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War of words: Framing of the United States in Selected Belarusian newspapers in 2009

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Natalie Manayeva entitled "War of words: Framing of the United States in Selected Belarusian newspapers in 2009." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Communication and Information.

Dr. Peter Gross, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Dr. Michael R. Fitzgerald, Dr. Dwight L. Teeter Jr.

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

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FRAMING OF THE UNITED STATES
IN SELECTED BELARUSIAN NEWSPAPERS IN 2009**

A Thesis Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Natalie Manayeva
August 2010

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*This work is dedicated to the memory of my beloved Grandparents,
Dina Manaeva and Alexander Drakokhrust*

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the peculiarities of framing of the United States in selected Belarusian newspapers during first six months of the Obama administration. The concepts of anti-Americanism, authoritarian model of mass media and framing were chosen as a theoretical framework. This study was focused on the two main questions: first, what is the difference in how Belarusian state-run and independent newspapers frame the U.S., and second, what is the mechanism of creating negative image of the U.S. in Belarusian newspapers. In order to provide comprehensive answers to both questions the multi-method approach (involving methods of content and framing analysis) was chosen. As this study demonstrated, the state-run and independent newspapers present a very different image of the U.S.: state-run newspapers present the U.S. within a scope of strong negative frames. However, the picture in the independent newspapers is the opposite: out of four general frames three were positive and one was neutral-positive. The results of the content analysis showed that negative images of the United States do not necessarily have to be promoted through direct judgmental statements, but could rather be initiated by means of selecting certain negative facts for publication, often from unidentified sources. By concentrating their attention on crime, natural catastrophes, manipulating statistical data, omitting sources of information and selecting foreign experts who are critically inclined against the U.S media create a negative image of the United States.

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INTRODUCTION

In the last decade the America's global image has declined world-wide. As public opinion polls data from Pew Research demonstrate, anti-American feelings seem to grow even among close U.S. allies:

Table 1. Global public opinion towards US, 2001-2008.¹

Favorable Views of the U.S.								
	1999/ 2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Britain	83	75	70	58	55	56	51	53
France	62	62	42	37	43	39	39	42
Spain	50	--	38	--	41	23	34	33
Germany	78	60	45	38	42	37	30	31
Poland	86	79	--	--	62	--	61	68
Russia	37	61	37	46	52	43	41	46
Turkey	52	30	15	30	23	12	9	12
Lebanon	--	36	27	--	42	--	47	51
Egypt	--	--	--	--	--	30	21	22
Jordan	--	25	1	5	21	15	20	19
South Korea	58	52	46	--	--	--	58	70
India	--	66	--	--	71	56	59	66
Japan	77	72	--	--	--	63	61	50
Australia	--	--	59	--	--	--	--	46
China	--	--	--	--	42	47	34	41
Indonesia	75	61	15	--	38	30	29	37
Pakistan	23	10	13	21	23	27	15	19
Brazil	56	51	35	--	--	--	44	47
Mexico	68	64	--	--	--	--	56	47
Argentina	50	34	--	--	--	--	16	22
Tanzania	--	53	--	--	--	--	46	65
Nigeria	46	76	61	--	--	62	70	64
South Africa	--	65	--	--	--	--	--	60

1999/2000 survey trends provided by the Office of Research,
U.S. Department of State.

¹ Pew Research Center: Survey Reports. Global Public Opinion in the Bush Years (2001-2008)
<http://pewglobal.org/2008/12/18/global-public-opinion-in-the-bush-years-2001-2008>

There are many potentially negative consequences of the tendency of the US image to decline. Accumulation of negative attitudes towards the country could, at some point, result in direct confrontation in the international political arena or even in armed conflicts in places where the US have direct economic or political interests. Loss of political supporters may not always be caused by a poor image of the country, but a negative image will definitely have some effect in that process. Some less demonstrable but rather harmful economic outcomes of anti-American moods may include damage to American businesses abroad and loss of competitiveness of American products and services on international market.

In order to avoid or to control negative outcomes of the phenomenon of anti-Americanism it is important to understand mechanics of it. It is of special importance in “problematic countries” like those of post soviet bloc.

Anti-American feelings in the Eastern Europe and Russia still exist today and they are different from those in the soviet era. It would be a mistake to extrapolate the knowledge about old Soviet-era anti-American stereotypes and consider it valid in the post-Soviet 21st century. Establishing a strong relationship with such strategic partners as Russia and the Eastern Europe nations is impossible without a deep understanding of the region and its attitudes toward the United States. Comprehending those attitudes is essential for American politicians, policy and decision-makers, and non-profit organizations, and should be based on more substantive academic research.

This research is focused on the example of Belarus. It is designed to explore characteristics and elements of images of the U.S. presented by Belarusian newspapers.

From the vantage point of 2010, the relationship between the U.S.A. and Belarus steadily deteriorated² in the preceding decade. The Bush administration used to call Belarus “the last dictatorship of Europe,” whereas the Belarusian leadership called the U.S., “the most alienated state in the world.”³ To gain support inside and outside their countries, both sides formed and promoted negative images of each other (see Manayeva, Yuran, Fitzgerald, 2010). The main instrument in this process was, of course, the mass media of the two countries (see Manayeva, Yuran, Fitzgerald, 2010). The Obama administration is trying to revise and renew U.S. foreign policy, including the Belarusian case.⁴

² See US Department of State, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs: Background Note: Belarus: “In October 2004, the U.S. Congress passed, and President George W. Bush signed, the Belarus Democracy Act, which was designed to promote democratization. In signing the act, President Bush noted that the authorities were turning Belarus into “a regime of repression in the heart of Europe,” and set out the U.S. policy of working “with our allies and partners to assist those seeking to return Belarus to its rightful place among the Euro-Atlantic community of democracies.” Source: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5371.htm>

³ See White House Office of the Press Secretary: President Discusses Freedom and Democracy in Latvia (May 7, 2005): “The people of that country [Belarus] live under Europe’s last dictatorship, and they deserve better... The governments of Latvia and Lithuania have worked to build support for democracy in Belarus, and to deliver truthful information by radio and newspapers. Together we have set a firm and confident standard: Repression has no place on this continent.” <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050507-8.html>

⁴ Obama: Time to ‘reset’ relations with Russia. Associated Press, March 3, 2009. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29478806/>

Previous research on Belarusian press during George W. Bush administration⁵ (Manayeva, Yuran, Fitzgerald, 2010) shows that there is a great difference in the image of the United States that Belarusian non-state and state-run newspapers are presenting. The purpose of the study was to examine how the Belarusian newspapers were presenting the U.S. to its readers in the first six months of Obama's administration and to discover what frames were used. The findings show how one of the world's authoritarian regimes was presenting the U.S. to its citizen/readers.

According to the classic American book *Four Theories of the Press* by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm Belarusian media system, in general, could be identified within the authoritarian model. Peculiarities of the evolution of this model in the post-communist societies were described by Peter Gross (*Entangled Evolutions: Media and Democratization in Eastern Europe*, 2002), Colin Sparks (*Communism, Capitalism and the Mass Media*, 1997), and Carol Yakubowicz (*Rude Awakening: Social and Media Change in Central and Eastern Europe*, 2007).

The proposed study attempted to outline one model of a contemporary authoritarian press' presentation of the U.S. to its readers and do so in the context of existing theories of the concept of framing and anti-Americanism.

This study could serve as a base for further research in several different ways. First, further studies could be focused on the connection between the image of the

⁵ Manayeva, N., Yuran, D., Fitzgerald, M. (2010). A comparative study of the image of Belarus in the US Press and the image of the US in Belarusian press. Baker Center Journal of Applied Public Policy (2).

U.S. that Belarusian newspapers present and the image of the U.S. in minds of Belarusian people: the results of framing and content analysis could be compared with public opinion poll data to see if (and how) the media coverage influences attitudes of Belarusian people towards United States. Another way to broaden this research is to add other important geo-political players (Russia, for example) to the analysis. In addition, current research could be extended by adding more sources: television, radio, and new media.

BACKGROUND: THE BELARUSIAN MEDIA LANDSCAPE AND LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Background information: Belarus ⁶

Belarus is a post-soviet country located east of Poland and West of Russia, with a population around 10 million.⁷ After more than 70 years as a constituent republic of the USSR, Belarus declared itself sovereign from the Soviet Union in 1990 and became independent state in 1991.⁸

Since his election in 1994 as the country's first democratically elected president, Alexander Lukashenko has managed to stay in the office by "consolidating his power over all institutions and undermining the rule of law through authoritarian means,

⁶ This Section is based on the U.S. Department of State Report on Human Rights Report: Belarus, U.S. Department of State Background Note on Belarus, and the Amnesty International: Human Rights in Republic of Belarus Report (2009).

⁷ CIA, The world Factbook: Belarus. <https://cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bo.html>

⁸ Ibid.

manipulating elections, and arbitrary decrees”.⁹ Since 1996, all major elections in Belarus failed to meet international democratic standards. As U.S. Department of State Report on Human Rights Report: Belarus (2009)¹⁰ stresses, “[in Belarus] the right of citizens to change their government is severely restricted”.

Since 1994, Belarusian authorities continue to commit numerous abuses of basic human rights (including politically motivated disappearances, arrests for political reasons and use of administrative measures to detain political activists, convicting individuals on false and politically motivated charges and other abuses), and civil liberties (including control and censor over the media, harasses, assaults, and arrests of journalists, restricting access to the Internet, restricting academic freedom and cultural events, restricting freedom of assembly, associations and various other abuses).

According to the U.S. Department of State Report on Human Rights Report on Belarus, Belarusian government’s human rights record remains very poor: “The government failed to account for past politically motivated disappearances. ...Arbitrary arrests, detentions, and imprisonment of citizens for political reasons, criticizing officials, or for participating in demonstrations also continued. The judiciary lacked independence, trial outcomes usually were predetermined, and many trials were conducted behind closed doors. The government further restricted civil

⁹ U.S. Department of State, 2009 Human Rights Report: Belarus.
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/eur/136021.htm>

¹⁰ Ibid.

liberties, including freedoms of press, speech, assembly, association, and religion and continued to enforce politically motivated military conscriptions of opposition youth leaders. The government seized published materials from civil society activists and limited the distribution of a number of independent media outlets. State security services used unreasonable force to disperse peaceful protesters. ...Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and political parties were subjected to harassment, fines, and prosecution. Religious leaders were fined or deported for performing services, and churches continued to face persecution from authorities. ...There was discrimination against Roma, ethnic, and sexual minorities, and against use of the Belarusian language. Authorities harassed independent unions and dismissed their members, severely limiting the ability of the workers to form and join independent trade unions and to organize and bargain collectively.”

As to U.S.-Belarus relations, the diplomatic relations were established in 1991 (when the United States officially recognized Belarusian independence), and the U.S. Embassy was opened in Minsk, Belarus in 1992. Since President Lukashenko was elected in 1994, the diplomatic relations between two countries have consistently deteriorated.

In 1997 U.S. Ambassador Daniel Speckhard, who served from 1997 to 2000 was “recalled for one year because of the dispute between the Belarusian government and the Western Embassies over the confiscation of the diplomatic residencies”.¹¹

¹¹ US Department of State, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs: Background Note: Belarus.

In October 2004 the U.S. Congress passed and President George W. Bush signed the Belarus Democracy Act that was designed to promote democratization in Belarus. After the flawed Belarusian Presidential elections of 2006 the United States, together with The European Union imposed travel restriction of selected Belarusian officials (including President Lukashenko) together with financial sanctions against Belarus.

In the end of 2007 U.S. Treasury department froze the U.S. assets of Belarusian company “Belnaftehim” because of Lukashenko’s control over the company. Shortly after that U.S. Ambassador Karen B. Steward was recalled to Washington following a threat of expulsion by the Belarusian authorities and the recall of Belarusian Ambassador from the U.S. The staff of the U.S. embassy in Minsk was reduced to five diplomats, and that made it impossible to provide visa services to most Belarusians.

Background information: Belarusian media landscape¹²

Although the Belarusian constitution provides for freedom of the speech and of the press, Belarusian authorities do not respect these rights in practice. Moreover, they enforce laws to control and censor the media and punish dissidence. Individuals cannot criticize the government publicly without fear of repression: for example,

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5371.htm>

¹² This section is based on the U.S. Department of State Report on Human Rights Report: Belarus, U.S. Department of State Background Note on Belarus, IREX Media Sustainability Index 2010.

giving information to the foreigners about the country that seems false or derogatory to the authorities is a criminal offence; slandering and insulting the president or public officials is a criminal offence with the punishment of four years in prison.¹³

As it is stated in the U.S. Department of State Background Note on Belarus,¹⁴ “Efforts to further infringe upon press freedoms included the continued use of libel laws, restrictions on foreign funding, pressure on businesses not to advertise with independent media, limitations on access to newsprint and printing presses, prohibiting access to state distribution networks, censorship, restrictions on the import of media-related materials, temporary and permanent suspension of independent and opposition periodicals, confiscation in quantity of printed publications, and detention of those distributing such material.”

According to the Amnesty International Human Rights in Republic of Belarus Report (2009),¹⁵ “[In 2009] the government continued to exert excessive control over civil society. State control over the media increased, and restrictions on independent media continued. Some public events were banned; peaceful demonstrators were fined and detained for short periods; and civil society activists and journalists were harassed.”

¹³ U.S. Department of State, 2009 Human Rights Report: Belarus.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/eur/136021.htm>

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Amnesty International: Human Rights in Republic of Belarus Report (2009).

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/belarus/report-2009>

According to the IREX Media Sustainability Index 2010, “news is restricted in Belarus and independent news sources are not readily available. There is some relief thanks to the Internet, small private newspapers, satellite dishes, and foreign radio stations... There are a lot of state-owned, and very few private, sources of information. Quantitatively, there are more non-state media registered, yet audience-wise, they are largely overshadowed. Subsidized, state-run¹⁶ publications dominate the print market. Private newspapers are discriminated against in distribution, severely limiting their reach.”¹⁷ The circulation of most popular state-run newspaper *Sovetskaya Belorussiya/Belarus Segodnya* (around 500,000 copies) compared to the numbers of most popular independent newspaper *Narodnya Volya* (around 25,000 copies) illustrates the difference between the audience of state-run and independent media (see Manaev, Manyeva, Yuran, 2010).

The government controls the content of domestic broadcast media: as the President Lukashenko stated in 2007: “control of radio and television stations remains a high priority for the government... Private stations should not be allowed to operate in the country.... State publishing houses should never sign contracts with

¹⁶ In case of Belarus, state –run status of the media includes: ownership by the state; state authorities are the founders of the media outlet; state authorities have a right to appoint editors-in-chief; authorities provide most of the facilities (space, equipment, printing houses, distribution system). In some cases, state authorities provide funding from the state budget, and as a consequence – control media coverage. On the other hand, non-state status of the media means that the founder and owners are private people or structures (it could be business, various NGOs, political parties, trade unions, etc.), that pay for all facilities and services mentioned above.

¹⁷ IREX Media Sustainability Index 2010.

www.irex.org/programs/msi_eur/2010/EE_MSI_2010_Belarus.pdf

independent media publications that violated media laws.”¹⁸ As a consequence of this policy, only state-run television and radio networks are allowed to operate state-wide. As the U.S. Department of State 2009 Human Rights Report on Belarus states: “The government continued to use its virtual monopoly on television and radio broadcasting to disseminate its version of events and minimize all opposing viewpoints. State television coordinated its propaganda documentaries with the country's security services.”

As it is stressed by Belarusian Association of Journalists in the annual report “Mass Media in Belarus (2008)”,¹⁹ state mass media not only receive administrative support and preferences, but also direct support from the state budget. According to the report, these are the numbers for the state financial support for state-run media (including newspapers *Sovetskaya Belorussiya/Belarus Segodnya* and *Zvyazda*) over the years:

- 2004 - 29.7 millions in U.S. dollars;
- 2005 - 40.8 millions in U.S. dollars;
- 2006 - 60.7 millions in U.S. dollars;
- 2007 - 64.0 millions in U.S. dollars;
- 2008 - 74.0 millions in U.S. dollars;
- 2009 - 90.1 millions in U.S. dollars;

¹⁸ U.S. Department of State, 2009 Human Rights Report: Belarus.
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/eur/136021.htm>

¹⁹ Belarusian Association of Journalists, Annual Report “Mass Media in Belarus (2008).” p. 4.
<http://baj.by/index.php?module=p&type=file&func=get&tid=6&fid=pdf&pid=29>

These numbers show the financial support for the state-run media have tripled over last five years (2004 to 2009). The strong administrative and financial support that state-run newspapers receive from the government has a serious consequence on the content of these newspapers: they promote official ideology and propaganda.

Print media still remains an influential source of information for millions of Belarusians. Thus, according to Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS) public opinion polls²⁰, 60.5% of respondents get information about life in Belarus and abroad “most often from newspapers” (to compare: 95.2% - from TV, and 55% - from radio). Here, 85.7% get information about life in Belarus, and 48.2% about life in the European Union and the US from the state-run media, while only 35.4% and 20.2% accordingly get it from the non-state media. The most readable newspaper is “*Sovetskaya Belorussiya/Belarus Segodnya*”: more than quarter of respondents read it daily or often, and 16% time to time (to compare: “*Belorusy i Rynok*” 2.4% and 3.8% accordingly). 34% of newspaper readers are most interested in economic issues, 29.3% - in social issues, 28.5% - in news, and 25.6% - in domestic and foreign politics.

Most part of print media audience trusts them. Thus, 62.7% respondents trust the state-run media information about life in Belarus, and 35.2% - in the European Union and the US, while only 25.5% and 15.1% accordingly trust information from the non-state media. However, to conclude about trust level to different media we

²⁰ <http://www.iiseps.org/earhive.html>

should make more complex calculation. For example, if over 40% of respondents read *Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, and 35.2% trust the state-run media information about life in the European Union and the US, obviously, not all its readers trust this source. While if 6.2% of respondents read “*Belorusy i Rynok*”, and 15.1% trust the non state-run media information about life in the European Union and the US, obviously, that a level of trust to this source in fact is higher²¹.

Newspapers’ Profiles²²

Here is the basic information on four Belarusian newspapers that were used in this study (see methodology section for information on sampling).

State-run newspaper *Sovetskaya Belorussiya/Belarus Segodnya* (“*Советская Беларусь*”)

- *General information:* socially and politically oriented state-run daily newspaper. First published in 1928. Founders: administration of the president of Belarus and the editorial board. Circulation: 500,000. Republic-wide publication.
- *Specialization:* analytics, news, commentaries, interviews with politicians, scientists, musicians, etc. Another feature of the newspaper is the weekly “round table” discussions on hot issues in Belarus.

²¹ <http://www.iiseps.org/earhive.html>

²² This section is based on the 2010 annual project “Coverage of domestic political issues in state-run and independent press in Belarus” by V. Astashenok & V. Borodavchenko, students of the Belarusian State University, College of Philosophy and Social Sciences, Department of Information and Communication. Their research was based on the information about newspapers published on official web-sites and interviews with editorial staff.

- *Target audience:* wide audience

State-run newspaper *Zvyazda* (“Звязда”)

- *General information:* The country’s oldest newspaper published in the Belarusian language. First published in 1917. Founders of the newspaper are the Belarusian Parliament and the Council of Ministers. Republic-wide publication.

- *Specialization:* Covers social, political, economical, cultural issue and events in Belarus, with special attention to the law enforcement agencies, the parliament and the government, labor unions and political parties.

- *Target audience:* wide audience

Independent newspaper *BelGazeta* (“БелГазета”)

- *General information:* Informational and analytical weekly newspaper. First published in 1995. Privately owned. Circulation: 21,260. Republic-wide publication.

- *Specialization:* Important Belarus and world issues, Belarusian domestic and foreign policy, news of companies and everyday life. The newspaper also publishes regular special editions on real estate, construction business, medical care, and other topics.

- *Target audience:* businessmen, managers, students, and other intellectuals.

Independent newspaper *Belorusy I Rynek* (“Белорусы и Рынок”)

- *General information:* weekly analytical newspaper for businessmen. First published in 1990. Privately owned. Circulation: 13,140. Republic-wide publication.

- *Specialization*: the stated goal of the newspaper is to provide its readers with full information on different spheres of life in Belarus, including profound analysis of current issues and tendencies.

- *Target audience*: state employees and businessmen, students and professors, managers of different levels, economists, lawyers, and other educated people.

Literature review/theoretical background

There are three common topics in existing literature that are closely related to the proposed study: anti-Americanism, and the concept of framing and content-analysis.

Anti-Americanism

According to Seifert, Emmer, and Vowe (2006), although the term “anti-Americanism” has been widely used and discussed in academic and political spheres it has rarely been clearly defined. A basic definition by Mielke (2002) stated that anti-Americanism is a “preconception based on the assumption of negative stereotypes which apply relatively indiscriminately to America and everything American.” Such a definition is a simplification: according to Ceaser (2003), anti-Americanism has emerged out of long-time philosophical and ideological traditions that can be traced back more than two hundred years. There is no single description or explanation for the phenomenon that is called anti-Americanism; it differs from country to country.

The phenomenon of anti-Americanism have been studied and discussed in the contexts of many countries and areas around the world. The relevant literature is divided into several categories, such as anti-Americanism in the Muslim world (this topic has been heavily studied after 9/11 events and both Afghanistan and Iraq wars, see Makdisi 2002, Rubin 2002); Latin-American anti-Americanism (see McPherson 2003, 3); “Old world” European anti-Americanism (special attention has been paid to France; see Berman 2004 and Ellwood 1999); Asian anti-Americanism (particularly as it relates to Japan and South Korea; see Kim 1996, Steinberg 2005).

As Seifert, Emmer, and Vowe (2006) emphasized, the mass media play a great role in spreading and reinforcing anti-American stereotypes and preconceptions. According to Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), mass media audiences that have no direct reality experiences or whose experience is limited, are highly dependent on media defining and explaining the American reality. In the case of anti-Americanism, it means that people who don't have direct contact with Americans get their information and form their perception of America and Americans by relying on the mass media. Other communication theories such as agenda-setting, framing and cultivation theory support such an assumption.

A brief overview of literature on anti-Americanism demonstrates certain gaps in our knowledge on the subject: although a substantive amount of research has been done on Islamic, Latin American, and West European (mostly French) anti-Americanism, the topic of modern East European and Russian anti-Americanism is

yet to be researched. Most of the research that has been done in this field covers the Soviet era and is focused on Soviet propaganda.

The Concept of Framing

The concept of framing is a part of the concept of news making as a social construct: scholars believe that journalists in their work create an artificial reality that reproduces their own realities – including their beliefs, social, political and ideological boundaries (Gitlin, 2003; Reese, 2001).

Although the concept of framing became an important trend in political communication and media research, there is no unified approach to defining framing (Entman, 1993; 2004).

According to Entman's standard definition of framing, "framing is selecting and highlighting some faces of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluations, and/or solution".

Words and images that make up a frame differ from any others: they can stimulate support or opposition to the sides of political conflict. As Robert Entman stated in *Projections of Power*, mass media's political power is in their ability to frame news, "to favor one side other the other" (Entman, 2004).

Entman stated that there are two types of frames: substantive and procedural (Entman, 2004). While procedural frames have a narrow focus (they deal with

evaluations of political actors' legitimacy), substantive frames have at least two of the following functions in covering political news:

- defining affects or conditions as problematic;
- identifying causes;
- conveying a moral judgment;
- endorsing remedies or improvements.

Vreese, Semetko, and Valkenburg suggested that there are four basic frames (so-called "generic frames") that are consistently present in news texts: human interest, responsibility, economic consequences, conflict, and morality (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; de Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001). Within the human interest frame news stories are personalized through lives of individuals and have emotional appeal to reader, while responsibility frame focuses on particular people or entities that are responsible for an event. Economic consequences frame is all about economic consequence of the events of life of particle people, social groups or nations, while conflict frame is focused on collision between social groups and individuals.

The same authors also suggested separation between issue-specific news frames and generic frames: while issue specific frames are closely tied to particular story or event, generic frames are universal and could be used in wide variety of stores. As several studies demonstrated (see Dimitrova, Kaid, Williams, Trammell, 2005; Rojecki, 2008) this kind of separation between generic and specific frames are particularly useful for research on international news.

Another important aspect within framing theory is the process of passing information from the authorities to the mass audience. The cascade model (Entman, 2004) compared this process to the real world waterfall: each next level of actors adds new frames and ideas. The cascade model suggested, however, that some actors (government officials and journalists) have more power to push their own ideas and frames to the public. Top government officials have the greater ability to choose which ideas and frames will become a part of the public discourse. From the other side, journalists and news organizations have the power to control the information that is given to the public.

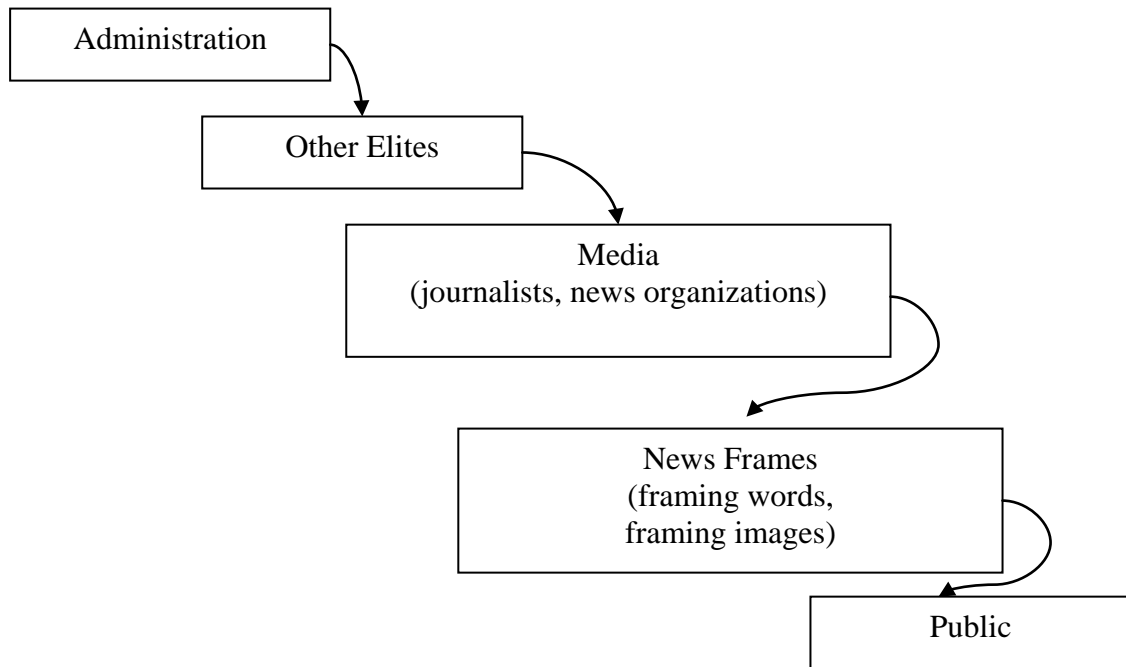


Figure 1. Cascading Model (Entman, 2004)

Content analysis

Content analysis as a method for summarizing and analyzing different types of content was used in social sciences for over seven decades (Stemler, 2001). There are many definition of content analysis in social science literature: Berelson (1974) defined it as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of manifest content of communications"; Holsti (1969) defined content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages"; Stemler suggested a broader definition (based on works by Berelson, 1952; Krippendorff, 1980; and Weber, 1990): "systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding".

As Busha & Harter (1980) stated, content analysis is used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to present it in an objective manner. The method could be used to analyze content of any type of communication: books, news articles, TV shows, interviews, speeches, conversations, advertising, discussions, historical documents and many more.

These are the main advantages of content analysis as a method of social sciences (Stemler, 2001):

- It it's a systematic, reliable technique that transfers large into content categories;

- Although this method implies human judgment, it removes some of the “subjectivity” from research;
- It makes it possible to detect tendencies and trends in a time period;
- It could be used to detect links between causes (e.g. program content) and effect (e.g. audience size);
- It allows for both quantitative and qualitative operations.

As Busha & Harter (1980) stated, because the method of content analysis could be applied to any piece of written or recorded communication, it is used in many fields, including marketing, media studies, literature and rhetoric studies, ethnography and cultural studies, sociology and political science.

Stemler (2001) stated that content analysis is used in social sciences for several reasons: it enables to detect and examine trends and patterns; it could be used to determine authorship of documents; it also provides an empirical basis for monitoring shifts in public opinion. More possibilities for the uses of content analysis are listed by Berelson (1952):

- Reveal international differences in communication content;
- Detect the existence of propaganda;
- Identify the intentions, focus or communication trends of an individual, group or institution;
- Describe attitudinal and behavioral responses to communications;
- Determine psychological or emotional state of persons or groups.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

Research questions

Under the assumption that both ideology and politics play role in setting the frames for international news coverage, the proposed study is set out to see how Belarusian press cover the U.S. under Obama's administration. The following research questions were posed:

- RQ1: Are the state-run Belarusian newspapers less sympathetic (i.e. presenting negative frames) toward the US and Obama's administration, and present the US as hostile towards Belarus?
- RQ2: Are the independent Belarusian newspapers more sympathetic (i.e. presenting positive frames) toward the US and Obama's administration, and present the US as friendly/neutral towards Belarus?
- RQ3: How is the negative image of the U.S. constructed in stories? I.e. is the negative image created by direct negative evaluation, or by the choice of topics or sources, or by the choice of types of events (problems or achievements) that are covered?

Justification of methods

This study was focused on the two main questions: first, what is the difference in how Belarusian state-run and independent newspapers frame the U.S., and second, what is the mechanism of creating negative image of the U.S. in newspapers. In order

to provide comprehensive answers to both questions the multi-method approach (involving both methods of content and framing analysis) was chosen for this study. The framing analysis was set to demonstrate the difference in framing between the state-run and independent newspapers, while the content analysis was set to explain how was the negative image of the U.S. created in Belarusian media by determining the presence of certain categories.

Content analysis is a method of summarizing and analyzing different types of content by categories. This method allows the researcher to determine presence of certain characteristics in the text. In this study content-analysis was used to explain the mechanism of creating the negative image of the U.S. by singling out several categories, such as time of publication, topic of the story, type of event in the story and several others,

Framing analysis was chosen as one of the methods for this study because it enables the researcher to single out frames: their main purpose is to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution. According to Entman (2004), frames stimulate support or opposition to the sides of political conflict: in this case, support or opposition to the U.S. and President Obama.

The two methods of content analysis and framing were used together in this study because the combined data results provides a fuller picture of the way Belarusian media frame and present the United States. While content analysis provides quantitative data on how many U.S.-related stories are there, what are the

sources, what are the topics of these stories, framing analysis provides qualitative results of how the United States is framed in Belarusian media, do those frames stimulate support or opposition towards the U.S. and President Obama.

Sampling and time frame

Because of the peculiarities of the media landscape in Belarus, stories covering the U.S. were analyzed²³ in major Belarusian state-run and independent newspapers.

Two state-run newspapers were analyzed in this study: *Belarus Segodnya* (also called “*Sovetslaya Belarussia*”), (“*Советская Беларусь*”), and *Zvyazda* (“*Звезда*”). They had been chosen for two reasons: 1) they were two of the top three Belarusian newspapers with largest readership²⁴ in Belarus 2) they were easily accessible: both had internet-based archives.

The two independent newspapers analyzed – *BelGazeta* (“*БелГазета*”), and *Belorusy I Rynek* (“*Белорусы и Рынок*”) – had been selected for this study based on similar characteristics: both were amongst largest independent newspapers and both had accessible internet-based archives.

Search words and phrases “USA”, “United States”, “America”, “American”, “Washington”, “Obama”, “Bush” & “Clinton”, “California”, “States”²⁵ in both

²³ The coding was conducted completely by the author due to the appropriate requirements for the MA thesis.

²⁴ IREX Media Sustainability Index 2010.

www.irex.org/programs/msi_eur/2010/EE_MSI_2010_Belarus.pdf

²⁵ Word State (Штат) is used in Russian and Belarusian languages to describe territorial units of the USA, Brazil, Mexico and Australia.

Russian and Belarusian languages²⁶ had been used to select articles for preliminary analysis. Stories had were reviewed in following stage to select those that had story lines related to the U.S. rather than just casually mentioning words “U.S.” and “American” concerning currency, products or locations.

Stories published in period between February, 2009 and July, 2009 had been selected for the analysis. As it was mentioned earlier the aim of the study was to examine how the Belarusian press was presenting the U.S. to its readers in the beginning of Obama’s presidency.

Content-analysis methodology

The unit of analysis in this study was article in selected Belarusian newspapers containing the key words and heaving at least one story line concerning the U.S.

Categories of content analysis were:

- *Time of publication*: When was the story published (by month)?
- *Topic of the story*: Which topics were brought up in the story: US foreign policy, US domestic policy, economy, crime, culture (and sports), everyday life, or other topics?
- *Type of event in the story*: What is the type of event described in the story: an achievement, a problem or a neutral event?
- *Offered solution*: Was a suggestion made that would help to improve the situation described in the article?

²⁶ A pilot study demonstrated that stories covering the U.S. in Belarusian newspapers contained at least one or more of these words.

- *Object of description*: Was the story focused on the US as a country, US social institutions, social groups, businesses, or individuals?
- *Direct evaluation*: Was any direct verbal evaluations of the US in the story (words with negative or positive connotations, etc) given in the story? Was it negative, positive, neutral or none or balanced?
- *Sources of information in the story*: Which sources were used in the story (Belarusian officials, US officials, officials of third courtiers, Belarusian media, US media, media of third countries, international organizations, other sources, or unidentified sources)?

Framing analysis methodology

The methodology of framing analysis in this study was based on research by Robert Entman (2004). Here are questions that guided this framing analysis:

- What words are included in headlines? Do they have positive/negative connotations?
- What information is emphasized or understated?
- What are the sources used in the story?
- Does the way the story is presented stimulate support or opposition to the United States or President Obama?

RESULTS OF THE STUDY: CONTENT-ANALYSIS

Table 2. Number of analyzed stories by newspaper

Newspapers	#	%
State-run	208	61.9
Independent	128	38.1
Belgazeta	38	11.3
Belorusy I Rynok	90	26.8
Belarus Segodnia	94	28.0
Zviazda	114	33.9
Total	336	100.0

The results of the content analysis demonstrate that in the first six months of Obama's presidency the United States was closely followed by both state-run and independent Belarusian media.²⁷

The results did not indicate any serious deviations in the number of stories by months: each month had from 10% to 20% of stories.

The most common topic of stories in the state-run newspapers is U.S. foreign policy. Other issues, as economy or domestic policy are of rare occurrence. The image of the U.S. is being formed within the discourse of U.S. foreign policy and their relations with other countries. As for the independent newspapers, economy is the most common topic.

²⁷ When looking at the results one should keep in mind that the ratio of state-run and independent newspapers that cover politics is around 10 to 1 (see Manaev, Manayeva, Yuran, 2010).

Table 3. Number of analyzed stories by month

Newspapers / Months	State-run		Independent		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
February	30	14.4	27	21.1	57	17.0
March	41	19.7	25	19.5	66	19.6
April	32	15.4	11	8.6	43	12.8
May	23	11.1	17	13.3	40	11.9
June	39	18.8	22	17.2	61	18.2
July	43	20.7	26	20.3	69	20.5
Total	208	100	128	100.0	336	100.0

Table 4. Topic in state-run newspapers

Topic	#	%
USA foreign policy	83	39.9
Economy	51	24.5
Other topic	33	15.9
USA/Belarus affairs	33	15.9
Everyday life	27	13.0
Crime	26	12.5
Domestic policy	19	9.1
Culture	18	8.7

Table 5. Topic in independent newspapers

Topic	#	%
Economy	54	42.2
USA foreign policy	48	37.5
USA/Belarus affairs	26	20.3
Culture	21	16.4
Domestic policy	13	10.2
Other topic	12	9.4
Everyday life	7	5.5
Crime	1	0.8

Table 6. Direct evaluation in the state-run newspapers

Direct Evaluation	#	%
Neutral or none	107	51.4
Positive	18	8.7
Balanced	74	35.6
Negative	9	4.3
Total	208	100.0

Table 7. Direct evaluation in independent newspapers

Direct Evaluation	#	%
Neutral or none	77	60.2
Positive	22	17.2
Balanced	23	18.0
Negative	6	4.7
Total	128	100.0

During the soviet period the negative image of the U.S. was traditionally portrayed by the newspapers using direct negative evaluation (see Wolfe, 2005). However, the content analysis of Belarusian newspapers clearly shows different results: in both state-run and independent newspapers most of the stories did not have direct evaluation.

The most important and curious results of the study are related to the category “type of event: problem, achievement, neutral”. As the Table 11 shows, in the state-run newspapers 46% of stories are focused on problems and only 16% are focused on achievements. That makes the ratio of problem to achievement 3 to 1. At the same time in the independent newspapers 28% of stories cover problems and 31% cover achievements: the ratio of problems to achievements is almost 1 to 1.

Table 8. Type of events in state-run newspapers

Type of events	N	%
A problem	95	45.7
Neither	79	38.0
An achievement	34	16.3

Table 9. Type of events in independent newspapers

Type of events	N	%
Neither	53	41.4
An achievement	39	30.5
A problem	36	28.1

As shown in tables 10 and 11, Belarusian state-run and newspapers cover the same topics in a very different manner. In the spheres of economy, domestic and foreign policy state run newspapers mostly cover problems and rarely focus on achievements. As to independent newspapers, they tend to cover achievements and neutral events.

The next table shows how the state-run newspapers create the negative image of the United States using different sources. The sources that are critical toward the U.S. and emphasize American problems are carefully selected and quoted by the state-run media. At the same time, Belarusian sources that are quoted tend to cover neutral events or achievements: it means that the state-run newspapers are creating the negative image of the U.S. with outside sources, in other words they get someone else to do the dirty work.

Table 10. Cross table “type of events” and “topic” in state-run newspapers

Type of events / Topic	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Crime	5	19.2	2	7.7	19	73.1	26	100
Culture and sport	9	50.0	8	44.4	1	5.6	18	100
Domestic policy	8	42.1	2	10.5	9	47.4	19	100
Economy	13	25.5	3	5.9	35	68.6	51	100
Everyday life	14	51.9	1	3.7	12	44.4	27	100
Other topic	12	36.4	7	21.2	14	42.4	33	100
USA/Belarus affairs	15	45.5	11	33.3	7	21.2	33	100
USA foreign policy	39	47.0	15	18.1	29	34.9	83	100
Total	79	38.0	34	16.3	95	45.7	208	100

Table 11. Cross table “type of events” and “topic” in independent newspapers

Type of events / Topic	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Crime	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	100
Culture and sport	6	28.6	14	66.7	1	4.8	21	100
Domestic policy	7	53.8	4	30.8	2	15.4	13	100
Economy	16	29.6	15	27.8	23	42.6	54	100
Everyday life	4	57.1	0	0.0	3	42.9	7	100
Other topic	7	58.3	2	16.7	3	25.0	12	100
USA/Belarus affairs	11	42.3	11	42.3	4	15.4	26	100
USA foreign policy	26	54.2	12	25.0	10	20.8	48	100
Total	53	41.4	39	30.5	36	28.1	128	100

Table 12. Cross table of “type of events” and “source of information” in state-run newspapers

Type of events / Source of information	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
American media	17	32.7	9	17.3	26	50.0	52	100
American officials	24	32.9	17	23.3	32	43.8	73	100
Belarusian media	9	47.4	4	21.1	6	31.6	19	100
Belarusian officials	20	46.5	10	23.3	13	30.2	43	100
International organizations	14	30.4	2	4.3	30	65.2	46	100
Third country media	22	46.8	2	4.3	23	48.9	47	100
Third country officials	17	37.0	7	15.2	22	47.8	46	100
Other source	17	36.2	9	19.1	21	44.7	47	100
Unidentified source	8	32.0	1	4.0	16	64.0	25	100
Total	78	37.7	34	16.4	95	45.9	207	100

Table 13. Cross table of “type of events” and “source of information” in independent newspapers

Type of events / Source of information	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
American media	23	46.9	11	22.4	15	30.6	49	100
American officials	32	41.6	19	24.7	26	33.8	77	100
Belarusian media	2	33.3	3	50.0	1	16.7	6	100
Belarusian officials	6	50.0	4	33.3	2	16.7	12	100
International organizations	10	20.4	15	30.6	24	49.0	49	100
Third country media	11	39.3	10	35.7	7	25.0	28	100
Third country officials	16	59.3	7	25.9	4	14.8	27	100
Other source	8	30.8	11	42.3	7	26.9	26	100
Unidentified source	1	20.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	5	100
Total	53	41.4	39	30.5	36	28.1	128	100

The results in independent newspapers are quite different: different sources (American, Belarusian and international) are quoted on problems, achievements and neutral events at more or less even ratio.

The results of content analysis show that independent and state-run newspapers cover similar topics. But while independent newspapers try to evenly cover problems, achievements, neutral events and use different sources, state-run newspapers focus on covering problems and create negative image of the U.S. by quoting selected Anti-American oriented sources.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY: FRAMING ANALYSIS

Framing analysis helped to identify assessment of the U.S. in news stories, an important element of image presentation that was not apparent within the results of content analysis. The results of framing analysis correlate (and reinforce) the results of content analysis.

The state-run newspapers present the U.S. within a scope of strong negative frames: out of five frames that were identified four were negative (economic crisis; aggressive world police state; alien culture/way of life; crime/catastrophes) and only one was neutral/positive (president Obama/new foreign policy). The way the United States is framed in independent newspapers is a mirror image to the one in state-run: out of four general frames three were positive (U.S.-Belarus cultural bonds) and one was neutral-positive (economic crisis). One frame in state-run newspapers stands out amongst mostly negative coverage. President Obama seemed to bring to new hope to Lukashenko's administration. A chance to reestablish relations with the United States for Belarusian authorities was associated with the new American president. Thus, the coverage of Obama in a period of uncertainty about his intentions toward Belarus was quite neutral or sometimes even positive. Lukashenko saw Obama as a "flexible diplomat" and he even "recognized himself" in the young man who came to power in times of stress. Obviously, such an attitude was picked up and promoted for a time by state-run media. The results of the framing analysis are presented in the following table, including frames and examples of quotations for each frame.

Table 14. Frames and selected quotes (independent/state run newspapers)

Independent newspapers	State-run newspapers
<p>Neutral/positive frame: Economic crisis in the US (another version of this frame – US recovering from the crisis)</p> <p>Example quote: “there are new signs of economic recovery in the US... the index of consumers confidence is going up now”</p>	<p>Negative frame: U.S. as a country dying from economic crisis (another version of this frame – US is the only cause for world economic crisis)</p> <p>Example quote: “USA admitted that the world economic crisis is their fault”; “American economy will soon face a hyperinflation. The level of hyperinflation were be compared to one in Zimbabwe”.</p>
<p>Positive frame: U.S.-Belarus cultural bonds / U.S. embassy’s cultural programs</p> <p>Example quote: “This music festival was organized with the support of the US embassy in Minsk... the festival was very useful for Belarusian culture, overcoming stereotypes and promoting mutual understanding”</p>	<p>Negative frame: U.S. as opposite to Belarus in their moral values, ethics and the way of life.</p> <p>Example quote: “[an article about a head of local charity foundation] “the roots of his [head of foundation] charity projects are surprising – they are American, or to be exact, anti-American. He lived in the Us for a while, but totally could not accept American way of life, so he returned home [to Belarus]. But living in that alien reality and suffering from nostalgia made him ... a Belarusian patriot”</p>
<p>Positive frame: U.S. (together with the European Union) as an opponent to Lukashenko’s regime.</p>	<p>Neutral/positive frame: New leadership in the U.S., improvement in foreign policy, opposite to George W. Bush and his</p>

<p>Example quote: “Economic sanctions that were imposed on the Belarusian authorities for violating human rights”</p>	<p>administration (version of this frame - improvement in U.S.-Belarus relations)</p> <p>Example quote: “Perestroika in the White House”; “we admire ... Obama’s great respect for other countries ... that was demonstrated during Obama’s European tour. According to new administration, US will abandon the old style of “arrogant” behavior towards other countries”</p>
<p>Positive frame: U.S. as the world leader and peacemaker.</p> <p>Example quote: “US are playing the part of the mediator [between Armenia and Turkey] and try to normalize relationship between those two countries”; “America, even with all of the nuances, is one of the most free and open countries with well-developed finance system and wealthy market”</p>	<p>Negative frame: U.S. as a world police and aggressive state.</p> <p>Example quote: “USA is a sort of store for terrorists and foreign countries who want to buy high-tech military armaments, including components for nuclear weapons”; “Obama has announced that he will be fighting for a world without nuclear weapons... That reminds of an old soviet anecdote: “they will be fighting for the world peace so hard that the entire world will be blown up”.</p>
	<p>Negative frame: U.S. as a country of crime and catastrophes, where life there is frightful and dangerous</p>
<p>Total:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Neutral/positive frames • 3 Positive frames 	<p>Total:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Neutral/positive frame • 4 Negative frames

Although, as the results of content analysis showed, there are many similarities in what are both state-run and independent newspapers write about (for example: number of stories, main topic of the story) the way they frame and present the U.S. to their readers is nearly opposite. In spite of the fact that the negative image formation mechanics has changed since the Soviet times, the outcomes is still the same: state-run newspapers present, strong negative image of the U.S. promoting anti-American feelings in the audience.

DISCUSSION/ CONCLUSIONS

Most Belarusians will never have any personal experience with Americans and the United States. Belarusian media are the main source source of information about everything American for them. Thus it is crucial to know and understand how the United States is presented in Belarusian Media.

As this study demonstrated, the state-run and independent newspapers present a very different image of the U.S. As the results of framing analysis showed, state-run newspapers present the U.S. within a scope of strong negative frames. However, the picture in the independent newspapers is the opposite: out of four general frames three were positive and one was neutral-positive.

It is important to understand the ways certain image can be presented in the media. As the results of the content analysis showed, negative images of the United States do not necessarily have to be promoted through direct judgmental statements but could rather be initiated by means of selecting certain negative facts for

publication, often from unidentified sources. By concentrating their attention on crime, natural catastrophes, manipulating statistical data (omitting explanations for dreadful numbers like “30 million children are missing in he U.S.”) media can create an image of the United states as a dangerous place populated by aggressive wicked people.

Selection of foreign experts who are critically inclined against the U.S. is another way to control the image presented. An evaluation that comes from an independent and even more than that – foreign – expert brings additional trustworthiness to the story.

Omitting sources of information is often unnoticed by an ordinary reader. The same reader would not be able to distinguish between trustworthy publications listed as sources or foreign tabloids which he never encountered.

All these and other “new’ methods used by Belarusian state-run media illustrate the process of evolution of the ways a negative image of the U.S is formed. As a result of the new tactic a pseudo-objective image is being created: but it still remains strongly negative.

Here are the results of public opinion polls²⁸ from Belarus by the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS) that illustrate strong connection between the way mass media frame and present the U.S. and the way mass public perceive the United States:

²⁸ Results of IISEPS quarterly nation-wide public opinion polls. See iiseps.org

Table 15. Public attitudes toward the U.S. in different media audiences (03' 2010), %

Public attitudes towards the US	Trust state-run media (34.5)	Trust independent media (30.3)
<i>"After the diplomatic conflict between Belarus and the United States, which broke out in the spring of 2008, relations between the two countries remain tense (i.e. staff of the U.S. embassy in Minsk fell five times, and the Belarusians have to go for U.S. visas in other countries). Do you think it necessary to restore normal relations with the U.S. or not?"</i>		
It is necessary to restore normal relations with the United States	35.2	51.4
This is not necessarily	28.1	17.8
I do not care	31.9	29.1
<i>Who threatens Belarus?</i>		
USA	33.7	19.7
<i>What society is fairer?</i>		
American society	4.0	16.9

People who trust state run media have the least favorable attitude toward the U.S.: almost 30% do not believe that Belarus needs to restore normal diplomatic relations with the U.S., 34% believe that the United States threatens Belarus and only 4% believe that the American society is fair. On the other hand, people who trust independent media have a different perspective on the United States: a majority of these readers believes that it is essential for Belarus to restore normal relations with the U.S., less (20%) people believe that the United States threatens their country and 17% believe that the American society is fair.

In conclusion, improving the global image of the United States must be founded on a thorough comprehension of mechanisms used to form negative images of the United States. In addition, the vanishing of old ideologies and propaganda methods that the United States was accustomed to during the Cold War era does not

necessarily indicate a shift toward democracy and western values in post-communist countries. Failure to recognize the need for new approaches in dealing with relatively new players in the international arena such as Belarus—as well as failures to evaluate propaganda-formation correctly—could prove costly to the United States.

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APPENDIX A

RESULTS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

Number of stories

Table A1. Number of analyzed stories by newspaper

Newspapers	#	%
State-run	208	61.9
Independent	128	38.1
Belgazeta	38	11.3
Belorusy I Rynok	90	26.8
Belarus Segodnia	94	28.0
Zviazda	114	33.9
Total	336	100.0

Table A2. Number of analyzed stories by month

Newspapers / Months	State-run		Independent		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
February	30	14.4	27	21.1	57	17.0
March	41	19.7	25	19.5	66	19.6
April	32	15.4	11	8.6	43	12.8
May	23	11.1	17	13.3	40	11.9
June	39	18.8	22	17.2	61	18.2
July	43	20.7	26	20.3	69	20.5
Total	208	100	128	100.0	336	100.0

Category: Source of information in the stories

Table A3. Source of information in state-run newspapers

Source	#	%
American officials	73	35.3
American media	52	25.1
Third country media	47	22.7
Other source	47	22.7
International organizations	46	22.2
Third country officials	46	22.2
Belarusian officials	43	20.8
Unidentified source	25	12.1
Belarusian media	19	9.2

Table A4. Source of information in independent newspapers

Source	#	%
American officials	77	60.2
American media	49	38.3
International organizations	49	38.3
Third country media	28	21.9
Third country officials	27	21.1
Other source	26	20.3
Belarusian officials	12	9.4
Belarusian media	6	4.7
Unidentified source	5	3.9

Category: Main topic of the story

Table 5A. Main topic in state-run newspapers

Topic	#	%
USA foreign policy	83	39.9
Economy	51	24.5
Other topic	33	15.9
USA/Belarus affairs	33	15.9
Everyday life	27	13.0
Crime	26	12.5
Domestic policy	19	9.1
Culture	18	8.7

Table A6. Main topic in independent newspapers

Topic	#	%
Economy	54	42.2
USA foreign policy	48	37.5
USA/Belarus affairs	26	20.3
Culture	21	16.4
Domestic policy	13	10.2
Other topic	12	9.4
Everyday life	7	5.5
Crime	1	0.8

Category: Direct evaluation

Table A7. Direct Evaluation in the state-run newspapers

Direct Evaluation	#	%
Neutral or none	107	51.4
Positive	18	8.7
Balanced	74	35.6
Negative	9	4.3
Total	208	100.0

Table A8. Direct Evaluation in independent newspapers

Direct Evaluation	#	%
Neutral or none	77	60.2
Positive	22	17.2
Balanced	23	18.0
Negative	6	4.7
Total	128	100.0

Direct evaluation by month

Table A9. Direct evaluation by month in state-run newspapers

Direct Evaluation	Month of the publication											
	February		March		April		May		June		July	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Neutral or none	19	63.3	17	41.5	12	37.5	11	47.8	25	64.1	23	53.5
Positive	3	10.0	5	12.2	2	6.3	1	4.3	2	5.1	5	11.6
Balanced	8	26.7	16	39.0	16	50.0	9	39.1	11	28.2	14	32.6
Negative	0	0.0	3	7.3	2	6.3	2	8.7	1	2.6	1	2.3

Table A10. Direct evaluation by month in independent newspapers

Direct Evaluation	Month of the publication											
	February		March		April		May		June		July	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Neutral or none	18	66.7	14	56.0	3	27.3	10	58.8	17	77.3	15	57.7
Positive	1	3.7	5	20.0	3	27.3	3	17.6	5	22.7	5	19.2
Balanced	5	18.5	5	20.0	5	45.5	4	23.5	0	0.0	4	15.4
Negative	3	11.1	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	7.7

Category: Type of events of the story: problem / achievement / neutral

Table A11. Type of events in state-run newspapers

Type of events	N	%
A problem	95	45.7
Neither	79	38.0
An achievement	34	16.3

Table A12. Type of events in independent newspapers

Type of events	N	%
Neither	53	41.4
An achievement	39	30.5
A problem	36	28.1

Type of events and Solution

Table A13. Type of events and solution in state-run newspapers

Solution / Type of events	Solution offered		No solution offered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Neither	8	10.1	71	89.9	79	100
An achievement	7	20.6	27	79.4	34	100
A problem	27	28.4	68	71.6	95	100
Total	42	20.2	166	79.8	208	100

Table A14. Type of events and solution in independent newspapers

Solution / Type of events	Solution offered		No solution offered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Neither	8	15.1	45	84.9	53	100
An achievement	5	12.8	34	87.2	39	100
A problem	10	27.8	26	72.2	36	100
Total	23	18.0	105	82.0	128	100

Type of events by month

Table A15. Type of events by month in state-run newspapers

Month / Type of events	February		March		April		May		June		July	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Neither	13	43.3	11	26.8	12	37.5	12	52.2	15	38.5	16	37.2
An achievement	5	16.7	6	14.6	5	15.6	4	17.4	5	12.8	9	20.9
A problem	12	40.0	24	58.5	15	46.9	7	30.4	19	48.7	18	41.9

Table A16. Type of events by month independent newspapers

Month / Type of events	February		March		April		May		June		July	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Neither	13	48.1	12	48.0	2	18.2	7	41.2	9	40.9	10	38.5
An achievement	5	18.5	8	32.0	6	54.5	5	29.4	6	27.3	9	34.6
A problem	9	33.3	5	20.0	3	27.3	5	29.4	7	31.8	7	26.9

Type of events by topic

Table A17. Type of events by topic in state-run newspapers

Type of events / Topic	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Crime	5	19.2	2	7.7	19	73.1	26	100
Culture and sport	9	50.0	8	44.4	1	5.6	18	100
Domestic policy	8	42.1	2	10.5	9	47.4	19	100
Economy	13	25.5	3	5.9	35	68.6	51	100
Everyday life	14	51.9	1	3.7	12	44.4	27	100
Other topic	12	36.4	7	21.2	14	42.4	33	100
USA/Belarus affairs	15	45.5	11	33.3	7	21.2	33	100
USA foreign policy	39	47.0	15	18.1	29	34.9	83	100
Total	79	38.0	34	16.3	95	45.7	208	100

Table A18. Type of events by topic in independent newspapers

Type of events / Topic	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Crime	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	100
Culture and sport	6	28.6	14	66.7	1	4.8	21	100
Domestic policy	7	53.8	4	30.8	2	15.4	13	100
Economy	16	29.6	15	27.8	23	42.6	54	100
Everyday life	4	57.1	0	0.0	3	42.9	7	100
Other topic	7	58.3	2	16.7	3	25.0	12	100
USA/Belarus affairs	11	42.3	11	42.3	4	15.4	26	100
USA foreign policy	26	54.2	12	25.0	10	20.8	48	100
Total	53	41.4	39	30.5	36	28.1	128	100

Type of events by object of description

Table A19. Type of events by object of description in state-run newspapers

Type of events / Object	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Businesses	12	30.8	4	10.3	23	59.0	39	100
Country in general	58	34.9	30	18.1	78	47.0	166	100
Social groups	3	37.5	1	12.5	4	50.0	8	100
Institutions	39	33.9	19	16.5	57	49.6	115	100
Personalities	24	38.1	12	19.0	27	42.9	63	100
Total	79	38.0	34	16.3	95	45.7	208	100

Table A20. Type of events by object of description in independent newspapers

Type of events / Object	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Businesses	10	24.4	11	26.8	20	48.8	41	100
Country in general	27	37.0	25	34.2	21	28.8	73	100
Social groups	1	12.5	5	62.5	2	25.0	8	100
Institutions	34	42.0	23	28.4	24	29.6	81	100
Personalities	13	43.3	13	43.3	4	13.3	30	100
Total	53	41.7	38	29.9	36	28.3	127	100

Type of events by source of information

Table A21. Type of events by source of information in state-run newspapers

Type of events / Source of information	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
American media	17	32.7	9	17.3	26	50.0	52	100
American officials	24	32.9	17	23.3	32	43.8	73	100
Belarusian media	9	47.4	4	21.1	6	31.6	19	100
Belarusian officials	20	46.5	10	23.3	13	30.2	43	100
International organizations	14	30.4	2	4.3	30	65.2	46	100
Third country media	22	46.8	2	4.3	23	48.9	47	100
Third country officials	17	37.0	7	15.2	22	47.8	46	100
Other source	17	36.2	9	19.1	21	44.7	47	100
Unidentified source	8	32.0	1	4.0	16	64.0	25	100
Total	78	37.7	34	16.4	95	45.9	207	100

Table A22. Type of events by source of information in independent newspapers

Type of events / Source of information	Neither		An achievement		A problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
American media	23	46.9	11	22.4	15	30.6	49	100
American officials	32	41.6	19	24.7	26	33.8	77	100
Belarusian media	2	33.3	3	50.0	1	16.7	6	100
Belarusian officials	6	50.0	4	33.3	2	16.7	12	100
International organizations	10	20.4	15	30.6	24	49.0	49	100
Third country media	11	39.3	10	35.7	7	25.0	28	100
Third country officials	16	59.3	7	25.9	4	14.8	27	100
Other source	8	30.8	11	42.3	7	26.9	26	100
Unidentified source	1	20.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	5	100
Total	53	41.4	39	30.5	36	28.1	128	100

APPENDIX B

RESULTS OF FRAMING ANALYSIS

Frames in independent newspapers

Frame 1: *Economic crisis / recovering from the crisis*

- (BelGazeta, Art. 14) «There is no reason for blaming the US for the crisis... As if it is America's fault that governments of hundreds of countries could not manage their own economies... As if Pentagon and NATO with the force of their arms and armies support oligarchs that steal budget money in developing countries... Americans had nothing to do with it”
- (Belorusy i Rynok, Art. 10) “US banks are having a hard time now, and the prospects don't look too good for financing industry”
- (Belorusy i Rynok, Art. 17) “there are new signs of economic recovery in the US... the index of consumers confidence is going up now”

Frame 2: *US-Belarus cultural bonds / US embassy's cultural programs*

- (BelGazeta, Art. 49) “This music festival was organized with the support of the US embassy in Minsk... the festival was very useful from Belarusian culture, overcoming stereotypes and promoting mutual understanding”
- (BelGazeta, Art. 19) “this cultural event was organized with traditional support of the American embassy... American musicians turned out to be much

closer to Belarusians that we expected... Lead singer had a grand-grand father from Mozyr [Belarusian town] and a grand-grand mother from Belarus too”

- (BelGazeta, Art. 53) “Michael Jackson ... was loved by several generations in Belarus and the US”
- (Belorusy i Rynok, Art. 29) “[these] cultural events were organized by the US embassy with the support of the bureau of education and cultural relations of the US state department”
- (Belorusy i Rynok, Art. 49) [an article about an American musical who was touring in Belarus] “I really want to come back to Belarus... I felt close to Belarusian people”

Frame 3: *US (together with the European Union) as an opponent to Lukashenko’s regime*

- (BelGazeta, Art. 26) “Economic sanctions that were imposed on the Belarusian authorities for violating human rights”

Frame 4: *US as the world leader and peacemaker*

- (BelGazeta, Art. 29) “The US is a huge and very wealthy country... They produce 25% of the world gross domestic product, and they also are one of the world leaders in innovation and technology. Moreover, US are the most generous donor of world-wide charitable and peace-building organizations... We should thank America, not envy and give vent to our bile”.

- (BelGazeta, Art. 52) “America, even with all of the nuances, is one of the most free and open countries with well-developed finance system and wealthy market”
- (Belorusy i Rynok, Art. 35) [an article about North Korea’s nuclear program]: “The western countries headed by the US were insisting on severe sanctions against North Korea”
- (Belorusy i Rynok, Art. 30) “US are playing the part of the mediator [between Armenia and Turkey] and try to normalize relationship between those two countries”
- (Belorusy i Rynok, Art. 23) “a limited number of the military personnel will stay in the country [Iraq]... The military will serve as advisers and instructors to new Iraq government”

Frames in State-run newspapers

Frame 1: *USA as a country of crime and catastrophes, life there is frightful and dangerous*

Frame 2: *USA is a country dying from economic crisis (another version of this frame – US is the only cause for world economic crisis)*

- (Zvyazda, art. 93) “In the US the number of people who get food stamps have achieved a new record. According to data, ... this number is as high as 32,2 million people... That is 10% of all American population”.

- (Zvyazda, art. 84) “Silvio Berlusconi, Italian prime-minister, called world economic crisis “an American flu”. According to Berlusconi, “this American disease has damages a healthy body of Italian economy”.
- (Zvyazda, art. 27) “USA admitted that the world economic crisis is their fault”
- (Zvyazda, art. 2) “American economy will soon face a hyperinflation. The level of hyperinflation were be compared to one in Zimbabwe”.

Frame 3: *USA as a world police and aggressive state.*

- (Zvyazda, art. 9) “comparing to 1999, military spending in the US went up 67%. The military budget of the US is the biggest in the world... the military budget of the US is more than the combined military budgets of 14 states [that are next to US on the list of highest military spending countries]”
- (Sovetskaya Belarussia, art. 6) “Obama has announced that he will be fighting for a world without nuclear weapons... That reminds of an old soviet anecdote: “they will be fighting for the world peace so hard that all the world will be blown up”.
- (Zvyazda, art. 119) the title of the article: “Pentagon will finance development of cannibal robots”
- (Zvyazda, art. 130) “There was a tight local election in Arizona, and the outcome of the lection was determined with a playing cards ... When we read about things like that, we think: how the hell people of this sort are trying to teach us something about democracy and elections?!”

- (Zvyazda, art. 10) “USA is a sort of store for terrorists and foreign countries who want to buy high-tech military armaments, including components for nuclear weapons”

Frame 4: *USA is opposite to Belarus in their moral values, ethics and the way of life.*

- (Zvyazda, art. 122) [an article about a grand-mother who locked her grandkids in a car on a parking lot for several hours] “This kind of behavior is not so uncommon among Americans: every year kids get locked in cars on the street and die from heat”.
- (Zvyazda, art. 17) the title of the article: “Obama loves soap operas, and find out news from tabloids” ...“Obama’s favorite TV show is Entourage, a scandalous soap opera full of violence, blood and sex”.
- (Zvyazda, art. 62) [an article about a head of local charity foundation] “the roots of his [head of foundation] charity projects are surprising – they are American, or to be exact, anti-American. He lived in the Us for a while, but totally could not accept American way of life, so he returned home [to Belarus]. But living in that alien reality and suffering from nostalgia made him ... a Belarusian patriot”.

Frame 5: *New leadership in the US, Obama’s administration, improvement in foreign policy (opposite to George W. Bush and his administration).* *This frame was the most common one among editorials and analytical stories*

- (Sovetskaya Belarussia, art. 19) “President Obama abandoned the old doctrine of Bush’s presidency (according to the old doctrine, the US could single-handedly change the world in their own image and the military force was the main source of control). Instead, president Obama prefers to use diplomacy and dialog, which he believes could help to restore positive image of the US and strengthen American influence all around the world”
- (Sovetskaya Belarussia, art. 21) the title of the article is “Perestroika in the White House”
- (Sovetskaya Belarussia, art. 57) “we admire ... Obama’s great respect for other countries ... that was demonstrated during Obama’s European tour. According to new administration, US will abandon the old style of “arrogant” behavior towards other countries”
- (Sovetskaya Belarussia, art. 53) “if Hillary Clinton’s main goal during her official tour of the Asian countries was to show that US foreign policy have shifted towards new doctrine [friendly and respectful to other countries] then her goal was definitely achieved”
- (Sovetskaya Belarussia, art. 16) “[the article is about a meeting between A. Lukashenko and US senators] Both sides demonstrated willful attention and respect for each other. That was a good sign for everyone who is waiting for improvement in US-Belarus relations”

- (Zvyazda, art. 35) “President Lukashenko hopes that the progress in US-Belarus relation is possible now when Obama is in the White House. As president Lukashenko stated: “If will be difficult for president Obama to change the direction of American policy... But if he will manage to do it, there will be progress [in Belarus-US relations]. He [president Obama] is a wise man”.
- (Zvyazda, art. 30) “President Lukashenko noted an importance of US-Belarus relations, emphasizing the experience of political, economical, and cultural bounds between our counties... As he [president Lukashenko] stated, “we always had hope for... normalization of relations between our countries”

VITA

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