. Commentators tend to agree that certain groups are trying to create a clash between ethnic Russians and other ethnicities, with the aim of causing Russia's demise. The Biryulyovo

riots showed a significant externalization of the migrant threat. However, in the case of Manezhnaia, the threat was framed as internal migration. After Biryulyovo, all 'non-Slavic'-looking people were lumped together as external migrants. In general, given the multiple existential threat narratives associated with the enemy image of a migrant, one could argue that it is a unified category for different Others (cf. Laclau 2000). Conversely, given the almost standardized personification for these threats, it does not appear to be an abstract Other. In numerous riot cases, it was the mob—rather than the government—that acted as a securitizing actor and prompted the anti-migratory statements and measures.

Notes

1. 'Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West' (PEGIDA) is a German political movement based in Dresden. Since October 2014 it has been organizing public demonstrations, aimed at the German government, against what it considers to be the Islamization of Europe.
2. 'Khasavyurt capitulation' is the way some right-wing groups describe the 1996 treaty that ended the first Chechen war.

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CHAPTER 9

Lesser Threats

In the previous chapters I discussed threat narratives that were both targeted by customized political acts and widely accepted by the public as such. What happens when one of the success criteria is not there? If a threat is not existential, does it constitute a successful securitization? If the public is no longer debating it, does it mean that securitization failed? This chapter discusses the cases that cannot be deemed as successful securitizations based on the two aforementioned success criteria: either there is no customized political act or it is not accepted as a threat by the audience.

9.1 China: A Threat Without an Enemy Image?

The threat of China is challenging to investigate. There is a burgeoning scholarship devoted to Sino-Russian relations, examining the chances for economic/political cooperation (Swanström 2014), and Chinese migration to Russia (Wishnick 2005). According to both opinion polls and Integrum World Wide monitoring, China was identified as a threat and was discursively associated with a threat. Before the events in Ukraine, China consistently scored higher than most other threats identified in opinion polls and was likely on the way to becoming a major nodal threat discourse.

However, Twitter scraping and visual scraping did not yield any prominent threat discourse and/or personification. The words most commonly associated with China were related to technology, the Olympic Games, tourism, or economics (Fig. 9.1).

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Fig. 9.1 ScraperWiki's word cloud with tweets matching 'China': 'instructions, Samsung, skyscraper, Shanghai'

The most frequently used words in the Twitter scrape (Fig. 9.1) appear to be benign; they include 'to download' (*skachat'*), 'instruction' (*instruktsia*), Samsung, curling, skyscraper, massage, Nokia, online, and 'proshivka' (firmware). In the Twitter scrape for China one can also find references to Ukraine that show how pervasive the Euromaidan discussions were on Russian social networks. The visual material from the Twitter scrape also appeared relatively harmless and largely displayed Chinese athletes and products. The collection of the most frequently tweeted visuals on China that were found on

the Twitter scrape is representative of the Russian discourse and except for two visuals that feature Chinese soldiers, the visuals contain very little if any threat connotation. Thus, China is not perceived as an existential threat on a popular level. The same is true for LiveJournal (LJ) and Vkontakte (VK). Most VK communities that feature China are related to retail: Russians want to buy clothing, electronics, etc; there is no trace of anti-Chinese sentiments like it is the case with the USA. Out of more than 38,000 communities that have "China" in their name not a single one (!) had a negative overtone.

When it comes to the governmental level, Putin also repeated on a number of occasions that he does not consider China to be a threat to Russia (RIA-Novosti, 17 October 2011). Russian parliamentarians also tend to glorify the 'strategic Sino-Russian alliance in the face of sanctions, pressures and threats [from the West]' (Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 15 May 2015) or China's position in the United Nations Security Council that supports Russia (Gosudarstvennaya Duma, 10 February 2012). There have been no customized political acts because there is no perceived Chinese threat.

The fact that China is not perceived as a threat is rather puzzling (Wishnick 2015). Given the popularity of geopolitical thought in Russia (Guzzini 2012), China should be a prime suspect in enemy image construction. It has a long territorial border with Russia, there were military altercations with China in 1969, and Chinese ground forces significantly outnumber Russian ones. Chinese officials openly state that Eastern Siberia and the Russian Far East have been illegally 'seized' by Tsarist Russia (Evans-Pritchard 2014). Nemtsov and Milov (2008) even called Putin an agent of Chinese influence in Russia given that under his leadership Russia made significant territorial concessions, allowed Chinese military exercises on Russian territory, and armed the Chinese military with missiles, submarines, and aircraft.

This constellation leads to the conclusion that one of the decisive felicity conditions for the success of the existential threat narrative is the governmental rhetoric amplified by mass media, which is absent in China's case. Memory entrepreneurs in the government or mass media have not picked up embeddedness of the Chinese threat though the military confrontation in 1969 either, and there is little if any visual material exhibiting personification of the threat.

9.2 Jews: Routinized Enemy Image?

Just as 'little security nothings' (Huysmans 2011), routinized enemy images are deeply embedded in people's everyday lives. The level of anti-Semitism in Russia is comparatively low (Alperovich and Yudina 2014)

and is usually perpetrated by far-right nationalist groups. In Russia, anti-Semitism is consigned to everyday prejudice (rather than a heightened threat narrative visible in media), inherited from Tsarist/Soviet anti-Semitic practices. Tsarist legislation included, for instance, restrictions on freedom of movement (pale of settlement—a western region of Imperial Russia where permanent residency by Jews was allowed), restrictions on education, and restrictions on profession (Gitelman 2001). It is also notable that the famous conspiracy theory hoax—the Protocols of Elders of Zion that 'describes' a meeting among the heads of Jewish tribes plotting world domination—was fabricated by Tsarist secret services in Russia at the turn of the nineteenth century (Poliakov 1987).

The Soviet era was famous for the campaign against 'rootless cosmopolitans' (a euphemism for Jews) and the 'Doctors' plot'. As noted in Chap. 4 on the historical embeddedness of anti-Americanism, the *Krokodil* caricature on the 'Doctors' plot' contained a reference to the 'American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee' that supposedly financed the conspiracy. The movie *Circus*, which described 'the only country where a man could breathe freely', was actually edited to cut out a lullaby in Yiddish at the end of the movie, which was sung by a Soviet Jewish actor and head of the Anti-Fascist Committee—Solomon Mikhoels. State anti-Semitism was also a reason for the absence of collective memory of the Holocaust (Etkind 2013), not to mention the anti-Israel sentiments related to the Soviet geopolitical considerations in the Middle East (Friedgut 1984). On the popular level, there is a saying 'Suitcase, train station, Israel' (chemodan, vokzal, Izrail) that originated in the Soviet era and is usually thrown at oppositional Jewish journalists. It implies that if Jews don't like what is going on in Russia, they should just leave for 'their own' country. This is a remnant of the Soviet 'territorial' understanding of ethnicity in general. The saying emphasizes even further that Jews are supposedly not loyal to Russia and have no place in it if they don't support the regime.

Putin, despite his numerous misgivings, has not produced anti-Semitic statements; he has visited Israel on a number of occasions and even sponsored the opening of the first Jewish museum in Moscow (Vesti.ru 8 November 2012). His noticeable sympathy towards the Jewish community has led a number of far-right nationalist groups to 'accuse' Putin of being a Jew himself (Midgard-info 2012). Despite Putin's aversion to anti-Semitism, social networks are rife with it. Usually, it is related to the popularity of conspiracy theories (Yablokov 2012; Gudkov 2004). Given that social networks are conducive to the spread of conspiratorial discourse

(Mocanu et al. 2014), it is no wonder that it is centred on Jews—the usual target of conspiracy theories (cf. Byford 2011).

On Twitter, a conspiracy narrative was exemplified by numerous tweets that pondered Jewish identity of journalists and opposition leaders and posters, styled as 'demotivators' where the ethnicity of top NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, precursor to the KGB) officials was marked as Jewish, which reflects another popular conspiracy theory that the October Revolution in 1917 was orchestrated and carried out by Jews. This particular conspiracy theory was propagated by the White movement, monarchist opposition to the socialist revolutionaries during the Civil War in Russia in 1918–1922. It remains quite popular in Russia to this day (see Gudkov 2004). However, the amount of anti-Semitic rhetoric on Twitter was relatively small compared to the datasets on fascism and the USA.

Conspiracy theories usually reach a highpoint during political/economic crises (Yablokov 2012). For instance, in the case of the Biryulyovo pogrom, 'Jews' was one of the most frequently used words on Live Journal (LJ)'s most popular posts on the riots. Before the events in Ukraine, a Twitter scrape did not yield statistically significant discursive representations of the threat, apart from several visuals (which, arguably, could be considered more effective than verbal threat articulations). During the Ukrainian crisis the frequency of the term 'Jews' increased significantly, as did a heavy use of derogatory terms.

An additional surge in anti-Semitism occurred during the downing of the Malaysian Airlines MH17 flight on 17 July 2014, which spawned a number of conspiracy theories. On Twitter and Vkontakte.com (VK), discussions of the crash revolved around concerns that for too long 'they [European investigators] are decrypting black boxes' (Pervyi Kanal 2014), 'ukry [Ukrainians] and the US' will have to answer for the crashed Boeing. The wildest conspiracy theory was the version expressed by one of the former leaders of the self-proclaimed People's Republic of Donetsk, Igor Strelkov, according to which, the Boeing passengers were already dead, and the plane was shot down by the Ukrainian military to blame Russia and Russia-backed militias (*opolchency*) (Anti-Maidan 2014). This version was circulated widely in LJ, VK, and was even expressed in the pages of the Russian newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (Demchenko 2014). The amalgamation of 'culprits' in this particular tweet was by no means unique:

> Igor Vyalov It is not clear who is to blame? Look who benefits! Fascism http://t.co/5v2KGTUIKO #Zionism #Aircraft #Victims #Boeing #Ukraine #USA # Provocation #Buk (Igor Vyalov, Tweet from 18 July 2014).

The motif of anti-Semitism was present in many messages on social networks, spreading a conspiracy narrative on Twitter and VK. In many instances, these social network users figured out the 'real' (i.e., Jewish) names of Ukrainian politicians and accused them of plotting against Ukraine and Russia (Bersun 2001, 28 November 2014). These anti-Semitic messages are clearly influenced by the discourse on 'the atrocities of fascism' discussed in detail in Chap. 5. Thus, there is a merger of the frames 'Zionism' and 'fascism', which is likely a consequence of the collective memory of the representation of Israel as an imperialist and fascist state during the Soviet era (Umland 1999), or simply a merger of existential threat narrative (fascism) with a routinized enemy image.

Anti-Semitic rhetoric coupled with conspiracy theory is also present in the Charlie Hebdo shooting. Many members of pro-Kremlin movements believe that the opposition in Russia is exclusively Jewish. For example, the oppositional radio station—*Echo Moskvy* (echo of Moscow) is derisively nicknamed *Echo Matsy*, or echo of Matsa—the leavened bread eaten by Jews during Passover. As a vestige of Soviet ethnic politics, Jewish identity is understood in ethnic, not religious terms and hence the ethnicity of oppositional journalists is frequently underlined, as exemplified by a deleted Facebook post by Vsevolod Nepogodin, where he asked: 'Respected Islamic terrorists who shot the editors of Charlie Hebdo today! Could you do a favour to all Russian people and come to Moscow to destroy the editors of "Echo Moskvy" and "Dozhd" [independent liberal TV channel]? Our sofa patriots don't have enough courage and decisiveness. We promise that we will hide you from the police and thank you with all Russian generosity! We are proud of you, who are desperately fighting the dominance of Gay Europe's tolerastia [conflation of tolerance and pederast]. Glory to Allah! Death to KatseShatseAlbats! [Conflating names of several Jewish names from the aforementioned oppositional media]' (Odessa City Website 2015). This status is a perfect example of securitization logic: the journalists are reduced to their 'wrong' ethnicity and supposed to be killed to counteract the wrong 'Gayropa' morality. This extreme rhetoric is restricted to far-right circles and does not have a significant presence on social networks.

9.3 Estonia and Georgia: An Old Enemy Is Better than Two New Ones

There is a Russian proverb that says 'an old friend is better than two new ones'. This truism seems to work with enemies as well. It is only recently that Estonia and Georgia were on Russia's enemy radar due to

a World War II commemoration controversy and a war. Both countries have significantly lost their prominence in public opinion polls since them (Levada 2013) and within the mass media, according to Integrum World Wide. Even the scraping of social networks did not identify a major enemy image structure, probably because neither of the countries is regarded as a prominent existential threat to Russia, either geopolitically or culturally. Nevertheless, both of these countries are viewed as proxies for other threats analysed in this book: in Russian public perception Georgia and Estonia lack agency and subjectivity to be a full-scale threat. The important difference with the other lesser threats, China and Jews, is that both Estonia and Georgia were targeted by 'customized political acts': after the Bronze Soldier controversy (see below for more details), the Estonian government was a target of cyberattacks (BBC 17 May 2007), and in the Georgian case, Russia was even involved in a war that culminated in the recognition of independence of breakaway regions South Ossetia and Abkhazia. However, neither of the countries has a strong collective memory as an enemy image or as a threat. Baltic otherness was always highlighted by the popular culture. In Soviet films the Baltic states and in particular Estonia and its capital Tallinn often 'played' the topographic role of 'abroad'. Baltic actors, such as Yuozas Budraytis, Al'gimantas Masyulis or Ants Eskola, who received from his colleagues a title 'Soviet Union's chief Nazi' were given the roles of spies or Nazis (Nazis and Blondes 2008). Even in everyday life, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians were held by their Soviet citizens often for foreigners. This could be seen in the short story On Summer Day (1968) by the famous Soviet writer Fasil Iskander: A West German, who speaks Russian, is held for an Estonian. People from the Baltic countries were not seen in Soviet times as "real" Soviet citizens: too western, too suspicious. At the same time, Georgians could be theoretically cast in the 'migrant worker' category due to their 'Caucasian' looks.

The Bronze Solider controversy in 2007 is actually the reason why Estonia came on Russia's enemy image radar. Estonian authorities decided to move *Alyosha,* a bronze statue in the centre of Tallinn that commemorated the Soviet soldiers who fought against Nazi troops in World War II. The statue was widely seen as a symbol for Soviet occupation by many Estonians. After the statue was relocated to a military cemetery, there were several waves of protest, both in Estonia and in Russia (Hackmann and Lehti 2013). This event showed how important the Great Patriotic War narrative is for the Russians. Demonstrations in front of the Estonian embassy organized by the pro-Kremlin movement *Nashi*, an attack on the Estonian ambassador

in Moscow, and finally a cyberattack on the Estonian government showed a high degree of popular outrage, in which the role of the Russian government was seen as encouraging, if not sponsoring (Lenta.ru 2007). Russia stopped the oil supply to Estonia for a brief period of time and a number of Russian companies refused to buy Estonian products (Delfi 2007).

Even though the Estonian government was branded as 'fascist' by pro-Kremlin movements (Lassila 2014), representations of Estonia were far from the existential threat narrative. Integrum World Wide data shows that Estonia never reached the frequency of threats like terrorism, migration, or the West. In fact, the Estonian threat did not seem to feature a specific personification, which also could have contributed to the relative failure of the threat narrative. Yet, in retrospect, the Bronze Soldier incident could be seen as an antecedent to Russia's reaction to the events in Ukraine in 2014.

Georgia had been seen somewhat unfavourably by the Russian government since the Rose Revolution in 2003 and Georgia's drift from the Community of Independent States structures into Euro-Atlantic architecture (Karagiannis 2013). The military, however, had a long history before the 2008 war, as the military conflict between Abkhazia/Georgia and South Ossetia/Georgia could be seen as a heritage of the Soviet Union's policy of setting seemingly arbitrary borders. The Abkhaz population, for instance, is not ethnically Georgian but is related to Cherkassian and Adygean minorities that live in Russia, and are mostly Muslim (as opposed to Christian Georgians). Most of the inhabitants of South Ossetia are Ossetians who also populate North Ossetia, which is a part of Russia. Yet, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, they were separated by a state border.

According to Russian legislation on 'compatriots', all former Soviet citizens are eligible for Russian citizenship. This encompassing definition of compatriots might seem purely declarative, but in fact it was employed during the war in Georgia and as justification for the annexation of Crimea. Russian speakers, or people who used to own Soviet passports, were issued Russian passports in South Ossetia and Abkhazia before and after the 2008 war (Sakwa 2012). In a meeting with military officers in November 2011, the then President Medvedev insisted that the war in Georgia was an 'absolutely necessary action to save large numbers of our citizens' from the Georgian threat (Sakwa 2012).

This issue has also been taken up in the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation that states under the rubric 'The use of Armed Forces and other troops during immediate threat of aggression and war', that Russian armed forces could be used 'to ensure the protection of [Russian] citizens, outside

the Russian Federation in accordance with the generally recognized principles and norms of international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation' (Voennaya Doktrina Rossiskoy Federatsii 2014), which makes the post-Soviet countries with large Russian minorities especially nervous (cf. the media coverage of the Ukrainian crisis in Estonia in Mälksoo 2014).

Unlike Estonia, the Georgian case did involve personification of the threat through the figure of Georgian President Saakashvili. Especially popular on Russian social networks was the 'tie-eating incident' when President Saakashvili was caught on camera munching on his tie. Even though social network users were mocking Saakashvili, the personification was carried out in feminization terms, that is, representing Saakashvili as weak, scared, and submissive. In one of the caricatures, Saakashvili is eating his tie and turning down an Aeroflot plane ticket to Russia. While the character in the original poster is calm and resolute in his alcohol denial, Saakashvili seems to be terrified and alarmed by the mere idea of visiting Russia.

Consequently, Estonia with the Bronze Solider controversy (Lassila 2014) could be regarded as a proxy for the threat of fascism, while Georgia could be seen as a proxy for the Western threat due to its cooperation with the USA and attempts to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). However, neither of them fulfilled the felicity conditions to existential threats and were never accepted by the audience as such.

9.4 Findings About Lesser Threats

Opinion polls about lesser threats cases have shown that these lesser threats may not constitute successful securitization processes. Even if threats are targeted by 'customized political acts', the audience may not perceive the threats as existential in nature as evidenced by the social network data. The case of China is particularly puzzling. Due to its size, ambition, economic and military power, it should be identified as a threat by public opinion, especially given the popularity of geopolitical thought in Russia (Morozov 2009b). However, on the popular level there are no statistically significant existential threat connotations associated with China despite the massive amount of scraped data. Visual materials did not yield any notable threat personification. Thus, while China is identified as a threat through a direct questioning by Levada sociologists, the population does not perceive it as such on a discursive level.

Anti-Semitism proved to be a routinized enemy image that does not provide statistically significant enmification material apart from the 'usual

suspects' of far-right nationalist groups. In a way, these groups constitute audiences that accepted the Jews as a personification of an existential threat narrative. Even though there is deep-seated anti-Semitic prejudice in the Russian population that was upheld during the Soviet era through legislative measures and mass media campaigns, anti-Semitic enemy images are not statistically significant. At the same time, the visual material seems to reflect the old Tsarist and Communist-era conspiracy theory enmification narratives that feature both personification and existential threats. The question still remains whether the absence of openly anti-Semitic rhetoric from the Russian leadership played a role in the relative failure of securitization, or whether one can even conceive of this process as desecuritization in a historical perspective.

Estonia and Georgia were on the receiving ends of 'customized political acts', and in 2007–2008, their perception by the Russian public was far from favourable. The Estonian case was related to the commemoration of the Great Patriotic War, while Georgia was involved in an actual war with Russia (Sakwa 2012). However, both countries seem to have lost their enemy image statuses in the public perception. This phenomenon could be related to the lack of collective memory embeddedness of both countries as threats or their general perception as 'non-existential' threats with the lack of notable personification. Both cases can also be described as desecuritized or even as failed securitizations given the absence of widespread public perception of them as existential threats even at the height of the respective crises in relations, despite some political acts and antagonistic governmental rhetoric. At the same time, felicity conditions for successful securitization are linked to the factors identified in the main argument of this book: the interplay of personified existential threat narratives, collective memory embeddedness, and enmification rhetoric at the governmental level.

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CHAPTER 10

Conclusions

'Tell me who your friend is, and I will tell you who you are' is a very popular Euripidian maxim in Russia. One can extrapolate this truism to a different form: 'Tell me who your enemy is, and I will tell you who you are'. By examining enemy image narratives, it is possible to make more plausible assumptions about the image of the self, about the fears that permeate it, and about future developments of current identity constructs. This book aimed to expose the mechanisms of successful existential threat narratives through the combination of securitization, enemy image research, and collective memory. According to the theoretical framework of this book, an enemy image is a correlate of a successful securitization narrative rooted in collective memory.

I reconceptualized Guzzini's, Balzacq's, and Stritzel's felicity condition arguments, as discussed in Chap. 2, in the following way: (1) the grammar plot of the security becomes in my case a dyad of personification and threat; (2) dispositional condition/embeddedness in my theoretical framework is a collective memory reference; (3) social capital/positional power of the speaker corresponds to the governmental and mass media levels of analysis and includes but is not limited to adoption of measures. Contrary to Balzacq's argument (2011), acceptance by the audience (public opinion polls and social networks level of analysis in my study) was conceptualized as an indicator of securitization's success.

Most securitization studies concentrate on the enunciator's side (illocutionary act) and normally defend the argument that the positional

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power of the securitizing actor provides for the acceptance by the audience (Nyman 2013; Floyd 2011; Hansen 2011) with notable exceptions by Christou, Adamides (2013); Lupovici (2014); Léonard and Kaunert (2010). However, by concentrating on the governmental level of identity articulation, one can lose sight of discursive struggles that take place outside of the 'power vertical'. These discourses can shed light on the plethora of opinions on various existential threat narratives, and most importantly on the extent of the audience's acceptance. This book took a different route and concentrated on the audience's perceptions of existential threat narratives, not neglecting, however, governmental-level articulations.

Even though the theoretical framework provided in this book can be widely applied to different case studies, this book maintained a focus on Russia to investigate a setting and material rarely accessed by scholars, especially scholars of securitization. The book's focus on the audience provides an insight into the securitization dynamics on a popular level, which has not been to date the subject of academic investigation. Given the lack of press freedom in Russia, social networks represented alternative spaces for self-expression (Fedor 2013), and despite rising restrictions on Internet communication and the government's involvement in social network discussion management, social networks still amount to a sustainable social space.

Even though the Russian language makes for a 'naturally restricted universe' online (Fedor 2013; Kamusella 2008), studying online discourses still represents a challenge because of the various possibilities for manipulations (van Dijck 2007), especially by the government and especially in Russia. In the post-Soviet space in particular, the ubiquity of 'political technologies' has fundamentally eroded trust in the reliability of digital media (Wilson 2005). Disclosure of the Kremlin's 'blog factory' and other state interventions into the blogosphere has undercut the credibility of online commentators (Fedor 2013). However, online discussion still represents a viable window into public opinion, especially given the Russian government's numerous attempts to 'manage' the web.

This book is the first study of this scale to investigate the conditions for the success and failure of securitization narratives using social network data. This study can also tip the balance in the debate, whether securitization should evolve in a sociological or a post-structural branch (Balzacq 2011), or, as Stritzel puts it, whether securitization is 'a social sphere (with "actors", "fields", "authority", "intersubjectivity", "audience", and "facil-

itating conditions") [or] a (post-structural/postmodern) linguistic theory based on Derrida and performativity' (Stritzel 2007: 377). By bringing the discursive struggles to the forefront, this book bridges the divide between the sociological and post-structural strands of securitization.

Social network analysis in the context of this book does not only rely on big data processing, but is also complemented by close reading and visual semiotic analysis, with the latter being used in other major international relations projects (Hansen 2015; Heck and Schlag 2013; Möller 2013). Visual semiotics is not only an innovative method for international relations, but it pinpoints the instances and vehicles of personification, especially helpful coupled with the concept of picture memory (Warburg 1939; Efal 2007) that by definition unites it with the collective memory component of the theoretical framework.

One of the challenges that emerged in this study involved the fluidity of the social network landscape and the changeability of public opinion—the kind of challenges that Fedor (2013, 244–245) alluded to in her conclusion to the first comprehensive account on the social media's role in the post-Soviet space. Some of those challenges were mediated by the use of Integrum World Wide software that allowed tracking the mass media on a long-term basis. The fluidity of the online space contributed to a more complicated case selection process that warranted several stages of filtering and updating to present a more comprehensive landscape of existential threat narratives that circulate in contemporary Russia, which also reflects the ease with which culturally embedded threat narratives are possible to resurrect.

This book concentrated on five existential threat narratives in Russia that were associated with enemy images. The peculiar quality of threat narratives is that some of them produced a plethora of enemy images (such as fascism; sexuality), while others were associated with none (such as China). In contrast, certain enemy images were associated with numerous existential threat narratives (see Chap. 8 on migration, the West [Chap. 4], blasphemy [Chap. 6]). The proposed clustering of threats and enemy images was based on the discursive proximity of the threat narratives, or, to put it differently, on their discursive entanglement that makes it difficult to delineate single threats and/or enemy images.

In its totality, however, threat narratives seem to circle around two poles of existential threat clusters: geopolitical and cultural threats that can also be narrowed down to threats that undermine Russia as a (sovereign) state. Which is more dangerous, regime change or a challenge to spiritual

bonds? Both seem to generate a profound response among the Russian public. In the following, I provide a brief overview of the empirical results on each threat narrative.

10.1 Empirical Findings

One of the most rich collective memory threat discourses in Russia is the threat emanating from the West. Ample visual material from the Soviet era only helps to bring the enemy image back to life. Government officials seem to be giving a fresh spin on the old anti-American frames, accusing the USA of undermining Russia's stability and being hypocritical or 'cynical' about human rights—the above-mentioned *Whataboutist* argumentation. Both discursive constructions and picture memory indicate a much more direct embeddedness in Soviet collective memory, compared to other enemy images. Using the framework for the analysis by Katzenstein and Keohane (2007) that subcategorizes the types of anti-American discourses, it was possible to conclude that the anti-Americanism in Russia is a blend of its liberal and sovereign species. At the same time, a radical version of anti-Americanism is visible on social networks in its conspiratorial version, as well as in speeches of several politicians and pundits.

Visual material is quite remarkably based on 'picture memory' dating back to the Soviet Union. Apart from the obvious recycling of Soviet-era posters, social network users are creating collages using the same tropes of American alliance with Nazi ideology, making extensive use of personification through the figure of the American president and state symbols (flag, the bald eagle). Moreover, in order to contribute to the self-inflation of the Russian president, numerous social network users (some of them quite high-ranking such as parliamentarian Rodnina) stoop so low as to descend into racist denigrations. The attitude towards America as a personification of the existential threat is ambiguous. It's not only a threat in itself, but it is also a personification of a general 'Western influence' that is supposed to corrupt Russia. The EU, on the other hand, is only awarded a secondary role in the enmification process, as a less important (in Russian understanding) actor completely under the American influence.

The most topical existential threat narrative with regard to the crisis in Ukraine was analysed in Chap. 5. Fascism is a very 'convenient' existential threat narrative for the post-Soviet space because with the increased role of the Great Patriotic War in Russian identity, it is effective at stirring othering constructs. It is unsurprising that a successful

enemy image emerged out of the media representations of the Ukrainian crisis: fascism has a very solid collective memory grounding, received widespread attention both by high-ranking politicians and by state mass media that reverberated on social networks. Personification of the threat was also relatively easy as it relied on the picture memory of fascism and accessibility of conspiratorial—enemy image-based—discourses. Thus, a 'fascism' enemy image was reincarnated as a 'Ukrainian fascist', which dominated not only the official discourse, but also the social media, that is, the audience level. The conflict in Ukraine was framed in Russian social media predominantly as another reinstalment of the Great Patriotic War: Russians are yet again fighting fascism but this time as a reincarnation in Ukraine. Given that fascism as a narrative has deep embeddedness in Russian collective memory as an existential threat discourse, it is fairly easy to manipulate public opinion into the necessity of extraordinary measures that effectively led to the breakdown of the post-Cold War security system.

While Euromaidan was largely branded as a Nazi movement, the word 'Maidan' has come to be used in pro-governmental discourse as a synonym for regime change and war brought in from the outside. While the sending of Ukrainian troops into Eastern Ukraine was presented by the government of President Petro Poroshenko as an 'anti-terrorist operation', it was both largely perceived and presented in Russia as a war against the civilian population. One of the indicators that demonstrated the public's acceptance of this discourse was the popularity of the term 'fascism' used in discussion boards, tweets, and posts on social networks. Nevertheless, variability in online audiences should be noted. While Russian Twitter featured the conflict in Ukraine framed as a battle between fascist and anti-fascist movements, social networks Vkontakte.com (VK) and Live Journal (LJ) offered a much wider range of opinions, including the more radical pro-Russian (anti-American, right-wing racist), and a more neutral or pro-Ukrainian position.

Discourses surrounding fascism in relation to the Ukrainian crisis were ubiquitous on social networks. And along with the discourse came the narratives often associated with it: attacks on civilians, brutality, swastikas, anti-Semitism, personification through the figure of Stepan Bandera or through external actors who are seeking to destabilize the region. These narratives are characteristic of the Cold War-era siege mentality and conspiratorial mindset (see Chap. 4 on the West/USA). While not always explicitly calling Ukraine a fascist state, commentators on social

network resorted to other derogatory remarks, which frequently 'feminized' Ukraine, portraying 'her' as a whore or homosexual. The latter point makes an interesting connection to the discourse of homosexuality as existential threat to Russia (discussed in Chap. 7) and the importance of 'spiritual bonds' that were supposedly under attack by the punk band Pussy Riot (Chap. 6).

Threats to 'spiritual bonds' were associated with a more challenging cluster of enemy images and discussed in Chap. 6. According to some researchers (Sperling 2015; Riabova and Riabov 2013, 2015), it was a euphemism for feminism's threat to Russian societal practices. While in 2012 the choice of Pussy Riot as an enemy image to Russia's 'spiritual bonds' was justified, especially according to Levada polls and Integrum World Wide monitoring, the rise in perception of other existential threats, most notably fascism, somewhat overshadowed spiritual bonds with geopolitical concerns. Attacks on religion were construed as an attack on the cultural fabric of society, and supposedly aimed at destroying Russia as a civilization. Female political activism at the same time was condemned on the public and governmental levels, as well as by the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The threat to 'spiritual bonds' was presented in many guises: it harkened back to the Soviet-era perceptions of what constitutes a wholesome family. In this model, a woman's primary function was to fulfil her destiny as a mother and wife. Moreover, criticism of the state—otherwise 'known' as 'slanderous fabrications' aimed at 'discrediting the Soviet state and social system' are generally perceived as attempts to undermine the 'Russian civilizational code'. Finally, the importance of 'spiritual bonds' in public perception is a testimony to the revival of religiosity in the former Soviet Union during the *Perestroika* era: in the process of temporal othering (Diez 2004) religion was seen as a positive counterpoint to communist values.

Accordingly, a neo-conservative turn in President Putin's policies can be exemplified at its best with legislation geared towards the protection of 'spiritual bonds'—hence the numerous references to 'blasphemy' during and in the aftermath of the Pussy Riot trial that even spilled over to controversy to the staging of *Tannhäuser* in Novosibirsk in early 2015. It proves that despite the Russian mass media's fixation on the Ukrainian crisis, 'blasphemy' as a threat has remained quite potent since the Pussy Riot trial.

Despite the geopolitical dimensions of the discourse on Nazism in Chap. 5, the threats to the Russian cultural makeup gain substantial trac-

tion on social networks and are frequently voiced by leading politicians. The Western reaction to the case of Pussy Riot was considered to be an intrusion into the Russian fabric of society, represented by traditional, non-Western (i.e., non-corrupt) values—Hence also the stress on the French journalists' guilt in the attack on Charlie Hebdo: the fact that Russia 'outlawed' the insults on religious feelings made the country safe from the terror attacks and thus implicitly supported the crackdown on the freedom of the press. Consequently, the Charlie Hebdo attack was framed in a way to signify Russia's moral superiority over the West that allows for such provocations.

Chapter 7 analysed sexuality as a medium to channel enemy images. By coupling alternative sexuality with the threat to children and personifying it with pictures of kissing men or famous gay pop idols, the enemy image is sedimented in the population even on the linguistic level as an existential threat narrative. At the same time, Soviet practice provides a large pool of collective memory references to 'sins' against a socialist society that are now transformed into a religious discourse.

Noting that 'homosexualism' is perceived as an umbrella term for most 'non-traditional sexual relations', homosexuality as a threat fulfils all the felicity conditions necessary to function as a viable enemy image: it involves an existential threat narrative and personification plus an abundance of visual materials; it has deep-rooted embeddedness through extensive collective memory references to the Soviet era and beyond; and finally, the Russian government provides an unequivocally negative construction of homosexuality that includes discriminatory political measures aimed at 'protecting' children.

Scraping of the three main social networks proved that homosexuality as a threat is discussed widely on social networks. There is also abundant evidence that pejorative epithets of the word 'homosexual' in Russian are rampantly used online and intended as insults. Personification, that is, anthropomorphizing of the threat, is also quite common and functions through the visual representations of supposedly unattractive same-sex couples, references to prison slang, motifs of sin, and the juxtaposition of 'perverted' same-sex couples with images of supposedly 'healthy' heterosexuals. Personification functions through embeddedness as well because anti-gay activists use Soviet-era wartime posters and caricatures to indicate an existential threat by referencing fascism, spies, and villains in Soviet popular culture. In other words, it is a play on familiar symbols in new contexts, adaption, and reinvention.

Social network data provided abundant material that indicates the deep-rooted perception of homosexuality as a disease. This is also a vestige of the Soviet-era linguistic use of 'homosexualism', the persecution of 'degenerates' and promiscuity in 'people's courts', and the criminalization of homosexuality. However, this topic was a theme that, due to its taboo status, was rather restricted to certain non-mainstream discursive forums. Also notable is that visual materials are rearticulations of governmental rhetoric, which suggests another level of acceptance of the threat by the audience. Such a construction of sexuality draws from the tradition of depicting moral depravity as a channel of foreign influence and thus alien to patriotism.

Governmental rhetoric completes the cycle of enmification: even though on the highest level it is acknowledged that sexual orientation should not be punished, the mere fact of placing homosexuality on the same level with paedophilia confirms the narrative construction of homosexuality as a crime and threat to Russia's social fabric. Governmental support for homophobic organizations and the adoption of the ban on propaganda of 'non-traditional sexual relations' shows that homosexuality is indeed construed as an existential threat to Russia as a country, and most Russians are ready to accept this kind of rhetoric.

Chapter 8 discussed the securitization of migration, which is a phenomenon hardly unique to Russia. Numerous studies dealt with this issue from different perspectives, from securitization through racial discourse (Ibrahim 2005), to economic reasoning (Huysmans 2000) or terrorism (Salter 2011) to name a few. In Russia there is an established othering discourse that is applied to migrants and is usually promulgated by the Russian mass media (Morozov 2009a). Research on identity construction on Russian TV (Hutchings and Tolz 2011) identified several patterns that are common to all major TV channels and that conform to the binary process of 'othering' that has been identified by most discourse scholars (Milliken 1999; Hansen 2006; Burnham et al. 2008).

Linguistics play an important role in framing the discourse on migrants: the common, perfectly politically correct term 'litsa neslavyanskoy vneshnosti' (non-Slavic-looking persons) already presents migrants as an outgroup. By defining the in-group as 'Slavic' and adding a negation 'ne', it defines migrants by what they are not, that is, ethnic Russians, thus drawing a line based on physical appearance. Another way of referring to migrants is to state their origins, and even if they are Russian citizens, their territorial link is kept: 'litsa kavkazskoy natsional'nosti' (persons of

Caucasian ethnicity)—a nonsensical term, whose sole purpose is to transform an indication of geographic origin into a non-existent ethnicity.

At the same time, collective memory of Chechen wars and terrorist acts created a pool of information for the embeddedness of the migrant threat. Even though the threat of terrorism is not significantly present in migrant narratives, the othering processes helps define migrants by what non-migrants are not: usually through the use of negative attributes such as illiteracy, alien culture, and diverging phenotype. The Soviet collective memory contributed to the territorial understanding of ethnicity, which is supposed to be settled within its legal/designated 'habitat' and *natsional'nost* (ethnicity) as one of the main markers of a citizen.

The Biryulyovo riots showed a slight transformation of the migrant threat discourse. On top of the previous culture conflict, ethnic criminality, and terrorist threats, governmental securitizing agents added economic security to the mix of threat narratives. In general, the enemy image of migrants represent a whole cluster of competing threat narratives that are related to a single, 'non-Slavic-looking' personification: it's not only culture conflict and terrorism, it's also ethnic criminality and, most recently, economic security.

Another interesting deviation from the threat narratives surrounding the Manezhnaia riots is the fact that conspiracies of power discourses were much more visible on social networks with regard to the migrant threat. Many commentators agree that there are certain groups that are trying to cause a clash between ethnic Russians and other ethnicities, with an aim of ultimately bringing about Russia's destruction. The Biryulyovo riots showed a significant externalization of the migrant threat: while in the Manezhnaia case the threat was framed as an internal migration, after Biryulyovo all 'non-Slavic'-looking people were lumped together as external migrants. There are therefore several different logics at play here: imperial versus ethnic nationalism plus everyday xenophobia, with an additional dimension of pro- and anti-Kremlin attitudes that are particularly visible on social networks.

Chapter 9 discussed lesser threats, that is, clusters of threats that were identified by opinion polls, but were not singled out by legislation or, when they were, were singled out by customized political acts but are not identified as (existential) threats anymore. The case of China is quite puzzling. Although there may be prima facie reasons for which China could be thought of as a threat to Russia, on the popular level no statistically significant existential threat connotations were found. Neither did visual

materials yield any notable threat personification. Thus, while China was identified as a threat on a public opinion poll, this does not translate into a discursive threat narrative, accepted and rearticulated by the general public on social networks.

Apart from the 'usual suspects', that is, far-right nationalist groups, an enemy image associated with 'Jews' did not prove to provide significant enmification materials. Even though there is deep-seated anti-Semitic prejudice among the Russian population, which has its roots in legislative measures and mass media campaigns adopted during the Tsarist and Soviet era, anti-Semitic enemy images are not statistically significant. That being said, visual materials do reflect the old conspiracy theory of enmification narratives featuring both personification and existential threats. The question still remains whether the absence of openly anti-Semitic rhetoric from the Russian leadership played a role in the relative failure of securitization or if one can even conceive of this process as desecuritization in a historical perspective.

Other lesser threats—Estonia and Georgia—were at the receiving ends of 'customized political acts', and in 2007–2008, their perception by the Russian public was far from favourable. While the Estonian case was related to the commemoration of the Great Patriotic War and was the target of a brief 'cyberwar' considered by most analysts as originating from Russia, Georgia was involved in a 'real-world' war (Sakwa 2012). Despite the seriousness of the conflict escalation, both countries have lost their enemy image statuses among the public perception. I ascribe this to the lack of collective memory embeddedness as threats for both countries. Historically, neither is perceived as threatening nor is there any notable personification of the enemy image. Both cases can be described as desecuritized or even as failed securitizations.

10.2 Contribution and Limitations

The results of this research, due to its multidisciplinarian nature, offer relevant contributions to security studies, nationalism, sociology, media studies, gender studies, post-Soviet studies, and digital humanities in general. In any climate where fearmongering is ubiquitous and permeates everyday life, there is a heightened need to critically analyse narratives. This book engages in a similar process: by pointing out the constructed nature of threat narratives it creates a normative push to perceive the phenomena already accepted by the audience as existential threats in non-securitized terms.

It is possible to conclude that a threat narrative can oscillate between desecuritization (Jews, Estonia, Georgia), unsuccessful securitization (China), and successful securitization (sexuality, the West, 'blasphemy', migration, fascism), while the latter ones are also associated with an effective enemy image construct. An enemy image is a successfully securitized existential threat narrative that works through personification of the threat and a significant visual component on a popular level, collective memory embeddedness, as well as being reinforced through governmental rhetoric and government measures. An enemy image in this case does not just represent a sum of the felicity conditions; it is a discursive reality of its own, a product of the securitization process.

Personification of the threat, that is, existence of an enemy image, can be considered as an addition to the grammar plot of security with a possible explanation of securitization failure. The discussion of successful securitization cases in Russia also lends valuable insights into dynamics of the authoritarian regime and the tools in its survival kit. Approaching post-Soviet Russia's enmification narratives through the prism of digital media uncovers a heterogeneous setting. Despite the evidence for digital media's conducive environment for the development of conspiracy theories and further othering infections, digital media represent a habitat for modern anthropology in need of studying.

While enemy images of the West and the USA are drawn from one of deepest pools of both verbal and visual reservoirs of othering that go back to Tsarist and Soviet Russia, the enemy image of sexuality is embedded in a mainstream silence of the Soviet era that harkens back to taboo language and 'bare life' social spaces. The intensification of the Great Patriotic War commemoration cemented the existential nature of the threat narrative of fascism that was particularly visible during the events in Ukraine. The different threats to spiritual bonds also enjoy a large collective memory pool of information and given the controversy around the 'blasphemous' staging of the opera *Tannhäuser* in Novosibirsk (RIA-Novosti 2015), sentencing of young women to prison because of inappropriate dancing in front of the Great Patriotic War monument (Moskovskiy Komsomolets 2015) the threats to spiritual bonds are interpreted through 'deviant' femininity and religious transgressions.

At the same time, the embeddedness of migration as an enemy image is rather based on the 'noble savage' narrative, which was not necessarily xenophobic during the Soviet era, but transformed into different forms of racism as a result of recent terrorist attacks. The crisis in Ukraine overshad-

owed the xenophobic attitudes towards migrants and even the number of physical attacks on people who don't look 'Slavic enough' decreased (Verkhovsky 2015). In other words, what one observes is a plurality in which sometimes one discourse has a clear hegemony, but this hegemony is unstable and can be quickly replaced by another. It shows that existential threat narratives and enemy images associated with them are extremely fluid, depend on media rearticulation, and could draw on different types of embeddedness.

The peculiarity of the Russian digital landscape can be difficult to decipher. The fact that the Russian government is using paid 'trolls' to steer Internet discussions could have tilted the picture into a more pro-governmental direction than it actually is. There is limited research assessing the impact of 'troll factories' on the Russian blogosphere; thus, one cannot definitively establish its fraction in the discursive struggles (Seddon 2014; Gunitsky 2015). Further quantitative and qualitative research is needed to flesh out the public opinion on social networks without the '50 rouble commentary' factor.

The Russian case is in some respects unique, but in the course of this research a number of issues emerged that are similar to the debates in other countries; for example, the debate on homosexuality in the USA between liberal and conservative circles is especially noteworthy as the conservative rhetoric is quite similar to the Russian governmental discourse. Moreover, the convention of far-right political parties in St. Petersburg in March 2015, organized by the Party 'Rodina' whose former head Rogozin serves as Deputy Prime Minister, also showed that the neo-conservative anti-Westernist agenda is attractive to a number of international actors (Tétrault-Farber 2015). Given the authoritarian setting, one can argue against extrapolating the theoretical framework to other types of political systems. Following Vuori (2008), however, the framework is flexible. In a democratic setting, one should pay even more attention to the audience acceptance level and cultural peculiarities of discourse embeddedness that would be undeniably specific to each country.

A more disturbing development is the readiness for the 'customized political act' on the Russian government's side that seemed to be one of the crucial elements to the success of enemy images. The legislation aimed at specific 'enemies' had a profound effect on discursive struggles surrounding the existential threat narratives discussed in this book, delineating and discriminating certain groups of people and contributing to the 'spiral of securitization'. This factor is particularly disturbing as the

governmental rhetoric and measures contribute or even constitute the climate of hostility in Russian society, where enemy images and discourses are rearticulated and promulgated in the mass media and social media. Threat narratives are extremely toxic and require critical reflection and deconstruction in any setting. This book provided a theoretical and methodological framework to do just that.

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