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EU-Ukraine relations: representations of Russia in the EU rhetoric towards Ukraine

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Abstract

Ukraine-Russia conflict that exploded in 2014 undermined the international law system's core, and the fundamentals of European as well as the global security architecture. The variety of research on the crisis issue provide different explanations of it. As the revolution in Ukraine started after Ukrainian government's refusal to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, it is assumed that the EU played a certain role in the conflict. Many researchers on EU-Ukraine relations (Haukkala, 2015&2016; House of Lords, 2015; Kuzio, 2017) articulate that the EU contributed to the conflict between Ukraine and Russia by not thinking strategically and misunderstanding Russia. Therefore, to research Russia's representations in the EU-Ukraine rhetoric preceding the crisis is necessary. Examining the EU's policies towards Ukraine as well as the speeches of the high-ranked EU officials throughout six-year period from 2008 until 2014 illustrates how the EU represented Russia in its foreign policy discourse within EU-Ukraine relations. The analysis attempts to reveal how Russia's representations led to its further exclusion from the European neighbourhood initiatives.

Keywords: European Union, Ukraine, Ukrainian conflict, European Neighbourhood Policy, Russia.

List of abbreviations

EU - European Union

ENP- European Neighbourhood Policy

EaP - Eastern Partnership

AA - Association Agreement

DCFTA - Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

EACU - Eurasian Customs Union

Table of contents

1. Introduction

In the end of 2013, global attention was drawn towards an unfolding crisis Ukraine. The crisis began with mass pro-European protests in Ukraine as a response to the government's refusal to sign the Association Agreement (AA) with the European Union (EU). The political instability in Ukraine escalated when Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014 and started an armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine. This led to the world community becoming a silent witness to fundamental changes in the international relations system when international law proved to be ineffective. International security agreements guaranteeing Ukraine's territorial integrity remained active only written on paper. The Ukrainian crisis undermined the international law system's core, and the fundamentals of European as well as the global security system (Umland, 2015). In the light of such a severe crisis, many researchers and politicians try to understand why the crisis happened, why Crimea was annexed by Russia and what triggered it.

As Ukrainian crisis flamed after the Ukrainian government refusal to sign the AA with the EU, the EU and particularly its relations with Ukraine play a certain role in why the crisis occurred. Many researchers claim that Ukrainian crisis is a consequence of the EU not thinking strategically in its foreign policy towards Ukraine. The EU did not seriously account in its policies for the Ukraine's geopolitical situation, namely Russia factor (Haukkala, 2008; Kuzio, 2017, House of Lords, 2015). Throughout the EU's intense rapprochement to Ukraine from 2008 until 2014, Russia gave clear signals of its growing concerns and dissatisfaction. This creates a necessity to examine how exactly the EU perceived Russia in its neighbourhood policies towards Ukraine. Since the EU foreign policy is often described from the standpoints of normative power (Manners, 2002) as having a benign and civilizing nature devoid of hard power methods, the construction of EU's foreign policy identity as a norm-setter is prevalent in the discourse around policies towards Ukraine. By employing discourse analysis the thesis will focus on how the EU as a normative power constructed Russia's image in the EU rhetoric with Ukraine. Therefore, the relevant research question is: How is Russia represented in the EU's discourse towards Ukraine?

Throughout the selected six-year period from 2008 till 2014, the EU's major foreign policy frameworks to deal with Ukraine were European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and its Eastern dimension called Eastern Partnership (EaP). The normative power discourse that appeared around these neighbourhood policy grids, captures the patterns of Russia's representations in the EU's official documents and statements towards Ukraine. Therefore, the research examined the ENP and EaP official documents and speeches of the EU's top-ranked

officials. The main goal was to study the extent of Russia's representations and their further communication to Ukraine through the EU's official political discourse with Ukraine.

The relevance of the research topic is determined by the peculiarities of the future EU integration processes and also what position Ukraine will take in dealing with both Russia and the EU in the conditions of continuing crisis. The thesis attempts to complement the existing research on the EU-Ukraine relations in terms of examining Russia's representations in the EU's political communication towards Ukraine.

1.1. Thesis structure

The thesis consists of six chapters. Each chapter is divided into subchapters. The second chapter introduces the theoretical foundations of the thesis in order to study Russia's representations in the EU-Ukraine discourse. The chapter outlines the EU's normative power discourse as a theoretical approach to the Russia's representations in the EU-Ukraine relations' rhetoric. Chapter proceeds from common representations of the EU's normative power to the reflections that normative power is a discursive category. Since the EU constructs its identity as a normative power that disseminates norms, the subsection on the Self and Other divide is also included. Further, the discussion on the "othering" effect within European normative power discourse is provided. The chapter is finalized by the academic critique of the EU's normative power approach to the neighbourhood. Third chapter outlines the methodology of the thesis. The chapter discusses discourse analysis as a methodological tool, justification for the method used, selection of the texts and time period for the analysis. In the last subsection of the chapter the validity, reliability and limitations of the research are discussed. Fourth chapter covers the historical background of the EU-Ukraine relations and the EU's initial rhetoric to Russia after its enlargement. Also, Russia's reactions to the EU's neighbourhood activities are discussed. Fifth chapter outlines the analysis of the selected EU's official documents and statements. The texts are analysed in the chronological order by dividing them into two subgroups of the EU's official policy documents and official statements of the EU's authorities. The main focus of the analysis lied on the rhetoric used to represent Russia in the EU-Ukraine political communication. The sixth chapter outlines the conclusions of the research.

2. Theoretical framework

. This chapter elaborates theoretical framework that is used to analyse how Russia was represented in the EU-Ukraine discourse. The framework is grounded on the image of the EU as normative power in international relations The chapter outlines the theoretical foundations to the study of the normative power concept as argued by Manners (2002, 2006), Diez (2005) and other researchers. The chapter consist of five subsections. The first subsection outlines the classical Manners' (2002) understanding of the EU's normative power. Second subsection outlines the arguments of Diez (2005) who takes Manners' ideas further and claims that the EU's normative power is discursively constructed. Diez (2005) argues that a construction of the EU as a normative power has a major drawback that is the "othering" practice. Therefore, next subsection is about the EU's Self and Other identity construction in the European neighbourhood policies. The subsection moves onto the EU's practice of "othering" through the normative power discourse. The academic critique about the EU's normative power dissemination in the neighbourhood finalizes the chapter.

2.1. Common conceptualization of the EU's normative power

Since the European Neighbourhood Policy and Eastern Partnership manifest the EU's normative power in governing the EU relations with Ukraine, the section outlines classic understanding of the European normative power. For the first time, idea of the normative power Europe was outlined by Manners' (2002). Manners (2002) proposed to consider Europe as a normative power due to a change of the EU position in the international relations after the end of the Cold War. The EU's gradual development and ratification of new normative treaties defined the European community vision and created not just an organization however, a unity of views and norms. This common vision formed the basis of EU's normative power (Manners, 2002).

Manners (2011) defines different meanings of normative power as such. Firstly, normative power is ideational that derives primarily from its normative nature rather than employs the material or physical means of influence. Therefore, EU policies attempt to normatively affect the activities of other actors. In this way, the EU can act normatively and also change the norms in the world politics and adapt them to the changes in the social life (Manners, 2011). Secondly, normative power is a characteristic of an actor and its international identity. Thus, the EU appears as global political actor that can project ideal type of normative power in order

to normalize the world. In this respect, the EU can be conceptualized as an actor, which changes the norms in the international system (Manners, 2002). Also, European normative power manifests the ability to create an understanding of "normal" in international relations (Manners, 2002). In other words, normative power presupposes the EU shapes its external neighbours' behaviour by making them to implement changes in their norms and standards. This is largely done through the power of EU's attractiveness to the third countries and not by material forms of coercion such as economic or military power (Orbie, 2006). The power of attractiveness is embedded in European procedures, standards, principles and values. Therefore, the EU conducts normative policy by using soft instruments in spreading its norms and principles (Orbie, 2006).

There are several factors contributing to the spread of normative power. They also refer to the Self and Other dichotomy of the identity construction in the time and space (Prozorov, 2011). The first factor is temporal or the time of normative power occurrence (Prozorov, 2011). Many authors point out that the development of new norms coincides with the crisis period (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Postel-Vinay, 2008). Thus, the EU's normative power manifestation enhanced after the end of the Cold War by attempts to create a new world order based on liberal values. The European Union success contrary to ideological failure of the socialist camp increased the importance of the norms broadcast by the EU (Zielonka, 2008). During this period, an active rethinking of the EU policy's normative components took place that led to the formulation of the Copenhagen criteria defining the conditions necessary for accession to the EU. Those criteria are considered as one of the most important documents fixing the EU's normative power (Manners, 2002) that were used also in the ENP.

After the successful enlargement to the East in 2004 and 2007, the EU's role as a normative power becomes an element of its political identity. While formulating a foreign policy towards third countries, the EU increasingly focuses on transposing its normative baggage onto them (Kelley, 2006). The EU documented its own norms and values and defined its neighbourhood as the primary zone of its normative power application (Youngs, 2004). Thus, spatial factor implies special attention to particular countries or regions with geographic proximity and common historical experience (Prozorov, 2011). Even before the emergence of normative power concept, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, p. 908) pointed out that the successful dissemination of norms largely depends on the existence of a common favourable historical experience that serves as a basis for articulating new norms. Naturally, the common historical experience is often determined by geographical proximity. That is, the primary

audience for the new norms are the neighbouring states. The neighbours' support and recognition of the EU's attractiveness can ensure the successful promotion of new norms.

However, the ways the EU's normative power represents itself in practice is a topic of a wider debate discussing that the EU's normative power is discursively constructed. The next section outlines this in a greater detail.

2.2. Normative power as discursive construction of the EU's Self

The idea of the normative power as part of the identity's discursive practice is presented in the works of Diez (2005). Diez (2005) takes Manners' ideas further and states that the EU's normative power is not objective category but a discursive practice. Therefore, the analytical focus moves from the nature of the EU's normative power to the ways of its discursive construction through the EU's official rhetoric and actions. Since the EU's normative power discourse is widely employed by the EU politicians (Diez, 2005), the articulation of the normative power in practice is visible through the EU's official discourses towards Ukraine within the ENP and EaP frameworks.

The EU's normative power representations construct the EU's identity in contrast to others. As such, by changing others while spreading norms, the EU's normative power discourse constructs Self identity (Diez, 2005). Diez (2005) argues that the EU constructs Others while constructing its normative power identity as benign that allows it to ignore the deficiencies it. Such practice undermines the EU's self-reflexivity because the EU ignores its mistakes. Since, normative power is based on the idea of formulating the normative component of the EU's identity in the opposition to the Other (Diez, 2005; Diez & Manners, 2007), it is necessary to outline the Self and Other dichotomy.

2.3. Self and Other divide

Identity is a constitutive phenomenon that is developing on a certain dichotomy to a different Other. During the identity construction, the Self has to establish contacts for further interaction with the Other. By colliding interests, communities develop an understanding of Other's difference and, consequently, achieve further cognition of the Self (Campbell, 1992).

The interaction between Self and Others is based on the inclusive or exclusive nature of the Self since in both cases the identity of the Self is socially constructed (Rumelili, 2004). The differentiation according to particular inherent characteristics of the Self lead to the construction of the Other with constantly different features. On the other hand, when

differentiating the Self and the Other depending on certain acquired features there is a chance for the Other to get similar to the Self. It leads to the construction of the Other with characteristics of the temporary "otherness" (Rumelili, 2004). The extent of interaction between the Self and the Other is corrected on the basis of the reaction of the latter to the process of constructing its identity. This reaction may range from an absolute recognition of this process to its complete rejection. The recognition of the identity constructed for the Other provides for more security of the Self identity because the discourses of Other identity contribute to the constant reproduction of the existing Self -identity. On the contrary, the resistance of the Other in the process of constructing its identity is a threat to the Self identity that forces it to clearly distinguish the differences of the Other (Rumelili, 2004). When constructing an identity of an inclusive type, the recognition on the part of the Other leads to the affirmation of the superiority of the position of the Self and a deeper assimilation of the Other with a specific Self.

In the case of exclusive identities, the recognition confirms the isolation of the Other and impossibility of its likeness to the Self. Recognition helps to define clear dividing lines between a specific Self and Other. However, the resistance the Other can threaten the identity of the Self by blurring the boundary between them. Accordingly, by engaging in the processes of international interaction, the actors protect their own identities by means of their association or delimitation from the identities of other actors. They interact according to the common interests, emphasizing their belonging to a community of other type (Rumelili, 2004). It should be emphasized that inclusiveness and exclusiveness are not static and the choice of one form or another is determined by the relationship with a specific Other. However, not everything depends on the subject or the Self, since an important element in constructing the connection between Self and the Other is the potential reaction of the Other (Rumelili, 2004). Therefore, it is not so much about the purposeful actions of the Other as about the already established practice of cooperation and its own willingness to cooperate (Rumelili, 2004). This practice is visible in the EU's normative power dissemination. While dragging certain neighbours in the cooperation frameworks, it leaves others out. However, the ground for cooperation is created on the acceptance of the shared norms.

As for Russia's representations by the EU, it historically was described as Other to which the EU compares itself (Said, 2003; Neumann, 1999). Europe and Russia are attributed characteristics that are traditionally juxtaposed with the West and the East, respectively. For example, progress and backwardness, freedom and oppression, civilization, and barbarism. These differences get predictable assessment that the Europe is constructed as a positive and

progressive actor. Of course, the image of Russia in the EU is not homogeneous, it varies depending on the ideological orientation of political actors, the theme of Russia, on the state of relations between Russia and Europe, on the political situation.

The opposition of European norms and values to the norms and values of meaningful Others helps to crystallize the EU's normative power identity. Therefore, it is impossible to understand the problems of the European normative power identity construction without studying Others and the borders between the EU's Self and Others. Increased tensions between the EU and Russia over Ukraine arise the question on Russia's representations in the EU's normative power discourse towards Ukraine. The answer to this question is important not only in the context of the EU's foreign policy identity formation but also to understand the development of the EU-Ukraine relations and their contribution to the Ukrainian crisis.

2.4. The practice of "othering" through the normative power discourse

The "othering" effect of the normative power emerges upon labelling the Other as non-normative that does not recognize the norms of the Self. For example, Diez (2005, p.628) identifies the following ways of "othering" within the normative power discourse: Other as an existential threat that is mostly the result of the securitization process; Other as a violator of international principles; Other as different in essence; Other as inferior, that is Self is constructed as superior to Other. Overcoming of otherness can take various forms, but the most important is the appeal to the past. The Other here is the same society, but at some previous stage. The Self here not only critically rethinks its history, but also draws a dividing line between the Self that existed before and the Self that realized the old mistakes (Wæver, 1998). Describing the problem of "otherness", Prozorov (2011) notes that according to modern discussions in the theory of international relations, today's Other Europe is rooted in its own past. The construction of the EU's self-identity as a normative power is reflexive towards itself and its past. The current Self of the Union is exposed to its past where lessons from the wars are reflected upon modern image and taken into account in order not to ever happen again.

The representations of the Post-Soviet space as an Other is deeply rooted in the EU's identity discourse. After the Iron Curtain fall, the main objective of the EU was to integrate European states under the common European norms and values. Since Ukraine was more responsive towards the EU's normative power dissemination, the boundary between Self and Other was narrowed. However, it is different with Russia that do not find EU's normative

power attractive. Thus, whilst Russia decided not to participate in the ENP, the EU further excluded it from the EaP framework that aimed to drag Ukraine closer to the EU's identity.

Usually, the identity discourse in its ordinary manifestations leads to exclusion of the Other and the Other is constructed as different to the Self. The specificity of EU's discourse presupposes the possibility for Others to overcome the otherness and become closer to the Self. Overcoming the boundary between the EU's Self and Other proceeds through inclusion of the Other in the EU's normative power discourse upon the European norms acceptance by the Other. This is based on the wider discourse of European continent integration that was divided due to the wars and conflicts (Rehn, 2008b). That is, European identity is not conceived as a closed club but as an opportunity for other societies to share these values and enroll into European society. This practice is performed in the EU's neighbourhood through the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership towards Ukraine.

2.5. Academic critique of the EU's normative power towards neighbours

While there is a lot of research that describes normative power as benign there is also a bitter part of critique that argues that normative power of the EU goes hand in hand with security and economic interests, where the latter are often driving forces for the EU foreign policy decision. Haukkala (2008) while analysing the concept of normative power Europe states that the EU acts as a modern "regulatory empire" because it sets the norms and rules (Haukkala, 2008). The main instrument of the EU's regional cooperation is the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) that regulates the course of integration into the EU structures. The empire of the EU includes different areas, where one group of neighbours by following the rules of the EU received membership perspective or became members of the EU. The other group or so-called "grey zone", has to cooperate with the EU without guarantees of future membership (Haukkala, 2008). However, the EU is not a classic empire, it is an empire by invitation. The third countries have a choice on accepting or rejecting European normative power. This can be observed in the public opinion and discourses in the countries to which the EU applies its normative power or directs its efforts on country's Europeanisation (Youngs, 2001). Nevertheless, countries interested in membership consider the reception of such invitation as a significant gain for the them. The possibility of EU membership is outstanding for the dissemination of normative power because the norms and values become legitimate (Diez & Pace, 2011). The EU by expressing its position through the normative power is claimed to be a normative hegemon that builds asymmetrical approaches with its partners

(Haukkala, 2010). Haukkala (2016) argues that the EU was creating the EU-centred order in its neighbourhood.

Norms and values can be used to define the identity of being European. Haukkala (2007) argues that by applying the normative power the EU becomes a regional hegemon in Europe as it has almost complete monopoly on what can be called European. EU defines the boundaries of normality and makes characteristics of the "Europeanness", thereby establishing the right for other countries to self-determination and classification (Haukkala, 2007). This leads to countries often give up their significant interests by trying to satisfy the requirements of the EU in order to gain membership perspective or preference in certain areas of interaction.

Speaking about the objectives of the European Union in the process of expanding the normative borders with regard to the Eastern neighbours, Lavenex (2004) notes that the main driving forces here are the recognition of the growing interdependence of the EU with these countries and emerging threats in the field of soft security. Accordingly, the export of the acquis communautaire to neighbouring countries is "not only a generous transfer of acquired civil virtues, but a more strategic attempt to gain control over political events through external governance (Lavenex, 2004).

Normative power discourse aims to construct perception of the EU as an exemplary model (Boedeltje & Van Houtum, 2011). However, the EU, unlike an independent state, is an entity consisting of separate members that further coordinate the EU representative image and hence Europe. The weaknesses of the normative power diffusion is that the EU member states first of all consider national interests when it comes to normative issues (Smith, 2004; Diez, 2013). Youngs (2004) states the EU's normative power is aimed to control the Eastern Neighbourhood and that the norms promoted are characterized by the notion of rationality. Smith (2014) shares the same view stating that the EU's policy towards Ukraine contains the notion of Realpolitik driven by self interests. Therefore, normative power spread is undermined by the EU's self interests in trade and security spheres.

European energy securitization did not come unnoticed as well. By emphasizing energy security aspects in the policy towards neighbours, the EU weakens its status as a normative power (Tocci, 2008). Hyde-Prince (2006) argues the member states use the EU as a tool for forming its neighbourhood with the methods of soft and hard power. He states that the EU should be considered as a hegemony where members frame the neighbourhood by the offering the partnerships or isolation, membership promises or exclusion, carrots and sticks methods.

When describing the EU as a hegemon or empire, the question of geopolitical rivalry with Russia is also relevant. The following stance is reflected in the works of Haukkala (2008) and

Boedeltje and Van Houtum (2011a, 2011b). Boedeltje and Van Houtum state that there is a certain degree of the inconsistency within the EU official discourse concerning the ENP. While it was envisaged as a policy for avoiding new borders in Europe, it actually constructs such borders. For example, by excluding Russia from the ENP and Eastern Partnership policies. Thus, the EU enlargement is not cultural or ethical issue but purely political (Boedeltje & Van Houtum, 2011a). The EU is a unique phenomenon because on the one hand, it serves for differentiating the EU and its neighbours from the rest of Europe by the inclusion to the existing system of norms. On the other hand, it is a form of exclusion that might lead to the EU losing legitimacy in the eyes of neighbouring countries. Boedeltje and Van Houtum (2011a, p.130) argue that the EU's export of its norms to the external environment is affected by its strategic interest that lies in "conflicting geopolitics" (Boedeltje & Van Houtum, 2011a, p.130). It is evident through contradicting rhetoric where from one side there are a underdeveloped neighbours that have to accept European norms and on the other side, official speeches emphasizing dialogue and mutual cooperation (Boedeltje & Van Houtum, 2011a, p.130).

The idea that Ukrainian conflict resulted as a competition and a zero-sum game from Russia's side and the EU's unwillingness to play in the game "spheres of influence" was outlined by Haukkala (2016). The EU's policy with Ukraine is criticized for failure to include long-term strategies in its policies (Haukkala, 2016). The post-Soviet space plays an important role in relations between the EU and Russia that are both interested in strengthening their influence in the region. The increased presence of the EU in Ukraine and pressuring it towards a European choice was creating significant concerns from Russia's side (Stewart, 2009). Russia often emphasized that it viewed the EU policy towards Ukraine through the prism of rivalry. With the development of Russia's led integration project Russia aimed to reassert its status of great power and to create bi-polar order in Europe (Dragneva & Wolczuk, 2013). However, Haukkala (2016) argues that with the projection of its normative power the EU wanted to establish unipolar order with the EU in its centre that would be characterized by stability and prosperity. Even though the EU policies were rooted in geography, they were not driven by geopolitical considerations. The EU opposed itself to Russia by refusing to engage in the rivalry for the spheres of interests and zero-sum game (Haukkala, 2016). The lack of strategic thinking led to integration competition with Russia even though the EU was not ready for that (Forsberg & Haukkala, 2016). The similar standpoint that the EU was ill-equipped to compete with Russia and thus "sleepwalked in the crisis" is articulated by the House of Lords (2015) and Kuzio (2017).

There is also an aspect of security discourse in the EU's foreign policy towards its neighbours. Boedeltje & Van Houtum (2011b) argue that the EU projected its norms and values beyond the external borders in order to become a global player. The ENP policy and its instruments (namely action plans) are designed in order to secure the political and economic stability (Boedeltje & Van Houtum, 2011b). The EU seeks to prevent the threats spilling over from external borders therefore, security discourse is central to the ENP. The neighbours are offered the EU's unilaterally predefined sets of requirement without the perspective of membership in the Union. This is another argument for the EU possessing the power of inclusion and inclusion, as it decides what countries are going to be included in the neighbourhood and what they should look like (Boedeltje & Van Houtum, 2011b). Since the ENP did not provide the EU's membership option, the EU's neighbours in order to not being left out of the EU's constructed neighbourhood, opted for a vague perspective to be the EU member sometime in the future (Van Houtum & Boedeltje, 2011b). The abovementioned researchers also state that despite the official ENP discourse that aims to not creating new division lines, in practice the statements of the officials underline the neighbours as different, thus creating "others" (Van Houtum & Boedeltje, 2011b, p.124). The distancing between the EU and its neighbours is also made through the discourses of prosperity and poverty. As European countries and the EU are often described as prosperous that offers financial assistance and seeks to combat political and economic instability. Therefore, recipients of such assistance can be regarded as underdeveloped (Van Houtum & Boedeltje, 2011b). In line with Van Houtum and Boedeltje (2011b) arguments the EU acts in terms of geopolitical discourse by creating the policies based on top-down approach, spreading unilaterally predefined norms and standards that are considered superior to the ones of neighbours.

The critics of the ENP policy argue that it aims to close the EU borders and unilaterally spread its aforehead defined standards to its partners. The EU standards and norms are thus seen as more valuable and important than those of neighbours (Boedeltje, & Houtum, 2011a). This leads to creation of new division lines by alienating the neighbouring states and damaging their cultures by spreading top-down policies that reproduce the EU's dominance and contain an element of imperial power that is driven by self-interests (Boedeltje, & Houtum, 2011a, p. 131).

The review of the literature reflecting critical stances on the EU's normative power activity provided a wider understanding of the specifics of the EU's normative power discourse towards neighbours, namely Ukraine and Russia.

3. Methodology

The chapter outlines the methodology of the thesis in order to investigate the construction of Russia's image in the EU's official rhetoric towards Ukraine. Discourse analysis as a methodological tool is presented in the chapter in detail. The sampling approach to the material and justification of the researched time period is discussed.

3.1. Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is a particular way of speaking about and understanding parts of the world (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Discourse analysis applied to the study of foreign policy scrutinizingly explores the substantive content of the political communication by paying attention to its social organization rather than textual form (Bryman, 2012). Discourse establishes a set of possible allegations on the given sphere, organizes and structures the way in which politicians should talk about a certain topic, an object or process (Carta & Morin, 2014). In addition, discourses legitimize political decisions and actions (Reyes, 2011). Discourse analysis was preferred over content analysis because content analysis can only observe the frequency with which some actors mention certain issues, however, bypassing the nature of the relationship between the actors, their role in the joint debate or their position on certain problems. Through language, discourses create a meaning of the events and shape reality. Based on obtained knowledge discourses construct the identity accordingly (Jørgensen & Phillips, L. 2002). Political discourses also constructs the semantic opposition between the Self and Other identities (Carta & Morin, 2014).

The most important element in the formation of the EU's normative power is its consolidation in the EU's official discourse. According to Manners (2002), the EU's normative power with third countries was gradually formed through the adoption of various common documents that include joint declarations, agreements, and criteria for the governing relations with the neighbours. Thus, official documents and speeches bear the notion of the EU's identity in terms of normative power. The foreign policy documents forming official EU discourse towards Ukraine belong to the ENP and the EaP frameworks. Discourse analysis helped to study Russia's representations in the EU-Ukraine communication and language patterns used by high-ranked politicians when constructing Russia's image in the EU-Ukraine relations. The official language used on different communication levels and in the certain contexts was paid attention to. Next section outlines the selection of the texts and a time period used for the analysis.

3.2. Selection of the texts and time frame

Master thesis covers the period from 2008 until 2014. This period is characterized by the process of greater convergence in the EU-Ukraine relations. The particular interest in choosing specifically the year of 2008 as a starting point is justified due to the EU's decision to intensify the relations with Ukraine in 2008. The reasons for intensification are explained by Russia's war in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine-Russia energy crises. Since 2014 EU-Ukraine relations have changed drastically, thus research it was feasible to limit the time frame by the end of 2013.

The research focus lies on the normative discourse accompanying the ENP and EaP policy frameworks towards Ukraine. Thesis analyses the EU's official rhetoric in the significant ENP and EaP policy documents and the executives' speeches. The reason why thesis is not limited only to the official policies and resolutions is because they contain high level of authority and are widely spread, however, they are not extensive in expressing identity (Carta & Morin, 2014). Therefore, the speeches of the EU's high-ranked officials were also selected for the analysis as they better transcend European identity.

According to Hansen (2006) the executive representatives of the state or government possess the highest level of authority in order to articulate the official foreign policy discourse. Therefore, the authorities that are in charge of the EU's foreign policy activities are included into the analysis. Throughout the selected research time frame, together with the changes in the international arena, the EU itself went through changes. The Lisbon Treaty enforced in 2009 established new positions of The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and permanent president of the European Council. Therefore, the selected EU's officials are:

- Jose Manuel Barroso, The President of the European Commission
- Herman Van Rompuy, The President of the European Council
- Catherine Ashton, The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.
- Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy
- Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy
- Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement

As energy security is also central part of the EU's rhetoric towards both Russia and Ukraine the speeches of Günther Oettinger, European Commissioner for Energy were also reviewed.

Instead of just stating that the EU's normative power is a force for good, the thesis investigates the EU's rhetoric used in justifying EU's policies towards Ukraine. However, Russia is also part of the neighbourhood and has its interests in Ukraine. Therefore, in order to trace the level of the EU's awareness about Russia's presence in the East European region it is necessary to investigate how Russia's image was represented both European official documents and the EU politicians speeches . For the analysis the textual materials of the EU's communication towards Ukraine were divided into:

- the ENP and EaP official documents, such as: annual reviews, annual progress reports, Association Agenda for Ukraine, EU-Ukraine summit materials
- the EU official statements: for example, addressing EU-Ukraine relations alone or within the ENP or EaP context during the conferences or meetings with Ukrainian authorities.

Purposive sampling was used when selecting official documents and speeches of the EU's politicians. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling strategy that helps researcher to select the elements of the study in line with the study objectives and researcher's opinion (Berg & Lune, 2014). In the texts the attention was given to the leading concepts, text features such as irony, repetitions, wording, metaphors, as well as to intertextuality, interdiscursivity and text type (Bryman, 2012).

The selection of EU's official policies and speeches consist of 57 documents. They were selected in line with the time frame according to the chronology of EU-Ukraine relations and main milestones in them. After screening the EU official webpages the materials for analysis were selected. Since the EU governs relations with Ukraine through ENP and EaP frameworks, the documents related to them were picked. The selected materials contain the high degree of authority to represent the EU foreign policy stance and are wide-spread.

As for selecting the EU's official documents, at first, the database search of the Commission Communications that contain notions about ENP and EaP was performed. Second, selected documents were read through and the notions on Russia were highlighted. Third, the references about Russia, the context of that reference, together with the interpretation were outlined in the thesis.

Regarding the EU's top officials speeches, similar sampling approach was performed. Searching the European Commission press release database with a query "Ukraine" during the selected time period provided a set of results. From those results, there were selected speeches of the abovementioned top ranked officials that took place during certain conditions, for example significant conferences, EU-Ukraine summits and EU-Ukraine politicians meetings.

The texts selected went through several rounds of scrutinized reading. After the reading, the material was analysed and categorized. The investigation traced the major discursive patterns of normative power construction, metaphors, narratives, the construction of identities together with self/other dichotomies. The cases of interdiscursivity and intertextuality were recognized. The questions that guided the analysis were:

- Russia's representations in the rhetoric around EU-Ukraine relations.
- the EU's representation as a normative power towards Ukraine within the ENP and the EaP setting
- the EU's justification for the relations with Ukraine

The obtained results were interpreted with the use of discourse analysis by highlighting the Russia's and also the EU's and Ukraine's representations in the EU's official rhetoric towards Ukraine. The main goal was to research how Russia is represented on different levels of the EU's official foreign policy rhetoric towards Ukraine. How Russia is described in the official documents towards Ukraine and how those representations are further communicated through the official statements in the narrower EU-Ukraine setting.

3.3. Validity, reliability and limitations of the research.

Since discourse analysis is dependent on the researchers interpretations the results obtained are rather subjective. Therefore, reliability and validity are important to consider when doing discourse analysis research (Bryman, 2012). Reliability provides for the thesis results to be tested. Thus, the excerpts from the official statements and documents were properly cited and provided with the page number. Validity and reliability also is strengthened by the thesis structuring that follows coherent and logical flow. The research decisions made in the thesis are explained and justified.

In terms of the sampling material discourse analysis was used to find the actual meaning and content of the texts, discursive constructions of the EU's, Russia's and Ukraine's images;

the ways discourses communicate the meaning and beliefs; the ways discourses are used to justify actions. In order to provide for greater validity and reliability the sampling material contained only the texts in English. This also helped to avoid translation bias.

The limitations of the chosen discourse approach lie in the specifics of textual material. Official documents and speeches contain useful discursive information but language is not everything. The major difficulty in performing discourse analysis of the foreign policy texts as that most of political discourse is hidden. It is impossible to know what issues politicians discuss behind the closed doors. Thus, the fruitfulness of the discourse analysis, the validity the conclusions is not guaranteed and the discursive interpretation of political actions should be supplemented by research of structural and cognitive levels (Van Dijk, 1997). Another limitation to discourse analysis of the statements is that the texts comparing to videos do not allow the researcher to investigate the facial expressions of the speaker, the gestures or the voice tone.

4. Historical background of the EU-Ukraine relations from 2008 until 2014

The historical background chapter outlines the chronology of EU-Ukraine relations for the period from 2008 until 2014. Additionally, the chapter depicts major preconditions to the relationship change in 2008-2009. Therefore, it shortly outlines the EU-Ukraine relations just after the EU enlargement in 2004. The chapter provides the arguments for why Ukraine became important for the EU's normative power application and why the EU decided to deepen relations with Ukraine in 2008-2009. Despite the EU's relations with Russia is not part of the analysis, the chapter outlines the EU's approach to Russia and how it was reflected in the neighbourhood policy rhetoric. Also, Russia's reactions to the EU's policies and its actions in the neighbourhood. The context chapter provides the wider understanding of the EU, Ukraine and Russia interactions and is necessary to understand how Russia was approached in the EU-Ukraine relations through the ENP and EaP rhetoric.

4.1. EU-Ukraine relations after the EU's enlargement in 2004

The EU-Ukraine relations date back to Ukraine becoming an independent state in 1991 after the USSR collapse. In the beginning of EU-Ukraine cooperation, the Union was not specifically interested in Ukraine (Kuzio, 2003). However, after the EU's biggest enlargement

to the East in 2004, Ukraine became its new direct neighbour. That raised a problem of developing new policies and engage strategically with Ukraine. The Union began to govern the relations with new neighbours through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) that embraced sixteen states as well as Ukraine. The ENP as a manifestation of the EU's normative power addressed the importance of the norms dissemination to the EU's external borders: "The Union's aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples. In its relations with the wider world, it aims at upholding and promoting these values" (European Commission, 2004a, p.12).The ultimate goal of the project was to create along the European borders a "ring of friends" that share with the EU "everything but institutions" according to the formula of Romano Prodi (2002). The idea was further reflected in the ENP documents: "the EU should aim to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood – a 'ring of friends' - with whom the EU enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative relations" (European Commission, 2003, p.4).

The nature of the ENP implies that without offering the neighbouring countries the prospect of a full-fledged accession to the EU, it provides them an in-depth integration based on exports of the acquis communautaire (the set of EU regulatory norms). As per Copenhagen criteria requirements, the approximation of domestic political, economic social conditions to European ones is in fact the inclusion of these countries in the EU internal market. Also, it is a process lessening the divide between the Self and Other identities through inclusion of a different Other to the part of the Self.

In parallel to the EU's enlargement, the Orange Revolution that erupted in Ukraine in 2004 led to Ukrainian authorities change and proclamation of the pro-European integration course. Still, the Union treated Ukraine indifferently. The ENP structure put Ukraine in one basket with sixteen other ENP participants. The policy began to be heavily criticized by its "one size fits all" approach (Bicchi, 2006).

4.2. The EU's official rhetoric towards Russia after the EU's enlargement

As for Russia, the EU initially wanted to include Russia in the ENP framework but the country decided to opt out because of its status and request for special equal treatment (Haukkala, 2008). Therefore, the EU-Russia relations were governed by separate looser frameworks (College of Europe, 2013).

The EU's rhetoric on Russia's inclusion to the neighbourhood is reflected in the Wider Europe Communication that lists the strengthening relations with Russia as one of the top priorities (European Commission, 2003). In contrast to Ukraine that is just mentioned within the category of Western Newly Independent States (WNIS), the EU's official rhetoric approaches Russia separately, so it stands out of the whole set of East European countries. On top of that, the policy discourse specifies the importance of the EU-Russia relations. In addition, there is an idea to offer Russia (and Ukraine as a part of East European bloc) a stake in the EU's internal market in return for progress in demonstrating shared values and norms (European Commission, 2003, p.4). There is a careful promise that the ENP will benefit EU-Russia cooperation: "A new neighbourhood policy will only constitute one pillar of the overall EU/Russia strategic partnership" (European Commission, 2003, p.5). Therefore, the outlined rhetoric justifies that the EU initially attempted to include Russia in its normative power discourse.

The ENP Strategy Paper (European Commission, 2004a) is more modest to mention Russia. Still, it denotes that Russia is EU's key strategic partner and the relations will be framed by a separate policy framework. The rhetoric emphasized the energy cooperation as the most important for the EU-Russia relations (European Commission, 2004a, p.6). Strategy Paper emphasizes that share the common neighbourhood and need to cooperate together on issues of common interests (European Commission, 2004a, p.6). Simultaneously, the rhetoric of the abovementioned strategy paper also began to detach Ukraine from the bulk of the East European states.

. The Russian position on the EU's integration activities in its proximity at first were seen indifferently. However, after the Orange Revolution and the ENP launch it began to be more careful to the growing role of the EU and it's projected norms in the post-Soviet region (Haukkala, 2016). Through ENP in Ukraine, the EU promotes the security and stability by disseminating its rules and values (Rieker & Gjerde, 2015). This was viewed as a power game by Russia that considered such activities as attempt to bind Ukraine to the European orbit while Russia was losing its influence there. As Russia did not get incorporated into the ENP and further was not invited in EaP project it claimed that EU creates new borders in Europe (Rieker & Gjerde, 2015).

4.3. Increased energy security concerns

As mentioned in the European security strategy (European Council, 2003), energy dependence is a special concern to Europe. However, the issue was not so urgent before the tensions between Ukraine and Russia caused the gas supply interruptions in 2005-2006. Hence, starting from 2005 energy security began to appear more often in the EU's official discourse. The EU initiated a process of energy supply securitization by normatively engaging Ukraine into common legally binding agreements. In 2009 the Ukraine-Russia gas crisis left several EU member states without gas for the several days. The crisis undermined the EU's trust in both Ukraine and Russia reliability and created the necessity to address the problem with legally binding framework. The situation created a wave of EU rhetoric on the energy security. This rhetoric that became a part of the energy security discourse was further reflected in almost every EU's official document or speech towards Ukraine. The energy security discourse emphasized the interdependence of the EU as importer, Russia as supplier and Ukraine as a transit country. The EU's normative power dissemination in the field of energy security led to Ukraine's entry into the Energy Community in 2010 aimed at establishing secure gas transit through Ukraine (European Commission, 20010a).

4.4 The EU-Ukraine relationship change

In 2009 EU-Ukraine relations were changed drastically. To understand the preconditions for the change, the Russia's actions in 2008 are outlined. In the beginning of 2008 Russia issued its new Foreign Policy Concept that suggested a new European security order and outlined its strategic interests in Ukraine as a part of the Post-Soviet area (President of Russia, 2008). In August 2008 Russia started a short war in Georgia that caused the huge resonance in the world and in the EU in particular because of the conflict proximity. As a response to that, the EU decided to launch a new policy framework with Eastern neighbours as soon as possible. Therefore, in 2009 Ukraine becomes a participant of the Eastern partnership (EaP). The main objectives of the EaP were to establish relations of political association between the EU and Ukraine, as well as its gradual economic integration, without formal membership in the EU. The program aimed to involve the state in the orbit of the EU's overall policy influence by giving it a share in the European internal market. By increasing economic ties with the EU the influence of the Union also made approximation to Russia less likely. This approach to Ukraine despite its benign nature Russia saw as a geopolitical project with anti-Russian

emphasis (Rieker & Gjerde, 2015). Russia because of close linkages with Ukraine and its vital interests in the country saw the cooperation with the EU as a weakening of its influence (Adomeit, 2011).

President Dmitriy Medvedev expressed Russian reaction to the EaP initiative: ""I'll put it succinctly. We tried to convince ourselves [that the EU project is harmless] but in the end we couldn't," "What worries us is that in some countries attempts are being made to exploit this structure as a partnership against Russia" (Rettman, 2009). The usage of sharp words like "harmless", "exploit", "partnership against Russia" directly signals about Russia's dissatisfaction. The wording "partnership against Russia" means that Russia felt excluded from the project and its interests in the region were not taken into consideration.

In 2010 after the presidential elections Ukraine faced the leadership change. New President Viktor Yanukovych represented pro-Russian part of Ukrainian population and was expected to intensify relations with Russia. Despite the pessimistic expectations that Ukraine will change its political direction, Yanukovych and his team took ambivalent position and continued to both cooperate with Russia and the EU, however officially following Ukraine's pro-European path. The EU and Ukraine began to actively negotiate the Association Agreement. In the same time, Ukraine's domestic political situation and relations with Russia hindered the process of negotiations. The EU started to heavily criticize Ukraine for major violations of the democracy and human rights (Parliamentary Assembly, 2010) namely the persecution of the former Ukrainian government's authorities.

Responding to the EaP, Russia from its side launched Eurasian Economic Union (EACU) as an alternative integration structure on the Post-Soviet space (Shumylo-Tapiola, 2012). As Russia had its own strategic interests in the post-Soviet region and the European Union was interested in stability of its neighbourhood through European norms dissemination, Ukraine appeared in the middle of the rivalry between different economic and political governance models of Russia and the EU.

After 2012 Russia began to actively invite Ukraine to join the Customs Union of the Eurasian Economic Union to become its full member, arguing for the economic benefits that Ukraine will receive, in particular, the supply of Russian energy at lower prices (Moshes, 2013). At the same time, there was another political component namely the consensus of the Ukrainian elites about the need for integration with the European Union and signing of the Association Agreement that envisaged creation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade

Area (DCFTA) with the Union. As a result, Ukraine rejected Russia's proposals for integration and agreed to symbolic participation of Ukraine as an observer in the Customs Union (Vasilyeva & Lagutina, 2016).

The EU expressed its position in the statement made by Stefan Füle that participation in the DCFTA is not compatible with the Customs Union membership (European Commission, 2013c). In October, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that if an Association with the European Union was created, Ukraine would not be able to join the Customs Union even on the observer status conditions (Moshes, 2013).

In the end of November 2013, one week before the EU Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius the President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych refused to sign an Association Agreement with the EU and opted for an agreement offer from Russia with accompanying loan of 15 milliard USD (Walker, 2013). This decision combined with the mass dissatisfaction with the Yanukovych presidency lead to mass protests on the main square of Kyiv, Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) and in other cities of Ukraine where protestants voted for the closer integration with the EU and the dismissal of the Yanukovych government. When revolutionary events began to escalate, Yanukovych fled and interim government was established, Russia annexed Crimea on 16th of March 2014 and supported military insurgencies in the East of Ukraine. The conflict in the Eastern Ukraine continues and is still unresolved.

5. Analysis of the EU's official rhetoric towards Ukraine

The official documents and statements were analysed in a chronological order within the selected period from 2008 until 2014. Discourse analysis helped to research the construction of the EU's normative power identity through ENP and EaP policy framework towards Ukraine. The main focus was on how the EU rhetoric represents Russia while creating meaning for further development of the EU-Ukraine relations. The EU's self-representations were also highlighted. The results of the analysis are structured into the subsections: the EU's official documents and the EU's official statements. The representation of the results is outlined accordingly.

5.1. 2008: The year of crises

The EU began to speak about increasing the cooperation with Ukraine already in the beginning of 2008. After the EU's decision to take relations with the Mediterranean states onto the new level, there was an idea to put forward cooperation with the Eastern bloc as well. As for Ukraine, EU relations with this country were described as a source of stability on the continent: "Anchoring the countries such as Ukraine more firmly on the European track is important for the security and stability of the entire Europe" (Rehn, 2008c, p.2-3). Ferrero-Waldner justifies the intensification of the EU-Ukraine relations not only by Ukraine geographical proximity but also by the success of the ENP normative power spread that brings Ukraine closer to the EU (European Commission, 2008a).

Official statements in 2008

The main trend in the EU rhetoric preceding the Georgia conflict with Russia was the role of the EU on the global stage in order to make the EU stronger by reinforcing the ENP. The analysis focuses on the speeches of Olli Rehn and Benita Ferrero-Waldner.

In 2008 just before the conflict in Georgia, Russia suggested the new European security order different from the European security architecture and outlined its desire to influence the former USSR countries and Ukraine in particular (President of Russia, 2008). The EU's reflections on that were detected in the speech of Rehn (2008a). The superior, progressive and far-reaching model of the EU is contrasted to the past that connotes to the discourse of the wars, conflicts and instability: "It is a choice between a European future and the nationalism of the past" (Rehn, 2008a, p.6). Thus, the speech contains the notions of the competition between liberal European model and autocratic Russian one. The speech draws a sharp divide between EU and Russia thus contributing to the "othering" of Russia in the EU's normative power discourse. It also describes the EU as postmodern soft power whereas Russia as a modern state relying on hard power use: "The European model of liberal democracy has been successfully transferred through the EU's enlargement policy. But the other model of nationalist autocracy competes with it in several European countries" (Rehn, 2008a, p.5).

However, a part of the rhetoric develops on lessening the Self/Other divide and bringing Russia closer but on the condition it will accept European norms. As Rehn explains, such a move will make Russia more predictable and reliable in the future (Rehn, 2008a, p.7). Rehn also touches upon Ukraine and its European choice. It can be seen that the inclusion of Ukraine

into the European identity does not go smooth after the Orange revolution and the country moves slowly in the reforms' implementation. Still before the energy crisis and Georgia war Rehn's rhetoric towards Ukraine is rather mild and general. The statements "The EU is committed to closer ties with Ukraine" and "reinforce the European neighbourhood policy" point to the EU's engagement but still do not indicate Union's acute interest in the country (Rehn, 2008a, p.7). The neighbourhood policy is defined as the source to European security as it includes the states sharing same values and creates a circle of stability around the EU (Rehn, 2008a). Rehn explores the discourse of post-communist states liberation and builds an image of Europe as the source of freedom, therefore the EU is a force for good.

The discursive construction of the EU's past as other is opposed to its current stage of development. "The EU was slow to develop the ambition to play a major global role. The EU founding fathers did not set out to build a superpower. Instead, their goal was to create an alternative form of international governance in Europe, to end the great power rivalries that had led to two world wars"(Rehn, 2008a). The reflexivity of the EU as an actor learning from own previous mistakes lead to a new role and lack of desire to engage in rivalry with Russia.

The EU rhetoric in 2008 recognized the competition between the EU as soft power projecting liberal democracy in its neighbourhood and Russia as hard power casting nationalism and autocracy (Rehn, 2008a). Also, it was articulated that the Russian model undermines the dissemination of norms in Ukraine: "The tension between the competing models of the European way of life and authoritarian capitalism can also be seen in Ukraine" (Rehn, 2008a, p.7). In the Rehn's rhetoric, the construction of the EU as a force for good is illuminated in high contrast to the Other Russia as a hard power: "The European model is based on democracy and the rule of law, whereas in the authoritarian State representation is largely confined to supporters of the government and there is no proper democratic accountability. It usually draws its political support from nationalism" (Rehn, 2008b, p.3).

After the Russia-Georgia war, Olli Rehn stated that next risky point is Ukraine. Therefore, the EU had to increase the EU-Ukraine cooperation and include it into the European community because of the threat coming from Russia: "Ukraine may be the next focus of political pressure for Russia, whose doctrine of "the near abroad" harks back to the sphere of interest policy of the past. This is why it is important, for the sake of stability, that the EU should deliver a clear political signal that Ukraine's rapprochement towards the EU is possible, provided that Ukraine continues its determined work for reforms promoting European values." (Rehn, 2008b, p.5). By that, the EU on the top authorities' level realized the threat coming from Russia and constructed it as Other that violates rules and norms because of its strategic

interests. The outlined rhetoric constructs Russia as strategic old-fashioned actor while the EU is a benign norms promoter. The further EU's actions towards strengthening the EU-Ukraine cooperation result in the process of distancing and even excluding Russia from the EU's projects in the shared neighbourhood.

Russia's war with Georgia and overall security situation in the region forced the EU to speed up the cooperation with its Eastern neighbours. Ferrero-Waldner stated: "A year ago we could not have expected negotiations on the new agreement to have come so far". (European Commission, 2008b). The cooperation took a form of the EaP in deepening ties with Ukraine and thus, providing more security in the region by keeping Ukraine closer to the EU. The discourse around the EaP articulated the EU's identity that works towards democratizing the Eastern neighbours and providing more security, prosperity and stability (European Commission, 2008b).

Official documents in 2008

The ENP review for 2008 as well as Ukraine's ENP implementation progress report are not selected because these documents revise the previous year of 2007 retrospectively that is not a part of the time frame. The texts selected are: European Commission Communication on EaP, EU-Ukraine summit materials.

The Communication from the European Commission (2008a) on establishing of the EaP mentions Russia only two times. One time in the main body of the document stating that the strategic partnership with Russia will be conducted in parallel with the EaP (European Commission, 2008a, p.3). Second time Russia is mentioned in the footnotes in the context of energy security supply that might be interrupted because of the conflict in Georgia (European Commission, 2008a, p.8). In contrast with the ENP where the EU included Russia in the framework but it decided to opt out, the EaP policy did not presuppose the Russia's participation there at all.

The EU-Ukraine summit in the end of 2008 reconfirmed the seriousness of the EU intentions and the Association Agreement with Ukraine was agreed. The EU proclaimed a line of Ukraine's greater integration into the EU. The EU-Ukraine relations were described as of gained more dynamic and novelty (Council of the EU, 2008). The justification for the EU's normative power dissemination in deepening EU-Ukraine relations is based on the recognition of "Ukraine as a European country shares a common history and common values with the countries of the European Union" (Council of the EU, 2008, p. 3). The Summit also reflected

the EU's position on the Georgia issue: by the resulting violence and by the disproportionate reaction of Russia. Military action of this kind is not a solution and is not acceptable" (Council of the EU, 2008, p. 4).

Therefore, the conflictual environment prompted the EU to build up relationships with Ukraine. The EaP official rhetoric totally excluded Russia from the cooperation in the shared neighbourhood, except for energy questions. The selected speeches of Rehn as a Commissioner for Enlargement revealed sharp rhetoric towards Russia. The construction of Russia as different Other and as a threat is further reflected in the official documents by not including the country into the EaP framework.

5.2. 2009: The energy security and European Partnership

The year of 2009 is marked by the several trends in the EU's discourse towards Ukraine. The major lines were the EU's energy security and Eastern Partnership initiative. As Russia-Georgia conflict fostered the development of the EaP, the main discourse in the neighbourhood policy was to ensure the stability. Scrolling through the EU's official statements revealed increased attention given to Ukraine from the EU's side. The statements regarded mostly issues on securing Russian gas flow through Ukraine to the EU.

Official documents in 2009

The major narrative in all of the documents analysed for 2009 builds around the discourse of bringing Ukraine closer to the EU. This point to the existing dichotomy between Self and Other identities where Ukraine is still Other and not part of the EU. Through the spread of normative power the EU tries to drag the countries sharing European values closer to the EU's Self identity. For instance: "Eastern Partnership will seek to support political and socio-economic reforms of the partner countries, facilitating approximation towards the European Union" (The Council of the EU, 2009). The phrases "bring relationship to the new level", "more ambitious partnership", "step change", "new chapter in the relations" indicate the increased interest of the EU in the Eastern neighbourhood and Ukraine as a part of it and the EU's readiness to intensify the relations. Those words also transcend the positive message regarding the EU's attractiveness and securing good stable future by following European model. The notions of normative power discourse refer to indications of the commitment to shared norms, principles of international law and fundamental values.

In 2009, almost every EU's official document or speech articulated the increased role of Ukraine as a transit state and a key partner in the European security architecture. Connected to that the EU documents contained the phrases "strategic partner", "important neighbour", "key partner in the Eastern neighbourhood", "main transit state". With the EaP initiation, the EU began to emphasize the close/far dichotomy that is inherent to Self and Other construction as well. The phrases "to bring Ukraine closer to the EU both politically and economically" indicate to dragging Ukraine closer to the European Self identity.

The official documents reviewed for the 2009 are: ENP Review, Ukraine's ENP Progress Report, the EaP Joint Declaration, Provisional EU-Ukraine Association Agenda and ENP Annual Strategy for 2009.

The assessment of the ENP implementation for the 2008 (European Commission, 2009a) stipulates the major crises happened in 2008 including the Russia-Georgia war and Ukraine-Russia gas crisis. The year of 2008 is described with the following words: "a difficult year", "a year of crises", "difficult and unfavourable international context". The difficult circumstances of 2008 justify the EU's intention to deepen EU-Ukraine relations: "This unfavourable context underscores the need for even more active and tangible EU support for the Neighbourhood to promote mutual prosperity, stability and security" (European Commission, 2009a, p.2).

Russia is mentioned in the two contexts in the ENP review (European Commission, 2009a): conflict in Georgia and Russian gas interruptions through Ukraine. Those contexts are stated to have long-term implications for the ENP realization. In terms of Russia-Georgia war, Russian image is constructed as the aggressive country that violated the international rules and attacked the independent state. The words "exceptional events", "violent conflict in Georgia", "unilateral steps", "strengthening relations with separatists", "building up military presence", "Russian troops on the Georgia territory" point to the creation of the meaning of Russia as a hard power that still uses weapons to secure its interests. Russia is constructed as a threat to the EU's security and normative power identity. The EU's self is constructed on the opposite side of the Self/Other divide with the phrases: "support for Georgia's territorial integrity", "peaceful conflict resolution", "EU's help", etc.

However, the EU keeps its security objectives upfront and fosters integration and interdependence with the neighbouring states. "The crises in 2008 and the remaining challenges in partner countries have only reinforced the strategic rationale for an intensified ENP providing tangible and credible support to create mutual security and prosperity dividends." (European Commission, 2009a, p.10). Therefore, it justifies its ambition to deepen

the relations with Eastern flank countries to provide more security, stability and prosperity in the region. The whole communication misses out the need to build relations with Russia.

The construction of the ENP as a benign policy that boosts and catalyses reforms is represented in the document: "Despite the difficult overall environment, partners made significant progress on implementation of the ENP in several key areas, reflecting the policy's role as a catalyst for reforms" (European Commission, 2009a, p.3). The justification of the EU's deepening relations with Ukraine within new EaP policy is reflected in the following way: " In response to the Union's strategic interest in seeing stability, better governance and economic development at its Eastern borders, to the need to help the Union's partners to consolidate their statehood and sovereignty, including through democratic reforms, and to their stated choice to intensify their relations with the EU" (European Commission, 2009a, p.8). Therefore, the document mentioned Russia as a unstable, dangerous, undisciplined actor that uses hard power to defend its strategic interest and undermine the spread of the EU's normative power in the region.

The Ukraine ENP Progress Report for 2008 also speak about Russia in the security contexts regarding energy supply and border management only (European Commission, 2009b, p.12). In case of energy security the report builds on intertextuality outlines the similar rhetoric as in the Report from 2008 (European Commission, 2009b). The text underscores the words "conflict between Russia and Ukraine", "gas interruptions from Russia", "gas crisis". In the trade sphere, the report compares the Ukraine's export indicators to the EU and Russia, emphasizing that Ukraine exports more to the EU (European Commission, 2009b, p.8).

Following the manner of the European Commission (2008a) Communication on EaP, the Joint Declaration on the Eastern Partnership did not mention any word about Russia so that the EU rhetoric left the country outside of the common neighbourhood cooperation frameworks. It the same way the Provisional EU-Ukraine Association Agenda did not mention a word about Russia as well.

Nevertheless, the EU recognized the key priority to enhance engagement with Russia. As it is stipulated in the Annual Strategy for 2009 the new agreement with Russia is in the EU's to do list (European Commission, 2008c). However, the new agreement is mentioned to govern the EU-Russia relations separately from the common neighbourhood.

Official statements in 2009

The EU officials that made important statements during 2009 are Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy; José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission; Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement.

Together with overall neighbourhood security, another reason to intensify the EU relations with Ukraine was Ukraine-Russia gas crisis of 2008-2009 that created a wave of rhetoric and actions towards strengthening the EU's energy security. The energy crisis gave impetus to have predictable and steady relations with both Ukraine and Russia. The threat to EU's energy security from the unstable relations between Ukraine and Russia in the gas sector led to increased interest of the EU in Ukraine as a key transit state. Thus, gas transit stability stipulates another reason to why Ukraine became important for the EU. Gas crisis between Ukraine and Russia was coloured "as the most serious security event in relation to gas that has ever happened in Europe" (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a, p.2). In the speech Ferrero-Waldner also notes the issue of increasing distrust to Russia as energy supplier and Ukraine as a transporter. The necessity to assure energy security and to negotiate stable energy supplies of the EU as consumer, Russia as exporter and Ukraine as a transit country was stipulated in the official discourse as the trilateral interdependence of the EU, Ukraine and Russia (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a). In the rhetoric the EU swings the unfavourable issue of its dependence on Russia's gas and calls it interdependence because the EU buys considerable amount of gas Russia sells. Ukraine here plays the role of a stable gas flow transmitter: "When problems arise the gas must still flow…..long-term reliability, transparency and predictability of the key transit routes to the EU" (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a, p.3). Another more rational argument for building up EU-Ukraine relations in energy was given in the following manner: "Ukraine became of strategic interest to the EU for gas flowing that route and also because it was economically feasible" (Piebalgs, 2009).

The Russian offer on reforming the European security architecture was not left without attention. Ferrero-Waldner (2009a) touches upon Russia's suggestion on new European security system. She calls it ambitious but not precise and expresses concern on preserving previously achieved agreements. The EU seems to hope to engage Russia into its legally binding commitments in order for it to respect rule-based systems. Ferrero-Waldner indicates that the EU will consider new security order as an opportunity rather than a threat, only when it is built on common norms (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a, p.5).

Moving on, the rhetoric stipulates the lack of trust to Russia: "The war in Georgia and the gas crisis seriously undermined the level of trust between us" (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a, p.5). The speech softly develops the idea of Russia's difference and due to war in Georgia Russia is represented as norms violator and is seen as a threat by the EU: "We concluded that we should not try to hide certain differences which exist between us such as Georgia and human rights; but we should equally not let these prevent us from hard-headed engagement on matters of mutual interest" (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a, p.4). However, despite all these problems the need to continue cooperation due to interdependence and mutual interests is highlighted. Therefore, the EU hopes to educate Russia and cooperate with in on legally binding basis aimed to make it more predictable and reliable. Moreover, there is a call to greater self-reflexivity of the EU actions in Ferrero-Waldner speech: "Our challenge is to remain true to our principles and interests, whilst being flexible and responsive to developments on the ground" (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a, p.6). Contrary to Russia's image the EU highlights its benign role as a stable actor spreading norms. The rhetoric about the EU's role ensuring security is expressed in the following style: "The EU is fully aware of its responsibility to ensure peace, prosperity and security for itself and its neighbours...Give me a firm place to stand and I will move the earth. The European Union is a firm place to stand. (Ferrero-Waldner, 2009a, p.6).

The speeches of Olli Rehn, the Commissioner for Enlargement, contain more discursive material compared to Ferrero-Waldner statements and the official documents. For example, Olli Rehn in his speeches on the EU's role in the world develops the discourse of the Europe's historical division and conflictual past. Rehn recalls the end of the Cold War and fall of the Berlin Wall that "ended half a century of totalitarian rule in Eastern Europe"(Rehn, 2009a, p.2). Such phrasing sharply makes a divide between European benign Self and barbaric Soviet Other. Further, his speech touches upon Russia topic and the Russia's return to the spheres of influence in its near abroad: "Uffe Ellemann Jensen warned in his blog last month against Russia's return to a policy of spheres of interest in Eastern Europe. I agree: we don't need new political walls in Europe to replace the walls of concrete that fell 20 years ago. This would go against everything the EU stands for. That is why our new Eastern Partnerships, e.g. with the Ukraine, are so important in bringing these countries closer to the EU and refusing any spheres of interest. But we can and we should make Russia a closer partner in the many areas where we have genuine shared interests. Surely, we need patience: this may make Russia a more predictable and reliable partner in the long run. It should help in the modernisation of the country, to the mutual benefit of Russia and the EU (Rehn, 2009a, p., 5). Rehn neatly imbeds the normative power discourse by referring to the EU's appeal to the East European countries

after the fall of the Iron Curtain. In addition, main idea to reunite the European continent on the ground of stability and prosperity through shared norms and values connotes to the aspect of normative power inclusiveness, thus attempts to make the neighbours as part of the Self. However, in spite of including Ukraine into the identity discourse, the Russia is still excluded from the common neighbourhood policy with an emphasis on the Russia's special treatment.

In another speech, Rehn indirectly compares Russia as a traditional state and the EU as a post-modern power: "EU-Russia relations have changed dramatically since George Kennan wrote his famous Telegram "X" in 1947. Containment in the classical sense is neither appropriate nor possible in today's interdependent, post-cold war world…..While times have changed in these respects, George Kennan's warning against sphere of interest politics still rings true today, as does his belief in human rights, values and the powers of attraction of the West " (Rehn, 2009b, p.5). The speech refers to the post-modernity discourse where the containment of Russia in a traditional sense is impossible and outdated. In addition, Rehn mentions the states sovereignty importance in order to justify and support the choice of the EU's normative power by neighbours: "Sweden's Foreign Minister Carl Bildt spoke for the whole of the EU last week when he said that our eastern neighbours "are sovereign nations and they have their right to choose their own destiny. They have expressed a wish for a closer relationship with the European Union" (Rehn, 2009b, p.5).

Another thread in the normative power discourse outlined by Rehn (2009a, p.6) is the superiority of the EU as a normative power in the form of positioning itself as a norm setter that shapes and transforms its neighbourhood. Continuing that idea, Rehn articulates the necessity to work with Russia in the field of security and make Russia more trustworthy partner: "We can and we should make Russia a closer partner in the many areas where we have genuine shared interests, from energy security to nuclear non-proliferation to counter-terrorism. We have to achieve a better understanding and deeper trust when it comes to matters of crucial importance for European and global security. It is of paramount importance that events like those in Georgia last year are never again repeated. By a realistic policy of engagement, matched by patience, we can help make Russia a more predictable and reliable partner in the long-run, to the mutual benefit of Russia, the EU and the United States"(Rehn, 2009b, p.5). Rehn expresses the necessity to build bridges between the EU and Russia that will have further implications for the future: "We need a new beginning with Russia too. It must be based on a realistic assessment of our interests, of Russia today, and of the nature of our relations"."(Rehn, 2009b, p.5).

During the review of the 2009 period it was possible to trace the common normative power discourse in the form of the representing the EU as a force for good and a norm setter. The issue of inclusiveness was reflected in the EU's increased attempts to drag neighbouring states and Ukraine in particular to the poll of European community. However, Russia was excluded not only in the political framework but also in the speeches where the differences between EU and Russia were emphasized. However, the reviewed official policy documents barely mention Russia beyond the issues of energy security, the EU's representatives speeches actively construct Russia as Other. The EU's rhetoric clarified that its cooperation with Russia goes in parallel to the neighbourhood policy initiatives.

5.3. 2010: Strong and long-standing friend to Ukraine

The rhetoric in the beginning of the year is highly positive, signalling EU readiness to support pro-European choice of Ukraine. The election of Yanukovych as new Ukraine's President added a new wave of increased attention to the EU-Ukraine relations in the European discourse. The EU feared that Ukraine will take a U-turn towards Russia instead of working closer with the EU (White & Feklyunina, 2014). The focus of the rhetoric in the official documents lies on the EU-Ukraine mutual interest to deepen the relations. The partnership with Ukraine is described in highly positive tone as genuine, strong, deep and far-reaching.

Official documents in 2010

The selected EU's official documents regarding Ukraine are: European Council Conclusions, Ukraine's ENP Progress Report and 14th EU-Ukraine Summit materials.

The European Council conclusions (2010) under the paragraph "A changing world: a challenge for the EU" recognized the emergence of the new powers in the world and importance of strategic partnerships. The rhetoric stipulates that new actors have their own views and interests that will make an effect on the international arena. However, the Council emphasized the need to increase the EU's influence in the world. The EU's feature to stabilize the neighbourhood was highlighted. As for Russia, it is mentioned several times regarding the importance of strengthening cooperation between the EU-Russia in the fields of frozen conflicts and energy security (European Council, 2010, p.6). Council outlined the forthcoming summits with both Russia and Ukraine so that the countries are of equal importance for the EU: "The upcoming summits with Ukraine in November and Russia in December should be

used to deepen cooperation on areas of mutual benefit, so as to bring more stability and predictability to those two important relationships, as well as to promote human rights" (European Council, 2010, p.6). However, taking into account the wider context where the trilateral negotiations on the energy issues of Russia, the EU and Ukraine were taking place, such formulation is not surprising.

In Ukraine's Progress Report for 2009 (European Commission, 2010a) Russia is mentioned in the context of energy security and border demarcation between Ukraine and Russia. In case of energy security the report builds on intertextuality outlines the similar rhetoric as in the Report from 2008 (European Commission, 2009b).

The materials of the 14th EU-Ukraine Summit mention Russia in the context of energy relations. For example, Joint Press Statement (Council of the EU, 2010) just briefly outlines that "leaders discussed international and regional issues of common interest". However, the speech of Barroso following the Summit elaborates more on the Russia's representation by highlighting that "triangular relationship between Ukraine, Russia and the European Union in energy field is so important" (Barroso, 2010c, p.2).

Official statements in 2010

The speeches of the following officials were selected for review: Jose Manuel Barroso, Stefan Füle, Catherine Ashton, Günther Oettinger. Despite Russia started strengthening regional cooperation under its rule, the EU's politicians' rhetoric does not touch upon Russian alternative integration efforts at all. However, Russia is still discussed in the energy context. The EU label itself as a "friend of Ukraine" and supporter of reforms that highly values Ukraine as a close EU's partner (Barroso, 2010a).

The selected speech of Füle at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv in Ukraine does not contain any word about Russia. However, the speech carries a message to promote and justify the relations between the EU and Ukraine. In the speech Füle points to the notion of EU-Ukraine interdependence and therefore their relations are "enormously important" for both actors (Füle, 2010a). To justify the relations with Ukraine the rhetoric emphasizes the common ground between Ukraine and the Union that lie in "shared values and common history" (Füle, 2010a, p.3). The main argument for the European choice is not short term but long term benefits future generations will enjoy (Füle, 2010a). Following European model is presented as an opportunity that will foster Ukraine's development forward. The

relations' convergence is explained as a result of inevitable development process: "There is a natural and inevitable dynamic in our relations, based on mutual interest, which draws us closer together" (Füle, 2010a, p.2).

Füle (2010b, p.2) while addressing European Union-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee outlines that "Ukraine matters enormously to the EU. It is important not only for reasons of geography, demography and geopolitics. Ukraine has an enormous industrial, economic and agricultural potential. It also has a deepening democratic tradition. It is a leader in the region and consequently its development in the coming years will have a major impact on the countries in the neighbourhood". The outlined wording points to the EU's awareness of the Ukraine's geopolitical position, however close relations with this country will provide for greater regional stability and prosperity and will influence other neighbours. Unfortunately, the rhetoric does not specify which neighbours. The rhetoric constructs a friendly image of the EU that is there to help Ukraine out, nevertheless the EU requires Ukraine to enhance reforms implementation: "We believe that both the EU and Ukraine stand to benefit enormously from our cooperation. We welcome strongly the positive messages that have been delivered by President Yanukovych. We look forward to seeing those messages translating into concrete reform steps. We will accompany Ukraine in the difficult process of reform. Above all we will remain a strong and long-standing friend to Ukraine." (Füle, 2010b, p.3)

Significant part of the EU's statements for 2010 reflects on the steady growth of fundamental freedoms' violations in Ukraine, so that EU rhetoric began to emphasize the importance of the core norms to which Ukraine has committed itself (Barroso, 2010b; Ashton & Füle, 2010a). This commitment to norms served a precondition to further convergence: "For the European Union and our Member States respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law are fundamental principles that bind us together. They are principles that cannot be compromised - so too for our relations with key partners such as Ukraine. The pace and depth of our rapprochement with Ukraine will be determined by full respect for these values" (Ashton & Füle, 2010a, p.2).

The notion about Russia in the politicians' rhetoric is expressed in the speech of Füle at Committee on Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament. There, he mentions Russia regarding Ukraine's new gas agreement with Russia and the decision to extend lease for the Russian Fleet in Crimea the EU. Despite careful wording that such decision is sovereign affairs of Ukraine, the rhetoric calls the agreements as controversial (Füle, 2010c, p.4). Füle outlines the Ukrainian opposition opinion that the extended lease agreement undermines the

sovereignty of Ukraine. Still, rhetoric stipulates that the only thing the EU worries about is the security of gas flows that is of the Union's strategic interest (Füle, 2010c)

Füle's (2010d) speech at the 7th annual meeting of Yalta European Strategy (YES Conference) draws on the Cold War world bipolar divide and the current situation in the international arena. Russia is not addressed directly, nevertheless the rhetoric points to emergence of multiple global players and a multi-polar world. This statement connotes to the EU's official documents reflection on Russia's growing power and its regional integration activities.

In the speeches around gas flow security there is an attempt on the side of the EU to conduct trilateral dialogue with both Russia and Ukraine (Barroso, 2010b). The importance of Russia is visible in the energy security rhetoric of EU Commissioner for Energy at the International Odessa Forum: "The importance of Russia as a key player in the Black Sea region is evident... The European Union and Russia are interdependent, the EU being by far the first importer of Russian hydrocarbons." (Oettinger, 2010, p.3). The rhetoric also describes Ukraine as a key player for EU's gas stability: "Ukraine has a strategic asset - its extensive existing gas transportation network. The country is at a cross-road where it has a unique opportunity to ensure that it continues to make commercial sense for the gas market players to use the Ukrainian gas transportation network as one of the preferred routes for Russian gas supplies to the EU" (Oettinger, 2010, p.2).

The review of documents for 2010 revealed that Russia creation of the Eurasian Economic Union was not left without the EU's attention. The issue was reflected in some official speeches and in the ENP Review. However, the EU-Ukraine Summit materials, EaP review and Ukraine's progress report continued talking about Russia only through the energy security prism.

5.4. 2011: Formalization of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement

The year of 2011 in the EU-Ukraine relations is characterized by the increased violations of the fundamental human rights in Ukraine. The vast EU's rhetoric addresses the issues of different violations of media freedoms, suspended reforms and persecutions of the former authorities. All those drawbacks not only weaken the EU's successful spread of norms, however, they also undermine the EU's image as a normative power. Thus, the EU begins to heavily criticize Ukraine and its authorities to continue the path of convergence. Still, despite those factors the EU continued cooperation with Ukraine and negotiated the AA and DCFTA.

At the same time, Russia continued strengthening its regional integration project and it began to be noticed and reflected by the EU top-level officials.

Official documents in 2011

The official documents in 2011 do not mention Russia frequently, therefore provide little discursive information on Russia's representation. However, it is necessary to outline the how official policies conceived of Russia's presence in the region. The selected documents are: European Parliament Report on review of the ENP, annual ENP review, EaP review, Ukraine's Progress Report and EU-Ukraine Summit materials.

The 2011 European Parliament Report on review of the ENP calls on the Commission to "explore opportunities for an institutional interlink between the ENP and the neighbourhood policies of key regional players" (European Parliament, 2011, p.22). It invokes the necessity to strengthen the EaP and develop regional cooperation with Russia through the constructive dialogue on the security and other issues of common interest (European Parliament, 2011, p.18).

In the annual ENP review Russia is mentioned under the paragraph 3.1. Strengthening the Eastern Partnership. There is made an allusion to Russia as a state interested "more generally in the development of Eastern Partnership", together with other big countries, for example Turkey and USA (European Commission, 2011b, p.16). This allusion referred to the informal Eastern Partnership Information and Coordination Group involving donors and regional players. However, the Review notes that "informal cooperation will be intensified in line with the interests of Eastern Partnership partners" (European Commission, 2011b, p.16).

The EaP review in 2010 underlined the need to develop informal relations with regional players. Therefore, Russia is only alluded in the reference together with the group of other significant regional players (European Commission, 2011c). That is however is not reflected in Ukraine's progress report for 2010 as the document does not mention Russia at all (European commission, 2011a).

The EU-Ukraine summit in 2011 finalized the negotiations on the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine that lasted for four years, from 2007 until 2011. Among the reasons on why it took such a long time to negotiate the AA are Ukraine domestic political battles, failure to implement necessary reforms, financial crisis of 2008 and Ukraine's

recovery and also Russia's integration project Eurasian Economic Union in the region with Ukraine's participation in it. As at the same date 19 December 2011 there was a meeting of the Eurasian Economic Union participants Summit conduction was a milestone in EU-Ukraine relations that reasserted the Ukraine's pro-European integration course. A closer look at the summit materials, namely speeches of Rompuy (2011) and Barroso (2011) did not reveal any mentions about Russia and its actions in the region. The only evidence that the parties talked about Russia is reflected in the Joint Statement of the Summit (Council of the EU, 2011) by the sentence that parties discussed regional issues of common interest. However, taking into account the wider discourse regarding Russia's intensified regional project, the EU rhetoric stipulates that Ukraine's European choice makes a crucial importance for the future in terms of country's modernisation and prosperity (Rompuy, 2011). Barroso in his Summit speech did stipulate the successful spread of the EU's norms to Ukraine in the energy field. Ukraine joining the European Energy Community in 2010 is described as: "historic event and a concrete signal of Ukraine's European path" (Barroso, 2011, p.2).

Official speeches in 2011

Russia was not widely discussed in the EU's statements regarding Ukraine in 2011 except for the energy security. However, the analysis traced that the EU rhetoric began to reflect on the Russia's activity in the region. The selected officials for the 2011 are: Stefan Füle and Günther Oettinger.

Füle (2011a, p.2) in the speech address to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Club uses the following rhetoric to justify the deepening of the EU-Ukraine relations: "2011 is a critical year for EU-Ukraine relations. The 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident, the 20th anniversary of Ukraine's independence, and, I hope, the finalization of our Association Agreement, are all putting Ukraine in the spotlight. We need to seize the opportunity provided by this attention and accelerate our work on political association, economic integration and sustainable reform – I count on your support for that". Füle encourages Ukrainian authorities to keep up the pro-European course in order to create conditions for the successful norms spread and greater EU-Ukraine convergence: "In Kyiv, we need friends who lend their full support to the reform agenda and who will speak up for the underlying advantages for Ukraine of political association and economic integration with the EU" (Füle, 2011a, p.3). The notion about Russia is expressed indirectly and metaphorically: "They will also remind citizens that deepening relations with the EU does not mean closing the door to other strategic partners. I hope you

will continue working together and that you will share with us the lessons you learn from your dialogue" (Füle, 2011a, p.3). Therefore, the EU addresses the pro-Russian part of Ukrainian population that expresses dissatisfaction of the country's European foreign policy course. Russia is constructed as Ukraine's strategic partner and their mutual relations are emphasized. However, the statement indirectly draws a Self and Other divide again, by stating that it is Ukraine that will share the lessons of its cooperation with Russia. Russia's image is represented distantly, whereas Ukraine is already the EU's partner.

In another speech at the European Policy Center, Füle in order to drag Ukraine closer and promote the European model draws to Ukraine's history as a part of USSR: "Ukraine can clearly demonstrate that weak rule of law is a remnant of the past. Ukraine can show that European values are at the heart of its European choice" (Füle, 2011b, p.3). The rhetoric points to the positive changes Ukraine made since becoming independent state by using the words "rebirth". Emphasizing that Ukraine is on the progressive European path the statement uses the words "Ukraine has shed the vestiges of the Soviet Union and has embarked on the long and challenging road of reforms" (Füle, 2011b, p.2). The EU is described in the rhetoric as a friend, helping hand in rebuilding Ukraine for young generations.as Ukrainians dream of. The speech does not address Russia issue at all.

Reviewing the rhetoric going around energy security in 2011 reveals more about Russia's image construction. Russia as the EU's main energy exporter attempted to realize the method of "divide and rule" and negotiate energy issues with separate member states (De Jong, 2016). The EU official rhetoric, however, emphasized that Russia has to cooperate with the European dimension and consider the EU level instead of separate states (Oettinger, 2011, p.6). Also, the EU's rhetoric emphasizes the importance of the interdependence of the EU, Ukraine and Russia and the necessity of the trilateral discussions on the gas related issues. There are calls from the EU "to exploit the EU's geopolitical potential and reinforce cooperation with strategic partners", namely Russia (Oettinger, 2011, p.6). The need to achieve a common normative ground is highlighted.

5.5. 2012: No compromise on values

The year of 2012 is characterized by significant human rights violations in Ukraine. The imprisoning of former Ukrainian government officials including Yulia Tymoshenko caused heavy critics from the EU. The EU's official rhetoric stressed the need to implement judicial

reform in order to eradicate cases of selective justice. The tone of the EU statements was demanding and mentoring. The Union positioned itself as an educator of Ukraine. The words used to underline the extent of the EU's frustration were: "indignation", "extreme concern", "disappointment", etc. As a reaction to the Yanukovych policy, the EU's top officials boycotted the EURO 2012 football championship held in Ukraine (Harding, 2012). The EU accused Ukraine in disrespect of international standards and European values and norms. Respect of international law was set as a precondition for signing of the AA in vast EU rhetoric during 2012. For example, in the words of Füle: "I sincerely hope that Ukraine will demonstrate its commitment to European values and reforms, allowing us to further develop our relationship" (European Commission, 2012b). The EU's rhetoric expressed concern that Ukraine undermines common values and therefore, the divide between Self identity and Other becomes bigger.

Official documents in 2012

The subsection discusses in detail the following official documents: Council Conclusions on Ukraine, ENP Review, EaP review and Ukraine's Progress Report.

Since there was no EU-Ukraine Summit conducted in 2012 the Council Conclusions (Council of the EU, 2012) towards Ukraine were analysed. The major topic was preparations for the EU-Ukraine AA conclusion and importance to eliminates the issues of selective justice in Ukraine. Russia was not discussed in the Conclusions on Ukraine.

The ENP Review for 2011 (European Commission, 2012a, p.16) regards Russia in the section "A joined-up approach with other donor countries and international institutions" in the context of regional security: "Countries such as Russia and Turkey have the potential to make an important contribution to regional stability".

Ukraine's Progress Report for 2011 (European Commission, 2012b) mentions Russia in the energy security context. However, the text stipulates the need to have trilateral negotiations on gas transit. The text refers to the vast rhetoric on the energy security where it states about the interdependence of Russia as a supplier, Ukraine as a transit network and the EU as a consumer. In terms of the EU's border management initiatives Russia is regarded in the issue on Ukraine-Russia border demarcation. The report on the EaP implementation for 2011 does not contain any word about Russia (European Commission, 2012c) that points to the main line of the EaP focus where Russia is not included.

Official statements in 2012

The majority of the EU's statements discussed Ukraine's violations and failures in the reforms representations. Russia was again touched upon in the energy security context and the need to tripartite cooperation. The selected official statements included in the analysis belong to Stefan Füle as his speeches cover rich discursive information for the analysis.

Füle (2012a) in the statement about Ukraine at the European Parliament Plenary Session discussed the cases of selective justice. The rhetoric changed its overall positive tone and began to construct Ukraine is other because it is a former USSR state: "Let me remind you of the bigger picture. We are talking about the transformation and transition of a country of 50 million people, we are talking about the transformation of Eastern Europe and we are talking about a country, a region, where, not a long time ago – and we all here remember this – a totalitarian regime reigned, the Soviet totalitarian regime to be more precise" (Füle, 2012a, p.3). The following discursive representation connotes to the dark past times of the Cold War. The EU plays a role of a transformation force that helps Ukraine to find the light and prosper by following European way.

Füle (2012a, p. 3) again speaks about Russia indirectly: "there has been a discussion about geopolitics being on one side and values on the other side. I do not see a contradiction. I think we need to be aware of geopolitics, but we should not play geopolitics. I think we should do everything possible to help Ukraine to transform and that this is in line with the legitimate aspirations of the people. We should be flexible, innovative and creative. We should not see the situation as being black and white". The rhetoric juxtaposes the positive image of the EU as a "flexible", "innovative" to geopolitical game that interdiscursively connotes to the previous vast rhetoric on the labelling geopolitics as out-fashioned methods related to hard powers. The EU's lack of desire to participate in geopolitical rivalry with Russia is also explained through the EU's discourse. As the EU regards the zero-sum games, geopolitical competition as vestiges of the past that has to do with the violent conflicts on the European continent and totalitarism of the Soviet regime. The EU presents itself as an actor learning from its own past mistakes in order for them to never repeat again.

In the speech given during Yalta annual conference in 2012, Füle (2012b) while criticizing Ukraine for violating European norms and principles, continues the trend of dragging Ukraine to European family. The rhetoric used is highly positive, describing the EU as a magnet that is very attractive for Ukraine and its people. The EU is presented to modernise and transform Ukraine in the best possible way. The wording style "make the dream a reality" used to

encourage Ukraine following the European path that is described as "a dream", or the best way to live.

The analysis of the political texts from 2012 traced that Russia was not discussed much either in the official documents or in the speeches. The EU's official policies did not speak at all about Russia except for energy security, Füle's rhetoric indirectly alluded to Russia's geopolitical games in the region.

5.6. 2013: The road to Vilnius Summit

The tendency compared to 2008 is that in 2013 before the Vilnius summit the EU raised more talks about Russia in its communication towards Ukraine. It is explained by Russia actively pressing Ukraine to join the Eurasian Customs Union with the use of different political and economic coercive methods. The EU, from it side actively continued the rhetoric on Ukraine's preparation to sign the AA and how it will change Ukraine's future for the better.

Official documents in 2013

The important official documents reviewed for 2013 were: annual ENP Review, the EaP review, Ukraine's ENP Progress Report and 16th EU-Ukraine Summit materials. The analysis of the official documents for the 2013 traced the following notions on Russia's representations.

The analysis of the ENP Review from the 2012 traced that the EU began to recognize Russian presence in the common neighbourhood. In the introduction, the Review mentions Russia indirectly as a "third actor" in the context of its increased involvement in the common neighbourhood (European Commission, 2013c, p.3). That implies that the EU has to increase its engagement with Ukraine to help "tackling problems affecting the region"(European Commission, 2013c, p.3). Therefore, the EU not only right away constructs its image as a benign actor but also justifies its actions to deepen relations with Ukraine. Further, the review reflects on the Russian new integration initiative in the region (European Commission, 2013c). Under the paragraph "Challenges ahead" the document indirectly alludes to Russia: "Shifts in the foreign policy orientation of partner countries and the increasing involvement of other actors in the region may also make the EU less attractive as a model and partner"(European Commission, 2013c, p.22). There is a direct call to greater reflexivity and necessity to include Russia into the neighbourhood cooperation: "This will require the EU to reflect on how to have a more multilateral policy approach, involving and working with, more systematically than it

does now, the other actors working in the neighbourhood in addressing, together with partner countries themselves, issues of shared interest"(European Commission, 2013c, p.22). Russian-led regional framework is called as "alternative", "new challenge", "changed the landscape". That is it undermines the attractiveness of the European model as a norm-setter and as a partner: "This is perceived as offering an alternative model of political and economic development to integration with the EU" (European Commission, 2013c, p.22). The Review directly stipulates: "there is a choice to be made. For example, joining the Customs Union that is part of the Eurasian Union would preclude economic integration with the EU through a DCFTA" (European Commission, 2013c, p.22). Ukraine as an EaP participant had to make a choice because of the   incompatibility of the European and Russian model. With such an ultimate wording, the EU emphasizes the lack of flexibility of the EU model and its unreadiness to include Russia in the cooperation. It also signals about the lack of reflexivity as to why Russia increased its own regional integration process. There is also lack of reflexivity towards Ukraine that has an ambivalent position and has to benefit from cooperation with both the EU and Russia.

The EaP review for 2012 speaks about Russia only in the context of regional cooperation on the environment in the East Europe (European Commission, 2013e). Also, there is a notion about the third meeting of the informal EaP information and coordination group where regional players participate. However, there is no references to Russia on the security concerns, even though energy security aspects are widely discussed in the document. Ukraine's progress report for 2012 states nothing about Russia either in the context of general security or in energy stability (European Commission, 2013d).

The EU-Ukraine Summit statements revealed indirect mentioning about Russia only in the Barroso (2013b) statement. The rhetoric addresses "the regional and multilateral issues, including the overall development of the region". The relations with Russia are labelled as 'good neighbourly relations' and Russia itself is regarded among "the countries of the region" (Barroso, 2013b, p.2). The rhetoric building on importance of Ukraine to the EU's energy security is detected again: "Ukraine as a transit country remains a reliable partner of the EU, willing to ensure stable and secure gas flows to Europe" (Council of the EU, 2013). Russia however is not mentioned in that context.

Official statements in 2013

Analysis of the EU's political speeches however, provided distinctive rhetoric comparing with the official documents. The selected officials for this period are Jose Manuel Barroso, Catherine Ashton and Stefan Füle.

Despite human rights violations in Ukraine the EU still continued its line of convergence, preparing the country to sign the AA. Commenting on the achievements and delays in the area of democratic reforms in partner countries, High Representative Catherine Ashton said: "The European Union will continue to do all it can to help the development of deep democracy in our partner countries. The European Neighbourhood Policy has a vital role to play in supporting this process. Delays in some partner countries are obviously a matter of concern, but must not be used as an excuse for disengagement. For the EU, building sustainable democracies remains a top priority" (European Commission, 2013).

Trying to secure Ukrainian pro-European choice the EU was pushing Ukraine to implement the necessary reforms and was evaluating the progress: "the window of opportunity is short and there is no plan B if we would miss the Vilnius target" (Füle, 2013a). Again, the EU's rhetoric constructs the EU's image as a very attractive option that is going to be transformative for Ukraine: "the Vilnius summit is going to be a game changer" (Füle, 2013e, p.3). The use of word "transformative", "innovative", "ambitious" carry highly positive meaning that is the EU promotes itself as an extremely attractive model for Ukraine to choose.

There is a notion of difference among the official documents discourse and the official speeches. Whereas official documents still mark a line between Ukraine and Europe, the speeches of Barroso in 2013 greet Ukraine as a member of European family. On the 16th EU-Ukraine Summit Barroso stipulated more level of Ukraine's inclusion: "Ukraine is already a member of the European family of nations and we want all Ukrainians to enjoy the benefits of that, through the signing and entering into force of the Association Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement" (Barroso, 2013b).

Füle (2013b, p.2) in the speech to European Parliament Plenary session refers to Russia indirectly: "Let me also make this very clear: this is not a Free Trade Agreement and this is not just a geostrategic kind of Treaty we are in – and by the way with the new Neighbourhood Policy that this house so much supported I thought the times were over when this is treated only from a geostrategic point of view, keeping away the values and the interests". It clearly reflects on the geopolitical ambitions of Russia in the region that was pushing for EACU. The rhetoric exercises the "othering" of Russia by pointing to its outdated style of foreign policy

conduction characterized by interests. Simultaneously, the normative power discourse constructs the EU's identity as the model for Ukraine to choose: "In the case of Ukraine, what we are concluding is the treaty not only about political association but also about economic integration, a treaty that brings Ukraine much closer to the Europe, gradually accepting the country into the single market of the European Union. This is what the DCFTA is offering. I don't know, in addition to Enlargement, any other policy which would so effectively build more European Union in our partner countries than this Association Agreement/DCFTA. It is an agreement on the shared responsibility based on shared values" (Füle, 2013b, p.2).

The review also traced the construction of Ukraine as Other in the EU's, however in a context of Ukraine's approximation to the EU despite difficult post-Soviet starting conditions: "Don't underestimate the difference between being part of the socialist camp and being part of the post-Soviet Union: you have a different starting point" (Füle, 2013b, p.2)

The idea of transforming Ukraine as a part of the post-Soviet Union is prevalent in the discourse in 2013 as well. "We have been talking a lot about the transformation of Eastern Europe to complete this project of a united, prosperous and stable Europe. This year and the Vilnius Summit is the opportunity not only to talk about it but to deliver on it – signing the AA by Ukraine." (Füle, 2013b, p.2). The rhetoric again connotes to the discourse of united wider Europe and the EU as a transformation force. The notions of normative power discourse are also reflected in the rhetoric: "But we made one thing clear: there will be one area where there will be no flexibility, where we will make no compromises and these is the area of our shared values and shared principles and they are the basis of this agreement" (Füle, 2013b, p.3).

In the speech preceding Vilnius Summit Füle (2013d, p.4) expresses in a straightforward manner Russia's attempts to engage Ukraine into its integration project: "The more we cooperate with our partners the more we feel the need to strengthen and widen the Exchange of views with Russia. More than two months ago, the European Commission was in Moscow for a meeting with the government. For the first time we raised three important issues related to the shared neighbourhood: we explained the lack of compatibility between Association Agreements and the Customs Union. We explained that the reason for that incompatibility is that we cannot make legally binding agreements with partners that are not in charge of their external trade policies. We made clear that this is not about politics or ideology. We are keen for our partners to strengthen their relationships with Russia. We also made the point that we are ready with our partners and Moscow to talk about those policies of the Customs Union and Eurasian union where the partners could participate without putting into question the content of the Association Agreement negotiations. In other words, we will be very pragmatic in this

regard. Thirdly, we also made an offer to strengthen contacts between the European Commission and Eurasian union on some of the most important areas such as the regulatory framework. We are keen to see that the European Union regulatory work is compatible with the Eurasian union side". The rhetoric of that style points to the strengthening of the divide between the EU and Russia. The EU's position is expressed in principled terms, namely "incompatibility", "without putting into question the content", "we will be very pragmatic". However, while rhetoric softens by the promise of negotiating the compatibility, the divide between the Self and Other is constructed. Ukraine is constructed as a partner of the EU. Russia is addressed through the importance of the EU's partners (Ukraine) to strengthen links with it.

Analysis of Füle speech at Yalta conference before the crucial Vilnius Summit again draws on the incompatibility of the Russian and European models of integration. However, politician states that there is no "choice between Moscow and Brussels". The EU sounds to be reflective to Russian concerns: "We will be doing our utmost for the Association Agreement DCFTA not to be seen as a threat but as an opportunity", by still trying to persuade Russia that the EU-Ukraine relations will only benefit Russia.

Again, the necessity to find a common language with Russia is emphasized, thus the EU realizes the importance of the actor: "We want our partners to have good relations and cooperation with Russia. We are striving to have the same good relations with Russia. It is a special and strategic partner for us" (Füle, 2013e, p.3). Unfortunately, there is a notion that the EU draws a line between "our partners" and Russia. Russia is constructed as Other, that means cooperation with it goes beyond the EU's neighbourhood project where Ukraine already participates.

Füle's (2013c) speech to European Parliament in the eve of crucial Vilnius Summit not only has a blunt name "Statement on the pressure exercised by Russia on countries of the Eastern Partnership" but also mentions Russia many times. In the beginning the rhetoric provides the arguments for the closer integration based on natural EU-Ukraine relations development. The rhetoric transcends a message to Russia that AA with Ukraine is not a threat and should not be perceived as such. However, it is beneficial to both Russia and Ukraine as the EU partner in the longer term: "We have to do a better job in communicating with our Russian friends making the point again and again that the Eastern Partnership is not against them, against their interest" (Füle, 2013c, p.3). Moving on, the speech in the straightforward style emphasizes Russia's pressure on the EU partners. The following quote by comparing and contrasting, constructs Russian integration project as different Other with unattractive

qualities and simultaneously constructs the EU's model as extremely appealing choice: " It is true that the Customs Union membership is not compatible with the DCFTAs which we have negotiated with Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, and Armenia. This is not because of ideological differences; this is not about a clash of economic blocs, or a zero-sum game. This is due to legal impossibilities: for instance, you cannot at the same time lower your customs tariffs as per the DCFTA and increase them as a result of the Customs Union membership. The new generation of Association Agreements will bring enormous transformative benefits through legal approximation, regulatory convergence, and market liberalisation. Independent studies indicate that a DCFTA will bring substantial benefits. Exports to the EU could double over time, leading to increase in GDP of up to approximately 12%. But in order to implement these, our partners must enjoy full sovereignty over their own trade policies, which members of the Customs Union will not" (Füle, 2013c, p.2). The rhetoric also indicates the normative incompatibilities between Russian and European models that point to Russia's "othering" through the EU's normative power discourse.

Further in the speech, Füle develops principled position that there exist only one option for integration. The formulation points to that option is to choose the EU: "It may certainly be possible for members of the Eastern Partnership to increase their cooperation with the Customs Union, perhaps as observers; and participation in a DCFTA is of course fully compatible with our partners' existing free trade agreements with other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) states. Let me be clear: the development of the Eurasian Economic Union project must respect our partners' sovereign decisions. Any threats from Russia linked to the possible signing of agreements with the European Union are unacceptable." (Füle, 2013c, p.2). Referring to the discourse of the dark past to which the postmodern EU juxtaposes itself was also detected: "This is not how international relations should function on our continent in the twenty-first century. Such actions clearly breach the principles to which all European states have subscribed" (Füle, 2013c, p.3).

In line with the EU's respect for the universal rules and norms, the rhetoric also hints to superiority of the EU's position to dictate the norms and rules: "it is not a political game, it is about our partners' sovereignty, about their external trade policy. And we always added that we are the first ones to be interested in traditional ties between our partners and Russia and that we stand ready to help the partners and eventually, also Moscow, to find policies our partners could align with as long as they do not contradict the agreements on DCFTA." (Füle, 2013c, p.3).

Finalizing the speech, Füle (2013c, p.3) constructs the EU's image that has visible benefits over Russian model: "I have problems to participate in the zero-sum game, as I am a believer in win-win games, particularly in dealing with such a strategic partner as Russia". The rhetoric points that the EU offers better approach to the problem than Russia does. However, despite the rhetoric increasing the divide between the EU's Self and Russian Other, there is an attempt to overcome "otherness": "I am not in the business of creating new walls – quite the contrary", "work with our neighbours to find ways of maximising the compatibility between the EU and Eurasian structures in a way that can facilitate trade and economic integration. To the benefit of our neighbour but also to the benefit of the neighbour of our neighbours". Thus, the wording points to the EU reflecting on the problem and thinking about cooperation. Since, this message was distributed two months before the Vilnius Summit it is obvious that solution for finding compatibility was not found.

Because of the Ukraine's authorities refuse to sign the Association agreement with the EU, the EU's rhetoric changes and Ukraine gains more features of the Other. Barroso (2013a, p.5): And I hope that the European forces will show their commitment to our common project. Because it is not true that is it just in the Western part of Ukraine. No, most of the Ukrainians care about a future in peace and freedom. And I think we have this duty to recognise them today". However, the speech of Ashton addressing the people of Ukraine expresses high interest and engagement with the country. The rhetoric is very careful and does mention Russia directly any single time. However, inspiring Ukraine to keep up the European integration course Ashton indirectly alludes to Russia. First allusion is made when Ashton encouraged Ukraine as a sovereign state to enhance the cooperation with the EU in the form of AA: "As a sovereign state, we believe you have choices that you can make and we hope that you will choose as part of that to have the strongest possible relationship with the European Union." (Ashton, 2013, p.2). The EU already stated that to join the EACU means to give up Ukraine's sovereignty. Therefore, the rhetoric puts the emphasis on the wording "sovereign state" as a state that makes decisions and those decision are following the EU. Second allusion to Russia can be seen in the following wording: "We also believe in the strong economic relations between us. Not about making choices, but about recognising it's possible to have strong and good relations with all neighbours. Relations that will not only drive the economy in the short term, but drive the economy in the longer-term, to make sure that the potential for this nation to develop economically is realised." (Ashton, 2013, p.1). Pointing to short-term benefits means for example Russia's offer to sell gas at lower prices to Ukraine. Whereas, the EU's offer will bring long-term benefits. Therefore, there is a notion of inconsistency in the rhetoric. While

stating that signing the AA is not about making choices, Ashton continues to promote European model.

Review of the official texts in 2013 revealed the increased attention of the EU towards Russia. The country was constructed as different and old-fashioned. The Russian methods of policy conduction were labelled as geopolitical and interests' driven. Russian integration project was described as a short-term benefit aiming to pull away Ukraine's sovereignty. On top of that, Russian project's image was constructed incompatible with the EU's regulations, because it impedes sovereign states' right to decide for themselves.

6. Conclusion

The review of the EU's political rhetoric towards Ukraine from 2008 until 2014 revealed the Unions increased interest in EU-Ukraine relations. From the point of no interest and just a neighbour before 2008 Ukraine became the epicenter of the EU's attention and "key partner in the region". After Russia suggestion to reform the European security architecture and its aggression in Georgia the EU pulled all its efforts to tailor a new approach to cooperation with Ukraine that took a form of EaP. The cooperation was also heated by increased instability in the energy supplies that also created the necessity to legally bind Ukraine to the common energy regulating agreements in order to make it more reliable partner. The EU's efforts to engage Russia into legally binding agreements and to spread its normative power to Russia proved to be unsuccessful. The divide between the EU and Russia began to increase that was evident while analyzing the EU's communication with Ukraine.

The analysis of the EU's official speeches and policies towards Ukraine from 2008 until 2014 provided the following results. Since the EU rhetoric towards Ukraine articulates its normative power identity through its political discourse the analysis revealed that the EU constructs Russia as Other. As the specifics of the EU's normative power is to have welcoming ground for the norms dissemination, it requires the neighbours readiness to accept the norms. The EU faced difficulties while trying to spread its norms to Russia. Threatened by instability on external borders, the EU discursively began to draw a line between Other Russia on one side and the EU and its normative power application space, namely shared neighbourhood and more precisely Ukraine. Ukraine was ready to accept the norms, implement the reforms and follow pro-European path, thus the EU was eager to cooperate with it and represented it as ally, partner, friend and a source of stability on the Eastern

border. Russia that did not want to accept European norms on the contrary was represented as different Other that resulted in Russia's exclusion from the EU's neighbourhood initiatives. Hence, while the EU was dragging Ukraine in, it simultaneously excluded Russia because it was difficult to spread European norms to it.

In highly conflictual setting that of Georgia war in 2008 or Russia pressing Ukraine before Vilnius Summit in 2013, the EU rhetoric actively mentions Russia by assigning it unfavourable qualities. The EU's constructs Russia's image as a strategic old-fashioned actor while the EU is a benign progressive force for good. When representing Russia's regional integration project the EU used highly contrasted language to juxtapose the differences and present the EU in the best light.

The research also revealed certain gap in communicating Russia's image to Ukraine. The EU on the top authorities' level realized the threat coming from Russia and constructed it as Other that violates rules and norms because of its strategic interests. This stance was reflected in major official documents like annual ENP reviews, speeches at big conferences. However, the analysis of the narrower setting, for example EaP annual reviews, Ukraine's ENP Progress Reports, EU-Ukraine Summit materials, meetings of the EU executives with Ukrainian authorities did not provide fruitful discursive results on Russia's representations in specifically EU-Ukraine relations. The notions about Russia in the narrower setting ranged from not speaking about it at all or speaking about it in the energy security or border management vein. The EaP annual reviews only mentioned Russia's participation in the informal group on regional cooperation. The official speeches were more explicit in recognizing Russia's presence and constructing its image as Other, especially in 2008 and 2013. The EU authorities actively represented the European model as the best option to choose contrasting it with Russia's integration offer. The EU's approach to foreign policy in Ukraine is juxtaposed to old-fashioned Russian as the more progressive, far-reaching, innovative and created for future generations. Russian model is represented as outdated, coercive, unreliable, not based on universal norms and eager to impinge the neighbouring states sovereignty. Thus, it is possible to trace that the EU constructs its identity in contrast to Russian one in line with Diez (2005) "othering" characteristics. Through the period studies it was possible to trace the ranging of Russia's representations. At extremely conflictual times Russia was represented as threat, inferior Other, norms violator. In more stable times and when the EU had to negotiate gas security Russia was presented as just different. In the EU-Ukraine relations the analysis traced the representation of the European integration model as a more superior to Russian one, thus Russia's image was constructed as inferior Other.

These findings complement the arguments of Haukkala (2016) that the EU was competing with Russia over Ukraine. However, together with this unreflexive competition realized by the EU the analysis traced the construction of the EU's normative identity opposing it to Russia as Other. This practice of Russia's "othering" traced in the EU's normative power discourse towards Ukraine led to further exclusion of Russia from the EU's neighbourhood initiatives. That practice contributed to distancing Russia and worsening not only the EU- Russia relations but also relations between Ukraine and Russia that resulted in a severe crisis.

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