

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: COLD WAR II: UKRAINIAN SOVEREIGNTY
AND IDENTITY

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Ukraine's 2014 Revolution of Dignity showcases tensions between nationalism and internationalism in a post-Cold War era. Ukraine's political leaders and ordinary citizens express opposing views about the identity and sovereignty of their nation, as some want closer ties with the European Union, while others seek closer relations with the Russian Federation. The myths and memories of Ukraine's Cossack past, as well as its time in the former Soviet Union, animate discourses throughout the conflict. These debates result in no clear consensus about Ukrainian identity.

The inability of Ukraine to find a unified nationalist identity in the conflict highlights a post-Cold War paradox. Ukraine is unable to articulate a unifying identity because the myths and memories of the Cold War continue to circulate in public discourse. International organizations are largely unable to legitimize either side's claims of identity in the conflict. This chaos has invited outside intervention, as both the Russia Federation and the United States attempt to influence Ukraine's decisions about sovereignty and identity in ways benefitting Russian or American

interests. These discourses mirror Cold War debates over Soviet satellite countries, as a propaganda battle for the hearts and minds of the Ukrainian people rage on in political speeches, online forums, and in international organizations. Ukraine is thus mired in a cycle of unrest, as corruption and language issues continue to prevent the nation from articulating a unified nationalist identity.

Ukraine's crisis showcases the inherent conflict within notions of sovereignty, as both self-determination and freedom from outside intervention often contradict the expected obligations of nations to protect not only their citizens but also those of other nations whose human rights are threatened. This project challenges the notion that post-Cold War states can easily move beyond the legacies of the Cold War, as their past myths and memories continue to define their sovereignty and identity well after the conflict ends.

COLD WAR II: UKRAINIAN SOVEREIGNTY AND IDENTITY

by

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Dedication

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Introduction

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanykovich was in serious trouble. In November 2013, his government backed out of a trade agreement with the European Union at the last minute, instead promising closer ties with the Russian Federation.¹ The crowds swelled to over 800,000 people when pro-EU “Maidan” protesters in Kiev were met with arrests and violence from Yanykovich’s “Berkut” riot police. Yanykovich responded by forcing strict anti-protest laws through parliament. On February 20, 2014, Kiev saw its worst day of violence in almost 70 years as uniformed snipers fired at protesters, killing at least 88 people.² Yanykovich fled Ukraine soon after and a warrant was issued for his arrest for the crime of “mass murder.”³

Yanykovich’s rapid downfall reflected decades of tensions. For Ukrainians, religious and linguistic traditions, conflicts over economic and military alliances, and the brutal legacies of the Soviet Union, all influenced the three months of protests and government crackdowns. A nation comparable to the size of Texas, Ukraine is roughly divided down the banks of the Dnieper River winding through the center of the country. Western Ukrainians typically speak Ukrainian and want closer ties with the European Union. The most vocal and aggressive Maidan protesters originated from these regions; for many of these protesters, the Soviet Union represents 70 years of violent oppression. Conversely, eastern Ukrainians typically speak Russian and want Ukraine to prioritize its relationship with the Russian Federation over ties with Europe. These individuals often remember the Soviet Union with fond nostalgia.⁴ Those living in the eastern regions view the Maidan protesters as fascist descendants

of the deeply hated Stepan Bandera, a Ukrainian nationalist leader who joined the Nazis and fought against the Soviet Union during the “Great Patriotic War.”⁵

These divisions were exacerbated by more recent conflicts between Ukraine and Russia. Russian-backed insurgents shot down a Malaysian Airlines passenger jet in eastern Ukraine as part of the ongoing military campaign between Russian and Ukrainian forces in the Donbas region.⁶ On July 17, 2014, Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 departed Amsterdam for Kuala Lumpur. Several hours after takeoff, the plane was shot down 25 miles from the Ukraine-Russia border, killing all 283 passengers and 15 crew on board.⁷ The loss of life was staggering. Eighty of the passengers were under the age of 18, and 20 were younger than 12 years of age. Over 20 *entire families* were killed.⁸ The fighting between Ukrainian and Russian forces intensified in the aftermath of this tragedy. More than a thousand Ukrainians have been killed since the winter of 2014. Out of such turbulence, Ukrainians struggle to find a unified nationalist discourse that articulates their collective identity and desired future in a post-Cold War era.

The international community has watched this conflict closely because it reignited familiar Cold War battles over the sovereignty of former satellite nations entrapped by the former Soviet Union. President Vladimir Putin—Russia's charismatic leader—defied international pressure in his military campaign against neighboring Ukraine. Putin annexed Crimea, supported separatists in eastern Ukraine, and levied retaliatory economic sanctions against both Ukraine and the United States.⁹ This conflict also aggravated the divisions between the Russian Federation and the west. The governments of Russia and the United States sparred at the United

Nations, attacked each other in public speeches, and formed coalitions of nations to geopolitically battle each other throughout the world.¹⁰ In Ukraine, those divisions were drawn into stark contrast as Russian forces supported separatists in eastern regions and the United States backed the pro-western government in Kiev.¹¹ These latest clashes only underscore the international battle over Ukrainian sovereignty and identity that involves the governments of Ukraine, Russia, and the United States in particular.

Scholars have argued that the current conflict between and among Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and international organizations represents a new Cold War. As early as 2008, Journalist Edward Lucas claimed that a new Cold War between the United States and the Russian Federation was underway.¹² Former Soviet premiere Mikhail Gorbachev argued that a new Cold War had started in the wake of the current conflict, blaming American actions in Eastern Europe.¹³ Journalist Philip Howard also suggested that this second Cold War was unique because it included elements of cyber warfare—arguments developed in Chapter 2 about online “troll army” rhetoric.¹⁴ My dissertation makes three unique contributions to this ongoing argument about the turn toward a Cold War II. First, I argue that the new Cold War traps former Soviet states in a liminal flux that prevents rearticulations of identity and sovereignty in a post-Cold War era. Whereas other examinations of the conflict have focused on a new Cold War from the bi-polar perspective of Russia and the United States, this study explores the implications of former states caught between these two powers and international organizations in a war of words over their national sovereignty. Second, I explore tensions between multiple sources of nationalism, from above and below, as

political leaders and ordinary citizens shape and respond to articulations of Ukraine's national identity and navigate tensions between nationalism and internationalism.

Third, this project examines in-between national actors like Sergey "Goblin" Aksyonov and anonymous Internet "troll army" commenters, suggesting that the current conflict exposes limitations on traditional understandings of national sovereignty and identity. Such individuals participate in constructions of national identity sovereignty as neither political elites nor ordinary citizens, suggesting that conceptions limited to those perspectives are inadequate to explain a post-Cold War framework. Thus, the Cold War II showcases the ways in which Ukrainian identity and sovereignty are caught in a post-Cold War paradox between historic myths and memories of the Cold War and an inherent push for more international, western orientation. I first explore the conflict's Cold War struggles over land and national identity before turning to the current war of words over Ukraine's sovereignty.

The Cold War as a battle for land and borders

The Cold War represented a battle over the sovereignty of nation-states, chiefly between the Soviet Union and the United States. These tensions existed in an era of deepening and strengthening internationalism in the form of institutions, laws, and public opinion. That battle for control played out, at least in part, over two large areas: a battle over land and borders and a battle over national identity.¹⁵ This section explores these contestations.

At the 2015 United Nations General Assembly, President Putin was asked if America's economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure had failed as a form of isolation.¹⁶ He replied, "It's impossible to isolate Russia. To understand that, just look

at the map.”¹⁷ Over a century earlier, Catherine the Great remarked, “I have no way to defend my borders but to extend them.”¹⁸ Although issued over one hundred years apart, these two statements reflect the centrality of land in defining Russia’s relationship with the west. The Cold War was shaped by moments of conflict reflected in physical battles over borders and land.

Immediately following the end of World War II, the Soviet Union—echoing Catherine the Great’s statement—aggressively pursued land expansion across much of Eastern Europe. Many of what would become the 15 Republics of the Soviet Union were occupied immediately after the end of the war in a massive Soviet land grab.¹⁹ Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill observed in his 1946 “Sinews of Peace” address that the Soviet Union had taken over much of Eastern Europe without firing a shot after the war:

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow.²⁰

Churchill was not the only one to sound the alarm after the Soviet Union’s expansion. Deputy American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, George Kennan, wrote in his 1946 “Long Telegram” that the Soviet land grab would only continue due to its engrained nationalist drive for expansion and “instinctive fear of the outside world.” Kennan argued in his anonymously-published “X” article that the Soviets must “be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points.”²¹ Kennan's notion of

containment would inform American foreign policy towards the Soviet Union for the duration of the Cold War.

Rather than confront the Soviet Union's expansion militarily, the United States adopted this policy of containment in the aftermath of World War II aimed at preventing further Soviet expansion without risking direct military conflict.²² Through the Marshall Plan, American allies spent the equivalent of \$130 billion rebuilding European economies to combat the spread of communism.²³ On March 12, 1947, President Harry S Truman delivered his "Truman Doctrine" of economic aid to Greece and Turkey. He warned that Greece would most certainly fall without immediate American intervention because of "the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists."²⁴ This U.S. foreign policy doctrine suggested that combating Soviet land expansion was a top priority, and the United States would intervene to stop communism's spread.²⁵

Germany further illustrated the Cold War tension over land as both Soviet and American leaders hoped to re-build the destroyed nation in its own image at war's end. Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov explained why Berlin was at the center of this battle over land: "What happens to Berlin, happens to Germany; what happens to Germany, happens to Europe."²⁶ Germany was split between East and West, dividing Berlin in two. Joseph Stalin intended to pressure western Germany into capitulating to Soviet demands; he believed that western nations lacked the resolve to reject this territorial expansion.²⁷ Following territorial disputes in 1948, Stalin instituted the Berlin Blockade, preventing food, materials, and supplies from arriving in West Berlin.²⁸ Soon after, the Soviet Union appeared to have

underestimated western resolve in preserving the territorial integrity of West Germany. General Lucius Clay, commander of American forces in Berlin, explained his resolve to preserve western influence in the city: “We are convinced that our remaining in Berlin is essential to our prestige in Germany and in Europe. Whether for good or bad, it has become a symbol of the American intent.”²⁹ For over a year, from 1948-1949, the United States and other western nations conducted a massive “Berlin Airlift” of food and supplies to keep West Berlin afloat and to help the city survive the Soviet siege. Eventually Stalin capitulated, lifting the blockade, and allowing the East-West division along the Berlin Wall to remain intact. The United States continued its massive military buildup in West Germany and fortified its position in Europe, while the Soviet Union did the same in its territories.³⁰

The same year the Soviet Union attempted to starve West Berlin into submission, Soviet leaders established a communist government in North Korea.³¹ Stalin again felt that the west lacked the resolve to resist his territorial expansion and he continued to arm the North Korean government.³² For Stalin, the goal was to expand Soviet-controlled territories into South Korea without risking a direct conflict with the United States. Similarly, President Truman was not willing to risk an open military engagement with the Soviet Union. Yet, he was also unwilling to let Soviet expansion go unchecked. In a National Security Council Memorandum, Truman warned Douglas MacArthur that the operation in Korea was only justified if “at the time of such operation there was no entry into North Korea by major Soviet or Chinese Communist forces, no announcements of intended entry, nor a threat to counter our operations militarily.”³³ While the United States and the Soviet Union

struggled for territorial control in Asia, neither nation was willing to do so openly against the other.

Leaders of both the United States and the Soviet Union described the Korean battles as a struggle over territory. President Truman framed the Korean conflict as one of territorial expansion on the part of communism: “The attack upon Korea makes it plain beyond all doubt that communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war.”³⁴ For Truman, the Soviets were the aggressors, gobbling up territory in Asia and forcing independent nations into their sphere of influence. Conversely, Stalin presented the conflict in terms of western territorial expansion into the region. Stalin drew on recent World War II history in making this argument:

In this case it is difficult to convince the soldiers that China, who threatened neither England nor America, from whom the Americans stole the island of Taiwan, are aggressors, and that the U.S.A., having stolen the island of Taiwan and led their troops straight to the borders of China, is the defending side. It is therefore difficult to convince the troops that the U.S.A. is right to defend its security on Korean territory and on the borders of China, and that China and Korea are not right to defend their security on their own territory or on the borders of their states. Really, one must have lost what was left of conscience to maintain that the United States of America, which has stolen Chinese territory, the island of Taiwan, and fallen upon China's borders in Korea, is the defensive side.³⁵

Both sides quickly followed through on their threats to intervene in the conflict.

Although Soviet soldiers officially stayed out of the clashes, Soviet forces trained and armed North Korean troops and funded Communist China's efforts to support the North Korean forces.³⁶ The United States soon committed its own troops to the conflict, suffering over 33,000 casualties in what the United Nations characterized as a “Peace Action” that came to an uneasy stalemate in 1954.³⁷ Following the war, the

Soviet Union fortified into proxy-control over the pro-Soviet government in North Korea with a massive aid program of debt relief, logistical support, and necessary supplies; the Americans did the same in South Korea. As was the case in Germany, both Soviet and western governments fortified their military position once the conflict officially ended in Korea.³⁸

The United States, through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), went on the territorial offensive in October 1959 by reaching an agreement to put nuclear-tipped Jupiter missiles in Turkey. Ostensibly this was done in the name of defending an American ally in the region. However, by placing nuclear missiles in Turkey—and across the Black Sea from Nikita Khrushchev's summer home in Sochi, Russia—the United States gained a first-strike capability against the Soviet Union and a key strategic foothold deep within the Soviet sphere of influence.³⁹

The United States and the Soviet Union also sparred over Cuba. Closer to home, President Dwight Eisenhower continued American territorial chess moves against the Soviet Union. In 1960 Eisenhower approved a plan by the Central Intelligence Agency to fund and train a group of 1,500 paramilitaries to overthrow the pro-Soviet Fidel Castro government in Cuba. The strategy behind this operation was expressed in the September 1962 number X Memorandum from the U.S. State Department: “[To] bring about the replacement of the Castro regime with one more devoted to the true interests of the Cuban people and more acceptable to the United States in such a manner to avoid any appearance of U.S. intervention.”⁴⁰ The operation, launched by President Kennedy on April 17, 1961, was called the “Bay of Pigs Invasion.” The Bay of Pigs attack was a failure as Castro himself took control of

the Cuban forces. Castro oversaw a total victory that significantly strengthened the Soviet position in the country.⁴¹ In response, President Kennedy initially denied any American involvement in the invasion. The following day, in a letter to Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, Kennedy wrote, "I have previously stated, and I repeat now, that the United States intends no military intervention in Cuba."⁴² Three days later, Kennedy acknowledged America's role in the invasion but framed the events as America acting in its own defense while indicting the moral authority of the Soviet Union:

I want it clearly understood that this Government will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations which are to the security of our Nation! Should that time ever come, we do not intend to be lectured on "intervention" by those whose character was stamped for all time on the bloody streets of Budapest!⁴³

President Kennedy thus framed the American-orchestrated Bay of Pigs offensive, aimed at controlling land in America's territorial "sphere of influence," as a defensive national security measure.

These territorial battles between the United States and the Soviet Union reached dangerous new levels when, in 1962, the Soviet Union covertly sent nuclear missiles to Cuba and publically denied doing so. President Kennedy became aware of Soviet duplicity and used a television address on October 22, 1962, to further the American narrative of Soviet wrongdoing and aggression. Speaking of the newly constructed missiles sites in Cuba, Kennedy argued, "The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere."⁴⁴ Kennedy framed the conflict as one of territorial aggression in an American sphere of influence.

As was frequently the case during the Cold War, the United Nations General Assembly became a forum for dueling nationalist narratives over territory. Most notably, ambassadors Adlai Stevenson and Valerian Zorin sparred during the Cuban Missile Crisis; both nations used the international media coverage of the debate for propaganda purposes. From the perspective of the Soviet Union, American aggression in Cuba, Turkey, and Taiwan spurred the conflict, and the Soviet government had every right to defend itself and support its regional ally.⁴⁵ Zorin, Soviet Ambassador to the UN, outlined his strategy in a telegram to the Soviet Foreign Ministry: “The USA's aggressions against Cuba cannot be evaluated as anything other than a provocation pushing the world to the verge of nuclear war.”⁴⁶ The Soviet narrative was one of American overreach and territorial intrusion. Conversely, the American version of events emphasized Soviet aggression and over-expansion that threatened global security.⁴⁷ Ambassador Stevenson exclaimed, “We are here today and have been this week for one single reason -- because the Soviet Union secretly introduced this menacing offensive military buildup into the island of Cuba while assuring the world that nothing was further from their thoughts.”⁴⁸ Both the United States and the Soviet Union brought their rhetorical war of words to the global community in their battle over territorial and military expansion.

Such land battles reached new heights during the space race. In Yuri Gagarin, the Soviets found their cosmonaut, and Gagarin became an international celebrity following his successful 1961 space flight. Soviet leaders framed this event as a testament to the exceptionalism of the Soviet people. In a telegram to Gagarin after his successful flight, Khrushchev outlined how the event was a national victory

for all Soviet people: “The flight accomplished by you opens a new page in the history of mankind, in the conquest of outer space, and fills the hearts of Soviet people with great joy and pride for their socialist country.”⁴⁹ Through the phrases like the “conquest of outer space,” the Soviets used the scientific achievement to punctuate their further expansion of territory.

The United States worked to keep pace in the Cold War battle over the territory of space. President Kennedy rhetorically framed the American effort to beat the Soviet Union to the moon as one of national pride, American exceptionalism, and scientific superiority. Just months after the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy spoke of the American motivations for participating in the space race: “We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things *not* because they are easy, *but because they are hard*; because *that goal* will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because *that challenge* is one ...*we intend to win*.”⁵⁰ This narrative suggested that America was serving a humanitarian role in its exploration, and traveling to space was simply the next great frontier and a logical extension of manifest destiny. The implicit assumption was that America “winning” this race highlighted the need for territorial expansion into the heavens.

As the Cold War progressed, other proxy-wars were waged over land disputes and conflicts over territories and borders. The decades-long conflict in Vietnam (1955-1975) and the nine-year Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979-1989) featured parallel military defeats for both the United States and the Soviet Union. In Vietnam, the United States resisted Soviet expansion, fighting well armed and Soviet-trained North Vietnamese forces. While the war spanned a period of almost 20 years,

it intensified rapidly following the assassination of President Kennedy. President Lyndon B. Johnson signaled an escalation in American foreign policy in 1963 by raising concerns over what had been dubbed as a “domino theory” where nation after nation could fall to communism. The fear, Johnson reasoned, necessitated the need to stop Soviet territorial expansion in all “little nations” around the world that were threatened by Soviet forces.⁵¹ Similarly, in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union was defeated in its efforts to defend its pro-Soviet regime that could expand the Soviet sphere of influence.⁵² While not directly involved, the United States covertly supported anti-Soviet forces in the conflict. These efforts escalated until the eventual Soviet retreat from Afghanistan in 1989.⁵³ The Soviet defeat in the conflict reflected an increasing lack of control from Moscow.

When the Cold War officially came to an end on Christmas day, 1991, the 15 Soviet republics broke away from Russia and formed independent states. This dissolution of the Soviet Union represented the final blow in a long and intensifying struggle on the part of the republics to resist Soviet rule; “Popular Front” movements sprung up in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia as early as 1988, and violent uprisings took place in Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan during the same time period.⁵⁴ Protesters were seemingly emboldened by the Soviet Union’s inability to maintain control of its territories, and moves by Soviet leaders to offer increased regional autonomy to these republics only inflamed and enabled further resistance.⁵⁵ When the Soviet Union finally collapsed, these new/old nations were forced to redefine their own territories that they now controlled. These territorial reconfigurations were often complicated and sometimes violent; the United Nations

helped broker these transitions. After the Soviet Union's collapse, the UN welcomed the newly formed Russian Federation and all of the former Soviet republics as member states. Sadly, the efforts by the international community were often unsuccessful; conflicts among competing factions often broke out during these territorial and border shifts.

With the Soviet Union's collapse, the newly minted Russian Federation entered a time of tremendous uncertainty. In the immediate post-Cold War period of the 1990s, new President Boris Yeltsin was largely unable to address issues of inflation, a declining population, and rampant corruption.⁵⁶ The nation was no longer officially a Soviet country, but many of the same issues continued to plague political leaders in the Russian Federation; while it looked like a functioning democracy, behind the scenes the Russian Federation embraced Soviet-style political and economic corruption.⁵⁷ Moreover, while it looked like western-style media, the Russian Federation's state-controlled outlets adopted a neo-Soviet style of unabashed subjectivity in their pro-government coverage.⁵⁸ Despite these changes, the myths and memories used to characterize these issues from the Soviet Union continued to circulate in Russian public life after the Cold War came to a close.⁵⁹

The tumultuous post-Cold War period saw fresh territorial divisions lead to brutal conflicts. Without overarching Soviet influence and military strength to put down internal disputes, civil and regional wars sprang up in Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the breakup of the former Yugoslavia witnessed brutal genocides in Croatia, Kosovo, and Serbia. Georgia experienced breakaway republics in Abkhazia and South Ossetia declared their independence, and Moldova was unable to contain the

breakaway of the Transnistria region.⁶⁰ The Russian Federation also endured an awful war. Chechens in the north caucuses, believing they should *also* have been granted independence from Russia after the Cold War, rebelled and were violently put down by Russian forces in two separate conflicts.⁶¹ Such contestations illustrate how the Cold War and post-Cold War periods were battles between nation-states fought over territories and borders. Yet, the Cold War battle also played out over matters of national identity. The following section illustrates how these identity disputes inform the current Ukrainian crisis.

The Cold War as a propaganda battle over national identities

National identities are rhetorical notions constructed in part through propaganda. As Michael Lane Bruner argues, “national identities are incessantly negotiated,” representing “a never-ending and politically consequential rhetorical struggle over” the meanings “of national character.”⁶² Both the United States and the Soviet Union forged their own nation’s national identities and the identities of their Cold War nemesis. These constructions played out in propaganda battles throughout the Cold War. In 1928, Edward Bernays defined propaganda as “The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses.”⁶³ In international disputes such as those characterizing the Cold War, propaganda represents information disseminated by governments for the purpose of swaying international opinion.⁶⁴ However, in foreign policy conflicts government leaders also direct propaganda messages to international *and* domestic audiences simultaneously.⁶⁵

Domestic discourses often have international implications. Official government messages in foreign policy disputes are predominantly targeted to international audiences. Additionally, national myths and images that are perpetuated by presidents and circulate in domestic rhetoric are also promulgated in international propaganda. Thus, presidents and leaders may address their own people while simultaneously communicating important messages to their enemies or allies.⁶⁶ Cold War leaders often indirectly targeted their international enemies and allies through messages written for domestic audiences. Both the Soviet Union and the United States constructed and circulated these propaganda messages throughout the Cold War via a variety of channels.⁶⁷ This section explores the propaganda infrastructure of both nations.

Soviet propaganda infrastructure

The Soviet Union's primary domestic propaganda apparatus was the Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti, or the KGB—the Committee for State Security. The KGB disseminated propaganda narratives “in print, at endless meetings, in school, in mass demonstrations, on the radio.”⁶⁸ Such propaganda was directed at Soviet citizens and touched all parts of public life in the Soviet Union. “Lenin's corners,” which were shrines for the display of propaganda about the God-like founder of the Soviet nation, were built in all public buildings, and schools conducted marches, songs and pledges of allegiance to Soviet leaders.⁶⁹ Young Pioneers—a Soviet youth group—were taught to be loyal and uncompromising in their fight against the enemies of socialism.⁷⁰ Radio was also used to reach wide audiences throughout the country and to disseminate pro-Soviet messages in the republics.⁷¹ Propaganda

posters with simple designs were hung in every Soviet town.⁷² Films depicting Soviet heroism were shown throughout the nation, both in theatres and sometimes from specially designed “propaganda trains,” which would project the movie onto the sides of the cars whenever the train stopped.⁷³ Following its founding in 1917, the newspaper *Pravda* regularly disseminated propaganda messages while all anti-government newspapers were suppressed by the KGB.⁷⁴ Books and plays were also used to spread pro-government messages from within Russia and the Soviet orbit.⁷⁵

The KGB also directed the arm of international propaganda for the Soviet Union. In addition, the Glavnoye Razvedyvatel'noye Upravleniye (GRU), the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, also played a major role. One Soviet tactic of foreign propaganda was to support peace movements in other nations that undermined American efforts at territorial expansion. For example, Soviet defector Stanislav Lunev claimed, “the GRU and the KGB helped to fund just about every antiwar movement and organization in America and abroad.”⁷⁶ The scope of these efforts to disseminate Soviet propaganda abroad was enormous; the Central Intelligence Agency estimated, for example, that during the 1980s the Soviet budget for propaganda abroad reached between \$3.5 and \$4 billion.⁷⁷ The Soviet Union used this massive propaganda infrastructure to promote narratives of Soviet exceptionalism and the evils of the enemy.

American propaganda infrastructure

Understanding the Cold War helps us understand American propaganda. Woodrow Wilson’s 1913 inauguration signaled a new era of propaganda in American foreign policy. The roots of American propaganda can be traced to President

Wilson's actions during World War I.⁷⁸ Wilson recognized that the United States needed to explain its intentions and goals directly to the peoples of the world, not just to their leaders and diplomats.⁷⁹ To that end, Wilson founded the Committee on Public Information (CPI) in 1917. This organization helped convinced domestic audiences of the need to intervene in World War I.⁸⁰ The CPI's head, George Creel, stressed the importance of propaganda in his book, *How We Advertised America*. He argued that World War I "had to be fought out in the hearts and minds of people as well as on the actual firing line. The approval of the world meant the steady flow of inspiration into the trenches."⁸¹ Popular opposition to propaganda grew after World War I, putting President Franklin Roosevelt in a difficult position.⁸² Like Wilson, Roosevelt believed that the federal government needed to directly inform the public instead of relying entirely on the press to convey essential information.⁸³ In the pre-Cold War era, the role of government-sponsored propaganda became increasingly integral to American foreign policy.

Following World War II, American leaders recognized the need to create a peacetime propaganda infrastructure and overcame significant opposition in building one. President Truman faced stiff opposition to his proposed peacetime propaganda programs from journalists, political elites, and the public.⁸⁴ Those in the media who endorsed wartime propaganda saw a foreign information program in peacetime, such as Truman's United States Information Service (USIS), as unwanted competitor paid for by taxpayers.⁸⁵ Beyond opposition from media elites, David Krugler argues that four major factors were working against Truman during his efforts to continue and expand propaganda programs after World War II:

First, the conservative-led drive to roll back the New Deal and discredit its precept of activist government; second, struggles between the legislative and executive branches over the proper prerogative of each in foreign affairs; third, the use of foreign affairs and policies to serve partisan, even personal, aims; and fourth, intra-executive branch disagreement over the purposes of propaganda.⁸⁶

Thus, Truman's propaganda programs were strongly opposed by multiple forces following World War II.

Two dynamics also worked in Truman's favor in his effort to build a peacetime propaganda infrastructure. First, the Soviet Union was ramping up its own anti-western propaganda in Eastern Europe, making life increasingly difficult for American diplomats.⁸⁷ Second, as the Cold War intensified, so did public fears of Soviet aggression. Events such as the Berlin Blockade, the "loss" of China to communism, and the Soviet Union successfully testing an atomic bomb made it increasingly difficult to deny a need for a large-scale American propaganda effort in the early years of the Cold War to match the propaganda efforts of the Soviet Union. In this climate of fear, President Truman, and later President Dwight Eisenhower, were able to frame their call for a broad, permanent peacetime propaganda program as a national security issue.⁸⁸ On August 31, 1945, President Truman argued, "the nature of present-day foreign relations makes it essential for the United States to maintain information activities abroad as an integral part of the conduct of our foreign affairs."⁸⁹ Thus, from the beginning of the Cold War, the United States sought to define American identity and undermine the Soviet Union through propaganda campaigns.⁹⁰

The infrastructure of U.S. propaganda centralized the voice of the U.S. president and involved the skillful manipulation of media through various channels.⁹¹

As Shawn J. Parry-Giles argues, “America’s commitment to a government-sponsored propaganda program not surprisingly parallels the rise of the rhetorical presidency.”⁹² Presidents exerted control over propaganda by selecting the director of propaganda operations and asserting their voice into deliberations over propaganda’s content. For instance, Presidents Truman and Eisenhower were instrumental in setting up a permanent propaganda structure that continues to inform existing propaganda practices.⁹³ Under them, U.S. propaganda programs were either positioned under the U.S. Department of State or positioned as independent agencies.⁹⁴ Yet, the presidents nevertheless exerted an important level of authority over propaganda operations; the programs, in turn, served as a platform for promulgating the presidents’ political agendas.⁹⁵

President Kennedy also integrated propaganda into his foreign policy arsenal. The United States Information Agency (USIA—USIS's successor as reorganized under Eisenhower) served as an important agency in Cold War propaganda efforts.⁹⁶ This meant, for instance, that the USIA produced and showed propaganda films to both domestic and international audiences.⁹⁷ The Johnson administration would expand the use of USIA to include still photographs to promote his agenda.⁹⁸ Under the Reagan administration, these efforts to combat Soviet “disinformation” were restored to the Truman-era levels.⁹⁹ With propaganda structures essentially under White House control from the Eisenhower administration on, presidents had numerous tools at their disposal for propaganda purposes.

Presidents also used large international policy initiatives as propaganda fare during the Cold War that targeted both international and domestic audiences. For

instance, President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" (AFP) initiative in December 1953 "provided as ideal forum to maximize worldwide propaganda appeal."¹⁰⁰ AFP was a program where the United States and Soviet Union would both contribute fissionable material to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA, under the control of the United Nations) that would then provide nuclear power for peaceful uses in other countries. Surrendering nuclear material would also mean both the United States and the U.S.S.R. would have less material for bombs. As Eisenhower explained in his speech to the United Nations General Assembly, "I know that the American people share my deep belief that if a danger exists in the world, it is a danger shared by all—and equally, that if hope exists in the mind of one nation, that hope should be shared by all."¹⁰¹

Eisenhower's program made the United States appear peaceful and ready to compromise for the greater good; the Soviets rejected it because, as C.D. Jackson explained, the U.S.S.R. would have to "pony up some fissionable material, which they don't want to do (and maybe they haven't got so much of it), or they have got to stand revealed before the whole world as an enemy of mankind."¹⁰² The Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) promoted Atoms for Peace in numerous ways domestically, including the distribution of AFP postage stamps, AFP floats in parades, and in positive articles in magazines like *Time*.¹⁰³ This domestic campaign also included the distribution of "500,000 illustrated pamphlets" which contained Eisenhower's full speech and "photographs."¹⁰⁴ Such proposals like Atoms for Peace thus allowed presidents to turn the international community and forums like the

United Nations into propaganda channels during the Cold War to undermine Soviet military and propaganda operations and to define American identity.

Radio was a primary mechanism for the spread of American propaganda messages. Walter Hixson explains the centrality of radio as a propaganda channel during the Cold War, capable of penetrating the Iron Curtain: “As East-West tensions mounted, radio emerged as virtually the only viable means of disseminating anti-communist propaganda.”¹⁰⁵ Truman’s administration concluded in 1951 that radio was “the only significant remaining program which effectively reaches the people of either or both the USSR and the satellites.”¹⁰⁶ One such radio operation was the Voice of America (VOA)—a relic of World War II. Austin Stevens argues that the VOA presented “facts abroad about international developments...setting forth the United States’ position in areas where it may not be known.”¹⁰⁷ The VOA broadcasted pro-American and anti-communist messages as an official arm of U.S. foreign policy.¹⁰⁸ As Krugler explains, VOA was “the nation’s ideological arm of anti-communism.”¹⁰⁹ VOA programs stressed “the virtues of democracies with the vices of communist regimes” in addition to “the inevitability of our ultimate triumph.” Such messages depicted the U.S.S.R. as “the scheming villain...all black and sinister,” while America “stands up against the powers of evil with unyielding determination and fierce goal-consciousness.”¹¹⁰ Throughout the Cold War, radio represented a significant channel for American propaganda.¹¹¹ American leaders repeatedly used mass communication technologies to reach wide audiences throughout the Cold War.¹¹² As technologies became more sophisticated, so did America’s propaganda operations.

Not all U.S. propaganda, however, was officially connected to the U.S. government. Both Presidents Truman and Eisenhower built up the country's covert propaganda channels. The U.S. government, for instance, also influenced the content of other propaganda radio channels like Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL) that were not officially connected to the United States publicly but CIA-influenced privately.¹¹³ Their broadcasters spoke as if they had escaped the throes of communism in their search for freedom in the west. RL “existed to beam messages to the Soviet Union, using former Soviet citizens as broadcasters” while RFE targeted Eastern Europe.¹¹⁴ In addition, Truman created the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) and Eisenhower the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB). Both were designed to strengthen American interests and weaken communism by conducting psychological warfare abroad.¹¹⁵ These covert channels represented significant sites of American propaganda throughout the Cold War. There were three themes associated U.S. Cold War propaganda narratives: championing capitalism, exalting American exceptionalism, and framing the United States as a peaceful nation.¹¹⁶

Ukraine: Struggling for sovereignty

Ukraine also faced a battle over land and identity in its history before, during, and after the Cold War. Understanding this history helps us comprehend Ukraine’s own struggle for sovereignty while caught between two world powers. This history also helps us understand Ukraine’s role in both American and Soviet propaganda. Until the most recent conflict, the Ukrainian government’s propaganda infrastructure has been minimal. As discussed, in foreign policy disputes, propaganda messages are usually official statements by government leaders to influence international public

opinion, and for much of its recent history, Ukraine represented an occupied territory. It had no leaders independent of Polish, Tsarist, or Soviet control who *could* articulate messages of Ukrainian identity or resist control of its territories by foreign powers. However, this is not to say that nationalist myths—an essential component of Ukraine’s current propaganda efforts—were not circulating during this time period. Understanding the cultural roots of those exceptionalist myths requires an examination of Ukrainian history.

Pre-Soviet Ukraine

The 1648 Cossack rebellion was an important time for Ukraine in defining its identity. During the rebellion in what is now central Ukraine, peasants known as Cossacks fiercely fought against their forced serfdom under the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth.¹¹⁷ Many of them were peasants from Poland and Lithuania who had been forced to move to the area to work in the bountiful fields.¹¹⁸ Their primary cause was simple freedom from Polish domination. There was a narrative of an oppressed people who demanded to “breathe freely,” sharing their common experiences of oppression and a “willingness to die” for their collective freedom.¹¹⁹ Cossack victory was imminent at the end of the 15-year war.¹²⁰ Rather than accept defeat, the Commonwealth formed an alliance with powerful Tsarist Russia and partitioned Ukraine down the Dnipro River between their two larger nations.¹²¹ Many of the issues Ukraine currently faces can be traced in part to this geography; the Dnipro River divides the country in two, and the Tsarist period saw that geographic barrier function as the territorial dividing line. The Cossacks, who envisioned themselves as

Ukrainian, were forced into the west; those in the east more commonly viewed themselves as Russian and became the subjects of the Romanov Dynasty.¹²²

Cossack identity was fiercely opposed to outside rule. Ukrainian leader Hetman Zaxarcenko responded to the demands of invading Turkish forces that the Ukrainians surrender before a major battle in the 1670s:

Zaporozhians -- to the Turkish Sultan
You Turkish Satan, brother and comrade of the damned devil and secretary to Lucifer himself! What the hell kind of knight are you? The devil [shits] and you and your army swallow [it]. You aren't fit to have the sons of Christians under you; we aren't afraid of your army, and we'll fight you on land and sea. You Babylonian busboy, Macedonian mechanic, Jerusalem beer brewer, Alexandrian goat skinner, swineherd of Upper and Lower Egypt, Armenian pig, Tatar goat, Kamenets hangman, Podolian thief, grandson of the Evil Serpent himself, and buffoon of all the world and the netherworld, fool of our God, swine's snout, mare's [rectum], butcher's dog, unbaptized brow, may the devil steam your ass! That's how the Cossacks answer you, you nasty glob of spit! You're unfit to rule true Christians. We don't know the date because we don't have a calendar, the moon is in the sky, and the year is in a book, and the day is the same with us as with you, so go kiss our [butt]!¹²³
-Chief Hetman Zaxarcenko with all the Zaporozhian Host

The Cossacks resented any foreign power coming into their lands and attempting to dominate them, and they were willing to die fighting for their freedom. Although the Cossacks would win the battle with the Turkish troops outlined here, they were eventually overwhelmed by the Commonwealth's alliance with Tsarist Russian. After the failed rebellion, Tsarist Russia controlled what is now eastern Ukraine for centuries. At the same time, Poland, and eventually Hungary and Austria, controlled the western half of the country. This split caused this Cossack discourse of national identity to evolve in different ways on each side of the Dnipro over several centuries.

Tsarist rule further refined and bifurcated Ukrainian identity in ways reflected in today's conflict. As a response to growing fears of separatism in its territories,

Russia cracked down on any expressions of nationalism in the eastern parts of Ukraine under Tsarist control throughout the 1800s.¹²⁴ This ban included the use of the Ukrainian language in schools in particular.¹²⁵ Conversely, the use of the Ukrainian language maintained a sufficient base in Western Ukraine where it was never banned.¹²⁶ The language remained a prominent feature of its music, literature, and folklore.¹²⁷ Under this climate of repression, many Ukrainophiles—usually Cossack descendants who promoted Ukrainian independence—fled the Tsarist-controlled territories.¹²⁸ They often settled in the far-western regions of the country where the independence movement was allowed to flourish under relaxed Austrian and Polish control.¹²⁹ Those friendly to Russia, however, remained in the eastern half of the country. Thus, while the Ukrainian identity created by the Cossacks was allowed to thrive west of the Dnipro, the same political and linguistic commitments were more likely silenced in the east.¹³⁰

Ukraine and the Soviet Union

These same political divisions existed for centuries until Ukraine voted to become one of the founding members of the Soviet Union in 1922 following a disputed election run by the Soviet leadership.¹³¹ Under Soviet rule, the Ukrainian people were only allowed one shared identity defined by an allegiance to the Soviet Union. Russian replaced Ukrainian as the national language and people were forbidden to practice their faith in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.¹³² The forced collectivization of farmland from 1932-1933 decimated the Ukrainian peasantry, as millions died fiercely defending their land and refusing to give up their crops.¹³³ As mentioned, Stepan Bandera, a Ukrainian nationalist leader, joined the Nazis and

fought against the Soviet Union during the “Great Patriotic War.”¹³⁴ These Ukrainian nationalists and Bandera-followers, united in the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UIA), would continue to staunchly resist Soviet rule.¹³⁵ Red Army forces eventually crushed them in the early 1950s.¹³⁶ The failure to resist collectivization and the defeat of Bandera’s army left Ukrainians with little recourse but to bend to Soviet rule. Their territory was occupied and their national identity was submerged in many ways for much of the Cold War.¹³⁷

Ukrainians nonetheless found ways to resist Soviet occupation. Living under Soviet rule meant that Ukrainians could not develop their own propaganda infrastructure since a uniquely Ukrainian—and non-Soviet—identity was officially forbidden.¹³⁸ Many Ukrainians were not happy about this inability to publicly express their national identity; especially in western regions, frustration with Soviet rule was strong. Dissidents who resisted Soviet occupation needed to operate in secret because the KGB quickly infiltrated and destroyed numerous nationalist movements in Ukraine.¹³⁹ The two largest Ukrainian dissident movements were the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (zpUHVR, the political base of the future Prolog, discussed in the next section) and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists loyal to Stepan Bandera (OUNb, also known as OUNr).¹⁴⁰ Although Bandera had been assassinated, his legacy remained a powerful nationalist rallying cry. Fearing KGB operatives, dissidents were not able to resist openly, instead coordinating with the United States to undermine Soviet authority covertly. Things remained this way until, with the Soviet Union collapsing around them, 92 percent of Ukrainians voted for Independence on December 1, 1991.¹⁴¹

Ukraine and the United States during the Cold War

The United States attempted to undermine the Soviet Union's control in Ukraine throughout the Cold War.¹⁴² From 1952-1992, the United States supported the Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation. Taras Kuzio explains the scope of Prolog's propaganda activities:

Prolog reached out to a far wider political spectrum inside Ukraine as well as cooperated with a broad spectrum of Western NGO's, academics and politicians as well as new Eastern European opposition movements such as Poland's *Solidarity*. Prolog was a leader in the smuggling of literature into Soviet Ukraine (tamvydav, or published there), the smuggling of literature out of the country (samvydav [samizdat] or self-published), and maintaining contacts with Ukrainian underground organizations and overt dissidents and opposition movements.¹⁴³

Moreover, Prolog coordinated with U.S.-funded Radio Svoboda (the Ukrainian-language service of Radio Liberty) throughout its existence. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty radio programs were filled by anti-communist émigrés affiliated with Prolog who told stories of their wonderful lives in the west.¹⁴⁴

The propaganda goals of these programs were to encourage resistance to Soviet rule. Ross Johnson argues that the goal of supporting dissident groups and Radio Free Europe and Radio liberty was to encourage Ukrainians to self-liberate: "The aims of this strategy were to keep alive hopes of resistance [and] give sustenance to dissenters." Johnson continues that the U.S.-funded programs were designed to "support alternatives to communist rule, promote autonomist tendencies in the USSR and outer Soviet empire, give air to national communist leanings, and, from the 1960s, provide a voice to the emerging dissidents, civil society and opposition."¹⁴⁵ As Prolog President Roman Kupchinsky explains, "All of this (Prolog Activity) would have been impossible without the U.S. government as a secure

financial base.”¹⁴⁶ The United States thus did all it could to covertly support Ukrainian dissident movements and undermine Soviet authority in Ukraine during the Cold War.

Post-Cold War Ukrainian identity

When the Soviet Union collapsed, the Ukrainian people were given an opportunity to articulate their own national identity for the first time in over half a century. Without the Soviet Union to submerge nationalist divisions, centuries-old conflicts reemerged and Ukraine quickly became polarized.

Ukrainian presidents relied on the nation’s own propaganda infrastructure to navigate these tensions. Unfortunately for Ukrainians who desired closer ties with the west, Russian agents dominated Ukraine’s propaganda apparatuses in its Security Service, the SBU, since the end of the Cold War. The SBU is under the direct control of the Ukrainian president. However, as Philip Shishkin explains, “Unlike other former Soviet republics, Ukraine didn’t purge the ranks of its spy service when it gained independence. Many of its agents came from the former Soviet KGB’s 5th directorate, which had focused on rooting out domestic political dissent.”¹⁴⁷

Corruption was rampant in the SBU following the Cold War.¹⁴⁸ When conflicts erupted between Ukrainian leadership and the Russian Federation, the SBU actively undermined pro-American political candidates and movements. SBU agents, for instance, infiltrated the 2014 Maidan protests and violently attacked other protesters and looted stores to discredit the movement. Virtually the entire agency subsequently fled to Crimea or Russia following President Yanykovich’s removal from power to avoid being arrested for treason.¹⁴⁹

To address this lack of propaganda infrastructure, the SBU hired a new crop of recruits from western Ukraine, many of whom were in their early twenties.¹⁵⁰ The Ukrainian government's revamped SBU—ostensibly free of Russian spies—operates in ways modeled after its western Cold War counterparts, producing and distributing pro-Ukrainian books, magazines, radio advertisements, cable news shows, and newspapers defending the current government.¹⁵¹ Under the direct control of President Poroshenko, these propaganda apparatuses publically and covertly work to support a pro-western political agenda and undermine Russian influence in the country. Ukraine's struggle for sovereignty and control over its own identity is the subject of this project. This current crisis is informed by the rhetorical and political legacy of the Cold War.

The present study

Research questions

This study will explore the battle over Ukrainian sovereignty in the current crisis involving Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and select international organizations (EU, NATO, UN). Three research questions will guide this study. First, I examine how Ukrainian sovereignty is constituted by officials from Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and international organizations (EU, NATO, UN) in the ongoing war of words over Ukrainian identity and territory in a post-Cold War era. Second, in examining the current dispute over Ukrainian sovereignty, I explore what happens when myths and memories of nation-states are promulgated internationally and collide with the myths and memories of other nation-states in a period of heightened international engagement. Third, I analyze how the public memory of the

Cold War influences the debate over Ukrainian sovereignty in the post-Cold War world. This project explores how political leaders and ordinary citizens use myths, memories, and narratives to navigate the tensions between nationalism and internationalism in a post-Cold War world.

Scope of the project

First, I study the rhetoric of government officials and the ways such rhetoric circulates in public life.¹⁵² Disputes over Ukrainian sovereignty are represented either in messages targeted directly toward international audiences or in discourses that circulate widely across the Internet to reach international audiences. Such propaganda often encourages support and incites opposition. This study thus also includes dissenting voices and their contributions to Ukrainian sovereignty. Second, I examine texts written or translated into English. This project focuses on propaganda messages targeting international audiences and efforts by those audiences to resist such messages. Texts targeting international audiences are often written or translated primarily into English. While I also analyze speeches delivered in Russian and Ukrainian, official English transcripts often accompany these discourses.¹⁵³

Rhetorical lenses

As explained, this study will examine the battle over Ukrainian sovereignty among Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and international organizations. The conflict is as much a war of words as it is a war between militaries—a conflict that is exacerbated by the tensions between nationalism and internationalism. As such, I will explore the discourses that have helped define this foreign policy struggle. All parties have used propaganda, as a form of rhetoric, to characterize their own actions and to

depict the comportment of other nations. Such propaganda, infused with ideologies of nationalism and internationalism and reliant on myths and memories, represents the primary critical lenses used to examine the crisis over Ukrainian sovereignty. In what follows, I explain the central theories that make up my critical approach for this study.

I bring a rhetorical perspective to this project that reflects the commitments of rhetoric and public address. This means, as Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman suggest, that I must “acknowledge the factors of ‘power politics’ while also accounting for discursive power” found in the debates over Ukrainian sovereignty.¹⁵⁴ First, my approach presumes that language is foundational to rhetorical study. As Murray Edelman argues, “political language is political reality.”¹⁵⁵ Second, my approach presumes that ideology is foundational to rhetorical study. As Michael Calvin McGee argues, “Ideology in practice is a political language, preserved in rhetorical documents, with the capacity to dictate decision and control public belief and behavior.”¹⁵⁶ John Thompson elaborates further that to study ideology is “to study the ways in which multifarious uses of language intersect with power, nourishing it, sustaining it, enacting it.”¹⁵⁷ Ideology thus intersects rhetoric, values, ideas, and power, manifested in structures such as government propaganda.

Third, my approach presumes that identity is central to rhetorical study. As Maurice Charland suggests, identities are constituted by a variety of factors, including culture, history, language, and religion.¹⁵⁸ He explains, “Political identity must be an ideological fiction” and this “fiction becomes historically material and of consequence as persons live it.”¹⁵⁹ Identities can relate to individuals as well as

nation-states. As Michael Lane Bruner explains, “National identities articulated by state leaders...proactively contribute to the construction, maintenance, and transformation of those identities.”¹⁶⁰ Contestations often erupt in this battle over identity formation, particularly among rival nations.¹⁶¹

Finally, my approach presumes that rhetoric and the ideas that texts feature must be situated in the historical, political, and social contexts that shape them. Ernest J. Wraga explains that ideas can be traced in discourse: “The word *ideas*, therefore...refers widely to formulations of thought as the product and expression of social incentives, which give rise and importance now to one idea, then to another.” Wraga’s ideas—formulations of thought—represent connected “products of their social environment.”¹⁶² This study recognizes the importance of historical ideas that continue to circulate in more contemporary discourse. Understanding the battle of words and ideas over Ukrainian sovereignty necessitates a robust understanding of the battle of words and ideas that played out among the world's Cold Warriors—the Americans, the Soviets and their republics, and international organizations.

Propaganda represents an important means by which this battle plays out.¹⁶³ Propaganda serves as a type of rhetoric that is used by governments to influence international public opinion.¹⁶⁴ Erin Steuter and Deborah Wills conceive of governmental propaganda as a form of rhetorical influence that helps “persuade the public of the evil of the enemy and the justness of its own cause.” As Steuter and Wills conclude, “Influence, after all, is propaganda’s purpose.”¹⁶⁵ Shawn Parry-Giles similarly suggests that governments and leaders serve a critical purpose in propaganda’s distribution by intertwining strategy and persuasion. She defines

propaganda as “Strategically devised messages that are disseminated to masses of people by an institution for the purposes of generating action benefiting its source.”¹⁶⁶

Generally speaking, there are three kinds of propaganda—black, white, and gray. Black propaganda has no official ties to any government making it a more covert form of propaganda.¹⁶⁷ White propaganda represents an official message from governments or clearly identifiable sources.¹⁶⁸ Gray propaganda is located somewhere between black and white, where, as Parry-Giles explains, its “source was concealed or attributed to a non-hostile source.”¹⁶⁹ This study will focus on white and gray propaganda as I study the messages of governmental leaders and those who act on behalf of governments yet “camouflage” their connections to them.¹⁷⁰ These messages of propaganda reflect ideologies of nationalism and internationalism and the tensions that arise between them in times of international conflict.

Nationalism: connecting identity and power

Scholars have expended considerable time defining theories of nationalism.¹⁷¹ Karina Korostelina argues that nationalism is a rhetorical process of determining shared national identity, which is the product of both “1) ethnic history and the identity of continuity, values, and belief systems and 2) dominant ideologies and conscious manipulation, including commemoration, ideology, and symbolism.”¹⁷² For her, nationalism “‘invents’ nations that never existed before to imbue the newly created state with shared meaning.”¹⁷³ Studies of nationalism thus examine the discourse about and by a nation-state(s) and the ideologies that construct the nation's identity and history.

The rise of the nation-state coincided with the gradual break up of colonizing relationships that forced nations to re-envision their identity.¹⁷⁴ Before the twentieth century, world order was dominated by monarchies focused on maintaining and expanding their empires.¹⁷⁵ For instance, the monarchies of England, France, Spain, and Holland alone conquered and ruled much of the Americas, Africa, and Asia for centuries. This geopolitical structure dominated for hundreds of years and “as late as 1914, these colonizing states made up the majority of the membership of the world political system.”¹⁷⁶ However, the rise of nationalist movements resisting imperial subjugation soon became untenable for monarchies. Several factors led to increasing numbers of people resisting colonial rule throughout the 1800s. Benedict Anderson explains these forces:

In the course of the nineteenth century, and especially in its later half, the philological-lexicographic revolution and the rise of intra-European nationalist movements, themselves the products, not only of capitalism, but of the elephantiasis of the dynastic states, created increasing cultural, and therefore political, difficulties for many dynasts.¹⁷⁷

New nationalist communities were able to resist colonial rule because of the “interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communication (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity.”¹⁷⁸ People began to identify with a nation rather than with an empire, and political leaders started building a rhetoric reflecting this realization based in national tenets and commitments. Identities associated with colonial dynasties slowly gave way to identities associated with nation-states.

Colonial rulers tried to adapt to these changing realities to maintain control of their empires. In response to these resistances, some monarchies began describing

themselves in nationalist vernacular. For instance, the “Romanovs discovered they were Great Russians.”¹⁷⁹ These efforts by monarchs to coopt nationalist rhetoric in order to sustain their dynasties all eventually failed. As Anderson explains, “the First World War brought the age of high dynasticism to an end. By 1922, Habsburgs, Hohenzollerns, Romanovs and Ottomans were gone. In place of the Congress of Berlin came the League of *Nations*. From this time on, the legitimate international norm was the nation-state.”¹⁸⁰ As colonial empires receded, the people of these new nations needed a new discourse to define their identities, and nationalism narratives served that purpose. The post-Cold War era represents yet another period of pronounced shifts in borders and identities and Ukraine represents a classic case in debates over national sovereignty. The nation-state thus remains an integral feature of contemporary geo-politics.

Anderson famously described nations as “imagined communities” that are “conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship.” As Anderson's definition implies, nations are fundamentally constituted rhetorically through texts and words. These communities are “distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.”¹⁸¹ Thomas Cronin and Michael Genovese explain that such nationalist discourse serves to unite large groups of people willing to kill and die “for such limited imaginings” of their “national character.”¹⁸² Nationalism rhetoric ultimately reflects what Vanessa Beasley calls a “doubled-edged sword” by promoting a “shared identity” that also “encourage[s] exclusion, intolerance, and even inhumanity.”¹⁸³ Rhetorics of nationalism thus draw on cultural and ideational resources to constitute a nation’s sovereignty and identity.

Conceptions of nationalism can derive from a multiplicity of sources. Bruner argues that there are generally two helpful characterizations of nationalism—“nationalism from above,” characterized by political and social elites, and “nationalism from below,” expressed by the oppressed individuals of a society.¹⁸⁴ When political leaders construct nationalist discourses, they can have tremendous influence in defining a nation's identity. For example, Vladimir Putin demonstrates how political elites can shape national identity in his address to the Russian Duma following the 2014 annexation of Crimea: “Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride. In people’s hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia.”¹⁸⁵ Putin suggests that incorporating Crimea into the Russian Federation is a point of national pride, and that his government has acted in ways reflecting—and constituting—the history and values of the Russian people.¹⁸⁶ As a political leader, Putin was uniquely positioned to make these contributions to his nation’s identity. Political elites accordingly have tremendous rhetorical power to shape and define conceptions of nationalism.¹⁸⁷

Nationalism from below represents efforts by often-oppressed individuals to resist dominant nationalist ideologies. Rather than elites generating a national ideal, groups of people form their own understanding of what a nationalist identity is and express that view rhetorically. As Bruner explains, “Intellectuals and the economically oppressed also seek to resurrect or maintain a particular culture when opposed by colonial forces.”¹⁸⁸ The 2014 Ukrainian “Revolution of Dignity” highlights nationalism from below, as large groups of economically oppressed peoples who identified with Europe resisted Russian influence and redefined their

own nation as a free and independent nation.¹⁸⁹ By chanting, “Ukraine is Europe” in massive protests and toppling statues of Vladimir Lenin, Ukrainians articulated their own identity that resisted the pro-Russian one championed by then-president Viktor Yanykovich.¹⁹⁰ Instead of a president or political leader controlling the identity of the nation-state, nationalism from below suggests that the people participate in shaping a nation's identity.

Internationalism: global integration through communities and organizations

Scholars have also extended considerable effort defining theories of internationalism. Micheline Ishay argues that internationalism is “commonly perceived as an ideology that stresses universal justice and political rights regardless of national, ethnic, or religious origins....”¹⁹¹ She suggests that internationalism is “a process *sui generis* rather than a static concept, shaped and transformed by progressive thinkers and historical events.” For Ishay, “‘Progressive’ refers to... actions and ideas that challenge the status quo in pursuit of altruistic ends.”¹⁹²

Internationalism theory calls for leaders to act in ways that benefit other nations and international communities. As she explains, internationalism is “the historical record of progressive events and thoughts clustered around philosophical, political, and social perspectives.”¹⁹³ It is an ideological commitment to a global community. Ishay argues that internationalism must be understood as “guidelines describing social relations between and within states. Internationalism assumes a dynamic between the global and the domestic social arrangement.”¹⁹⁴ Because internationalism is an evolving process, those guidelines suggesting international relationships between nations have evolved over time.

Historically, internationalism has been used to justify colonization and empire building. The British, French, and Dutch efforts to control South Africa (1652-1795), the Spanish-American war (1898), the Eight-Nation Alliance putting down the Boxer Rebellion in China (1899-1901), and the U.S. war against the Philippines (1899-1902), are all examples where leaders used internationalist arguments to validate colonization and extend empires. For instance, Senator Albert Beveridge called for America to continue its “march toward the commercial supremacy of the world” in his 1898 “March of the Flag” address, urging senators to look beyond their borders and colonize the Philippines.¹⁹⁵ While internationalism was used to justify colonization, it has conversely been used as a framework for resisting such attacks on a global scale.

Following World War I, President Woodrow Wilson argued for a global system of government, shifting conceptions of internationalism from empire building to peacemaking, where global communities would come together to prevent future wars. Harold Josephson argues that Wilson tried to transform “the world from a warlike state of nature to an orderly global society governed by liberal norms.”¹⁹⁶ His system proposed to make what N. Gordon Levin, Jr. calls a “more rational and orderly...world system of competing nation-states.”¹⁹⁷ If such alliances succeeded, war would be prevented through the passage of international laws and enforced by an overarching association of nations. Such agreements would take the form of broad non-aggression pacts signed by associated members and non-members alike.¹⁹⁸ The Wilsonian political vision included a democratic world government, diplomacy, trade, labor protections, disarmament, and the formation of a “general association of

nations” to draw “covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.”¹⁹⁹

Wilson faced strong resistance at the time, and his proposal was defeated in the United States even though at its height, 58 other nations opted to join the League of Nations in its twenty-six year history (1920-1946).²⁰⁰

Although Wilson’s call for a global government was unsuccessful in the short term, his internationalism model for global integration persisted.²⁰¹ Other international organizations followed in the wake of the League of Nations. One such organization is the United Nations (UN). Founded after World War II, Article I of the UN Charter explains its purpose:

Maintain international peace and security; develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination; achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.²⁰²

The UN would offer a global forum for public deliberation, conduct humanitarian relief efforts, and levy economic sanctions against nations violating these founding principles. Such actions follow Wilson’s internationalist vision. Similarly, the European Union’s (EU) charter expresses parallel goals: “The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.”²⁰³ The EU often uses its comparatively strong currency, the Euro, as an incentive to get potential member states to meet these foundational human rights

benchmarks.²⁰⁴ These actions and founding documents suggest an international European identity defined by peace and global cooperation.

While the UN and EU have used internationalism to focus on peaceful alternatives to war and to promote human rights, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's charter roots its genesis in a national security alliance. NATO was founded in 1949 to deter Soviet aggression during the Cold War. Founding NATO members were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The European states had good reason to fear Soviet expansion at the time, and an alliance made political sense. Its charter lays out NATO's mission in this way: "Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all."²⁰⁵ All NATO members are committed to defending any NATO member with force.²⁰⁶ Thus, international organizations are founded on ideological commitments to internationalism, and those structures and ideologies have supported diverse international causes ranging from humanitarian missions to national security alliances.

The tension between nationalism and internationalism

The tension between nationalism and internationalism is central to this project.²⁰⁷ Ishay explains, "Nationalism is shaped in diametrical opposition to internationalism."²⁰⁸ Acting in one's own national interest often contradicts the will of the international community. For instance, Russian leaders framed the Russian Federation's annexation of Crimea as a benefit to Russian nationalism; however, the

UN, EU, and NATO condemned those same actions. Each instead defended Ukrainian sovereignty over Russian aggression.

Many leaders standing on the world stage face a rhetorical challenge in navigating the ideological tension between nationalism and internationalism. In his examination of the relationship between China and the United States, Stephen Hartnett explains this tension: “when the U.S. government...ratcheted up the pressure on the Party, they did so in the name of a universalist version of human rights that supposedly transcends national boundaries and local customs...assuming to speak for norms that are self-evident and apolitical.”²⁰⁹ This internationalist rhetoric of human rights transcends borders of any one nation. Ideologies of nationalism rely on the implicit assumptions of national exceptionalism; yet, ideologies of internationalism assume that certain values, such as “human rights,” represent shared values for an *alliance* of nation-states. Nationalism places the focus on the one; internationalism places the focus on the many. Nationalism vests the power in the nation-state; internationalism rests the power in international alliance. Even when the sovereignty of the nation-state reigns, there is still a responsibility to protect the people of other nations, codified in international law.²¹⁰ This responsibility, and its solidification in international communities, justifies both American and United Nations’ involvement in the Ukrainian crisis. The tension between theories of nationalism and internationalism thus must be negotiated by Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and international organizations in the propaganda battle over Ukrainian sovereignty. Myth and memory represent important inventional resources in this struggle.

Myth and memory

Propaganda texts often reflect the tensions between nationalism and internationalism, and myths are integral features of such ideological contestations. David Sutton's conception of *mythos* is illustrative. He argues that "under this umbrella term we will place a culture's corpus of sacred and secular narratives, the stories a people use to define themselves as separate from the rest of humanity."²¹¹ Myths are tremendous rhetorical resources because they are linked with ideology. Ben Halpern argues, "Myth and ideology are closely related conceptions."²¹² McGee also suggests that myths and ideologies are connected: "If we are to describe the trick-of-the-mind which deludes us into believing that we 'think' with/through/for a 'society' to which we 'belong,' we need a theoretical model which accounts for both "ideology" and "myth..."²¹³ Therefore, myths can give voice to nationalism and internationalism ideologies.

Myths are central components of national identities and international orientations. As Keith Cameron explains, "myth is inexorably linked with the concept of national identity."²¹⁴ This identity can create idealized visions of national character. Trevor Parry-Giles and Shawn J. Parry-Giles argue, "Texts of nationalism typically offer a mythic ideal of individual and collective identity."²¹⁵ Myths can therefore help bolster key aspects of national identity. However, in establishing collective identity, the myths of one nation often conflict with the myths of others. As Michael Brown explains, "...the tendency to breed conflicts is inherent to typical nationalist myths."²¹⁶ Ernst Cassirer agrees that the link between myths and communities can be divisive. He suggests that the entire history of Western political

theory was nothing less than a struggle over myths and their proper use.²¹⁷ Myths thus can create collective identity that can function to unite nations and divide them as they simultaneously shape perceptions of global communities.

Myths have been an essential tool for defining Ukrainian, American, and Russian post-Cold War identity. Tatiana Zhurzhenko explores Ukrainian efforts to create a unifying national myth after the Soviet Union's collapse. She argues, "The process of nation-building is pursued by drawing the cultural heritage and traditions into the ideological struggle and creating historiographic myths concerning the origins, national character and destiny of the newly emerging nation."²¹⁸ Hiroaki Kuromiya delineates the Cossack myth of patriotic warriors as resisting foreign invaders. These warriors serve as "the core of modern Ukrainian nation building" for Presidents Kuchma and Kravchuk after the Cold War.²¹⁹ American leaders have similarly relied on myths to articulate conceptions of national identity. The myth of American exceptionalism is a frequent trope in presidential discourse, linking a present moment to America's pre-revolutionary founding aboard John Winthrop's *Arbella* in 1630; Winthrop's "Shining City on a Hill" comment about an exceptional destiny was used by President Reagan to showcase the superiority of American identity over its Cold War nemesis.²²⁰ Similarly, the Soviet myth of Stakanovite exceptionalism expressed by fiercely defending the Russian people is often used by Vladimir Putin to project an identity of strength. Putin's "Outhouse" speech was in reaction to the ongoing Chechen war. He announced that all terrorists would die by Russian hands, even if troops found them in the outhouse. Putin's speech thus deploys the Stakanovite myth to articulate and reinforce Russian identity.

Myths can also purvey internationalist visions. As Bruner argues, “the rhetorical dimension of national belonging remains a very powerful force in...international relations.”²²¹ Internationalism myths often rely on past narratives of collective action to address shared problems. For example, President Putin called on the United States to obey international law and avoid unilateral intervention in Syria in his 2013 *New York Times* editorial. His argument used an international myth of allied American and Soviet forces collectively and heroically winning World War II: “We were also allies once, and defeated the Nazis together!” Because defeating Nazi Germany was a shared experience between multiple nations, the myth functioned to form a collective, international identity that encouraged leaders to think beyond their borders. Putin then uses this shared myth of communal victory and heroism to call for American support of international law in Syria: “The universal international organization — the United Nations — was then established to prevent such devastation from ever happening again.” Here, Putin championed internationalism by recalling the time in history where this shared alliance was forged to address international disputes; he used this mythic strategy to support his foreign policy agenda.²²² Myths can serve as a crucial propaganda strategy for encouraging nation-states to think and act more globally in addressing international problems.

Ideologies of nationalism and internationalism also rely on public memories.

Bruner argues that public memory is an essential tool in articulating national identity:

Rather than assuming that national identity is a purely ‘natural’ process from the bottom up, or a purely manipulative process from the top down, national character is more appropriately conceptualized as a constant tension between motivated interpretations of the past and motivated visions of the present and future.²²³

The process of uncovering this tension is what Bruner calls “strategies of remembrance” or “politicized forms of public memory.”²²⁴ He explains, “national identities are created and transformed through...a wide variety of specific strategies for public memory.”²²⁵ Ideologies of internationalism are also promulgated through public memories in the attainment of propaganda aims. Bruner argues that through memory, “critics are better positioned to critique the strategies and their likely impact on state formation and international arrangements.”²²⁶ Thus, public memories represent integral components of nationalist and internationalist ideologies.

One such strategy of remembrance is commemoration through monuments. In studying public memorials, Carole Blair, Marsha Jepperson, and Enrico Pucci argue, such visual representations “select from history those events, individuals, places, and ideas that will be sacralized by a culture or a polity.”²²⁷ Schwartz explains that, “Commemoration lifts from an ordinary historical sequence those extraordinary events which embody our deepest and most fundamental values.”²²⁸ Such shared values serve to unite people behind common beliefs and assumptions, articulating notions of identity.²²⁹ For instance, public memorials of national heroes, such as those to Ukrainian poet Taras Shchenchenko, can unite Ukrainians behind a shared national identity while remembering his accomplishments for the nation.²³⁰ Similarly, memorials can articulate international orientations and collective efforts to combat shared problems. For example, on September 11, 2006, the Russian Federation, through the Artist’s Foundation in St. Petersburg, donated a “Tear Drop Memorial” in New Jersey, across the Hudson River from the Statue of Liberty. The monument is officially named, “To the Struggle Against World Terrorism” and is inscribed,

“Monument to the struggle against world terrorism, artist Zurab Tsereteli.”²³¹ This monument commemorates the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but it also frames terrorism as a problem of global significance demanding collective attention.²³² Given the Russian Federation’s history of surviving its own violent terrorist attacks, this goal makes sense.²³³ Public memory is thus a force of nationalism and internationalism reflected in the propaganda of world leaders.

This study assumes that all nation-states use propaganda to promote their foreign policy goals on the international stage. In the process, nation-states promulgate their individual myths and memories to the international community as they simultaneously negotiate the myths and memories of internationalism. International organizations in response seek to broker peaceful compromises among estranged nations. The result is a war of words for the sovereignty of nation-states seeking to assert their power and recalibrate their national identity in a shifting global environment. In battling over Ukraine sovereignty in a post-Cold War world, these clashes of nationalism and internationalism, myths and memories play out in the propaganda of Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and the international organizations. This study will examine this complex and contentious war of words.

The present study

This project questions the actual shift in 1989 between a period of Cold War and a period of post-Cold War, especially for former Soviet satellite regions like Ukraine. As countries like Ukraine try to assert their own sovereignty and identity in a post-Cold War world, they are ensnared in what I define as a post-Cold War

paradox over their identity and sovereignty in the nearly forty-five-year war. Even when a war ends, the animosities that animated the war do not dissipate. From a history of ideas perspective, the ideas that produced and then fueled the conflict do not burn out. This study shows how much of the Cold War and the ideas that defined it continue to define and confine the identity and sovereignty of nations struggling to gain independence and authority in the post-Cold War context. A battle thus continues to play out over the hearts and minds of these former Soviet states. Focusing on the ideas that continue to constitute Ukrainian identity and sovereignty helps challenge the existence of “post” when attached to this war—a second Cold War—that is still raging. This post-Cold War paradox serves as the umbrella paradox that frames all other paradoxes addressed in each of the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 1 explores the paradox of Ukraine’s splintered identity divided by geography and ideology over a pro-Russian east vs. a pro-European west. Ukraine is European and Russian, east and west, and each identity is seemingly incompatible with the other. This tension between and among political elites and ordinary citizens restricts interpretations of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty as the nation struggles to articulate a unified nationalist discourse. Political leaders like Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko deploy myths and memories to define Ukrainian nationalism. The intractable failure of Ukrainians to find a unifying interpretation of their sovereignty and identity owes a debt to the Cold War, resulting in the splintering of the nation’s borders. Such contestations have left Ukraine vulnerable to outside interference.

Chapter 2 explores the paradox of the Russia’s construction of Ukrainian identity from above, below, and between. Even as the USSR shifted its identity from

the USSR to Russia following the Cold War, it refused to allow Ukraine to reconstitute its own identity and sovereignty in a post-Cold War period. It restricted the sovereignty of Ukraine by taking back the land and identity that it controlled during the Cold War. This chapter examines the Russian Federation's perspective on Ukrainian identity, with a focus on how Russian myths and memories of the Cold War influenced conceptions of Ukraine's identity and sovereignty in a post-Cold War world. When Vladimir Putin returned to the presidency in 2012, he stepped back in time and reclaimed the ideas that defined the Cold War as a means to reclaim their past authority over Ukraine. This chapter also examines how Russian President Vladimir Putin navigated the commitments to internationalism in the post-Cold War and the tensions that exist over controversial national identities. The tensions between nationalism from above (from political leaders) and below (from ordinary citizens) help explain the Russian rhetoric. Because there were also Ukrainian citizens who identified as Russians, especially in Crimea and eastern regions of the country, issues of citizenship and borders complicate this nationalist discourse. This chapter isolates an "in-between nationalism" rhetoric originating from neither ordinary citizens nor political elites. This in-between nationalism is a national identity created by individuals who exist in a nationalist liminal space as neither internationally recognized political leaders nor as ordinary citizens. Crimean leader Sergey "Goblin" Aksyonov and anonymous Internet "troll army" commenters represent these groups who rely on the authenticity of organic social movements *and* the credibility and resources of political elites and institutions that contribute to meanings of identity. This chapter thus challenges traditional understandings of national identity

construction (from above and below) as non-state, and non-citizen, actors (from Russia rather than Ukraine) use unique perspectives to articulate visions of Ukrainian identity, fracturing the global order in Cold War II.

Chapter 3 addresses two related paradoxes. First, the tensions between nationalism from above and below were also present in American rhetoric, but often, American leaders continued to speak on behalf of the Ukrainian people as they adopted a rhetoric “from below” approach. Second, the United States defined Ukrainian identity in ways that were pro-western and resistant to the Russian Federation, while simultaneously championing popular sovereignty and self-determination as paramount values for the Ukrainian people. This paradox of defending the will of the Ukrainian people while asserting the authority to direct those wishes in the direction of US foreign policy undermines western credibility. Ukraine again becomes a political football in the second Cold War that is deepening between the United States and Russia.

Chapter 4 addresses the paradox of self-determination and non-intervention as international organizations (UN, EU, NATO) at once champion international collaborations while defending the sovereignty of member nations. Ukraine turned to the international community to legitimize its pro-European turn and condemn Russian actions in eastern Ukraine. But the paradox left Ukraine once again trapped as the United Nations failed to adjudicate Ukraine’s calls for legitimation or even forcefully condemn Russian actions within Ukrainian territory because of its commitment to non-intervention. This dispute showcases what can happen to self-determination and sovereignty when nation-states like Ukraine embody diverse historical allegiances

and identities. The result is a splintering that invites outside interference in an attempt to help these post-Soviet satellite regions define their national identity in ways that most advantage external actors concerned about their own political power.

A notion of top-down nationalism is constructed as the United States, Russia, and international organizations attempt to determine Ukraine's identity and usurp its sovereignty. Rogers Smith frames U.S. political influences (specifically theories of citizenship) in terms of a multiple traditions thesis. This chapter argues that sovereignty and identity represent two such traditions animating constructions of Ukrainian nationalism and the battle over self-determination. Such disputes in the international community explain why Ukraine struggles to gain sovereignty, fails to achieve consensus in their national identity, and continues to be vulnerable to external aggression and internal division.

In sum, this project examines a major battle over the sovereignty of the nation-state in a in an era of shifting political alliances and borders. It considers the recirculation of Cold War ideologies in this post-Cold War conflict, and how Ukraine hopes to navigate being caught in what Simon Tisdall calls "the new Cold War" between Russia and the United States.²³⁴ I explore how tensions between nationalism and internationalism are articulated and challenged throughout this new war of words that contests Ukrainian territory and national identity in a changing post-Cold War world.

NOTES

¹ "Ukraine Suspends Preparations for EU Trade Agreement," *BBC News*, 21 November 2013.

² “Ukraine Crisis Timeline,” *BBC World News*, 4 May 2014.

³ Mark Memmott, “Ukraine’s Yanykovich on the Run from Mass Murder Charge,” *NPR*, 24 February 2014.

⁴ These geographic divisions are thoroughly explained in Karina Korostelina, *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power: Self-imagination in a Young Ukrainian Nation* (Lexington books, 2013).

⁵ These are extremely broad, and even slightly clumsy, conceptions of Ukrainian social and political life. There are many nuances in these relationships and in the collective memory that Ukrainians are struggling to define. The project will unpack these distinctions at length.

⁶ Calling the people who downed the jet “insurgents” is a contested rhetorical choice. The Kiev government has claimed since the start of the conflict that they were fighting regular Russian military units in the region, though Russian leaders refused to acknowledge any official military presence until December 2015.

⁷ Jeffro Mullen, “Report: MH 17 Hit by ‘High Energy’ Objects from Outside,” *CNN*, 9 September 2014.

⁸ Petaling Jaya, “Malaysian Airlines MH 17 Crash: 20 Families Gone in One Shot,” *The Straits Times*, 21 July 2014.

⁹ Elsa Buchanan, “Ukraine Crisis Timeline: From the Highs of Independence to Full-Blown War,” *International Business Times*, 21 April 2015.

¹⁰ “The Ukraine Crisis Timeline,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 4 January 2016. During the Cold War, for the United States, that coalition was made up of nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Soviet Union’s coalition was made up of communist nations around the world that it was supporting at various points of the Cold War, such as China, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Guatemala. In the current conflict, Russia has fewer friends, though Belarus and Venezuela are reliable allies.

¹¹ So far the United States has given Ukraine \$291 million in humanitarian aid and military equipment, as well as a \$1 billion loan guarantee. The White House explains their efforts to coordinate with international organizations and non-governmental organizations to address Ukraine’s internal refugee crisis: “The U.S. government is contributing to the work in Ukraine of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),

and the UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).” “FACT SHEET: U.S. Support for Ukraine,” Office of the Press Secretary, 18 September 2014. Meanwhile, the Russian Federation has sent 48 humanitarian aid convoys food and medical supplies to the Donbas region, in addition to supporting and training the insurgents and actively fighting Ukrainian forces with regular Russian military units. “Russia Sends its 48th Humanitarian Aid Convoy to the Donbas Region,” *TASS Russian News Agency*, 24 December 2015.

¹² Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: How the Kremlin Menaces both Russia and the West* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012).

¹³ Simon Shuster, “Exclusive: Gorbachev Blames U.S. for Provoking ‘New Cold War,’” *Time Magazine*, 11 December 2014.

¹⁴ Philip Howard, “Social Media and the New Cold War,” *Reuters*, 1 August 2016.

¹⁵ The battle also took place in other ways, including through diplomacy and economic sanctions. While those areas are important, I focus on major Cold War events over land and identity here for clarity.

¹⁶ These sanctions were levied in response to Russia’s invasion of Crimea and eastern Ukraine in 2014.

¹⁷ Vladimir Putin, quoted by Christopher Miller, <https://twitter.com/ChristopherJM/status/648635190194098177>, 28 September 2015. Putin’s belief that geography is a legitimate factor in defining a nation apparently only applies to Russia. In a January 2016 interview, Putin remarked about the Russian takeover of Crimea, “For me, it is not borders and state territories that matter, but people’s fortunes.” Blome, Nikolaus, Kai Diekmann and Daniel Biskup, “Vladimir Putin: The Interview,” *Bild*, 11 January 2016, <http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/wladimir-putin/russian-president-vladimir-putin-the-interview-44092656.bild.html>

¹⁸ This quotation attributed to Catherine the Great might well be apocryphal, but regardless of the veracity of its origin, the belief in Russia’s need for territorial expansion has remained constant since her rule in the eighteenth century. Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations* (New York: Atlantic Books, 2011), 78.

¹⁹ The 15 republics were Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Latvia, and Estonia. Of these 15 republics, the unofficial policy of the Soviet Union was that Russia was “first among equals.” David Remnick, *Lenin’s tomb: The last days of the Soviet empire* (Vintage, 1994).

²⁰ Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri—given over a year before George Kennan's "X Article" that would articulate the U.S. "Containment" policy toward Soviet Union was published—first expressed the new dominance of Russian identity in its occupied nations. Winston Churchill, "The Sinews of Peace," 5 March 1946. National Churchill Museum, <https://www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org/sinews-of-peace-iron-curtain-speech.html>

²¹ X, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct". *Foreign Affairs* 25, no. 4 (1947): 566–582.

²² Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997): "Their aim was to apply external pressures, short of direct military conflict, that would promote instability behind the Iron Curtain with the ultimate goal of "rolling back" communism in Eastern Europe and, to the extent possible, the USSR itself" (xiv).

²³ Michael Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947–1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

²⁴ Harry Truman, "The Truman Doctrine," 12 March 1947, *American Rhetoric*. Whether or not the Soviet Union actually intended to overthrow the Greek and Turkish governments is immaterial for Truman's propaganda purposes in this speech. Richard Freeland explains: "Although there is good reason to doubt Soviet support for Greek guerillas in 1947, there is no reason to believe that those responsible for American foreign policy had any uncertainties on the issue at the time. There is no question that these men were uniformly convinced that the U.S.S.R. was committed to an expansionist policy not only in the Balkans but also in Western Europe, and that only American intervention could prevent their success." Richard Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security, 1946-1948* (New York: Knopf, 1972) 101.

²⁵ Brockriede and Scott explain the significance of the "Truman Doctrine" speech at the time: "To policy makers in the State Department, Greece and Turkey became linked as the area in which to block Russian expansion into the Mediterranean. Furthermore, the thread was a test of American will. Could the United States act resolutely in time of peace in taking an international role unprecedented in the country's history?" Brockriede, Wayne, and Robert Scott, *Moments in the Rhetoric of the Cold War* (New York: Random House, 1970), 13.

²⁶ As quoted in Giangreco, D.M. and Robert Griffin, *Airbridge to Berlin: The Berlin Crisis of 1948: Its Origins and Aftermath* (Presidio Press, 1988), 55.

²⁷ Roger Miller, *To Save a City: The Berlin Airlift, 1948-1949*, Vol. 68 (Texas A&M University Press, 2000), 12.

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- ²⁸ John Gaddis, *The Cold War: a New history* (Penguin, 2006), 33.
- ²⁹ *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany, 1945 – 1949* Vol. 2 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 677
- ³⁰ These events are covered at length in General Clay's account of the blockade and its aftermath. Lucius Clay, *Germany and the Fight for Freedom* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1950).
- ³¹ James Stokesbury, *A Short History of the Korean War* (Harper Collins, 2009), 26.
- ³² Kathryn Weathersby, "Should we fear this?": *Stalin and the danger of war with America*, Vol. 39 (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2002), 10.
- ³³ Harry S Truman, "Directive to the Commander of the United Nations Forces in Korea," 27 September 1950, *The Truman Library*, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/korea/large/documents/pdfs/ki-18-3.pdf.
- ³⁴ Harry S Truman: "Statement by the President on the Situation in Korea," June 27, 1950, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13538>
- ³⁵ Joseph Stalin, "For Lasting Peace, for People's Democracy!" *Pravda* No. 8, 23 (February - March, 1951).
- ³⁶ Allan Millet, *The War for Korea, 1945-1950: A House Burning* (University Press of Kansas, 2005), 15.
- ³⁷ David Rees, "Korea: The Limited War," (New York: St. Martin's, 1964): 24.
- ³⁸ Charles Armstrong, "The Destruction and Reconstruction of North Korea, 1950-1960," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 8, no. 51 (2010), 51.
- ³⁹ The decision by Eisenhower to put missiles in Turkey, and later their deployment by Kennedy, is outlined at length in Nur Bilge Criss, "Strategic nuclear missiles in Turkey: The Jupiter affair, 1959–1963," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 20, no. 3 (1997): 97-122.
- ⁴⁰ FRUS X, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1961–1963*, Volume X, Cuba, (US Department of State, 1962).
- ⁴¹ These events are discussed at length in Robert Quirk, *Fidel Castro* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 1995).

⁴² John Kennedy, "Letter to Chairman Khrushchev," 18 April 1961, *Kennedy Presidential Library*, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/~media/assets/Foundation/Best%20of%20JFK/JFKKhrushchevNSF183418612pages.pdf>

⁴³ John Kennedy, "Address Before the American Society of Newspaper Editors," 20 April 1961, *Kennedy Presidential Library*, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKWHA-024-001.aspx>

⁴⁴ John Kennedy, "Cuban Missile Crisis Address to the Nation," 22 October 1962. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkucubanmissilecrisis.html>

⁴⁵ Arnold Horelick, "The Cuban Missile Crisis," *An Analysis of Soviet Calculations and Behavior* (1962).

⁴⁶ Valerian Zorin, "Telegram from the UN Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry," 23 October 1962, *Wilson Center*. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/1119161>

⁴⁷ Robert Kennedy, *Thirteen days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (WW Norton & Company, 2011). Zorin continued, "We will demand a condemnation of the USA aggressions, the immediate cessation of the blockade they have declared and all infractions of maritime freedom; and an immediate end to all forms of intervention in the domestic affairs of the Republic of Cuba."

⁴⁸ Adlai Stevenson, "UN Security Council Address on Soviet Missiles in Cuba," 25 October 1962. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/adlaistevensonunitednationscuba.html> Stevensen continued, "You, the Soviet Union, has sent these weapons to Cuba. You, the Soviet Union, has upset the balance of power in the world. You, the Soviet Union, has created this new danger, not the United States."

⁴⁹ Nikita Khrushchev, "Telegram to Yuri Gagarin," *The First Man in Space* (New York: Cross Currants Press, 1961). Khrushchev's remarks began, "It gives me great joy to congratulate you warmly upon your spectacular heroic feat, the first space flight aboard the orbital ship Vostok. All Soviet people admire your glorious feat which will be remembered for ages to come as an example of courage, valor and heroism in the service of mankind."

⁵⁰ John Kennedy, "Rice Stadium Moon Speech," 12 September 1962, *NASA*. Kennedy also remarked in this speech, "There is no strife, no prejudice, no national conflict in outer space as yet. Its hazards are hostile to us all. Its conquest deserves the

best of all mankind, and its opportunity for peaceful cooperation may never come again.”

⁵¹ The “Domino Theory” actually originated ten years earlier in a press conference with President Eisenhower. He said, “Finally, you have broader considerations that might follow what you would call the 'falling domino' principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences.” Dwight Eisenhower, “President Eisenhower’s News Conference, 7 April 1954, *Public Papers of the Presidents*, Eisenhower (1954), 382.

A decade later in a 1964 television interview, President Johnson framed the war in Vietnam as an extension of President Kennedy’s legacy in the region, and why the “Domino Theory” was something both he and his predecessor championed:

Mr. Severeid: Mr. Kennedy said, on the subject of Vietnam, I think, that he did believe in the 'falling domino' theory, that if Vietnam were lost, that other countries in the area would soon be lost.

Johnson: I think it would be a very dangerous thing, and I share President Kennedy's view, and I think the whole of Southeast Asia would be involved and that would involve hundreds of millions of people, and I think it's-it cannot be ignored, we must do everything that we can, we must be responsible, we must stay there and help them, and that is what we are going to do.

Lyndon Johnson, “TV Interview with President Johnson in which Johnson endorses the Domino Theory,” 15 March 1964, *Public Papers of the Presidents*, Johnson (1963-64), 370.

⁵² Paul Grigory, *Lenin's Brain and Other Tales from the Secret Soviet Archives*, No. 555 (Hoover Press, 2008), 121.

⁵³ For an entertaining and accurate account of the American covert war in Afghanistan, see George Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War* (Grove Press, 2003).

⁵⁴ These events are chronicled extensively in David Remnick, *Resurrection: The Struggle for a New Russia* (New York: Vintage, 1998).

⁵⁵ The unsuccessful efforts of the Soviet Union to maintain control of the republics, and the sometimes violent reactions and counter-protests during this period, are outlined in Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford University Press, 1993).

⁵⁶ Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic peace: Principles for a post-Cold War World* (Princeton University Press, 1994).

⁵⁷ Timothy Luke, "Governmentality and Contragovernmentality: Rethinking Sovereignty and Territoriality after the Cold War." *Political Geography* 15, no. 6-7 (1996): 491-507. See also: Sarah Oates, *Television, Democracy and Elections in Russia*, (New York: Routledge, 2006).

⁵⁸ Sarah Oates, "The Neo-Soviet Model of the Media," *Europe-Asia Studies* 59, no. 8 (2007): 1279-1297.

⁵⁹ Samuel Huntington, "If Not Civilizations, What? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World." *Foreign Affairs* (1993): 186-194.

⁶⁰ These battles are thoroughly discussed in Jack F. Matlock, *Autopsy on an Empire: The American Ambassador's Account of the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (New York: Random House, 1995).

⁶¹ Matthew Evangelista, *The Chechen wars: will Russia go the way of the Soviet Union?* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

⁶² Michael Lane Bruner, *Strategies of Remembrance: The Rhetorical Dimensions of National Identity Construction* (Univ of South Carolina Press, 2002), 1.

⁶³ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (New York: Ig Publishing, 1928), 2.

⁶⁴ This definition comes from foundational propaganda scholar J. Michael Sproule, *Propaganda and Democracy: The American Experience of Media and Mass Persuasion* (Cambridge University Press, 1997). He would also define propaganda as, "Efforts by special interests to win over the public covertly by infiltrating messages into various channels of public expression ordinarily viewed as politically neutral." This emphasis on propaganda geared towards international audiences is found in MacKenzie, who argues in his discussion of government messages, "The orthodox theory holds that a public opinion constitutes a moral judgment on a group of facts. The theory I am suggesting is that, in the present state of education, a public opinion is primarily a moralized and codified version of the facts. I am arguing that the pattern of stereotypes at the center of our codes largely determines what group of facts we shall see, and in what light we shall see them." John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: the Manipulation of British Public Opinion (1880-1960)* (Dover, NH: Manchester University Press, 1984), 45.

⁶⁵ James J. Kimble explores how war bonds were used as a source of government propaganda during World War II. The messages geared towards domestic audiences were designed to prepare the population for war and maintain a commitment to supporting the war effort once fighting began. He explains, "In the process of

propagandizing the American public, the Treasury's messages exhibited the psychological stages used by military leaders in preparing soldiers for battle." James J. Kimble, *Mobilizing the home front: war bonds and domestic propaganda*, Vol. 15, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006), 45. Kimble makes the case that these propaganda messages had implications for both international and domestic audiences. Moreover, although the Smith-Mundt Act made it *illegal* to propagandize the American people, international propaganda campaigns often had a domestic component. For instance, the Atoms for Peace program involved President Eisenhower persuading the American people that surrendering fissionable material to the International Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations was the right course of action for national security reasons. As Parry-Giles argues, "the Atoms for Peace campaign targeted domestic and international audiences." Shawn Parry-Giles, *The Rhetorical Presidency, Propaganda, and the Cold War, 1945-1955* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 165.

⁶⁶ Richard Neustadt argues that presidents face a major challenge in that their public comments and addresses must be designed simultaneously to rally and appeal to domestic and international audiences, which often have very different expectations. Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991). For instance, President Kennedy's Inaugural Address and President Reagan's "Evil Empire" speech were both given towards domestic audiences, but their content included messages applicable to the Cold War conflict with the Soviet Union, and it is reasonable to assume that Soviet leaders heard those messages. I argue that in a multi-mediated world, it is essentially impossible for a world leader to speak to *only* one audience, as those messages are immediately circulated around the world and heard by domestic and international audiences. Thus, while the focus of this study is on propaganda messages from government leaders towards international audiences, those distinctions do not *exclude* the impact of those speeches on domestic audiences, particularly in terms of national identity constriction and reinforcement. These nuances will be explored in the lenses section of the present study, but this clarification is helpful in understanding the subsequent section.

⁶⁷ I am not making the case that all messages by American leaders constitute propaganda. My focus is on international messages, yet I recognize the role of domestic audiences in propaganda campaigns.

⁶⁸ Robert Conquest, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century* (New York: Norton, 2000), 101-110.

⁶⁹ Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (New York: Macmillan, 2007), 20-31.

⁷⁰ Lewis Siegelbaum, Andrej Konstantinovič Sokolov, Ludmila Kosheleva, and Sergei Vladimirovich Zhuravlev, *Stalinism as a Way of Life: A Narrative in Documents* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 378.

⁷¹ Anthony Rhodes, *Propaganda: the Art of Persuasion, World War II* (Secaucus: Book Sales, 1987), 212.

⁷² Robert Service, *A History of Modern Russia: from Nicholas II to Putin* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 140.

⁷³ Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime* (New York: Vintage, 2011), 308-309.

⁷⁴ Medvedev, Roy and George Shriver, *Let History Judge: the Origins and Consequences of Stalinism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 41.

⁷⁵ These propaganda messages did not significantly differ between Russia and the 15 republics. While Russia maintained its “First Among Equals” status, the propaganda messages throughout the Soviet Union stressed unity and a collective loyalty to socialism and the Soviet state during the Cold War. Bruner (2002) explains, “The Soviet identity was fundamentally imperial and economic rather than ethnic or cultural...” (39). The similarity of the propaganda campaigns in both Russia and the 15 republics is also explored in Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia: the Post-Soviet Transition* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000).

⁷⁶ Lunev, Stanislav and Ira Winkler, *Through the Eyes of the Enemy: Russia's Highest Ranking Military Defector Reveals why Russia is More Dangerous Than Ever* (London: Regnery Pub, 1998), 75.

⁷⁷ Richard Staar, *Foreign Policies of the Soviet Union* (Washington: Hoover Press, 1991), 75.

⁷⁸ President Wilson signed Executive Order 2594 in 1917. The order established the Committee on Public Information (CPI) which was “charged with encouraging and then consolidating the revolution of opinion which changed the United States from anti-militaristic democracy to an organized war machine.” Mock, James R. and Cedric Larson, *Words that Won the War* (Princeton University Press, 1939), 14, 51.

⁷⁹ David F. Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945-1953* (University of Missouri Press, 2000), 18.

⁸⁰ Hixson explains the CPI’s propaganda tactics and how it evolved on the course of the war: “While the CPI focused initially on efforts to promote a domestic consensus among a public that had been sharply divided over intervention in the European war,

the wartime agency soon shifted its attention to foreign audiences. The CPI used news articles, feature stories, movies, lectures, the telegraph, posters, signboards, a wireless cable service, foreign press bureaus, a film division, and leaflet-filled balloons.”

Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 1.). Brewer further explores CPI's propaganda tactics geared towards domestic audiences: “The CPI's goal of deluging Americans with patriotic messages was realized at the movies. Draped in flags, theaters displayed propaganda posters and portraits of President Wilson.” Susan A. Brewer, *Why America fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 69.

⁸¹ George Creel, *How we Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 4.

⁸² Hixson explains, “The very term propaganda fell into disrepute during the interwar years. Its pejorative connotation stemmed not only from disillusion about the U.S. participation in the European war, but from the activities of propagandists in revolutionary Russia and Nazi Germany” (2).

⁸³ Krugler, 25. Roosevelt founded the “Office of War Information” (OWI) six months after Pearl Harbor. He also created the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which used its Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) in Europe to dump 35 million leaflets in Italy in June 1943 alone, showed American propaganda films in liberated towns, and distributed food and humanitarian aid to beleaguered Italians (Hixson, 3). Roosevelt's Coordinator of Information (COI) was “directed to gather and examine material relating to issues of national security, and to present its findings to the president upon his request....The COI was also instructed to spread propaganda abroad (excluding the Western Hemisphere) based on its intelligence efforts, which relied on espionage” (Krugler, 29). These various propaganda agencies, with different goals and structures, led to confusion about who was responsible for what during Roosevelt's time in office, prompting President Truman's efforts to centralized propaganda infrastructure after the war.

⁸⁴ Hixson explains the intense pressure President Truman was under at the time: “The end of the war not surprisingly brought intense pressure on the government to get out of the propaganda business. Congress proscribed a domestic information program, and only a minority on Capitol Hill and in the journalistic community advocated maintaining an overseas campaign. Most of those who expressed an opinion believed that with troops returning home after victory in Europe and Asia, the United States should ‘disarm’ its international information effort” (4).

⁸⁵ Hixson 30. This opposition to propaganda programs from journalists would continue well into the Cold War. Such resistance is perhaps best reflected in efforts to

fight against the Voice of America radio programs, founded in 1942. The Associated Press and United Press refused to supply news to the VOA after the war, for instance, because they “worried that a relationship with a government media service impugned their objectivity” (Krugler 2). Similarly, Walter Lippmann, the dean of American journalists, condemned the Voice of America as a “propaganda machine.” Walter Lippmann, *Washington Post*, 27 December 1951.

⁸⁶ Krugler 2-3.

⁸⁷ This is how American leaders characterized the impact of the Soviet propaganda campaign in Europe after the war: “[t]he ultimate objective of this campaign is not merely to undermine the prestige of the U.S. and the effectiveness of its national policy but to weaken and divide world opinion to a point where effective opposition to Soviet designs is no longer attainable by political, economic, or military means.” National Security Council Files 4, Coordination of Foreign Information Measures, 9 December 1947. This assessment of Soviet propaganda efforts was compiled by the Secretaries of the Army, Defense, and Air Force (respectively Kenneth Royall, James Forrestal, and Stuart Symington) and signed by President Truman on December 18, 1947. As Krugler explains, “The importance of this declaration is not easily underestimated. By linking Soviet information activities to the already established perception that the Soviet Union was spreading communism around the world, NSC 4 changed fundamentally the purpose of the VOA. Rebutting Soviet propaganda became far more important than telling the world about America” (Krugler 78).

⁸⁸ As Hixson argues, “Deepening Cold War tensions silenced domestic critics of the overseas program, many of whom now conceded the need for resources to combat increasingly hostile Soviet propaganda” (11). Even though congressional leaders could not directly oppose propaganda once public fears of Soviet aggression had set in, people was still squeamish about using the actual word *propaganda*. To get around this problem, President Truman’s Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Edward Barrett refused to call Truman’s “Campaign of Truth” actual propaganda, instead referring to the programs as psychological warfare. He explains, “American congressman, like Americans in general, were suspicious of anything that could be labeled propaganda, but if you dressed it up as warfare, money was very easy to come by.” Edward W. Barrett testimony, “Voice of America,” 27 July 1950, U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations.

⁸⁹ Harry Truman, “Statement by the President,” 31 August 1945, Box 166, White House Central File: Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, Harry S. Truman Library Institute. Five years later, Truman would similarly characterize his “Campaign of Truth” propaganda offensive as “above all else, for the minds of men... Unless we get the real story across to people in other countries, we will lose the battle for men’s minds by default.” This program was regarded as a “Marshall Plan of Ideas” and called for a “sustained, intensified program to promote the cause

of freedom against the propaganda of slavery.” Harry S. Truman, *Department of State Bulletin*, 1 May 1950, 669-672.

⁹⁰ As Parry-Giles explains, “To understand propaganda’s influence is to grasp the means by which American’s Cold War messages were produced and the overall impact that such strategizing had on the ideological constructions of the Cold War” (xvii).

⁹¹ Jason Edwards explains the significance the American president has on defining national identity and shaping foreign policy: “The primary voice in all of American politics is still the President of the United States. The president is the only true representative of the American people. His voice is heard by millions within the United States and across the world. His speech is a repository of America’s political culture that can serve to capture and shape the public mood, while at the same time say something about American identity, where Americans have been, where they are in the present, and where they are going in the future... The importance of the presidency becomes even greater in the realm of foreign policy, partly because of his constitutional mandate to lead.... It is no secret that the president has more access to information and knowledge about every country, organization, and group within the world.” Jason A. Edwards, *Navigating the Post-Cold War World: President Clinton's Foreign Policy Rhetoric* (Lexington, KY: Lexington Books, 2008), 1-2.

⁹² Parry-Giles, xviii.

⁹³ Two factors are worth stressing here. First, each president made changes to frame propaganda activities according to their own vision and foreign policy. While Presidents Truman and Eisenhower were instrumental in the initial process of founding a peacetime propaganda program, each subsequent administration modified these structures of government as needed. Second, domestic propaganda—as in, propaganda messages targeting American audiences—was officially banned when the Smith-Mundt Act was signed into law on January 28, 1948. However, I argue that the same kind of flag-waving, patriotic messages that characterized the CPI remain common in the contemporary public address of American political leaders. Steeped in nationalism, these foundational myths, continue to circulate in political discourse, unofficially replicating the same themes of long-dead domestic propaganda programs.

⁹⁴ As Truman’s Assistant Secretary of State, William Benton “lobbied to gain support for a permanent information services” (Hixson 5). He described the lack of funds and respect given to the information services as “grossly inadequate” and “far below what seems to me to be self-evident national needs.” William Benton, “Benton to Marshall,” 1 November 1946, Box 166, White House Central File: Official File, Truman Papers, Harry S. Truman Library Institute. “The propaganda program under Eisenhower thus became a more stable and institutionalized force in U.S. foreign policy” (Parry-Giles 130). This happened by increasing the amount of covert

propaganda and consolidating various propaganda apparatuses under United States Information Agency (USIA). Eisenhower served as “commander-in-chief of the propaganda program, with the White House functioning as the central command center” (Parry-Giles 131).

⁹⁵ American presidents represent the central voice of the nation-state. As Mary Stuckey explains, “More than any other participant in the national conversation, the task of articulating the collective culture, like the responsibility of managing the collective action, belongs to the president. As the only elected politician answerable to all Americans, the president is in a unique position both in terms of policy and in the more ceremonial and symbolic aspects of the office.” Mary Stuckey, *Defining Americans: The Presidency and National Identity* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 7.

⁹⁶ USIA was founded under Eisenhower to consolidate various agencies and make propaganda a more permanent, central part of American foreign policy. Parry-Giles explains, “The intent was for the USIA to disseminate ‘positive’ material while relegating the more strident propaganda to covert channels” (140). In essence, USIA covered more “objective” news, a focus that gave other intelligence agencies cover to conduct more nefarious propaganda campaigns: “The USIA essentially became a ‘news’ organization that masked the intricate and massive covert propaganda activities that were disassociated from the U.S. government” (Parry-Giles 130). As Hixson argues, “The agency’s three primary propaganda themes were to denounce communism, exalt the capitalist system, and promote democracy...USIA tirelessly promoted the Eisenhower administration’s propaganda campaigns, especially the major disarmament initiatives ‘Atoms for Peace’ and ‘Open Skies’” (122-3).

⁹⁷ Fitzhugh Green, *American Propaganda Abroad* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1988), 35-37.

⁹⁸ The USIA’s efforts to expand its use of photographs and other mass communication technologies to reach wide audiences are detailed in Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁹⁹ These shifts on USIA’s use during the Cold War are traced well in Parry-Giles, 187-189.

¹⁰⁰ Hixson 94.

¹⁰¹ Dwight Eisenhower, “Atoms for Peace,” 8 December 1953, *Voices of Democracy*, <http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/eisenhower-atoms-for-peace-speech-text/>

¹⁰² John Newhouse, *War and Peace in the Nuclear Age* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 107-9.

¹⁰³ Parry-Giles 162-172. The favorable *Time* coverage happened because C.D. Jackson—propaganda zealot and supporter of Eisenhower’s campaigns—became its editor.

¹⁰⁴ Operations Coordinating Board Minutes, 19 January 1954, White House Central Files, 1953-1961, Confidential File, Box 13, DDEPL, 1.

¹⁰⁵ Hixson 31.

¹⁰⁶ Edward W. Lilly, “The Development of American Psychological Operations, 1945-1951,” Box 22, Papers of the Psychological Strategy Board, Harry S. Truman Library.

¹⁰⁷ Austin Stevens, “Voice of America Girds for Battle,” *New York Times*, 11 August 1948, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Hixson 2. Founded under President Roosevelt 1942, VOA broadcast American news and war updates throughout the conflict. After World War II, President Truman moved VOA to the State Department and survived several congressional efforts to eliminate the program altogether.

¹⁰⁹ Krugler 1. Truman won his fight to keep VOA on the air. “The Smith-Mundt Act and the Campaign of Truth fixed the VOA as a permanent part of the nation’s fight against global communism” (Krugler 8).

¹¹⁰ *The New Yorker*, 4 June 1949. Hixson explains how Russian-language programs helped VOA: “The inauguration of Russian-language broadcasts in February, 1947 marked the beginning of VOA’s emergence as a key weapon in the nation’s Cold War arsenal” (32). There is no way for sure to measure the impact VOA’s programs had on Soviet morale throughout the Cold War. However, “The most telling evidence of VOA effectiveness...was the jamming of its broadcasts to Europe and the Pacific by the Soviet Union, beginning in the winter of 1948” (Hixson 33). When VOA administrators asked the CIA for help in overcoming Soviet jamming technology, they were initially rebuffed. “In early 1950 the CIA explained that Soviet jamming of the VOA was actually desirable because it demonstrated to Soviet citizens that their government was going to great lengths to block access to the VOA’s programs...In other words, the message itself did not matter, only the fact that Soviet authorities did not want it heard” (Krugler 9).

¹¹¹ VOA came under attack by Sen. Joe McCarthy during the post-WWII Red Scare hearings. McCarthy “purported to find employees engaged in sabotage and sexual

misconduct” working for the VOA (Krugler 2). Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles refused to intervene on VOA’s behalf, weakening the program, but creating a further justification to move it to executive-controlled agencies and further away from congressional oversight.

¹¹² President Reagan’s contributions to the American propaganda structures of the Cold War were extensive. He expanded VOA to include audiences in Cuba and enhanced televised American propaganda through Worldnet, “a closed-circuit satellite television system that transmitted twenty-four hours a day in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic” (Parry-Giles 190). Worldnet would extend radio’s ability to reach wide audiences quickly all over the world into “video diplomacy.” Richard C. Levy, “Discussion,” in *Public Diplomacy: USA versus USSR*, ed. Richard F. Starr (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 195.

¹¹³ Lawrence C. Soley, *Radio Warfare: OSS and CIA Subversive Propaganda* (New York: Praeger, 1989), 222-223.

¹¹⁴ Parry-Giles 52.

¹¹⁵ Osgood explains, “The PSB defined psychological warfare as any nonmilitary action that influenced public opinion or foreign policy interest. This, therefore, includes, but is not limited to: trade and economic aid, cultural and educational exchange, threats to use force and diplomacy.” Kenneth Osgood, “Hearts and Minds: The Unconventional Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 4 (2): 85–107. The PSB was abolished and replaced by OCB under the recommendation of the Jackson Committee in 1953 to centralize psychological warfare operations under the control of the president.

¹¹⁶ Joyce Kolko and Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and the United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 11.

¹¹⁷ Piotr Stefan Wandycz, *Ideology, Politics, and Diplomacy in East Central Europe*, Vol. 5 (University Rochester Press, 2003), 66.

¹¹⁸ Ukraine was eventually known as the “Breadbasket of Europe,” producing as much as 25% of all of the food for the former Soviet Union. Edgar Snow, *The Pattern of Soviet Power* (Random House, 1945), 73.

¹¹⁹ Linda Gordon, *Cossack Rebellions: Social Turmoil in the Sixteenth Century Ukraine* (New York: SUNY Press, 1983), 105. Serhii Plokhy, *The Cossack Myth: History and Nationhood in the Age of Empires* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 27.

¹²⁰ Serhy Yekelchuk, *Ukraine: Birth of a Modern Nation* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹²¹ Vadym Ryzhkov, "The Cossack Palestine," *The Day*, 28 October 2008, <http://www.day.kiev.ua/en/article/history-and-i/cossack-palestine>

¹²² These evolutions are discussed at length in Serhii Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History* (Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

¹²³ This text is reproduced in Victor A. Friedman's analysis of the letter: Victor A. Friedman, "The Zaporozhian Letter to the Turkish Sultan: Historical Commentary and Linguistic Analysis" *Slavica Hierosolymitana* Vol. 2, 1978.

¹²⁴ The censorship of Ukrainian nationalism under Russian Tsarist rule is outlined in Anton Shekhovtsov, "The Creeping Resurgence of the Ukrainian Radical Right? The Case of the Freedom Party," *Europe-Asia Studies* 63, no. 2 (2011): 203-228.

¹²⁵ Jonathan Steele, *Eternal Russia: Yeltsin, Gorbachev, and the Mirage of Democracy* (Harvard University Press, 1994), 217.

¹²⁶ Paul Wexler, *Purism and Language: A Study in Modern Ukrainian and Belorussian Nationalism* (Indiana University Press, 1974), 309.

¹²⁷ Laada Bilaniuk. *Contested tongues: Language Politics and Cultural Correction in Ukraine* (Cornell University Press, 2005), 78.

¹²⁸ This "flight" of Cossacks away from Tsarist control to western Ukraine is documented in Clarence A. Manning, *The Story of the Ukraine* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947).

¹²⁹ It is important recognize the nuances of the ethnic and cultural traditions that evolved in Ukraine during this time. As Andrew Wilson explains, there were essentially *two* Cossacks: "The Zaporizhzhian Cossacks were an entirely different ethnic group from the neighboring Don Cossacks, who were in the last analysis merely agents of Moscow." Petro Lavriv explains that the Don Cossacks "accepted the authority first of local princes and then of the Tsars in Moscow." Petro Lavriv, "Istoriia pivdenno-skhidnoi Ukrainy," *Lviv* (1992): 9-14. Wilson continues: "Although perhaps at the beginning of the Cossack era there were no sharp differences between the Zaporizhzhian and Don Cossacks, the two groups had different origins and distinct political and social traditions. Although the Zaporizhzhians, like the Don Cossacks, were Orthodox, the former were loyal to Kiev rather than Moscow. The Zaporizhzhians were also mainly runaway serfs from central Ukraine who spoke a version of old Ukrainian. Finally, the Zaporizhzhian

Cossacks merged key elements of Renaissance and Reformation culture (creating, for example, their own architectural style, Ukrainian Baroque) with their own democratic self-governing traditions.” Thus, as Leonid Zalizniak claims, “the [Zaporizhzhian] Cossack state marked the border of European culture.” Leonid Zalizniak, “Ukrainai Rosiia: rizni historychni doli,” *Starozytnosti* 19 (1991) 7. Andrew Wilson, “The Donbas between Ukraine and Russia: The use of history in political disputes,” *Journal of Contemporary History* (1995): 271-272. When I discuss Cossacks, I am therefore referring to the Zaporizhzhian Cossacks.

¹³⁰ The fermentation of Cossack identity under Polish control in western Ukraine is outlined at length in Paul R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine: the Land and its Peoples* (Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

¹³¹ These events are detailed at length in Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History* (University of Toronto Press, 2009).

¹³² Patricia Herlihy, “Crisis in Society and Religion in Ukraine,” *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 14, no. 2 (1994): 1.

¹³³ The forced famine, known as the “Holodomor” genocide among many Ukrainians, featured brutal violence and incidents of cannibalism as families struggled to survive. These events are detailed in Yaroslav Bilinsky, “Was the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933 genocide?” *Journal of Genocide Research* 1, no. 2 (1999): 147-156.

¹³⁴ David Marples, “Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 58, no. 4 (2006): 555-566.

¹³⁵ Alexander Statiev explains that the Ukrainian guerilla resistance was the largest in the post-war republics the Soviets were attempting to control: “The Ukrainian nationalist movement was the largest in the annexed Soviet borderlands with 25-40,000 guerrillas and upwards of 400,000 supporters involved in various duties in the underground network.” *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹³⁶ Korostelina 68.

¹³⁷ Ukrainians did enjoy one territorial benefit of Soviet occupation. Khrushchev transferred Crimea to Ukrainian control in 1954. At the time, this move was mostly symbolic as Russia and Ukraine were both part of the Soviet Union (Korostelina 68). 60 years later, this action remains highly contested and the source of international conflict.

¹³⁸ The supremacy of the KGB as the official propaganda infrastructure in the republics is outlined in Vladislav M. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: the Soviet Union in the*

Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ of North Carolina Press, 2009).

¹³⁹ Most of the roughly 30 resistance movements the CIA initially supported in Ukraine were infiltrated by the KGB. Taras Kuzio, "US support for Ukraine's liberation during the Cold War: A study of Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 45, no. 1 (2012): 5.

¹⁴⁰ Kuzio 2-4.

¹⁴¹ Will Englund, "Ukrainians decide to go their own way, independence commands 92% majority," *Baltimore Sun*, 3 December 1991.

¹⁴² In the pre-Cold War era, the United States had little interest in Ukraine, or in stopping Soviet expansion into Ukraine following the Russian revolution, or in intervening to prevent the collectivization famine-genocide in Ukraine. A number of respected American journalists, including Pulitzer Prize winning *New York Times* writer Walter Duranty and Louis Fischer of *The Nation*, told American leadership and their readers that there was no famine in Ukraine. This journalistic cover up of the famine is outlined in Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 1937), 44. American president Herbert Hoover's attempts to coordinate a relief effort to Russia funneled food supplies to Soviet leadership, doing little to help Ukraine. Even the Hoover Institute's glowing account of his efforts to stop the famine showcase that little was done to stop millions of Ukrainians from starving to death: Benjamin M. Weissman, *Herbert Hoover and Famine Relief to Soviet Russia, 1921-1923*, Vol. 134. (New York: Hoover Press, 1974). In sum, the United States had little, if any, interest in Ukraine before the Cold War, and its leaders could not be bothered to take an interest in the country even in the face of genocide.

¹⁴³ Kuzio adds, "Many of Prolog's books and *Suchasnist* magazine were re-published in miniature format for easier smuggling into the USSR. Miniature copies of *Suchasnist* were printed on special paper that would dissolve if dropped into water, enabling Ukrainian dissidents to destroy émigré literature in the event of a raid by the KGB... Prolog mass distributed videos of the 1983 Ukrainian émigré documentary Harvest of Despair about the 1933 holodomor (terror-famine) before it was discussed openly in the Soviet press in the late 1980s (the Communist Party of Ukraine only admitted to the famine having taken place in 1990)" (1, 6, 9).

¹⁴⁴ Kuzio continues, "Prolog Vice President Anatole Kaminsky and Prolog President Roman Kupchinsky left their positions to become heads of Radio Svoboda in 1978 and 1990 respectfully. Prolog leaders Kaminsky and Kupchinsky, and Prolog freelancer Bohdan Nahaylo, headed Radio Svoboda for a quarter of a century from 1978 until 2003 during the disintegration of the USSR, drive to Ukrainian independence, and the first decade of Ukraine as an independent state" (2). This

reflects the connection between American propaganda programs and Ukrainian dissident movements and defectors.

¹⁴⁵ Ross Johnson, *Radio free Europe and Radio Liberty: the CIA Years and Beyond* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010), 54.

¹⁴⁶ Roman Kupchinsky, "Ukraine during the Cold War: the Role of Prolog Research Corporation," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 30 November 2008.

¹⁴⁷ Philip Shishkin, "How Russian Spy Games are Sabotaging Ukraine's Intelligence Agency," *The Wall Street Journal*, 11 March 2015.

¹⁴⁸ Shishkin explains, "Corruption spread through the security service, according to current and former officials. Reports of SBU involvement in arms sales abroad began appearing regularly in the early 2000s. One case involved a former SBU officer and Russian intermediaries who sold Ukrainian cruise missiles to Iran and China. Ukrainian authorities later acknowledged the sale and arrested some alleged participants. Ukraine's then-President Leonid Kuchma was caught on tape in 2000 discussing a possible sale of anti-aircraft radar to Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The surveillance of the president's office was conducted for years by a career security officer assigned to Mr. Kuchma's protective detail. Another murky chapter in recent Ukrainian history involves the 2004 poisoning of pro-Western politician Viktor Yushchenko. His successful run for the presidency that year against a Moscow-backed candidate triggered Ukraine's Orange Revolution. During the campaign, Mr. Yushchenko ingested dioxin, a powerful toxin that left him in severe pain, his face discolored and bloated. Shortly before becoming ill, he had attended a small private dinner with Ihor Smeshko, then SBU chief."

¹⁴⁹ The new head of the SBU following Yanykovich's removal from office, Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, claimed to have found his new office building empty. He remembers, "the agency's former leadership had all fled to Russia or Crimea. There were no operative files, no weapons. Institutionally, the place was totally destroyed." Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, interview with Mark Snowiss, "Ex-Ukrainian spy chief: Russian camps spreading chaos," *Voice of America*, 24 July 2015.

¹⁵⁰ Christopher Miller, "Ukraine's top intelligence agency deeply infiltrated by Russian spies," *Mashable*, 30 December 2014. These recruits were also subject to recurrent interrogations and lie detector tests to demonstrate their loyalty.

¹⁵¹ Marta Dyczok, "Information Wars: Hegemony, Counter-Hegemony, Propaganda, the use of Force, and Resistance," *Russian Journal of Communication* 6, no. 2 (2014): 173-176.

¹⁵² As mentioned, messages in a multi-mediated world circulate rapidly and it is virtually impossible for a president to speak exclusively to a domestic or international audience at the time of this writing. Thus, while a message may be officially addressed to a domestic audience, the speaker knows that this discourse is heard around the world. Similarly, speeches directed at international audiences are heard by audiences back home. This expands the scope of texts I can examine, though the focus remains on speeches by government officials and how that discourse circulates.

¹⁵³ The governments of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, as well as the UN, EU, and NATO, all publish official transcripts of major speeches, press conferences, and events on their websites.

¹⁵⁴ Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman, "Realism and Rhetoric in International Relations," in *Post-Realism: The Rhetorical Turn in International Relations*, ed. Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman (East Lansing: Michigan State Press, 1999), 24.

¹⁵⁵ Murray Edelman, *Constructing the Political Spectacle* (University of Chicago Press, 1988), 104.

¹⁵⁶ Michael Calvin McGee, "The Ideograph": A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology," *Quarterly journal of speech* 66, no. 1 (1980): 1.

¹⁵⁷ John B. Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (University of California Press, 1984), 11.

¹⁵⁸ Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the Peuple Quebecois," *Quarterly journal of Speech* 73, no. 2 (1987): 133-150.

¹⁵⁹ Charland 137. This idea is informed by Michael Calvin McGee's notion fiction can become historical material with deep consequences for people's lives.

¹⁶⁰ Bruner, 2002, 97.

¹⁶¹ An example of national identities directly conflicting can be found in Gabriel V. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I*, Vol. 9 (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹⁶² He calls for tracing how ideas circulated in speeches over time. Understanding the ideas in the Ukrainian crisis demands understanding the "social environment" of the Cold War and post-Cold War era and how ideas in those moments were seen in rhetoric. Drawing on an understanding of those time periods helps explain current manifestations of these ideas through discourse. Ernest J. Wraga, "Public address: A study in social and intellectual history," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 33, no. 4 (1947): 451. This rhetorical approach and ideational tracing is appropriate considering this

project's focus on nationalism and internationalism. Benedict Anderson makes the point that conceptions of nationalism require exactly this kind of tracing: "To understand them properly we need to consider carefully how they came into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (New York: Verso Books, 2006), 4.

¹⁶³ There are numerous conceptions of propaganda. Beyond the foundational 1928 Bernays definition offered earlier—"The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses"—several overarching philosophies on propaganda are outlined here. Some scholars focus on propaganda's impact on large groups of people. For instance, Walter Hixson suggests that propaganda is "The attempt to influence behavior by shaping the attitudes of masses of people" (1). Similarly, Krugler couches propaganda in terms of changing behavior, characterizing it as: "Efforts to convince listeners that the presentation offered was the truth, and that listeners' beliefs and actions should correspond to this truth" (3). Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell also focus on propaganda's ability to influence beliefs and actions, defining it thusly: "The deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist." "Introduction," *Readings in propaganda and persuasion: New and classic essays* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006), 4. Some scholars take a negative view of propaganda. For instance, Susan Brewer defines propaganda as "The deliberate manipulation of facts, ideas, and lies" (4). Noam Chomsky also defines propaganda in terms of its dangers, especially when used by governments: "Propaganda is to Democracy what violence is to totalitarianism." "Propaganda, American Style," *Z*, 17 September 2001. While these definitions are useful in understanding broad ways of thinking regarding propaganda, I believe my definition is more appropriate for the current study because it centers the role of government *and* rhetoric influence.

¹⁶⁴ There is a fundamental tension between strategy and ideology. Strategy gives a lot of power and agency to the political actors. Ideology often recognizes the structures of power as more influential than human agency. I take a middle ground that recognizes the force of human agency and the power of ideological forces. In other words, when talking about nationalism and internationalism, I recognize that commitments to these ideologies often function at the common sense level (the consequence of ideology). Yet I also realize that political actors rely on such strategies for political purposes that represent very conscious efforts. This tension was reflected in Northern Ireland in the late twentieth century campaigns of the Irish Republican Army to maintain ideological purity why embracing a more pragmatic political—over violent—strategy: "Sinn Féin, the political wing of the paramilitary group the IRA, once excluded from the political sphere because of its association with 'terrorists', has since the early 1990s become an integral player in the Northern

Ireland peace process and a formidable challenger to British hegemony. Evidence of this new power is inscribed into public spaces across the region, on the hundreds of monuments, plaques and street murals which pay homage to the Republican struggle and question the role of the British government in the conflict. Replacing armalite (the armed struggle) and complementing the ballot box (the democratic struggle), memorialization has become a significant part of the Republican movement's peacetime struggle to undermine British control, a struggle which has had to redefine its parameters in a rapidly changing political landscape. John A. Hannigan, "The Armalite and the Ballot Box: Dilemmas of Strategy and Ideology in the Provisional IRA," *Social Problems* 33, no. 1 (1985): 1-2.

¹⁶⁵ Steuter, Erin, and Deborah Wills, *At War with Metaphor: Media, Propaganda, and Racism in the War on Terror* (Lexington Books, 2009), 18.

¹⁶⁶ Parry-Giles, xxvi, n. 10.

¹⁶⁷ J. Edgar Hoover explains, black propaganda is "Primarily designed for subversion, confusion, and political effect." J. Edgar Hoover, "CIA Authority to Perform Propaganda and Commando Type Functions," 25 September 1947, CIA, FOIA request. Jowett and O'Donnell explain: "Black propaganda is credited to a false source and spreads lies, fabrication, and deceptions. Black propaganda is the "big lie," including all types of creative deceit" (13). A kind of black propaganda is Belligerent Propaganda. Parry-Giles explains that this is an aspect of psychological warfare including "the fostering of surrender, maligning, panic, terror, revolt, confusion, non-cooperation, sabotage" (68, n. 31).

¹⁶⁸ As Jowett and O'Donnell argue, "White propaganda comes from a source that is identified correctly, and the information in the messages tends to be accurate" (12).

¹⁶⁹ Parry-Giles 53. Jowett and O'Donnell explain, "Gray propaganda is somewhere between white and black propaganda. The source may or may not be correctly identified, and the accuracy of the information is uncertain" (15). Gray propaganda is sometimes called "Camouflaged."

¹⁷⁰ Thus, my focus will be on leaders/white propaganda and those faking an independence from Russia in Crimea and eastern Ukraine or conducting obscured, somewhat anonymous online campaigns (gray). Of course not all propaganda voices will be representing a government. I recognize the role of protesters as speaking back to power or speaking back to propaganda. These individuals constitute what Gerard A. Hauser calls "vernacular voices" of publics talking back to power structures. Gerard A. Hauser, *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres* (Columbia, SC: Univ of South Carolina Press, 1999).

¹⁷¹ Eley, Geoff, and Ronald Grigor Suny, *Becoming National: A Reader*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1996). Eley and Suny argue that there is really only one thing that nationalism scholars agree on, and that is that nobody agrees on anything. Hugh Seton-Watson agrees, arguing, “Thus I am driven to the conclusion that no ‘scientific definition’ of the nation can be devised.” Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: an Inquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1977), 3.

¹⁷² Korostelina 1.

¹⁷³ Korostelina 1.

¹⁷⁴ Anderson also argues that the global decline in the influence of religious institutions contributed to the rise of the nation-state during this time period. He explains, “[I]n western Europe the eighteenth century marks not only the dawn of the age of nationalism but the dusk of religious modes of thought” (11). Anderson suggests that as the world became more secularized in the eighteenth century, people needed new narratives to explain life’s many misfortunes and constant fear of death, and nations filled that void. Religions had a sacred language, which was a community of signs/symbols, and a sacred text—traditions that nationalism would use.

¹⁷⁵ Such dynasties drew their authority from a belief in their divine rule instead of state institutions. Benedict Anderson examples, “Kingship organizes everything around a high center. Its legitimacy derives from divinity, not from populations, who, after all, are subjects, not citizens” (19).

¹⁷⁶ Anderson 22.

¹⁷⁷ Anderson 86.

¹⁷⁸ Anderson 42-43.

¹⁷⁹ Anderson 87-88. He explains these efforts of rulers to resist the collapse of their dynasties: “The key to situating ‘official nationalism’—willed merger of nation and dynastic empire—is to remember that it developed *after*, and *in reaction to*, the popular national movements proliferating in Europe since the 1920s.”

¹⁸⁰ Anderson 115.

¹⁸¹ Anderson 6-7.

¹⁸² Cronin, Thomas and Michael Genovese, “The Paradoxes of the American Presidency” (Oxford University Press, 1998), 150-151.

¹⁸³ Vanessa B. Beasley, *You, the People: American National Identity in Presidential Rhetoric*, No. 10 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2011), 5.

¹⁸⁴ Bruner, 2002, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Vladimir Putin, "Address by the President of the Russian Federation on Crimean Referendum," 18 Mach 2014.

¹⁸⁶ Similarly, Neil MacCormick argues that civic nationalism is defined by beliefs in institutions and in ideas of government, and leaders frequently use such ideals to unite citizens. People are united behind the ideas of representative, inclusive government in which everyone can participate, and these ideals are fostered by political elites. Neil MacCormick, "Nation and Nationalism," *Legal Right and Social Democracy: Essays in Legal and Political Philosophy* (1982): 247-64.

¹⁸⁷ I am not arguing that political leaders can create new national identities from thin air. Rather, they marshal rhetorical resources such as myths and memory their people are familiar with, and use these culturally-specific *topoi* to articulate a nationalist discourse. These identities do not have to be stable forever, and in fact they often evolve as needed to meet the demands of changing rhetorical situations. Kenneth Burke's notion of casuistic stretching is useful here. On a basic level, casuistry is "the application of abstract principles to particular conditions." Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (University of California Press, 1969), 155. "By casuistic stretching, one introduces new principles while theoretically remaining faithful to old principles." Kenneth Burke, *Attitudes toward history* (University of California Press, 1984), 229. In other words, when making claims of nationalism and internationalism, leaders must ground that discourse in myths and memories their audience is already familiar with.

¹⁸⁸ Bruner, 2002, 288.

¹⁸⁹ Nationalism from below often resists direct military oppression. This draws attention to the relationship between nationalism and militarism. Laura Howard and John Prividera argue that nationalism and militarism are two sides of the same coin, depending on each other for survival, much to detriment of others. They suggest that there is a clear center of American nationalism that is the white male warrior, and the further removed from that center an individual is, the more marginalized and harmed they become. Prividera, Laura C. and John W. Howard III, "Masculinity, Whiteness, and the Warrior Hero: Perpetuating the Strategic Rhetoric of US nationalism and the Marginalization of Women," *Women and Language* 29, no. 2 (2006): 29.

¹⁹⁰ David M. Hersvenhorn, "Thousands Protest Ukraine's Rejection of Trade Pacts," *New York Times*, 24 November 2013.

¹⁹¹ Micheline Ishay, *Internationalism and its Betrayal*, Vol. 2 (University of Minnesota Press, 1995), xv.

¹⁹² Ishay xxi.

¹⁹³ Ishay *ibid*.

¹⁹⁴ Ishay *ibid*. Conflicts within nations about international relations can seem contradictory on the surface. However, such disputes frequently happen! Leaders argue over a nation's place in international alliances and over their government's role in helping solving international disputes. The congressional debate over the League of Nations is one example.

¹⁹⁵ Albert Beveridge, "The March of the Flag," 16 September 1898, *Voices of Democracy*.

¹⁹⁶ Harold Josephson, *James T. Shotwell and the Rise of Internationalism in America* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press), 69.

¹⁹⁷ N. Gordon Levin, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 4.

¹⁹⁸ Wilson campaigned around the country to rally support his League of Nations proposal. Richard Ellis, ed. *Speaking to the People: The Rhetorical Presidency in Historical Perspective* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998).

¹⁹⁹ Woodrow Wilson, "An Address to a Joint Session of Congress: January 8, 1918," in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 45, November 11, 1917-January 15, 1918*, edited by Arthur S. Link (Princeton University Press, 1984), 536-38.

²⁰⁰ Francis P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations* (Oxford University Press, 1965). Senator Henry Cabot Lodge successfully argued against the United States joining the League of Nations, arguing: "The United States is the world's best hope, but if you fetter her in the interests and quarrels of other nations, if you tangle her in the intrigues of Europe, you will destroy her powerful good, and endanger her very existence. Leave her to march freely through the centuries to come, as in the years that have gone. Strong, generous, and confident, she has nobly served mankind. Beware how you trifle with your marvelous inheritance; this great land of ordered liberty. For if we stumble and fall, freedom and civilization everywhere will go down in ruin." Henry Cabot Lodge, "Treaty of peace with Germany: Speech of Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge," *United States Senate*, 12 August 1919. Lodge was not the first or last politician who defined American nationalism by its isolation. Presidents Washington and Jefferson both warned against "entangling alliances" with other nations; before World War II, radio host Reverend Charles Coughlin and Charles Lindbergh's

“America First” organization both lobbied to keep the United States out of the conflict. This is to say that in American history, people arguing internationalist positions frequently lose.

²⁰¹ Speaking to the Daughters of the America Revolution in 1915, Wilson explained, “America has a cause which is not confined to the American continent. It is the cause of humanity itself. I mean the development of constitutional liberty in the world.” Woodrow Wilson, “An Address to the Daughters of the American Revolution,” *Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, 49. Mary Stuckey argues that Wilson’s call for global leadership, and his calls for universal human rights, were strong rhetorical tools: “Wilson’s use of universals was a powerful legitimating tool. It legitimated the claims for inclusion by many newly visible groups, and it also legitimated the accommodations, deferrals, and denials of those claims. When applied to the international arena, these universals enabled protection of hierarchies at home while also instantiating and extending them abroad” (196). In other words, Wilson’s call for global inclusion also created hierarchies and ignored marginalized groups, both domestically and abroad. Such restrictions are also seen in various immigration policies and notions of citizenship, outlined in Rogers M. Smith, *Civic ideals: Conflicting visions of citizenship in US history*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999). Just as nationalism can unite and divide people, so can internationalism.

²⁰² *United Nations Charter*, 26 June 1945.

²⁰³ The EU was founded in a much smaller form following World War II, and was essentially designed by the governments of France and Germany—having endured two brutal wars against each other in three decades—to so intertwine their economies that attacking the other would be financial disaster. For an entertaining account of the EU’s founding, see “France and Germany: A love story,” 24 October 2011, *National Public Radio, Planet Money Podcast*, <http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2011/10/21/141512746/france-and-germany-a-love-story> The EU would slowly expand, and eventually it took its current form in 1993. “The founding principles of the Union,” 1 November 1993, *European Union*, http://europa.eu/scadplus/constitution/objectives_en.htm

²⁰⁴ The EU charter explains, “Any European State wishing to become a member of the Union must respect these values in order to be considered eligible for admission.” “The Founding Principles of the Union,” *ibid*.

²⁰⁵ “The North Atlantic Treaty,” 4 April 1949, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm

²⁰⁶ This provision, Article 5 of the Charter, has only been invoked once in NATO’s history—by the United States following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

²⁰⁷ Anderson explains how international forums for internationalism like the United Nations reflect this tension: “Almost every year the United Nations admits new members. And many ‘old nations,’ once thought fully consolidated, find themselves challenged with ‘sub’-nationalisms within their borders—nationalisms which, naturally, dream of one day shedding this sub-ness one happy day” (3).

²⁰⁸ Ishay xxii.

²⁰⁹ Stephen Hartnett, “To ‘Dance with Lost Souls’: Liu Xiaobo, Charter 08, and the Contested Rhetorics of Democracy and Human Rights in China,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 16, no. 2 (2013), 227.

²¹⁰ This notion of the responsibility to protect as a condition of national sovereignty will be explored at length in chapters 3 and 4. These conceptions are explored clearly by Luke Glanville, *Sovereignty and the responsibility to protect: a new history* (University of Chicago Press, 2014). This commitment to global human rights as a condition of national sovereignty was outlined in the United Nations’ charter:

We the Peoples of the United Nations determined
To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our
lifetime
brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
To reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the
human
person, in Equal rights of men and women and of nations large and
small, and
To establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations
arising from
treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
To promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom...
Have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims.

United Nations Informational Organizations, 1945-46, 3: 641.

²¹¹ David Sutton, “On Mythic Criticism: A Proposed Compromise,” *Communication Reports* 10, no. 2 (1997): 211-217.

²¹² Ben Halpern, “Myth and Ideology in Modern Usage,” *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History*, Vol. 1, 11, 1961. However, despite their interconnection, McGee argues myth and ideology are distinct concepts. He explains that while ideology “assumes that the exposure of falsity is a moral act,” someone using myth “is typically at great pains to argue for a value-free approach to the object of study” (6).

²¹³ McGee 4.

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- ²¹⁴ Keith Cameron, *National Identity* (Exeter, England: Intellect, 1999), 4.
- ²¹⁵ Parry-Giles, Trevor, and Shawn J. Parry-Giles, *The Prime-Time Presidency: The West Wing and U.S. Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 15.
- ²¹⁶ Michael E. Brown, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1997), 67.
- ²¹⁷ Ernest Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (New Haven, Conn: Yale Univeristy Press, 1946), 2-10.
- ²¹⁸ Tatiana Zhurzhenko, *Ukrainian Feminism (s): Between Nationalist Myth and Anti-Nationalist Critique* (Vienna, Austria: Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, 2001).
- ²¹⁹ Hiroaki Kuromiya, "Kuchma, Kravchuk, and Ukrainian Nation-Building," *The National Council for Soviet and Eastern European Research*, 28 June 1995.
- ²²⁰ President Reagan often uses the "Shining City on a Hill" trope in his political career, though perhaps the most famous instances were during his acceptance speech at the 1984 Republican National Convention and in his 1989 farewell address.
- ²²¹ Bruner, 2002, 89.
- ²²² Vladimir Putin, "A plea of caution from Russia," *New York Times*, 11 September 2013.
- ²²³ Bruner, 2002, 92.
- ²²⁴ Bruner, 2002, 3.
- ²²⁵ Bruner, 2002, 97.
- ²²⁶ Bruner 3. He argues that these strategies of remembrance differ widely between nations: "They can be highly complex, particularly in countries with considerable public discourse coupled with a serious motivated repression—as with Germany and the repression of National Socialism...At other times, as with Russia, the public sphere is so underdeveloped that strategies become the simple and blunt instruments of naked political power" (3).
- ²²⁷ Carole, Blair, Marsha Jeppeson, and Enrico Pucci Jr., "Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77, no. 3 (1991): 263.

²²⁸ Schwartz, Barry Schwartz, "The social context of commemoration: A study in collective memory," *Social Forces* 61, no. 2 (1982): 377.

²²⁹ William Gass explains, "...it is sometimes necessary to focus the thoughts of a group upon some past person or event, to get people *to remember together*, perhaps because we have a new and common enterprise in mind which demands that we act together, but often, simply, because the unity of the group is thereby affirmed, and in that way kept in strength and readiness inasmuch as social unity is called upon subtly during every moment of community life...Such historical images are souvenirs, too...of confusions society has implicitly determined to hold in common; of lies society has decided to tell itself until they become the national truth. Both public and private monuments have as much to do with these fictions as with the dead they presumably memorize, and the ideals they are said to enshrine William Gass, "Monumentality Mentality + Remembrance and Art," *Oppositions* 25 (1982): 130-131.

²³⁰ Sabra Ayres explains Shevchenko's legacy: "'Fight!—you will prevail. God is helping you!' The couplet's passionate cry and the legacy of the man who wrote them are still in play in this deeply divided nation, where thousands turned out today to celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth. From the heart of Ukrainian nationalism in the western city of Lviv to Russian-occupied Crimea, wreaths were laid at the feet of memorials to the poet and artist. Even in the eastern city of Donetsk, where pro-Russia passions run deep, bouquets of flowers were left at the base of the city's Shevchenko statue. The Soviet Union also used his image—and sometimes the exact same couplet – during the Second World War to inspire Ukrainian Soviets to fight against Nazi Germany. Ukrainian school children were taught to recite his poems, and as a result, practically every city in Ukraine has a statue and street in his name. Four months after antigovernment protests first erupted here, the poet's mustached face is plastered on billboards and poles across the battle-scarred Maidan. To demonstrators who remain camped out on the streets, Shevchenko's legacy is clear: He's a true Ukrainian hero, whose writings about the country and devotion to the Ukrainian language should be the inspiration to the rebirth of a new, united Ukrainian nation." Sabra Ayres, "In divided Ukraine, inspiration from the poet of the underdog," *Christian Science Monitor*, 9 March 2014.

²³¹ Jonathan Miller, "Monument in Search of a Home," *New York Times*, 18 April 2010.

²³² The citizens of Jersey City were unwilling to remember terrorism in the way the Russian Federation had hoped. Miller explains: "The monument touched off an outcry here when it won approval from the council in December 2003; many complained that local artists should have been considered in designing the memorial, while others questioned its aesthetic appeal." This struggle over an public memory strategy rooted in internationalism ideologies highlights the tension between

nationalism and internationalism. When met with an gesture of international good will, residents responded with national, and local, objections. The monumenet was eventually moved to Bayonne, New Jersey.

²³³ Among many examples, the Moscow Airport was attacked by Chechen militant suicide bombers on January 24, 2011, killing 35 people and injuring over 100 more. “Moscow bombing: Carnage at Russia’s Domodedovo Airport,” *BBC*, 24 January 2011.

²³⁴ Simon Tisdall, “The new Cold War: are we going back to the bad old days?” *The Guardian*, 19 November 2014.

Chapter 1

“Last week, residents of Kharkiv installed barricades around the statue of Lenin after fending off an attack by Euromaidan revolutionaries.”¹

“In December anti-government protesters toppled a statue of the Soviet state founder in Ukraine's capital Kiev. Earlier this month they replaced it with a golden toilet.”²

Around 2:00 a.m. on February 23, 2014, a large crowd gathered on Strebko Square in Iljichiovsk, a Ukrainian town near Odessa. Some local residents had come to tear down and smash the monument to Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin in the city center, while others came to protect the monument from destruction. A fight broke out amongst the protesters, and several shots were fired. Two men were hospitalized, multiple arrests were made, and the 16-ton bronze statue of Lenin survived.³ Nineteen months later, the newly minted president, Petro Poroshenko, passed an initiative to purge Ukraine of Communist symbols. This meant that officials of Iljichiovsk—a town named after Vladimir *Illyich* Lenin himself—had to change its name to Chornomorsk (“Black Sea” in Ukrainian), and government representatives spent six hours taking down the Lenin monument for good. Local activist Oleh Gladchenko—part of the February skirmish nearly two years earlier—remarked on the monument’s removal, “I wanted to show that we are a Ukrainian city and we are with Ukraine.”⁴

The battle over Iljichiovsk’s Lenin statue is representative of overarching struggles to define Ukrainian nationalism in the post-Cold War period. Monuments to Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin are everywhere in the former Soviet Union. They serve as constant reminders of the legacies shaping contemporary identities in Russia and the former Soviet territories. The monuments were unacceptable for Ukrainians wishing to move away from both the echoes of Soviet domination and from current

Russian usurpation. The removal of the statues also afforded Ukrainians a unique opportunity to define their own visions of national identity—protesters could tear down and symbolically demolish the oppression from their nation’s tumultuous past. From November 2013 until February 2014, over 100 of Ukraine’s 1,500 Lenin monuments were torn down by protesters and destroyed across Ukraine. During the same period, self-appointed “defenders of history”—groups of men armed with bats and helmets—guarded dozens of other Lenin statues to deter such attacks.⁵ For them, tearing down the monuments was an unacceptable usurpation of Ukraine’s history as a Soviet republic. This is a central paradox defining Ukrainian sovereignty and identity—how can Ukrainians adopt a pro-western orientation steeped in Ukrainian nationalism while remaining loyal to their Cold War alignment with Russia? It is impossible to satisfy both sides; either the monuments are smashed or they remain. Ukraine is either part of Europe or nestled in Russia’s sphere of influence.

The symbolism of destroying Lenin’s statues says much about the role of average Ukrainians in attempting to wrestle their own vision of Ukrainian identity from the Russians. Ukrainians struggled to find a unified nationalist discourse that articulated their collective history and desired future, and this struggle was reflected in part by the protests to smash or protect these public monuments to the nation’s Soviet past. This chapter places attention on efforts like these monument protests to define Ukrainian nationalism in the current conflict over land and identity. The discourses studied in this chapter targeted, at least in part, international audiences as Ukrainians attempted to free themselves from Russian domination and align their identity with Europe and the west. Local protests over statues and government

policies purging Ukraine of communist symbols served the same ends—to redefine Ukrainian nationalism and to ensure that the international community lined up on the side of Ukrainian sovereignty. This chapter examines how Ukraine constituted its sovereignty during the 2013-2014 Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity and in the aftermath of the Russian invasion. Political leaders and ordinary people sought to define Ukrainian nationalism in ways centered on different interpretations of the USSR's legacies, attempting to resolve the paradox of their identity in different ways. The rhetoric surrounding this legacy, and the ways it shaped Ukraine's future, coalesced around several themes, including corruption, narratives of World War II, revolution, and Ukraine's place in global communities.

This chapter will show the ways that Ukrainian leaders used nationalism from above narratives to define their nation's identity through Ukraine's past and present heroes. Bruner argues that there are generally two helpful characterizations of nationalism—nationalism from above, characterized by political and social elites, and nationalism from below, expressed by the society's marginalized groups and individuals.⁶ When political leaders construct nationalist discourses, they can have tremendous influence in defining a nation's identity.⁷ Leaders deployed myths and memories of Ukrainian nationalism to constitute the nation's sovereignty by returning to remembrances of Cossack independence.⁸ More specifically, Ukrainian leaders deployed the memories surrounding the mythos of soldier Stepan Bandera's heroism to stress the nation's resistance to outside rule during the World War II era. Several major speeches delivered by President Poroshenko during the start of the conflict highlight these tropes of Ukraine's historical heroes. These speeches include

Poroshenko's June 7, 2014 Inaugural address and his 2016 New Year address.

Similarly, the 2015 series of Victory Day commercials and the official commemoration and public memorials for the "Heavenly Hundred" were steeped in Ukrainian heroism. These images connected remembrances of the "Great Patriotic War" and the nation's defeat of Nazi Germany to the contemporary resistance against the Russian invasion. References to the painful memories of the Nazis during World War II also stood to unify the west against Russian aggression in Ukraine's efforts to build support for their own national sovereignty.

This chapter will also show the ways that Ukrainian nationalism from below was constituted by protesters in ways that negotiated the legacies of the Soviet Union and stressed Ukraine's place in Europe and in international organizations (e.g., European Union). Nationalism from below represents efforts by marginalized members of society to resist dominant nationalist ideologies. Rather than elites generating a national ideal, groups of people form their own understanding of what a nationalist identity is and express that view rhetorically. As Bruner explains, "Intellectuals and the economically oppressed also seek to resurrect or maintain a particular culture when opposed by colonial forces."⁹ The protesters also relied on the myths of the Cossack independence when arguing for an identity aligned with Europe that rejected the corrupt legacies and military occupation of the Soviet Union.¹⁰ The speeches from the Maidan protests also resisted Soviet allegiances by highlighting efforts to define Ukraine as part of Europe. How these events were depicted in Ukrainian media, including in the documentary "Winter on Fire" and the smashing of Lenin monuments, showcase how such myths and memories were constructed. And

because these myths and memories circulated far and wide, they helped unite both international organizations and the west against the Russian invasion.

This chapter will proceed in several stages while exploring the paradox of Ukraine's inability to construct a post-Cold War identity. First, I explore the background of the conflict itself—the protests and counter-protests that defined these propaganda battles. Second, I discuss how the legacies of the Soviet Union, especially issues of corruption, the memory of World War II, and a desire for revolution, informed efforts to constitute Ukrainian identity. Third, I examine what these legacies suggest about Ukraine's place in global communities. Ukrainian leaders and protesters used myths and memories to define Ukrainian sovereignty in ways reflecting a tension between nationalism and internationalism.

Understanding the context of the Revolution of Dignity

When the Soviet Union collapsed, the Ukrainian people were given an opportunity to articulate their own national identity for the first time in over half a century. Without the Soviet Union to submerge nationalist divisions, centuries-old conflicts reemerged and polarized the nation. Ukraine's presidents often refused to commit to a consistent identity aligned with either a Russian or western vision.¹¹ The paradox of Ukrainian sovereignty continued as these mixed messages left Ukrainian identity fluid in terms of the nation's place in international communities. They were neither west nor east, and the political leaders were seemingly comfortable not choosing a side. After the Soviet Union's collapse, there was much international concern regarding Ukraine's stockpile of nuclear weapons, which were almost a third of the entire Soviet arsenal.¹² The United States in particular pressured Ukraine to

give up its nuclear weapons.¹³ To address this anxiety, the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Great Britain, and the United States signed the Budapest Memorandum on December 5, 1994 to provide Ukraine with security assurances in exchange for surrendering its nuclear weapons. Ukraine also agreed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapon state.¹⁴ Following this pro-western move, Ukraine and the Russian Federation signed a “Friendship Treaty” in 1997 and later reached an agreement on Russia’s continued use of the Black Sea Sevastopol Naval Base. The Ukrainian government reversed course again in 2002 when the Ukrainian leadership announced its decision to launch a formal bid to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).¹⁵ The election of pro-western Viktor Yushenko following the 2004 Orange Revolution was reversed with the election of pro-Kremlin Viktor Yanykovich in 2010. In the over two-decades since its independence until the current crisis, Ukrainian leaders have been unwilling to define their nation’s identity in terms of international organizations.¹⁶

This failure to articulate a unifying Ukrainian identity set the stage for the current crisis. President Yanykovich’s indecision on the question of Ukrainian identity and place in global communities brought nearly two decades of tensions to a head. In November 2013, his government backed out of a trade agreement with the European Union at the last minute, instead promising closer ties with the Russian Federation.¹⁷ The subsequent protests were called the Revolution of Dignity. Over 800,000 pro-EU Maidan protesters in Kiev were met with arrests and violence from Yanykovich’s “Berkut” riot police. Yanykovich responded by forcing strict anti-protest laws through parliament. On February 20, 2014, Kiev saw its worst day of

violence in almost 70 years as uniformed snipers fired at protesters, killing at least 88 people.¹⁸ Yanykovich fled Ukraine soon after and a warrant was issued for his arrest for the crime of “mass murder.”¹⁹ Pro-western chocolate industrialist Petro Poroshenko was elected president soon after, promising EU membership within five years.²⁰ In response, the Russian government backed a referendum in Crimea that saw the peninsula secede from Ukraine and officially join the Russian Federation. Simultaneously, the Russian government supplied separatists with weapons in eastern Ukraine who called for similar autonomy from Kiev. Ukrainian forces resisted Russian efforts to functionally annex the eastern territories; the two nations have been frozen in conflict ever since.

Understanding the rhetoric of the Revolution of Dignity

To make sense of these events and define their own identity and place in global communities, Ukrainians looked to the mythic heroes from their history. The myth of the heroic Ukrainian Cossack, defined by fierce independence and resistance to outside rule, characterized much of this rhetoric from the Revolution of Dignity. Sociologist Frank Sysyn explains, “The Cossacks and their legacy were at the center of political and cultural struggles in Ukraine that fundamentally determined the process of nation-building and state-building in modern Ukraine.”²¹

When Ukrainian leaders and protesters refer to independence, they are often invoking the legacies of their Cossack ancestors. As Sysyn explains, “the essence of Ukrainian nationalism rested in the Cossacks.”²² This spirit of fierce resistance to foreign rule and a particular disdain for Russian occupation can be traced back to the 1648 Cossack rebellion. As the logic of this myth connoted, Ukrainians fought

against Tsarist rule, against Soviet rule, and ultimately against Russian rule. These myths from Ukrainian history are central tools in defining Ukrainian identity. For Ukrainians choosing a more European identity for their nation, these are central, defining myths that are not negotiable. Pro-Russian Ukrainians have a different and seemingly intractable set of myths rejected by half of the country and explored in the following section. The paradox of Ukrainian identity is reflected in their mythic contestations; one side's heroes are the other side's traitors.

The legacies of the Soviet Union informed the ways in which Ukrainian nationalism was defined in the current conflict. Three overarching themes emerged—the corruption of the Soviet Union, narratives of World War II, and Ukraine's place in global communities as a European nation. Ukrainian leaders and ordinary Ukrainians interacted with these themes, as nationalism from above and nationalism from below each articulated different visions of national identity. Understanding the ways in which Ukrainians constituted their own identity demands isolating both perspectives. The following section discusses how political leaders and ordinary people explored these themes during the current conflict.

The legacies of the Soviet Union: corruption and the Great Patriotic War

The Ukrainian paradoxical struggle to achieve a unifying national identity is perhaps best seen in the protests to smash or protect the public monuments to Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin. From November 2013 until February 2014, over 100 of Ukraine's 1,500 Lenin monuments were torn down by protesters and destroyed around Ukraine. Meanwhile, self-appointed “defenders of history”—groups of men

armed with clubs—guarded several other Lenin monuments to prevent attacks on the statues.²³

Such images of the Lenin monuments being toppled and protected by protesters represent larger contested narratives defining Ukrainian identity. Vladimir Lenin's legacy problematizes both sides of these protests. Lenin believed in the character of the Ukrainian people. Unlike Joseph Stalin, whose collectivization campaign killed 7.5 million Ukrainians in the forced famines of the early 1930s, Lenin thought the Tsars had treated Ukrainians especially unfairly during the Imperial Russia era, arguing that the Ukrainian people deserved relative autonomy and respect.²⁴ In 1917, when articulating his vision for Ukraine's role in the Soviet Union and its relationship with Russia, he stressed this need for Ukrainian autonomy: "No democrat can deny the Ukraine's *right* to freely secede from Russia. This cannot be done without full recognition of the Ukraine's rights, including the *right* to free secession."²⁵ It is thus ironic that Lenin himself would have presumably agreed with those tearing down his statues and disagreed with those protecting them. Examining these images allows for a more thorough explication of these deep cultural contradictions and contestations that are thoroughly immersed in national and regional history. Ukrainians literally fought each other over their public memory visually embodied in the Lenin monuments. These narratives as shown in the rhetoric of the protests reflect nationalist discourses in the current conflict and Ukraine's intractable identity paradox.

Over 100 Lenin monuments were toppled around Ukraine during the Maidan protests, and pro-Russian citizens protected dozens of other statues throughout the

country. These pro- and anti-Lenin protests took place over a period of several weeks, in every region, involving thousands of people. This analysis does not attempt to explicate the events at every toppling or discuss each attempt by protesters to keep the Lenin monuments upright. Rather, after reviewing Russian and western mainstream media coverage of the events, I isolate representative examples of how the memorials were characterized by both sides before and during the protests. In this case, the nationalism from below vision of Ukrainian identity was far from unified.

“Defenders of History”: “Lenin” as the Embodiment of Soviet “Great Patriotic War” Nostalgia

The individuals defending the Lenin monuments frequently invoked the “Great Patriotic War” narrative as a rhetorical tool in constructing this myth of Soviet heroism. Lenin himself died 15 years before the outbreak of World War II, so understanding Soviet military history as embodied by Lenin is essential in exploring these identity constructions.

There was no part of Soviet society that was not touched by the devastation of the fight against Nazi fascism. Soviet military commander Georgy Zhukov—the most decorated soldier in the history of the Soviet Union—explains in his memoirs what the Soviet victory, and the enormous loss of life it took to earn it, meant to the Soviet people:

The Great Patriot War was a supreme armed clash between Socialism and Fascism. It was a nation-wide war against a pernicious class enemy who encroached upon what is dearest of all to all Soviet men and women—the gains of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the Soviet way of life. The Communist Party raised our country and the entire multinational Soviet people to a resolute armed struggle against Fascism.²⁶

In his 1956 “Secret Speech” at the twentieth Communist Party Conference, Soviet Premiere Nikita Khrushchev’s address took place over a decade after the war’s end. Khrushchev—a native Ukrainian—refers to these sacrifices with reverence: “After the conclusion of the Patriotic War, the Soviet nation stressed with pride the magnificent victories gained through great sacrifices and tremendous efforts.”²⁷ This rhetoric suggests that Soviet citizens owe it to their twenty-six million fallen comrades to make sure their sacrifices were not in vain. Khrushchev argues that wavering attitudes on the same beliefs that their loved ones died defending dishonors their memory and sacrifice. Thus, “fascist” is the worst possible thing that someone in the former Soviet Union could be called.

In light of these deeply painful cultural legacies of World War II, the next step for the monument defenders was to equate the statue’s attackers with fascist Nazis in constructing a “Lenin” narrative. Pro-Russian Ukrainians pursued this strategy by linking the Maidan protesters and monument-destroyers with Stepan Bandera. During World War II, Bandera—a Ukrainian nationalist from the far western regions of the country—joined forces with the Nazis in a scheme to achieve an independent Ukrainian state after the war. Bandera’s plan almost immediately backfired; Germany lost the “Great Patriotic War,” and Bandera was assassinated while living in exile in Germany in 1959, under the order of Premier Khrushchev.²⁸ Protesters who see pro-western Ukrainians as the enemy frequently invoke Bandera’s name when defending the monuments.

Various examples illustrate this rhetorical strategy. For instance, Artem, a 35-year-old pro-Russian activist in the eastern city of Kharkiv, argued, “Those people in

Kiev are Bandera-following Nazi collaborators.”²⁹ When President Putin welcomed Crimeans into Russia, he announced that he was saving them from new Ukrainian leaders who are the “ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler’s accomplice during World War II.”³⁰ Echoing these statements, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov asked, “Why do we not hear statements of condemnation toward those who seize government buildings, attack and burn police officers, and voice racist and anti-Semitic slogans?” Such a statement implied that the Maidan protesters were violent fascist Nazis.³¹ Thus, by protecting the monuments, the pro-Russian protesters are contributing to a longstanding rhetoric of anti-fascism that their construction of the “Lenin” narrative embodies. The Lenin myth honors the collective public memory of Soviet and Ukrainian losses during the Great Patriotic War through heroic narratives of their shared experience opposing Nazi Germany and fascist collaborators. Placing the Maidan protests in this narrative, the monument protectors are heroes, upholding a long-established national *ethos* of the former Soviet Union.

A second strategy reflected nostalgia for the Soviet Union in defending the monuments. In this narrative, the monument protectors are heroes fighting for their history and for an accurate depiction of Ukraine’s collective memory. The followers of Bandera are Nazi fascist villains, but the monument defenders are proud heroes. This account from Russian media expresses this narrative:

Two Ukrainians from the town of Iljichiovsk in the Odessa region of Ukraine were injured from traumatic weapons, trying to defend the statue of Lenin. At night of February 23, a large number of local residents gathered on Strebko Square. The people came to defend the monument to Vladimir Lenin from the opposition. At about two o’clock in the morning, a conflict sparked between two residents. A man, born in 1978, fired a traumatic weapon at two other residents. Both victims were taken to hospital. The police opened a criminal

case under article “Hooliganism” of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. Earlier, a statue of Lenin was demolished in Dnepropetrovsk on Sunday.³²

This story highlights many themes of the pro-monument Lenin narrative. Crowds of loyal citizens were defending Russian history, the “official” memory embodied in the Lenin monument, from hooligans, and they were heroically wounded in the exchange. Just like heroic Soviet troops had defended the Lenin myth’s overarching, uniting principles at Stalingrad seventy years before, the memorial defenders will risk their lives for these collective ideals.

Similar narratives emerge from related clashes characterized in Russian media: “On Sunday, December 8th, the Ukrainian protesters demolished the monument to Lenin on Bessarabia Square in Kiev. The following day, the vandals damaged the statue of Lenin in Kotovsk, the Odessa region.”³³ Here, the pro-western protesters are characterized as “vandals” who are acting outside the law and beyond the acceptable official public memory of Lenin. An additional account follows this narrative trend: “In Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-biggest city, local residents have installed barricades around a statue of Lenin after fending off an attack by revolutionaries late last Saturday.”³⁴ The pro-monument citizens are literally setting up barricades to defend themselves against fascist aggression, just like their Soviet ancestors did in Stalingrad, Leningrad, Moscow, and dozens of other battles during the Great Patriotic War.

Pro-monument protesters argue that they are defending their proud Soviet history and the overarching ideals they glean from such narratives. As one Crimean explained from the barricades, “For the majority in western Ukraine, their heroes are those who fought for independence, the Banderas. Our heroes are those who went

from Stalingrad to Berlin.”³⁵ This statement refers to the Soviet soldiers who fought in the siege of Stalingrad for over five months in a battle representing a key turning point in World War II, and the eventual triumph in Berlin over fascist Germany.³⁶ For defenders of Soviet legacies, these events represent tremendous character-defining victories symbolizing triumph and identity. Thus, the heroes and villains in this narrative, and their connections to public memory, are well established in this pro-monument Lenin narrative. The men and women fighting valiantly against the radical fascist Bandera followers are heroes who understand their part in the authentic and justifiable official public memory of the Great Patriotic War. Fighting against hooligans in defense of the monument is simply a natural extension of the Stalingrad barricades. Their protests thus represent efforts to define Ukrainian nationalism in ways embracing Soviet nostalgia. For them, the resistance against mass pro-European protests is akin to the Soviet army resisting the superior forces of Nazi Germany at Stalingrad. To allow the monuments to be destroyed would be to abandon this history and a key part of their vision for Ukraine’s national identity. Ukraine was stuck; paradoxically, tearing down the monuments would enrage Ukrainians nostalgic for the Soviet Union and fond of this history, but leaving them up would infuriate the people opposed to those narratives for reasons explored next.

Defenders of Ukraine: “Lenin” as the embodiment of Soviet corruption

While the pro-monument defenders centered their myth’s narrative *ethos* in the collective memory of World War II, the protesters smashing the Lenin statues grounded their account of Ukrainian public memory in the Yanykovich administration’s very recent failures and in the Soviet Union’s 70-year legacy of

corruption. This resistance to corruption was reflected in nationalism from both above and below as political leaders and protesters sought to define Ukrainian identity in ways free from this Soviet legacy. A first rhetorical strategy of the anti-monument protesters was to link Lenin with the decadent corruption that caused catastrophic income stratification and terrible poverty after the Soviet Union's collapse.

Understanding this conception of the *Lenin myth as a symbol of corruption* requires an understanding of the economic legacy of the state Lenin founded in his pursuit of global socialism in 1922.

In the former Soviet Union corruption was systemic and rampant to a degree difficult to describe. The “nomenklatura” system ensured that a very small number of elites controlled every major administrative position in the Soviet state, accumulating massive fortunes. Communist Party “bosses” in the fifteen Soviet Republics also had almost complete autonomy to amass enormous personal wealth in exchange for loyalty to Moscow.³⁷ Meanwhile, almost everyone else lived in a state of comparative poverty when measured against western nations in terms of income, availability of products, and quality of goods.³⁸ During the last few years of the regime, few products were available for most people to buy. When the Soviet Union finally collapsed, every state-owned business was immediately privatized, and the same individuals who profited during the last regime made sure that this wealth was funneled to members of their own elite class of individuals. Almost overnight, Russia, Ukraine, and other newly independent states saw a generation of hyper-wealthy “oligarchs” amass enormous fortunes while the working classes suffered multiple economic depressions.³⁹ In an irony that would have made Lenin cringe, the rich-poor

gap grew exponentially in this climate of corruption and gangster-style violence. The result was that after the fall of the Soviet Union, most Ukrainians struggled to make ends meet as luxury cars zoomed past in major cities like Kiev and Odessa. Corruption became a sad necessity of daily life, and Ukrainians grew to increasingly resent the oligarchs who were robbing their country and its people.⁴⁰

In light of this exigence, Yanykovich was forced from power in February 2014. His bodyguards also fled the country, leaving the recently deposed president's house unguarded. As Ukraine's President, Yanykovich had earned \$100,000 Griven annually. This was enough to make him far richer than most Ukrainians, but not wealthy enough to explain his opulent 340-acre Mezhyhirya estate twelve miles outside of Kiev; for instance, his wood paneled staircases alone cost \$200,000 Griven. The house was a "monument to national corruption."⁴¹ Protesters immediately compared Yanykovich's home to the similarly abandoned mansions of deposed dictators Muammar Gaddafi and Saddam Hussein and to the enormous shoe collection of Imelda Marcos. As hundreds of Ukrainians made the trip from Kiev to his estate, media was flooded with images of how the oligarch-in-chief lived:

Pet ostriches, gold-plated golf clubs, and an odd model horse standing in the garden: it is all there. A replica of a Spanish galleon bobs awkwardly in a man-made pond. It is too big for the pond, but large enough to apparently house Yanukovych's own private restaurant. On arrival, protesters found many of his papers burnt, leaving his personalized golf bag and the towels monogrammed with his initials in the toilets as the most obvious signs of his earlier presence.⁴²

The estate's extravagance was the clearest evidence yet of the corruption that had long plagued Ukraine, both under Soviet rule and in its immediate aftermath. Harry Langston explains:

The estate, half the size of Monaco, cost hundreds of millions of dollars to construct, much of it coming from embezzlement and corruption, and had long been in the protesters' sights. The average monthly salary for a Ukrainian citizen is around \$275, so president Viktor Yanukovich's opulent lifestyle was a constant slap in the face that could not be ignored.⁴³

Thus, for those defining “Lenin” negatively, Yanykovich’s extravagant taxpayer-funded mansion was a perfect symbol of the public memory of Soviet-era corruption. Moreover, now protesters had visual evidence connecting the sleazy exploitation of the Soviet Union with its ongoing legacy, which Ukrainians faced in the economic depression gripping the country. The protesters’ vision for Ukrainian nationalism—one free from corruption, embracing a European economy and civil society that holds leaders accountable for their choices—now had a clear example of what they were fighting against.

With narratives of Yanykovich’s corruption functioning as rhetorical resources linking Soviet-era corruption to the current regime, protesters leapt into action. Days after removing the central Lenin monument from a main square in Kiev, it was replaced with a replica of one of the most ridiculous alleged features from the Mezhyhirya estate: “Protestors in the Ukraine have installed a golden toilet on a plinth that was once the home of a statue of former Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin. A student group in Kiev placed the toilet there as a scathing commentary on allegations of corruption among government ministers.”⁴⁴ Thus, the protesters define the Lenin myth through a narrative that would resonate with working-class Ukrainians: the Soviet Union should be remembered not with any fond nostalgia or proud defense of the motherland during the Great Patriotic War, but rather with the daily grind of awful poverty and systemic corruption that characterized the lives of most

Ukrainians. As the overarching symbol of the former Soviet Union, the Lenin myth functions as a synecdoche for *all* corruption and *all* poverty. In this narrative, tearing down Ukraine's Lenin statues is therefore a heroic act of defiance on the part of the protesters, and the counter-protests defending the monuments only perpetuate a deeply flawed and corrupt bureaucracy in their version of Ukraine's public memory.

Once elected, Petro Poroshenko would make fighting corruption a top priority. He joined his people in similarly resisting this mythic legacy of Soviet corruption. For Poroshenko, this resistance, and a desire to create a fresh start for the Ukrainian people free of Soviet influence, became a key part of Ukrainian identity. In his inaugural address, he made this point clear:

[We] must eliminate corruption for this end. We need a national anti-corruption pact between the government and the people. It is simple: officials do not take and people do not give. We won't be able to change the country unless we change ourselves, our attitude to our life and the life of the country. Each of us shares the responsibility for the fact that Ukraine has come to a crisis state. Someone considered it normal not to pay taxes. Someone lived high at the cost of the state budget. Someone voted and held rallies for money. Someone received undeserved benefits and awards. Together we destroyed the foundation of public trust, principles of law and social organization.⁴⁵

Here, Poroshenko calls for both government actors and ordinary Ukrainians to come together with the shared goal of eliminating corruption. While he indicts the patriotism and loyalty of his predecessor Yanykovich, Poroshenko also disparages the entire legacy of the Soviet Union. He calls on everyone in the nation to embrace this vision for Ukraine's national identity free from corruption. Poroshenko's anti-corruption discourse, steeped in anti-Soviet themes, clearly resonated with many pro-western Ukrainians, making it a cornerstone of Ukrainian nationalism, both from

above and below. However, many in eastern Ukraine strongly rejected these narratives, leaving Ukrainian identity in a paradoxical flux.

“The Great Patriotic War” and the Ukrainian Identity

The “defenders of history” who camped out around Lenin monuments were not the only Ukrainians to lay claim to the heroic narratives of World War II. Both during and after the revolution, government leaders and protesters deployed the myth of the “Great Patriotic War” to define Ukrainian identity. The pro-European faction argued that the revolution was following in the footsteps of heroic Cossacks fighting for Ukraine’s freedom, just as their grandparents had done when they fought fascist Germany decades earlier. For Ukrainians attempting to define their national identity, Cossack heroism and that of the Red Army soldiers, were fundamentally linked.

During the Revolution of Dignity, protesters deployed this Cossack/Patriotic War myth. The Oscar-nominated documentary *Winter on Fire* chronicles the protests and features numerous interviews with ordinary Ukrainians who took to the barricades to define their national identity.⁴⁶ One protester tells the camera, “I came here to defend my future, the future of my children, compatriots, and country.” The tone of such a statement echoes Soviet-era propaganda about the heroic purpose of the Soviet soldiers resisting German invaders. As Yankyovich’s crackdown worsened and the protesters were murdered by sniper fire, protesters’ descriptions of the Maidan conflict as a “battlefield” and a “war” became reality. The film depicts police firing onto protesters who protected themselves with shields, an overflowing medical tent of wounded protesters, and ordinary Ukrainians learning military tactics to resist police. The link between the Soviet Union’s “Great Patriotic War” and the current

conflict became clear. The heroic narratives of the Maidan protesters would only grow in reverence in the days and months following the revolution.

The Ukrainian government further developed these heroic protestor narratives during the aftermath of the revolution. Just as Soviet-era heroes of the “Great Patriotic War” were revered every year during the May 8 Victory Day parades throughout Kiev, the Ukrainian government sought to honor the fallen revolutionaries. On the one-year anniversary of “Bloody Tuesday”—the worst day of the protest when over a hundred protesters were killed by sniper fire—Petro Poroshenko commemorated their sacrifice. Journalist Sarah Chappell explains: “The ‘Rays of Light’ display beamed spotlights up from the ground at dozens of locations around Independence Square where the victims, known as the ‘Heavenly Hundred,’ lost their lives in February 2014.”⁴⁷ Ukrainian leaders were commemorating the Revolution of Dignity the same way the “Great Patriotic War” was remembered during the Soviet era, drawing on this historic myth. The expression, “Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the Heroes” is common among politicians, revolutionaries, and ordinary Ukrainians. Honoring the heroism of fallen comrades in a struggle for freedom is simply a repurposing of a familiar Soviet-era trope. Moreover, these narratives blend Soviet-style hero glorification with Cossack-style resistance and hostility to foreign invaders. The combination is a uniquely Ukrainian tool for building national identity that likely resonates with Ukrainian audiences. This resonance is reflected in the “Order of the Heavenly Hundred” given out by Poroshenko in the aftermath of the crisis. The award was given for “civil courage, patriotism and the defense of the constitutional principles of democracy, selfless

service to the Ukrainian people during the Euromaidan-protests; as well as any events related to the protection of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.”⁴⁸ The Ukrainian government thus extended this narrative of heroism and sacrifice, creating a nationalism from above identity even after the conflict ended. This identity, however, was one paradoxically rejected by pro-Russian Ukrainians in the east; heroism and villainy characterized the same events.

Once the war between the Ukrainian and Russian forces in eastern Ukraine began in earnest, the Ukrainian government again sought to link the current conflict with the legacies of World War II. Shortly before the 2015 Victory Day celebration, the Ukrainian government released two advertisements expressly linking the heroism of Ukrainian forces during the “Great Patriotic War” with the current conflict with Russia. Both commercials begin with the same English text on the screen:

Propaganda of the Russian Federation is doing its best to rewrite the history of World War II and misappropriate Victory Day. Ukraine’s input to World War II was 8,000,000 lives, 2021 Heroes of the Soviet Union were Ukrainians, 10 of 41 marshals were born in Ukraine. Ukraine honors the Memory of the Victory. This film is a tribute to our heroes.⁴⁹

One advertisement depicts an old man in an apartment filled with old model airplanes, presumably from the Soviet Air Force. He dresses in a military uniform festooned with numerous medals. The phone rings, and a young man in a military uniform on the other end remarks, “Hello grandpa! I want to congratulate you!” The older man replies, “My jacket is ironed, my orders are on me.” The grandson emotionally explains that he keeps one of his grandfather’s medals in his shirt pocket, over his heart. The camera then cuts to the grandfather putting on his military hat who says, “Glory to Ukraine!” while his grandson puts on his helmet and rushes to a

waiting helicopter. The advertisement concludes with the phrase, “We remember. We admire. We will win.” Linking the “Great Patriotic War” with the current conflict allows the advertisement to utilize familiar public memories for a new purpose—support for the Ukrainian army.

The “Revolutionary” myth of Ukrainian nationalism

A third theme—the mythic Ukrainian revolutionary—emerged from the protests’ rhetoric. Both government leaders and ordinary citizens deploy this narrative, creating a nationalist identity from above and below. As mentioned, fierce resistance to outside rule defines the Cossack identity. The process of calling for a revolution to overthrow an occupying force, and then launching military campaigns to do so, are key tropes in the Ukrainian revolutionary narrative. Instrumental leaders throughout Ukraine’s history embraced the mantle of revolutionary. For instance, Stepan Bandera during and after World War II embraced a revolutionary *ethos*, as did Viktor Yushenko after tainted election results spurred the 2004 Orange Revolution. Petro Poroshenko attempted to take up this mantle in the aftermath of the Russian invasion.

Eighteen months after the Revolution of Dignity, President Poroshenko struck a similarly defiant, revolutionary tone in articulating this vision for Ukraine’s identity in his 2016 New Year’s address. War with Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine had left the Ukrainian president with a challenging rhetorical situation. He needed to both articulate resolve and determination and also express his European vision for Ukrainian nationalism, reminding Ukrainians why victory was essential. Poroshenko was able to do this by connecting the heroes of the current conflict with

his commitment to Ukraine's European national identity: "We withstood and saved the country. Not only older did we become, but also wiser and stronger. And what is the most important - we became more united as a Ukrainian nation."⁵⁰ Poroshenko paints a heroic picture of Ukraine's soldiers for his citizens: "Let us first of all bow to glorious Ukrainian warriors for making today's holiday come true. To those who are currently not at the festive table, but in the cold winter trench. To those who are now standing with guns, not wine glasses. Glory to Heroes!" In Poroshenko's vision, the Ukrainian military is fighting for everyone. Poroshenko thus extends the link from Cossacks to Red Army soldiers to Maidan revolutionaries to the current Ukrainian army. For Poroshenko, the current conflict is only the latest in a long string of revolutionary events for Ukrainians resisting outside rule, further developing the nationalist myth from above. But paradoxically, for pro-Russian Ukrainians, this latest revolution is only the latest in a string of Bandera-like rebellions terrorizing the population.

This revolutionary spirit was extended in an additional attempt to link the current revolutionaries with historic ones. An additional advertisement on the anniversary of Victory Day depicts a grandmother, wearing a decorated uniform and flipping through photographs of her time as a nurse. Her granddaughter also calls; she is also a nurse, but in the current conflict. The granddaughter tells her "grannie," "Thank you for what you have done. I am very proud of you!" The grandmother replies, "And me of you, too. Glory to the Heroes!" as her granddaughter rushes to provide medical care to a soldier in a hospital. This advertisement also concludes with the phrase, "We remember. We admire. We will win." This commercial similarly

links the Great Patriotic War with the current conflict, relying on historic narratives and heroic myths to define Ukrainian nationalism. However, in stressing the Ukrainian role in resisting Nazi occupation for the Soviet Union, this commercial coopts Soviet heroism in the name of Ukrainian revolution. This advertisement suggests that the current conflict with the Russian Federation is simply the natural extension of the war against fascist Germany, which was itself fought in the same vein as Cossack revolutions. And, like the Great Patriotic War, the outcome will be the same—Ukraine’s heroes will triumph over the foreign invaders. Thus, Ukraine’s government links Ukraine’s historic revolutions with the current effort to resist Russian influence and overthrow the corrupt legacies of the Soviet Union. Ordinary Ukrainians similarly fought in ways continuing the revolutionary nationalist spirit. The new revolution was waged in the same spirit as previous revolutions.

During the protests, ordinary Ukrainians explained why they were fighting. In the process, they connected Ukraine’s historic revolutions with the current campaign in constructing a nationalism-from-below identity. One remarks, “This is the Ukrainian revolution!” Another explains that he just wanted to “do something for the revolution” and that he and his revolutionary colleagues are “together ‘til the end!” These revolutionary expressions, and a willingness to sacrifice for the greater cause, similarly mirror the Soviet-era propaganda messages of the Great Patriotic War and Cossack efforts to resist foreign invaders. Like their Cossack and Red Army ancestors before them, the Ukrainian revolutionaries were willing to shed their blood for the cause of freedom, and in the name of their new revolutionary identity. The protesters accordingly constructed a fluid link between historic narratives of heroism and

sacrifice to the current conflict in order to define Ukrainian nationalism and identity from the streets of the capital.

Ukraine's future as a European nation: freedom and alliances

Two additional themes emerge from the discourse when exploring Ukraine's place in global communities. The first is a desire for freedom and the second is an alliance between nations. These themes are related to overarching revolutionary themes seen throughout Ukraine's history and its current conflict. The Cossacks, Stepan Bandera, and the Maidan revolutionaries were all fighting for the freedom and self-determination of the Ukrainian people. This meant freedom from foreign influence—and often from Russian occupation. But Ukrainian revolutions were not simply *against* foreign presence in their lands; they were also *for* a free and independent Ukrainian nationalism. Both leaders and ordinary citizens embraced this national identity, defining a vision of Ukrainian nationalism steeped in discourses of freedom. When calling for their freedom, Ukrainians also meant the freedom to be a part of an alliance of European nations. Like the social contract, Ukraine freely entered into such European agreements. While such alliances restricted some freedoms, the agreements also provided the security Ukraine needed, given Russia's recent land grabs in Crimea and violent colonizing practices during the Cold War. These alliances would bolster Ukraine's attempts to break free from Russian influence, and creating these European communities also became a goal for both leaders and ordinary citizens in the Revolution of Dignity. These goals alienated pro-Russian individuals desiring a closer relationship with Russia, paradoxically fostering division instead of unity. This section explores how Ukraine's place in global

communities became steeped in nationalistic discourses of freedom and alliances from above and below.

The protesters during the Revolution of Dignity made it clear that they were fighting to depose President Yanykovich and bring the country into Europe. In the *Winter on Fire* documentary, ordinary Ukrainians are shown taking to the streets, and eventually to the barricades, with the goal of European integration. One protester tells the camera, “We’re not afraid to die for freedom! We will win and Ukraine will be part of Europe.” A young woman proclaims, “The people came out because the government promised to make an agreement with the European Union. So we finally have steps to live as a European country, like a part of the civil world community.” These expressions of a desire to be part of Europe were echoed in the chants heard throughout the film. “Sign the [EU Association] Agreement!” and “Ukraine is part of Europe” chants are shown as the crowds swell to over a million people. Protesters also explain what a European identity means to them. One speaker tells a crowd, “There are two European values: freedom and human dignity.” For many protesters, these European values are linked with their desired future as a nation. One protester expresses her disgust with the Yanykovich government’s decision to move away from Europe thusly: “They stole our children’s future!” Another demonstrator similarly adds, “We dream a better future” while holding a sign reading, “Yanykovich: Sign [the EU Association Agreement] or Burn in Hell!” The protesters articulated a vision of Ukrainian identity grounded firmly in Europe and free from Russian influence. The Ukrainian nationalism from below was defined in the protests as a firmly European

one. They were fighting for the freedom to be independent of Russian influence, and an alliance with European nations would codify this identity.

The revolutionary events allowed Ukraine's leaders to articulate a nationalist vision from above steeped in freedom from Russian influence and alignment with European nations. Yanykovich fled Kiev in the middle of the night on February 21, 2014, as the protests shown in *Winter on Fire* calling for his arrest had reached a violent breaking point.⁵¹ Less than a month later, the people of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula declared their independence from Ukraine and soon were officially annexed by the Russian Federation.⁵² In April, the Ukrainian military began clashing with pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine.⁵³ At the same time, the Ukrainian economy continued its free-fall.⁵⁴ Petro Poroshenko was elected Ukraine's fifth President in June 2014 in light of these cascading disasters. He relied on nationalist myths and memories to address these exigencies and to highlight Ukraine's place in global communities.

Poroshenko used his inaugural address to construct a nationalism from above, connecting Ukraine's historic and contemporary heroes with Europe. For Poroshenko, Ukraine's historic, rightful place was in Europe. He explained, "The return of Ukraine to its natural, European state was dreamt of throughout many generations."⁵⁵ Poroshenko's vision for a European Ukraine was therefore defined by its past. Quoting nineteenth-century Ukrainian poet Ivano Franko, Poroshenko argues that Ukrainians are "a living light in the family of European peoples and active collaborators of European civilization." Poroshenko further constructed Ukraine's European origins by quoting nineteenth-century Ukrainian philosopher Mykhailo

Drahomanov in suggesting that Ukrainians “Plant our feet and heart in Ukraine, and keep our heads in Europe.” For Poroshenko, Ukrainian identity has always been a European one. He argued: “Ukraine’s European choice is the heart of our national ideal. This is the choice our ancestors and oracles have made.” Here, Poroshenko echoes the themes of both Ukrainian freedom and his nation’s place in formal alliances with European nations. For Ukraine’s new post-revolution leaders, the most essential benefit to earning freedom from Russia was to embrace a European alliance.

Poroshenko then connected these origins of Ukraine’s European identity to the contemporary revolution. Following a moment of silence, Poroshenko explained this link: “Entire generations of Ukrainian patriots fought for our independence, our freedom. The heroes of the Heaven’s Hundred fell for it. Ukrainian soldiers and peaceful civilians are dying for it. The victorious Revolution of Dignity did not only change the government. The country became different. The people became different. The time for irreversible positive changes has come.” For Poroshenko, the revolution was only the latest iteration of Ukraine’s centuries-long struggle for independence and a European identity. He argued: “All of Ukraine and all the Ukrainians in the world have united around the ideas of independence, freedom, dignity, legitimate state, European integration. The people have expressed their important opinion. During the revolutionary events. During the fight against aggression. During the elections. Now it is our turn, the government’s.” Poroshenko used his inaugural address to articulate his nationalist vision from the position of a national leader. In defending what he called “Ukraine’s European future,” Poroshenko explained this identity: “We are a people that was torn away from its big Motherland – Europe – and

we are returning to it. Finally and irreversibly.” The events of the Revolution of Dignity were only the latest in a centuries-long battle for independence in Poroshenko’s vision of Ukrainian nationalism. This vision also showcased the paradox of Ukrainian identity as pro-Russian Ukrainians likely found Poroshenko’s violent rejection of Russian influence frightening.

Poroshenko, perhaps fearing that his inaugural address would isolate those pro-Russian factions in the eastern regions of the country, argued that this European identity was not meant to exclude anyone. He addressed those in the far eastern regions directly:

Our dear brothers and sisters, our compatriots! What will I bring as President to you, when I come in the nearest future? Peace. A project for the decentralization of government. The guarantee of free usage of the Russian language in your region. A firm intention not to divide Ukrainians into right and wrong. Respect for the specifics of the regions. The right of local communities to their own nuances in issues of historical memory, pantheon of heroes, religious traditions.

Here, Poroshenko argued that as long as the direction for Ukraine was generally toward Europe, the eastern regions should feel welcome. In offering language concessions and pledging to allow a preservation of positive aspects of Russian history, Poroshenko suggests that all are welcome in the new, post-revolution, European Ukraine. This vision for Ukrainian independence is thus an inclusive one that allows for reintegration of disputed territories. Poroshenko’s nationalist narrative for his country is one of openness, as long as European integration is the eventual objective. But for Ukrainians who do not want European integration, instead desiring closer ties with Russia, these calls for openness fall short, alienating many in Eastern Ukraine and showcasing the paradox of Ukrainian identity in this post-war context.

Poroshenko used his inaugural to articulate what Ukraine's European identity meant to him in practice. For Poroshenko, being European meant that Ukraine needed local control of government and a strong economy. He explained:

European experience tells us that the majority of power already has to be delegated from the center to the local government bodies. An even distribution of national riches is of utmost importance today. But before we distribute national fortune, we have to multiply it. Ukraine has everything it needs to provide the people with European welfare. And what should we do, in order to live freely, live in prosperity, live in peace and security? All of this is written in the agreement for political association and the free trade zone with the European Union.

This economic growth and local control of government could only exist, Poroshenko argued, if the pro-European factions in his government worked together. He explained: "To realize our ambitious plans, we need not only peace and unity of the country, but also the consolidation of all patriotic, pro-Ukrainian, pro-European powers." Poroshenko reminds his colleagues of Ukraine's history of political infighting and the consequences of such lack of unity: "We have to constantly remember the harsh lessons of the national liberation battles of the 17-20s of the previous century. Back then our politicians were unable to unite and counter aggression together. The constant arguments and conflicts between leading Ukrainians caused the loss of our sovereignty." This European identity was inclusive, reflective of Ukraine's history, and incredibly fragile. From the beginning of Poroshenko's time in office, this Ukrainian nationalism from above identity was grounded in Europe and dependent on the myths and memories of Ukraine's past.

In his 2016 New Year's Eve address, Poroshenko argued that the sacrifices of the current conflict with the Russian Federation had made Ukraine's European dream a reality. He explained: "It is symbolic that on the eve of the holidays, we have won

several important decisions of the EU. Next year, the paper curtain between Ukraine and the European Union will fall down. Citizens of our state will have an opportunity to freely make business and tourist trips to Europe, as well as participate in the humanitarian exchange.” Here, a “paper curtain” mirrors the “Iron Curtain” separating the west and Soviet-occupied territories, including Ukraine, for much of the twentieth century. Poroshenko used his inaugural address to articulate Ukraine’s historical struggle toward Europe, and his New Year’s address extended this struggle to the current conflict. He argued that this journey would soon be coming to a triumphant end: “Dear Ukrainians! We are looking in the future with hope and optimism. Ukraine will be European, strong and unique! Happy New Year! Peace, happiness and prosperity to all of you! Glory to Ukraine!” This arc toward Europe, Poroshenko’s nationalism from above suggests, would soon be coming to a victorious end. For many eastern Ukrainians nostalgic for the Soviet Union, this is a frightening prospect, showcasing the paradox of Ukrainian identity.

Visions of Ukrainian identity

This chapter explored how Ukraine constituted its sovereignty during the 2013-2014 Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity and in the aftermath of the Russian invasion. Ukrainian leaders and ordinary citizens relied on myths and memories from Ukrainian history and the legacies of the Soviet Union to construct visions of Ukrainian nationalism. These assemblages of national identity featured themes of corruption and heroic narratives from the “Great Patriotic War” that informed desires for Ukraine’s place in global, and European, communities. Such narratives isolate a tension between nationalism and internationalism as Ukrainians struggle to be a part

of global communities and institutions, while grappling with the legacies of their history. Ukraine's identity and sovereignty were thus caught between Europe and Russia. By definition, neither side could get what they want, since both visions for Ukrainian nationalism were constructed in opposition to the other, and rooted in deep historical myths and memories stemming from the Cold War. This paradox of Ukrainian identity made it nearly impossible for a unifying nationalist discourse to emerge, leaving Ukraine open to foreign influence. The following chapter turns to how the Russian Federation attempts to dictate meanings of Ukrainian nationalism in the second Cold War.

¹ Srećko Horvat, "Ukraine's Fallen Statues of Lenin are Not just a Rejection of Russia," *BBC*, 16 March 2014.

232. Leon Watson, "First the President, now Lenin: Stunning Map reveals 100 statues of Soviet leader have been toppled in Ukraine," *Daily Mail*, 25 February 2014.

³ "Two Ukrainians wounded defending Lenin monument near Odessa, Ukraine," *Pravda*, 24 February 2014.

⁴ "Saying Goodbye to Lenin: Ukrainian Workers Start Dismantling 16 Ton Statue," *Ukraine Today*, 3 September 2015.

⁵ Horvat.

⁶ Bruner, 2002, *ibid.*

⁷ MacCormick *ibid.*

⁸ Claims of nationalism and internationalism demand that leaders must ground those discourses in myths and memories their audience is already familiar with.

⁹ Bruner, 2002, 288.

¹⁰ Nationalism from below often resists direct military oppression. This draws attention to the relationship between nationalism and militarism. Laura Howard and

John Privera argue that nationalism and militarism are two sides of the same coin, depending on each other for survival, much to detriment of other ideas. They suggest that there is a clear center of American nationalism that is the white male warrior, and the further removed from that center an individual is, the more marginalized and harmed they become. Privera, Laura C. and John W. Howard III, "Masculinity, whiteness, and the warrior hero: Perpetuating the strategic rhetoric of US nationalism and the marginalization of women," *Women and Language* 29, no. 2 (2006): 29.

¹¹ The governments of both the Russian Federation and the United States attempted to persuade Ukrainian leaders to move closer to their sphere of influence. Ukrainian politicians can articulate visions of their country's identity. As discussed, large public policy decisions and political alliances can function as propaganda opportunities influencing international public opinion. In this sense, Ukrainian leaders are central in shaping national identity and in creating propaganda messages. Presidential speeches and actions are significant sites of nationalist rhetoric worthy of analysis. Not only can Ukrainian leaders define their nation through speeches and international alliances and policies, but every choice they make also has the potential to define what Ukraine is *not*. For instance, President Yanykovich attempted to define Ukraine's identity as being aligned with Russia, and the massive public outcry and protests demonstrated his error. Isolating these spaces of resistance can just as easily define—through negation and public protest—what Ukrainian nationalism is at a given moment. This definition-by-rejected-speech approach is outlined in Michael Lane Bruner, "Rhetorical criticism as limit work," *Western Journal of Communication (includes Communication Reports)* 66, no. 3 (2002): 281-299.

¹² John Thor-Dahlburg, "Ukraine votes to quit Soviet Union," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 December 1991.

¹³ In a June 23, 1992 letter to Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, President George H. W. Bush assured Ukraine that the United States would offer Ukraine security guarantees if it surrendered its nuclear warms. Mariana Budjerjn summarizes this document: "First, Bush formally reaffirmed the United States' commitment to all nonnuclear NPT member states: it would seek immediate action in the UN Security Council to provide assistance if Ukraine became 'the object of aggression or of threats of aggression in which nuclear weapons are used.' Second, Bush urged Ukraine to put faith in Europe's new collective security system by participating in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the UN, whose principle of inviolability of borders helps 'assure the security of all states.' Third, Bush underscored the importance of democratic political transition, economic reform and investment as a guarantee of Ukraine's security. Finally, he offered US assistance in the development of Ukraine's conventional armed forces 'whose size, equipment, and doctrine contribute to the security of Ukraine and stability in the region.' Letter of US President George H.W. Bush to Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk," June 23, 1992, Fond 5233, Opis 1, Delo

12, Central State Archive of Ukraine,
<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119814> Mariana Budjeryn, "The Breach: Ukraine's Territorial Integrity and the Budapest Memorandum," *Nuclear Proliferation International History Project, Issue Brief* 3: 2, The Wilson Center.

¹⁴ "Budapest Memorandums on Security Assurances," submitted to the UN General Assembly Security Council, 19 December 1994. 20 years later, Ukrainian and American leaders would claim the Russian Federation was violating the second part of the agreement with its annexation of Crimea. This part of the memorandum reads: "The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America reaffirm their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations."

¹⁵ "Ukraine crisis timeline," *BBC World News*, 4 May 2014.

¹⁶ While the Ukrainian conflict is terrible, it is worth noting that other former Soviet republics have had a much more difficult time adjusting to independence. The brutal genocide in Yugoslavia is one example. Christoph Zurcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus* (New York: New York University Press, 2007).

¹⁷ "Ukraine suspends preparations for EU trade agreement," *BBC News*, 21 November 2013.

¹⁸ "Ukraine crisis timeline," *ibid.*

¹⁹ Mark Memmott, "Ukraine's Yanykovich on the Run from Mass Murder Charge," *NPR*, 24 February 2014.

²⁰ Forina, Anastasia and Oksana Grytsenko, "Poroshenko promises peace, EU, change in long press conference," *Kiev Post*, 25 September 2014.

²¹ Frank Sysyn, "The Reemergence of the Ukrainian Nation and Cossack mythology," *Social Research* (1991): 846.

²² Sysyn, 852.

²³ Horvat.

²⁴ Robert Davies and Stephen Wheatcroft, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33: A reply to Ellman," *Europe-Asia Studies* 58, no. 4 (2006): 625–633.

²⁵ Vladimir Lenin, "The Ukraine," *Pravda*, 28 June 1917.

²⁶ Georgy Zhukov, *The memoirs of Marshal Zhukov* (Cape, 1971), 690.

²⁷ Nikita Khrushchev, "Secret speech," in Thomas Henry Rigby, ed, *The Stalin dictatorship: Khrushchev's 'secret speech' and other documents* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1968).

²⁸ Christopher Andrew, *The sword and the shield: The Mitrokhin archive and the secret history of the KGB* (Basic Books, 2000).

²⁹ Anthony Faiola, "A ghost of World War II history haunts Ukraine's standoff with Russia," *The Washington Post*, 25 March 2014.

³⁰ Faiola.

³¹ Joshua Keating, "Fascists, Fascists, Everywhere," *Slate*, 20 February 2014.

³² "Two Ukrainians wounded defending Lenin monument near Odessa, Ukraine," *Pravda*, 24 February 2014.

³³ "Ukrainians demolish another Lenin monument," *Pravda*, 13 December 2013.

³⁴ Isabel Gorst, "Clashes over toppling of Lenin statues typifies east-west tension in Ukraine," *Irish Times*, March 1 2014.

³⁵ Faiola.

³⁶ Much has been written about the legacies of the Battle of Stalingrad. It was one of the bloodiest in history, with nearly two million soldiers killed, wounded, or captured. The battle proved decisive, as German forces never would regain the initiative. See John Macdonald, John, *Great Battles of World War II* (Running Press Book Publishers, 1993), Geoffrey Roberts, *Victory at Stalingrad: The Battle that Changed History* (New York: Longman, 2002), Chris Bellamy, *Absolute War: Soviet Russia in the Second World War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf & Random House, 2007).

³⁷ For an outstanding account of the corruption of party bureaucrats in the former Soviet Union, see David Remnick, *Lenin's tomb: The last days of the Soviet empire* (Random House LLC, 1994).

³⁸ The 1959 "Kitchen Debate" in a model American home exhibit in Moscow between Soviet Premiere Nikita Khrushchev and Vice President Richard Nixon illustrates this reality for the vast majority of Soviet citizens. When Khrushchev insisted that nothing in the exhibit would impress the Soviet people, the reality was

that both the model home and almost all of its appliances would have been far out of reach for almost everyone, except for wealthy Soviet elites. For more on the debate and Khrushchev's subsequent tour of the United States that further illustrated wealth disparities between the two nations, see Peter Carlson, *K Blows Top: A Cold War Comic Interlude, Starring Nikita Khrushchev, America's Most Unlikely Tourist* (Public Affairs, 2010).

³⁹ In my judgment, the two best books chronicling this accumulation of wealth by a select group of elites in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse are David Remnick, *Resurrection: The struggle for a new Russia* (New York: Random House, 1997) and David Hoffman, *The oligarchs: Wealth and power in the new Russia* (Public Affairs, 2003).

⁴⁰ When I was living in Ukraine in 2008, the English language newspaper *The Kiev Post* published a table of appropriate bribes on its front page. For instance, seeing a physician on the day you make an appointment would cost \$100 Griven, while getting admitted to a good university would cost \$5,000 Griven. The newspaper was offering this information not as a sad commentary of how rampant corruption was, but as a public service so that people could avoid paying *too much* in the inevitable bribe-driven shadow economy. Corruption was so rampant, so expected, that it was discussed openly in media.

⁴¹ Sergii Leshchenko, "Yanykovich, the luxury residence, and the money trail that leads to London," *Open Democracy*, 8 June 2012.

⁴² Patrick Kingsley, "When rebels toured the palace: how does Ukraine's presidential compound measure up?" *The Guardian*, 24 February 2014.

⁴³ Harry Langston, "Hanging out in ousted Ukrainian President Viktor Yanykovich's mansion," *Vice News*, 28 February 2014.

⁴⁴ Sam Webb, "Ukraine protesters replace statue of Lenin with golden toilet to highlight 'corruption' in government," *Daily Mail*, 14 February 2014.

⁴⁵ The Ukrainian President's official website has taken down the original text of his inaugural address. All translations therefore come from a combination of versions that have been compared so as to more thoroughly authenticate the speech. Those versions include: "Petro Poroshenko's full speech at the inauguration: full text," trans. Mariya Shcherbinina, *Euromaidan Public Relations*, 7 June, 2014. "Ukraine President Petro Poroshenko's Inauguration Speech: No Compromise with Donetsk and Lugansk," trans. Michael Chossudovsky, *Global Research*, 8 June 2014. "President Poroshenko's Speech and its Implications," trans. Melik Kaylan, *Forbes*, 8 June 2014.

⁴⁶ *Winter on Fire*, DVD, Directed by Evgeny Afineevsky, Netflix, 2016.

⁴⁷ Sarah Chappell, “Kiev lights up in remembrance of Maidan ‘Heavenly Hundred,’” *Euronews*, 20 February 2015.

⁴⁸ “The Council Established the Order of the Heavenly Hundred,” *Ukrainskaya Pravda*, 1 July 2014.

⁴⁹ VICTORY UKRAINE, “Ukraine. Victory Day. Grandfather,” Filmed [April 2015], YouTube video, 01:12, Posted 27 April 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhReJKVQOmU>. VICTORY UKRAINE, “Ukraine. Victory Day. Grandmother,” Filmed [April 2015], YouTube video, 01:12, Posted 27 April 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvLD03YDOxE>.

⁵⁰ All quotations from this address come from the official translation offered on Poroshenko’s presidential website: <http://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/novorichne-privitannya-prezidenta-ukrayini-36591>

⁵¹ Ian Traynor, “Ukraine protests: end nears for Viktor Yanykovich despite concessions,” *The Guardian*, 21 February 2014.

⁵² Paton Walsh, Nick, Diana Magnay & Matt Smith, “Ignoring West, Crimea readies vote on joining Russia,” *CNN*, 11 March 2014.

⁵³ Sergei Loiko, “Ukraine says it seized an airport seized by pro-Russian separatists,” *Los Angeles Times*, 15 April 2014.

⁵⁴ “Why is Ukraine’s economy in such a mess?” *The Economist*, 5 March 2014.

⁵⁵ The translation of this address was discussed in note 58.

Chapter 2

With longtime ally Yanykovich gone, the Russian Federation leapt into action to undermine the new pro-Western government in Kiev.¹ Putin defied international pressure by supporting separatists in eastern Ukraine and levying retaliatory economic sanctions against both Ukraine and the United States.² The Russian army also facilitated a referendum in March 2014 in which Crimean citizens were asked if they favored “reunifying Crimea with Russia as a subject of the Russian Federation” or pursuing even greater autonomy from Kiev.³ Maintaining the nation’s status as a regionally autonomous republic of Ukraine was not an option offered to voters. Amid allegations of fraud, an overwhelming majority chose to reunify with Russia.⁴ Putin addressed the Crimean reunification in a joint session of the Russian Duma days later. Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine would soon resist the authority of Kiev’s new pro-Western government, following Crimea’s lead. By Fall 2014, Ukrainian and Russian-supported forces were battling in earnest over the Donbass, with thousands killed or displaced in the months and years that followed.⁵

This chapter explores the Russian Federation’s perspective of Ukrainian identity, examining how Russian myths and memories of the Cold War influenced conceptions of Ukraine’s identity and sovereignty in a post-Cold War world. It also examines how Russian leaders navigated its commitments to internationalism after the Cold War and the tensions that exist over controversial national identities and newly minted borders. The tensions between nationalism from above and below are also present in Russian rhetoric. Because there were also Ukrainian citizens who identified as Russians, especially in Crimea and eastern regions of the country, issues

of citizenship and borders complicate this nationalist discourse. Several themes emerge from the rhetoric of Russian leadership (from above) and the articulations of identity from ordinary citizens adopting a Russian identity (from below). These themes include nostalgia for the former Soviet Union, a loyal defense of the Russian people, and resistance to perceived Western aggression. The nationalism from above discourses are first represented through several major speeches of Vladimir Putin surrounding the conflict. Second, the nationalism from below discourses include speeches of Russian citizens in Crimea and eastern Ukraine surrounding the Crimean referendum and the ongoing conflict. Speeches from ordinary citizens show the ways that constructions of national identity emerge organically in response to political exigencies.

Finally, I explore several texts isolating an “in-between nationalism” rhetoric originating from neither ordinary citizens nor political elites. This in-between nationalism is a national identity created by individuals who exist in a nationalist liminal space as neither internationally recognized political leaders nor as ordinary citizens. These people simultaneously rely on the authenticity of organic social movements *and* the credibility and resources of political elites and institutions in constructing a post-Cold War identity.

In-between nationalism is deployed in two ways in the Ukrainian crisis. First, it exists *overtly* in the political campaigns and speeches of Crimean leader Sergey “Goblin” Aksyonov, including his March 8, 2014 interview and his October 16 press conference the same year. He is not the officially recognized leader of Crimea in the international community, but adopts a nationalism from above discourse nonetheless.

He is a “from below” rhetor pretending to be a “from above” leader in constructing a vision of Crimean nationalism. Second, in-between nationalism exists *covertly* in the rhetoric of Russian Internet commenters (commonly referred to as the Kremlin’s “troll army”) in the comment sections of Western news coverage of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17. These individuals are acting as agents of the Russian government, but pretending to be ordinary citizens who adopt a “from below” *ethos*. As a form of gray propaganda, the origin of these posts is not known—though multiple reports strongly suggest the “trolls” are employees of the Russian security services.⁶ Their rhetorical force is fostered by the appearance of their populist appeals. Yet, their link to the Russian government turns them into another arm of the Kremlin’s propaganda program because their “from above” propaganda masquerades as “from below” editorializing. Regardless of the posts’ origins, they allow for the circulation of pro-Russian ideas about Ukraine strategized by Russian leaders.

A central paradox dominates the Russian rhetoric on Ukrainian sovereignty. The rhetoric of Russian leaders and those promulgating it rely on a Cold War identity in framing Russia’s sphere of influence. Russian leaders draw on myths and memories of the Cold War to define Ukrainian identity and sovereignty nearly twenty years after the Cold War ended, refusing to allow Ukraine to define itself in post-Cold War terms. Such Cold War memories deny Ukraine its right of self-determination in the post-Cold War era; by resurrecting these Cold War myths and memories, Russia works to bolster its claims of authority over the Crimea region in particular.

Ukraine and the Soviet Union

Russian leaders and ordinary citizens constructed a vision of Ukrainian identity steeped in the rich history between the two nations. Understanding this vision requires exploring these historical contestations. Ukraine voted to become one of the founding members of the Soviet Union in 1922 following a disputed election run by the Soviet leadership.⁷ Under Soviet rule, the Ukrainian people were only allowed one shared identity defined by an allegiance to the Soviet Union. Russian replaced Ukrainian as the national language and people were forbidden to practice their faith in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.⁸ The forced collectivization of farmland from 1932-1933 decimated the Ukrainian peasantry, as millions died fiercely defending their land and refusing to give up their crops.⁹ Stepan Bandera, a Ukrainian nationalist leader, joined the Nazis and fought against the Soviet Union during the “Great Patriotic War.”¹⁰ These Ukrainian nationalists and Bandera followers, united in the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UIA), would continue to fiercely resist Soviet rule.¹¹ Red Army forces eventually crushed them in the early 1950s.¹² The failure to resist collectivization and the defeat of Bandera’s army left Ukrainians with little recourse but to surrender to Soviet rule. Their territory was occupied and their national identity was submerged for much of the Cold War.¹³ Things remained this way until, with the Soviet Union collapsing around them, ninety-two percent of Ukrainians voted for Independence on December 1, 1991.¹⁴

When the Cold War officially came to an end on Christmas day, 1991, the 15 Soviet republics broke away from Russia and formed independent states. This dissolution of the Soviet Union represented the final blow in a long and intensifying

struggle on the part of the republics to resist Soviet rule; “Popular Front” movements sprung up in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia as early as 1988, and violent uprisings took place in Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan during the same time period.¹⁵ Protesters were seemingly emboldened by the Soviet Union’s inability to maintain control of its territories, and moves by Soviet leaders to offer increased regional autonomy to these republics only inflamed and enabled further resistance.¹⁶ When the Soviet Union finally collapsed, these newer and older nations were forced to define their own territories that they now controlled. These territorial reconfigurations were often complicated and sometimes violent; the United Nations helped broker these transitions. After the Soviet Union’s collapse, the UN welcomed the newly formed Russian Federation and all former Soviet republics as member states. Sadly, efforts by the international community were often unsuccessful; conflicts between competing factions often broke out during these territorial and border shifts.¹⁷

The tumultuous post-Cold War period saw fresh territorial divisions lead to brutal conflicts. Without overarching Soviet influence and military strength to put internal disputes to rest, civil and regional wars sprang up in Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the breakup of the former Yugoslavia witnessed brutal genocides in Croatia, Kosovo, and Serbia. Georgia experienced breakaway republics in Abkhazia and South Ossetia declare their independence, and Moldova was unable to contain the breakaway of the Transnistria region.¹⁸ The Russian Federation also endured an awful war. Chechens in the north Caucasuses, believing they should *also* have been granted independence from Russia after the Cold War, rebelled and were violently put down

by Russian forces in two separate conflicts.¹⁹ Such contestations illustrate how the post-Cold War period was a battle between nation-states fought over territories and borders. Losing these territories represented a national humiliation for the leaders of the new Russian Federation not accustomed to such monumental defeats. With a loss of land came a loss of identity; Russia was no longer an empire, and the loss of national pride stung for Russian leaders and ordinary citizens. The Ukrainian crisis ten years later offered President Putin an opportunity to reclaim some part of Russia's Cold War glory.

The origins of the Russian vision for Ukrainian identity: Territory and identity

At the 2015 United Nations General Assembly, President Putin was asked if America's economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure had failed to isolate Russia from the international community.²⁰ He replied, "It's impossible to isolate Russia. To understand that, just look at the map."²¹ Over a century earlier, Catherine the Great remarked, "I have no way to defend my borders but to extend them."²² Although issued over one hundred years apart, these two statements reflect the centrality of land in defining Russian nationalism. The Cold War was shaped by moments of conflict reflected in physical battles over borders and land. One such important dispute over borders was Russia's annexation of Crimea. Russia and Putin lay historical and moral claim to Crimea's land, insisting that Crimea's identity is aligned with Russian identity. Thus, Putin claims sovereignty over Crimea's land and identity, and understanding the origins of this claim demands first understanding the perspective of Russian nationalism.

Immediately following the end of World War II, the Soviet Union—echoing Catherine the Great’s statement—aggressively pursued land expansion across much of Eastern Europe. Many of what would become the 15 Republics of the Soviet Union were occupied immediately after the end of the war in a massive Soviet land grab.²³ Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill observed in his 1946 “Sinews of Peace” address that the Soviet Union had taken over much of Eastern Europe without firing a shot after the war:

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow.²⁴

Churchill was not the only one to sound the alarm after the Soviet Union’s expansion. Deputy American Ambassador to the Soviet Union George Kennan wrote in his 1946 “Long Telegram” that the Soviet land grab would only continue due to its engrained nationalist drive for expansion and “instinctive fear of the outside world.” Kennan argued in his anonymously-published “X” article that the Soviets must “be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points.”²⁵ The notion of containment, reflecting Kennan’s warning, would inform American foreign policy toward the Soviet Union for the duration of the Cold War.

These Western responses failed to grapple with how critical territorial expansion was to Soviet identity. The legacies of the tsars had instilled in Soviet leaders a belief that security and strength were shown in the expansion and defense of

territories. Unfortunately for the republics—and for Ukraine in particular—this meant their borders would be subsumed by the Soviet Union and their people would bend to Soviet rule or be destroyed. For Soviet leaders, territory and national identity were linked. These connections between borders and identity would become fundamental rhetorical resources in constructing Russian identity in a post-Cold War era. Thus, understanding Vladimir Putin’s strategies in his Crimea speech requires understanding the themes of Russian nationalism and how such conceptions are rooted in Cold War myths and memories of the Soviet Union. Those myths can be defined as nostalgia for the Soviet Union, a defense of the Russian people, and praise for their nation while simultaneously condemning the United States. All three myths would influence Russian conceptions of Ukrainian identity in the current conflict, highlighting the paradox of Russian conceptions of identity in Ukraine. In denying Ukraine the right to move beyond Soviet conceptions of identity and rejecting its territorial sovereignty, Ukraine is stripped as a sovereign nation of its right of self-determination—to define its own identity and control its own borders without Soviet influence and domination. These constructs reinforce the historical hold that Russia had over Ukrainian identity and land.

Themes of Russian nationalism: Nostalgia, defending the homeland, and resisting the West

First, Russian nationalism was built on the legacy of World War II. As chapter one discussed, there was no part of Soviet society that was left untouched by the devastating fight against Nazi fascism. The loss of life was staggering, and stories of such sacrifices became essential rhetorical tools in defining Soviet identity. The

victory over Nazi fascism thus made the Soviet Union exceptional in its narrative.²⁶ Stories of the victory helped galvanize domestic support for the Soviet regime decades later, becoming a central component of Soviet national identity. In today's post-Cold War world, this myth of the heroic defeat of the Nazis resonated similarly with a range of audiences. Hence, Russian leaders use this overarching nostalgia for the Soviet Union to characterize current debates.

Second, Russian nationalism relied on a "New Soviet Man" commitment to defending the nation. This exceptionalist myth of the Soviet soldier and the heroic victory of the Great Patriotic War dovetailed with the Stakanovite myth, named after the story of Alexey Stakanov who represented an exalted example of an ideal Soviet male. These individuals were called "Stakanovites" because they embodied the strength of Stakanov who, as a miner, hauled a seemingly impossible amount of coal.²⁷ These New Soviet Men also embodied loyalty and commitment to Soviet communist ideals, and they were exalted as a source of Russian pride.²⁸

Beyond Stakanov, Yuri Gagarin served as perhaps an even clearer exemplar of Soviet exceptionalism. The son of a bricklayer and milkmaid, he was born in 1934 and grew up on a collective farm and in the humble peasant working class of the Soviet Union.²⁹ Gagarin's village and home were occupied by German troops for almost four years and his two older brothers were sent to a Nazi labor camp. While this experience was traumatizing, it would give him tremendous credibility later in life as someone who had suffered like so many other Russians had during the "Great Patriotic War."³⁰ Gagarin excelled as a Soviet fight pilot who was chosen to be the first human to travel into space. He was selected as much because of his commitment

to Soviet communist principles as he was for his technical skills and his short stature (his short stature allowed him to fit into the tiny “Vostok” cockpit).³¹ One of his evaluators, a Soviet air force doctor, described him in this way: “Modest; high degree of intellectual development evident in Yuriy; fantastic memory; distinguishes himself from his colleagues by his sharp and far-ranging sense of attention to his surroundings; a well-developed imagination.”³² By all accounts, Gagarin was handsome, smart, humble, strong, loyal, hard working, and willing to articulate and defend his beliefs in the Soviet Union. Gagarin’s narrative was ideal for Soviet propaganda purposes as Russians were encouraged to feel great pride in the new Stakanovite.

Gagarin's myth was strengthened because this son of collective farmers had survived Nazi occupation and gone to space, powered entirely, the myth suggested, by communism and ingenuity. Even before his shocking death in a plane crash at age 34, Gagarin had become a mythic symbol of Soviet superiority and a testament to what the Russian people could achieve together in their commitment to Marxist-Leninist principles.³³ Gagarin thus embodied the values, beliefs, and assumptions of the Soviet people in the same manner as Alexei Stakanov. He was heralded as an exemplar of the ideal Soviet citizen for propaganda purposes.³⁴ By emphasizing his commitment to Soviet communism and the collective good, Gagarin became an exemplar of the Stakanovite myth for the Soviet citizens to follow with pride.³⁵ Such exemplars became symbols of national identity. True Soviet heroes were willing to defend their country through strength, loyalty, and sacrifice. If a leader could

exemplify these rhetorical features, then they could tap into tremendous resources in disseminating nationalist myths.

A third theme of Russian nationalism was a willingness to defend the Soviet Union and attack the West. This theme played out in the 1959 “Kitchen Debate” between Nikita Khrushchev and Vice President Richard Nixon. Initially, this debate appeared to be a mismatch. Nixon was a champion high school and collegiate debater before becoming a respected lawyer and veteran politician with decades of experience arguing successfully.³⁶ Conversely, Khrushchev completed a total of four years of education across his entire life and was much more accustomed to defending his nation through military strength than rhetorical skill.³⁷ Nixon could not have asked for a better opportunity to argue for the superiority of American capitalism through this media spectacle given the debate’s setting in a model home. Moreover, such a drubbing could have embarrassed Khrushchev in front of the international media.

Despite these disadvantages, Khrushchev did quite well during the kitchen debate, earning at worst a stalemate in the West’s press coverage of the event.³⁸ When the exchange was shown on U.S. television, the reaction from most Americans was that the debate had been a draw.³⁹ Nixon, with all his polished rhetorical skill and political debate experience, seemed overwhelmed by Khrushchev for much of the exchange as the Soviet leader delivered several memorable lines and spoke with impassioned conviction.⁴⁰ From a Soviet perspective, the newspaper *Pravda* continued its attacks on how unrealistic the exposition was, arguing that the average worker could not possibly afford all the goods on display at the exhibit.⁴¹ Thus, Khrushchev was willing to defend the Soviet way of life with pride. Khrushchev was

loyal, strong, and dedicated to defending the Soviet Union against the United States, exemplifying this strand of Soviet nationalism. His willingness to articulate and defend the motherland, especially in front of Western aggression, marked a key component of this nationalist myth. Any leader willing to do so would earn the respect of the Russian people.

The Soviet Union also promoted messages about the evils of the United States as a key part of its nationalism. As early as 1949, the Soviet Central Committee was explicit in their efforts to frame the United States as evil in Document #148:

In print news media such as “Pravda,” “Izvestiya,” “Trud,” “Literaturnaya Gazeta,” “Komsomolskaya Gazeta,” “Bolshevik,” and others, organize systematic publications of materials, articles, and pamphlets, unmasking aggressive plans of American imperialism, inhumane character of social and political order of [the] US, debunking American propaganda “fables” about American “prosperity,” showcasing deep controversies in US economy, mendaciousness of bourgeois democracy, idiocy of modern-day American bourgeois culture and morals.... [The] following themes should provide the basis for anti-American propaganda in press, radio and movies:

Capitalistic monopolies of U.S. - inspirators of aggression policy ...
U.S.A. - stronghold of colonial enslavement and colonial wars ...
Monopolies feed fascism on American soil ...
Democracy in U.S. - hypocritical cover-up for absolute rule of Capital
...
Myth of high standards of living for all social classes in U.S. ...
Myth of universal equality and equal opportunities for everyone in U.S. ...
Degeneration of American culture ...
Decay of cinematography in U.S. ...
Corrupt American press ...
Crime in U.S.A. ...⁴²

These nationalist myths were designed to undermine all aspects of American social and political life. Such strategies continued as the Soviet Union promoted the idea that America was a warmongering nation responsible for the tensions of the Cold War. Through narratives of Soviet nationalism and depictions of an evil American

enemy, the Soviet Union sought to undermine America's own claims of exceptionalism, creating a war of words over the rights to the exceptionalism mantle throughout the Cold War. This hostility to the West is a central underpinning of Russia's efforts to dominate Ukraine and resist Ukrainian efforts to move west. In undermining American character, the Soviet Union's leaders strengthened their own nation's identity. Similarly, resisting Ukraine's western push served Russia's foreign policy goals of advancing its own political status on the world stage and undermining both Europe and the West.

Russian conceptions of Ukrainian identity were thus framed in Cold War terms. The more Russian leaders grounded their arguments in Cold War-era themes, the more Ukrainian identity became defined by Soviet myths and memories. In grounding Ukrainian sovereignty and identity in the Cold War, Ukrainians would be prevented from defining their identity as anything other than as a part of Russia's national orbit. Whereas the Russian Federation was no longer an empire, it nevertheless asserted its Cold War-era control over Ukrainian sovereignty and identity. The following section illustrates how such themes played out in the nationalism from above discourses informing the current Ukrainian crisis. Those discourses include President Putin's Crimea speech and his address to the Novorossia Militia.

Soviet nostalgia and the legacies of the Great Patriotic War

Two addresses from Vladimir Putin articulated a nationalism from above discourse. These include his March 18, 2014, speech following the annexation of Crimea and his August 29, 2014, address to the Novorossia Militia. Rather than accept

Ukraine's sovereignty, Putin denies it in both addresses and instead asserts Russia's sovereignty over Crimea, pulling it into the Russian orbit. Putin thus defines Crimea as part of the Russian nation-state, framing the Crimean referendum as a rejection of Ukrainian sovereignty and an embrace of Russian identity. In supporting this political upheaval, Putin helps create the Crimean crisis itself and uses nationalist myths and memories to justify Russian actions. He initially deploys a nationalism from above myth by turning to the Soviet victory in World War II in his Crimea speech. The address was given to the Russian Duma shortly after the Crimean referendum. While the speech was targeted to Russian and Crimean audiences, it was widely circulated abroad to Western audiences that mostly condemned the takeover of Ukrainian territory.

President Putin's Crimea address is his framing of the crisis in historic terms from World War II. Putin's speech represents this myth of winning the "Great Patriotic War" by glorifying the Soviet and Russian militaries and condemning Ukraine's role in World War II. Putin first champions Crimea as a symbol of Russian military heroism. He argues, "The graves of Russian soldiers whose bravery brought Crimea into the Russian empire are also in Crimea."⁴³ For Putin, Crimea symbolizes "Russian military glory and outstanding valor." Here, Putin links past military glories with the current Russian Naval base at the port of Sevastopol. Putin refuses to surrender Crimea to Ukraine, asking, "What would this have meant for Crimea and Sevastopol in the future? It would have meant that NATO's navy would be right there in this city of Russia's military glory!" For Putin, giving up Crimea would dishonor the mythic memories of Russian war heroes. He connects the heroic acts of World

War II to the current political maneuvers in Crimea. The symbolism of World War II references was likely not lost of his Russian and Russian-identifying audiences in Crimea and throughout the Russian Federation. By absorbing Crimea, Russia was again asserting its regional dominance and resisting foreign influence in ways that mirrored the USSR's World War II struggles against Nazi Germany. Putin again defines Ukrainian identity, and the Russian land grab of Crimea, in Cold War terms, hindering Ukraine's move into Europe and away from Russia's sphere of influence.

Putin also condemns the new, pro-Western Ukrainian government by linking it with the Soviet Union's "Great Patriotic War" foe, Nazi Germany. He describes these leaders as "nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes and anti-Semites" who "continue to set the tone in Ukraine to this day." Putin argues that the current leaders of Ukraine ousted Yanykovich in an unconstitutional coup akin to the hated World War II Ukrainian leader, Stepan Bandera: "Nevertheless, we can all clearly see the intentions of these ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler's accomplice during World War II." These intentions, according to Putin, are to persecute Russian speakers and hurt ethnic Russians in Crimea and throughout Ukraine. In linking the current leadership to Nazis, Putin draws on the myths of Soviet heroism during World War II and the nationalist memory of their treasured victory over fascism. In deploying nationalism from above in this way, Putin extends nationalist myths and memories that challenge Ukrainian sovereignty. He subsumes Ukrainian nationalism under Russian nationalism. Putin's use of Cold War myths and memories mirrors Russian history and bolsters Russia's current military efforts to resist Ukraine's turn toward Europe free from Russia's control. The Russian Federation's construction of Ukraine

in Cold War terms thus blocks Ukraine from forging a new identity free from Russian influence in a post-Cold War world.

Defending the homeland as a “New Soviet Man” ideological exemplar

Putin constructs himself as a hero of the Soviet Union defending the homeland by situating the reclaiming of Crimea as a necessary step in correcting an historic injustice. He argues that reclaiming Crimea is a matter of historic principle:

“Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride. In people’s hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia.” Putin suggests that incorporating Crimea into the Russian Federation is a point of national pride, and that his government has acted in ways reflecting—and constituting—the history and values of the Russian people.⁴⁴ As a political leader, Putin was uniquely positioned to make these contributions to his nation’s identity.⁴⁵ He argues that understanding the referendum demands understanding “what Russia and Crimea have always meant for each other.” For Putin, Russia was not annexing a part of Ukraine but righting an historic wrong. He explains what Crimea means to the Russian people, and what the loss of Crimea symbolized when the Soviet Union collapsed:

And what about the Russian state? What about Russia? It humbly accepted the situation. This country was going through such hard times then that realistically it was incapable of protecting its interests. However, the people could not reconcile themselves to this outrageous historical injustice....Yes, we all knew this in our hearts and minds, but we had to proceed from the existing reality and build our good-neighborly relations with independent Ukraine on a new basis.

Here, Putin argues that addressing the loss of Crimea is essential to fixing a long-standing national humiliation. His unwavering commitment to this belief makes him a modern equivalent of Yuri Gagarin, steadfastly defending his homeland. Putin’s

nationalism from above myth celebrates Russian commitments to Soviet legacies. Those legacies trump Ukraine's assertions of territorial sovereignty. For Putin, Ukraine is still beholden to these Soviet legacies, despite Russia itself being a post-Cold War power.

Putin uses memories of the Soviet Union by championing a vision of Ukrainian identity nostalgic for a time when Crimea and Russia were one nation. Putin ignores Ukrainian sovereignty in the post-Cold War period and instead focuses on the emotional appeal of Soviet nostalgia rooted in the Cold War period. He explains, "All these years, citizens and many public figures came back to this issue, saying that Crimea is historically Russian land and Sevastopol is a Russian city." Thus, Ukraine's post-Cold War sovereignty is framed by Russia's own memory of its Cold War rule over Ukraine. Again, Putin defines Ukrainian identity as merely another vehicle to express Russian nationalism. For him, Ukrainian identity is defined by Russian identity; the mere nostalgia for a Soviet-controlled nationalism trumps Ukraine's struggle to define its independence from Russia.⁴⁶ Much of this argument is built on ethno-nationalist ties between ethnic Russians and Crimean citizens; in mentioning their shared history and the connections between their "hearts and minds," Putin argues that Russians and Crimeans have a shared ethnicity in addition to their shared history.⁴⁷ These ethnic connections similarly disrupt Ukrainian assertions of sovereignty. For Putin, Russian history and blood paradoxically trump Ukrainian efforts to separate identities and borders; Ukrainian identity is merely a vehicle for defining Russian nationalism characterized by heroic myths and memories.

Putin's view of Ukrainian identity in his Crimea speech is also reminiscent of Soviet Cold War communist commitments to international law. He argues that the Crimea referendum was "in full compliance with democratic procedures and international norms" and that "more than eighty-two percent of the electorate took part in the vote. Over ninety-six percent of them spoke out in favor of reuniting with Russia. These numbers speak for themselves." In this case, Putin highlights the vote itself to showcase Russia's commitment to international law and order. This was not an illegal occupation on the part of the Russian Federation; the Crimean people *invited* the Russian army, Putin reasons. Thus, in Putin's narrative, the objections of Western nations to Russia's actions in Ukraine fly in the face of international law and notions of order and justice. Putin defines Ukrainian identity as rejecting such international commitments. Soviet leaders throughout the Cold War similarly championed international order when it fit their interests. Such mythic memories are likely familiar and compelling for Putin's Russian audiences at home, and Russian-identifying audiences in Crimea. Putin thus constructs a mythic ideological purity in his defense of the homeland, constituting himself as an ideological exemplar of Russian nationalism for his people to admire and follow. Within this vision, Ukrainian identity is morally and legally subordinate to Russian ethno-nationalism. In attempting to link Ukrainian identity with these Cold War-era themes, Russia also reinforces its own identity to the same Cold War constructions, justifying its authority over Ukraine.

Putin similarly constructed a myth of ideological purity in defense of the homeland in his speech to the Novorossia militia on August 29, 2014. The speech was

published on the official presidential website, and was directed at Russian-backed insurgents in eastern Ukraine. At the time, the Ukrainian and Russian forces were locked in a fierce struggle for territory in the Donbass region. Neither side seemed able to totally displace the other, as Ukrainians and Russians fought over territory they believed was rightfully theirs. While the stated audience of the address was the Russian insurgents, the address was certainly heard by both Ukrainian leaders in Kiev as well as Western leaders. In the speech, Putin constructs a moral rhetoric in support of his pro-Russian allies: “It is clear the militia has achieved a major success in intercepting Kiev’s military operation, which represents a grave danger to the population of Donbass and which has already led to the loss of many lives among peaceful residents.”⁴⁸ In this narrative, the Russian side of the conflict is doing all it can to stop the loss of life in the region. He continues this ideological purity narrative by offering mercy while championing Russian military might:

I call on the militia groups to open a humanitarian corridor for Ukrainian service members who have been surrounded, so as to avoid any needless loss of life, giving them the opportunity to leave the combat area unimpeded and reunite with their families, to return them to their mothers, wives, and children, and to quickly provide medical assistance to those who were injured in the course of the military operation.⁴⁹

In this narrative, the Ukrainian forces are about to be destroyed by the overwhelming skill and ability of the Russian-backed armies. Putin claims Russian forces were routing the Ukrainian army, implying that Ukrainian leaders and those defending Ukrainian sovereignty were weak. This aligns with Putin’s overarching subordination of Ukrainian sovereignty under Russian nationalism. Any sovereignty and independence that Ukrainians can claw away from the Russian Federation is simply because of the mercy of Russian leaders. Ukrainian identity is again paradoxically

constrained by these Cold War-era orientations. The Russian Federation works to block any attempts by Ukraine to create a post-Cold War identity.

Putin's narrative suggests that the pro-Russian forces are both stronger and more moral than their Ukrainian counterparts that were responsible for numerous civilian deaths. He continues this mercy/strength narrative of Russian kindness and Ukrainian savagery: "For its part, the Russian side is ready and willing to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Donbass, who have been affected by this humanitarian catastrophe. I once again call on the Ukrainian authorities to immediately stop military actions...and resolve all problems via peaceful means."⁵⁰ His narrative champions the nationalist myth of Russian moral and military superiority. The Russian-supporting people in eastern Ukraine are defending themselves, decisively winning the battle, and acting morally and with mercy all at the same time. Thus, those defending Ukrainian identity are not only losing, but are also morally bankrupt. For Putin, Ukrainian identity is simply a vehicle to assert Russian superiority in terms of international law, military might, and universal morality. The historic and ethnic ties between Russian and Crimean people only cement the moral foundation of Putin's claim; Crimea helps Putin define Ukraine's post-Cold War identity in Cold War terms.

Praising the Russian Federation while condemning the West

Putin praises Russia while condemning the West in his Crimea speech. He defines Ukrainian identity as morally bankrupt while strengthening his own nation's assertions of nationalist exceptionalism. First, Putin champions the values and character of the Russian Federation that he claims the referendum symbolizes. He

argues, “Crimea is a unique blend of different peoples’ cultures and traditions. This makes it similar to Russia as a whole, where not a single ethnic group has been lost over the centuries...retaining their own identity, traditions, languages, and faith.”⁵¹ For Putin, the referendum highlights the beautiful polyglot pluralism of the Russian nation. In Putin’s narrative, the new Bandera-like government in Kiev threatens this linguistic and cultural diversity in Crimea. Speaking of the ethnic Russians living in Crimea, Putin exclaims, “Time and time again attempts were made to deprive Russians of their historical memory, even of their language and to subject them to forced assimilation...we could not abandon Crimea and its residents in distress. This would have been betrayal on our part.”⁵² Here, Putin suggests that the referendum is Russia’s heroic attempt to save an historic ally from cultural and linguistic assimilation at the hands of a tyrannical government.⁵³ Such heroism narratives are an essential part of nationalism myth building. Building on Soviet nostalgia, Putin suggests that Russian resistances to Ukrainian tyranny are heroic and brave. These emotional connections link current Russian efforts with Soviet myths and heroism during World War II.⁵⁴ The eastern Ukrainians resisting Kiev’s rule and Russian citizens share both blood and heroic narratives from the former Soviet Union. Putin suggests they are ethnically and mythically connected in ways that deny Ukraine’s right to a post-Cold War identity. In this sense, Russian post-Cold War identity is mired in a Cold War memory in which the USSR controlled the identity and the land of Ukraine. Such rhetoric shows a yearning for a nostalgic Soviet past of Russian dominance and control. The more Ukraine is linked to the Soviet Union, the more Russia and Ukraine are unable to move beyond a Cold War-era frame.

Putin argues that Russia is not taking over Crimea but rather saving it from foreign powers. Such arguments about resisting foreign powers were exactly the kind of rhetoric used by Soviet leaders to justify the occupation of the 15 republics throughout the Cold War, as the republics were being saved from Western intervention. The occupation of these territories, often by force, was framed as a battle between worldviews—Soviet socialism vs. Western capitalism. The moral superiority of the Soviet model constructed by Stalin, Khrushchev, Andropov, and other Soviet leaders made victory over evil Western capitalism a necessity.⁵⁵ Putin's rhetoric constructs a similar binary, echoing Cold War themes of superiority and the essential need for absolute victory against an evil foe. He defines Ukrainian identity in these terms, stressing Russian superiority.

Putin condemns the West in his Crimea speech in ways reminiscent of Cold War rhetoric. In response to Western criticism, Putin asks, "What do we hear from our colleagues in Western Europe and North America? They say we are violating norms of international law. Firstly, it's a good thing that they at least remember that there exists such a thing as international law—better late than never."⁵⁶ Here, Putin attacks perceived Western hypocrisy in military invasions in Iraq and Afghanistan that flew in the face of international organizations. Putin reasons that if the Crimea referendum violates international law, Western nations are far guiltier. He continues his condemnation of Western handwringing over the Crimean crisis by indicting American exceptionalism directly:

Our western [sic] partners, led by the United States of America, prefer not to be guided by international law in their practical policies, but by the rule of the gun. They have come to believe in their exclusivity and exceptionalism, that they can decide the destinies of the world, that only they can ever be right.

They act as they please: here and there, they use force against sovereign states, building coalitions based on the principle, “If you are not with us, you are against us.”

Putin’s strategy of strengthening his own nation’s political position by weakening his Western rivals is a familiar one. Throughout the Cold War, Soviet leaders attacked the United States for various foreign policies. Thus, in weakening Western credibility, Putin bolsters Russian nationalism. He therefore constructs a vision of Ukrainian identity that is weak, immoral, and villainous. Putin constructs a nationalism that is zero-sum; strengthening Russian regional standing weakens Ukrainian post-Cold War identity, and diminishing Ukrainian sovereignty bolsters Russian power. Both identities are subsumed under the memory of a Soviet identity.

Nationalism from below: Protesters, Russia-friendly Crimeans, and finding an identity

Following the “Revolution of Dignity” in Kiev, the people of Crimea struggled to define a unified identity to help them navigate the tensions between Ukraine and Russia. The Crimean government did not acknowledge the new pro-Western direction the Ukrainian government had taken. In response, between four and five thousand Crimean Tatars and supporters of the Euromaidan-Crimea movement gathered in front of the Crimean Supreme Council to protest the Crimean parliament’s reluctance to recognize the new Ukrainian authorities.⁵⁷ Protesters held Ukrainian and Crimean-Tatar national flags, chanting, “Ukraine!,” and the familiar Maidan chant, “Glory to Ukraine! Glory to Heroes!,” adding chants of “Crimea is not Russia!”⁵⁸ Meanwhile, six or seven hundred supporters of pro-Russian organizations and the Russian Unity Party gathered near the parliament building to support the

Crimean parliament, holding Russian flags.⁵⁹ These clashes were often violent, as bottles, stones, and flags were thrown between the two camps. At least two people were killed, and thirty more were injured in these exchanges.⁶⁰ These conflicts reveal a struggle of the Crimean people to define a national identity. Just as the Ukrainian people were not unified in their calls for European integration, the Crimean people were not in complete agreement about their desire to unite with Russia. For them, ethno-nationalism and a shared history with Russia were primary factors in shaping their pro-Russian identity, rejecting Kiev's assertions of sovereignty over Crimean territory. The Crimean people's identity would ultimately redefine their sovereignty itself, uniting the peninsula with the Russian Federation. This section explores the debates over Crimean identity and nationalism from below, with a focus on Crimean self-determination and nostalgia for the Soviet Union, and the legacies of World War II.

The initial task of Crimean people was to unite internally. The head of the Crimean Tatar People, Refat Chubarov, called for protesters to go home peacefully in response to the clashes outside parliament. He explained that the Crimean people would not be divided by "provocations" and its people would decide the future of the region on their own: "We have gathered here to ensure that the Supreme Council [of Crimea] is no longer a center of destabilization. We may be different in our approach, but we are one in blood and in our love for Crimea. We are trying to find a common approach to building the future of Crimea."⁶¹ Chubarov suggests that the Crimean people share an ethnic heritage that defines their identity, and supersedes larger divisions between the Russian and Ukrainian governments. Russian Unity Party

leader Sergey Aksyonov echoed this call for a shared vision for Crimea: “All of us here are Crimeans. Let us remember that, above all. Crimea is our common home, and we must respect each other. We must together address the outside challenges.... Do not let political provocateurs start clashes on this square.”⁶² This internal unity of the Crimean people challenges Ukraine’s conception of its own sovereignty in a post-Cold War world that includes Crimea.

The key for Crimeans was the ability to decide their own fate, and not be governed by a foreign power against their will. Protesters and ordinary citizens defined their identity first and foremost as Crimean, and while that identity aligned more closely with Russia than Ukraine, self-determination was a primary concern. Their identity was defined by shared heritage, blood, and autonomy, each of which shaped Crimean sovereignty, moving it into Russia’s sphere of influence and shaping a post-Cold War identity for the peninsula that excluded Ukraine.

Crimeans agreed that they should be able to decide their fate free from the influence of Kiev or Moscow and turned to the question of what that shared identity should be. The Crimean people frequently characterized their struggle to define their identity in terms reminiscent of World War II. Some held a nostalgic view of the Soviet Union. This identity was aligned with the Russian Federation. As protester Dmitry Kovalenko bluntly told *The Guardian*, “We need to unite with Russia.”⁶³ For most protesters, Crimean identity was primarily Russian, and the Crimean capitol of Sevastopol exemplified this identity. As a protester named Anotoly explained, “Sevastopol is a Russian town and will always be a Russian town...we will never surrender to those fascists in Kiev!”⁶⁴ The Crimean people represented in this

comment define their identity in pro-Russian terms, echoing themes from the Cold War that challenge Ukraine's sphere of influence. Olga, a retiree who took to the streets to express her national identity, explained, "We are not like the Kievans, we will not give up. We hoped there wouldn't be a split in the country, but if a fully Bandera regime emerges in Kiev then we will be a part of Russia." In referring to the Kiev government as a Bandera regime, this protester defines her national identity using the myths of Soviet struggles against Nazi Germany. Sergei Bochenko, a commander in a local militia group, put things more bluntly: "There's not a chance in hell we're going to accept the rule of that fascist scum."⁶⁵ Thus, the Crimean people used shared history and myths with Russia to articulate their pro-Russian identity. For them, identity defines their sovereignty, challenging their government's western push. When they felt their history and national identity were no longer aligned, the Crimean people sought to realign with the Russian Federation. Their post-Cold War identity was thus defined by Soviet-era nostalgia, not by Ukraine's pro-European track.

By defining their national identity using the myths of World War II, the next logical step was to secede from Ukraine altogether. In response to Kiev's increasingly Western identifications, self-defense militias were formed in Crimea, and protesters called for the Russian military to save them from Ukrainian domination. One protester exclaimed, "Putin and the Black Sea fleet should come. We are not scared of bloodshed!"⁶⁶ Dmitry Sinichkin, president of the local branch of the Night Wolves motorbike group, claimed that "Bloodshed is inevitable," and boasted that his Sevastopol had up to 200,000 people who could be counted on to defend their Crimean homeland.⁶⁷ The people Sinichkin describes define their sovereignty through

Cold War myths and memories nostalgic for the Soviet Union. This identity is expressed with seemingly heartfelt conviction, making Ukraine's calls for European integration extremely difficult. The Russian intrusion in post-Cold War Ukraine has created extreme levels of chaos that has allowed middling, shadowy actors to play an oversized role in the conflict.

In-between nationalism: Sergey Aksyonov and Crimean identity

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Sergey Aksyonov went into business selling black market cigarettes in Crimea, Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova. He was an enforcer for a criminal syndicate called "Salem," named for the cigarettes they imported.⁶⁸ Aksyonov's ability to collect on debts through intimidation and violence earned him the nickname "Goblin" in the Russian mob.⁶⁹ After building his criminal empire, Aksyonov used the profits to make a fortune in local real estate during the 1990s, and then went into local politics. Campaigning on reunification with Russia, his Russian Unity party got four percent of the vote in the 2010 Crimean parliamentary elections, earning three out of the chamber's one hundred seats.⁷⁰ When the pro-Western revolution occurred in Kiev in 2014, Aksyonov leapt into action by storming the parliament building in Sevastopol before dawn; his men were armed with assault rifles and rocket launchers. According to eyewitnesses and local officials, the group moved swiftly to articulate a nationalist identity for the Crimean peninsula:

They let the guards go, sealed the doors, and only allowed the lawmakers whom Aksyonov invited to enter the building.... Those who did arrive could hardly have voted their conscience while pro-Russian gunmen stood in the wings with rocket launchers. Both of the votes held that day were unanimous. The first appointed Aksyonov, a rookie statesman with less than four years

experience as a local parliamentarian, as the new Prime Minister of Crimea. The second vote called for a referendum on the peninsula's secession from Ukraine.⁷¹

Aksyonov's position in the conflict represents a contested nationalist space, as his election, and the Crimean referendum and Russian reunification he later facilitated, is widely rejected by the international community, particularly the West. Aksyonov is neither Ukrainian nor Russian, neither ordinary citizen nor official country leader; his rhetoric represents an in-between nationalism articulating the hybridity of Ukrainian and Russian national identity. The ways in which Aksyonov exists in and navigates this nationalist liminal space can thus illuminate unique aspects of both Russian and Ukrainian identity that are only possible because of Russia's meddling in the former Soviet satellite country.

Following the referendum reunifying Crimea and Ukraine, Aksyonov acted like the legitimate leader of the peninsula and attempted to construct a nationalist identity for the Crimean people by deploying Russian myths and memories. He gave an interview to a Russian television station in March, and a press conference in Moscow seven months later. Both television appearances were in Russian, though the intended audiences likely included Russian, Ukrainian, and Western leaders, as well as international audiences and the Crimean people.⁷² Aksyonov deploys similar themes in each appearance to those President Putin used in his speeches regarding the Ukrainian crisis, including nostalgia for the Soviet Union, a loyal defense of the homeland, and resistance to Western aggression. The similarities between Aksyonov's rhetoric and that of the Russian leadership might suggest deliberate attempts to connect Crimean and Russian nationalisms. Yet, he also relies on the

Ukrainian dynamic of Cossack independence resistant to outside rule; in this case, the new government in Kiev being the “outsider” to his Crimean identity. Aksyonov thus weaves together aspects of both Russian and Ukrainian nationalisms to articulate an identity that is from neither above nor below. This section explores his March 8, 2014, interview and his October 16 press conference the same year.

First, Aksyonov expresses nostalgia for the Soviet Union. In his press conference, he argues that rejoining Russia corrects an historic injustice: “Crimea is united in its understanding that joining Russia is like returning home...these people physically and spiritually are Russians.” This theme echoes the argument made by President Putin about Crimea’s territorial origins and rightful place in Russian hands. A Crimean identity is a Russian one in this articulation of nationalism. Similarly, Aksyonov characterizes the process of wresting control over Crimea from Ukrainian hands in terms reminiscent of the Great Patriot War. During his press conference, he characterizes his Crimean self-defense forces in heroic terms: “These are people that, when Crimea and Russia needed, showed courage, will, character, that without any reward, joined barricades, participated in the blocking of military forces, and as a result of their patriotism and actions showed that Crimea needs them.” For Aksyonov, the defense forces expelling Ukrainian authorities from his peninsula were patriots, akin to the Red Army soldiers who fought at Stalingrad to defend the homeland from fascist Germany. In discussing the military crisis in eastern Ukraine, Aksyonov added, “What militia is doing in Donetsk and Lugansk, I understand them. I support them morally. I consider them true heroes.” Thus, in articulating a Crimean identity,

Aksyonov deploys the myths and memories of *Soviet* heroes challenging *Ukrainian* aggression.

Aksyonov links the current government in Kiev with foreign invaders when constructing a Crimean identity. In his press conference, he suggests that “revolution of dignity” was actually an “armed coup in Kiev.” His depiction of the current state of the Ukrainian government is bleak. Aksyonov relies on memories of Stepan Bandera’s betrayal of the Soviet Union to make his case for the moral inequivalence of Kiev and Crimea:

You see what’s happening in Ukraine. Authorities are not in charge there. Some folks in masks are deciding who can be and who cannot be, whom to throw into a dumpster. Maybe someone deserves to be thrown into a dumpster as a way of fighting corrupted officials, it might be proper as a social measure, but in terms of law and order, we are not allowing such things here in Russia.... Representatives of the right sector, some weird folks, who are wearing masks in front of police, there is no law and order today. Therefore, the revolution in Kiev was not a revolution but an armed coup.

The members of the “Right Sector” political party are from far-western regions of Ukraine, the same that were the last to surrender to Soviet rule, and the first to join forces with fascist Germany during the Great Patriot War. In characterizing the entire government in Kiev as an armed coup by the descendants of Hitler’s allies, Aksyonov deploys a myth from World War II. His forces are thus the ideological ancestors of the Red Army heroically defending the homeland.

Second, to expand on this myth, Aksyonov suggests his actions in Crimea are simply in service of homeland defense by amplifying the ideological purity trope. As a component of Russian nationalism, this trope relies on ideological purity and commitment to law and order. In his press conference, Aksyonov explains that his regime will not tolerate corruption: “We won’t have any kind of protection rackets or

law-enforcement officers here, no-one [sic] will be demanding extortions, I guarantee security for all investors all over Crimean republic.” This rhetorical strategy constructs Aksyonov himself as an ideological exemplar embodying the strength and purity of his nationalist vision; he is a modern Yuri Gagarin. Despite his own background in organized crime, Aksyonov suggests that the days of being ruled by oligarchs and mafia dons in Crimea are now over, thanks to his—and Crimea’s—commitment to law and order. Similarly, Aksyonov argues the Crimean overthrow of Ukrainian authorities was in full compliance with international law: “I consider them people who are legally defending their rights. If you lived in Ukraine and saw how Russians are treated there, you would have understood that they are actually fighting for their rights and freedoms, freedom of expression.” Aksyonov’s self-defense forces were fighting for their independence, akin to Cossacks resisting foreign invaders. He is both Russian and Ukrainian, embodying myths and memories of both national identities. Aksyonov thus embodies the hybridity of Crimean identity, constructing an in-between nationalism made possible by Russian interference in Ukraine’s attempts to unify as an independent nation-state in the aftermath of the Cold War.

Third, Aksyonov calls for Crimea to resist Western aggression and praises the Russian Federation. His rhetoric adapts Cold War tropes of Western violence common in Soviet propaganda campaigns. Aksyonov speaks of the current war in eastern Ukraine during his press conference, arguing that the pro-Western Ukrainian leaders are genocidal monsters actively committing war crimes. “Killing of Russian speaking people is taking place,” he claims. “In my opinion, it is a genocide of Russians in Donbass, Lugansk, that is beyond comprehension. Donetsk is being

bombed and Lugansk is under fire.” In Aksyonov’s narrative, the West is to blame for the brutal violence. He repeatedly characterizes the West and Ukraine’s government as the instigators and causes of the current crisis. In his interview, Aksyonov argues that the Crimean referendum is about human rights and self-determination:

When I was speaking on TV I was saying that we respect the choice of those Ukrainians who want to be a part of Europe, I was personally saying that. It is their right and the right to stand up for their interests. We were not saying anything to people from Lvov or Ternopol when they kicked prosecutors, policemen out of their offices, the head of the local administration, we were not saying that we are going to mobilize our forces to go to Lvov and teach those living in Lvov how to live? We were saying that it was [our] right to make certain decisions, participate in discussions.

In this version of events, Crimea is simply searching for its freedom, and the Western-backed government in Kiev is fighting to prevent that self-determination. This trope of praising the freedom to decide a national identity is similarly Ukrainian, echoing calls for Cossack independence resistant to outside rule. Yet, Aksyonov blends this trope with the Soviet-era rhetorical myth of resisting Western aggression, thus offering a new articulation of the dual nationalist identities.

Aksyonov similarly uses Cold War tropes of condemning Western media and propaganda messages while praising Russia. He argues in his press conference that Russia will support Crimea far better than Ukraine and the West ever did: “The funds allocated to support retired persons make up over 10 billion rubles until 2020, this is ten times the amount that Ukraine was planning to allocate during all these years.” Here, Aksyonov makes the case that Russian leadership has stepped in to save the Crimean people from the relative indifference of Western leaders and Kiev politicians. His explanation for why these dynamics are not understood by ordinary Ukrainians is a familiar one, seen frequently throughout the Cold War:

When you speak to Ukrainians that only watch TV channels that belong to Ukrainian oligarchs, they think that there is only military personnel, tanks and constant combat actions in Crimea with daily shootings. As soon as people visit the Republic, they see that everything is safe, moreover, everyone is happy that they have joined Russian Federation, that the spirits are still up high, the rating of our president, Vladimir Putin, makes up 93%. Is there any European president with such approval ratings?

Aksyonov suggests that the biased Western media is to blame for the ignorance of Ukrainian citizens regarding the situation in eastern Ukraine, in Crimea, and in their own government. Praising Russia while condemning the West echoes Cold War strategies of Soviet identity building and tropes of Russian nationalism. Yet, Aksyonov frames his Crimean identity around self-determination and independence from foreign influence—decidedly Ukrainian characteristics. His discourse represents a hybridity of nationalism myths and memories in constructing a Crimean identity. He is a Cossack, struggling against outside rule, while also loyally embracing the legacy of the Soviet Union. In this apparent paradox, Aksyonov articulates a unique in-between nationalism by defining a uniquely Crimean identity separate from Ukraine. This is made possible by Russian efforts to short-circuit Ukraine's attempts to articulate a post-Cold War identity.

In-between nationalism and online comment trolls

This debate over Ukraine's identity was more than a war of words. Russian rebels in Ukraine had finally gone too far. On July 17, 2014, Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 departed Amsterdam for Kuala Lumpur. Several hours after takeoff, the plane was shot down twenty-five miles from the Ukraine-Russia border, killing all 283 passengers and fifteen crew on board.⁷³ The loss of life was staggering. Eighty of the passengers were under the age of eighteen, and twenty were younger than twelve

years old. Over twenty *entire families* were killed.⁷⁴ Russian insurgents were obvious and immediate suspects because the crash took place in the Shakhtarsk Region of the Donbass in eastern Ukraine, and the rebels were known to possess Buk surface-to-air missiles in their territory.⁷⁵ U.S. sources attributed the crash to a missile fired by Russian rebels based on sensors tracing the path of the missile, analysis of shrapnel patterns in the wreckage, and voice print analysis of separatists' conversations in which they claimed credit for the strike.⁷⁶ Immediately after the crash, a post appeared on Russian social media attributed to Russian Colonel Igor Girkin, leader of the Donbass rebels, bragging about how his men had shot down a Ukrainian transport plane.⁷⁷ Once it became clear they had shot down the commercial passenger jet instead, the post was taken down and the Russian agents emphatically denied any involvement. For the entire world, these events seemed clear: Russian agents had attempted to shoot down a Ukrainian plane and instead had murdered nearly 300 innocent people. Russia's support of insurgents in Ukraine directly led to the Malaysia Airlines disaster, only the latest in a long string of brutal war crimes perpetrated by the Russian Federation and its president, Vladimir Putin.

In comment sections around the Internet, however, the conclusions were much less clear. Commenters blamed the crash on Ukraine for not policing its own airspace.⁷⁸ Others suggested the crash would not have happened without Western provocations. Still more suggested that Ukrainian President Poroshenko was a neo-Nazi fascist who came to power through a coup, and who would enslave or exterminate eastern Ukrainians for speaking Russian unless President Putin intervened. The pro-Russian sentiment in online forums following the Malaysia

Airlines crash is not isolated to this incident. Seemingly every time any Western media outlet runs a story covering Russia in any capacity, the comment sections quickly fill up with posts championing the Russian government or attacking Western positions. Recent reports seem to confirm what was long suspected: these posts represent a coordinated propaganda campaign on the part of the Russian government to manipulate public opinion. Several reports from former employees of these “troll farms” have documented how the Russian government hires hundreds of people to comment in online forums and defend Russian policies and insult Western leaders and positions.⁷⁹ The term “troll army” is used in these reports to characterize the paid pro-Russian commenters.⁸⁰

These “trolls”—people who stubbornly take offensive or incendiary positions in online forums—act in service of the Russian intelligence agencies, and their posts represent a powerful propaganda weapon in the war of words over the battle to define Ukrainian nationalism.⁸¹ While Putin articulates nationalism from above narratives and myths in his speeches, these comments represent something new. They fall into a middle space between officially recognized narratives and the discourse of ordinary Russian citizens. Their source is obscured, but their messages nonetheless articulate visions of Russian nationalism worthy of examination because of their pervasiveness and their focus on undermining Ukrainian identity. These messages capture the Cold War paradox in which Russia ensnares Ukraine in Cold War memories that inhibit Ukraine’s ability to unify around a common identity in the post-Cold War period.

Understanding the Russian “troll army” as a burgeoning foreign policy strategy highlights how coordinated anonymous messages in virtual communities

function as a form of propaganda. I am not suggesting that a paid agent of the Russian intelligence service pens every single pro-Russian comment on the Internet; indeed, some Russian patriots ardently defend their nation and/or attack Western positions in online communities. In fact, Russian intelligence services are *counting on* the fact that audiences are unable to distinguish between the sincere commenters and paid trolls. Part of their rhetorical power is that they masquerade as narratives from below. Yet, these messages are really narratives from above voiced by people pretending to be voices from below. Thus, these trolls represent an in-between nationalism. This type of obscured propaganda—in which the source of the message is uncertain—represents an important strategy of Russian foreign policy efforts to undermine Ukrainian identity.

Exploring the rhetorical strategies of the Russian troll army first requires understanding the perspective of propaganda. These propaganda messages take shape in *ad hoc* online communities of Western news websites. The posts are not public speeches by official representatives of any government. Russia or any other state actor does not *officially* sanction them or claim responsibility for their content. Because they are comments on the Internet, they are situated in a transnational space that is grounded everywhere and nowhere, as readers have *no way of knowing* where other commenters come from or if their stated identity is genuine. Nonetheless, these pro-Russian comments make clear nationalist arguments that hold the promise of shaping public opinion.

These propaganda messages are targeted to large numbers of people—propaganda messages do little good for the institution if they only work on a small

scale. Messages of this nature function best if they can reach a mass audience, strengthening the interests of their original source. The Internet is a particularly unique environment for propaganda messages because it can reach mass audiences in shaping public opinion. Audiences perusing comment sections on Internet news stories likely have strong views on the subject matter. As David Willcox argues in his discussion of the Internet during the Kosovo War, “The Internet offered a haven for dissenting voices, a forum for non-mainstream opinion, and an ideological challenge to state-influenced traditional media.”⁸² The Internet therefore functions as a site for alternative opinions. Online news consumers and commenters are thus engaged communities whose members can shape public opinion more broadly. Influencing these audiences by either reinforcing institutional propaganda or weakening oppositional positions is an essential part of a transnational propaganda campaign—especially one that involves trolls.

The troll army uses propaganda to bolster the expansion of Russian borders and the usurpation of Ukrainian territory by targeting consumers of Western news. These campaigns represent obscured propaganda that re-envision the borders of the Russian and Ukrainian nation-states by undermining Ukrainian calls for Western intervention and justifying Russian aggression. This propaganda marshals the rhetorical power of nationalism from-below messages while actually representing the identity constructions of from-above Russian officials, thriving in a space of in-between nationalism. I turn to the Malaysia Airlines crash as a case study to examine the ways in which the troll army attempts to validate Russian sovereignty and

usurpation over Ukrainian territory in an expansive yet “obscured” propaganda campaign.

“Do we think the CIA can't hack twitter accounts?” The Russian troll army in action

This analysis examines the comment section of “Missile destroys Malaysia Airlines plane over Ukraine, killing 298 people,” an article from *The Guardian* published online the day of the crash.⁸³ *The Guardian* is a British newspaper with a thriving online community that routinely debates global events in the comment sections of its online stories.⁸⁴ In this case, that audience appears to be Western consumers of news commenting on the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Its stories are written in English, suggesting a Western readership. This article reflects such participation from audiences as the piece was shared 14,000 times on social media and features 2,192 comments. Consumers of these messages were also presumably familiar with the Russian government’s annexation of Crimea and the Ukrainian election of Petro Poroshenko following the violent protests of former President Yanykovich. In other words, these audiences were likely well-informed and frequent consumers of news living in English-speaking Western countries.

Comments on this article were made anonymously, as *The Guardian* does not require any genuine authentication for posting. While other online forums allow comments to be made only by users logged in with native or third-party social media accounts, *Guardian* commenters invent personalized handles and comment on multiple stories anonymously, or create single-use “burner” accounts with nothing more than an email address. Reports from Russian “troll farms” suggest that the pro-Russian posters spend a significant amount of time creating a “post history” for their

fake accounts to make them seem more authentic.⁸⁵ This requires posting many comments on other stories unrelated to Russia so that a cursory search through a handle's posts will make the commenter seem like an actual person and not an obvious employee of Russian intelligence agencies. Taken together, the manufactured credibility of a post history and the anonymity of fake names further reinforce the invisibility of this propaganda. With each obfuscating step, audiences are less likely to adequately discern legitimate posters from paid troll commenters.

These propaganda campaigns are thus collectively obvious and individually obscured. However, sometimes the best efforts to obscure the message source fails, and the trolls are too obvious in their messages, as posters are called out by fellow commenters. For instance, commenter DaveHodge waded into the discussion about Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 by saying, "Looks as though someone in Ukraine thought they were taking out a Russian passenger plane. Oops! Let's try to blame it on the rebels!!! Luckily enough of the rebels have secured the site and retrieved the black box so an impartial investigation can take place."⁸⁶ Several commenters immediately called the authenticity of this post into question. KingcnutCase replied, "Propaganda i'd [sic] say," and several others suggested that Dave was not the commenter's real name.⁸⁷ A user who stated their name as David Watkin posted, "'Dave.' Yeah, of course you are," while user Malkatrinho replied, "Good effort, 'Dave.'"⁸⁸ However, even in the most obvious pro-Russian cases like this, some readers could not tell if this poster was genuine. As commenter AnaGram2 expressed, "You're either a troll or incredibly stupid."⁸⁹ Being unable to differentiate between trolls and actual, genuine commenters demonstrates how the Kremlin's troll army can work,

reinforcing that the source is obscured. This obfuscation similarly makes it challenging for Ukrainians who genuinely want a post-Cold War identity to gain a foothold in their communities in English-speaking forums in Western media, as their legitimate posts are drowned out by an avalanche of fake posters.

In the comment sections of this article, three basic themes become apparent, each undermining Ukrainian identity. First, some commenters are incredulous that the Russian rebels are involved, demanding that the international community withhold judgment until a full and impartial investigation into the crash is conducted. This mirrors the Russian nationalism from above theme of defending the homeland through ideological purity that Putin deployed in his address. For instance, commenter Stephan Clark argues, “I think we need to wait for more evidence on who exactly is behind this. I don't know and I think not many people do at the moment.”⁹⁰ Similarly, commenter girondistnyc exclaims, “Nobody knows. People shouldn't jump to conclusions.”⁹¹ Commenter Exodus20 argues, “There are NO trustworthy source [sic] of information and data because all sources can be and probably have already been compromised.”⁹² This block of commenters suggests that no blame can be placed on anyone, much less on the Russian government, because it is either too soon after the crash to know for certain, or because the media itself cannot be trusted. Such propaganda characterizing all media as untrustworthy strengthens the Russian government's position. Not trusting the press means no responsibility can be assigned to *anyone*, and the guilty parties can go unpunished. These messages therefore absolve Russia of responsibility for the attack, and blame Ukraine and the West for irresponsibly jumping to conclusions.

A second group of commenters blame “Western provocations” for the crash, a similar argument to Putin’s “resistance to the West” theme common within his nationalist narratives. Here, Ukrainians were the villains of this story and reckless assertions of Ukrainian sovereignty were to blame for the disaster. These commenters have no reservations about rushing to such judgment, but instead of blaming Russia for the downed aircraft, they blame Western nations. Commenter nfnfnf asks, “Do we think the CIA can't hack peoples twitter [sic] accounts?”⁹³ in response to posts about Russian rebels supposedly bragging on social media about shooting down what they thought was a Ukrainian transport plane. This conspiracy theory suggests that the U.S. intelligence agencies shot down the jet and framed the Russian rebels to marshal public support for backing President Poroshenko. Commenter HiImTroyMcCLure makes this anti-Western argument even more explicitly: “The EU has been wrecklessly [sic] provocative in supporting the overthrow of Yanukovych [sic] just because he was pro Russian. Even though he was democratically elected. The EU doesn't want to be friends with Russia, it wants to dominate it.”⁹⁴ In this narrative, the focus is on the ousting of former President Yanyovich months earlier, not the downed passenger jet. The European Union is the real aggressor and hegemon, not the Russian Federation. This argument suggests that the plane would not have been shot down if the West had not provoked Russia. Western nations are scrutinized and Russia is spared in this propaganda.

A third group of commenters blamed the Ukrainian government for the crash, similarly mirroring Putin’s nationalism from above narrative of Western aggression. Ukrainian identity and the sovereignty it defends are therefore responsible for the

murders. This narrative suggests that letting the plane fly over the Donbass region where conflicts were ongoing was a terrible mistake on the part of the Ukrainian government. For instance, commenter DmitryBooing asks, “So authorities are not to blame for letting civil planes fly above the territory where jets and helicopters are used in a war and are being shot down every two or three days?”⁹⁵ This question suggests that these events would have been avoided if only the Ukrainians had ceded control of their own airspace to a rebel group they did not recognize as legitimate. Echoing these sentiments, commenter Marko Raos exclaims, “It’s called ‘war’ you know. That aircraft had absolutely no business there.”⁹⁶ Moreover, Marko Raos implies that Malaysia Airlines itself was to blame for taking such a dangerous flight path. In other words, in this line of propaganda reasoning, all responsibility for the deaths of 298 people should fall on any actor *except* the Russian government and the rebels they support. This strengthens the political position of the Russian government and weakens its geopolitical rivals. Ukraine’s dangerous actions justify its return to Russia’s sphere of influence.

In these narratives, Russian nationalism suggests that the ongoing invasion of Ukraine is correcting an historic injustice of long-standing Western provocations in the region. The reliance on Cold War memories reflects a defiant vision of Russian nationalism standing up to the West. In a recent documentary about his nation’s 2014 annexation of Crimea, President Putin argued, “It’s because this has elements of historical justice. I believe we did the right thing and I don’t regret anything. We have witnessed such attempts during Russia’s entire history, dating back to tsarist times. This attempt to deter Russia, this policy, has been known for a long time, for

centuries. There is nothing new.’’⁹⁷ Whether these individuals supported these messages out of genuine patriotism or because it was their job is simply not known.⁹⁸ President Putin and his rebels in Ukraine constituted Ukraine’s identity in Cold War terms, which returned the country to the power and control of the Russians who were bent on retaking at least some of its territory.

As a site of this obscured propaganda, the Internet complicates the role of public opinion in global conflicts. This analysis suggests that obscured propaganda can target a diversity of audiences anywhere in the world at any time.⁹⁹ This represents a stark shift from previous propaganda battles. During the Cold War, Western intelligence services sometimes had to resort to balloons to literally airlift their propaganda messages into the Soviet sphere of influence. Now, the Russian troll army’s obscured propaganda campaign shows how the Internet allows governments and those acting on their behalf to target the opposition’s audiences with ease. While the Internet can be blocked or thoroughly restricted, Western commitments to free speech have allowed relatively unfettered access to news websites, further enabling this obscured propaganda campaign.¹⁰⁰

This troll army campaign seeks to undermine any popular support shown to Ukraine's foreign policy crisis by American politicians seeking to justify assistance. These online commenters do not need to convince Western audiences to support the Russian Federation’s actions in Ukraine; rather, they simply need these consumers of online news to question their own government’s position on the issue, because indecision or indifference will allow Russia to continue to act with impunity in Ukraine. Without a clear pathway to articulate a post-Cold War identity, the hope is

that Ukraine will default to Soviet-era frames of sovereignty and identity, and Russia's interpretation will be validated. As Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 demonstrates, the consequences of Western indifference can be brutal, and Russian assertions of sovereignty over Ukraine are rooted in myths and memories that resonate with many pro-Soviet Ukrainians. Thus, the Russian post-Cold War rhetoric is designed to restrict Ukraine's ability to construct its own post-Cold War identity. The more Ukrainian identity is undermined using Cold War-era myths and memories, the less Ukraine can express its own sovereignty in the post-Cold War era.

Implications and conclusions

President Putin's address on the annexation of Crimea, the protests by ordinary Ukrainians in the region, and the online efforts to demonize Ukrainian identity each demonstrate the durability of nationalist myths and memories. The political and social realities facing the Russian people have shifted dramatically since the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, for Russian audiences, the same exceptionalist themes that defined their Soviet identity continue to resonate, functioning as comforting rhetorical tropes at moments of great uncertainty. Putin's ability to marshal Cold War-era exceptionalist strategies sheds light on core components of Russian nationalism: military strength, mythic memories of historic military triumphs, and condemnation of former Cold War rivals. Putin and others use these resources to lay claim to Ukrainian land and identity in Crimea. These texts showcase the rhetorical strategies defining Russian nationalism in Cold War terms and in ways opposed to the West. For Russian leaders and ordinary citizens, Ukrainian sovereignty is simply a vehicle for rearticulating and reifying these Cold

War myths and memories. From Putin's perspective, Russian identity dominates Ukrainian identity in the post-Cold War period in ways that the USSR dominated it during the Cold War. Putin's military and propaganda efforts worked in Crimea. And, even if Putin's identity theft more broadly falls short, he and his troll army cast doubt and spark chaos in a country vulnerable to outside interference and struggling to become a sovereign nation.

At the time of this writing, the Russian Federation is struggling. Its economy is collapsing between the rapidly devaluing Ruble and plummeting oil prices. Unemployment and inflation both continue to rise at alarming rates.¹⁰¹ The Russian military is involved in ongoing conflicts in both Ukraine and Syria with unclear objectives and no end in sight. Journalists and opposition leaders are arrested or killed with great regularity, and the persecution of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals remains pervasive. For a Western politician, such conditions would seemingly make reelection difficult, if not lead to their removal from office. Yet Vladimir Putin will likely be reelected to his fourth presidential term in 2018. A Levada Center poll from October 2017 puts Putin's popularity in Russia at eighty-three percent.¹⁰² Putin's rhetoric in his Crimean and Novorossiia addresses might offer some explanation for his political longevity. His strategies work so well that he is difficult if not impossible to oppose. Combined with the obscured propaganda campaigns in online communities, these nationalist myths remain formidable resources in articulating Russian nationalism that are difficult to challenge. There is little political dissent in Russia, so isolating a nationalism from below narrative is challenging. In this vacuum, Putin's constructions of Russian identity remain the

dominant definition. Until Russian opposition leaders can marshal the rhetorical myths and memories of Cold War nationalism in ways rivaling Putin, few challenges to his regime stand a chance. Russian constructions of Ukrainian identity should thus be read in this climate of how useful those definitions are in strengthening Russian identity. Nostalgia for the Soviet Union, ethno-nationalism, heroic myths of the Great Patriot War, and online comments echoing these themes are all tools that undermine Ukrainian identity and sovereignty. The more effective Russian efforts are to reify a Cold War identity for itself and Ukraine, the more Ukraine will struggle to construct its own post-Soviet identity. In the process, both Russia and Ukraine become mired in the past myths and memories of the Cold War—a conflict that ripples across the globe.

¹ So far the United States has given Ukraine \$291 million in humanitarian aid and military equipment, as well as a \$1 billion loan guarantee. The White House explains their efforts to coordinate with international organizations and non-governmental organizations to address Ukraine's internal refugee crisis: "The U.S. government is contributing to the work in Ukraine of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)." "FACT SHEET: U.S. support for Ukraine," Office of the Press Secretary, 18 September 2014. Meanwhile, the Russian Federation has sent 48 humanitarian aid convoys food and medical supplies to the Donbas region, in addition to supporting and training the insurgents and actively fighting Ukrainian forces with regular Russian military units. "Russia sends its 48th humanitarian aid convoy to the Donbas region," *TASS Russian News Agency*, 24 December 2015.

² Elsa Buchanan, "Ukraine crisis time: From the highs of independence to full-blown war," *International Business Times*, 21 April 2015.

³ "Crimean referendum: What does the ballot paper say?" *BBC*, 10 March 2014.

⁴ Vasovic, Aleksandar, and Adrian Croft, "U.S., EU set sanctions as Putin recognises Crimea 'sovereignty,'" *Reuters*, 18 March 2014.

⁵ The United Nations Human Rights Office reports that at least 9,800 civilians and members of armed forces have been killed since the conflict began in mid-April 2014. "Civilians face 'Dire' situation in eastern Ukraine, UN Warns," *UN News Centre*, 3 February 2017.

⁶ This definition of "Gray Propaganda" is explored in Scot Macdonald, *Propaganda and Information Warfare in the Twenty-First Century: Altered images and deception operations*, Routledge, 2006, 36.

⁷ These events are detailed at length in Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: a history* (University of Toronto Press, 2009).

⁸ Patricia Herlihy, "Crisis in society and religion in Ukraine," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 14, no. 2 (1994): 1.

⁹ The forced famine, known as the "Holodomor" genocide among many Ukrainians, featured brutal violence and incidents of cannibalism as families struggled to survive. These events are detailed in Yaroslav Bilinsky, "Was the Ukrainian famine of 1932–1933 genocide?" *Journal of Genocide Research* 1, no. 2 (1999): 147-156.

¹⁰ David Marples, "Stepan Bandera: The resurrection of a Ukrainian national hero," *Europe-Asia Studies* 58, no. 4 (2006): 555-566.

¹¹ Alexander Statiev explains that the Ukrainian guerilla resistance was the largest in the post-war republics the Soviets were attempting to control: "The Ukrainian nationalist movement was the largest in the annexed Soviet borderlands with 25-40,000 guerrillas and upwards of 400,000 supporters involved in various duties in the underground network." *The Soviet counterinsurgency in the western borderlands* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹² Korostelina 68.

¹³ Ukrainians did enjoy one territorial benefit of Soviet occupation. Khrushchev transferred Crimea to Ukrainian control in 1954. At the time, this move was mostly symbolic as Russia and Ukraine were both part of the Soviet Union (Korostelina 68). 60 years later, this action remains highly contested and the source of international conflict.

¹⁴ Will Englund, "Ukrainians decide to go their own way, independence commands 92% majority," *Baltimore Sun*, 3 December 1991.

¹⁵ These events are chronicled extensively in David Remnick, *Resurrection: The struggle for a new Russia* (New York: Vintage, 1998).

¹⁶ The unsuccessful efforts of the Soviet Union to maintain control of the republics, and the sometimes violent reactions and counter-protests during this period, are outlined in Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford University Press, 1993).

¹⁷ Much has been written about the chaos and violence that erupted in many of the republics following the collapse of the Soviet Union. See: Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (New York: Brookings Institution Press, 1995). Graham Smith, *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: the Politics of National Identities* (Cambridge University Press, 1998). Henry E. Hale, "Regime Cycles: democracy, autocracy, and revolution in post-Soviet Eurasia," *World Politics* 58, no. 1 (2005): 133-165. Dov Lynch, "Separatist states and post-Soviet conflicts," In *The Legacy of the Soviet Union*, pp. 61-82 (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2004).

¹⁸ These battles are thoroughly discussed in Jack F. Matlock, *Autopsy on an Empire: The American Ambassador's Account of the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (New York: Random House, 1995).

¹⁹ Matthew Evangelista, *The Chechen wars: will Russia go the way of the Soviet Union?* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

²⁰ These sanctions were levied in direct response to Russia's invasion of Crimea and eastern Ukraine in 2014.

²¹ Vladimir Putin, quoted by Christopher Miller, <https://twitter.com/ChristopherJM/status/648635190194098177>, 28 September 2015. Putin's belief that geography is a legitimate factor in defining a nation apparently only applies to Russia. In a January 2016 interview, Putin remarked about the Russian takeover of Crimea, "For me, it is not borders and state territories that matter, but people's fortunes." Blome, Nikolaus, Kai Diekmann and Daniel Biskup, "Vladimir Putin: The Interview," *Bild*, 11 January 2016, <http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/wladimir-putin/russian-president-vladimir-putin-the-interview-44092656.bild.html>

²² This quotation attributed to Catherine the Great might well be apocryphal, but regardless of the veracity of its origin, the belief in Russia's need for territorial expansion has remained constant since her rule in the eighteenth century. Robert Cooper, *The breaking of nations* (New York: Atlantic Books, 2011), 78.

²³ The 15 republics were Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Latvia, and Estonia. Of these 15 republics, the unofficial policy of the Soviet Union was that Russia was “first among equals.” David Remnick, *Lenin's tomb: The last days of the Soviet empire* (Vintage, 1994).

²⁴ Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech in Fulton, Missouri—given over a year before George Kennan’s “X Article” that would articulate the U.S. “Containment” policy toward Soviet Union was published—first expressed the new dominance of Russian identity in its occupied nations. Winston Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace,” 5 March 1946. National Churchill Museum, <https://www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org/sinews-of-peace-iron-curtain-speech.html>

²⁵ X, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct”. *Foreign Affairs* 25, no. 4 (1947): 566–582.

²⁶ Amir Weiner, “The making of a dominant myth: The Second World War and the construction of political identities within the Soviet polity,” *The Russian Review* 55, no. 4 (1996): 638-660.

²⁷ His daughter, Violetta Stakhanova, would later remark, “He loved his job, and everything he achieved was through his own hard work, his own talent and perseverance... He was incredibly competitive. He kept thinking how to increase the productivity of his mine - and eventually he came up with a brilliant solution.” Descriptions like this—hard working, talented, brilliant—characterized Stakanov’s efforts in the aftermath of his success. Dina Newman, “Alexei Stakanov: The USSR’s Superstar Miner,” 30 December 2015.

²⁸ Stakanov’s record was likely apocryphal, though for propaganda purposes that is irrelevant—his narrative was used as a tool by Soviet leaders to unite people behind a common story of working class Soviet heroism. Richard Overy, *The dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia* (New York: Norton & Company, 2004).

²⁹ Mark Bassin and Catriona Kelly, eds., *Soviet and post-soviet identities* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

³⁰ Jamie Doran and Piers Bizony, *Starman: The truth behind the legend of Yuri Gagarin* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011).

³¹ Patrick Major, “Future perfect? Communist science fiction in the Cold War,” *Cold War History* 4, no. 1 (2003): 71-96.

³² Asif Siddiqi, *Challenge to Apollo: the Soviet Union and the space race, 1945-1974* (NASA, 2000), 262. Gagarin’s glowing description continued: “Quick reactions; persevering, prepares himself painstakingly for his activities and training exercises;

does not feel constrained when he has to defend his point of view if he considers himself right; appears that he understands life better than a lot of his friends.”

³³ Deborah Cadbury, *Space race: The epic battle between America and the Soviet Union for dominion of space* (Harper Collins, 2007).

³⁴ I submit that Gagarin functioned as a key figure in Soviet propaganda. His name became shorthand for achieving much through Soviet beliefs, representing everything Soviet leaders wanted from their people. Gagarin became a rhetorical abbreviation for an entire identity.

³⁵ While living in Ukraine, my wonderful 87-year-old host grandmother fondly recalled watching on television as Gagarin landed following his space flight. She remembered that his boots were untied as he walked across the runway, and this made everyone melt with affection for the humble country boy who was just like them, but who had achieved amazing things. I suspect Gagarin’s untied shoelaces were deliberate on the part of the Soviet government and were meant to illicit this exact response. The narrative that Gagarin was “just like her” thus “rang true” for my host grandmother. Walter Fisher, “Narration as a human communication paradigm: The case of public moral argument.” *Communications Monographs* 51, no. 1 (1984): 1-22.

³⁶ Jonathan Aitken and Alan Rachins, *Nixon: A life* (New York: Regnery), 1993.

³⁷ Khrushchev grew up in a very poor village outside of what is now Donetsk, Ukraine and lacked any formal training in argumentation or public speaking. William Taubman, *Khrushchev: the Man and his Era*. (New York: WW Norton: 2004), 10-24.

³⁸ “News of the Week in Review,” *New York Times*, 26 July 1959.

³⁹ “Moscow Debate Stirs U.S. Public,” *New York Times*, 27 July 1959.

⁴⁰ Some of Khrushchev’s memorable lines include this exchange, punctuated by a wave in Nixon’s face: “Well then we will say America has been in existence for 150 years and this is the level she has reached. We have existed not quite 42 years and in another seven years we will be on the same level as America. When we catch you up, in passing you by, we will wave to you.” “Kitchen Debate Transcript,” Temple University, http://astro.temple.edu/~rimmerma/Khrushchev_Nixon_debate.htm

⁴¹ Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank you, comrade Stalin!: Soviet public culture from revolution to Cold War* (Princeton Book Company Publishers: 2000), 240.

⁴² Soviet Central Committee Document 148, "Plan of measures, towards strengthening anti-American propaganda for nearest future," 1949.
<http://www.alexanderyakovlev.org/fond/issues-doc/69577>

⁴³ All quotations from the speech come from: Vladimir Putin, "Address by the President of the Russian Federation on Crimean Referendum," 18 March 2014.

⁴⁴ For more on civic nationalism, see Neil MacCormick, above.

⁴⁵ In other words, myths are cultural-specific.

⁴⁶ Alison Brysk explores this notion of emotion in constructions of nationalism in "Hearts and Minds: Bringing Symbolic Politics Back In." *Polity* 27, no. 4 (1995): 559-585.

⁴⁷ These concepts of blood lineage as an underpinning of nationalist identity is explored in Walker Connor, "A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group is a..." *Ethnic and racial studies* 1, no. 4 (1978): 377-400.

⁴⁸ Vladimir Putin, "President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiia Militia," 29 August 2014. All quotations from this speech come from the official government translation of the President's website, here:
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46506>

⁴⁹ Vladimir Putin, "President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiia Militia," *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Vladimir Putin, "President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiia Militia," *ibid.*

⁵¹ Vladimir Putin, "President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiia Militia," *ibid.*

⁵² Vladimir Putin, "President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiia Militia," *ibid.*

⁵³ Russia's long and complicated history of Crimean occupation is explored in Gwendolyn Sasse, *The Crimea question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict*, Harvard University Press (2007).

⁵⁴ Patrick Colm Hogan, *Understanding nationalism*, The Ohio State University Press (2009).

⁵⁵ These divisions of Soviet and American identities grounded in communism and capitalism are explored at length in David Remnick, *Resurrection: The struggle for a new Russia*, Vintage (1998).

⁵⁶ Vladimir Putin, "President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiia Militia," 29 August 2014. All quotations from this speech come from the official government translation of the President's website, here: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46506>

⁵⁷ "Crimean Tatars, pro-Russian supports approach Crimean parliament building," *Interfax Ukraine*, 26 February 2014.

⁵⁸ "Stones, bottles thrown as pro-, anti-Russian protesters clash in Crimea," *Russia Today*, 26 February 2014.

⁵⁹ "Ukraine's Crimea Region is Bastion of Resistance to New Rulers," *Huffington Post*, 29 April 2014.

⁶⁰ JC Finley, "Unrest in Crimean leaves 2 dead; government buildings seized," *UPI News*, 27 February 2014.

⁶¹ "Stones, bottles thrown as pro-, anti-Russian protesters clash in Crimea," *ibid.*

⁶² "Stones, bottles thrown as pro-, anti-Russian protesters clash in Crimea," *ibid.*

⁶³ Howard Amos, "Ukraine crisis fuels succession calls in pro-Russian south," *ibid.*

⁶⁴ Howard Amos, "Ukraine crisis fuels succession calls in pro-Russian south," *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Simon Shuster, "Gunman Seize Parliament in Ukraine's Russian Stronghold," *TIME*, 27 February 2014.

⁶⁶ Howard Amos, "Ukraine: Sevastopol installs pro-Russian mayor as separatism fears grow," *The Guardian*, 25 February 2014.

⁶⁷ Howard Amos, "Ukraine: Sevastopol installs pro-Russian mayor as separatism fears grow," *ibid.*

⁶⁸ Simon Shuster, "Putin's Man in Crimea is Ukraine's Worst Nightmare," *Time*, *ibid.*

⁶⁹ Simon Shuster, "Putin's Man in Crimea is Ukraine's Worst Nightmare," *Time*, *ibid.*

⁷⁰ Simon Shuster, "Gunman Seize Parliament in Ukraine's Russian Stronghold," *TIME*, *ibid.*

⁷¹ Simon Shuster, "Putin's Man in Crimea is Ukraine's Worst Nightmare," *Time*, 10 March 2014.

⁷² Sergey Aksyonov, "Interview," 7 March 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gI7Ah9VJKNg>. Sergey Aksyonov, "Press Conference," 16 October 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cT2g2KbS5JA>. Both texts were translated by Anastasiya Kogan and Yulia Popova.

⁷³ Jeffro Mullen, "Report: MH 17 hit by 'high energy' objects from outside," *CNN*, 9 September 2014.

⁷⁴ Petaling Jaya, "Malaysian Airlines MH 17 crash: 20 families gone in one shot," *The Straits Times*, 21 July 2014.

⁷⁵ Brian Bennett, "U.S. officials believe attack against Malaysian plane was mistake," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 July 2014.

⁷⁶ Greg Miller, "U.S. discloses intelligence on downing of Malaysian jet," *Washington Post*, 22 July 2014.

⁷⁷ Alec Luhn, "Three pro-Russian rebel leaders at the center of suspicions over down MH17," *The Guardian*, 20 July 2014.

⁷⁸ This excuse echoes the official Russian position on the MH17 crash. "Ukraine crisis: Poroshenko offers rebels more autonomy," *BBC*, 10 September 2014.

⁷⁹ Numerous stories have documented the existence of these troll farms, and much reporting has evidenced claims that they are an attempt by Russian intelligence agencies to influence western public opinion. Just some of these reports include: Natasha Bertrand, "It looks like Russia hired Internet trolls to pose as pro-Trump Americans," *Business Insider*, 27 July 2016. Rebecca Shapiro, "Russian online troll tells Samantha Bee why she prefers Donald Trump," *Huffington Post*, 1 November 2016. Jessica Duncan, "Russia launches a 'troll factory' using fake Twitter and Facebook accounts to flood social media with lies about Britain and the West," *Daily Mail*, 16 October 2016. Leo Benedictus, "Invasion of the troll armies: from Russian Trump supporters to Turkist state stooges," *The Guardian*, 6 November 2016. Meghan Keneally, "How Russia used trolls, cyber attacks and propaganda to try to influence election," *ABC News*, 6 January 2017. Daisy Sindelar, "The Kremlin's troll army: Russia is financing legions of pro-Russian internet commenters," *The Atlantic*, 12 August 2014. Sindelar's article includes this comment: "The Kremlin, which has waged a massive disinformation campaign aimed at legitimizing Russia's annexation of Crimea and support for separatists in eastern Ukraine, has employed so-called 'troll armies' to invade online territories armed with pro-Moscow rhetoric." Max

Sheddon, “Documents show how Russia’s troll army hit America,” *Huffington Post*, 2 June 2014. Sheddon argues: “Russia’s campaign to shape international opinion around its invasion of Ukraine has extended to recruiting and training a new cadre of online trolls that have been deployed to spread the Kremlin’s message on the comments section of top American websites. Plans attached to emails leaked by a mysterious Russian hacker collective show IT managers reporting on a new ideological front against the West in the comments sections of Fox News, *Huffington Post*, The Blaze, *Politico*, and *WorldNetDaily*. The documents show instructions provided to the commenters that detail the workload expected of them. On an average working day, the Russians are to post on news articles 50 times. Each blogger is to maintain six Facebook accounts publishing at least three posts a day and discussing the news in groups at least twice a day. By the end of the first month, they are expected to have won 500 subscribers and get at least five posts on each item a day. On Twitter, the bloggers are expected to manage 10 accounts with up to 2,000 followers and tweet 50 times a day.”

⁸⁰ The most recent troll army story is from Shaun Walker, “Salutin’ Putin: inside a Russian troll house,” *The Guardian*, 2 April 2015. Even the comment section on this story *about how Russia manipulates public opinion in comment sections* is full of Russian trolls.

⁸¹ This definition of trolls is taken from: Coles, Bryn Alexander, and Melanie West. “Trolling the trolls: Online forum users constructions of the nature and properties of trolling.” *Computers in Human Behavior* 60 (2016): 233-244.

⁸² David Willcox, *Propaganda, the Press and Conflict: the Gulf War and Kosovo*, Routledge, 2005, 62.

⁸³ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, “Missile destroys Malaysian Airlines plane over Ukraine, killing 298 people,” *The Guardian*, 17 July 2014.

⁸⁴ *The Guardian* is generally regarded as a credible and respected news sources. See: “Is *The Guardian* a reliable news source?,” *Quora*, 1 December 2015. Kenneth Burke unpacks the notion of representative anecdote in *A grammar of motives*, Univ of California Press, 1969. He argues that in order for an anecdote to be truly representative it must be thorough enough to accurately summarize the larger claims made by a discourse—falling short of that, it is simply a reduction that misses some part of the larger arguments being made. However, the anecdote should not be *so* thorough that it stops being an anecdote and instead functions as simply a reproduction of the larger text. Barry Brummett makes the case that Burke’s representative anecdote is particularly helpful for media criticism in which there is just so much discourse to examine that exploring at all at once is not practical or productive. In the example of online comment sections covering the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, this is the certainly the case. Virtually every comment

section online for stories addressing this conflict features similar arguments. *The Guardian* story was chosen because I argue it is a representative anecdote of these larger discourses. Barry Brummett, "Burke's representative anecdote as a method in media criticism," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 1, no. 2 (1984): 161-176.

⁸⁵ The details of this troll operation are outlined at length in Adrian Chen, "The Agency," *New York Times*, 2 June 2015.

⁸⁶ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, "Missile destroys Malaysian Airlines plane over Ukraine, killing 298 people," *The Guardian*, 17 July 2014.

⁸⁷ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁸⁹ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹⁰ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹¹ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹² Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹³ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹⁴ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹⁵ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹⁶ Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem, and Alec Luhn, *ibid.*

⁹⁷ Hudson Hongo, "Vladimir Putin has 'No Regrets' about Crimea annexation," *Gawker*, 26 April 2015.

⁹⁸ The Ukrainian invasion and the annexation of Crimea are examples of Russia acting from a place of historic nationalism that will only increase as the nation prepares for the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, or "The Great Patriotic War." In this climate of celebrations and intense, public devotion to past heroism, the Russian government has resorted to extreme and sometimes entertaining measures to preserve these histories. For instance, six young women were recently arrested and sentenced to 10-15 days in jail for releasing a video showing them "twerking" near a Novorossiysk War Memorial. Anna Merlan, "Russian women jailed for 'Hooliganism' for twerking near war memorial," *Gawker*, 27 April 2015.

⁹⁹ This reach of the Internet is not totally universal, as it can be shut down or heavily regulated and policed by governments, and large portions of the world do not have access to it.

¹⁰⁰ Alarmingly, non-state actors have also flourished in this climate. For instance, ISIS has been building its forces through highly successful Internet recruitment campaigns on social media. According to a Summer 2014 CBS News report, “As many as 3,000 Westerners are fighting alongside the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, and other jihadist groups in Syria and Iraq. Terror analysts say those fighters pose the greatest threat to the United States because of their ability to travel freely and blend in. Many are recruited through a powerful online media campaign.” “ISIS recruits fighters through powerful online campaign,” *CBS News*, 29 August 2014.

¹⁰¹ Jacob Sharpe, “Putin is looking vulnerable in a crumbling Russia,” *Newsweek*, 14 April 2017.

¹⁰² The Levada Center is one of the few remaining independent polling organizations in Russia. They were recently blacklisted as a foreign agent, suggesting that these numbers are accurate since they would have no incentive to paint a flattering picture of President Putin’s popularity. Mikhail Metzel, “Leading independent pollster blacklisted as ‘foreign agent,’” *Moscow Times*, 5 September 2016.

Chapter 3

Ukraine's "Revolution of Dignity" was officially over. Viktor Yanykovich was gone, new elections were in the books, and it was Petro Poroshenko's inauguration day, June 7, 2014. Two dozen young women, dressed in traditional Ukrainian peasant dresses with flowers in their hair, led Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada parliament and honored guests in a rousing rendition of the national anthem.¹ Ukrainian Speaker of Parliament Arseniy Yatsenyuk noted that numerous foreign dignitaries were in attendance to witness the swearing in of Petro Poroshenko as Ukraine's new president. The leaders of Austria, Albania, Belarus, Poland, Lithuania, and even the Secretary General of NATO watched the festivities. Russian President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Dimitri Medvedev, and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov were noticeably absent as Yatsenyuk announced that American Vice President Joe Biden had flown in for the festivities. Taking off his translation earpiece, Biden rose, grinned, and waved to the cheering audience.² Poroshenko stood beaming behind a lectern, having taken the presidential oath of office moments earlier. The new president was festooned in a ceremonial necklace and holding the official Presidential Mace over his head, as members of parliament rose to applaud their new leader. From the gallery, Biden smiled down on Poroshenko.

Biden and other American leaders faced challenges in articulating a vision for Ukrainian identity. Whereas Vladimir Putin could call on centuries of common cultural and linguistic traditions and the legacies of World War II and the Cold War, the United States had much less shared history with Ukraine to work with. And what history *did* exist between the two nations was problematized by the legacy of the Cold

War in which Ukraine was often trapped between two superpowers. Ukrainian identity and sovereignty, along with that of other satellite nations, were merely political pawns in this superpower struggle for decades. Ukrainians had little reason to trust that an American vision of Ukrainian nationalism was rooted in anything other than similar Cold War-era self-interest.

This chapter will explore how American leaders attempted to address these exigencies in a post-Cold War world by articulating a vision of Ukrainian identity rooted in self-determination and sovereignty. The American perspective grappled with two related paradoxes. First, the tensions between nationalism from above and below were also present in American rhetoric, but often, American leaders continued to speak on behalf of the Ukrainian people as they adopted a rhetoric “from below” approach. Second, the United States defined Ukrainian identity in ways that were pro-western and resistant to the Russian Federation, while simultaneously championing popular sovereignty and self-determination as paramount values for the Ukrainian people. This paradox of defending the will of the Ukrainian people while asserting the authority to speak on their behalf undermines western credibility. Several themes emerge from the rhetoric of American leadership (from above) and the articulations from ordinary American citizens adopting a Ukrainian identity (from below). Those include the exceptionalism of western democracy and capitalism, a sense of belonging to European communities, and a willingness to defend those key components of Ukrainian national character against Russian aggression.

Nationalism “from above” discourse will include speeches by President Obama, Vice President Biden, and Secretary of State John Kerry, and American

Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt's *Washington Post* editorial. Political leaders speaking from above constructed visions of Ukrainian identity echoing western calls for sovereignty and self-determination from the Cold War. Nationalism from below discourse will be explored by examining the protests in New York following President Putin's 2015 visit to the United Nations. These discourses from ordinary citizens and from political leaders like Obama, Kerry, and Biden, show the ways that arguments on Ukraine's national identity emerged from arguments about sovereignty and self-determination.

The evolution of American exceptionalism

Understanding the contemporary iteration of American exceptionalism during the Ukraine crisis requires explicating its origins and teasing out overarching themes from its evolution. This particular ideology began as a rhetorical construction before the United States even existed. John Winthrop's "A model of Christian charity" sermon was given in 1630 aboard the *Arbella* as colonists made their way to the new world. Winthrop explains their special purpose: "We shall find that the God of Israel is among us....'the Lord make it like that of NEW ENGLAND.' For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us."³ America's ancestors believed they were chosen by God to fulfill a special mission in the wilderness that they alone were capable of completing; "exceptional" seems inadequate to characterize such a theme. As Deborah Madsen argues, this American nation "is to be a model, a guide, and a measure for other nations."⁴ From the start, America was meant to be a "light" for the world to follow.

This exceptionalist discourse also served practical purposes for the citizens of

Winthrop's "New World." Because the colonists lacked "a shared language, culture, common descent or historical territory," they needed something else to unite them on their journey and as they struggled to survive.⁵ Their exceptionalism and divine mission articulated this overarching narrative: "the myth of American exceptionalism provided a unifying idea by distinguishing those who came to the new world from those Europeans who did not."⁶ As Trevor McCrisken explains, "America has a special role to play in the world [and] America differs drastically from the 'old world.' Unlike previous nations, America will never fail."⁷ In other words, Americans were different because they were blessed. The colonists used this shared ideology of American exceptionalism as a rhetorical bridge connecting their brutal frontier conditions to a belief in their mission from God.

The right of intervention in the affairs of other nations was dependent on a missionary strand of American exceptionalism.⁸ As Piort Szpunar explains, "the missionary strand of American exceptionalism is explicitly imperialistic and sees it as the US's destiny to promote and project its superior values."⁹ This version of American exceptionalism suggests that the United States has a duty—like Samuel Danforth's colonists embracing the ordained "errand into the wilderness"—to spread American values throughout the world.¹⁰ Advocates of the missionary strand were historically not satisfied with a simple colonization of the United States through manifest destiny. The 1823 closing of North America to European nations was also not enough for proponents of this strand.¹¹ The Monroe Doctrine argued that any interference in North or South America would be seen as "the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States."¹² Missionary strand ideologues

wanted more. Often, this strand embraces a strong military presence abroad. Albert Beveridge takes this approach about American expansionism in his treatment of the Philippines following the Spanish-American War in 1898:

We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world. And we will move forward to our work, not howling out regrets like slaves whipped to their burdens but with gratitude for a task worthy of our strength and thanksgiving to Almighty God that He has marked us as His chosen people, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world.¹³

The goal of the missionary American exceptionalism strand is to help the world share in American values, with interventionism, colonization, and militarism forming inevitable offshoots of this perspective.

The missionary strand of American identity is particularly visible at the turn of the twentieth century as the United States became more embroiled in battles inside and outside of the continent. President Theodore Roosevelt expanded the Monroe Doctrine in his State of the Union Address in 1904 when he asserted the American right to intervene abroad if America's national security were threatened:

Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America [i.e., the Western Hemisphere], as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the western hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international policy power.¹⁴

While framed in terms of national interest and security, this missionary strand would also be characterized as a national duty of the American government to intervene abroad. Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State, Elihu Root, makes this argument:

All sovereignty in the world is held upon the condition of performing the duties of a sovereign. In the parliament of man the rights of the weakest state are recognized; the right of the sovereign ruler of the sovereign people to be

protected against aggression is recognized and protected by the common influence of mankind. But that right is help upon the condition that the sovereign ruler or the sovereign people performs the duties of sovereignty; that the citizens of other powers are protected within the territory; that the rules of international law are observed; that national obligations are faithfully kept.¹⁵

Thus, the American government reserved the right to intervene abroad not just when the nation's security was threatened, but also when other nations failed to uphold their obligations to their own people. Sovereignty in this sense meant a commitment to certain global standards of human rights and a willingness to defend those rights abroad if needed.

The Cold War and American exceptionalism

The belief in the exceptionalism of American democracy and capitalism shaped American rhetoric during the Cold War. Godfrey Hodgson explains how these foundational beliefs were reflected during this period:

After 1945 it was natural for American exceptionalism to be seen in large measure as the consequence of exceptional economic success....So in the 1950s the current version of exceptionalism was a new blend of the moral exceptionalism of Roosevelt's fight for the Four Freedoms and pride in economic recovery, material progress, and military power.¹⁶

In other words, spreading American democracy and capitalism were foundational components of American Cold War foreign policy, and a "missionary exceptionalism" helped define American rhetoric from this time period. Hodgson defines the Cold War iteration of exceptionalism: "this is the belief that it is the destiny, some say the God-given destiny, of the United States to spread the benefits of its democratic system and of its specific vision of capitalism to as many other

countries as possible.”¹⁷ This kind evangelism of American democracy and capitalism was rooted in the core assumption that these systems were exceptional.

The 1959 “Kitchen Debate” between Nixon and Khrushchev showcased this priority of defending capitalism as a centerpiece of American exceptionalism.¹⁸

During their exchange, Nixon and Khrushchev were surrounded by numerous technological advances and products in an exhibit designed by American politicians to demonstrate the advantages of capitalism to Soviet citizens and the citizens of satellite nations.¹⁹ These devices included “home appliances, fashions, television and hi-fi sets, a model house priced to sell [to] an 'average' family, farm equipment, 1959 automobiles, boats, sporting equipment and a children’s playground.”²⁰ The implicit argument of the model home was that American capitalism was the superior economic model in the Cold War. As propaganda, the home itself suggested that Soviet citizens would and should embrace capitalism after getting one look at a refrigerator.²¹ Promoting American goods showcased the hubris of American exceptionalism throughout the Cold War. The assumption seemed to be that if the Soviet people could only see for themselves the value of American capitalism, they would overthrow their socialist leadership.

American propaganda also suggested that American exceptionalism was defined by democracy and a willingness to defend those key components of national character. Several public addresses served as representative examples of this exceptionalism narrative. President Kennedy’s inaugural address showcased how defending freedom and democracy were central components of American propaganda: “In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been

granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.”²² Kennedy defined defending freedom as a central component of American identity. It was as much a message of American strength as it was a message of deterrence in disrupting Soviet expansionism.²³ Similarly, President Reagan highlighted how freedom represented a crucial aspect of American exceptionalism in his “Challenger” speech: “I’ve always had great faith in and respect for our space program, and what happened today does nothing to diminish it. We don’t hide our space program. We don’t keep secrets and cover things up. We do it all up front and in public. That’s the way freedom is.”²⁴ Here, Reagan framed freedom as a reflection of national character and transparency, implicitly distinguishing the U.S. space program from the Soviet program.²⁵ The American ability to survive national tragedies reflected what freedom meant for this theme.²⁶

Framing the United States as a peaceful nation and the USSR as a warring nation

Beyond exceptionalism, the second American theme of the Cold War was framing America as a peaceful nation resisting Soviet aggression in the eyes of the global community. President Eisenhower constructed this propaganda theme in which the United States peacefully led the world in response to Soviet territorial expansion.²⁷ As the war between American troops and Soviet-proxies in Korea came to an uneasy stalemate, international organizations and diplomatic relations took on an increasingly important role in American propaganda. Eisenhower’s Atoms for Peace program encouraged both the United States and Soviet Union to give up fissionable material to the United Nations. As mentioned, this approach allowed the

United States to use international organizations as a propaganda vehicle for achieving its foreign policy goals abroad through Eisenhower's "hidden hand" policies.²⁸ More importantly, in launching the Atoms for Peace campaign in 1953, Eisenhower spoke directly to the United Nations General Assembly, showcasing the increased importance not only of an international community and of American leadership in that body. Eisenhower argued: "Never before in history has so much hope for so many people been gathered together in a single organization. Your deliberations and decisions during these somber years have already realized part of those hopes."²⁹ This address highlighted the global leadership role the United States sought to promote in the area of peace. It used the United Nations (U.N.) as a platform to promote its peaceful role as a propaganda strategy in the Cold War. Eisenhower championed the U.N., and in doing so, he promoted the United States for its government's eagerness to work with international institutions and sacrifice for global peace and stability. In this propaganda narrative, the United States peacefully led the world while resisting Soviet aggression.

The United States also framed the Soviet Union as an evil force throughout the Cold War. As Jason Edwards argues, "The Soviet threat was the central organizing principle for U.S. foreign policy during this era."³⁰ This propaganda highlighted perceived vulnerabilities for communist infiltration in numerous areas of the United States, including labor, academia, media, the federal government, and national defense. By infiltrating various aspects of American life, U.S. leaders feared that Soviet agents were "fooling" Americans into thinking there was no communist threat, leaving the nation vulnerable to military invasion.³¹ Athan Theoharis explains

these fears led to a “loyalty investigation of every person entering the civilian employment of any department or agency of the executive branch of the federal government.”³² The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) hearings orchestrated by Senator Joseph McCarthy during the second Red Scare were the result of a coordinated effort on the part of the propaganda infrastructure to showcase the persistent and dangerous communist threat.³³ In this narrative, the Soviet Union was everywhere, and threatened Americans even within their own borders. President Reagan’s “Evil Empire” speech highlighted the perceived Soviet danger:

Yes, let us pray for the salvation of all of those who live in that totalitarian darkness—pray they will discover the joy of knowing God. But until they do, let us be aware that while they preach the supremacy of the State, declare its omnipotence over individual man, and predict its eventual domination of all peoples on the earth, they are the focus of evil in the modern world.³⁴

Reagan abandoned subtlety, arguing that the Soviet Union wanted to dominate the whole world, including and especially bastions of freedom like the United States.³⁵ Americans were thus acting in self-defense by intervening abroad and embracing an activist foreign policy. Such narratives of American exceptionalism and a dangerous Soviet enemy served as key components of American propaganda during the Cold War, and would inform how American leaders defined Ukrainian identity in the current conflict.

United States and Ukraine

American conceptions of Ukrainian identity are thoroughly rooted in the Cold War. Understanding current attempts to define Ukrainian sovereignty and borders demands an explication of this context. The United States attempted to undermine the Soviet Union’s control in Ukraine throughout the Cold War.³⁶ From 1952-1992, the

United States supported the Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation to resist Soviet influence in Ukraine. Taras Kuzio explains the scope of Prolog's propaganda activities:

Prolog reached out to a far wider political spectrum inside Ukraine as well as cooperated with a broad spectrum of Western NGO's, academics and politicians as well as new Eastern European opposition movements such as Poland's *Solidarity*. Prolog was a leader in the smuggling of literature into Soviet Ukraine (tamvydav, or published there), the smuggling of literature out of the country (samvydav [samizdat] or self-published), and maintaining contacts with Ukrainian underground organizations and overt dissidents and opposition movements.³⁷

Moreover, Prolog coordinated with U.S.-funded Radio Svoboda (the Ukrainian-language service of Radio Liberty) throughout its existence. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty programs were filled by anti-communist émigrés affiliated with Prolog who told stories of their wonderful lives in the west.³⁸

The propaganda goals of these programs were to encourage resistance to Soviet rule. Ross Johnson argues that the goal of supporting dissident groups, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty was to encourage Ukrainians to self-liberate: "The aims of this strategy were to keep alive hopes of resistance [and] give sustenance to dissenters." Johnson continues that the U.S.-funded programs were designed to "support alternatives to communist rule, promote autonomist tendencies in the USSR and outer Soviet empire, give air to national communist leanings, and, from the 1960s, provide a voice to the emerging dissidents, civil society and opposition."³⁹ As Prolog President Roman Kupchinsky explains, "All of this (Prolog Activity) would have been impossible without the U.S. government as a secure financial base."⁴⁰ The United States government thus did all it could to covertly support Ukrainian dissident movements and undermine Soviet authority in Ukraine during the Cold War. Ukraine

was caught between two superpowers for much of the twentieth century, and the rhetorical efforts by the United States contained several themes in influencing Ukraine's national identity.

The U.S. perspective toward Ukraine in the Cold War was based in the belief of Ukraine's right of self-determination as a sovereign nation. The U.S. response to Ukraine was also grounded in a belief that powerful nations had a responsibility to protect vulnerable people whose rights were being violated by unscrupulous nations (e.g., the Soviets' aggression toward Ukraine and other satellite regions). Luke Glanville explains sovereignty's traditional meaning: "Sovereignty meant that states had an infeasible right to autonomous self-government, free from outside interference and intervention. Sovereigns were responsible and accountable to none but themselves."⁴¹ Nations, though, could lose their right of non-intervention—and their right of self-determination—if they encroached on the rights of their own people or the people of other nations without their consent. Such violations could invite outside intervention in order to protect the people from human rights abuses. As Glanville explains, the responsibility to protect derives from a basic assumption about nation-state responsibilities:

[W]hile peoples have a right to govern themselves free from outside interference, this should be conditional on their protection of human rights. When a sovereign state proves unwilling or unable to protect its own population, it yields its sovereign right of nonintervention, and the responsibility to protect passes to the society of states.⁴²

America's belief in its own exceptionalism and in the superiority of democracy and capitalism only deepened its commitment to a right and responsibility to intervene in order to protect vulnerable people around the world.

Yet, a contradiction exists within this foreign policy logic that permeated both U.S. Cold War and post-Cold War rhetoric targeting the Soviet satellite regions. U.S. officials would treat Ukraine as a sovereign nation so long as it instituted a pro-western democratic government. Ukraine's self-determination thus came with clear conditions that laid out an American vision for Ukraine's identity. American leaders would endorse Ukrainian self-determination as long as it chose a pro-western orientation. Such logic ultimately defied the principles of self-determination. Ukraine was awarded sovereignty if it aligned with the west and instituted democratic principles; if its leaders chose otherwise, it could forfeit its right to self-determination. This inherent contradiction in the U.S. treatment of Ukraine defines the paradox Ukraine faced in the post-Cold War where its so-called right of self-determination came with clear conditions.

Nationalism from above: Ukrainian democracy and Russian aggression

The American nationalism from above rhetoric was reflected in a series of discourses from political leaders. First, three addresses from President Obama highlight his conception of Ukrainian nationalism. His February 28, 2014, address allowed him to pledge American support for Ukraine following Yanykovich's ousting.⁴³ This speech was given in the White House pressroom just days following the conclusion of the Maidan protests and in the wake of increasing Russian fermentation of dissent in Crimea. Second, Obama's July 21, 2014, speech from the White House was in response to the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 and in the wake of increased international outrage at Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine.⁴⁴ Third, Obama's September 3, 2014, speech in Estonia addressed the

importance of NATO in combatting Russian actions in Ukraine, and in the enduring power and importance of former Cold War alliances and institutions in a post-Cold War era.⁴⁵ All three discourses highlight his nationalism from above conception of Ukrainian identity rooted in exemplar strands of American exceptionalism.

Other American political leaders echo these themes in defining Ukrainian identity. Secretary of State John Kerry's April 24, 2014, remarks from Washington, D.C., addressed Russian interventions in eastern Ukraine and Crimea as he called for international cooperation in resisting Russian actions.⁴⁶ American Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt wrote an April 4, 2014, *Washington Post* editorial similarly calling Russia to task for its aggression in Ukraine and calling for Ukrainian independence and self-determination.⁴⁷ Finally, 18 months after the Maidan Revolution of Dignity, Vice President Biden's December 9, 2015, speech to the Ukrainian parliament highlighted the current state of the crisis and called for Ukrainian sovereignty and independence from Russia's sphere of influence.⁴⁸ This section explores these themes of nationalism from above rhetoric defining Ukrainian identity as democratic, European, and in fierce opposition to Russian rule.

U.S. Support for Ukrainian self-determination

An initial theme of American leaders was that Ukrainian sovereignty should be paramount in the dispute with Russia. The Ukrainian people needed to be able to decide for themselves what their national identity would be, and relying on democratic institutions was an essential component of this self-determination. This theme builds on the Cold War component of American democracy as the ideological ideal for the world. It also reinforces the historic commonplace that sovereign nations

had a right of non-intervention from other nations. Several American political leaders showcase this nationalist theme in their speeches surrounding the Ukrainian conflict.

President Obama stressed the rights of Ukrainians to choose their own place in the world. Immediately following the ousting of Yankyovich, before Poroshenko's election and amidst the chaos of Russian interventions in Crimea, Obama argued for Ukraine's independence: "The Ukrainian people deserve the opportunity to determine their own future."⁴⁹ This choice, free from foreign influence of Russian meddling, was essential in Ukraine becoming an independent nation and articulating its own national identity. Obama frames this self-determination as a fundamental human right: "The events of the past several months remind us of how difficult democracy can be in a country with deep divisions. But the Ukrainian people have also reminded us that human beings have a human universal right to determine their own future."⁵⁰ For Obama, Ukrainian nationalism is defined by the ability to define itself. This discourse reflects similar Cold War themes of self-determination. In calling for the Ukrainian people to embrace their own sovereignty and make their own democratic decisions, Obama assumes that they would choose a European identity friendly to western interests.

Obama promotes democracy as the ideal form of government that would ensure Ukraine's future sovereignty. Self determination and democracy are linked to stability and territorial integrity in this strand: "We have urged an end to the violence and encouraged Ukrainians to pursue a course in which they have stabilized their country, forge a broad-based government, and move to elections this spring."⁵¹ For Obama, Ukrainians could either choose war or democracy, chaos or freedom. Obama

argued that denying Ukrainians the ability to choose their own destiny would have terrible consequences: “But any violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity would be deeply destabilizing, which is not in the interests of Ukraine, Russia or Europe. It would represent a profound interference in matters that must be determined by the Ukrainian people.”⁵² Here, Obama connects self-determination with territorial sovereignty and national survivability. The concepts are linked together as core components of American democracy. Obama argues: “The United States supports his government’s efforts and stands for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic future of Ukraine.”⁵³ Obama weaves all three components together in ways stressing that Ukraine must control its own destiny in terms of democratic institutions and borders. Identity and territory are linked in this American version of Ukrainian nationalism. This call for self-determination again assumes the Ukrainian people will define their nationalism in ways resistant to Russian rule and friendly to American interests.

In his speech following the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17, Obama blames the Russian Federation for encroaching on Ukrainian territory. This discourse is still grounded in promoting human rights and Ukraine’s self-determination—arguments earlier presidents made during the Cold War. Obama explains the consequences of Russia’s actions:

But if Russia continues to violate Ukraine’s sovereignty and to back these separatists, and these separatists become more and more dangerous – and now are risks not simply to the people inside of Ukraine but the broader international community – then Russia will only further isolate itself from the international community and the costs for Russia’s behavior will only continue to increase.⁵⁴

Here, Obama argues that Russia's actions in eastern Ukraine, in supporting the separatists who downed the passenger jet, are putting the global community in danger. Ukraine's territorial sovereignty was becoming a key part of global security in addition to an ongoing humanitarian crisis. He calls on President Putin to change course and respect Ukrainian territorial integrity: "Now is the time for President Putin and Russia to...get serious about trying to resolve hostilities within Ukraine in a way that respects Ukraine's sovereignty and respects the right of the Ukrainian people to make their own decisions about their own lives."⁵⁵ The Russian denial of Ukraine's independence and sovereignty deepens Obama's claims of the importance of Ukrainian self-determination. This is an argument that Obama did not make after pro-Russian president Viktor Yanykovich was elected by a clear majority of Ukrainians in 2010. Thus, in championing Ukrainian democracy in this instance, Obama defends American interests in eroding Russian influence in the region.

This effort to undermine Russian influence echoes Cold War themes of humanitarianism as a legitimizing rationale for intervention. Russia's assertion over Ukrainian territory was not legitimate because of its human rights abuses. Glanville explains the Cold War origins of this argument:

...through the course of the Cold War, international society increasingly recognized that sovereign statehood entailed a responsibility to promote and defend the human rights of a population. Moreover, to some extent, human-rights issues within states were understood to be beyond the scope of domestic jurisdiction and a legitimate matter of international concern and scrutiny.⁵⁶

From Obama's perspective, the international community has a right to condemn Russian actions. Obama's interpretation suggests a global, international orientation in which nations have a foundational responsibility to defend nations who cannot defend

themselves. Echoing sentiments from Elihu Root and Theodore Roosevelt, American leadership can defend its interests anywhere in the world, especially in the name of humanitarianism coupled with self-interests and global security.

Moreover, Obama's speech took place in a post-Cold War world in which the international community, including the Russian Federation, had endorsed such intervention in the face of human rights abuses. Throughout the Cold War, despite a rise in assertions of human rights claims in international forums by both the United States and the Soviet Union, little was ever done to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity and principle of nonintervention. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the international community started to act on this rhetoric. Glanville explains:

Central to the 'responsibility to protect' concept is the idea that sovereign states are responsible for the protection of their populations from mass atrocities and that they are accountable not only to their own people but also to international society for the performance of this duty....in 2011, the Security Council appealed to the concept and for the first time authorized the use of force against a functioning sovereign state, Libya, without its consent, for the purpose of protecting civilians from the threat of mass atrocities. These developments reflect a dramatic departure from the Cold War understanding of sovereignty.⁵⁷

The rules of global diplomacy had changed. Now, when invoking claims of Russian human rights abuses in Ukraine, Obama's words are more threatening. In this case, the global community could actually intervene with military force to stop the killing of civilians in eastern Ukraine. In asserting his definition of Ukrainian identity, and calling for the international community to agree with these claims of Ukrainian sovereignty, Obama's rhetoric challenges traditional assumptions of nonintervention.

Nearly six months after Poroshenko's election, the democratic, pro-western move his victory symbolized seemed in doubt. The violence in eastern Ukraine

continued to escalate, and Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity was increasingly threatened by Russian intervention. In the wake of this climate of fear and violence, Obama spoke in Estonia and took the opportunity to again champion the Cold War theme of American democracy and institutions: “We’re stronger because we’re democracies. We’re not afraid of free and fair elections, because true legitimacy can only come from one source—and that is the people.”⁵⁸ Here, Obama does not speak with an authoritative tone, in a paradoxical nationalism from below rhetorical move. He cannot demand that the Ukrainian people move its allegiance to west without invoking the legacies of western Cold War interventions in the region. Rather than telling Ukrainians to embrace democracy, he simply joins the chorus of leaders and ordinary people calling for democracy in Ukraine and championing the benefits of self-determination.

Obama also defends democracy as a key component of any legitimate national identity. He frames democracy as an exceptional form of government, the inevitable winner in any global struggle between ideas. Obama thoroughly deploys the Cold War theme of the supremacy of American democracy:

Democracy will win—because a government’s legitimacy can only come from citizens; because in this age of information and empowerment, people want more control over their lives, not less; and because, more than any other form of government ever devised, only democracy, rooted in the sanctity of the individual, can deliver real progress.⁵⁹

Here, Obama relies on Cold War themes about the ideological superiority of American nationalism. He also argues that when given the free choice to determine their own identity, free from foreign influence, the people will choose democracy. While speaking more broadly, Obama’s rhetoric is useful in constructing a Cold War

theme of democracy as the ideological ideal for the world to follow, including Ukraine. He is calling for the respect of the popular sovereignty and self-determination of the Ukrainian people. As Glanville explains, “Sovereignty may have been grounded in individual rights...For Americans...the protection of individual rights was at the heart of the idea of popular sovereignty.”⁶⁰ In this vein, the Ukrainian people were exercising their freedom of self-determination—their individual rights. Obama was constructing a view of Ukrainian nationalism rooted in popular sovereignty.

Obama applies this democratic Cold War theme to the Ukrainian crisis, explaining why a democratic Ukraine was a better and stronger Ukraine. He explains, “We want Ukrainians to be independent and strong and able to make their own choices free from fear and intimidation, because the more countries are free and strong, and free from intimidation, the more secure our own liberties are.”⁶¹ Here, he suggests that the Ukrainian people are correct in their choice to embrace democratic ideals—they will be better off for having chosen western institutions. When given a choice between Russian interference or western democracy, the Ukrainian people chose wisely in embracing self-determination. In these arguments, Obama once again stops short of demanding that the Ukrainian people pivot to the west. He simply explains the values and benefits of living in a free society. This move is strategic in that he can avoid accusations of interference in a sovereign state’s election. Obama also can promote sovereignty without denying the Ukrainian people the freedom to discover democratic and capitalist institutions free from outside influence.

Obama deepens his reliance on Cold War arguments by suggesting that self-determination is under attack from the Russian Federation. He explains: “And yet, as we gather here today, we know that this vision is threatened by Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. It is a brazen assault on the territorial integrity of Ukraine -- a sovereign and independent European nation.” Echoing Cold War themes, Obama’s core components of America’s conception of national identity—territorial integrity and self-determination—are threatened by Russian actions. In defining Ukraine as part of Europe, Obama links his Estonian audience to the Ukraine crisis in both territorial integrity and identity. Ukraine’s interests are connected to Estonian interests, and to the interests of all of Europe.

Obama highlights the consequences of undermining Ukrainian democratic choices to move towards Europe. Of Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine, Obama explains:

It challenges that most basic of principles of our international system—that borders cannot be redrawn at the barrel of a gun; that nations have the right to determine their own future. It undermines an international order where the rights of peoples and nations are upheld and can’t simply be taken away by brute force. This is what’s at stake in Ukraine. This is why we stand with the people of Ukraine today.⁶²

For Obama, attacking Ukraine represented an attack on international order and stability, and on the global community. European audiences and former Soviet republics are likely sympathetic to this argument since the citizens of those countries also made a democratic choice to move away from Russia and towards European integration. Obama directly speaks to these democratic choices as core components of the European community: “Countries like Estonia and Latvia and Lithuania are not ‘post-Soviet territory.’ You are sovereign and independent nations with the right to

make your own decisions. No other nation gets to veto your security decisions.”⁶³

Obama stresses that the “Russian sphere of influence” and shared history and culture are not values that come before self-determination and national sovereignty.

Ukrainians—as with all citizens in former Soviet republics—have the right to choose for their own people what their national identity will be, and to expect their territorial integrity will be respected by foreign powers.

In showcasing these principles, he encourages the Ukrainian people to decide for themselves what their national identity will be, while stopping short of demanding it outright. He defines Ukrainian nationalism in ways rooted in popular sovereignty. Jean-Jacques Rousseau argues that sovereignty itself is grounded in the will of the people. For him, sovereignty is “not a covenant between a superior and an inferior, but a covenant of the body with each of its members.”⁶⁴ He describes government thusly: “An intermediary body established between the subjects and the sovereign for their mutual communication, a body charged with the execution of the laws and the maintenance of freedom, both civil and political.”⁶⁵ As Glanville argues, “sovereignty is rightfully found in the people and cannot be alienated from them.”⁶⁶ Obama addresses this exigence by embracing a “from below” perspective, speaking broadly about democratic institutions and the value of freedom.

Secretary Kerry and Ambassador Pyatt echo similar Cold War themes of democratic institutions and the need for self-determination of the Ukrainian people. Both were addressing the Ukrainian crisis at the height of the Crimean takeover and eastern Ukrainian interventions by Russian-backed separatists in April 2014. Kerry frames the events as an attempt to undermine Ukrainian democracy on the part of the

Russian Federation. He explains: “This is a full-throated effort to actively sabotage the democratic process through gross external intimidation that has been brought inside Ukraine.”⁶⁷ He suggests that in attacking Ukrainian military personnel, Russian forces are actually attacking democratic ideals. Pyatt also gives voice to the American position on Ukraine’s self-determination: “As President Obama emphasized... ‘We want the Ukrainian people to determine their own destiny. That idea has guided U.S. policy from the first days of this crisis.’”⁶⁸ Here, Pyatt clarified that the overarching goal of American involvement in Ukraine was to help the Ukrainians determine their own national identity for themselves. Pyatt continues: “We’ve been keeping in touch with the legitimate government in Kiev and the people of Ukraine to ensure that they are the ones who choose their future.”⁶⁹ The Ukrainian people—not Russian or American—will determine the direction Ukraine takes. This self-determination and commitment to a democratic electoral process suggests that American leaders construct a vision of Ukrainian identity rooted in Cold War democratic themes and popular sovereignty. Vice President Biden, speaking 18 months after the Revolution of Dignity, makes the case for Ukrainian nationalism rooted in democratic beliefs and ideals. He champions the Ukrainian people as long-time defenders of democratic institutions: “In the West, as here we remember, the Orange Revolution—young men and women who filled the Maidan a decade ago demanding that their voices and their votes both be respected. They refused to back down in the face of rigged elections, and they succeeded.”⁷⁰ Biden calls attention to the willingness of Ukrainians to fight for their democratic freedoms once again, during revolutions a decade apart. To not reach these democratic goals, especially in the aftermath of such sacrifices by so

many, would betray the democratic ideals of the revolution: “Each of you...has an obligation to seize the opportunity that the sacrifices made in the Maidan, the sacrifices of the Heavenly Hundred. Each of you has an obligation to answer the call of history and finally build a united, democratic Ukrainian nation that can stand the test of time.”⁷¹ Biden’s narrative suggests that with revolutionary gusto, the Ukrainian people should choose a European identity through a democratic process.

Biden argues the United States respects Ukraine’s self-determination, challenging Russian influence in the region: “we will not recognize any nation having a sphere of influence. Sovereign states have the right to make their own decisions and choose their own alliances. Period.”⁷² If the Ukrainian people are willing to articulate their national identity, then Biden argues it must be respected by all parties in the international community: “The Ukrainian people have long struggled to direct their own destinies, to carve out a place besides the mighty Dnipro, to claim their own identity, proud and distinct.”⁷³ In calling for Ukrainian self-determination, American leaders constructed a vision of Ukrainian nationalism rooted in Cold War themes of American democracy.

Ukrainian identity as European

The argument from American leaders for Ukrainian democracy implies, and often directly states, that when given the opportunity, the Ukrainian people would choose a pro-western, pro-European, and anti-Russian identity for themselves. Thus, in supporting Ukrainian popular sovereignty, American political leaders were supporting western interests in constructing a European vision of Ukrainian nationalism. While also relying on the Cold War theme of western-style democratic

freedom, this argument suggests that there are economic benefits to this European identity for Ukraine. The Ukrainian people would enjoy western capitalism if only they could be part of Europe. American political leaders make these arguments across multiple speeches when defining Ukrainian nationalism as a European one.

In his speech in Estonia, Obama argues that democratic identities are fundamentally linked with capitalist, European economies. Obama's logic suggests that the further removed a society gets from authoritarian rule, the more capitalist and democratic it becomes. He warns that this transformation to a European economy free from corruption would not be easy: "Here in the Baltics, after decades of authoritarian rule, the habits of democracy had to be learned. The institutions of good governance had to be built. Economies had to be reformed. Foreign forces had to be removed from your territory."⁷⁴ Obama links democratic institutions and Cold War themes of American democracy with Cold War strands of capitalism and prosperity, aligned with self-rule and independence from foreign influence. He argues that a European identity is a prosperous one: "We're stronger because we embrace open economies. Look at the evidence. Here in Estonia, we see the success of free markets, integration with Europe, taking on tough reforms."⁷⁵ For Obama, a European identity is connected to democratic reforms and a better quality of life for Europeans.

Paradoxically, Obama calls for a Ukrainian identity free from foreign influence while trying to influence its identity himself. Obama is able to leverage a higher quality of life for Ukrainians against this contradiction by linking self-determination with capitalist progress. At the same time, Obama—without calling them by name—refers to Russians as "foreign forces." Thus, Obama constructs a

vision of Ukrainian nationalism that skillfully combines a higher quality of life through western capitalism with self-determination. This allows Obama to potentially nullify some of Russia's best arguments against American foreign influence in the region, and negate centuries of shared history and culture between Russia and Ukraine.

Obama frames the Ukrainian revolution and ongoing fight for independence as a battle for a European identity. The Revolution of Dignity protesters were calling out for a European economy free from corruption and crony capitalist oligarchy. He explains:

The protests in Ukraine, on the Maidan, were not led by neo-Nazis or fascists. They were led by ordinary Ukrainians—men and women, young and old—who were fed up with a corrupt regime and who wanted to share in the progress and prosperity that they see in the rest of Europe.⁷⁶

For Obama, the choice the Ukrainian people were making was clear. Having witnessed the prosperity of Europe, Ukrainians wanted to move west, closer to their financially prosperous European counterparts. They wanted to share in the wealth of Europe. This was a choice of national identity. For Obama it was a natural and positive one that the United States would support. He argues: “So the United States will continue to help Ukraine reform—to escape a legacy of corruption and build democratic institutions, to grow its economy.”⁷⁷ In choosing to move west, the Ukrainian people were embracing a European identity that enjoyed a better and more comfortable way of life. Thus, Obama relies on the Cold War glories of capitalism to articulate a European identity for the Ukrainian people—one that, he argues, they were drawn to more naturally. He champions a “from below” perspective to simply encourage a pro-western choice the Ukrainian people have already made. By framing

the argument in this way, he blunted criticism of Cold War-era meddling in Eastern Europe. Obama implies that he is not interfering—he is simply encouraging a choice that benefits European and American interests, which also happens to follow their true, authentic identity.

Secretary Kerry and Vice President Biden both argue that addressing corruption is a key component of Ukrainians moving closer toward Europe. These leaders argue that European identity is free from corruption and crony capitalism, and Ukrainians must make eliminating corruption a priority in reaching this nationalist orientation. They suggest most Ukrainians would agree that corruption was a key barrier in becoming integrated into Europe. Kerry mocked Russia's mystification at the idea of a corruption-free society: "Now Russia claims...that Ukrainians can't possibly be calling for a government free of corruption and coercion. Russia is actually mystified ...with Ukrainians who want to build a better life..."⁷⁸ However, as Biden explains, wanting a better life and having a better life will be challenging for Ukrainians because they already defeated the previous "Orange Revolution" 10 years earlier: "And the bright flame of hope for a new Ukraine snuffed out by the pervasive poison of cronyism, corruption, and kleptocracy."⁷⁹ Corruption is antithetical to the European identity championed by these leaders. In highlighting the "better life" in Europe, Biden encourages Ukrainians to make their own pro-western choice free from Russia's foreign influence. In mocking Russia's mystification at wanting to move west, Biden also implies that America and Ukraine are together in their laughter at Russia's expense.

Choosing democracy will ensure that Ukraine can pursue a corruption-free future. Biden argues more specifically that democratic ideals and fighting against corruption are fundamentally linked in creating a “Ukrainian-European future.”⁸⁰ Biden makes clear that democratic choices require economic commitments from leaders and ordinary citizens:

But in addition, you also have a battle, a historic battle against corruption. Ukraine cannot afford for the people to lose hope again. The only thing worse than having no hope at all is having hopes rise and see them dashed repeatedly on the shoals of corruption. And if the people resign themselves to exploitation and corruption for fear of losing whatever little they have left, that would be the death knell for Ukrainian democracy. We’ve taken so many critical steps already. But all of you know there’s more to do to finish this race. Not enough has been done yet. But I can tell you, you cannot name me a single democracy in the world where the cancer of corruption is prevalent. You cannot name me one. So Ukraine must be strong enough to choose its own future, strongly. Strong defensively. Strong economically. A strong system of democratic governance.⁸¹

In linking democracy and economic freedom free from corruption, Biden deploys Cold War themes of both western democracy and American capitalism. For Ukrainians to enjoy the economic prosperity of Europe, they must commit to European democratic and economic institutions. A European identity cannot survive without commitments to both ideals.

Both Obama and Biden outline what is at stake for the Ukrainian people in deciding whether these economic sacrifices are worth making in pursuit of a European identity. If the Ukrainian people fail, then democracy itself in Europe is at risk—an argument reminiscent of the domino theory of the Cold War. Biden explains:

...you have the unwavering support of the United States of America and the American people—including nearly 1 million proud Ukrainian Americans. You have the united support of Europe—Western, Central, and Eastern

Europe—all invested in your democratic success because your success goes to the heart of an enduring commitment to a Europe whole, free, and at peace. If you fail, the experiment fails. It is no exaggeration to say that the hopes of freedom-loving people the world over are with you because so much rides on your fragile experiment with democracy succeeding.

Biden thus elevates the consequences of Ukraine's choice of national identity—pro-west or pro-Russian. If the Ukrainians make the wrong choice, they could disrupt the power balance across Europe—destabilizing it once again and triggering another Cold War. Obama makes similar arguments: “Because of the work of generations, because we’ve stood together in a great alliance, because people across this continent have forged a European Union dedicated to cooperation and peace, we have made historic progress toward the vision we share—a Europe that is whole and free and at peace.”⁸²

As a nationalism from above discourse, the Cold War ideas of democracy and capitalist prosperity deployed by American leaders construct a version of Ukrainian nationalism that is European, self-determining, and economically prosperous. In making these arguments, Obama champions popular sovereignty that blends together American and Ukrainian interests. In doing so, he paradoxically defends expression free from outside influence while clearly endorsing one particular choice benefiting the United States.

Ukrainian identity as a resistance to Russian aggression

The Cold War themes of peace, aligned with the west, and war, aligned with the Soviet Union, also characterize this discourse. This idea stresses the atrocities and military aggression carried out by the Russian Federation in flagrant disregard for international law and human rights. In this narrative, the Ukrainian people are simultaneously innocent victims of Russian warmongering, while also heroic

defenders of freedom and western-style democracy. This rhetoric encourages a free and independent Ukraine that establishes its post-Cold War identity, while nudging the nation closer to western alliances in ways reminiscent of the Cold War—where nations either lined up on the side of the west or the USSR. Several speeches from American political leaders define this theme in the events surrounding the Crimean crisis and Russian military interventions in eastern Ukraine.

American leaders described the Russian Federation as the violent, militaristic aggressor, both in Crimea and in eastern Ukraine. This characterization of Russia began almost immediately after the Revolution of Dignity. Obama exclaimed at the time, “We are now deeply concerned by reports of military movements taken by the Russian Federation inside of Ukraine. It would be a clear violation of Russia’s commitment to respect the independence and sovereignty and borders of Ukraine, and of international laws.”⁸³ Political leaders would frequently use the theme of Russia flagrantly violating international laws and norms throughout the crisis. In his Estonia speech, Obama continued this theme: “Keep in mind that, repeatedly, President Putin has ignored the opportunity to resolve the crisis in Ukraine diplomatically.”⁸⁴ Similarly, Ambassador Pyatt argued, “The Russian government’s illegal ‘annexation’ of Crimea caused this crisis.”⁸⁵ Thus, a central theme in American rhetoric surrounding the Ukraine crisis is that Russia caused and sustained the conflict in violation of international laws and norms. This discourse echoes Cold War characterizations of the Soviet Union as an aggressive, duplicitous nation ignoring the international community and acting only in its national interests. In calling for a post-Cold War Ukraine, this rhetoric paradoxically resorts to Cold War-era tropes.

This effort by American leaders to frame the Ukraine crisis in terms of international laws and norms fundamentally undercuts calls for Ukrainian self-determination. It paradoxically suggests that a country's conception of nationalism also has to be adjudicated and condoned by other sovereign nations and international organizations. As Obama explains, "The United States, the European Union, our partners around the world have all said we prefer a diplomatic solution."⁸⁶ Even though Obama seems to be arguing for a nationalism from below perspective, his vision is very top-down, making the case for national and international-level solutions to the crisis. While Obama's rhetoric speaks from the view of the Ukraine people, struggling for a better life, his solutions embrace the perspective of a political leader who, along with other political leaders and institutions, will determine whether Ukraine's identity is correct and legitimate. The United States' leaders thus embrace the self-determination of the Ukrainian people while at the same time paradoxically trying to determine Ukraine's self-determination for them, in ways benefiting western interests and undermining Russian influence.

This undercuts Obama's calls for Ukrainian self-determination, because Ukrainian sovereignty is still determined by western oversight and legitimation. Such determinations inherently favor western nations. Glanville explains: "Powerful states have for much of sovereignty's history been able to exert unequal influence and successfully bend international consensus about the rules of sovereignty to their own will."⁸⁷ Similarly, Samuel Barkin argues: "It is usually the conceptions of legitimacy and sovereignty of the existing powerful states in international relations that become the international norm."⁸⁸ Put differently, Obama's claims are disingenuous when he

champions the popular sovereignty of the Ukrainian people while also making clear that western-dominated institutions must legitimize Ukraine's choice of national identity. So even as U.S. leaders affirm Ukraine's right of non-intervention (sovereignty), they are at once delicately (from below) and boldly (from above) intervening—at least rhetorically—into Ukraine's process of self-determination. Such a framework turns Ukraine into a political football between Russia, the United States, and the international organizations, sidelining Ukraine from such decision-making. Thus, Ukraine is caught in the middle of nation-states and international organizations trying to dictate their identity and the details of their sovereignty. This too is a legacy of the Cold War where satellite countries were pawns in this larger political dispute over their political future. While Obama and others sought to undercut Russian legitimacy in Ukraine, their actions exposed the hollowness of American calls for Ukrainian sovereignty.

These negative characterizations of the Russian Federation escalated following the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17. President Obama carefully outlines the tragic loss of life, and then blames the Russian Federation's actions in eastern Ukraine for the disaster. He first explains the humanitarian cost of the downed jet: "Over the last several days our hearts have been absolutely broken as we've learned more about the extraordinary and beautiful lives that were lost—men, women and children and infants who were killed so suddenly and so senselessly."⁸⁹ Dwelling on the brutality of the attack and on the horrific loss of life serves a rhetorical function; these arguments reinforce that the Russians have engaged in hostile actions necessitating a global response. This rhetoric of moral condemnation characterized

much of the Cold War sparring between the United States and the Soviet Union, and characterizes the American rhetoric surrounding the Ukraine crisis. Moreover, Obama again speaks from a “from below” perspective in reifying the “consent of the governed” viewpoint, which positions the people as determining Ukraine’s future. The people would surely denounce such horrific acts of murder and turn away from Russia and toward Europe when determining the future of their nation.

The next step for Obama is to expressly link the atrocities of the Russian-backed separatists with the Russian government itself. Obama makes clear that the separatists are merely a shadow-funded army in eastern Ukraine funded by the Russians. This again makes clear that the Russians are directly responsible for this staggering loss of life:

Now, Russia has extraordinary influence over these separatists. No one denies that. Russia has urged them on. Russia has trained them. We know that Russia has armed them with military equipment and weapons, including anti-aircraft weapons. Key separatist leaders are Russian citizens. So given its direct influence over the separatists, Russia, and President Putin in particular, has direct responsibility to compel them to cooperate with the investigation. That is the least that they can do.⁹⁰

Obama suggests that without the support and political cover from the Russian government, Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 would not have been shot down. He reasons that the Russian leadership, and President Putin, is therefore directly responsible for this loss of life. He accuses the Russian government as murdering warmongers responsible for the deaths of innocent people. Biden similarly characterizes the Russian government as responsible for the instability and violence in Ukraine: “And as Russia continues to send its thugs, its troops, its mercenaries across the border, Russian tanks and missiles still fill the Donbas. Separatist forces

are organized, commanded and directed by Moscow.”⁹¹ The worse the characterization of Russia, the more Obama can nudge the Ukrainians toward the west in the second Cold War. Obama thus paradoxically embraces the perspective of Ukrainian citizens while speaking in his capacity as a political leader; he calls for Ukraine to condemn Russia while paradoxically championing their freedom from outside interference.

A second component of this Cold War theme is to characterize the west and its allies as peaceful in contrast to the warring, violent Soviet Union. In this case, Kerry argues that the Ukrainian leadership had done everything in its power to facilitate a peaceful solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine: “We met in Geneva with a clear mission: to improve security conditions and find political solutions to the conflict threatening the sovereignty and unity of Ukraine. The world has rightly judged that Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and the government of Ukraine are working in good faith...”⁹² Kerry argues that the Russian leadership is the single biggest impediment to finding peace in Ukraine. Beyond characterizing the Russian leadership as responsible for the conflict, Kerry suggests that the Russian leaders enabled its continuation. Kerry explains:

The world, sadly, has rightly judged that Russia has put its faith in distraction, deception and destabilization....Russia has refused to take a single concrete step in the right direction. Not a single Russian official—not one—has publicly gone on television in Ukraine and called on the separatists to support the Geneva Agreement, to support the stand-down, to give up their weapons and get out of the Ukrainian buildings.⁹³

Whereas the Ukrainian leadership had complied with peace agreements, the Russian government had repeatedly ignored diplomatic solutions to the crisis. In stressing this

contract between the peaceful Ukrainians and warring Russians, Kerry deploys this Cold War theme to define Ukrainian nationalism.

Biden summarizes this idea by exploring the ways in which Russia instigated and maintained the conflict, and how the United States would continue to resist this nefarious geopolitical maneuvering. For Biden, Russian aggression could only be met with heroic western force. In this theme, the western nations rallying to Ukraine's side were doing so in defense of a smaller, vulnerable nation under attack from a regional hegemon. Biden explains:

Russia has violated these ground rules and continues to violate them. Today Russia is occupying sovereign Ukrainian territory. Let me be crystal clear: The United States does not, will not, never will recognize Russia's attempt to annex the Crimea. It's that simple. There is no justification....So the United States will continue to stand with Ukraine against Russian aggression. We're providing support to help and train and assist your security forces, and we've relied on and rallied the rest of the world to Ukraine's cause.⁹⁴

"Russian aggression" and characterizations of American heroism echoes Cold War themes and rhetorical strategies. American leaders use these strands of a peaceful west and a warring Russia bent on regional domination of satellite nations during the Ukraine conflict. In the process, these political leaders construct a vision of Ukrainian nationalism that is democratic, European, and peaceful, while also willing to defend these core values against Russian aggression. American leaders paradoxically urge Ukraine to look west while also defending Ukraine's right to self-determination free from outside interference. U.S. leaders put pressure on Ukraine to choose a democratic future while also condemning Russia for meddling in their neighbor's affairs. The following section explores the rhetoric of ordinary Ukrainians in the United States articulating similar themes.

Nationalism from below: Russian atrocities and Ukrainian freedom

Protests broke out in New York following President Putin's 2015 visit to the United Nations. These responses from ordinary citizens reflect the vision "from below" of Ukrainian nationalism. When Biden spoke of "nearly 1 million proud Ukrainian Americans" during his 2015 address to the Ukrainian parliament, he was speaking of a community in a complicated nationalist liminal space. Many recent immigrants still had family in Ukraine, and were presumably watching the escalating violence characterizing the crisis with shock and alarm. When Vladimir Putin visited New York City and the United Nations for the first time in 10 years, only 18 months after the Revolution of Dignity, various Ukrainian American groups jumped at the chance to protest the Russian leader. *Newsweek* explains: "The protest was organized by the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, American European Solidarity Council and United Ukrainian American Organizations of New York."⁹⁵ Through media coverage of the event, themes from the protest represented calls for Ukrainian freedom and a condemnation of perceived Russian atrocities in Ukraine. These protests by ordinary Ukrainian Americans constructed a vision of Ukrainian nationalism from below that was independent of Russian influence and heroically resisting Russian occupation.

Hundreds of protesters gathered outside the United Nations, many wearing traditional Ukrainian attire, with flowers in their hair. *The Ukrainian Weekly* explains the protest: "While Ukrainians were being escorted from inside the main hall for holding aloft a Ukrainian flag, a united mix of nationalities and human rights advocates chanted "No more vetoes for Putin," "Crimea is Ukraine," and "Justice for

MH17” from across the street.”⁹⁶ One pointed protest sign likely summarized the feelings of some in attendance:

#PutinKills
Don’t Believe
A War Criminal⁹⁷

This rhetoric suggests that Russia is committing a perpetual act of war in Ukraine through its occupation of Crimea and ongoing engagements in the Donbas region. Moreover, such protest rhetoric extends Cold War assumptions from the era of the Soviet Union—an aggressive, dishonest, warlike nation bent on dominating its republics, including Ukraine. In characterizing the Russian government in this manner, while also stressing, “Crimea is Ukraine,” protesters constructed an image of Ukrainian nationalism similar to those of U.S. and Ukrainian political leaders. Russia was a warlike nation in violation of numerous international laws, responsible for the murder of innocent civilians, and actively subverting the democratic process and institutions in Ukraine. Conversely, these messages suggest that Ukrainians the world over simply wanted basic democratic freedoms and self-determination to secure a firm place in Europe, and to enjoy the economic prosperity that comes with being a part of those communities.

This protest contributes to our understanding of Ukrainian identity by suggesting that notions of popular sovereignty extend beyond traditional conceptions of borders. In an international climate, national identities can transcend territorial boundaries. Voters who endorsed the Poroshenko regime’s pro-European agenda articulate the “will” of the Ukrainian people. However, in the protest in New York, many people endorsed this westward reorientation despite not having any official say

in the matter. This protest thus isolates the intersection of different sources of legitimization for sovereignty—the will of the people and how that will is expressed through the people’s representatives in parliament.

Implications and conclusions

The United States constructed a vision of Ukrainian nationalism that was democratic and dependent on the self-determination of the Ukrainian people to choose their own destiny. This nationalist articulation was also grounded in a European orientation and the prosperity of a capitalist economy free from Soviet-era corruption and post-Soviet crony capitalism. Such an American conception of Ukrainian nationalism was fiercely resistant to the brutal, violent Russian occupation of Ukrainian territory. All of these features reflect themes from the Cold War. For much of the twentieth century, the United States relied on the exceptionalism of democracy and American capitalism to construct an image of the west as peacefully resisting violent aggression from the Soviet Union. The reliance on Cold War themes to characterize Ukrainian nationalism in the current crisis reflects the durability of these ideologies to characterize political events in a post-Cold War world.

There are vulnerabilities to this American nationalist imaginary for Ukraine. Whereas Russian rhetoric can rely on a shared history, culture, language, and religion to appeal to the Ukrainian people, the United States has no such advantages. The themes of the Cold War echo a time in which the United States and Ukraine itself had a complicated relationship given that Ukraine—by force—existed in the Soviet orbit. Ukrainians were subjected to anti-American rhetoric for decades from the Soviet propaganda machine, making it difficult for American propaganda to penetrate the

iron curtain. Ukrainians have shown both affinity and hostility toward the United States and the west in general. Thus, the same divisions that make fostering a unifying Ukrainian nationalism so challenging make it increasingly complicated for non-Ukrainian actors to find a broadly appealing message that galvanizes Ukrainian identity around a western democratic vision. The similarities between the “from above” and “from below” characterizations of Ukrainian nationalism—an identity that is democratic, enjoying the prosperity of Europe, and fiercely resistant to Russian rule—might struggle to appeal to anyone who did not already agree with this characterization of Ukrainian identity and the direction of the country. When many of these rhetorical strategies call for Ukrainians to make great personal financial sacrifices in the fight against corruption, American leaders will need to do more to appeal to a wider swath of Ukrainians.

These paradoxical American visions of Ukrainian nationalism are also vulnerable to accusations of hypocrisy and self-interest. Glanville argues: “It is generally accepted by students of international relations that sovereignty is constituted through recognition.”⁹⁸ In the case of Ukraine, American leaders frequently assert or imply the right to do the recognizing. The United States champions self-determination and independence for Ukrainians to determine their own destiny. However, this is an argument that only seems to appear when the Ukrainian people choose a closer alliance with the west, and in ways benefiting American interests in the region. When pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanykovich legitimately and convincingly won the 2010 presidential election, pulling Ukraine closer to Russia’s sphere of influence, American leaders did not champion Ukrainian

self-determination and democracy. Ukraine is thus caught between two global superpowers who are eager to stoke nationalist fervor in the name of self-interest. Building lasting relationships and joining global communities is therefore challenging without a foundation of mutual trust and respect. The Cold War battles over sovereignty and identity are officially over, though Ukraine remains trapped.

Recent political developments in the United States significantly complicate matters. Newly confirmed secretary of state and former oil company executive Rex Tillerson, in one of his first diplomatic trips abroad, waded into questions about Ukrainian nationalism and America's role in the current crisis. *Bloomberg Politics* reports: “‘Why should U.S. taxpayers be interested in Ukraine?’ Tillerson asked foreign ministers discussing Russia’s intervention there at a Group of Seven gathering Tuesday in Lucca, Italy.”⁹⁹ Whereas the Obama administration championed global and regional alliances and the value of folding Ukraine into these communities, the Trump administration’s foreign policy—while unpredictable—appears much less interested in fostering Ukrainian democracy, economic prosperity, and its ability to resist Russian intervention in its territory. During the 2016 presidential campaign, President Trump insisted, “Putin is not going to go into Ukraine,” despite occupying Crimea for two and half years at the time.¹⁰⁰ The future of America in fostering Ukrainian nationalism, and Ukraine’s place in Europe, therefore remain in doubt.¹⁰¹ The following chapter explores the ways in which international organizations articulated and challenged conceptions of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty.

¹ Tim Lister, “Poroshenko sets out Ukraine’s European destiny, warns adversaries,” *CNN*, 7 June 2014.

² David Herszenhorn, "Poroshenko takes Ukraine helm with tough words for Russia," *New York Times*, 7 June 2014.

³ John Withrop, "A model of Christian charity," *Conrad Cherry, God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny* (Englewood: Prentice Hall, 1971): 39-43.

⁴ Deborah Madsen, *American exceptionalism* (University of Mississippi Press, 1998).

⁵ Trevor McCrisken, *American exceptionalism and the legacy of Vietnam: US foreign policy since 1974* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 7.

⁶ Piort Szpunar, "The horror of Fort Hood: disseminating American exceptionalism," *Media, Culture & Society* 35 (2): 2013, 184.

⁷ McCrisken, 8-10.

⁸ McCrisken, 6-11.

⁹ Szpunar, 189.

¹⁰ Samuel Danforth, quoted in Perry Miller, "Errand into the Wilderness," *The William and Mary Quarterly: A Magazine of Early American History* (1953): 4-32.

¹¹ The Monroe Doctrine was arguably an example of isolationist rhetoric rather than expansionism since it suggested America will stay out of European affairs as long as North America was left alone. However, I argue that the simple assertion that two entire continents were "ours" justifies calling the Monroe Doctrine imperialist.

¹² "The Monroe Doctrine," "Basic Readings in U.S. Democracy," *U.S. Department of State*.

¹³ *Record*, 56 Cong., I Sess., pp. 704-712

¹⁴ Theodore Roosevelt. Quoted from Warren Zimmerman, *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2002), 440-441.

¹⁵ Elihu Root, "The Monroe Doctrine," in *Miscellaneous Addresses by Elihu Root*, edited by Robert Bacon and James Scott (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1917), 270.

¹⁶ Godfrey Hodgson, *The myth of American exceptionalism* (Yale University Press, 2009), 158-159.

¹⁷ Hodgson, 159. He explains, "This view is not wholly new. Seeds of it can be seen in early Protestant religion. It played a part in the patriotic rhetoric of the new Republic, in the confidence of the champions of Manifest Destiny that theirs was an 'empire of liberty,' and in the belief system of many American leaders, including especially Woodrow Wilson but also, in different ways, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and John F. Kennedy" (159).

¹⁸ Marilyn Kushner, "Exhibiting art at the American national exhibition in Moscow, 1959: domestic politics and cultural diplomacy," *Journal of Cold War studies* 4, no. 1 (2002), 7.

¹⁹ The efforts to "sell" capitalism to the Soviet people through the exhibit are detailed in Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American way: US propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

²⁰ Much of the American press coverage of the exhibition suggested that the Russian people were shocked by what was supposedly available to the "average" American worker, coverage that Khrushchev would mock during the debate. "The Russian People Can Take a Peek at U.S. Civilization." *Saturday Evening Post*, August 1, 1959.

²¹ At least, this was the ambition of the exhibition's organizers. The goals of the model home, and Nikita Khrushchev's subsequent visit to the United States, are outlined in Peter Carson, *K Blows Top: A Cold War Comic Interlude Starring Nikita Khrushchev, America's Most Unlikely Tourist* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009).

²² Kennedy, John, "Inaugural Address," 20 January 1961, *Voices of Democracy*, <http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/kennedy-inaugural-address-speech-text/>

²³ President Kennedy's chief speechwriter Ted Sorenson explains that the speech was intended as much for Soviet audiences as American ones: "Speaking at the height of the Cold War, he wanted to make clear to Soviet chairman Nikita Khrushchev that America's new leader preferred not a "hot war" but genuine peace, negotiations and cooperation; that, while standing firm against any armed encroachment on freedom, he was seeking to tone down Cold War rancor and tensions." Ted Sorenson, "JFK's inaugural address was world-changing," *The Guardian*, 22 April 2007.

²⁴ Ronald Reagan, "Address to the nation on the explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger," 28 January 1986, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/12886b.htm>

²⁵ Frances Fitzgerald argues that the space race was a clear and significant extension of the Cold War under President Reagan: *Way out there in the blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the end of the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

²⁶ Again, the question of audience is key. President Reagan's "Challenger" speech is an excellent example of a presidential address that reaches both domestic and international audiences. Reagan champions American character and values, rallying a domestic audience behind myths loaded with nationalism. At the same time, Reagan is aware that his speech is being broadcast around the world, and into the offices of the Kremlin.

²⁷ President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace strategy paralleled his "New Look" foreign policy that scaled back conventional arms in favor of an increased "air-atomic" capability through which American bombers would guarantee a massive retaliation in the event of a Soviet first-strike. The "New Look" plan was used more covertly at the same time Atoms for Peace was publicly outlined. As Eisenhower's Secretary of State John Foster Dulles explained: "The way to deter aggression is for the free community to be willing and able to respond vigorously at places and with means of its own choosing." Quoted in Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959), 248.

²⁸ Fred I. Greenstein, *The hidden-hand presidency: Eisenhower as leader* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

²⁹ Dwight Eisenhower, "Atoms for Peace," 8 December 1953, *Voices of Democracy*.

³⁰ Edwards, xi.

³¹ C.L.R James, *World Revolution, 1917-1936: The Rise and Fall of the Communist International* (Westport, Connecticut: Hyperion Press, 1973); Tim Rees and Andrew Thorpe, *International Communism and the Communist International, 1919-43* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

³² "Executive Order 9835, *Loyalty Oaths*, March 21, 1947," Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947 (1947 CIS microfiche EO 9818-9855), 627; Athan G. Theoharis, *Spying on Americans: Political Surveillance from Hoover to the Huston Plan* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), 202.

³³ McCarthy's "Red Scare" hearings are another example of a discourse that was clearly directed at domestic audiences but that also circulated internationally. These hearings, while awful, were based on foundational myths of American exceptionalism and freedom that were—supposedly—under attack from communists. The hearings therefore functioned to reflect circulating nationalist myths in public life. At the same time, the Soviet government was certainly aware the hearings took place and could

read McCarthy's antics—and President Eisenhower's refusal to shut him down—as a propaganda message for international audiences.

³⁴ Ronald Reagan, "Address to the National Association of Evangelicals," 8 March 1983, *Voices of Democracy*, <http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/reagan-evil-empire-speech-text/>

⁴³⁵ These narratives of a constant Soviet threat are reminiscent of the early Cold War "Duck and Cover" drills students performed in public schools. Children would practice how to behave during what was believed to be a possible, even likely, nuclear first-strike by the Soviet Union. This constant fear the "evil" Soviet Union defined these propaganda narratives throughout the Cold War.

³⁶ In the pre-Cold War era, the United States had little interest in Ukraine, or in stopping Soviet expansion into Ukraine following the Russian revolution, or in intervening to prevent the collectivization famine-genocide in Ukraine. A number of respected American journalists, including Pulitzer Prize winning *New York Times* writer Walter Duranty and Louis Fischer of *The Nation*, told American leadership and their readers that there was no famine in Ukraine. This journalistic cover up of the famine is outlined in Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 1937), 44. American president Herbert Hoover's attempts to coordinate a relief effort to Russia funneled food supplies to Soviet leadership, doing little to help Ukraine. Even the Hoover Institute's glowing account of his efforts to stop the famine showcase that little was done to stop millions of Ukrainians from starving to death: Benjamin M. Weissman, *Herbert Hoover and famine relief to Soviet Russia, 1921-1923*, Vol. 134. (New York: Hoover Press, 1974). In sum, the United States had little, if any, interest in Ukraine before the Cold War, and its leaders could not be bothered to take an interest in the country even in the face of genocide.

³⁷ Kuzio adds, "Many of Prolog's books and *Suchasnist* magazine were re-published in miniature format for easier smuggling into the USSR. Miniature copies of *Suchasnist* were printed on special paper that would dissolve if dropped into water, enabling Ukrainian dissidents to destroy émigré literature in the event of a raid by the KGB... Prolog mass distributed videos of the 1983 Ukrainian émigré documentary Harvest of Despair about the 1933 holodomor (terror-famine) before it was discussed openly in the Soviet press in the late 1980s (the Communist Party of Ukraine only admitted to the famine having taken place in 1990)." Kuzio, Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: perestroika to independence* (Springer, 1999), 1, 6, 9.

³⁸ Kuzio continues, "Prolog Vice President Anatole Kaminsky and Prolog President Roman Kupchinsky left their positions to become heads of Radio Svoboda in 1978 and 1990 respectfully. Prolog leaders Kaminsky and Kupchinsky, and Prolog freelancer Bohdan Nahaylo, headed Radio Svoboda for a quarter of a century from 1978 until 2003 during the disintegration of the USSR, drive to Ukrainian

independence, and the first decade of Ukraine as an independent state” (2). This reflects the connection between American propaganda programs and Ukrainian dissident movements and defectors.

³⁹ Ross Johnson, *Radio free Europe and Radio Liberty: the CIA years and beyond* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010), 54.

⁴⁰ Roman Kupchinsky, “Ukraine during the Cold War: the Role of Prolog Research Corporation,” *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 30 November 2008.

⁴¹ Luke Glanville, *Sovereignty and the responsibility to protect: a new history* (University of Chicago Press, 2013), 11. He argues that most scholars believe this right of non-intervention represents “the timeless essence of sovereignty” (12).

⁴² Glanville, 8.

⁴³ Barack Obama, “Transcript of Obama’s remarks on Ukraine,” *New York Times*, 28 February 2014.

⁴⁴ Barack Obama, “Transcript: Obama’s remarks on Gaza and Ukraine,” *Washington Post*, 21 July 2014.

⁴⁵ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *Obama White House Archives*, 3 September 2014.

⁴⁶ John Kerry, “Secretary Kerry on Ukraine,” *C-SPAN*, 24 April 2014.

⁴⁷ Geoffrey Pyatt, “Ukraine — Not the United States or Russia — Will Determine Its Own Future,” *Washington Post*, 4 April 2014.

⁴⁸ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *Obama White House Archives*, 9 December 2015.

⁴⁹ Barack Obama, “Transcript of Obama’s remarks on Ukraine,” *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Barack Obama, “Transcript of Obama’s remarks on Ukraine,” *ibid.*

⁵¹ Barack Obama, “Transcript of Obama’s remarks on Ukraine,” *ibid.*

⁵² Barack Obama, “Transcript of Obama’s remarks on Ukraine,” *ibid.*

⁵³ Barack Obama, “Transcript of Obama’s remarks on Ukraine,” *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Barack Obama, “Transcript: Obama’s remarks on Gaza and Ukraine,” *ibid.*

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- ⁵⁵ Barack Obama, “Transcript: Obama’s remarks on Gaza and Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁵⁶ Glanville, 169.
- ⁵⁷ Glanville, 171.
- ⁵⁸ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁶⁰ Glanville, 61, 65.
- ⁶¹ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁶² Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁶³ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁶⁴ Charles Reus-Smit, ii. 4.
- ⁶⁵ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 19.
- ⁶⁶ Glanville, 67.
- ⁶⁷ John Kerry, “Secretary Kerry on Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ Geoffrey Pyatt, “Ukraine — Not the United States or Russia — Will Determine Its Own Future,” *ibid.*
- ⁶⁹ Geoffrey Pyatt, “Ukraine — Not the United States or Russia — Will Determine Its Own Future,” *ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁷¹ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁷² Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁷³ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁷⁴ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*

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- ⁷⁵ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁷⁶ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁷⁷ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁷⁸ John Kerry, “Secretary Kerry on Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁷⁹ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁸⁰ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁸¹ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁸² Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁸³ Barack Obama, “Transcript of Obama’s remarks on Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁸⁴ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁸⁵ Geoffrey Pyatt, “Ukraine — Not the United States or Russia — Will Determine Its Own Future,” *ibid.*
- ⁸⁶ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia,” *ibid.*
- ⁸⁷ Glanville, 28.
- ⁸⁸ Samuel Barkin, “The Evolution of the Construction of Sovereignty and the Emergence of Human Rights Norms,” *Millennium* 27 (2), 234.
- ⁸⁹ Barack Obama, “Transcript: Obama’s remarks on Gaza and Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁹⁰ Barack Obama, “Transcript: Obama’s remarks on Gaza and Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁹¹ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁹² John Kerry, “Secretary Kerry on Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁹³ John Kerry, “Secretary Kerry on Ukraine,” *ibid.*
- ⁹⁴ Joe Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian Rada,” *ibid.*
- ⁹⁵ Polly Mosendz, “Ukrainian Americans protest Russian President Putin’s appearance at United Nations,” *Newsweek*, 27 September 2015.

⁹⁶ “Hundreds protest Putin’s arrival at United Nations,” *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 2 October 2015.

⁹⁷ “Hundreds protest Putin’s arrival at United Nations,” *The Ukrainian Weekly*, *ibid.*

⁹⁸ Glanville, 24.

⁹⁹ Wadhams, Nick and John Follain, “Tillerson asks why U.S. taxpayers should care about Ukraine,” *Bloomberg Politics*, 11 April 2017. This is a question that I am fully prepared and eager to answer at my dissertation defense.

¹⁰⁰ Bradner, Eric, and David Wright, “Trump says Putin is ‘not going to go into Ukraine,’ despite Crimea,” *CNN*, 1 August 2016.

¹⁰¹ Some good news for Ukrainians wishing to be part of Europe will come on June 1st, 2017, when Ukrainians are finally granted Visa-Free travel to the European Union. Ukrainians will be able to travel to western Europe for up to 90 days without a visa for tourist purposes: Lawrence Norman, “Ukraine to get Visa-Free travel to European Union from June 1,” *Wall Street Journal*, 6 April 2017. I attended a forum with various congressional representatives and even ambassador Pyatt this spring. The consensus was that the best thing Ukraine could do to retake Crimea from Russia—since a military option was not available—was to simply grow their economy to the degree that the Crimeans themselves would *want* reintegration. Visa-Free travel—the ability to witness firsthand the prosperity and high standard of living of many Europeans—might go a long way in fostering this essential economic growth and cultural exchanges necessary to short circuit Russian propaganda in the region.

Chapter 4

When the United Nations General Assembly convened on March 27, 2014, the global community was in crisis. The Russian government had facilitated a referendum in Crimea that reunified the peninsula with the Russian Federation 11 days earlier. The Ukrainian government was in chaos and could do little to resist Russian actions. Two months before Petro Poroshenko would be elected, the nation was under the interim leadership of Oleksandr Valentynovych Turchynov because ousted former President Viktor Yanykovich had fled the country.¹ Western nations were seemingly powerless to stop Russian intervention into Ukrainian territory, while much of Eastern Europe reasonably feared they might be the next targets of a Russian land grab.² Representatives from 169 countries gathered at the United Nations to debate the Crimean annexation and discuss a proposal calling on nations to not recognize the referendum. The scene was reminiscent of Cold War disputes between the United States and the Soviet Union; once again, the two global superpowers sparred on the world stage, using international institutions to make their case while condemning the actions of their geopolitical foe.³

This dispute showcases what can happen to self-determination and sovereignty when nation-states like Ukraine paradoxically embody diverse historical allegiances and identities. The result is a splintering that invites outside interference in an attempt to help these post-Soviet satellite regions define their national identity in ways that most advantage external actors engaged in power plays. A notion of top-down nationalism is constructed as the United States, Russia, and international organizations attempt to define Ukraine's identity and usurp its sovereignty. Rogers

Smith frames U.S. political influences (specifically theories of citizenship) in terms of a “multiple traditions thesis.” This chapter argues that sovereignty and international law represent two such traditions animating constructions of Ukrainian nationalism and the battle over self-determination. Both traditions function paradoxically in this conflict. Sovereignty is interpreted both as non-intervention *and* an obligation to violate the territorial integrity of a nation-state when human rights are threatened there; such interpretations obligate the international community to leave Ukraine alone *and* intervene to stop Russian actions within its borders. Similarly, international law is used by political states to justify their vision of foreign policy and is disregarded when it no longer serves the needs of global powers like Russia and the United States. Such disputes in the international community explain why Ukraine struggles to gain and maintain sovereignty, fails to achieve consensus in its national identity, and continues to be vulnerable to external aggression and internal division.

Leaders of the United States, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine each seek to use international organizations in ways that legitimize their interpretation of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty. Similarly, the leaders of international organizations attempt to exert influence over the actions of individual nations in the conflict by defining Ukrainian identity in different ways. While previous chapters isolated tensions between political leaders and ordinary citizens in defining Ukrainian nationalism from above and below, such a relationship is less applicable when exploring the rhetoric of international organizations. This tension between national and international political leaders defines the present study. This tension showcases

the relationship between nationalism and internationalism in adjudicating questions of identity and sovereignty on the world stage.

This chapter examines the response of international institutions to the current Ukrainian conflict. This chapter explores how international organizations (specifically the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and United Nations) grapple with meanings of sovereignty in Ukraine and how nations use those same institutions to define Ukrainian nationalism. I first analyze related United Nations resolutions passed since the current conflict began in 2014. Second, I examine the speeches delivered by Vladimir Putin and Petro Poroshenko in the U.N. General Assembly on September 2015. Third, I explore the 2015 deliberations of the Ukrainian parliament over passage of a non-discrimination bill as a condition for visa-free travel to the European Union. Fourth, I examine the European Union's official responses to the crisis, including speeches by EU leaders. Finally, I explore the speeches by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen surrounding the crisis.

The Cold War and internationalism

Understanding the relationship between international institutions and nations in the current conflict demands an explication of the Cold War origins and ideological underpinnings. Scholars have also extended considerable effort defining theories of internationalism. Micheline Ishay argues that internationalism is “commonly perceived as an ideology that stresses universal justice and political rights regardless of national, ethnic, or religious origins....”⁴ She suggests that internationalism is “a process *sui generis* rather than a static concept, shaped and transformed by

progressive thinkers and historical events.” For Ishay, “‘Progressive’ refers to... actions and ideas that challenge the status quo in pursuit of altruistic ends.”⁵

Internationalism theory calls for leaders to act in ways that benefit other nations and international communities. As she explains, internationalism is “the historical record of progressive events and thoughts clustered around philosophical, political, and social perspectives.”⁶ It is an ideological commitment to a global community. Ishay argues that internationalism must be understood as “guidelines describing social relations between and within states. Internationalism assumes a dynamic between the global and the domestic social arrangement.”⁷ Because internationalism is an evolving process, those guidelines suggesting international relationships between nations have evolved over time.

The notion of a global commitment to a collective decision-making process can be traced back to the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. International relations scholars often see that treaty as a turning point in global communities. Ian Clarke explains: “[The treaty was a] development of a sense of international society, grounded in shared concepts of international legitimacy...constituted by mutual recognition and a procedural principle of international consensus.”⁸ Luke Glanville argues that this collective national and international consciousness was revolutionary: “There was a belief that states would comply with the settlement because it was the mediated expression of their collective will.”⁹ Hedley Bull makes the case that the very sovereignty of individual nations was given to them by international communities:

Whatever rights are due to states or nations or other actions in international relations, they are subject to and limited by the rights of the international community. The rights of sovereign states, and of sovereign peoples or nations, derive from the rules of the international community or society and

are limited by them...The idea of sovereign rights existing apart from the rules laid down by international society itself and enjoyed without qualification has to be rejected in principle.¹⁰

Under this Westphalian philosophy, collective national communities were not only possible, but also beneficial for global order. Glanville continues: “Among the provisions negotiated in 1648 were enforceable responsibilities of statehood.”¹¹ Such responsibilities are at the core of internationalism.

Historically, internationalism has been used to justify colonization and empire building. The British, French, and Dutch efforts to control South Africa (1652-1795), the Spanish-American war (1898), the Eight-Nation Alliance putting down the Boxer Rebellion in China (1899-1901), and the U.S. war against the Philippines (1899-1902), are all examples where leaders used internationalist arguments to validate colonization and extend empires.¹² For instance, Senator Albert Beveridge called for America to continue its “march toward the commercial supremacy of the world” in his 1898 “March of the Flag” address, urging senators to look beyond their borders and colonize the Philippines.¹³ While internationalism was used to justify colonization, it has conversely been used as a framework for resisting such attacks on a global scale.

Following World War I, President Woodrow Wilson argued for a global system of government, shifting conceptions of internationalism from empire building to peacemaking, where global communities would come together to prevent future wars. Harold Josephson argues that Wilson tried to transform “the world from a warlike state of nature to an orderly global society governed by liberal norms.”¹⁴ His system proposed to make what N. Gordon Levin, Jr. calls a “more rational and

orderly...world system of competing nation-states.”¹⁵ If such alliances succeeded, war would be prevented through the passage of international laws and enforced by an overarching association of nations. Such agreements would take the form of broad non-aggression pacts signed by associated members and non-members alike.¹⁶ The Wilsonian political vision included a democratic world government, diplomacy, trade, labor protections, disarmament, and the formation of a “general association of nations” to draw “covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.”¹⁷ Wilson faced strong resistance at the time, and his proposal was defeated in the United States even though, at its height, 58 other nations opted to join the League of Nations in its twenty-six year history (1920-1946).¹⁸

Although Wilson’s call for a global government was unsuccessful in the short term, his internationalism model for global integration persisted.¹⁹ The League of Nations did operate for a number of years without American involvement, and other international organizations followed in its wake. One such organization is the United Nations (UN). Founded after World War II, Article I of the UN Charter explains its purpose:

Maintain international peace and security; develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination; achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.²⁰

The UN would offer a global forum for public deliberation, conduct humanitarian relief efforts, and levy economic sanctions against nations violating these founding principles. Such actions follow Wilson's internationalist vision.

At the April 1945 United Nations Conference on International Organizations in San Francisco, world leaders articulated the purpose of the new organization. At its core was a fundamental paradox: a simultaneous commitment to the sovereignty of the nation-state—support for self-determination and a belief in the principle of non-intervention—and an expectation that sovereign nations had a responsibility to protect the human rights of vulnerable populations against unscrupulous governments and unwanted attacks from aggressor nations. President Truman exclaimed, “We must build a new world—a better world—one in which the eternal dignity of man is respected.”²¹ Glanville explains, “The Soviets had also warmed to the idea of human rights...” as part of this new international organization.²² However, while the preservation of human rights was a stated goal of the UN, so was the adherence to the principle of non-intervention. As Glanville argues:

On the one hand, the UN Charter established what have become known as the “traditional” rights of state sovereignty. The rights of sovereign peoples to govern themselves and to be free from outside interference that has been gradually consolidated as legal rules since the eighteenth century were now firmly established in international law. On the other hand, the charter hinted at an alternative and sometimes-competing conception of popular sovereignty that insists that the enjoyment of these rights to self-government and freedom from interference requires the promotion and protection of the rights of individuals within the state. We find the endorsement of both human rights and nations and state rights in the charter's preamble.²³

In that preamble, the charter endorses the choices of “the Peoples of the United Nations...to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights” and also “respect for the principle of equal rights self-determination of peoples.”²⁴ Given this contradiction,

the international community was left to construct ways to navigate tensions between national borders and the universal protection of human rights around the world.

Throughout the Cold War, this tension between human rights and non-intervention were used as rhetorical tools by both the United States and the Soviet Union. Glanville explains practices of non-intervention: “Soviet bloc states and Western states also championed this conception of sovereignty when it was in their political and strategic interests to do so.”²⁵ However, human rights were also deployed when it served the interests of global powers. As was frequently the case during the Cold War, the United Nations General Assembly became a forum for dueling nationalist narratives over territory. Most notably, ambassadors Adlai Stevenson and Valerian Zorin sparred during the Cuban Missile Crisis; both nations used the international media coverage of the debate for propaganda purposes. From the perspective of the Soviet Union, American aggression in Cuba, Turkey, and Taiwan spurred the conflict, and the Soviet government had every right to defend itself and support its regional ally.²⁶ Zorin, Soviet Ambassador to the UN, outlined his strategy in a telegram to the Soviet Foreign Ministry: “The USA's aggressions against Cuba cannot be evaluated as anything other than a provocation pushing the world to the verge of nuclear war.”²⁷ The Soviet narrative was one of American overreach and territorial intrusion. Conversely, the American version of events emphasized Soviet aggression that threatened global security.²⁸ Ambassador Stevenson exclaimed, “We are here today and have been this week for one single reason—because the Soviet Union secretly introduced this menacing offensive military buildup into the island of Cuba while assuring the world that nothing was further from their thoughts.”²⁹ Both

the United States and the Soviet Union brought their rhetorical war of words to the global community in their battle over territorial and military expansion. However, as Glanville explains: "...despite these profound developments, international enforcement of human rights in the internal affairs of sovereign states remained for the most part illegitimate through the last decades of the Cold War."³⁰ While human rights were increasingly understood as a global problem, traditional conceptions of sovereignty as non-intervention prevailed for much of the Cold War, as human rights alone were rarely a sufficient justification for violating the borders of nation-states.³¹

Following the Cold War, a global shift towards an increasing acceptance of human rights as a defining feature of sovereignty superseding claims of non-intervention began to take shape. Human rights began to function as a rationale for intervention. Glanville explains: "This was facilitated by the ending of bipolar conflict. The end of the Cold War profoundly changed the dynamics of international relations and made possible an increase in Security Council activities in pursuit of international peace and security."³² UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar defined the meaning of the Cold War's end for international relations in his 1991 General Assembly address: "The extinction of the bipolarity associated with the Cold War has no doubt removed the factor that virtually immobilized international relations over four decades. It has cured the Security Council's paralysis and helped immensely in resolving regional conflicts."³³ Mary Stuckey argues that this shift towards "Human Rights" can be traced to the Carter administration: "Carter did help put human rights on the national agenda, and over time he helped make the issue a persistent theme in debates over US foreign policy."³⁴ This suggests that sovereign nations were

increasingly viewed as possessing a responsibility to protect the human rights of vulnerable peoples in other countries.³⁵

In 2005, the United Nations endorsed a “responsibility to protect” for the first time. Glanville defines this concept: “Central to the ‘responsibility to protect’ concept is the idea that sovereign states are responsible for the protection of their populations from mass atrocities and that they are accountable not only to their own people but also to international society for the performance of this duty.”³⁶ The United Nations had departed from Cold War understandings of sovereignty as primarily grounded in principles of non-intervention, and instead reserved the right to intervene, with force, in the name of human rights. When this principle was applied in Libya in 2011, it represented a stark departure from traditional understandings of sovereignty. Glanville explains: “Never before had the principle of international enforcement of sovereign responsibilities been so clearly endorsed by international society as it was in the 2005 summit agreement.”³⁷ The agreement outlines these principles and obligations:

138. Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity....

139. The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VII of the Charter, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. On this context, we are prepared to take collective action....³⁸

The international community acknowledged both the inherent obligation to act in accordance with international norms regarding human rights within a nation's own borders, but also an obligation to enforce those principles worldwide.

Similarly, the European Union's (EU) charter expresses goals parallel to those of the UN: "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities."³⁹ The EU often uses its comparatively strong currency, the Euro, as an incentive to get potential member states to meet these foundational human rights benchmarks.⁴⁰ These actions and founding documents suggest an international European identity defined by peace and global cooperation.

While the UN and EU have used internationalism to focus on peaceful alternatives to war and to promote human rights, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's charter roots its genesis in a national security alliance. NATO was founded in 1949 to deter Soviet aggression during the Cold War. Founding NATO members were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States. At the time, the European states had good reason to fear Soviet expansion, and an alliance made political sense. NATO's charter lays out its mission in this way: "Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all."⁴¹ All NATO members are committed to defending any NATO member with force.⁴² Thus, international organizations are founded on ideological commitments to internationalism, and those structures and

ideologies have supported diverse international causes ranging from humanitarian missions to national security alliances.

International organizations thus have been used as vehicles for both internationalist and nationalist ideologies and interests. Nations have used international institutions to legitimize and justify their actions and attack their geopolitical rivals. Gaining the endorsement of international communities of nations for actions lends credibility to the foreign policy actions of nations and to the articulations of identity and sovereignty that political leaders and ordinary citizens offer. However, such institutions have also pressured individual nations to alter their behavior and follow international norms. The goals and actions of international organizations differ greatly, and their role in global politics must be accounted for in understanding the current Ukrainian crisis. Several themes emerge from debates at the United Nations, including the support for international law, internationalist values and global norms, and self-determination.

International law and Ukrainian identity

The international community met during the 68th United Nations General Assembly to debate how to respond to the Russian annexation of Crimea and the subsequent referendum that saw the peninsula reunify with the Russian Federation. The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Andrii Deshchytsia, introduced the draft resolution calling for the body to denounce Russian aggression in the Crimean region. He argued that the measure was essential for both Ukraine and for “every United Nations Member State, even more so for the United Nations and the world order it embodied.”⁴³ Deshchytsia explained the importance of the measure:

“What has happened in my country is a direct violation of the United Nations Charter. Many struggle to grasp the reality—it happened in Ukraine, in the very heart of Europe. It happened in the twenty-first century.”⁴⁴ The measure eventually passed on a vote of 100 in favor, 11 against, with 58 abstentions; Russia would later veto the resolution. An overview of the resolution provided by the United Nations explains the meaning of the results: “The General Assembly today affirmed its commitment to Ukraine’s sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, underscoring the invalidity of the 16 March referendum held in autonomous Crimea.”⁴⁵ The vote was thus a decisive victory for the pro-western interpretation of Ukrainian identity, despite the Russian veto as a permanent member of the Security Council.

International law quickly emerged as a central theme in the debates, as both sides argued over whether Russian actions were legal. Questions of legality reflect a legitimizing function when defining Ukrainian identity. Glanville explains the role of legitimization of sovereignty by international communities: “In both domestic and international societies, sovereignty has historically been constructed by the successful legitimization of authority claims...”⁴⁶ One of the principle ways to legitimate claims of sovereignty was through international law. Glanville argues: “In both natural law and treaty law, then, sovereignty was understood to entail externally enforceable responsibilities for the protection of subjects.”⁴⁷ If the Russian referendum were to be seen as “legal” by the global community, then the Russian interpretation of Ukrainian sovereignty would have won the argument. If the actions by Russia were deemed illegal, then the Ukrainian interpretation of their identity as a pro-western, European

nation would have prevailed. Thus, framing Russian actions in terms of their legality called on the international community via the United Nations to adjudicate Russian, Ukrainian, and American interpretations of Ukrainian nationalism.

Multiple nations framed Russian actions in Crimea as a flagrant violation of international law. Vlad Lupan, the representative of the Republic of Moldova, argued that the Crimean referendum violated Ukraine's Constitution and international law.⁴⁸ Similarly, Ibrahim O. A. Dabbashi of Libya said he had voted for the resolution for "its commitment to the principles of international law and the Charter."⁴⁹ The Ukrainian delegation presented the legality of the issue in similar and more concrete terms:

After two weeks of military occupation, an integral part of Ukraine had been forcibly annexed by a State that had previously committed itself to guarantee that country's independence, sovereignty and territory integrity in accordance with the Budapest Memorandum; by a State which happened to be one of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, entrusted by the Organization's membership with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.⁵⁰

Here, Ukrainian representatives also said that Russian actions violated the Budapest Memorandum, written as a condition of Ukraine surrendering its nuclear weapons after the fall of the Soviet Union. Similarly, Russia was violating the Minsk Agreement in occupying Crimea, which called for: "Withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment, as well as mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine under monitoring of the OSCE. Disarmament of all illegal groups."⁵¹ Deshchytsia thus argues that the Russia Federation violated international law on several counts, both at the international and bilateral levels, in flaunting the Budapest Memorandum and the Minsk Agreement. These examples steeped the Ukrainian interpretation of

their identity in international law and called on the global community to legitimize their national sovereignty while condemning Russian actions.

Others in attendance agreed with the Ukrainian interpretation. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the European Union Delegation, concurred, stating that the European Union did not recognize the illegal referendum in Crimea. He argued Russian actions were a clear violation of Ukraine's Constitution and he strongly condemned the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, which the EU equally would not recognize.⁵² Liechtenstein's representative, Christian Wenaweser, also concurred with the Ukrainian interpretation, exclaiming that the Russian Federation's annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol represented a very serious violation of international law. Wenaweser explained his vote for the measure, arguing that United Nations Charter committed the international community to the principle of territorial integrity and the right of self-determination of peoples in conformity with international law.⁵³

These representatives suggest that the Russian actions violated international law on its face. If there is to be a global community of nations, they reasoned, the rule of law must be respected. From the perspective of pro-western representatives and especially those bordering the Russian Federation, the consequences of violating this compact are dire, as the security and peace of every nation is seemingly threatened. If the Russian Federation could annex part of Ukrainian territory, then they could seemingly ignore the borders of other nations. The theme of international law thus reflects a sense of self-interest from the nations voting in favor. Ukraine's Deshchytsia explains: "We have consistently called for the recognition of a

polycentric world order, equal and indivisible security in full conformity with the United Nations Charter basic principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity of any State.”⁵⁴ The notion that *any state* is protected by international law was a powerful rhetorical tool for the proponents of the measure. In passing the resolution, the majority of U.N. delegations legitimized Ukraine’s own interpretation of their identity as pro-western and European, and delegitimized Russian acts of intervention in the sovereign Ukraine.

International law was also used as a rhetorical tool for the measure’s opponents. They argued that the law was on the Russian Federation’s side, and that the referendum was conducted in accordance with international rules. Ja Song Nam of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea argued that Crimea’s reunification with the Russian Federation had been conducted legitimately through a referendum and in accordance with the UN Charter.⁵⁵ Moreover, they claimed that it was the Ukrainian Maidan revolutionaries who were to blame for the current crisis by illegally overthrowing democratically-elected president Viktor Yankovich. Samuel Moncada of Venezuela voted against the measure because his Government opposed the overthrow of the democratically-elected President.⁵⁶ Moncada warned that it was “the overthrow of constitutional governments by extremist groups linked to foreign powers that had unleashed the Second World War.” He pivoted from this historical argument to the contemporary context in stressing how essential it was to re-establish the constitutional order in Ukraine.⁵⁷ Nam similarly added that he was voting against the measure because the North Korean government “opposed attempts to overthrow legitimate governments.”⁵⁸ In arguing for the legality of Russian actions in Crimea,

and the illegality of Ukrainian actions in the Revolution of Dignity, the measure's opponents conceded the importance of international law as a legitimizing force. Although they failed to stop the measure's passage, they refused to concede the legitimacy of Russian interpretations of Ukrainian identity.

While both the pro-western and pro-Russian delegations relied on the theme of international law to legitimize their interpretations of Ukrainian identity, a collection of 58 nations questioned the applicability of this theme altogether. Inga Rhonda King of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines said "the draft resolution and the arguments of its chief proponents called into question the universal applicability of international law in the current situation."⁵⁹ Although her government remained very concerned about the events in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, King argued that her government "viewed the text as motivated more by 'principals' than principles" and regretted that the Assembly "had failed to consider the historical context of the geopolitical dispute and the nature of the regime change."⁶⁰ A large percentage of the representatives thus argued that the situation in Crimea was less about international law and overarching democratic ideals than about a Cold War battle between the United States and the Russian Federation. When asked to adjudicate the legitimacy of Ukrainian, American, and Russian versions of Ukrainian identity in accordance with international law, many nations simply refused. Like many nations during the Cold War who simply wanted to stay out of the way, this debate suggests that there are likely many nations who do not want to be caught between global superpowers over Ukrainian's future sovereignty and identity.

Eighteen months after the adoption of the resolution condemning the Crimean referendum, the United Nations General Assembly would again be the site of intense debate in ways reminiscent of the Cold War. At the seventieth general assembly, both Ukrainian President Poroshenko and Russian President Putin addressed the delegations. Both also relied on the theme of international law to legitimize their interpretations of Ukrainian identity. Poroshenko argued that Russian actions flaunt international law: “[Ukraine] is now suffering from a brutal violation of the fundamental norms and principles of the UN Charter. But, today, I have to recall that my country has become the object of external aggression.”⁶¹ Poroshenko elaborates his argument that Russia’s actions in Ukraine are especially egregious because they undercut the fundamental goals of the United Nations, taking advantage of Russia’s position of power on the Security Council to flaunt international laws:

Moreover, this state is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, which is entrusted by the UN Charter with maintaining international peace and security. 70 years ago the creators of the UN Charter have envisaged the mechanism of the UN Security Council sanctions to be one of the restraining tools applied in response to the breaches of peace and acts of aggression. However, they couldn’t even imagine that this tool will be needed against the Aggressor State that is a Permanent member of the UN Security Council. Since the beginning of the aggression, Russia used its veto right twice, while the UN Security Council was considering questions related to Ukraine. At the outset, Russia blocked a draft resolution condemning the “fake referendum” on Crimea’s annexation in March 2014. The second time Russia put its shameful veto on the draft resolution on establishment of the International Tribunal to investigate and bring to justice all responsible for Malaysian MH17 plane crash. By imposing its disgraceful veto on this draft resolution, Russia clearly demonstrated to the whole world its defiance in establishing the truth.⁶²

For Poroshenko, Russian actions are not only illegal, but they also short-circuit the international community’s ability to function as a legitimizing tool for Ukrainian identity. Poroshenko suggests that in preventing the overwhelming majority of

member states in the UN from endorsing Ukraine's move to the west, or to stop Russia's violations of Ukrainian sovereignty, Russia has broken the ability of global communities to adjudicate claims of identity.

As with the debate of the Crimean annexation, Poroshenko does not rely only on international law to make his case. He refers to bilateral agreements between Ukraine and Russia that are in shambles because of Russian actions:

This time, the aggressor is Russia—neighboring country, former strategic partner that legally pledged to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Ukraine. This country used to be a guarantor of Ukraine's security under the Budapest Memorandum, whereby security guarantees were provided to my country in exchange for a voluntary renunciation of the world's third nuclear arsenal.⁶³

Poroshenko argues that the consequences of Russian intervention in Ukraine are potentially dire. Not only do international institutions matter less, but even treaties between individual member states are also less significant. Trust between nations is eroded, and progress is denied. More importantly, on both national and international levels, Russia is refusing to accept the overwhelming consensus regarding Ukrainian sovereignty and identity. The argument is that Ukrainian articulations of their identity and sovereignty are denied the chance to be legitimized by the adjudication of international institutions because of Russian vetoes. Either Ukrainians accept the Russian vision for Ukrainian nationalism, or no other interpretation will be recognized.

The European Union similarly framed the issue of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty in the wake of Russian interventions in Ukraine in terms of international law. Six months after the Russian annexation of Crimean, José Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the European Commission, addressed the eleventh Yalta

European Strategy Annual Meeting. There, he explained that Russian actions had dire consequences for Ukraine, Europe, and the entire global order: “The annexation of Crimea and destabilization of Eastern Ukraine was a blunt challenge to international law and order. It concerns not just Ukraine, but Europe as a whole and the wider international community.”⁶⁴ Unsurprisingly, the EU representative viewed the conflict in Ukraine as a threat to Europe, since Russia disregarded the borders of another sovereign state. However, the EU leader also made the case that his regional organization could serve a legitimizing function for Ukrainian nationalism. In framing Ukrainian efforts to join Europe as a European and global concern, and deploying international law in the process, Borroso argued that the EU could also adjudicate claims of national identity and sovereignty.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization similarly used international law to legitimize pro-European interpretations of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty. NATO leadership used both international precedent and bilateral treaties to make these arguments. Months after Petro Poroshenko’s 2014 election, the NATO-Ukraine Commission explained the role of international law in the current conflict:

We, the Heads of State and Government of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, stand united in our support of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. We strongly condemn Russia’s illegal and illegitimate self-declared “annexation” of Crimea and its continued and deliberate destabilization of eastern Ukraine in violation of international law.⁶⁵

The existence of a NATO-Ukraine Commission is itself a statement on the role international organizations can play in positioning nations within global communities. NATO member states welcomed Ukraine and endorsed its interpretation of events, offering communal legitimacy to those claims of sovereignty and identity. Two years

later, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen would similarly use bilateral treaties to condemn Russian actions: “The aggressive actions and provocative statements of the separatists are in direct contradiction with the Minsk agreements. We call on Russia to stop its support for the separatists immediately, to stop destabilizing Ukraine and to respect its international commitments.”⁶⁶ Through Rasmussen, NATO again legitimizes Ukraine’s interpretation of events within its disputed borders. Russia was to blame for ignoring international laws and bilateral agreements, and its vision for Ukrainian identity was therefore delegitimized.

The United Nations, European Union, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization all used international laws to legitimize Ukrainian interpretations of their identity as pro-western and European in orientation. Individual nations attempted to influence these decisions, and Russian representatives were somewhat successful at undermining these proceedings. However, in relying on both treaties and international laws, pro-Ukrainian representatives were able to garner some measure of legitimacy for their claims of identity and sovereignty. The following section explores how international institutions constructed the Ukrainian crisis as a symbol of international values in defining Ukrainian nationalism.

Ukrainian identity as a symbol of internationalism

International organizations also attempted to define Ukrainian identity and sovereignty by framing the current conflict in terms of internationalist values and norms. This was done in part by highlighting certain fundamental principles that are part of global communities (e.g., international law). Human rights, respect for the

electoral process, and basic financial institutions were also used to define Ukraine's global identity. For instance, the Minsk Agreements called for holding local and regional elections and launching discussions about the "modalities of local elections in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and the Law of Ukraine."⁶⁷ In calling for local elections, and championing democratic reforms, the agreements stressed that the Ukrainians were willing to embrace European democracy. Similarly, the Minsk agreements call for humanitarian aid in eastern Ukraine. The parties involved agree to "ensure safe access, delivery, storage, and distribution of humanitarian assistance to those in need, on the basis of an international mechanism."⁶⁸ According to this vision, the Ukrainian people were not the aggressors, and would not be held responsible for the suffering of innocent people. Along those lines, the Minsk agreement stressed the need for basic financial institutions: "Ukraine shall reinstate control of the segment of its banking system in the conflict-affected areas and possibly an international mechanism to facilitate such transfers shall be established."⁶⁹ All of these measures—elections, as well as humanitarian and financial assistance—were endorsed by the United Nations. Such logic suggested that nations willing to meet these standards deserve to have their national identities legitimized and to be a part of the global community. The Minsk Agreements helped legitimate Ukraine's national identity and claims of sovereignty by establishing standards that celebrated Ukraine's actions and denounced Russia's moves.

In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly, President Poroshenko continued these themes of international norms as essential tools in defining Ukrainian identity. Poroshenko links global communities, humanitarian assistance, and Ukraine:

“I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the international community for the considerable efforts in providing necessary assistance to the people in need. At the same time I call upon the United Nations and all other international actors to continue to pay special attention to this very important issue.”⁷⁰

In praising global communities, and stressing the humanitarian aid to those in need, Poroshenko embraces core European values of self-determination and human rights outlined in the European Union Charter. Ukraine only wants to help innocent people survive, Poroshenko reasons, and these are messages that resonate with core European values and internationalism. Similarly, he condemns the Russian Federation’s actions for defying international norms and values: “I believe that the problem of blatant violations of human rights in the Crimea deserves a particular consideration within the UN General Assembly.”⁷¹ For Poroshenko, Ukraine is clearly a nation willing to embrace European and global values; the Russian Federation is not.

Vladimir Putin also addressed the 70th General Assembly of the United Nations, and also argued for the importance of international communities. Like Poroshenko, Putin was jockeying for the legitimization of his claims for Ukrainian identity and sovereignty. His defense of the United Nations would have audiences believing that the Russian Federation was ready to lead global communities, while his western rivals only undermined them:

Of course, the world changes, and the UN should also undergo natural transformation. Russia is ready to work together with its partners to develop the UN further on the basis of a broad consensus, but we consider any attempts to undermine the legitimacy of the United Nations as extremely dangerous. They may result in the collapse of the entire architecture of international relations, and then indeed there will be no rules left except for

the rule of force. The world will be dominated by selfishness rather than collective effort, by dictate rather than equality and liberty, and instead of truly independent states we will have protectorates controlled from outside. Sadly, some of our counterparts are still dominated by their Cold War-era bloc mentality and the ambition to conquer new geopolitical areas. First, they continued their policy of expanding NATO—one should wonder why, considering that the Warsaw Pact had ceased to exist and the Soviet Union had disintegrated.⁷²

Putin's defense of international institutions is by design. He champions collective, global action to solve problems, and embraces diplomacy over military conflicts. In condemning the expansion of NATO, Putin suggests that alliances between nations that stop short of global communities only serve to undermine collective interests of the world. NATO prevents the internationalist goals that Putin defends, and is therefore opposed to shared values of peace and diplomacy. The Russian Federation is the hero in Putin's narrative, while the west only resists his calls for internationalism and shared, global values. This internationalist rhetoric, like Poroshenko's, encourages the international norms to endorse a specific vision of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty when adjudicating the current conflict in the court of global opinion at the United Nations.

Putin was correct in his claim that NATO was eager to support Ukraine's move towards the west. NATO leaders framed the issue of Ukrainian identity in terms of its internationalist commitments to shared, progressive values. A NATO-Ukraine commission report explains: "Allies commend the Ukrainian people's commitment to freedom and democracy and their determination to decide their own future free from outside interference. They welcome the holding of free and fair Presidential elections... which testify to the consolidation of Ukraine's democracy and its European aspiration."⁷³ Here, NATO leaders showcase the progressive, global value

of democracy and free elections as examples of Ukraine's commitment to an internationalist identity. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen explains that this move towards Europe has forced the Ukrainian people to sacrifice a great deal:

This comes at great human cost to civilians. We express our condolences to the Ukrainian people for these tragic losses. Thirty civilians were killed and around a hundred were injured in the attack launched on residential areas of Mariupol. The attack was launched from territory controlled by separatists backed by Russia.⁷⁴

Here, Rasmussen points out what the Ukrainian people are willing to endure to finally embrace a European identity and to control their own borders. Listing these atrocities also serves to differentiate between the internationalist, progressive values of Europe and those of the Russian Federation's separatists in the area. NATO leaders argued that they endorsed Ukraine's interpretation of their national identity because the Ukrainian people were looking for the same values that Europeans already shared.

The European Union also attempted to endorse the Ukrainian vision of their identity and sovereignty in the conflict with the Russian Federation. This was done by defining Ukrainian nationalism as fundamentally European—as part of an internationalist vision for global norms. At a 2015 EU Conference on Support for Ukraine, Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, explored these themes:

Ukraine must seize this moment, which despite your many problems, is full of opportunity. But our message today, is that you do not have to face these challenges alone. The Ukrainian public—and some of Ukraine's other neighbors—need to know that we are all here to help this country become stronger, more modern and more self-sufficient. A country that makes its own choices and delivers security and prosperity for its citizens.⁷⁵

This argument suggested that Ukraine was not on its own, because the European Union was ready to help the nation's leaders and people through the challenging process of becoming a functioning member of the European *community* of nations. Similarly, the Joint Statement by the Presidents of Ukraine, the European Council, and the European Commission on the signing of an EU Association Agreement explains how Ukraine is now officially on a path to Europe: "The EU is committed to supporting Ukraine in its path towards a modern European democracy. The Association Agreement does not constitute the final goal in EU-Ukraine cooperation."⁷⁶ In explaining what being a part of Europe means—a *modern European democracy*—the EU makes its view of Ukrainian identity clear. Ukraine is moving west, and while its journey will not be easy, they are no longer in Russia's sphere of influence. This is precisely the vision of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty that Ukrainian leaders and many ordinary citizens articulated; the EU clearly endorsed it here.

Other European Union leaders explained the importance of winning the fight for Ukrainian identity. EU Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis at the Yalta European Strategy Annual Meeting argued that Ukrainian sovereignty was critical for Europe: "Ukraine should not become a forgotten conflict. The West cannot afford this to happen. We must stand up not only for Ukraine, but for the broader values of sovereignty and democracy, and for the logic of peaceful diplomacy."⁷⁷ For Dombrovskis, winning the battle for the identity and sovereignty of Ukraine was essential for the ideological underpinnings of Europe itself. If Ukraine fell under Russian pressure, Europe would betray its core principles of democracy and

sovereignty. President of the European Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, echoes these sentiments:

Waving European flags and camping under open skies in freezing temperatures, the Ukrainian people demonstrated why Europe is important, what Europe means and what Europe stands for. The Ukrainian people stood for freedom, democracy and rule of law. These are precisely the values that are at the core of the European Union. And, Europe will always stand with countries willing to engage on this path. This is what we want for Ukraine and what our relationship is all about. To support Ukraine to become a more democratic and rule-governed country. A more prosperous and modern society. Ukraine deserves the same opportunities that were afforded to other countries in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Just look at the evolution of Ukraine and Poland these last decades. In 1990 Ukraine was ahead of Poland in GDP and had about the same level in GDP per capita. Only 20 years later Polish indicators, both overall GDP and per capita GDP are three times higher. And, this transformation happened even before accession.⁷⁸

Barroso argues that Ukrainians are embracing core European values of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law, and it was the obligation of all like-minded members of the European and global communities to support them in their efforts. Failing to do so would betray those same values, even as Ukrainians were fighting for the security and shared interests of Europe. This clear endorsement of Ukraine's vision over Russia's was framed as an essential test for Europe and European values. Yet, Ukraine was about to face its own test, when attempting to align its deep national values with its internationalist commitments to moving west.

Ukraine's identity crisis—national values and international aspirations

While Poroshenko struggled against Russian military and economic pressures, a series of votes in the Ukrainian parliament suddenly threatened the country's goal of European integration. The movement that ushered Poroshenko to power was fueled by a desire to bring Ukraine closer to Europe and eventually into the European Union.

Protesters toppled statues of Vladimir Lenin while chanting, “Ukraine is Europe!”⁷⁹ Now, the religious and cultural legacies of the Soviet Union made Ukraine’s western move seem nearly impossible. On November 10, 2015, Ukraine’s Verkhovna Rada parliament voted down a bill that would have granted Ukrainian citizens’ visa-free travel to the European Union because the law contained a provision preventing discrimination against homosexuals in the workplace. The European Union had made it clear that legislated homophobia would permanently derail any chance of Ukraine joining the EU. Despite these warnings, Ukraine’s leaders initially rejected the antidiscrimination law over Poroshenko’s pleading.⁸⁰ An ongoing Russian invasion and the promise of long-desired European integration were not enough to overcome culturally engrained homophobia. Poroshenko was under attack from the east, and moving west was now nearly hopeless.

Initial resistance to the antidiscrimination bill was fierce. Opponents of the law grounded their arguments in nationalist components of both religion and Soviet-era homophobia. Member of parliament Pavlo Unguryan—a member of Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk’s own progressive, pro-European party—articulated the general sentiment among government leaders during the initial days of the debate. He grounded his arguments in Ukraine’s Christian identity and history: “As a country with a thousand-year-old Christian history, we simply cannot allow this. Today, a special status for sexual minorities is simply unacceptable.”⁸¹ Opponents of the law could count on the popular support of several anti-gay political groups. The nationalist Right Sector political party had violently attacked a gay pride parade months earlier.⁸² Similarly, Mykola Dulskiy, the founder of the political gang

“Fashion Verdict,” explained that his group’s goal was to “sweep promiscuity, gambling, sexual offenders and homosexuality from the streets of Ukraine’s cities.”⁸³ Such attitudes mirror the criminalization of homosexuality during the reign of the Soviet Union. The combination of religious discourse and a groundswell of Soviet-style homophobia from social movements were enough to initially defeat the antidiscrimination law.

Proponents of the bill framed their arguments in terms of ideologies of internationalism, grounded in Ukraine’s commitment to Europe and to overarching notions of human rights. In response to the initial defeat of the bill, member of parliament Iryna Gerashchenko explained, “This is a serious blow to our chances of getting visa-free travel to Europe.”⁸⁴ Serhiy Leshchenko, a member of Poroshenko’s block in parliament, was even more direct: “The importance of this law is greater than stereotypes surrounding it. And a visa-free regime concerns all citizens. Without adoption of the non-discrimination law, a visa-free regime will not be introduced.”⁸⁵ Petro Poroshenko similarly reminded Ukrainians that the Revolution of Dignity was fought to bring Ukraine closer to Europe. He harkened back to his editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* months earlier in which he claimed, “We have shown the world the true face of our nation, one that fights for European values and defends European security on its frontiers.”⁸⁶ Defeating the bill would mean undermining Ukraine’s European identity. Member of parliament Volodymyr Arieu similarly argued, “Ukraine is a European country, not a crass Soviet state where you can still feel the Russian influence that invaded post-Soviet countries. Ukraine is trying to escape from a post-Soviet reality so it can enter a European one.”⁸⁷ For government leaders, the bill

represented a key move for Ukraine away from the legacies of the Soviet Union and towards a European orientation grounded in internationalism. This internal struggle also took place for the legitimization of sovereignty claims about Ukraine's identity. Glanville explains that this is not uncommon: "Sovereignty is constructed both within and between political communities."⁸⁸ Thus, the Ukrainians themselves were fighting over what their identity meant, and Poroshenko's vision for a pro-western Ukraine eventually won out with calls for European integration, grounded in human rights rhetoric. The paradox of Ukrainian identity—wrestling with its Soviet past while calling for a European future—was, at least for now, resolved.

The propaganda battle over Ukrainian identity and self-determination

A third theme in the discourse of international organizations was the self-determination of the Ukrainian people. Whether Russian was intervening in Ukraine on behalf of Ukrainians or in contradiction to their wishes was a central marker in determining the legitimacy of these events. This was the difference between a diplomatic, humanitarian mission and a full-scale invasion of a foreign nation. Both the pro-Russian and pro-western sides in the debate argued that the Ukrainian people agreed with them. The outcome of this confrontation would serve to help legitimize a given interpretation of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty. Because of the Cold War past between Russia and the US and the rise of international organizations, each actor thought they had a stake in Ukraine's future. Ukrainian identity thus splintered in the post-Cold War era as each vied for the right to define Ukraine's identity on the grounds that the vulnerabilities of the newly sovereign nation left it open to outside manipulation and control.

Russian representatives argued that they acted in the spirit of self-determination for the Crimean people in the United Nations debate over the Russian intervention into Crimea. Vitaly Churchin, the Russian Federation's representative, declared, "We call on everyone to respect that voluntary choice" and that the Russian Government could not refuse Crimeans their right to self-determination.⁸⁹ Churchin explained Crimea's Russian history, exploring the deep cultural ties between the peninsula and the Russian Federation. The Crimean people wanted to be part of Russia because of this history: "For many years, Crimea had been part of the Russian Federation, sharing a common history, culture and people. An arbitrary decision in 1954 had transferred the region to the Ukrainian Republic, upsetting the natural state of affairs and cutting Crimea off from Russia."⁹⁰ This shared history and cultural connection meant that Russia was acting in the interests of the Crimean people, and in accordance with their will, by facilitating the referendum. Denying the legitimacy of Russian actions in the peninsula would mean denying the free choices of a large group of people.

Churchin next argued that western nations and the current Ukrainian government were undermining the will of the Crimean people and denying them their right to self-determination. He blamed the protests in Kiev on the "'adventurous actions' of provocateurs whose actions had led to the reunification decision."⁹¹ From the Russian perspective, the Revolution of Dignity was an anti-democratic coup that undermined the electoral principles of a democratic nation. The Russian version of events is terrifying:

The central square, the Maidan, had been converted into a militarized camp where violence had broken out against law enforcement, and a building

housing the United States Embassy had been captured...from that building, snipers had fired upon police and demonstrators, intending to provoke a violent overthrow of the Government.... On 21 February, President Viktor Yanukovich had agreed to disarm militants, free the building, create a national unity Government, and launch a constitutional process that would see elections held by year's end. Yet, the violence continued and the President had been compelled to leave Ukraine. Following a reshuffle, a "Government of victors" had appeared—national radicals who preached racist, anti-Semitic and xenophobic views, and who hated everything Russian.⁹²

This narrative presumes that the revolution that overthrew Viktor Yankovich was made up of thugs and radicals who opposed basic democratic freedoms. Churchin argued that, once in power, these radicals governed in ways that further eroded the self-determination of Crimeans: "Their first decisions had been to revoke the status of the Russian language used by Crimeans and to appoint governors rejected by the locals."⁹³ The identity and sovereignty of the Crimean people was eroded and threatened by the revolution of dignity in this narrative. While those in western Ukraine might have seen the events as triumphant, for those in Crimea, they were alarming threats to their very identity.

In Churchin's version of events, the Russian intervention in Crimea aimed to protect the Crimean people and preserve their freedoms. Churchin argued, "Ukraine required a true political process that would lead to conditions in which its people did not fear for their lives and were sure that they could exercise their rights."⁹⁴ The alleged western interventions in the region deserved more blame than Russian actions in this narrative. He endorsed the parts of the resolution that called for nations to "refrain from unilateral actions and inflammatory rhetoric" and suggested that member nations "base decisions on the interests of Ukrainians and of normal international relations."⁹⁵ Once again, the United States was acting in contradiction to

accepted global norms by pushing Ukraine towards the west, in ways that denied the Crimean people their right to define their own sovereignty and identity. In short, Russia was coming to the rescue of the Crimean people to protect their basic human right to self-determination, language, and democratic and electoral protections. In centering self-determination in their claims, the Russian delegation was arguing for the legitimacy of the referendum, and for their vision of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty.

The United States was also in attendance for the Crimea debate at the United Nations and strongly disagreed with the Russia version of events. American UN Ambassador Samantha Power argues that self-determination was a paramount value in international relations and among global communities, and the Russian actions in Ukraine had undermined these core principles. She argued that the measure before the United Nations was about a single issue: “affirming a commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine...” and to “make clear that borders are not mere suggestions.”⁹⁶ Power stressed that “Crimea was part of Ukraine” and argued “self-determination was a widely welcome value.”⁹⁷ For Power, the Crimean people had chosen to move west, and this included Crimea. To deny this free choice was to undermine the self-determination of a nation. In attacking the Russian position, Power argued: “Coercion could not be the means by which one ‘self-determined,’ and called for “an electoral process that would allow all Ukrainians to choose their leaders freely, fairly and without coercion.”⁹⁸ The Russian Federation was acting in ways that undermined Ukrainian identity by facilitating the Crimean referendum. In the American narrative of events, the vote was not a fair choice

because the Russian military forced the hands of the Crimean people. According to the United States, Russian claims of acting to defend the self-determination of the Crimean people are therefore false.

The 2015 United Nations General Assembly also featured dueling claims of acting in support of the Ukrainian people's right of self-determination. President Poroshenko condemned the Russian intervention as an overt attempt to undermine the will of the Ukrainian people. He explains his view of the Russian perspective of the conflict: "The goal of this war is to force the Ukrainian people to give up its sovereign choice to build a free, democratic, prosperous European state. All this takes place against the backdrop of traitorous rhetoric about brotherly peoples, common history, related languages and 'predestined' common future."⁹⁹ For Poroshenko, the Ukrainian people had already clearly articulated what their identity would be, and how they would use their right to self-determination. They were moving west, towards Europe, and toward the international organizations that came with that identity, including the EU and NATO. Every action taken by the Russian Federation was to resist these choices, and to keep the Ukrainian people under a Russian sphere of influence. The Ukrainian people were aware of their shared history, language, and culture with Russia, and had decided to move towards Europe anyway. Russian actions enacted a Russian identity in favor of a European one.

President Putin also spoke of the rights of a people to determine their future in his UN speech. He takes the time to define the concept for his audience: "What is the meaning of state sovereignty, the term which has been mentioned by our colleagues here? It basically means freedom, every person and every state being free to choose

their future.”¹⁰⁰ This self-determination is an essential component of national identity.

However, under Putin’s version of events, it was the west, rather than Russia, that was to blame for the erosion of Ukrainian sovereignty:

NATO has kept on expanding, together with its military infrastructure. Next, the post-Soviet states were forced to face a false choice between joining the West and carrying on with the East. Sooner or later, this logic of confrontation was bound to spark off a major geopolitical crisis. And that is exactly what happened in Ukraine, where the people’s widespread frustration with the government was used for instigating a coup d’état from abroad. This has triggered a civil war.¹⁰¹

For Putin, the entire conflict was the fault of western interventions into the sovereign state of Ukraine. The Ukrainian people may have chosen to move west, but this choice was a false one orchestrated by foreign powers. Just as Poroshenko argued that the Crimean people were not legitimately choosing their identity because of outside influence, Putin suggests that the Ukrainian people had been unduly influenced from abroad. Therefore the choice of Ukraine to move towards Europe was illegitimate and did not reflect the genuine will and self-determination of the Ukrainian people.

Putin defends his own military’s actions in Ukraine as acting in the interests of the Ukrainian people, especially those in the eastern Donbas Region. He describes eastern Ukrainians as being under constant threat, with few political rights, including that of self-determination: “Ukraine’s territorial integrity cannot be secured through the use of threats or military force, but it must be secured. The people of Donbas should have their rights and interests genuinely considered, and their choice respected.”¹⁰² In this narrative, Putin was intervening in eastern Ukraine to preserve the right of self-determination for the people in those regions. Putin argues of the people in these regions: “they should be engaged in devising the key elements of the

country's political system... Such steps would guarantee that Ukraine will develop as a civilized state, and a vital link in creating a common space of security and economic cooperation, both in Europe and in Eurasia.”¹⁰³ For Putin, the sovereignty of Ukraine, and especially those in Russian-friendly regions, was threatened by the current conflict orchestrated by a collection of foreign nations. He argues that the Ukrainian people need to choose their own destiny, but also that they have the ability to be both a part of Europe and to maintain close ties with Russia. In Putin’s narrative, the demand that they must be in Europe or in Russia’s control is a false one orchestrated by the west. Thus, for Putin, the legitimacy of Poroshenko’s definition of Ukrainian identity is a farce.

The European Union embraced Ukraine in part because EU leaders recognized the will of the Ukrainian people to be a part of Europe. In the Joint Statement by the Presidents of Ukraine, the European Council and the European Commission following the start of the EU Association Agreement’s adoption, the will of the Ukrainian people was acknowledged: “[The Association Agreement] follows the aspirations of the Ukrainian people, who have demonstrated their support for closer relations with the European Union, most recently in the parliamentary elections last Sunday.”¹⁰⁴ This was not a *coup* orchestrated by foreign powers; the Ukrainian people chose to move west, and they continued to do so long after the Maidan barricades went down in the form of repeated election results. European Commission head José Manuel Durão Barroso also acknowledged the choices of the Ukrainian people, noting that the Russian Federation rejected this choice:

I want to thank the people of Ukraine for their example. They clearly and courageously expressed their wish to take their future into their own hands.

Ukraine's best protection against any attempts to undermine its sovereignty is to build a strong democracy and a modern economy.... Ukraine wanted to sign, and eventually signed, the Association Agreement and Russia did not respect that. It did not want Ukraine to choose its path freely or determine its own future. And, this of course could not be accepted.¹⁰⁵

For the Ukrainian people, the choice to move towards Europe meant a commitment to democracy and a strong, European-style economy. Russian leaders, who wanted Ukrainians to stay under their sphere of influence, resisted these choices. Thus, Europe's choice to embrace Ukraine acknowledged their right to self-determination the Ukrainian articulation of their sovereignty and identity.

Questions of self-determination helped define the international organization debates surrounding Ukrainian nationalism. Those choices, and the legitimacy of those decisions, were central components of identity. Both Russia and western nations and organizations argued that the other side was resistant to the genuine will of the Ukrainian people. If the Ukrainian people chose a Russian identity, or a European orientation, neither side could accept that this choice was made free from influence. Because questions of self-determination are at the core of national identity and sovereignty articulations, nations wrestle with their role in global communities by adjudicating these conflicting claims of nationalism, borders, and laws.

Implications of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty in an international setting

Themes of international law, internationalism in the form of shared values and global communities, and self-determination helped define international responses to the Ukraine crisis. The ways in which each organization—the UN, EU, and NATO—and each major national actor involved—Ukraine, Russia, and the United States—deployed these themes reflect unique rhetorical strategies and exigencies.

The overarching role of international organizations in this conflict fluctuated depending on their perspective, and the ways in which they interacted with the nations involved.

Throughout the Cold War, United Nations had long been at the center of global sparing between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Vietnam War among many other events were litigated on the world stage at the UN. However, the purpose remained the same in global conflicts after the Cold War—to maintain global peace and to negotiate global political differences. In the case of the Ukraine conflict, that meant deciding whose interpretation of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty was legitimate.

The Russian Federation argued both that the Ukrainian people—at least those in Crimea and eastern Ukraine—wanted closer ties with the Russian Federation, and also that such a choice between Europe and Russia was a false one. Paradoxically, the Russian representatives both asserted a definition of Ukrainian identity while simultaneously claiming that such assertions were foundationally incorrect because Ukraine could be *both* in Europe and aligned with Russia. Analysis of Putin’s response to the events suggests that he frequently deployed a *tu quoque fallacy* to navigate this paradox. This argument (which is Latin for “You too!”) is an appeal to hypocrisy, asserting that because someone contradicted his or her own argument, his or her entire claim is therefore false. The strategy works by undercutting the credibility of an opponent rather than defending yourself against an argument, appealing to an audience’s need for consistency between words and actions. The *tu quoque* argument has long been a frequently used tool of politicians and especially

for Russian ones. Here, Putin claims that the United States frequently flaunted the decisions of the Security Council, implicitly referring to the second Iraq War. Yet, the United States calls on Russia to respect the outcome of United Nations decisions on the current conflict.

Putin's argument is that the United Nations is only respected when it is useful for American interests. While the American and Ukrainian side "won" every major debate about Ukrainian sovereignty and identity before the United Nations in terms of votes from the international community, Russia's veto on those same measures short-circuited the adjudicatory role the UN might have played in the conflict. The measures were defeated by the Russian Federation's unilateral veto, despite being in the clear minority in world opinion. Thus, the UN failed to legitimize any definition of Ukrainian nationalism. As Glanville argues, these failures are not entirely unexpected as the United Nations—even in a post-Libya "Responsibility to Protect" world—often fails to uphold its obligations to both peoples and humanitarian interests for structural reasons:

States variously argued that there was need for Security Council reform, agreement to restrain the exercise of veto, and clarification of criteria to guide decision making on the authorization of coercive measures, not only to prevent abusive misapplication of the "responsibility to protect" but also to ensure that the council would indeed exercise its authority, where appropriate, to ensure the protection of populations.¹⁰⁶

The paradox that has plagued the United Nations since its founding—intervening around the world in the defense of human rights and a strident belief in the principle of non-intervention—appears to remain intact, even in a post-Cold War world. These events call into question the effectiveness of the UN to decide the outcome of questions of national identity in a post-Cold War era.

Whereas the UN attempted to serve an adjudicatory function in global affairs, the EU and NATO both had much more specific regional interests at stake. They interpreted events in ways that took a clear side between Russia and the United States and accepted definitions of Ukrainian identity in line with those determinations. This often came with concrete financial assistance, and arguments steeped in the rhetoric of self-determination, international law, and the shared values of progressive European democracies. The Ukrainian people now have Visa-free travel to Europe as part of an agreement with the EU, a dream of the Ukrainian people for decades.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, the Ukrainian army continues to participate in NATO military training and support as the fight against Russian forces in eastern Ukraine is ongoing.¹⁰⁸ Whereas the UN failed to offer tangible support, the EU and NATO not only endorsed Ukraine's vision of their own nationalism, but also followed through in ways impacting the lives of the Ukrainian people. This showcases that international organizations must support interpretations of national identity and sovereignty in ways reflecting a changing post-Cold War world. Russia's continued influence in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine despite the efforts of international organizations to condemn these actions shows the legacy of the Cold War. Ukraine is unable to break free from Russia's sphere of influence because the paradox of their identity is also entrenched in Russian memory that is promulgated widely on the international stage and reflected in global structures like the United Nations; with Russia's powerful influence in that community, efforts to move Ukraine closer to Europe are vetoed, and such moves away from Russia's sphere of influence become much more difficult.

¹ “Ukraine: Speaker Oleksandr Turchynov named interim president,” *BBC News*, 23 February 2014.

² Natalie Nougayrede, “Poland’s warning to Europe: Russia’s aggression in Ukraine changes everything,” *The Guardian*, 10 April 2015.

³ The United Nations was frequently called on throughout the Cold War to adjudicate disputes between the United States and the Soviet Union. For instance, the Cuban Missile Crisis saw ambassadors Zorin and Stevenson squared off at the UN, and the body also weighed in on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. See: Robert Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2011) and Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (Hoover Press, Vol. 251.1985).

⁴ Ishay, *ibid.*

⁵ Ishay xxi.

⁶ Ishay *ibid.*

⁷ Ishay *ibid.* Conflicts within nations about international relations can seem contradictory on the surface. However, such disputes frequently happen! Leaders argue over a nation’s place in international alliances and over their government’s role in helping solving international disputes. The congressional debate over the League of Nations is one example.

⁸ Ian Clarke, *Legitimacy in International Society* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 51.

⁹ Glanville, *ibid.*

¹⁰ Hedley Bull, *Justice in International Relations: Hagey Lectures* (1948: Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo), 11-12.

¹¹ Glanville, 51.

¹² See above for the Beveridge comments and more evidence and examples.

¹³ Albert Beveridge, “The March of the Flag,” 16 September 1898, *Voices of Democracy*.

¹⁴ Harold Josephson, *James T. Shotwell and the Rise of Internationalism in America* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press), 69.

¹⁵ N. Gordon Levin, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 4.

¹⁶ Wilson campaigned around the country to rally support his League of Nations proposal. Richard Ellis, ed. *Speaking to the People: The Rhetorical Presidency in Historical Perspective* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998).

¹⁷ Woodrow Wilson, “An Address to a Joint Session of Congress: January 8, 1918,” in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 45, November 11, 1917-January 15, 1918*, edited by Arthur S. Link (Princeton University Press, 1984), 536-38.

¹⁸ As discussed, radio host Reverend Charles Coughlin and Charles Lindbergh’s “America First” organization each lobbied to keep the United States out of the conflict. This is to say that in American history, people arguing internationalist positions frequently lose.

¹⁹ As mentioned, just as nationalism can unite and divide people, so can internationalism.

²⁰ *United Nations Charter*, 26 June 1945.

²¹ Harry Truman, quoted in United Nations Information Organizations, *Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, 1945*, Vols. 1, 3, 6 (New York: United Nations Information Organizations).

²² Glanville, 138.

²³ Glanville, 145-146.

²⁴ Goodrich, Leland and Edvard Hambro, *Charter of the United Nations: Commentary and Documents, 2nd ed.*, Articles 1(3) and 1(2) (London: Stevens and Sons, 1949).

²⁵ Glanville, 159.

²⁶ Arnold Horelick, “The Cuban Missile Crisis,” *An Analysis of Soviet Calculations and Behavior* (1962).

²⁷ Valerian Zorin, “Telegram from the UN Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry,” 23 October 1962, *Wilson Center*.
<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/1119161>

²⁸ Robert Kennedy, *Thirteen days: A memoir of the Cuban missile crisis* (WW Norton & Company, 2011). Zorin continued, “We will demand a condemnation of the USA

aggressions, the immediate cessation of the blockade they have declared and all infractions of maritime freedom; and an immediate end to all forms of intervention in the domestic affairs of the Republic of Cuba.”

²⁹ Adlai Stevenson, “UN Security Council Address on Soviet Missiles in Cuba,” 25 October 1962.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/adlaistevensonunitednationscuba.html>
Stevensen continued, “You, the Soviet Union, has sent these weapons to Cuba. You, the Soviet Union, has upset the balance of power in the world. You, the Soviet Union, has created this new danger, not the United States.”

³⁰ Glanville, 168.

³¹ Glanville explains that the Cold War also saw a shift to a diverse way of thinking about sovereignty as non-intervention compared to human rights: “...while they may have prevailed for the most part, the ‘traditional’ rights of sovereignty were not uncontested during the Cold War. A competing vision of legitimate statehood that insisted that states had a responsibility to promote and defend the human rights upon which their sovereignty was grounded was repeatedly hinted at in the adoption of human rights covenants, in the opposition of postcolonial and Soviet bloc states to racial discrimination and reporting of human rights violations within states...it was increasingly accepted that not only were states accountable to their own people, but they could legitimately be subject to scrutiny and condemnation by international society” (170).

³² Glanville, 181.

³³ Perez de Cuellar, United Nations Report 46.1, 13 September 1991.

³⁴ Mary Stuckey, “Jimmy Carter, Human Rights, and Instrumental Effects of Presidential Rhetoric,” *The Handbook of Rhetoric and Public Address* (John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 294.

³⁵ Glanville argues that at this point, sovereignty was interpreted almost entirely from a framework of non-intervention. He argues: “The supposed ‘traditional’ definition of sovereignty had become so entrenched that sovereignty was understood in terms of a right to non-intervention, and the international enforcement of human rights was framed as its antithesis” (182). The shift to a more interventionist, “responsibility to protect” principle in the international communities is thus a tremendous shift for scholars, though Glanville himself does not believe such a shift actually happened, instead suggesting that the “responsibility to protect” can be seen throughout history.

³⁶ Glanville, 171.

³⁷ Glanville, 171.

³⁸ United Nations, A/60/I, 24 October 2005.

³⁹ The EU was founded in a much smaller form following World War II, and was essentially designed by the governments of France and Germany—having endured two brutal wars against each other in three decades—to so intertwine their economies that attacking the other would be financial disaster. For an entertaining account of the EU’s founding, see “France and Germany: A love story,” 24 October 2011, *National Public Radio, Planet Money Podcast*, <http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2011/10/21/141512746/france-and-germany-a-love-story> The EU would slowly expand, and eventually it took its current form in 1993. “The founding principles of the Union,” 1 November 1993, *European Union*, http://europa.eu/scadplus/constitution/objectives_en.htm

⁴⁰ The EU charter explains, “Any European State wishing to become a member of the Union must respect these values in order to be considered eligible for admission.” “The founding principles of the Union,” *ibid.*

⁴¹ “The North Atlantic Treaty,” 4 April 1949, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm

⁴² This provision, Article 5 of the Charter, has only been invoked once in NATO’s history—by the United States following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

⁴³ All United Nations General Assembly speeches were translated and summarized by the United Nations and posted on their website. “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *United Nations Sixty-Eighth General Assembly*, 27 March 2014, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/ga11493.doc.htm>

⁴⁴ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁴⁵ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Glanville, 17.

⁴⁷ Glanville, 59.

⁴⁸ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁴⁹ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵⁰ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵¹ “Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements Minsk,” *United Nations Sixty-Eighth General Assembly*, 12 February 2015, http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2202.pdf

⁵² “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.* Christian Wenaweser’s commentary was summarized by the United Nations, and no direct translation was offered in the official account of the assembly meeting.

⁵³ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵⁴ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵⁵ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵⁶ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵⁷ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵⁸ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁵⁹ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁶⁰ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁶¹ Petro Poroshenko, “Statement by the President at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” *Office of the President of Ukraine*,

29 September 2015, <http://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/vistup-prezidenta-ukrayini-na-zagalnih-debatah-70-yi-sesiya-36057>

⁶² Petro Poroshenko, “Statement by the President at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” *ibid.*

⁶³ Petro Poroshenko, “Statement by the President at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” *ibid.*

⁶⁴ José Manuel Durão Barroso, “Working together for a united Ukraine in a united continent,” *European Commission*, 12 September 2014, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-598_en.htm

⁶⁵ “Joint Statement of the NATO-Ukraine Commission,” *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 4 September 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/news_112695.htm?selectedLocale=en

⁶⁶ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “NATO Secretary General statement on the extraordinary meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission,” *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 15 January 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_116862.htm?selectedLocale=en

⁶⁷ “Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements Minsk,” *ibid.*

⁶⁸ “Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements Minsk,” *ibid.*

⁶⁹ “Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements Minsk,” *ibid.*

⁷⁰ Petro Poroshenko, “Statement by the President at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” *ibid.*

⁷¹ Petro Poroshenko, “Statement by the President at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” *ibid.*

⁷² Vladimir Putin, “70th Session of the UN General Assembly,” *Office of the President of Russia*, 28 September 2015, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/50385>

⁷³ “Joint Statement of the NATO-Ukraine Commission,” *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 4 September 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/news_112695.htm?selectedLocale=en

⁷⁴ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, *ibid.*

⁷⁵ Johannes Hahn, “Remarks at the International Conference on Support for Ukraine,” *European Commission*, 25 April 2015, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-4884_en.htm

⁷⁶ “Joint Statement by the Presidents of Ukraine, the European Council and the European Commission on the occasion of the beginning of the provisional application of the Association Agreement,” *European Commission*, 31 October 2014, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-349_en.htm

⁷⁷ Valdis Dombrovskis, “Ukraine—Test Case for the West,” *European Commission*, 16 September 2016, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-16-3087_en.htm

⁷⁸ José Manuel Durão Barroso, “Working together for a united Ukraine in a united continent,” *ibid.*

⁷⁹ David M. Hersvenhorn, “Thousands protest Ukraine’s rejection of trade pacts,” *New York Times*, 24 November 2013.

⁸⁰ “Ukraine-EU Visa Deal Uncertain,” *Euronews*, 11 September 2015.

⁸¹ Dmitry Zaks, “Ukraine snubs free travel to Europe over anti-gay law,” *Yahoo News*, 15 November 2015.

⁸² Masha Gessen, “The Assault on Kiev Pride,” *The New Yorker*, 6 June 2015.

⁸³ Veronika Melkozerova, “Vigilante group targets gays and others in violent promotion of its ‘family values,’” *Kiev Post*, 2 November 2015.

⁸⁴ Zaks *ibid.*

⁸⁵ “Ukrainian MPs pass anti-discrimination law on 5th time of asking: EU visa-free regime nears,” *Ukraine Today*, 13 November 2015.

⁸⁶ Petro Poroshenko, “We’re Making Steady Progress in Ukraine, Despite Putin,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10 June 2015.

⁸⁷ “Ukraine passes law outlawing discrimination against gay workers,” *Euronews*, 12 November 2015.

⁸⁸ Glanville, 18.

⁸⁹ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹⁰ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹¹ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹² “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹³ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.* The Cuban delegation expressed similar objections, as this report of the UN debate highlights: “Rodolfo Reyes Rodriguez of Cuba also stressed the importance of allowing peoples to exercise their right to self-determination, saying that his delegation would not accept the current Ukrainian authorities because they had assumed power by overthrowing the constitutional Government through violence. Cuba also opposed sanctions against the Russian Federation and rejected the double standards and hypocrisy shown by Western States. With their military doctrines, the United States and its allies violated international law and threatened the sovereignty of other States, he said, emphasizing that any attempt to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) posed a threat to the region’s peace and stability.”

⁹⁴ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹⁵ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹⁶ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹⁷ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.*

⁹⁸ “General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region,” *ibid.* Power would add: “Ukraine was justified in seeking a vote that would reaffirm respect for its borders and help encourage the Russian Federation to end its isolation and shift from its policy of confrontation to good-faith diplomatic efforts.”

⁹⁹ Petro Poroshenko, “Statement by the President at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Vladimir Putin, “70th Session of the UN General Assembly,” *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Vladimir Putin, “70th Session of the UN General Assembly,” *ibid.*

¹⁰² Vladimir Putin, “70th Session of the UN General Assembly,” *ibid.*

¹⁰³ Vladimir Putin, “70th Session of the UN General Assembly,” *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ “Joint Statement of the NATO-Ukraine Commission,” *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ José Manuel Durão Barroso, “Working together for a united Ukraine in a united continent,” *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Glanville, 202.

¹⁰⁷ “Ukraine hails Visa-free travel to European Union,” *BBC News*, 11 June 2017.

¹⁰⁸ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Relations with Ukraine,” http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_37750.htm#. More details on the changing NATO-Ukraine relationship in light of recent Russian interventions: “In parallel to its political support to Ukraine, NATO has significantly stepped up its practical assistance to Ukraine. Immediately following the illegal and illegitimate ‘annexation’ of Crimea by Russia, NATO foreign ministers agreed on measures to enhance Ukraine’s ability to provide for its own security. They also decided to further develop their practical support to Ukraine, based on a significant enhancement of existing cooperation programmes as well as the development of substantial new programmes. Allied leaders followed up on these decisions a few months later at a meeting with newly elected President Petro Poroshenko at the NATO Summit in Wales (September 2014). They decided to strengthen existing programmes on defence education, professional development, security sector governance and security-related scientific cooperation, to reinforce the advisory presence at the NATO offices in Kyiv and to launch substantial new programme...”

Conclusion

Nearly four years have passed since the Revolution of Dignity, and celebration has turned to frustration as Ukraine is still struggling to define its identity and sovereignty in the post-Cold War. Ukraine's leaders are striving to articulate a unified nationalist discourse and move beyond the myths and memories of the Cold War. Its identity and sovereignty remain trapped between its Soviet past and European future, between east and west. Its nationalism continues to be a political football between the United States and the Russian Federation, as international organizations likewise struggle to adjudicate the dispute or legitimize claims of Ukraine's sovereign identity. Andrew Higgins and Andrew Kramer argue that Ukraine's pluralism has been the nation-state's undoing: "[Ukraine is a] fragile state that is too fragmented by competing economic and regional interests to impose either Russian-style authoritarianism or European-style rule of law."¹ No one side can win out, even after a revolution brought down the pro-Russian Yanykovich government in 2014 and presented Ukrainians with a chance to start fresh and define their identity as a post-Soviet nation-state. This project suggests that these results cannot be surprising because the key players from the first Cold War are fighting a second Cold War through a series of fronts: cyber warfare, economic sanctions, diplomatic deliberations, propaganda exchanges, and military maneuvers. Many developing nations, including Ukraine, are caught in the cross-fire involving Russia, the United States, and international organizations, which leave many struggling from the Middle East through Europe with this post-Cold War paradox.

This project produces four important takeaways. First, Ukraine has remained entrenched in its pre-Soviet myths and memories and its Soviet Cold War history inhibiting the nation's articulation of a unifying post-Cold War identity. Soviet legacies of language and corruption continue to hinder Ukraine's development of a unifying national identity. The ongoing battle over a national language represents one such cultural legacy of the Cold War. On September 5, 2017, the Ukrainian Parliament passed a bill requiring that Ukrainian be the sole language of study in schools from the fifth grade on.² The bill was condemned by pundits as a transparent attempt by President Poroshenko's political party to punish Russian-speaking regions, which support President Putin's interventions in eastern Ukraine and Crimea, and curry populist favor with western, Ukrainian-speaking regions.³ Poroshenko soon signed the bill into law, attempting to express a more cohesive Ukrainian identity based in language. However, the law did not have the desired impact; while Russian-speaking regions condemned the proposed law, western Ukrainians—many of whom spoke Romanian, Polish, and Hungarian—also resisted the bill.⁴ Because of Ukraine's diverse linguistic heritage, language cannot help unify Ukraine in the post-Cold War. Requiring the Russian language in schools—as the Soviet Union had done for half a century—had a similar divisive impact.⁵ Thus, Ukraine continues to be caught in a paradox between its Cold War past, with its legacy of the Russian language, and a nascent Ukrainian nationalism that embraces the Ukrainian language only. The failure of Poroshenko's plan to unite Ukrainians over a shared language illustrates the difficulties its leaders face in moving Ukraine forward.

Ukraine also struggles to move beyond its Cold War past that is defined by corruption.⁶ President Poroshenko's inability to fully establish an anti-corruption court—a key campaign promise—is a foundational problem in shifting to a post-Cold War identity.⁷ Glanville explains: “When a sovereign state proves unwilling or unable to protect its own population, it yields its sovereign right of nonintervention, and the responsibility to protect passes on to the society of states.”⁸ Russia uses this rationale to justify its actions in eastern Ukraine and Crimea by calling Ukraine a corrupt oligarchy that needs saving.⁹ At the same time, the United States and international organizations say Russia is corrupt and violating Ukraine's right of self-determination. There is a concerted push to end the corruption and yet the Ukrainian government seems to make only very slow progress in cleaning up its fraudulent past.¹⁰ This has invited condemnation from the west—Chapter 3 explored American leaders frequently demanding that Ukraine make progress in fighting corruption, and EU leaders have also called on Ukraine to do more.¹¹ Russia also condemns Ukraine's corruption, yet also contributes to these issues by supporting various Ukrainian oligarchs.¹²

Second, Ukraine has experienced a cycle of unrest linked to its pre-Soviet history and exacerbated by the post-Cold War paradox. A foundational resistance to outside rule defines Ukraine's identity. That identity is deepened by the Revolution of Dignity in many ways mirroring the nation's Cossack fight for independence in the fifteenth century. Taras Chornovil explains: “What is Ukraine's national idea? It is resistance to authority.”¹³ This resistance to authority can be directed at outside rule from the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation, but also aimed at internal political

alliances. In this cycle of unrest, a sitting government predictably stalls after failing to live up to the revolutionary promise. Another crisis follows, until the heroes of *that* crisis are themselves removed from power (either by force or the vote) for failing to make life better. Such a cycle of unrest happened after the 2004 Orange Revolution saw Viktor Yushenko defeat Viktor Yanykovich only for Yushenko to become wildly unpopular soon after when his administration failed to live up to his promises during the crisis.¹⁴ The 2014 Revolution of Dignity is currently repeating this cycle as Poroshenko is struggling to meet the demands of the crisis that brought him to power.

Unfortunately for Poroshenko, his slow progress on fighting corruption and his heavy-handed Ukrainian language law invited internal opposition. This internal dissension is showing signs of inciting another change of power at a time of great fragility in the country's sovereignty. On September 10, 2017, Mikhail Saakashvili and a mob of his supporters forced their way past Ukrainian police at the Ukrainian-Polish border. *Al Jazeera* explains his role in Ukrainian politics: "Saakashvili was appointed to the Odessa post in 2015 on the strength of his record of fighting corruption in Georgia. However, he resigned the post after only 18 months, complaining that official corruption in Ukraine was so entrenched he could not work effectively."¹⁵ Regardless, Saakashvili's return to Ukraine represents a populist attempt to challenge Poroshenko from the left, primarily on the topic of corruption. Yulia Tymoshenko—former two-term Prime Minister and populist politician—was also with Saakashvili on the border, and recently announced that she would challenge Poroshenko in the 2019 presidential election.¹⁶ Poroshenko has gone from revolutionary hero to target for political revolutionaries in less than four years.

Saakashvilli and Tymoshenko appear poised to head back to the barricades of Maidan. The myths of Cossack resistance to outside rule are still strong in Ukraine, and contributed to Ukraine's post-Cold War paradox.

Third, Ukraine's polarization has formed an opening for other nations to meddle and interfere, challenging its sovereignty while seeking to bolster Ukraine's right of self-determination. Ukraine is accorded such a right of self-determination from the United States and Europe so long as decisions cohere with their own foreign policy goals. The United States and Russia have kept Ukraine divided in their battle over the hearts and minds of the Ukrainian people, while international organizations have failed to legitimize either side's vision for Ukrainian identity and sovereignty. Russia in particular has meddled with Ukrainian territory. Poroshenko is under attack from his political left in western Ukraine and the Russian government's invasion of eastern Ukraine and occupation of Crimea are ongoing. At dusk on September 26, 2017, a Ukrainian munitions depot exploded in eastern Ukraine (Kalynivka). Media reports outline the damage: "Some 32,000 metric tons of artillery shells worth \$800 million were destroyed in the chain of fires and explosions at the site. By comparison, Ukrainian forces are estimated to have used some 24,000 metric tons of munitions during the fighting in eastern Ukraine."¹⁷ The attack mirrored a similar explosion in March near the eastern town of Balaklia. That explosion was also disastrous: "Some 70,000 metric tons of munitions were destroyed in the incident, with one person killed amid damage estimated at some \$1 billion."¹⁸ The Ukrainian security services believe that a drone from Russian operatives carrying a thermite hand grenade caused the explosions.¹⁹

The same day as the Kalynivka explosion, the Russian-made film *Crimea* premiered in the peninsula and in Russia.²⁰ This film represents another example of Russian efforts to undermine Ukrainian unification. Depicting the heroic Crimean people resisting authoritarian rule from Kiev and declaring their independence, the film romanticizes the Russian and Crimean visions of Ukrainian identity, steeped in Cold War propaganda themes of the Great Patriotic War. Russian efforts to continue the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine also reinforce the post-Cold War paradox. With territory under dispute, Ukraine struggles to move all of its sovereign land towards a European alliance. Propaganda efforts like the *Crimea* film also suggest that the Russian government is fighting a battle for the hearts and minds of the Crimean people. The Russian Federation's attempts to draw Ukraine back into its orbit either through force (Crimea), terrorist acts (the downing of the Malaysian Airlines passenger jet), or through propaganda (the "Crimea" film) limit Ukraine's ability to construct a post-Cold War identity.

The United States has also attempted to influence Ukraine's political direction. Newly minted U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Jon Huntsman, made Ukrainian sovereignty a priority. As the *Associated Press* explained, Huntsman identified ways to improve U.S.-Russian relations. The "first step," Huntsman argued, was for Russia to return "control" to Ukraine over "its internationally recognized borders."²¹ Huntsman's comments came just weeks after the U.S. Senate approved a \$500 military aid package to Ukraine, including lethal defensive weapons.²² The United States is thus making combating Russian actions in Ukraine a fiscal and diplomatic priority.

These actions by the Russian Federation and the United States will do little to wrestle Ukraine free from its post-Cold War paradox. The United States sending Ukraine \$500 million in weapons only to have them blown up by Russian drones does not help Ukraine settle the conflict. With Russian support for Ukrainians favoring a pro-Russian orientation, and U.S. support for Ukrainians wanting closer European ties, both sides are emboldened in a battle that will likely produce many casualties in its pursuit of victory. This perpetual attempts to meddle in Ukrainian politics helps keep Ukraine in a liminal space that is neither fully integrated into Europe, nor re-integrated with the Russian Federation. International organizations can only watch as this chaos invites outside intervention from Russia and the United States, each hoping to nudge the Ukrainian people towards their side, or at least prevent other global powers from earning Ukraine's allegiance. This ongoing conflict only weakens Ukraine, inviting more interference from global powers, and pushing Ukraine farther away from finding a unifying post-Cold War identity. Cold War II has no end in sight.

Finally, the events in Ukraine also highlight the paradox inherent in the ideologies of sovereignty: the right of self-determination and non-interference from outside forces versus the belief that sovereign nations have a responsibility to protect other vulnerable nations. These dueling foreign policy assumptions (or the multiple and often competing traditions that plague political thought) foretell a dim future for those struggling for sovereignty in post-colonized or post-war periods.²³ Once freed from aggressor nations, a new battle begins over the hearts and minds of the newly liberated people. This battle is exacerbated by former super powers trying to return to

the past state of dominance and other super powers and international organizations trying to direct public opinion away from the aggressor nations to their side. The forces of these historical ideologies make it difficult for not only the freed nations struggling for self-determination, but also for the superpowers mired in the battle to transition from war to peace and to recognize the sovereignty of nations they once controlled. Efforts to re-envision the nation-state are complicated and often filled with entrenched obstacles.

In the end, this study shows the force of ideas in conceptualizing nationalism and war. Multiple agreements can be reached to end hot wars and cold wars but the ideas that animate them survive and recirculate, inhibiting an ability to re-envision a new nationalism based in newly acquired sovereignty and independence. The Ukrainian crisis shows the difficulty of reconstituting identity and land in new ways, unmooring both from past myths and memories.

¹ Higgins, Andrew and Andrew Kramer, “Schooled in Scandal: What Makes Ukraine a Hotbed of Intrigue,” *New York Times*, 7 October 2017.

² Tony Wesolowsky, “Ukrainian Language Bill Facing Barrage of Criticism From Minorities, Foreign Capitals,” *Radio Free Europe*, 24 September 2017.

³ “Kyiv ‘disappointed’ as Romanian President Cancels Ukraine Visit Over Language Bill,” *Radio Free Europe*, 22 September 2017.

⁴ The Russian Foreign Ministry condemned the law, saying Ukraine was trying to “forcefully establish a mono-ethnic language regime in a multinational state.” From

“Ukrainian President Signs Controversial Language Bill Into Law,” *Radio Free Europe*, 26 September 2017. Yaroslav Halas, the spokesman for the governor of the western Zakarpattia region, condemned the legislation: “We understand that this law is primarily directed against the Russian language, because it dominates the capital, the eastern regions. But in Transcarpathia, it hits the national minorities... This law is aimed at protecting the Ukrainian language, but mostly against Russian. It is not aimed at protecting the 150,000 Hungarians or several tens of thousands of Romanians who also live in the Chernivtsi region, or the Odesa region, where Moldovans and Gagauzians live.” From Wesolowsky, *ibid*.

⁵ The Russian language was mandated in Ukraine throughout the entire Soviet occupation. See Arel, Dominique Ariel, “Language politics in independent Ukraine: Towards one or two state languages?,” *Nationalities papers* 23, no. 3 (1995): 597-622.

⁶ It is difficult to explain the depth of corruption in Ukraine. Oliver Bullough explains: “Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index – the most widely used indicator of corruption worldwide – rates Ukraine 142nd in the world, alongside Uganda. In the latest ranking, it fell behind Nigeria.” Oliver Bullough, “Welcome to Ukraine, the most corrupt nation in Europe,” *The Guardian*, 6 February 2015.

⁷ Christopher Miller, “Ukrainian Activists Celebrate Anti-Corruption Court ‘Victory,’ But Cry Foul Over New Judicial-Reform Bill,” *Radio Free Europe*, 5 October 2017. While the anti-corruption court was established, the widely criticized Ukrainian Supreme Court—itsself often the subject of corruption allegations—will hear the cases. Miller explains: “once signed into law there also be a new ‘specialized anticorruption chamber in the new Supreme Court that would be the appellate body in all anticorruption cases.’ The Supreme Court has been heavily scrutinized of late, with the selection process for a new judge mired in scandal—as 30 of the 120 candidates put forth failed to meet ethical standards or account for their assets, according to reports that cite the Public Integrity Council, a civil-society watchdog.”

⁸ Glanville, 8.

⁹ Serhiy A. Leshchenko, opposition member in the Ukrainian parliament, explains: “The thread that ties strange things together in Ukraine is nearly always corruption.” From Higgins and Kramer, *ibid*.

¹⁰ Khomei, Oksana, Alena Permakova, Dmytro Sydorenko and Balazs Jarabik, “A Bittersweet Victory: Ukraine’s Association Agreement with the EU,” *New Eastern Europe*, 10 July 2017.

¹¹ Williams, Matthias, and Pavel Polityuk, "Corruption undermining Ukraine's progress, EU's Juncker," *Reuters*, 13 July 2017. European Commission Chief Jean-Claude Juncker explained: "What we are asking ... is to increase the fight against corruption, because corruption is undermining all the efforts this great nation is undertaking. We remain very concerned."

¹² This dynamic is explored in the following passage from Grey, Stephen, Tom Bergin, Sevgil Musaieva and Roman Anin, "Putin's allies channeled billions to Ukraine oligarch," *Reuters*, 26 November 2014. "In Russia, powerful friends helped him make a fortune. "In the United States, officials want him extradited and put behind bars. In Austria, where he is currently free on bail of \$155 million, authorities have yet to decide what to do with him. He is Dmitry Firtash, a former fireman and soldier. In little more than a decade, the Ukrainian went from obscurity to wealth and renown, largely by buying gas from Russia and selling it in his home country. His success was built on remarkable sweetheart deals brokered by associates of Russian leader Vladimir Putin, at immense cost to Russian taxpayers, a Reuters investigation shows. Russian government records reviewed for this article reveal for the first time the terms of recent deals between Firtash and Russia's Gazprom, a giant gas company majority owned by the state. According to Russian customs documents detailing the trades, Gazprom sold more than 20 billion cubic metres of gas well below market prices to Firtash over the past four years - about four times more than the Russian government has publicly acknowledged. The price Firtash paid was so low, Reuters calculates, that companies he controlled made more than \$3 billion on the arrangement. Over the same time period, other documents show, bankers close to Putin granted Firtash credit lines of up to \$11 billion. That credit helped Firtash, who backed pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich's successful 2010 bid to become Ukraine's president, to buy a dominant position in the country's chemical and fertiliser industry and expand his influence. The Firtash story is more than one man's grab for riches. It demonstrates how Putin uses Russian state assets to create streams of cash for political allies, and how he exported this model to Ukraine in an attempt to dominate his neighbour, which he sees as vital to Russia's strategic interests. With the help of Firtash, Yanukovich won power and went on to rule Ukraine for four years. The relationship had great geopolitical value for Putin: Yanukovich ended up steering the nation of more than 44 million away from the West's orbit and towards Moscow's until he was overthrown in February."

¹³ Taken from Higgins and Kramer, *ibid*.

¹⁴ Kuzio, Taras Kuzio, "Nationalism, identity and civil society in Ukraine: Understanding the Orange Revolution," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 43, no. 3 (2010): 285-296.

¹⁵ "Stateless Saakashvilli forces his way into Ukraine," *Al Jazeera*, 10 September 2017.

¹⁶ “Tymoshenko said on air on NewsOne TV station that she will run for president ‘to lift Ukraine from its knees.’” Anna Yakutenko, “Tymoshenko confirms she will run for president in 2019,” *Kyiv Post*, 14 October 2017. Whether Tymoshenko has the qualities needed to unite Ukraine, or even accomplish the basics of governing, remains to be seen. Her firebrand style of politics, and hyper-nationalist rhetoric, was deeply off-putting for many in “swing” oblasts in central Ukraine during her 2010 electoral defeat to Viktor Yankovych, and her two terms as Prime Minister resulted in few tangible accomplishments. Saakashvili is similarly polarizing. His appeal seems to be that he fought Russian invaders during the 2008 Georgian conflict, but he, too, has few accomplishments on his record beyond populist slogans and anti-Russian rhetoric. This is a main problem for Ukraine—revolutionaries are rarely skilled at actually governing. Even Poroshenko, whose primary qualification before his election was running a chocolate business, seems ill-equipped to handle the monumental tasks before him.

¹⁷ Tony Wesolowski, “Ukraine’s Exploding Munitions Depot Gives Ammunition to Security Concerns,” *Radio Free Europe*, 6 October 2017.

¹⁸ Wesolowski, “Ukraine’s Exploding Munitions Depot Gives Ammunition to Security Concerns,” *ibid.*

¹⁹ Andrew Caring, “Did a Russian Drone Blow Up a Ukrainian Ammo Base?” *Voaciv*, 31 July 2017. In other words, Russian personnel were able to destroy nearly \$2 billion worth of Ukrainian equipment with a drone currently selling for \$89.99 on Amazon, with free shipping for Amazon Prime customers: “Holy Stone HS160 Shadow FPV RC Drone with 720P HD Wi-Fi Camera Live Video Feed 2.4GHz 6-Axis Gyro Quadcopter for Kids & Beginners - Altitude Hold, One Key Start, Foldable Arms, Bonus Battery,” *Amazon.com*, 15 October 2017, https://www.amazon.com/Holy-Stone-Shadow-Quadcopter-Beginners/dp/B074S2HK59/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?ie=UTF8&qid=1508095208&sr=8-1-spons&keywords=drone&psc=1 I assume the price of the grenade was marginal. This is clearly an unsustainable model for the Ukrainian military.

²⁰ Tom Balmforth, “Blockbuster Or Flop? Russia’s Flick About Crimea Takeover Gets Lackluster Reception,” *Radio Free Europe*, 6 October 2017.

²¹ *Associated Press*, “US Ambassador to Russia Says Ukraine Key to Improved Relations,” 7 October 2017.

²² Illia Ponomarenko, “US Senate approves \$500 million military aid, lethal weapons for Ukraine,” *Kyiv Post*, 19 September 2017.

²³ As mentioned, one such tradition includes theories of citizenship, as explored in Rogers M. Smith, *Civic ideals: Conflicting visions of citizenship in US history* (Yale University Press, 1999).

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