

Whose Responsibility?
Chernobyl as Trauma Management
in Belarus and Ukraine

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PhD Dissertation

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Ekatherina Zhukova
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List of abbreviations and acronyms

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDG	Belarusian Business Newspaper (Russian: Belaruskaya Delovaya Gazeta)
Bq	Becquerel
Bq/m ²	Becquerel per square meter
BPF	Belarusian Popular Front
BSSR	Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic ¹
CCPI	Chernobyl Children's Project International
Ci	Curie
Ci/km ²	Curie per square kilometre
CIS	Commonwealth of the Independent States
CNPP	Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EC	European Commission
EHU	European Humanities University
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument
EU	European Union
G7	Group of 7
G8	Group of 8
GDL	Grand Duchy of Lithuania
Gomelenergo	Gomel Power Energy Enterprise
Goskomchernobyl	State Committee for the Chernobyl Consequences
Holodomor	Death by Forced Starvation
KGaA	Limited Partnership on Shares (German: Kommanditgesellschaft Auf Aktien)
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IISEPS	Institute for Independent Social and Economic Political Research
IPI	International Press Institute
ITAR-TASS	Information Telegraph Agency of Russia – Telegraph Agency of Communication and Messages
Km	Kilometre
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

¹ During the Soviet Union, today's 'Belarus' was called 'Belorussiya'.

NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
OUN	Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
RADBEL	Combating Illicit Trafficking of Nuclear and Radioactive Materials
RBIC	Russia-Belarus Information Centre
RBMK	High Power Channel-Type Reactor (Russian: Реактор Болшої Мощності Канальні)
RIA Novosti	Russian News & Information Agency
Rosenergoatom	Russian Electric Power Division of State Atomic Energy Corporation
RUB	Russian Rouble
SDF	Self-Defence Forces
SS-19 and SS-24	Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles UR-100N
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of the Independent States
TORCH	The Other Report on Chernobyl
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPA	Ukrainian Insurgent Army
USA	United States of America
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WHO	World Health Organisation
WVS	World Value Survey
WWII	Second World War

Transliteration

The word ‘Chernobyl’ was spelled as it appears in the UN official documents. The names of the Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian authors, outlined in the reference list, were presented exactly as they appear in their article by-lines. The names of the Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian newspapers were spelled according to their formal transliteration. Other names of people and places were transliterated using the British Standard of Romanisation (Table 1). The names spelled in Belarusian and Ukrainian were first translated into Russian and then transliterated into English.

Table 1 Romanisation of the Russian Alphabet

Letter upright	italic	Sound (IPA)	Romanisation British Standard
Аа	А а	[a]	a
Бб	Б б	[b]	b
Вв	В в	[v]	v
Гг	Г г	[g]	g
Дд	Д д	[d]	d
Ее	Е е	[jɛ, ɛ]	e
Ёё	Ё ё	[jɔ, ɔ]	ë
Жж	Ж ж	[ʒ]	zh
Зз	З з	[z]	z
Ии	И и	[i]	i
Йй	Й й	[j]	ÿ
Кк	К к	[k]	k
Лл	Л л	[l]	l
Мм	М м	[m]	m
Нн	Н н	[n]	n
Оо	О о	[ɔ]	o
Пп	П п	[p]	p
Рр	Р р	[r]	r
Сс	С с	[s]	s
Тт	Т т	[t]	t
Уу	У у	[u]	u
Фф	Ф ф	[f]	f
Хх	Х х	[x]	kh
Цц	Ц ц	[ts]	ts
Чч	Ч ч	[tʃ]	ch
Шш	Ш ш	[ʃ]	sh
Щщ	Щ щ	[ʂɕ, ʃʃ]	shch
Ъъ	Ъ ъ	–	"
Ыы	Ы ы	[ɨ]	ÿ (ui)
Ьь	Ь ь	–	'
Ээ	Э э	[ɛ]	é
Юю	Ю ю	[ju, u]	yu
Яя	Я я	[ja, a]	ya

Chapter 1.

Introduction

Different societies have different responses to tragic events, be it war, genocide, political assassinations, terrorist attacks, famine, or natural or technological disasters. Responses to tragic events do not necessarily result from the material burden they create. Rather, the meaning assigned to the tragic events by agents makes them appear important or marginal in the collective consciousness of the society. Different meanings assigned to a traumatic past can lead to different outcomes: They can create or separate communities, build solidarity and trust, or lead to suspicion and frustration. Using the case study of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, this chapter looks at the meaning-making of Chernobyl and its role in shaping conflict and cooperation between actors. It begins with a presentation of the empirical puzzle. It then reviews the existing literature on Chernobyl and traumatic events, *inter alia*, sociology of disaster, memory, and trauma studies, and identifies gaps and the prospects of contribution. It also briefly looks at the importance of the case studies for the Western foreign policy. Finally, it proposes an outline of the monograph and presents the limitations of the study.

1.1 Presenting the Case: Empirical Puzzle

The Chernobyl nuclear disaster occurred in 1986 in the Soviet Union and is considered the worst technological disaster in world history. The fourth power block exploded at 1:43 am on 26 April 1986 during the testing of one of the security systems. The response of the Soviet government was to cover it up. I was ten months old. To avoid the unknown, my mother took me to Moscow. As a capital of the Soviet Union, it was more protected by the Communist Party from the radioactive clouds. We spent nine months in 'exile' waiting for more comprehensive information. The best experience of those months was my father's arrival to take us back home. That day I made my first steps.

Sweden was the first country to detect the increased levels of radiation in the atmosphere and to demand information from the Soviet authorities. When the world learned about the consequences of Chernobyl, the disaster received a 7 on the international scale ranking nuclear catastrophes; the highest possible mark. The released radioactive elements contaminated the environment (soil, forests, rivers) and housing and infrastructure (villages and towns), and caused serious health problems and deaths. The Chernobyl

disaster was the first disaster to have a prolonged low-dose radiation effect on people in affected territories.

The Chernobyl power plant is located in the north-eastern part of Ukraine, close to the borders with Belarus and Russia. The most affected states were Belarus (23.5 % of its territory and 35 % of its population) and Ukraine (7 % of both its territory and population). Belarus had three times more contaminated territory and five times more affected people than Ukraine. After the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, Belarus and Ukraine became independent and had to cope with Chernobyl on their own. While Ukraine had four nuclear power plants, including the Chernobyl plant, Belarus had none. Belarus introduced a 10-year moratorium on the construction of new nuclear facilities in 1998, and it was first in 2008, 22 years after Chernobyl, that plans to build a new nuclear power plant were announced. Ukraine had to shut down the Chernobyl plant in 2000 despite increasing difficulties finding new sources of energy. Starting from 2010, Ukraine has been building a new confinement over the ruined Chernobyl reactor and a new wastes storage for 800 remaining radioactive wastes burials.

The Chernobyl legacy in both Ukraine and Belarus meant contaminated land (by caesium, strontium, and plutonium). The contamination of the soil was uneven and divided into five radioactive zones (Figure 1.1):

The first of them, straddling the border with Ukraine, is the zone with the highest level of contamination. It is the well-known exclusion zone, with a 30-km radius around the reactor ... Proceeding outward from the reactor, the following zone is that of primary evacuation, in which contamination levels of the soil with caesium-137 exceeded 40 Ci/km². The third zone is that of subsequent evacuation, with contamination levels for caesium-137 from 15 to 40 Ci/km² ... The fourth zone (5–15 Ci/km²) is the zone with the right to evacuation, and the fifth one (1–5 Ci/km²) is the zone of periodic radiation control. Belarus's second and fourth largest cities – Gomel and Mogilev, respectively – fall within this last area (Ioffe, 2007: 2).

20 per cent of the Belarusian territory was contaminated with caesium-137, 10 per cent – with strontium-90, and 2 per cent – with transuranium elements (plutonium 238, 239, 240, 241, and americium 241). Radioactive caesium and strontium entered a human body through nutrition. Milk and meat from the private households and mushrooms and berries from the woods accumulated caesium and strontium from the contaminated soil. Radioactive caesium spread in the body through metabolism, similar to potassium. The consumption of organic food was a way to remove caesium from the organism. Radioactive strontium, on the other hand, became a part of the bone

formation, similar to calcium. It was almost impossible to withdraw strontium from the body and it remained there permanently.²

Figure 1.1 Map of the Chernobyl Contamination



Source: The University of Texas at Austin Library:
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/chornobyl_radiation96.jpg.

The Chernobyl legacy also meant blast victims (the clean-up workers, evacuees, re-settlers, and those who fell ill). Chernobyl clean-up workers (known

² http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horosho_by_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

as Liquidators) included firefighters, pilots, soldiers, plant workers, constructors, doctors, and drivers sent to Chernobyl to stop the exploded reactor, calm down the fire, and save people's lives. By 2006, there were 115,000 liquidators officially registered in Belarus and 300,000 liquidators in Ukraine. Overall, there were 600,000 liquidators involved in clean-up operations from other republics of the former Soviet Union. My grandfather was one of them. He was an electrical engineer at Gomelenergo in Belarus.³ He was sent to the disaster's epicentre to help restore the broken power supply. He died from radiation sickness 5 years later.

Evacuees or re-settlers were victims who lost their homes in the contaminated zone and resettled to another area. 350,000 people were evacuated in the territory of Belarus. Stigmatisation was one of the problems they faced: 'Their poorly informed compatriots from unaffected areas declined to socialize with them and refused to allow their children to play with those from Chernobyl-affected areas' (Ioffe, 2007: 8). Another category of Chernobyl victims was *samossioly*, who were first resettled from the radioactive villages, but returned later to the evacuated zone and remained there of their own will. By 2006, there were 325 voluntary settlers in the evacuated areas. Yet another category of victims was foreign nationals who moved from dangerous 'spots' of the world (e.g., Afghanistan and Tajikistan) to the Chernobyl zone and were offered houses there. One of the problems was their exposure to the consumption of the radioactive milk and meat from the private households, as well as mushrooms, berries and products of the traditional forestry from the local woods. Another problem was aging. As Ioffe highlights, 'most younger and educated people abandoned those areas in droves, leaving the most vulnerable population groups behind' (Ioffe, 2007: 8). As a result, 'the population of retirees equals or exceeds the working-age population' (Ioffe, 2007: 8).

People with diseases included a separate category of victims. Men's diseases included tumours of the lungs, stomach, skin, and prostate. Women were sick with tumours of the breast, uterus, stomach, and skin. The most vulnerable category of people with diseases were children that were born right before and after Chernobyl and experienced health problems such as thyroid cancer, bone cancer, and leukaemia. As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus states, 'among children, thyroid cancer incidence went 40 times up since the explosion, with 2.5 to 7 times up among adults.'⁴ Having a thyroid gland removed is not an unusual practice in the contaminated are-

³ Gomelenergo is a Republican Unitary Enterprise of Power Industry in the Gomel Region of Belarus.

⁴ http://chernobyl.undp.org/russian/docs/belarus_23_anniversary.pdf.

as.⁵ Many families have relatives or friends who had this surgery. An annual check of a thyroid gland is a common medical practice as a first step to detect cancer. Thyroid gland cancer is the only disease, however, recognised by the international community as a direct cause of Chernobyl: ‘There is no proof that several other health effects (notably leukemia, cataracts, and congenital malformations) typically ascribed to Chernobyl indeed resulted from the accident’ (Ioffe, 2007: 7). This argument is highly politicised and remains controversial.

500,000 children in Belarus are considered as ‘Chernobyl’ children. They reside at the contaminated territories with different radiation levels. Coming from Gomel, the fifth zone (1–5 Ci/km²) of the Chernobyl contamination, I was also defined as a child of Chernobyl. With this identity, I participated in the Chernobyl recuperation programs in Italy, Germany, and Sweden. I was between 11 and 15 years old. These programs did not only offer fresh air and ‘clean’ meals for a month during summer, but also introduced the West to a child of the post-Soviet transition.

As we can see, Chernobyl brought many problems and affected lives of many people in different ways. Much has been said and written in this regard. Before introducing the focus of this book, a brief historical background of Belarus and Ukraine is useful.

Historically, Belarus was included in Kievan Rus’ (882-1251), the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1251-1569), the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569-1795), the Russian Empire (1795-1917), and the Soviet Union (1922-1991). The first time Belarus acquired its own territory was during the Communist era. Since Belarus has been part of Russian entities for the last two centuries, it was close to Russia in language, culture, traditions, and religion. As Dryzek and Holmes (2002) demonstrate, ‘By the late eighteenth century, it was part of the Russian Empire. This relationship has persisted, apart from a few brief periods during or shortly after wars’ (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002).

Ukrainians consider themselves the oldest nation among Russians and Belarusians. They claim ownership of the so-called ‘golden age’ of Kievan Rus’ since the ninth century, with longstanding claims to distinct territory, traditions, culture, and language. Historically, Ukraine was divided between larger powers (the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Russian Empire, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union), and the country emerged from the Soviet Union with two heterogeneous local communities (Kuzio

⁵ ‘Considerable thyroid exposure of local residents occurred through inhalation and ingestion of foodstuffs, especially milk containing high levels of radioiodine, during several days following the fallout’ (Ioffe, 2007: 7).

2001): western Ukrainians (pro-European) and eastern Ukrainians (pro-Russian). Central Ukrainians remained somewhere in between.

After independence, two antagonistic national narratives emerged in both countries to construct their new national identities: the pro-Russian and the pro-European. The pro-Russian narrative glorified the Soviet past, close ties with Russia, bilingualism (active Russian language and passive Belarusian and Ukrainian language), and separation from Europe (Kuzio, 2001; Ioffe, 2003). The pro-European narrative emphasised anti-Soviet and anti-Russian rhetoric, European values, unification with Europe, and the Ukrainian and Belarusian languages (Kuzio, 2001; Titarenko, 2007).

Yet, having similar national narratives, Belarus and Ukraine did not apply them in the same way to give meaning to their national tragic events. In other words, while the content of the national narratives was the same in theory, its application differed in practice. Belarus has incorporated Chernobyl into the plot of these narratives, but Ukraine has not. This puzzle is the main focus of this monograph: *How is it possible that Chernobyl has become a part of the national narratives in Belarus, but not in Ukraine, despite similar backgrounds?* I argue that this difference lies in several dimensions: temporal focus of the national narratives, the role of the state-controlled media, creativity and will of the elites, and the social antagonism within the population. First, Belarus and Ukraine differ in the temporal focus of their national narratives (message content). While in Belarus, the construction of the national narratives takes place against the challenges of the present, in Ukraine, this process goes against the ghosts of the past.⁶ As Chernobyl is understood as a traumatic event with ongoing consequences in the present, it has become a part of the present-oriented national narratives in Belarus, but not a part of the past-oriented narratives in Ukraine. In Belarus, the identities attached to Russia and Europe as main actors in the national narratives are echoed in the representations of Chernobyl. Bringing in the familiar identities of Russia and Europe to represent Chernobyl reproduces their roles as enemies or friends in the national narratives of Belarus. Assigning new identities to Russia and Europe through the representation of Chernobyl changes their roles as enemies or friends in the national narratives of Belarus. The reproduction of the national narratives contributes to a status quo in the conflict or cooperation with enemies and friends. The modification of the national narratives leads to conflict escalation or smoothing, cooperation improvement or spoiling.

⁶ In this monograph, I refer to Ukraine and its national narratives during 1992-2014 and do not touch upon the changes that have taken place after the escalation of the current Ukrainian crisis.

Second, Belarus and Ukraine have different types of public spheres where meaning-making takes place (message senders). Belarus has two public spheres, which are disconnected from each other. One public sphere is state controlled and another non-state controlled. Each of these publics has their own elites who advocate one of the antagonistic national narratives. The state-controlled public is represented by the Belarusian authorities. They advocate the pro-Russian narrative. The non-state public sphere is represented by the Belarusian opposition. They promote the pro-European narrative. Whatever issue comes into the public sphere is interpreted through these narratives. Chernobyl is one of these issues. The state-controlled public sphere uses the pro-Russian national narrative to give meaning to Chernobyl, while the non-state public employs the pro-European national narrative. Ukraine, on the other hand, has one common public sphere, which unites state-controlled, non-state, and oligarch-owned publics. Officials, opposition, and businesses operate within the common public sphere and are not divided, unlike in Belarus. This relaxes the need to fight for survival and participation in the public sphere through the application of the antagonistic national narratives. Even though these publics can favour different national narratives, not every issue is interpreted through them.

Third, Belarus and Ukraine have different social antagonisms within their populations (message receivers). In Belarus, the population is homogeneously-minded. It predominantly favours the pro-Russian national narrative. As the pro-Russian national narrative is articulated in the state-controlled public sphere and the majority of the population is its participants, it easily achieves a hegemonic status. The pro-European national narrative is articulated in the non-state public sphere. By not having popular support, it remains marginal. In Ukraine, the population is heterogeneously-minded. It is divided by the national narratives. People in the eastern Ukraine favour the pro-Russian national narrative, while people in the western Ukraine stand for the pro-European national narrative. In order not to escalate the ideological conflict, the representatives of the Ukrainian public sphere avoid the promotion of a particular national narrative in favour of one group of the population against another. As such, Chernobyl is not interpreted through any of these narratives in the public sphere.

The importance of studying the difference between Belarus and Ukraine in their approaches to representing Chernobyl allows us to understand how the same tragic event receives different responses in different states and what contributes to this difference. Interpreting the event through the prism of the national narratives allows us to see how the conflict between the antagonistic domestic actors and between the geopolitical enemies and friends

is reproduced or modified. Before I discuss how these arguments have come into being, I review the existing literature on Chernobyl.

1.2 The Existing Literature on Chernobyl: Gaps and Contributions

The existing studies on Chernobyl have not conducted comparative analyses on the two most affected countries over time. That is why we do not know what differences or similarities these victim countries might have in regard to the representations of Chernobyl. Two types of literature can be identified that discuss the social and political aspects of Chernobyl: non-specialised (non-academic) and specialised (academic) literature.⁷ Non-specialised literature is produced by non-academics; that is, experts (Medvedev, 1991), journalists, politicians (Shcherbak, 1989; Yaroshinskaya, 1995), and writers (Alexievich, 2005). Some of them are published without references and do not apply any scientific method of analysis. These works are either testimonies of the authors as first-hand witnesses, collections of testimonies of other victims through interviews, or disclosures of top-secret documents. The focus of these studies is on the causes and failed initial responses to the catastrophe and the life of victims. Most of these works look at Chernobyl as a unique accident in the history of humanity.

Another type of existing Chernobyl literature is specialised: It is produced by academics. For example, *The Anthropology of East Europe Review* dedicates an entire issue to the problem of Chernobyl entitled ‘Memories, Commemorations, and Representations of Chernobyl’ (2012).⁸ The contributors look at how the memory of Chernobyl was produced by different groups of society – politicians, opposition, and victims – and what commemoration practises they developed. Another journal, *Crossroads Digest* (2010), published by the European Humanities University (EHU), also dedicates an issue to Chernobyl.⁹ As EHU is a Belarusian university in exile in Lithuania and is pro-oppositional in its opinions, many discussions in the journal are criticisms of the Belarusian leadership. The specialised scholarship uses a

⁷ I only review literature published or translated into English and available to the broader public. I do not review unpublished works, works in different languages, studies conducted in areas other than social science (i.e., radiobiology, radioecology, or natural science), or studies that are not peer-reviewed and, thus, remain controversial (Yablokov and Nesterenko, 2007). [<http://www.nyas.org/publications/annals/Detail.aspx?cid=f3f3bd16-51ba-4d7b-a086-753f44b3bfc1>].

⁸ <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/aeer/issue/view/178>.

⁹ http://www.ehu.lt/files/periodicals/Digest_5_2010%20small.pdf.

scientific approach from their discipline to understand the specificity of post-Chernobyl processes and the context they are embedded in.

The specialised literature is represented by disciplines such as history (Marples, 1988, 1996; 2006; Arndt, 2010), human geography (Ioffe, 2007; Davies, 2013), anthropology (Kurti, 1988; Harper, 2001; Petryna, 2002; Abbott et al., 2006; Phillips, 2006; Kuchinskaya, 2014), sociology, and political science (Dawson, 1996; Wanner, 1998; Schmid, 2004; Stsiapanau, 2010, Kasperski, 2012, 2013). The work of anthropologists is victim-centred, sociologists and political scientists focus on state-society relations, while historians and human geographers touch on both. Some of the scholars belong to different spheres. For example, Wanner is a historian and anthropologist, but her work on Ukrainian nationalism is concentrated on politics. Abbott and colleagues are sociologists, but their in-depth interviews with victims resemble ethnographic methods of research. While containing in-depth case studies, this literature views Chernobyl as an example of broader social and political phenomena: nationalism and social movements (Dawson, 1996; Wanner, 1998), risk society (Beck, 1987; Abbott et al. 2006), biopolitics (Petryna, 2002), science, expertise, technology (Schmid, 2004; Kuchinskaya, 2014), and memory politics (Kasperski, 2012).

Some of these scholars also focus on particular affected countries. While Wanner (1998), Petryna (2002), and Davies (2013) study Ukraine, Ioffe (2007), Stsiapanau, (2010), Kasperski (2012, 2013), and Kuchinskaya (2014) are experts on Belarus. Wanner (1998) focuses on nationalist mobilisation in Ukraine, arguing that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Chernobyl vanished as a topic of political struggle. The power plant provided energy security and did 'light up Kiev every night' (1998: 100). Petryna explained the absence of using Chernobyl for nationalistic purposes in Ukraine with nationalists' wish to dispense with the 'bureaucratic dependency' to prevent 'a quasi-socialist population' (2002: 114). She introduced the concept of 'biological citizenship' to describe how the absence of official criteria to diagnose illness caused by Chernobyl encouraged people to find ways to link any disease to radiation. This helped them to obtain state benefits and, thus, solve personal poverty problems.

While Wanner (1998) and Petryna (2002) argue that Chernobyl did not become a tool for political struggle in Ukraine, Stsiapanau (2010) and Kasperski (2012, 2013) demonstrate the opposite trend in Belarus. Stsiapanau has mapped the interaction of two competing scientific discourse coalitions: the overcoming discourse and the liquidation discourse. While the oppositional 'overcoming' discourse argued that 'any, even the smallest, dose of radiation can have bad consequences for health', the official 'liquidation' discourse stated that life with low doses of radiation was possible (2008: 146).

These discourse coalitions were mapped to understand the Belarusian official position on nuclear power after Chernobyl. Kasperski (2012) studied the Chernobyl memory struggle as performative actions (i.e., erection of monuments and the organisation of ceremonies, visits, and protests) of official and opposition actors in Belarus. She showed that while in Belarus, the official politics was forgetting, the opposition practiced the politics of remembering.

Hence, from the existing literature we learn that in Belarus, Chernobyl has become a matter of political struggle, but in Ukraine, it has not. From the first glance, this can give us an answer to the puzzle stated above. In Belarus, the national narratives were employed to represent Chernobyl in order to engage in the political struggle. In Ukraine, the national narratives were not employed in order to avoid the political struggle. However, if we look closer, we may not be that satisfied. In regard to the Belarusian case, the work of Stsiapanau is focused on scientific discourses and does not engage in the discussion of the representations of Russia and Europe as the main actors in the pro-Russian and pro-European national narratives of Belarus. Even though the work of Kasperski is closest to the present monograph, it focuses mostly on the domestic conflict and how the antagonistic parties represent each other. Kasperski does not study the representations of Russia and Europe in-depth over time but mentions them only briefly. For example, she argues that the Belarusian authorities always present Europe in a negative light in a public sphere. In the book chapter called 'The Chernobyl Nuclear Accident and Identity Strategies in Belarus', she writes: 'As for the Western countries [implying Western Europe], Belarusian officials *constantly* depict them as an external force that is interested in using the Chernobyl disaster purely to destabilise the country and to prevent it from becoming a strong rival' (Kasperski, 2013: 131, *my emphasis*). She adds that 'They [the Belarusian officials] also suspect the West of using the help to disaster victims as an excuse for meddling in the country's internal affairs, for supporting the oppositional forces, or for imposing foreign values that might be unsuitable or even destructive for Belarusian people' (Kasperski, 2013: 131). This argument ignores the contingency in the representations of Europe by the Belarusian officials and its change over time and, hence, the implications it might have for the conflict resolution between Belarus and Europe and understanding the Belarusian phenomenon as such. By analysing the Belarusian official media in the period of 1992-2014, this monograph demonstrates that Europe was presented in both a positive and a negative light and that these representations differed over time. It shows that Europe was constantly praised for its help during 1992-2005 in 15 articles and temporarily blamed for its lack of help during 2010-2011 in four articles. The Belarusian officials' instability in representing Europe challenges the established understanding of the antag-

onism between Europe and Belarus. It highlights the areas where the conflict persists but also the areas where the prospects of cooperation are possible.

The same problem is found in the representations of Russia: Rather than focusing on dynamic perspectives over time, Kasperski makes a selective snapshot and argues for a particular static representation. In the same book chapter, she argues that 'Belarusian officials frame the catastrophe in light of a close relationship with Russia and highlight the necessity to maintain such a relationship' (Kasperski, 2013: 130). This monograph shows that while this was the case during the 1990s, it was no longer so during the 2000s. It demonstrates that there was a shift in the representations of Russia from an emphasis on the close ties (the 1990s) to a promotion of the Belarusian independence (the 2000s). This shift shows that not only Europe, but also Russia did not have a stable identity construction over time. It challenges the established understanding of a stable cooperation between Russia and Belarus. It points out temporal transformations in the bilateral relations between 'big brother' and 'little brother'. This, in turn, informs us what the prospects of change are in the post-Soviet space. Looking at the representations of Russia and Europe in tandem and their change over time allows us to see how Belarus has viewed its enemies and friends since its independence and how its own image has changed over time.

As such, the monograph identifies shifts in the representations of Europe and Russia that contradict the arguments of Kasperski. These contradictions serve as a contribution to the Chernobyl literature and call for more thorough research on the topic. It also presents a new topic for research: the role of humanitarian aid in shaping mutual relations between Belarus and Europe. This is particularly important in the context of the recuperative trips of the Chernobyl children abroad. Up till now, only two academic papers (to my knowledge) touch on this topic (Arndt, 2010; Bodrunova, 2012). The topic of the recuperative visits of children from the Chernobyl areas to Western Europe is important as it allows comparison of two types of cooperation – people-to-people and diplomatic cooperation – and conclusion drawing on the success or failure of each and on how one area of cooperation can help improve the other.

By conducting the in-depth case study, this monograph also contributes to the regional literature on the Belarusian national identity construction. Scholars such as Leshchenko (2004), Pershai (2006), Ioffe (2003, 2007, 2011), Titarenko (2007, 2009), Bekus (2008, 2010), and Buhr et al. (2011) have been studying the shift in the construction of the Belarusian national identity since 1992. This monograph demonstrates how this construction has changed during 1992-2014 through the representations of Russia and Europe. It also contributes to the works of Belarusian scholars such as Zaprud-

nik (1994), Goujon (1999, 2010), Marples (1999), Brzozowska (2003, 2004), Kotljarchuk (2004), and Leshchenko (2008), who study the Belarusian identity and politics in general. The monograph shows that in Belarus, the construction of national identity was present-oriented, rather than past-centred. The identity construction took place against the geopolitical enemies and friends of the present rather than the historical enemies and friends of the past. It demonstrates that the Belarusian opposition constantly represented Russia as an enemy and Europe as a friend. The Belarusian authorities, on the other hand, divided its enemy Europe into good guys (charities and citizens) and bad guys (politicians) and devalued the importance of Russia in the Belarusian life. The public spheres (state-controlled and non-state) and the popularity of the pro-Russian national narrative over the pro-European was the context that constituted the Belarusian national identity construction. Scholars interested in the Chernobyl literature and the Belarusian case in general are invited to read Chapters 6 and 7 for a detailed presentation of data, and Chapter 8 for a summary and a reflection on the broader socio-political context where the data was produced.

As for the Ukrainian scholars on Chernobyl, the topic seems to lose academic interest. The existing work is limited to the 1990s, and fewer studies were conducted during the 2000s. The existing publications focus on civil society discourse rather than elite discourse. Wanner (1998) studies grassroots movements, while Petryna (2002) looks at the Chernobyl victims. The recent study of Davies (2013) also focuses on the Chernobyl victims. None of these works look at the representations of Russia and Europe and their link to the Ukrainian national narratives after independence. This monograph shows that Chernobyl has not become a part of the national narratives in Ukraine through the representations of Russia and Europe. The reason for that was not the dependence on nuclear energy (as Wanner suggests) or the fight against bureaucracy (as Petryna proposes). Rather, it was the temporal focus of the national narratives of Ukraine on the past and the specific constitution of the public sphere (a common public sphere but a divided audience). This monograph argues that during 1992-2014, the construction of the Ukrainian national identity was past-oriented rather than present-centred. For example, *Holodomor* (the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s) was constructed as a part of the national narratives of Ukraine. It was seen as a past-oriented event finished in the present, with most of its victims dead. Chernobyl, on the other hand, was not constructed as a part of the national narratives of Ukraine. It was understood as a present-oriented event with ongoing consequences and victims alive. The composition of the public sphere (state-controlled, non-state, and oligarch-owned) and the sociological fragmentation of the population (supporting either the pro-European or the pro-

Russian national narrative) constituted the context of the construction of the Ukrainian national identity. The social antagonism within the population and the ability to access the public sphere discouraged the elites to link Chernobyl to the national narratives. As such, this monograph also contributes to the regional literature on the Ukrainian national identity (Solchanyk, 1994; Pirie, 1996; Shulman, 1999; 2004, 2005; Wolczuk, 2000; Wilson, 2000, 2002; Taras et al., 2004; Kuzio, 2001, 2002, 2007, 2010; Protsyk, 2008; Hansen and Hesli, 2009; and Korostelina, 2011, 2013). Scholars interested in the Chernobyl literature and the Ukrainian case in general are invited to read Chapters 9 and 10 for a detailed presentation of data, and Chapter 11 for a summary and a reflection on the broader socio-political context where the data was produced.

1.3 The Existing Literature on Traumatic Events: Gaps and Contributions

After identifying the gaps in the existing literature on Chernobyl, the next step is to answer the following questions: (a) To what broader socio-political phenomenon can this in-depth case study be related? (b) Through what theoretical and analytical means can the relationship between the empirical and theoretical components be established? As mentioned above, the monograph is interested in studying a traumatic event (Chernobyl), the meaning assigned to it (through the antagonistic national narratives), the actors engaged in this meaning-making (the official and opposition elites), and the arena where actors articulate this meaning (public sphere or media). The work that deals with this kind of inquiry usually comes from collective memory studies, sociology of disaster, and trauma literature.

The literature on collective memory is interested in studying responses to tragic events that have taken place in the past, are finished in the present, and should be either remembered or forgotten (Mosse, 1990; Winter, 1995; Olick and Levy, 1997; Taylor, 1997; Wieviorka, 1998; Wersch, 2003; Confino, 2005; Suleiman, 2006; DeJung, 2007; and others). Some events are forgotten in order to escape guilt (Alexander and Gao, 2012), while others are remembered in a neutral way in order to 'relax' shame (Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz, 1991). Some experiences are changed from shame into victimhood (Saito, 2006) and others from shame into responsibility (Giesen, 2004). Some events receive an official apology (Young, 1989), while others are publicly proclaimed to be a country's triumph (Smidchens, 2007).

Chernobyl is not considered a tragic event of the past that is finished but rather as an ongoing event in the present. That is why the literature on collective memory is of little help. At the same time, the ongoing consequences

of traumatic events are acknowledged in the interpretative sociology of disaster (Hewitt, 1983; Erikson, 1994; Quarantelli, 1998; Mileti, 1999; White, Kates and Burton, 2001). Social constructivist theories view responses to an event with ongoing consequences as a result of a certain meaning assigned to them to justify or excuse an action or inaction (Hewitt 1983). If a disaster is seen as an act of nature, one should combat and control nature (Quarantelli 1998). If a disaster is viewed as a result of absence of human precautions, one should develop certain adjustments (Mileti 1999). If a tragedy is understood as an act by humans against humans, 'the root causes' should be identified and eliminated (White, Kates and Burton 2001). Finally, if a disaster is seen as an act of God, a consequence of a human sin, or a result of fate, human inaction may follow (Erikson 1994).

The type of response to the disaster depends on who or what is defined as a responsible or a perpetrator. The construction of a perpetrator is also central to cultural trauma theory (Alexander et al. 2004; Alexander, 2012; Eyerman, 2001, 2011, 2013; Eyerman, Alexander and Breese 2013). The decision of who will be considered as a perpetrator is made by agency: People with access to the symbolic means of production assign meaning to a tragedy in a public sphere. While in the interpretative sociology of disaster, the construction of a perpetrator is made on a local level (the direct experts involved or the local communities affected), in cultural trauma theory, the construction of a perpetrator becomes a matter of the national community and collective identity (through reference to the broader meaning structures).

As such, cultural trauma theory satisfies the requirements to theorise the components of the present case study. The meaning-making touches the whole nation and, hence, can be viewed through reference to the national narratives. The meaning is also articulated in a public sphere (media) by people with access to the symbolic means of production (elites and intelligentsia). At the same time, the present case study identifies several limitations in the cultural trauma theory. These limitations are related to the focus of the theory on perpetrators, tragic events that are finished, Western media and civil society groups, and existing moral frameworks. The monograph addresses these limitations and proposes theory development. It suggests to focus on (a) saviours instead of perpetrators as the main actors of cultural trauma; (b) the tragic events with ongoing consequences in the present instead of finished events in the past; (c) post-colonial and transitional societies with state-controlled media instead of Western democratic societies with independent media; (d) new national narratives in the making rather than established or pre-existing moral frameworks. I summarise this proposal in four points below.

First, as the case study of Chernobyl is a tragic event with ongoing consequences, it is not only the meaning-making of *a perpetrator* who caused the disaster that is constructed in a public sphere, but of *a saviour* who helps to overcome the ongoing consequences. In the case of Belarus and Ukraine, these saviours become Russia and Europe as enemies and friends from the national narratives. The focus on saviours rather than perpetrators shows that the meaning-making of the tragic event may involve actors not related to the tragedy itself. It demonstrates how the perceived conflict or cooperation with present enemies and friends can be reproduced or modified by their participation in rescue operations in victim countries. As such, I propose to shift the focus in cultural trauma theory from *causes* and responses to causes of the tragic event to the *consequences* and responses to the consequences of the disaster. The focus on consequences rather than causes helps to study cases understood as having prolonged effects of a disaster (i.e., radiation or chemical effects on humans) and as requiring long-term responses, policies, and adjustments.

Second, in the post-colonial and transitional states, which search for their place in the world, the meaning-making in a public sphere not only relies on the existing national narratives, as cultural trauma suggests, but constructs new narratives at the same time. In other words, the construction of a saviour takes place simultaneously with *the national narratives in the making*. The construction of saviours may reproduce or modify the fragile content of these national narratives. If a friend from a national narrative is represented as providing help in dealing with the consequences of the disaster, its role from the national narrative is reproduced. If a friend is portrayed as being reluctant to provide assistance, its role in the national narrative is transformed, and friendship is constructed as spoiled. A similar situation takes place with an enemy. If an enemy from the national narrative is presented as not helping to mitigate the consequences of the disaster, its role from the national narrative is reproduced. If an enemy is portrayed as assisting in responding to the consequences of the disaster, its role in the national narrative is modified, and hostility is constructed as softened. These identity shifts help to change the understanding of cooperation or conflict that the victim countries have with their geopolitical enemies and friends.

Third, the articulation of a saviour through national narratives in the making constructs a certain understanding of *ontological security* of the nation. Ontological security, as defined by Giddens (1991), is a feeling of order, continuity of everyday routines, and absence of stress. In other words, ontological security is the perception of people's wellbeing. The post-Chernobyl situation can be described as ontological insecurity: Everyday routines were disrupted, and people experienced stress and a feeling of disorder. Chernobyl

brought about two types of ontological insecurity: human (health and environment) and technological (nuclear power). The return to ontological security of the population implied responding to ontological insecurity of the victims. The construction of saviours played one of the important roles in this process. If the saviour was presented as mitigating the consequences of the disaster successfully, ontological security was constructed as assured. If the saviour was portrayed as failing to deal with the consequences of the catastrophe in a successful manner, ontological security was constructed as threatened. The construction of ontological security became a way to link the individual traumas of the victims to the whole society.

Fourth, the studied victim countries of Belarus and Ukraine, as the post-communist states in transition, still have state-controlled media. Thus, the meaning-making takes place not in an autonomous public sphere comprising of multiple actors, as cultural trauma theory proposes, but in a public sphere divided between the *state and non-state actors*. It allows presentation of the state as an arena of trauma-making in its own right. Up till now, neither an elaborated theory of arenas nor a study of a specific field exists (Alexander et al., 2004). Looking at the state as an arena demonstrates that the state can mobilise its material resources (state-controlled public sphere) and symbolic resources (national narratives) to construct a saviour from a tragic event. In other words, the state-controlled media can strengthen the legitimacy of the official story if this story is built on familiar meaning structures to fit the aspirations of the population.

To account for these theoretical suggestions to cultural trauma theory (i.e., saviour, state-controlled and non-state media, national narratives in the making, and ontological security), this monograph introduces a new concept – the concept of *trauma management*. Trauma management is understood as a discourse consisting of competing stories about how saviours alleviate ontological insecurity of the victims to reach ontological security of the nation. The competing agents are the state and non-state actors divided by the antagonistic national narratives. Trauma management discourse either reproduces or modifies the conflict between the domestic actors. If the national narratives are reproduced in the antagonistic public spheres (state-controlled and non-state), the perceived conflict is also reproduced. If the national narratives are modified, the perceived conflict is also modified. Trauma management discourse also reproduces or modifies the conflict or cooperation with the geopolitical actors. If the roles of enemies and friends from the national narratives are reproduced, the understanding of the conflict and cooperation is also reproduced. If the roles of enemies and friends are modified, the understanding of the conflict and cooperation is also modified (worsened, softened, or improved). The public sphere can facilitate the

construction of a trauma management narrative if the actors apply a national narrative that appeals to the majority of the population. The public sphere is less likely to facilitate the articulation of a trauma management narrative if there is no national narrative that the majority of the population can accept. That is why the state-controlled public sphere can facilitate, but does not determine, the success or failure of trauma management. The state-controlled public sphere (as a material resource) can have power when agents articulate a national narrative (as an ideational resource) appealing to the majority of the population.

Hence, the primary purpose of this monograph is to refine or reconstruct a cultural trauma theory by proposing a study of a rare case (Burawoy, 1998). The deviancy and uniqueness of the case allows for a new concept of trauma management to emerge. The secondary purpose of this monograph is to propose ‘an empirical knowledge of the society’ (Small, 2009: 21) or ‘a case-study plus’ (Hansen, 2006) in relation to the socio-political consequences of Chernobyl in Belarus and Ukraine. The research question of the monograph is the following:

How does trauma management differ in Belarus and Ukraine?

The following sub-questions help to answer the main research question:

- (a) What is trauma management, and how is it constructed?
- (b) How does this construction change over time?
- (c) How does trauma management shape national narratives in the victim countries?
- (d) How does trauma management shape the ontological security in the victim countries?
- (e) How does the public sphere facilitate or restrict trauma management construction?

Finally, this monograph also contributes to other trauma theories that focus on the social and political aspects of tragic events: collective aspects of the individual suffering (Erikson, 1995; Edkins, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006; Fierke, 2006), trauma as a national tragedy (Saito, 2006), trauma as a symbol of universal suffering (Bauman, 1989; Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002; Kaplan, 2005), trauma governance (Kinnvall, 2012; Lundborg, 2012; Svensson, 2012), political interests in trauma construction (Novick, 1999; Kansteiner, 2004), and trauma as the anticipated catastrophe (Aradau and Munster, 2011; Neocleous, 2012). Scholars interested in the trauma literature and studies on traumatic events in general are invited to read Chapters 2, 3, and 4 for a detailed presentation of the theoretical framework of this study and Chapter 12 for conclusive remarks on the contributions to cultural trauma literature.

1.4 The Case Studies and the 'Real World': Problems and Solutions

In addition to the academic literature, the cases under study are important for Western foreign policy. As Hansen argues, 'policies are dependent upon representations of the threat, country, security problem, or crisis they seek to address' (Hansen, 2006: 6). The West has been representing *Belarus* as 'a virtual "black hole" in Europe', 'an anomaly in the region', a 'modern sultanate', 'an authoritarian cesspool', 'a bastard of Europe', 'an outpost of tyranny', 'the last dictatorship of Europe', a place of a 'mass psychological marasmus', and so on (Ioffe, 2007). The policies were hard-line, fitting the representations: shutting down embassies (USA in 2008) and imposing sanctions (EU in 1997-2013).

With this gloomy scenario, this monograph aims to look at how Belarus in turn represents its geopolitical Others – Europe and Russia – and where the prospects of cooperation with Europe can be found. It argues that Chernobyl has become one of the few areas where cooperation at the state level, regardless political scandals, was possible and continuous. As Ioffe stated, 'In September 1997, the EU introduced its first sanctions: specifically, it banned contacts with Belarusian authorities above the rank of deputy minister and any co-operation with Belarus *except combating the effects of the Chernobyl disaster*' (2011: 219, *my emphasis*). Similarly, the website of the USA Embassy to Belarus states:

Throughout the years of anything but a smooth relationship with Belarusian authorities, the United States has maintained its commitment to the Belarusian people whose lives in the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear accident are still missing the advantages of market economy and democratic values.¹⁰

This monograph proposes to look at the example of Chernobyl as a point of connection between Europe and Belarus that can be developed further and become a guide for cooperation in other spheres of life. It is important to develop 'people-to-people' contacts and 'official Europe-to-official Belarus' contacts rather than continuing with the traditional 'official Europe-to-oppositional Belarus' contacts. These contacts should not only focus on politics, which they have been constantly failing for the past 24 years, but prioritise day-to-day activities. True democracy can be developed only when people are ready for it. If ordinary citizens view democracy as another project of imperialism, there is not much hope that democracy promotion can be successful. Switching leaders may satisfy the West's short-term interests but will

¹⁰ <http://minsk.usembassy.gov/us-belarus.html>.

not bring long-term change to people's mind-sets. The Belarusian society has not been de-Sovietised yet. Taking away Soviet values from people through coercive means may be very traumatic and dangerous. Absence of hate to Russia in the Belarusian mind-set should be treated seriously when working on the Western approach towards Belarus. More soft power, more focus on apolitical interactions, less 'nicknames', better attention and knowledge of the local contexts should be an approach of the EU Neighbourhood Policy. Chapter 8 touches on the proposed prospects of cooperation between Europe and Belarus.

As for *Ukraine*, it became known to the West in 2013 not only because of Chernobyl. As Joe Biden says, 'Even if the guns in the east fell silent tomorrow, Ukraine would still face a struggle for its democratic and economic future here in Kiev. There is a lot of work to do'.¹¹ Meanwhile, the current government in Ukraine urges the West to take care of the crisis:

The Ukrainian president warned [the US Congress] of a threat to 'global security everywhere' posed by the Russian aggression against his country ... and urged the United States not to let 'Ukraine stand alone in the face of this aggression'.¹²

While Russia has become enemy number one for the current Ukrainian government, it has not been so before the Ukrainian crisis. The representations of Russia in the Chernobyl topic do not contain a specific construction of either friendship or hostility with Russia. The construction of Russia as Ukraine's enemy is a recent phenomenon related to the Ukrainian crisis (Maidan protests, change of government, annexation of Crimea, and war in the eastern Ukraine). It means that while one crisis (Chernobyl) has not been linked to the representations of enemies and friends, another crisis (the current war) has. The absence of Russia's identity as an enemy in the Ukrainian public sphere during 1992-2014 should be taken into consideration when dealing with the ongoing Ukrainian crisis today. It can be used as an example of how the conflict can be deescalated. The specifics of the Ukrainian enemy-friend constructions are discussed in Chapter 11.

1.5 The Outline of the Monograph and the Main Argument

This monograph consists of three parts. Part I is *theoretical*. It consists of three chapters that set the theoretical argument in an abductive manner. The

¹¹ <http://uacrisis.org/ru/joseph-r-biden-jr/>.

¹² <http://www.rferl.org/content/poroshenko-ukraine-joint-session-of-us-congress/26593792.html>.

abductive theoretical framework implies that the concepts are built on the basis of the existing literature (theory-driven) and the empirical materials (data-driven). This combination of theory and data allows proposing cultural trauma theory development through the anomalies or puzzles found in the empirical sources (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 34). As already mentioned, the anomalies, identified as the contributions of this study, are saviours, state-controlled and non-state public spheres, ontological security, and national narratives in the making. The idea of a saviour emerged from reading the data on Chernobyl. The idea of state-controlled and non-state media came from studying the socio-political context in the regional literature on the Belarusian and Ukrainian public spheres. The idea of national narratives came from reading the regional literature on the Belarusian and Ukrainian national identity projects. The idea of ontological security came from Giddens and was developed further by proposing two types of ontological insecurity to account for the Chernobyl specifics: human (health and environment) and technological (nuclear power) insecurity.

Chapter 2 begins by arguing that trauma has a social nature. It means that any occurrence or event is not automatically traumatic in and of itself because of its objective nature, but becomes traumatic when it is understood, perceived, and interpreted as such. In other words, the crisis event does not exist 'out there', but is discursively constructed by humans. As Eyerman argues, 'certain occurrences ... may create conditions conducive to setting in motion a process of cultural trauma without being traumatic in themselves.' (Eyerman, 2011). The chapter proposes to look at the collective nature of individual traumas through the concepts of ontological security and insecurity. Ontological security, as defined by Giddens, is a feeling of order and continuity of everyday routines and absence of anxiety and negative emotions. Having a social nature, ontological security does not take place independently of the context it is embedded in. Identities, values, or ideologies articulated in a public sphere become the established social framework that creates, sustains, or undermines people's ontological security. Ontological insecurity then, is a feeling of disorder, anxiety, negative emotions, and disruption of everyday routines. Ontological insecurity takes place when the crisis event occurs and the previously social frameworks are broken and do not help to process a new situation. Ontological insecurity does not occur automatically but through the victims' interpretation assigned to the crisis situation. The chapter shows that ontological security before Chernobyl was constituted by the Soviet ideology. Ontological insecurity after Chernobyl was constituted by a breakdown of the ideological beliefs and resulted in a social or collective trauma.

Ontological insecurity may remain at the level of collective trauma and not become cultural. For cultural trauma to take place, ontological insecurity should be articulated beyond the level of the first-hand witnesses and reach the entire population. Cultural trauma takes place when people with access to the symbolic means of production construct the meaning of the tragic event as important for every member of the society. The constructed meaning has discursive power when it is linked to the broader normative framework of what good and evil in the society is. A national narrative can be one of these frameworks. It consists of the representations of the nation's geopolitical enemies and friends, who can be viewed as a nation's perpetrators or saviours. They can be constructed as a nation's perpetrators when they are blamed in a public sphere for causing the disaster or failed initial response to it. They can be constructed as a nation's saviours when they are praised in a public sphere for helping to mitigate the consequences of the disaster or blamed for their reluctance to help. While the process of constructing a perpetrator is called cultural trauma, the process of defining a saviour is termed trauma management.

The perpetrator can be constructed through a critique of the current conditions and a demand for social change (as a continuous trauma). Continuous trauma is more likely to take place when the authorities fail to perform their duties in their response to a disaster. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, continuous trauma was constructed by informal groups (intelligentsia) in a totalitarian state by criticising the Soviet state and calling for a social change in a public sphere. The perpetrator can also be constructed by reflecting on what happened in the past and drawing conclusions for the whole nation in the present (as a retrospective trauma). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, retrospective trauma was articulated by formal groups (officials and opposition) in the transitional states.

The saviour, on the other hand, can be constructed by assigning the responsibility and evaluating the performance of actors in overcoming the consequences of the disaster (as trauma management). Saviours, compared to perpetrators, may not be directly linked to the tragic occurrence and may not enter the stage until after the event has taken place. In transitional societies, the construction of a saviour may serve as a way to reproduce or modify the understanding of who the geopolitical enemy and friend are. As cultural trauma has a social nature, so does trauma management. The way people choose to respond to a tragic event, and the way they assign responsibility for mitigating the consequences is mediated through the identities, values, or ideologies of the society.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to a detailed presentation of the concept of trauma management. It presents the key actors of trauma management: saviours

and victims. It theorises the process of the discursive construction of trauma management through concepts such as identities, discursive mechanisms, and degrees of Otherness. It shows how trauma management constitutes and is constituted by national narratives and how it shapes ontological security. Trauma management is defined as a story that a particular actor tells in a public sphere about overcoming human and technological insecurity of the victims in order to reach ontological security for the whole nation. In other words, a trauma management is a story about responsibility and victimhood. Trauma management discourse is a contestation over the hegemonic story about overcoming the disaster. Trauma management discourse consists of two or more competing trauma management narratives of antagonistic actors about the ways of assuring ontological security. It is constituted by (a) blaming or praising geopolitical enemies or friends for providing assistance or lack of assistance and (b) comparing victim countries in their levels of traumatising and success in problem solving.

The chapter argues that trauma management can construct *saviours* by blaming and praising geopolitical enemies and friends for help or lack of help. Blame and praise reproduce or modify the roles of enemies and friends defined in the national narratives of victim countries. If an enemy of a victim nation is presented as providing assistance, the idea of hostility is constructed as softened. An example is the official Belarus praising its enemy Europe. If a friend of a victim country is blamed in a public sphere for not providing aid, the idea of friendship is constructed as spoiled. An example is the official Belarus blaming its friend Russia. The chapter shows that saviours can also be constructed by comparing the policies of the national leadership with the policies of other victim countries. The comparison serves to construct the policies of the national leadership as legitimate but the policies of the leadership in other victim countries as illegitimate. If the policies of the national leadership are presented as better than the policies of other victim countries, ontological security is presented as assured. An example is the official Belarus presenting itself as a better problem solver. If the policies of the national leadership are portrayed as worse than the policies of other victim countries, ontological security is constructed as threatened. An example is the official Ukraine presenting itself as a worse problem solver.

The chapter also draws attention to the *victim* as another actor of trauma management. Trauma management constructs victims by comparing the level of traumatising of their own nation with the level of traumatising in other victim countries. Trauma management constructs the disaster as nationalised if a victim country claims more damage than others. If the country is constructed as more traumatised than others, the idea of ontological insecurity is reproduced. An example is the official Belarus presenting itself as

the most victimised. Trauma management portrays the disaster as de-nationalised if a victim country claims less damage than others. If the country is portrayed as less traumatised than others, the idea of ontological insecurity is relaxed. An example is the official Ukraine presenting other victim countries as more traumatised. The chapter argues that the construction of saviour and victim has discursive power when the same identities are repeated in a public sphere constantly or temporarily over a certain period of time.

While Chapter 3 outlines the discursive construction of trauma management in the text, Chapter 4 goes further and looks at the broader socio-political context of this construction. It focuses on the arena of its construction (public sphere or media), its message senders (official and opposition elites), and its message receivers (the population). It introduces two types of public sphere in the transitional societies: the disconnected public sphere (Belarus) and the hierarchical public sphere (Ukraine). The *disconnected public sphere* consists of state-controlled and non-state publics. These publics are completely divided when it comes to the material and symbolic resources they use. Each of the disconnected publics has its own national narrative, institutions, elites, and audiences. These publics do not communicate with each other and stand in binary opposition. Every event is interpreted through the national narrative of each of the disconnected publics. Trauma management discourse is more likely to take place in the disconnected public sphere, as it articulates two antagonistic trauma management narratives (one in a state-controlled public sphere and the other in a non-state public sphere) through reference to different national narratives.

The *hierarchical public sphere* consists of state-controlled, non-state, and oligarch-owned publics. It is not divided and includes everyone within. It provides unequal access to the symbolic means of production. State-controlled and oligarch-owned publics have the most access, while the non-state has the least. The audience is in general divided by the national narratives, regardless of the divisions within the public sphere. The hierarchical public sphere refrains from prioritising one national narrative over the other in order not to escalate the ideational conflict within the population. Trauma management discourse is less likely to take place in the hierarchical public sphere, as none of the publics (state-controlled, non-state, and oligarch-owned) articulates antagonistic trauma management narratives because of the polarisation within the population.

As the logics of the disconnected and hierarchical public spheres have been developed through a close reading of the secondary literature on the cases under study, this chapter also presents the historical background, the national narratives and their implementation, and the media ownership in the public spheres of Belarus and Ukraine to understand their differences.

Part II is *methodological*. It consists of Chapter 5, which introduces the ontological and epistemological positions of the study and discusses the process of data collection, selection, coding, and analysis. The study relies on the *constructivist* ontology and *interpretive* epistemology. As mentioned above, trauma has a social nature and is therefore constructed by the agents through the discursive process of meaning-making. Meaning derives from the certain ideas, beliefs, identities, values, or ideologies that a society is embedded in at a particular point of time and place. As such, people and their meaning structures stand in a constitutive relationship to each other. Humans make sense of the world by referring to the available meaning systems and either reproduce or transform them. National narratives are the available meaning systems of interest in this monograph.

Meaning constructed by agents can be studied through interpretation. In other words, interpretative epistemology becomes a way of accessing constructivist ontology. This access can be made through studying language. Language, however, is not transparent, and the access to it can be made through a careful study of the ‘experience-near’ concepts of the society of interest (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 53) and the context in which the language operates. To study the available meaning structures of a particular society (i.e., national narratives), one should study their manifestation in the texts through language. The study of language in this monograph is carried out through *thematic* (content) and *discourse* (meaning) analyses. First, the text is scanned for its content, and the dominant themes are identified through the thematic analysis. Then, the dominant themes are studied for the presence or absence of meaning structures embedded in them (national narratives). The argument is made that if meaning structures are present in the text, the text reproduces them. If meaning structures are absent in the text, the text does not reproduce them. At the same, the text can propose new elements that can modify the available meaning structures. As the meaning structure of interest is a national narrative, discourse analysis also serves to study the narrative genre that the text reproduces or modifies and the socio-political context this text is embedded in (text producers, text receivers, and the arena of text production and transmission).

The chapter also discusses the *abductive logic of research*, according to which concepts are formed both from theory (deductive) and data (inductive). Chapters 3 and 4 provide a detailed account of where the concepts of this monograph come from. The chapter defines the value of *the case studies* as twofold. On the one hand, the cases are used as a tool to develop a theory of cultural trauma further (generalisability). On the other hand, the cases are studied in and of themselves to contribute to the Chernobyl literature and literature on the Belarusian and Ukrainian national identity (particularity).

The case of the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe can be described as deviant, while the cases of Belarus and Ukraine can be defined as the most similar and context and process oriented. The deviance allows introducing the ideas of a moral framework in the making and state-controlled media (in the transitional states), as well as ontological insecurity and saviours (in the events with the ongoing consequences). The most similar case selection helps to settle on the linguistic (Chapter 3) and contextual (Chapter 4) units of analysis in within- and cross-case comparison. The context and process-oriented case studies allow for an exploratory study to take place with the purpose of theory development through the discovery of anomalies and inconsistencies in the data. It also allows tracing change over time. The *constitutive relationship* between the phenomena becomes a guiding building block for theory development. It supports the separation between causality and constitution and understands the discursive elements (identities, discursive mechanisms, and degrees of Otherness) from Chapter 3 and the broader socio-political context (state-controlled and non-state public sphere and divided or united population) from Chapter 4 as constitutive of national narratives, ontological security, and trauma management. In addition, the chapter addresses the *self-reflexivity of the researcher* in order to account for possible subjective bias.

The final Part III is *empirical*. While Part I introduces all concepts of this study, Part III places these concepts in a comparative (within-country and cross-country) and historical (change over time) perspectives. It conducts a systematic analysis of each media source. Chapters 6 and 7 document the presence of trauma management discourse in Belarus in a descriptive, interpretative, and theoretical manner. They link the quotes from the media to the linguistic devices, broader meaning structures, and theoretical concepts (national narratives, ontological security, identities, discursive mechanisms, and degrees of Otherness). Chapter 8 summarises and reflects on the analysis by linking it to the broader socio-political context of the society (text production and reception in the disconnected publics with a state-controlled media and a pro-Russian population). In other words, Chapters 6 and 7 present the quotes from the data in an organised manner and look at whether these quotes reproduce or modify the national narratives in Belarus and how these shifts in meaning shape the ontological security of the Belarusian citizens. Chapter 8 reflects on whether the constructed trauma management narratives are supported by the population and how their articulation in different public spheres (state-controlled and non-state) facilitate or prevent their popularity among the population. It argues that the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian authorities, articulated in a state-controlled public sphere through the pro-Russian moral framework, is more popular

among the majority. The trauma management of the Belarusian opposition, constructed in a non-state public sphere using the pro-European moral framework, is less popular among the population. The chapter also proposes a direction of future studies and a search for 'grey zones' bypass antagonism to establish a cooperation between Belarus and Europe.

Chapters 6 to 8 will be of interest to scholars focusing on the Chernobyl case in Belarus and on studies on Belarus in general. They show that both the state-controlled and non-state public spheres relied on the national narratives in representing Russia and Europe in relation to Chernobyl and constructed a trauma management discourse. The trauma management narrative of the non-state public sphere reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. By reproducing the national narrative, the understanding of conflict with Russia as an enemy and cooperation with Europe as a friend remained stable. By reproducing the traditional roles of Russia as an enemy and Europe as a friend, the understanding of ontological security in Belarus was also reproduced. Only by removing Russia from Belarusian life and introducing Europe into it could the Belarusian people have ontological security. In addition, the chapters show that the perception of the conflict between the Belarusian authorities and opposition was in flux and conditional on the shift in geopolitical orientations of the former.

The trauma management narrative of the state-controlled public sphere, on the other hand, modified the national narrative of the Belarusian authorities. By modifying the national narratives, the understanding of the geopolitical conflict with Europe as an enemy and cooperation with Russia as a friend was destabilised. By shaping the traditional roles of Europe as an enemy and Russia as a friend, the understanding of ontological security of the Belarusian citizens was also changed. Only by relying on the domestic leadership and becoming independent from Europe and Russia could the Belarusian people have ontological security. In addition, the chapters show that the perception of the domestic conflict between the Belarusian authorities and the opposition was stable and linked to political Europe.

Chapters 9 and 10 document the absence of trauma management discourse in the Ukrainian media in a descriptive, interpretative, and theoretical manner. They link the quotes from the media to the linguistic devices, broader meaning structures, and theoretical concepts of this study (national narratives, ontological security, identities, discursive mechanisms, and degrees of Otherness). Chapter 11 summarises and reflects on the analysis by linking it to the broader socio-political context of the society (text production and reception in the hierarchical public sphere and a divided population). In other words, Chapters 9 and 10 present the quotes from the data and look at whether these quotes carried the elements of the national narratives of

Ukraine and whether they shaped the ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens. Chapter 11, on the other hand, reflects on the reasons for absence of trauma management discourse in Ukraine. It argues that trauma management silenced the domestic and geopolitical conflicts between the pro-Russian and pro-European proponents. Rather than focusing on the present day saviours (Russia and Europe), the Ukrainian media focused on the past perpetrators (the Soviet Union) when linking Chernobyl to the national narratives of Ukraine. The chapter proposes a direction for future studies for the Ukrainian case.

Chapters 9 to 11 will be of interest to scholars focusing on the Chernobyl case in Ukraine and on studies of Ukraine in general. They demonstrate that none of the media (official or alternative) relied on their national narratives in representing Russia and Europe in relation to Chernobyl. It means that the antagonistic actors of the Ukrainian hierarchical public sphere did not construct a trauma management discourse. None of the constructed trauma management narratives had an established pattern of representation; the representations of Russia and Europe as enemies and friends were ambiguous. Compared to the Belarusian media, which reproduced and partially modified the identities of the domestic rivals through the representations of enemies and friends, the Ukrainian media did not construct the identities of the antagonistic domestic groups in the trauma management narratives. Therefore, neither internal nor external conflicts were reproduced or transformed by the Ukrainian trauma management.

As Chapters 8 and 11 conclude on both cases and aim to contribute to the scholarship on Chernobyl, Belarus, and Ukraine, Chapter 12 focuses on the comparative differences between the two countries only briefly. Its main goal is to present the contribution of this monograph to cultural trauma theory. It will be of interest to scholars of trauma studies and traumatic events in general. It summarises the abductive theoretical framework of trauma management outlined in Chapters 2 to 4 and the empirical analysis of the Chernobyl case study in Chapters 6 to 11. It briefly gives the answers to the following questions posed in this monograph: What is trauma management, and how is it constructed? How does trauma management shape the national narratives in the affected countries? How does trauma management shape the ontological security of the citizens in the victim countries? How does a public sphere facilitate or restrict the construction of trauma management? These questions, in turn, constitute answers to the main question of this monograph: How do the consequences of the same tragic event result in different responses in different countries, and how do these responses impact the affected societies?

The chapter then presents empirical examples of tragic events in the Philippines and Vietnam to demonstrate how the concept of trauma management can be applied to other cases. It shows that in the Philippines, typhoon Haiyan has become a hegemonic trauma management narrative, while Agent Orange in Vietnam has not. It concludes with an agenda for the future studies and proposes to look at international organisations as carriers of trauma management process and international society as an arena of trauma management. Bringing the international dimension can transcend the level of the state as an arena of trauma making and show how international disputes and partnerships can be improved or problematised through the representations of international rescue operations, saviours, and victims.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

To outline the limitations of the study is to state what the study is not about and what it is not doing. Below, I make several points on this matter. First, the study is limited to the research of the elite discourse in a public sphere. It does not investigate public opinion and people's responses to this discourse. The argument about public acceptance or rejection of a trauma management narrative of a particular actor is drawn from the secondary literature. As the study is cross-historical (diachronic), it would be problematic to find data on public opinion on a constructed trauma management narrative at a particular period of time in the past. The articles accessed online do not contain comments from the readers to understand their opinion. In addition, in Belarus, the public sphere is divided into state and non-state, each representing and sustaining its own national narrative to its own audience. That is why it would be difficult to find a 'grey' zone that would critically reflect on both public spheres over time. As the research of public opinion is time and resource consuming, studying public opinion would form a separate research project.

Second, the data presentation is uneven for the official and alternative media. The study prioritised the data documentation from the official media over the alternative media. The articles from the official media were analysed for *each* year from 1992 to 2014. The articles from the alternative media were analysed only for *every fifth* year (1992,¹³ 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011). While the official media was taken as a core data source for the analysis, the alternative media was added to the official data to see whether there was a

¹³ The first fifth anniversary of Chernobyl is 1991. However, as the Soviet Union still existed in 1991, the first independence year, 1992, was taken as a reference point to the first fifth national Chernobyl anniversary in Belarus and Ukraine.

discursive contestation or consensus on the topic of interest. As most of the quotes from the official media were documented in the analysis chapter, documenting more quotes from the alternative sources for the period of 1992-2014 would be too comprehensive for this thesis. In addition, the documentation of the discourse for one particular actor was limited to two media sources (i.e., the official and alternative media in each country). Inter-textual links between other sources from the same actor (i.e., different newspapers, magazines, or documentaries representing the official or alternative media) were consulted but not documented in a systematic manner. Some of them were documented only selectively to give an empirical example or strengthen a theoretical point.

Third, this study is limited to the representation of foreign actors who are considered to be identity orienteers of Belarus and Ukraine. These actors are Russia and Europe. It does not include other foreign actors (USA, Canada, China, Japan, or international organisations). Nor does it study domestic actors (leaders, politicians, opposition, experts, victims, and so on). Fourth, the study is interested in understanding and interpreting rather than explaining and predicting. Its aim is to map constitutive relations rather than causal. The broader socio-political context (i.e., media ownership and audience fragmentation) is understood as constitutive of trauma management that can facilitate or prevent its articulation but not determine its success or failure.

PART I.

TRAUMA MANAGEMENT: THE ABDUCTIVE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Part I is dedicated to the theory development. Chapters 2-4 construct a new concept of trauma management abductively. Chapter 2 positions the concept of trauma management within the theories of ontological insecurity and cultural trauma. Chapter 3 looks at the discursive tools of the construction of trauma management and its ability to shape national narratives and ontological security. Chapter 4 focuses on the broader social-political context and looks at how public sphere can facilitate or prevent trauma management to take place.

Part I shows that trauma management takes place when competing actors rely on a certain national narrative to give meaning to the responsibility. The hegemonic status of a trauma management narrative is more likely to be achieved in a state-controlled media to which the majority of the population is exposed to and identifies themselves with. The hegemonic trauma management narrative is less likely to take place in a society with the sociologically fragmented population who do not identify themselves with the proposed narrative. Trauma management demonstrates how actors can discursively improve or spoil relations with foreign states, legitimise or delegitimise the domestic leadership, nationalise or de-nationalise the disaster through the construction of a certain story about overcoming the consequences of the calamity.

Chapter 2. From Ontological Insecurity to Trauma Management

This chapter shows how the central concept of this study, trauma management, has come into being. It takes a brief look at the emergence of the Chernobyl ontological insecurity (human and technological), the development of a continuous trauma during 1986-1991 in the Soviet Union, and the emergence of a retrospective trauma after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It argues that ontological insecurity took a form of human and technological insecurity. The directly affected tried to make sense of the destruction of the surrounding environment and deterioration of their health, questioned the safety of the nuclear energy and expert knowledge. Continuous trauma resulted from the claim that the communist values were a reason why the disaster happened. This claim transformed into a demand for a social change and removal of the rotten values from the society. Retrospective trauma emerged after the independence as a recollection of what happened in Chernobyl in the newly emerged nation-states.

By assigning the responsibility for causes and the initial failed response to the disaster, both continuous and retrospective traumas constructed a perpetrator. The responsibility was also assigned for mitigating the long-term consequences of the tragic event by constructing a saviour. Constructing the saviour constituted the phenomenon of trauma management. The chapter argues that distinguishing between the perpetrators and saviours can open up new ways through which cultural trauma can be understood in the newly emerged states where moral frameworks are in the making. Focusing on the perpetrators can show how the post-colonial societies construct their new moral frameworks against the ghosts of the past (historical enemies and friends). Focusing of the saviours can demonstrate how the newly emerged states construct their moral frameworks against the challenges of the present (contemporary enemies and friends).

2.1 Ontological Insecurity as Collective Trauma

In medicine and psychology, *individual* or *personal* trauma is understood as a physical wound of the body or a psychological distortion of the mind of a human being (Bracken and Petty, 1998; Caruth, 1996; Freud, 1939). Freud (1939) defined trauma as a defensive mechanism of the human mind against

an objective occurrence that results in amnesia when the victim denies that something has happened. Caruth (1996), on the other hand, focused on the unspeakability of victims; a notion that occurs when a real occurrence lies beyond human understanding and comprehension and, hence, cannot be expressed and represented. The inability of the victims to use the known framework for comprehension and expression points out a social aspect of the individual trauma. Eyerman argues that the link between individual and social lies in the relational nature of the trauma: 'In economic crisis as in war, one's personal loss is intimately tied to those suffered by others' (Eyerman, 2013: 43). Here, the trauma becomes *collective* as the perception of loss and the way the affected individuals experience their own misery is related to the sufferings of others.

Ontological insecurity is another concept in understanding the social aspects of a trauma. The concept of ontological insecurity¹⁴ first emerged in psychiatry and was used to study 'how some individuals at times struggle with a full sense of self, ... how they may reflexively produce coping mechanisms, and how these feelings and behaviours have a deep impact upon the sense of worth and integrity' (Croft, 2012: 220). The founding father of the term ontological insecurity was the psychiatrist Ronald David Laing in his work *The Divided Self* (1960). Laing challenged the traditional medical psychiatry, arguing that it was not the biological state of individuals that caused ontological insecurity but the social context that the individual was embedded in (Croft, 2012: 220). In other words, the mental health of humans was not biologically but socially produced. To Laing, 'our sense of ontological security is a prerequisite for psychological health and ... many instances of mental illness are primarily a result of a lack in basic security of the self' (Laing, 1960: 1). The social component of Laing's theory lies in 'our experience of the self in relation to others which is felt as either nurturing or destructive to the development of an integral sense of ourselves'.¹⁵

In his work *Modernity and Self-Identity* (1991), the sociologist Anthony Giddens used Laing's idea of ontological insecurity to explain how the individual is influenced by social processes. His unit of analysis was not the individual but society. While ontological insecurity in Laing's sense concerned a

¹⁴ The concept of ontological security was born in psychiatry and psychology (Laing, 1960), moved to sociology (Giddens, 1990), appeared in medical science (Crossley, 2003; Padgett, 2007) and social policy (Hiscock et al., 2002; Noble, 2005; Rounds, 2006), and reached international relations (Huysmans, 1998; McSweeney, 1999; Kinnvall, 2004; Mitzen, 2006; Krolkowski, 2008; Steele, 2005, 2008; Berenskoetter and Giegerich, 2010).

¹⁵ <http://www.jesslayton.com/jessweb/Essays/Ontological%20Insecurity%20-%201995.pdf>.

person's subjective understanding of his own identity in relation to others, to Giddens, it derived from the interactions with the outside world in its broadest sense. He focused on how late modernity shaped human beings and their existence in the world. These social processes in Western societies were globalisation and individualisation. Giddens defined two concepts on the basis of these developments: *ontological security* and *ontological insecurity*. This distinction is useful for our understanding of pre-trauma and trauma situations. Ontological security can be conceptualised as a pre-trauma situation (before a shocking occurrence takes place), while ontological insecurity can be seen as a collective trauma (after a shocking occurrence took place). Let us look at these two concepts in more detail.

The main notion of Giddens's ontological security is trust: The individual is social as his trust in the world depends on how well this world and the processes of modernity safeguard his routines and continuity. Trust helps individuals to feel secure in their practical consciousness and continue with their daily routines. To Giddens, ontological security is an outcome of the produced trust as related to the preservation of everyday routines and human dignity: the avoidance of stress, anxiety, and negative emotions (Giddens, 1991: 92), the feeling of order and continuity in familiar settings, 'including those not directly within the perceptual environment of the individual' (Giddens, 1991: 243). He demonstrates that 'people handle dangers, and the fears associated with them, in terms of the emotional and behavioural "formulae" which have come to be part of their everyday behaviour and thought' (Giddens, 1991: 44). 'To be ontologically secure is to possess, on the level of the unconscious and practical consciousness, "answers" to fundamental existential questions which all human life in some way addresses' (Giddens, 1991: 243). Drawing on Giddens, Cassell (1993: 14) understood ontological security in the following way:

This is a psychological state that is equivalent to feeling 'at home' with oneself and the world, and is associated with the experience of low or manageable levels of anxiety... Actors will draw on rules and mobilize resources to re-enact practices that are found comforting: waking at the same time each day; putting on clothes in a particular order; eating a familiar breakfast; catching a train at the same time each day and so on. Disruptions of the routine will typically be experienced as unsettling and care will be taken to ensure that events unfold predictably (1993: 14).

Giddens particularly emphasises the role of experts and expertise in the modern world and trust that people develop to them to sustain ontological security. Experts and expertise become the main drivers of ontological securi-

ty: ‘expertise, in the context of the modern social order, is a more pervasive phenomenon than is officialdom’ (1994: 84).

Other scholars, however, argue that not just experts and expertise but also the state itself are important today in the provision of ontological security to its citizens.¹⁶ Alanna Krolikowski argues that ‘the state, as an evolving institution, affects individuals’ sense of ontological insecurity’ (2008: 111), following James Marlow, who states that ‘one of the major aspects of modern governmentality is the implicit provision by governments of ... present day “ontological security” to their citizens (Krolikowski, 2008: 125).

One of the ways the state can sustain ontological security is through the construction of collective identities. Articulating collective identities contributes to the ‘development of collective structures of ontological security within which the individual could be (relatively) free of dread ... [and] reaffirm a threatened self-identity’ (Croft, 2012: 226). Collective identities consist of ‘particularly powerful stories and beliefs because of their ability to convey a picture of security, stability, and simple answers’ (Kinnvall, 2004: 742). Collective identities can be articulated by the officials, experts, or civil society members within the state and can be constructed to ensure ontological security of a particular group or the whole nation. For example, in his study of the securitisation of the ‘British Muslims’, Stuart Croft argued that the threats to ontological security of the society ‘have a higher likelihood of being accepted if they are spoken by those in trust structures – perhaps fewer politicians but other important social actors in the media, church, in cultural fields, and sometimes in sport’ (Croft, 2012: 228). Similarly, Catarina Kinnvall studied Hindu immigrants and how they use their agency to become linked to a homeland religion and nationalism: ‘Imagining the nation, espe-

¹⁶ IR scholars debate whether ontological security depends on the outside world or the domestic situation. Jennifer Mitzen, Brent Steele, Felix Berenskoetter and Bastian Giegerich focus on the state as their level of analysis and study how the state as an actor ensures its ontological security. Jennifer Mitzen argues that ontological security of the state depends on the Other and the ‘intersubjective meanings upon which international society is built’ (Zarakol, 2006: 10). A similar position is held by Felix Berenskoetter and Bastian Giegerich, who study how states ensure their ontological security by participating in international organisations (Croft, 2012: 224). Brent Steele, however, argues that it is not the outside Other that matters for the state’s ontological security, but the ‘narratives emanating from the state about the “Self” and the understanding of its own identity (Zarakol, 2006: 11). Krolikowski, however, argues that ‘Treating the state as an actor affected by ontological insecurity strips Giddens’s approach of its concern for the historical evolution and specificity of institutions – including the institution of the state – and of their impact on individuals’ self-understandings and sense of existential security’ (Krolikowski, 2008: 124).

cially in its religious form, has become a way for many migrants to solve a crisis of ontological security and existential identity' (Kinnvall, 2006: 172).

Collective identities may also refer to value systems or ideologies that provide a normative order that societies should live with: 'A set of rules and resources ... deployed for acting and thinking, for doing and reflecting, or for living and understanding' (Korostelina, 2013: 32). For example, before Fukushima, nuclear nationalism was the core element of the Japanese identity to produce trust in the peaceful atom and create ontological security. This narrative was created after WWII and based on the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It divided the meaning of the atom into 'profane' (used for war purposes and aiming to kill people) and 'sacred' (used for peaceful purposes to produce energy). Using atoms for peaceful purposes was linked to the idea of the technological development and later superiority of Japan. The popularity of the discursive link between the peaceful atom and the Japanese technological development was initially strong. It represented the idea of salvation of the Japanese nation that helped 'to turn the traumatic legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in a positive direction' (Penney, 2011).¹⁷ It was not until Fukushima that the hegemonic discourse about the incontestable safety of the high quality technology in Japan was questioned.

What happens, then, to ontological security when events such as Fukushima occur? The answer to this question goes back to another Giddens concept: *ontological insecurity*. Let us remind ourselves that while ontological security refers to a pre-trauma situation or a situation of daily routines, ontological insecurity is considered a collective trauma after a shocking occur-

¹⁷ As Penney argues, 'Politicians attempt[ed] to set the tone for acceptable public expression of what constitutes community, norms, and values ... To resist, in effect, would be to go against the attractive nationalist trope of Japan as a peaceful technological leader ... In this style of rhetoric, atomic energy and related technology [were] made fundamental to the idea of national community' (Penney, 2011:3, 8). Through this discursive link, 'Japan's conservative politicians convinced the Japanese public and, in the end, themselves, that nuclear accidents like Three Mile Island and Chernobyl were impossible in Japan' (Penney, 2011). When the Chernobyl accident took place, it 'was not presented as a warning for Japan, but rather as an unsafe outside point of contrast with Japan's rigorous technology of safety' (Penney, 2011: 7). The dissent was managed by means of different strategies. The residents of the poor neighbourhoods where the power plants were built and disobedient employees were 'easily bought off with badly needed cash'. The grassroots activists or any other critics were publicly accused of being 'the Don Quixotes of the scientific nation'. The power plant employees were exposed to 'nuclear education' programmes (Aldrich, 2008; Penney, 2011). This was a powerful way to combat dissent, especially in the country where employment of the whole family depends on one company.

rence took place. Ontological insecurity takes place when ‘critical situations’ occur: ‘...circumstances of a radical disjuncture of an unpredictable kind which affect substantial numbers of individuals, situations that threaten or destroy the certitudes of institutionalized routines’ (Giddens, 1986: 61). These critical situations are

crises, events, and processes that are constructed into fundamental moments in time requiring a choice about response. Of course, they are social crises, shocks to established beliefs and ways of doing things, rather than purely exogenous and objective in nature (Croft, 2012: 223).

In other words, ontological insecurity is a situation in which previously established frameworks do not fit to process the current events. Ontological insecurity is understood as a feeling of disorder, discontinuity, stress, anxiety and negative emotions. Everyday routines are disrupted, biography is broken, and trust is undermined.¹⁸

I distinguish between two types of ontological insecurity in the sense of collective trauma: *technological insecurity* and *human insecurity*. Technological insecurity takes place when experts or professionals, as first-hand witnesses of a traumatic occurrence, lose belief in the quality, safety, and reliability of technology. For example, the *Titanic* ship sank in 1912 even though it was promoted as unsinkable. The *Hindenburg* dirigible exploded in 1937 even though it was claimed to be safe and ready for international

¹⁸ Ontological insecurity can also be viewed as dread or as an anticipation of a crisis event in future. Ontological insecurity in the sense of *dread* is a part of ontological security because ontological security is not just a blind trust: There is always fear of a possible danger. As Croft clarifies, “This is not “fear” in the sense that there is a specific threat and a definite object; it is not “fear” of attack by a neighbour, for example, or indeed of a particular neighbouring state... Here the better term is anxiety or, better still, dread [in Kierkegaard’s understanding]” (Croft, 2012: 222). In other words, it is not a real crisis or violence that produces ontological insecurity here, but rather disturbance of ““mundane” forms of social behaviour ... or routines in daily life” (Krolikowski, 2008: 130-131). Ontological insecurity in the sense of *anticipation* of a crisis event can happen before any real crisis event takes place and can be created out of anticipation of it instead. Anticipation of a future tragic event or a calamity, such as a car accident, an airplane crash, an attack, a disaster, or a future war, may produce fear contributing to ontological insecurity. As Mitzen argues, ‘Everyday life is so full of potential dangers that individuals cannot possibly process them all. Threats are both physical – your neighbour might attack, a tornado might strike – and social – you might be fired, your spouse might leave you. Moreover, novel or infrequent events are simply impossible to know in advance’ (Mitzen, 2006: 346). Compared to dread, which is a constitutive part of ontological security and not linked to any real specific danger, ontological insecurity in a sense of anticipation is linked to a particular future crisis event.

transportation. The Three Mile Island accident took place in 1979 even though nuclear energy was believed to be a safe source for producing inexpensive electricity. The explosion of the space shuttle *Challenger* took place in 1986 even though people believed they would conquer space (Neal, 2005: 142). The explosion at the Fukushima Daichii power plant took place in 2011 even though power plants were believed to not explode in countries with high technological development. This belief was generated by a modernisation narrative that ‘technology is by its very nature a rationalizing, instrumental, and corrosive force’ (Alexander and Smith, 1996: 252). As Alexander and Smith argue,

The extraordinary commitment that generated the motivational energy to create technology based industrialisation depended on more than the legal, economic, and political structures of capitalism and the objective knowledge about nature that rational scientific knowledge could provide. It was fuelled as well by a deep and widely shared belief that technology would bring salvation from the strains and sufferings of modernising society itself (Alexander and Smith, 1996: 258).

Let us take a closer look at how ontological security was constructed in the Soviet Union before Chernobyl and how it became understood as ontological insecurity after the explosion at the power plant. Before Chernobyl, ontological security (a pre-trauma situation) was based on the Soviet ideology. The Soviet ideology prioritised community, reason, action, power, inclusion, dependency, equality, and order in the organisation of the society (Smith, 1998).¹⁹ The Soviet people believed in progress and ‘development of all-conquering scientific knowledge’, where superstition, religion, prejudice, and mystification were seen as the attributes of backward societies that could prevent progress to take place (Smith, 1998: 129). As Smith points out,

tokens of this love of science and reason are sprinkled throughout the parole of the communist social text: from the massive Soviet space program and excellence in the natural sciences, to showpiece model farms and factories, and even to recreational pursuits like chess – the rational game *par excellence* (1998: 130).

The prioritisation of ‘reason’ formed the professional understanding of the developments in the area of Soviet nuclear energy. We may say that ontological security from the peaceful atom was constituted by the belief in the Soviet technology and science, safety of the nuclear energy for industrial purposes, and power of the expertise and professionalism. The Ukrainian clean-up

¹⁹ Any ideological system consists of codes that stand in binary opposition to their rivals, such as order/anarchy, equality/inequality, autonomy/dependency, inclusion/exclusion, law/power, action/passivity, community/individual, and reason/emotion (Smith, 1998).

worker Vladimir Shunevich stated that in the Soviet Union, ‘It was believed that the power plant could be built right on the Red Square in Moscow, while the reactor could be placed under the bed of just married’ (*Fakty i Kommentarii*, 25 April 2009).²⁰ The only threat to ontological security was the external enemy. The nuclear arms race competition between the USA and the USSR was believed to bring the nuclear war between the two superpowers. As the Ukrainian politician and writer Yuriï Shcherbak argued,

people were persuaded that the enemy was not across the road, but somewhere abroad. And ionizing radiation could happen only from the atomic bomb explosion that would be thrown on us only by the imperialists, but whether it could be thrown and when was unclear... It was the strangest idea to think about the danger from the “peaceful atom” of the Soviet type (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹

As such, before Chernobyl, ontological security was constituted by the Soviet ideology. After Chernobyl, ontological insecurity or collective trauma took place, as the old social frameworks did not help to make sense of the new situation. The first-hand witnesses questioned the premises of their ontological security: nuclear energy was no longer understood as clean, nuclear reactors were no longer believed to be safe, and the scientific knowledge was no longer perceived as valid. The Ukrainian politician and writer Yuriï Shcherbak referred to the loss of trust in technology in the following way: ‘One of the engineers described that when he saw the destroyed reactor from the window of his flat in the morning of 26 April, he thought he had gone crazy, as such a thing *was simply impossible*’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²² Similarly, the Ukrainian scientist and official Dmitriï Grodzinskiï stated that ‘we have been very disappointed with the nuclear energy that turned out to be not so ecologically clean as we were promised, and not so reliable’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²³ The clean-up worker Aleksandr Zheleznyakov, an expert in chemical and bacteriological investigation, affirmed: ‘I know that everything we studied at the university about radiation turned out not to be true. Chernobyl has turned everything upside down’ (*Uryadovy Kuryer*, 26 April 2012).²⁴

²⁰ <http://fakty.ua/18566-papa-iz-nashego-doma-vse-uehali>.

²¹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/yuriy_scherbak_lozh__glavnyy_istochnik_vseh_nashih_bed.html.

²² http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/yuriy_scherbak_lozh__glavnyy_istochnik_vseh_nashih_bed.html.

²³ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horosho_by_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

²⁴ <http://www.ukurier.gov.ua/uk/articles/likvidator-chornobilec-oleksandr-zheleznyakov-bily/p/>.

The experts involved in the Chernobyl management questioned the quality of their own expertise and knowledge, constructing them as limited and invalid for handling the disaster. The experts recalled that they lacked expertise, knowledge, and equipment to take the right decisions and actions. For example, 'The militia had a typical action plan on what to do in case of different emergency situations and natural disasters. But no one knew what to do in case of a fire at the nuclear power station!' (*Fakty i Kommentarii*, 25 April 2009).²⁵ The Soviet academic Valeriï Legasov said 20 hours after the catastrophe: 'We are pouring water [at the reactor], but I don't know how the destroyed reactor will react to that' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2000: 2). Ivan Gladush, a clean-up worker and former official, remembered:

The civil defence turned out to be unprepared for such a calamity. They were confused even though the civil defence was an elite institution in the Soviet era ... They had neither the proper means for dealing with the catastrophe, nor people and action plans ... They lacked dosimeters ... The protection was also inadequate. We were given some gauze bandages that did not protect us from anything ... (*Golos Ukrainy*, 27 April 2007: 8).

Technological insecurity of experts when handling a traumatic occurrence is not unique to Chernobyl. For example, after the accident at Three Mile Island,

The problems of the aftermath were of a type and a magnitude that neither the utility company nor government regulatory agencies were prepared to handle. Some means had to be found for disposing of the thousands of gallons of radioactive water in the containment building. Scientists have never developed any satisfactory way of disposing of large amounts of radioactive waste materials (Neal, 2005: 154).

Regarding technological insecurity, the shock of the directly involved experts, who were the first-hand witnesses, resembles the 'social trauma' of Smelser (2004). Smelser argues that a social trauma is a trauma of particular organisations or institutions (i.e., a factory, police, school, etc.) and is thus limited to a particular professional audience even though it can 'massively disrupt organised social life' (Smelser, 2004: 37). Smelser's case was The Great Depression of the 1930s that 'crippled the functioning economic institutions of those societies it affected, and it often led to strains or even breakdowns in their political and legal systems' (Smelser, 2004: 37). The Chernobyl accident was a trauma of the employees of the Chernobyl power plant, the experts in area of nuclear energy, the civil defence, the police, and other

²⁵ <http://fakty.ua/18566-papa-iz-nashego-doma-vse-uehali>.

institutions involved. It did not move beyond the professional level and did not touch the society as a whole.

Another type of ontological insecurity is *human insecurity*. Human security includes the natural environment and human wellbeing that is essential for human existence: soil, woods, water, air, nutrition, habitation, and health. For the past century, a whole range of new expressions have been introduced to construct the threatened environment: 'acid rain', 'endangered species', 'radioactive waste materials', 'environmental degradation', 'destruction of the ozone layer', and the greenhouse effect' (Neal, 2005: 157). The threatened health has been constructed through new terms such as AIDS, swine flu, bird flu, Ebola, and other kinds of diseases and viruses that affect humans on a massive scale. Human insecurity takes place when direct victims, as first-hand witnesses, lose trust in the environment and health, which they have always believed would serve them well. The frameworks of previously known daily routines no longer exist, and people have to reconsider nutrition patterns, introduce health precautions, and change a commonly accepted interaction with nature in order to return to their ontological security.

Post-Chernobyl situation was interpreted as human insecurity. The Ukrainian scientist and official Dmitrii Grodzinskiï described the destruction of human security by Chernobyl in the following way:

Whatever and whenever happens to people (be it war time or devastations), in whatever tragic situations the human being (and the nation) is left, the surrounding environment has always remained: woods to hide from unseen danger, air to breathe happily, water to kill thirst, plants, mushrooms, berries, and so on. And, now, imagine that all of a sudden, all this (even mother's milk) becomes dangerous. In other words, everything that was reliable in a person's life has suddenly changed. This is unnatural, cannot be accepted by the consciousness. Chernobyl has somehow placed us in another world. That is why it could not but affect the formation of the post-Chernobyl personal character (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁶

By not having another social framework available to process the situation immediately, people turned to being completely 'helpless and illiterate when facing the danger' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁷ The Ukrainian politician and writer Yuriï Shcherbak sadly remembers:

Since high school classes on the civil defence, I have remembered one simple thing: In case of radioactive danger, one should pour a couple of drops of iodine

²⁶ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horosho_by_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

²⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/yuriy_scherbak_lozh__glavnyy_istochnik_vseh_nashih_bed.html.

in a glass of water and drink it. This will help prevent the accumulation of radioactive iodine in the thyroid gland. Only few did that. People living in front of the walls of a monster such as the Chernobyl nuclear power plant did not know elementary measures of protection from the consequences of an atomic explosion. On the first day of the catastrophe, neighbourhood children were playing in the sand, or to be precise, in the disastrous radioactive dust (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁸

This reaction was constituted by the old social framework dictated by the Soviet ideology: The risk of an explosion at the Soviet nuclear power plant was never even imagined. Therefore, the comprehension of the explosion at the Chernobyl power plant was beyond the social frameworks people had at that time. Not only laymen but the experts themselves were not prepared. Many doctors did not know that iodine tincture from a home emergency kit could prevent the accumulation of radioactive iodine in the thyroid gland (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁹ Ukrainian rescue worker and official Ivan Plushch argued that the experts blindly underestimated the consequences of the disaster: The evacuation preparations started not 'because of the radioactive contamination or exposure, but in case of the reactor's explosion. If there were firm beliefs that it was not about to explode, the evacuation would not even have been considered ... Unfortunately, we were deceiving ourselves and other people. Deceiving unconsciously' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1994: 2). In other words, the directly affected people could not react to the disaster as they did not believe that it was serious. They did not have a social framework available that could help them to formulate this belief. Their actions were constituted by the old social framework constructed by the Soviet ideology.

The shock of the first-hand victims in a sense of human insecurity, in addition to social trauma of Smelser (as failed expertise), resembles the 'collective trauma' of Erikson (as broken daily routines). Erikson argues that collective trauma is 'a blow to basis tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of commonality' (Erikson, 1995: 187). Erikson's collective trauma is a trauma of a locality or particular community. His case study was a Buffalo Creek flood that took place in 1972 in the USA. A collective trauma occurred to the affected population who lost their homes and was restricted to the direct and indirect victims of this community. In the case of Chernobyl, this trauma touched all the

²⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/yuriy_scherbak_lozh__glavnyy_istochnik_vseh_nashih_bed.html.

²⁹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/yuriy_scherbak_lozh__glavnyy_istochnik_vseh_nashih_bed.html.

victims involved in the close proximity of the Chernobyl power plant: the rescue workers, re-settlers, evacuees, and people with diseases. I would add the environmental dimension to Erikson's definition and argue that a collective trauma is 'a blow to basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds' between humans and nature.

Compared to trauma in a medical sense, which exists as an object but cannot be expressed through words, ontological insecurity as collective trauma includes both an emotional component (i.e., feeling of anxiety and disorder) and an interpretative component (i.e., using words to give meaning to what is felt). As we have seen, all the quotes presented by the first-hand witnesses were the interpretations of what they felt and how they perceived what happened in Chernobyl. In other words, while in medical trauma, a shocking occurrence is a crisis with an objective force, in the collective trauma, 'crisis must be interpreted and understood as such' (Eyerman, 2011: 12). In other words, the proposed collective trauma understood as human and technological insecurity is a social crisis that takes place by being perceived and articulated as such.

2.2 Cultural Trauma: From Continuous to Retrospective and Trauma Management

Cultural trauma 'is usually connected with a traumatic incident and thus with individual and collective trauma, but its occurrence is contingent on a number of factors which may or not be present' (Eyerman, 2013: 43). First, while collective trauma is restricted to certain institutions, organisations, or communities, cultural trauma covers the social whole (i.e., nation). Second, while collective trauma allows the first-hand witnesses to interpret what happened to them, cultural trauma can be constructed by people who may not have a direct relation to the traumatic occurrence and whose interpretation of what happened is based on more abstract or metaphorical notions, such as collective values or identities.³⁰ Third, collective trauma is related to experiences, while cultural trauma is linked to struggle over meaning in a public sphere about the nature of the pain, victims, and perpetrators.

Trauma reaches a cultural level when the questions of *responsibility* are raised in a public sphere: Who or what can be blamed for causing the calamity, and who can be responsible for dealing with its aftermath? Finding the perpetrator derives from a human need *to assign responsibility for suffering*. Drawing on Connolly, Hansen points out that the Self (victim) needs the

³⁰ An example is the modern Germans, who feel guilt for the Nazi past even though they did not experience it themselves.

radical Other (perpetrator) because of ‘human experience of the unfairness and suffering of life and the inescapability of death; a suffering which creates resentment and the desire that someone should be made responsible’ (Hansen, 2006: 38). For example, a disaster can be seen as an act of God, a consequence of a human sin, a result of fate (Erikson, 1994), or an act of nature (Quarantelli, 1998). However, not a natural or supra-natural force but human agency would be blamed for the cause of the disaster: the absence of human precautions (Mileti, 1999) or an act by humans against humans (White, Kates and Burton, 2001).

Another reason to point out the perpetrator is *to protect the sacred values and beliefs* (Hansen, 2006: 38). The need to protect the sacred values emerges when the radical Other is understood as threatening the existence of the Self and should be destroyed. This understanding sees ‘the world as a battle between the forces of good and evil’, where the good forces have to protect themselves and their values from the bad ones (Hansen, 2006: 38). For example, Alexander and Smith show that during the industrialisation period in the USA, pro-technology actors (businesses, factories, and plants) viewed nature as ‘profane and threatening, as a force that demanded the “civilising” control of technology itself’ (Alexander and Smith, 1996: 258). The pro-nature activists, on the other hand, saw technology as a ‘threatening apocalypse’ and advocated for nature as ‘pacific and innocent, indeed as the last best hope for the survival of the civilisation itself’ (Alexander and Smith, 1996: 258).

The sacred values and beliefs are ‘at the heart of the definition of cultural trauma’ and are constituted within the moral (normative) framework of what every society understands under good or evil (Eyerman, 2011: 164). In cultural trauma, the content of good and evil is based on ‘the grounding myths of the nation that are present in a society at any given time’ (Eyerman, 2011: 32). The understanding of good and evil ‘may lie under the surface, but can be mobilized in the face of a shocking occurrence’ (Eyerman, 2011: 25). As such, a cultural trauma becomes ‘a public discourse on which the foundations of collective identity are opened for reflection and debate’ (Eyerman, 2013: 43). Moral framework allows the national identification with a traumatic event to take place through the acceptance of meaning assigned to it. The responsible for a traumatic occurrence will be interpreted through this moral framework: The perpetrators will be linked to evil, while victims will be associated with good.

This interpretation is made by people with access to the means of symbolic production. As Alexander argues, ‘collectivities do not make decisions as such; rather, it is agents who do’ (Alexander, 2004: 11). These agents, called *carrier groups*, ‘broadcast symbolic representations – characterisa-

tions – of ongoing social events, past, present, and future’ (Alexander, 2004: 11). They ‘articulate the significance of this occurrence for the collective, and to the extent that they are successful, the occurrence becomes a vital part of that group’s collective memory’ (Eyerman, 2011: 30). Carrier groups can be of various spectres and include government officials, oppositions, media, NGOs, intellectuals, artists, friends, and relatives of victims. They arrange debates, give interviews, publish articles and books on the topic, produce films, artwork, and stage plays, and organise commemoration events and protests. Carrier groups can operate in specific institutional arenas: religious, aesthetic, legal, scientific, mass media, and state bureaucracy (Alexander et al., 2004; Eyerman, Alexander and Breese 2013). There can be many different carrier groups, arguing for different interpretations of what happened within the same institutional arena or between different arenas.

When constructing a cultural trauma, the carrier groups may use the moral framework in different ways. They may: a) expose the previously taken-for-granted identities or values, arguing that they are in danger and thus in need of protection and preservation as sacred values; b) question the previously established identities and values, proclaiming them as rotten and call for their modification or complete change; c) argue that the previous values are sacred, but in a particular traumatic occurrence, they were not used right. In the last case, the values are proclaimed neither in danger, nor rotten, but in need of improvement. For example, the Netherlands interpreted the political assassinations of Theo van Gogh and Pim Fortuyn through the existing moral framework, which saw fascism as bad and threatening and the Dutch nation as good and in need of protection:

In the Netherlands, for example, the Second World War marked a significant turning point in defining what it meant to be Dutch... The surprisingly quick defeat of the Dutch army and the occupation of the country by the Germans provided a newly refined moral framework for what was good and evil, with good being associated with a rather ambiguous loyalty to the exiled House of Orange and evil being associated with the ideology of the occupier – Nazism in particular and fascism more generally. This framework helped shape public discourse both before and after the murders of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh, and it provided – to an extent at least – the framework through which the murders were interpreted. For those on the political left, as the charismatic leader of a social movement, Fortuyn represented a revitalized fascism, while Theo van Gogh heard the thumping of black boots when he looked at Muslims. Both these victims of assassination claimed to be defending the innocent Dutch (nation) from impending evil (Eyerman, 2011: 30).

In this case, the Dutchness was a threatened collective identity in need of protection. In addition to the national identity, other collective values may be

mobilised to interpret the traumatic occurrence. Eyerman demonstrates that a political assassination of the Swedish female prime minister, Anna Lindh, was interpreted through the values of democracy:

One of the first public statements made by the Swedish prime minister after the death of Anna Lindh was, 'This is an attack on our democratic society.' That Sweden is a democratic society is a fundamental belief and value grounding modern Swedish collective identity. This belief is not only taught in schools, but is also bound up with routine practices, such as voting every three years to elect the government. The fact that Sweden is a 'democracy' is normally taken for granted. The murder of Anna Lindh was shocking not only because she was a well-known member of the collective, but also because she was a political figure – a representative of that democratic process (Eyerman, 2011: 26).

In the Swedish case, the collective value of democracy, understood as sacred, was seen as being under threat and in need of restoration and protection. What the Swedish prime minister did from the position of a carrier group was to produce 'a claim to some fundamental injury, an exclamation of the terrifying profanation of some sacred value, a narrative about a horribly destructive social process, and a demand for emotional, institutional, and symbolic reparation and reconstitution' (Alexander, 2004: 11). The claim that an abstract foundational value (i.e., democracy) is in danger is the starting point of the process of a cultural trauma.

In the case of Chernobyl, instead of protecting the communist values and saying that they were in danger, the carrier groups condemned and blamed those values for the causes of Chernobyl and failed response to it. The Soviet system and ideology and the Russian domination were among those values, the sacredness of which was questioned. The role of the Communist Party in organising the life of its citizens and the role of science and technology in guiding the Soviet industry were the ideological values condemned. Questioning their sacredness raised the problem of how the political system and state institutions functioned, how leaders treated their citizens and performed their duties. As Eyerman argues,

Since shocking events ... break everyday routines and can call into question fundamental taken-for-granted beliefs that ground individual and collective identity, it is important that those in positions of authority act quickly to reaffirm those basic identities. To act in this manner is one way of assuring, or attempting to ensure, that the shock caused ... will be contained and limited to an institution or set of institutions ... and not involve the society at large. If quick action is not taken, or if such performances of authority fail, there is an extended risk that a social trauma will become a cultural trauma (Eyerman, 2011: 26).

The case of Chernobyl allows introducing three types of cultural trauma: continuous, retrospective, and trauma management.³¹ Continuous and retrospective traumas construct perpetrators through assigning responsibility for causes and the initial mismanagement of the calamity in the past.³² Trauma management, on the other hand, constructs saviours by assigning and evaluating responsibility for dealing with the ongoing consequences of the calamity in the present. Let us look at each of these trauma types in more detail.

Assigning responsibility in *continuous* trauma helps to answer the questions of ‘What type of society *are* we, in which such a tragedy could happen?’, ‘Why *did* it happen to us?’, and ‘Who or what *is* responsible?’ (Eyerman, 2011: 11). Temporally, these questions are past and present oriented and directed at dealing with the past and the present. They are based on the articulated demands of the carrier groups and call for change of the present conditions or circumstances. The example of the continuous trauma was the protests and demands of the carrier groups that took place before the collapse of the Soviet Union, right after the Chernobyl disaster took place. They blamed the Soviet system and Russia for causing and mismanaging Chernobyl and demanded the removal of the communist leadership, the introduction of a new value system, and independence from Russia as a solution.

The first carrier groups to speak up in the Soviet public sphere were intelligentsia (i.e., writers, scientists, and dissidents) and the affected population. They organized protests and produced literature with critical content to give meaning to the scope of the catastrophe, consequences, and misdeeds of the Soviet authorities. Kasperski argues that activities of these carrier groups ‘fuelled social and political mobilization against communist authorities and contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union’ (Kasperski, 2012: 84). In Ukraine, carrier groups such as the Ukrainian Writers’ Union, the grassroots association *Zelenyi Svit*, and Rukh (the Ukrainian Popular Movement in Support of Perestroika) criticised the Soviet system for covering up the disaster and called for ‘a reexamination of the legitimacy of the Soviet state’ (Wanner, 1998: xxii). Rukh, consisting of nationalist, religious, environmental, and professional groups, emerged in 1989 and agitated for Ukrainian in-

³¹ Continuous and retrospective trauma and trauma management are all types of cultural trauma which is a public discourse on the foundations of the collective identity.

³² The continuous and retrospective traumas add to another type of trauma introduced by Schmidt: a perpetual trauma. A perpetual trauma corresponds to the anticipation of a traumatic event in future: ‘We are all traumatised by the possibility of becoming victims ... [due to] ... the potentiality of particular events coupled with the mediation of fears and anxieties’, such as ‘drunk driving, incurable diseases, or global terrorism’ (Schmidt, 2014: 243). Hence, the perpetual trauma can be linked to my definition of ontological insecurity in a sense of anticipation of a traumatic occurrence.

dependence from the Soviet state. Similarly, in Belarus, carrier groups such as the Belarusian Writers' Union, the Belarusian Union of Cinematography, and the Belarusian Society of History and Education for the Victims of Stalinism united under an oppositional nationalist movement, the Belarusian Popular Front (BPF), to advocate against the Soviet authorities. The protests organised by these civil society groups used anti-communist and pro-independence rhetoric, linking the Chernobyl consequences to the democratisation of the country.

As such, before the collapse of the Soviet Union, a cultural trauma was constructed as *a demand* to change the whole state system all together; that is, create expert systems that were more open and transparent, and autonomous from the state, while people in power should be more accountable to the public. This demand was fulfilled by the collapse of the Soviet system and the communist ideology.

Assigning the responsibility to the state by questioning of the Soviet ideology and values implied that 'the responsible party was someone inside the collective' (Eyerman, 2011: 11-12). The responsible party may also be the Other. The assignment of the responsibility to a foreign state questions the value of collective dependency of the nation on the external Other. As Eyerman argues, 'a cultural trauma invokes public discourse on the fundamentals of collective identity at its broadest level – that of a nation' (Eyerman, 2011: 25). The identities that Eyerman thinks of here are 'ethnic or national' that 'can be mobilised in the face of a shocking occurrence' (Eyerman, 2011: 25). In the Soviet Ukraine, Chernobyl played 'a key role in promoting the view of Ukraine as an exploited colony of Moscow' (Wanner, 1998: 27). In 1986, the Ukrainian Writers' Union constructed a cultural trauma through an apocalyptic narrative, claiming that the Soviet destruction of the Ukrainian environment was also an aggression towards the Ukrainian culture, language, historical, and religious artefacts. They started to publish articles and books that challenged the Soviet historical accounts. In 1987, the environmental organisation *Zelenyi Svit* organised political protests against the Soviet government and linked the Chernobyl 'environmental destruction to [the Ukrainian] cultural destruction' (Wanner, 1998: xxiii). Dawson calls this Ukrainian environmental movement 'a surrogate for hidden nationalist demands' (Dawson, 1996: 7). It was more popular in the Western Ukraine, where nationalist sentiments were stronger than in the eastern Ukraine.

As the main task of the Ukrainian carrier groups was to advocate against the Soviet system and for Ukrainian independence, 'once independence was achieved, the environmental movement lost much of its political force and popular appeal' (Wanner, 1998: 223). In other words, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, these groups were no longer the carriers of a cultural

trauma process. Compared to the Ukrainian carrier groups, the Belarusian Popular Front did not give up on its nationalist rhetoric after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It became a political party represented in the Belarusian parliament during 1990-1995. One of their symbolic activities was the protest ‘the Chernobyl Way’ that has become a tradition every year on the anniversary of Chernobyl. After the BPF was removed from the parliament in 1995, it has started to use this protest to advocate against the current Belarusian leadership and against the close Belarusian ties with Russia. In other words, while in Ukraine, the cultural trauma of Rukh and *Zelenyi Svit* was limited to the *demand* for Ukraine to become independent from Russia (which was fulfilled), in Belarus, the cultural trauma of the BPF transformed from a demand for independence (before the collapse of the Soviet Union) to a demand for overthrowing the current leadership and releasing Belarus from the political, economic, historical, cultural, and religious ties with Russia (after the collapse of the Soviet Union). The ‘weight’ of the cultural trauma of the BPF in the Belarusian society will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Another type of trauma of the Chernobyl case is retrospective trauma. *Retrospective* trauma takes place when the traumatic event occurred in the past and is over in the present. As Schmidt states, in retrospective traumas, ‘the trauma processes began after the trauma events – the genocide of Jews in Europe and the slavery of African-Americans in the United States – were over’ (Schmidt, 2014: 242). In the case of Chernobyl, the retrospective traumas began after the breakup of the Soviet Union when Belarus and Ukraine became independent (and the demands of the continuous traumas were fulfilled). Assigning responsibility in retrospective trauma helps to answer the questions of ‘What type of society *were* we, in which such a tragedy could happen?’, ‘Why *did* it happen to us?’, and ‘Who or what *was* responsible?’ (Eyerman, 2011: 11). Temporally, these questions are past oriented and directed at dealing with the past. They are based on recollection of what happened in the past and juxtaposition of the past to the present.

As such, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, cultural trauma was no longer a demand, but *a recollection* by the first-hand witnesses of what happened in Chernobyl. This recollection took place in different state institutional arenas, including the official media.³³ An example of assigning respon-

³³ In the Belarusian official media, questioning of the Soviet state took place in 11 articles (1992-2011, 20 April-2 May), while in the Ukrainian official media, it took place in 35 articles (1994-2012, 20 April-2 May), thrice as many times than in Belarus. One of the reasons why the official Belarus gave less attention to the Soviet state’s performance in Chernobyl was the understanding of the Soviet era as the ‘golden age’ of Belarus. Another reason why the official Belarus spoke less of the Soviet system in connection with the

sibility to the state for causing the Chernobyl disaster in the official media was the following: ‘It is no news that those [Soviet] reactors were produced not only according to the laws of atomic physics, but also political “physics”, and hence, technical decisions were not the only reasons for the catastrophe’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1994: 4). Instead of simply assigning responsibility to the engineer who manufactured the reactors and questioning his professional expertise,³⁴ the whole state-controlled system that organised the manufacturing of the reactors was seen as responsible. As the 1996 Report of the Council of Ministers of Ukraine stated,

The atomic energy in the USSR was developing and functioning in the grip of the tough centralised system of governance. It emerged from the subsoil of the military-industrial complex and inherited its intrinsic omnipresent mystique. Experts working in this system were receiving only limited information according to their narrow professional orientation (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).³⁵

The Soviet value of dependence on the state was proclaimed harmful. It was not the expert that was guilty but the functioning of the state system he was embedded into. As a result, the expert was a victim of his own state. The state was also seen as responsible for mismanaging the calamity:

initial Chernobyl mismanagement was the location of the power plant at the territory of Ukraine. The official Ukraine spent more time discussing what was happening at its Chernobyl power plant during those times and what relationship the Ukrainian authorities had with the Moscow centre.

³⁴ Experts alone could be blamed for not adhering to their expertise and duties. Blaming the experts led to questioning their skills and the quality of the technology. An example of blaming an expert for causing Chernobyl is the following: ‘What happened was a simple violation of the regulations. By one person ... According to the regulations, the reactor should be blown and set in motion after 48 hours. However, it was set in motion after one hour.’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2003: 3). An expert (i.e., operator of the reactor) is blamed for not following the instructions of the expert system (i.e., nuclear reactor). This mistake is viewed as a cause of the catastrophe. By blaming the operator of the reactor as the only responsible, the solution to the problem is easy: better training of the specialists and more rigid employment rules. Experts could also be constructed as victims of the expert system. Instead of blaming the experts, the errors of the engineers who constructed the reactor were seen as the cause of the catastrophe (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2003: 3). Engineers as experts become perpetrators in this case. To prevent similar calamities in future, one has to improve the quality and engineering characteristics of the technology. Since blaming the experts does not question any foundational values or identities in the society, it does not constitute a cultural trauma, but only a social trauma (Smelser, 2004).

³⁵ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chernobyl_desyat_let_tragedii.html.

This tragedy, more than anything else, revealed the ‘pros’ of our administrative and command totalitarian system. On the one hand, it had a vulgarly low level of technical decisions and equipment and, on the other, a completely unjustified carelessness and irresponsible attitude towards the people (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1994: 2).

The Ukrainian politician and writer Yuriï Shcherbak claimed that the state failed to take responsibility and safeguard the wellbeing of the population:

No, in any case, the government is the one responsible for the population. Look at Gorbachëv, the promoter of *glasnost*. He should have made a public announcement the very same day when the Chernobyl catastrophe happened. He should have immediately ordered to take emergency measures in order to provide people with the drugs containing iodine. But he did not do that (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).³⁶

By assigning the responsibility to the Soviet state, retrospective trauma constructs a symbolic boundary between the past and the present authorities. It indirectly juxtaposes the past Soviet values against the transitional values of the present. This binary opposition makes the past look worse than the present and draw hopes for the better future. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the reference to Moscow in relation to Chernobyl was also made through the *recollection* of what Russia was doing before and after Chernobyl. This recollection interpreted Russia through the lenses of the Soviet centralised system rather than through the nationalistic terms of the language, culture, religion, and history. An example of blaming Moscow as a centre over periphery in the Soviet Union for the initial mismanagement of Chernobyl is the following: ‘Forgive me God, but Moscow behaved bluntly. They assigned radio-phobia on us and said all kinds of things, such as “forelocks”³⁷ are panicking’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 27 April 2007: 8).³⁸

³⁶ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/yuriy_scherbak_lozh__glavnyy_istochnik_vseh_nashih_bed.html.

³⁷ ‘Forelocks’ is the English translation of the Ukrainian word ‘*khokhli*’ – the nickname Russians gave to the Ukrainians – and is related to the hair style of the *Cossacks* – bold head with a distinct line of a long forelock. Belarusians are also unofficially called by the Belarusian word ‘*bulbashi*’, which means ‘potato people’.

³⁸ In the Belarusian official media, the blaming of Moscow did not begin to receive attention until the 2000s (three articles in 2001, 2006, and 2007), while in the Ukrainian official media, it was mentioned in 11 articles during 1994-2012. The belated blaming of Russia in the Belarusian official media can be understood as a result of the belated start of the construction of Belarusian statehood during the 2000s (Leshchenko, 2004). At the same time, this blaming was ambiguous and inconsistent.

As such, retrospective trauma as recollection constructs the present Self against the past Self (or the past Other). The past values and relations are proclaimed as rotten and are criticised. The critique of the past values becomes a ground for the formation of new present values. New values stand in a binary opposition to the old rotten values. Continuous trauma, on the other hand, is a construction of the present Self against the present Self or the present Other. The present values are condemned and a call for change is made. Both continuous and retrospective traumas are produced by blaming, which is a discursive mechanism or a constitutive part of a cultural trauma. Blaming takes place through public naming of the responsible for a tragic event by powerful actors and accusing them of wrong actions: explaining their intentions, motives, and reasons. Eyerman argues that

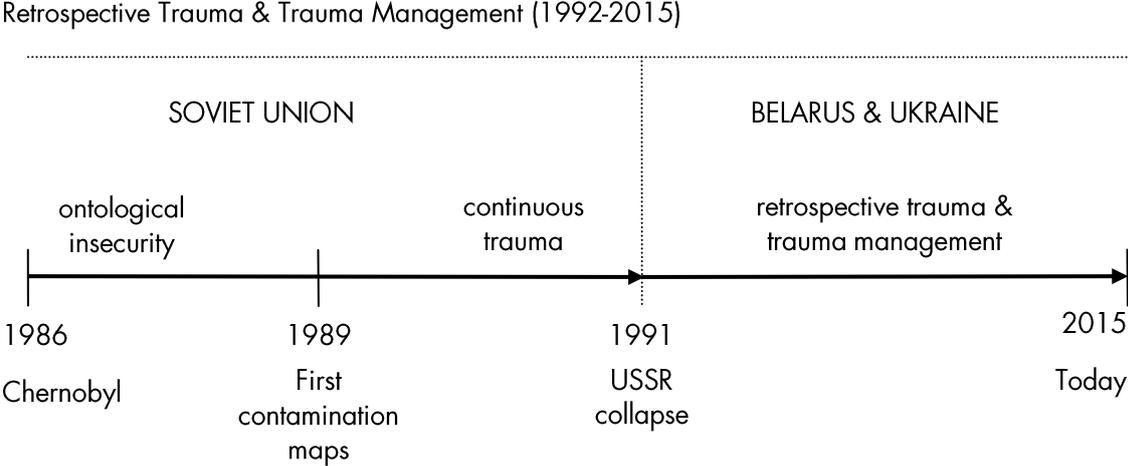
Attributing blame and settling on who is responsible is a central part of the process of cultural trauma ... The process of re-forming a collectivity, of bringing it to consciousness, and of naming the outside other that is responsible is a political process (Eyerman, 2011: 11).

When a traumatic occurrence is understood as having ongoing effects that can last into the future and should be controlled, new questions arise: ‘Who is responsible for managing the ongoing consequences of the traumatic occurrence?’, ‘How well *do* they perform their responsibility?’, and ‘What kind of a society *are* we becoming?’. Temporally, these questions are present and future oriented and directed at dealing with the present and future problems. These questions correspond to *trauma management*. Compared to continuous (demands) and retrospective (recollection) traumas that focus on the construction of the direct participants of a tragic event (i.e., victims and perpetrators), *trauma management* can bring in actors who may not have any direct relation to a tragic event (i.e., saviours). Rather, these actors become linked to a tragic event only after its occurrence by becoming help providers or problem solvers in alleviating the consequences of the event. These actors can be either Selves or Others. The Selves saviours can include domestic state actors (leaders, political parties, state institutions, and experts). The Others saviours include international actors (international organisations and individual states).

As such, trauma management becomes a story about how the saviours alleviate ontological insecurity (human and technological insecurity) of the direct victims in order to achieve ontological security for the entire population. While continuous trauma consists of demands and retrospective trauma is constituted of recollection, trauma management is produced from discursive *expectation* and *evaluation* assigned to actors in the performance of the tasks. In trauma management, the interpretation of ontological insecurity

may not be done by the direct victims, but by the carrier groups who construct the saviours and their performance. Figure 2.1 illustrates the time lag of the development of different traumas since 1986.

Figure 2.1 Chernobyl: Ontological Insecurity & Continuous Trauma (1986-1991)



The focus on saviours can demonstrate that polarisation (the construction of a radical difference between the victims and perpetrators) may not be necessary for a cultural trauma to take place. Rather, we should take into account the degrees of Otherness (i.e., a radical and non-radical Other) when studying the relationship between victims and saviours. The degrees of Otherness (to be discussed in the next chapter) can either reproduce or modify the understanding of what is good and evil in the society. This is because in addition to blaming as a discursive mechanism of trauma construction, trauma management includes praising for coping with the consequences of the event successfully. As such, trauma management consists of blaming or praising the actors for the mobilisation of material, human, and symbolic resources to deal with ongoing consequences of the calamity. Blaming occurs when the actor is thought of as failing to fulfil its responsibility in dealing with the aftermath of the event. Praising takes place when the actor is understood as providing successful assistance. Trauma management also includes discursive mechanisms such as comparing the victims on the levels of traumatisation and success in problem solving or uniting them under a common umbrella of victimhood (also to be discussed in the next chapter). Table 2.1 illustrates the temporal differences between continuous and retrospective traumas and trauma management.

The focus on saviours can also be a guideline to understanding whether there is a cultural trauma in the society. It can be an eye-opening on processes that may otherwise not be seen through the retrospective trauma. For example, the Belarusian official media did not systematically attribute blame to

Soviet Russia for causes and initial mismanagement of Chernobyl. Only three articles during 1992-2014 made ambiguous constructions of the role of Moscow in causing and mismanaging Chernobyl. With this result, one can conclude no cultural trauma was constructed in the retrospective sense. However, if we look at the construction of Russia's responsibility for dealing with the long-term consequences of Chernobyl, we will find that the Belarusian official media did systematically blame Russia for bad Chernobyl management in seven articles during the 2000s (but praised it for a successful Chernobyl management in six articles during the 1990s). This result shows that cultural trauma was constructed in the sense of trauma management, and it had a specific pattern of change. If we look at the Ukrainian official media, the situation was the opposite. Blaming Moscow for causing the Chernobyl disaster and initial mismanagement took place in 11 articles during 1994-2012, but four articles made ambiguous constructions of Russia's responsibility for the long-term Chernobyl management. As such, one can argue no cultural trauma was constructed in the Ukrainian official media in the sense of trauma management, but only in the retrospective sense. This leads to the conclusion that in official Belarus, the present Self was constructed against the present Others (i.e., contemporary Russia), while in official Ukraine, the present Self was produced against the past Self (i.e., Soviet Russia, or against the past Other if Soviet Russia is understood as a coloniser and not a part of the Self).

Table 2.1 Continuous and Retrospective Traumas and Trauma Management

Discourse	Temporality	Questions	Discursive mechanism	Reflection	Responsible
Retrospective trauma	Past oriented	Who was responsible?	Blaming (recollection)	Past Self:	Domestic actors:
		Why did it happen to us?		Values and ideology	State system
		What society were we in?		Collective identity	External actors: Larger states
Continuous trauma	Past and present oriented	Who is responsible?	Blaming (demand)	Past/Present Self:	Domestic actors:
		Why did it happen to us?		Values and ideology	State system
		What society are we in?		Collective identity	External actors: Larger states
Trauma management	Present and future oriented	Who is responsible?	Blaming Praising Comparing Uniting (expectation, evaluation)	Present/Future Self:	Domestic actors:
		How do the responsible perform their duties?		Values and ideology	Authorities
		What society are we becoming?		Collective identity	External actors: Individual states International organisations

This is an important observation as it shows how after the break-up of the Soviet Union the newly emerged Belarus and Ukraine constructed their national moral frameworks and defined what they would value as good and evil in their societies. One way to do it was to construct a new national moral framework against the old Soviet one: to position the present Self against the past Self. This was an example of the official Ukraine. It constructed a retrospective trauma with the past perpetrators by positioning the present Self against the past Self (the communist system) and the past Other (the Soviet Russia). Another way to do it was to construct a new moral framework against the challenges of the present: to position the present Self against the present Others (i.e., geopolitical enemies and friends).³⁹ This was an example of the official Belarus. It constructed trauma management with the present saviours by positioning the present Self against the present Others (Russia and Europe).

As such, one of the contributions of this monograph is to look at the construction of cultural trauma in societies whose moral framework is in the making. This focus would help to expand our understanding of how a cultural trauma is produced and move from a reflection on the taken-for-granted values to the construction of new values within a moral framework in the making. By looking at the cultural trauma through the dynamics of the new moral framework, we can understand how the newly emerged nations make sense of themselves and where they are going. In doing so, the focus will be on the construction of the position of the present Self against the present Others (i.e., geopolitical enemies and friends). As the concept of retrospective trauma has been already introduced in the academic literature (Schmidt, 2014),⁴⁰ this monograph restricts itself to the study of the new concept of trauma management. It proposes to look at one case where it was constructed (Belarus) and another case where it was not (Ukraine). This difference allows drawing conclusions about when we can and cannot have trauma management in a public sphere. The next chapter will take a closer look at the role of the saviours and victims in trauma management.

³⁹ This logic of reasoning was inspired by Hansen's discussion of Wæver's study on the construction of the identity of the EU against 'its violent past' (as a temporal identity) and against the neighbours that did not overcome their own violent past (as a spatial identity) (Hansen, 2006: 49-50). I will look at temporal and spatial identities in more detail when I discuss ethical identity as a discursive element of trauma management in the next chapter.

⁴⁰ The topic of Chernobyl perpetrators and retrospective trauma is raised in the article 'From ontological security to cultural trauma' in *Acta Sociologica* (forthcoming).

Chapter 3. Trauma Management: Saviours and Victims

This chapter is dedicated to the main actors of trauma management – saviours and victims. It shows how they can be constructed discursively. It demonstrates how the construction of their identities can shape the national narratives and ontological security in the country. Inspired by Hansen's (2006) framework, this chapter proposes a discourse analytical approach and the tools to theorise and study trauma management. It introduces three main concepts: identities, discursive mechanisms, and degrees of Otherness. It shows how (a) identities construct the responsibility of saviours and victimhood of victims, (b) discursive mechanisms assign and evaluate the performance of saviours, rank saviours in their level of success in problem solving and victims in their level of traumatisation, and (c) the degrees of Otherness reproduce or modify the conflict or cooperation with geopolitical enemies and friends, legitimise or de-legitimise actors and their policies, and nationalise or de-nationalise a disaster.

The chapter argues that trauma management becomes a story of a particular actor about the responsibility and victimhood. It shows that saviours can be constructed as Others and Selves. Others saviours can be geopolitical enemies and friends. When constructing Others saviours, trauma management can reproduce or modify the conflict with enemies and friendship with friends by blaming or praising them for assistance or its lack. If enemies and friends are praised for assistance, their symbolic image is improved. If enemies and friends are blamed for not providing assistance or doing it reluctantly, their symbolic image is spoiled. Selves saviours can include domestic leadership. When constructing Selves saviours, trauma management can legitimise or de-legitimise the policies of the domestic leadership by comparing them to the policies of other victim countries. The better the presentation of the domestic policies, the more legitimacy the leadership claims. When constructing victims, trauma management can nationalise or de-nationalise the disaster by ranking victims in their level of victimhood. The more victim is constructed as traumatised, the more the disaster is presented as nationalised.

3.1 *Others* Saviours and Selves Victims

As mentioned in Chapter 2, saviours can be the Selves and the Others. Self saviours include domestic actors, while Others saviours include foreign actors. Domestic and foreign actors will be discussed in the following. The *Others saviours* can include international actors that can be either not related to the victim countries in historical, geographical or political terms (i.e., international organisations and individual states), or they can be their historical or contemporary friends or enemies (i.e., particular foreign states or regions). The last category of saviours is particularly important as they are linked to the country's national narrative and, hence, constitute the moral (normative) framework of a cultural trauma. As Eyerman argues, 'the specific content of this normative framework varies according to the historical narratives that define the parameters of national identity' (Eyerman, 2011: 25). I will use the concepts 'national narrative' and 'moral framework' interchangeably, implying the construction of right (good) and wrong (evil) in the society. As such, a *national narrative* consists of radical Others (enemies) and non-radical Others (friends) of either the past or the present.⁴¹ National narratives construct differences of the Self with friends and enemies. 'Stories mark out identities; identities mark out differences; differences define "the other"; and "the other" helps structure the moral life of culture, group, and individual' (Plummer, 1995: 19).

The logic of construction of an enemy is the following: The more negative the Other, the more positive the Self. It is constructed through the binary opposition that consists of representing the 'badness' of the Other as opposed to the 'goodness' of the Self, such as good/evil, just/unjust, guilty/innocent, rational/irrational, civilised/barbaric, peaceful/aggressive, safe/dan-

⁴¹ In my understanding of a national narrative, I restrict it to the construction of enemies and friends or the Others of a nation state. In its broader sense, a national narrative can be a *Kulturnation* narrative (the construction of history, culture, language, traditions, or customs as cultural identity attributes), *Staatnation* narrative (the construction of citizenship, rights, duties, institutions, or territorial boundaries as civic identity attributes), and *Volksnation* (the construction of origin, ancestors, or race as ethnic identity attributes) (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 21-22; Mottier, 2005: 261). National narratives can also be studied through romantic, tragic, apocalyptic genres (Smith, 2005), structure (Campbell, 1949; Frye, 1957; Levi-Strauss, 1967; Czarniawska, 1998; Manning and Cullum-Swan, 1998), or formal properties (Propp, 1928; Burke, 1945; Bakhtin, 1981; Shklovsky, 1990). They can be understood as form of communication and knowledge (Barthes, 1974; Bruner, 1986), cognition (Bruner, 1996; Martin, 1996), contestation (Spivak, 1988; Barber, 1992; Hochschild, 1995), or social theory (Somers and Gibson, 1994).

gerous, and so forth (Connolly, 1991; Alexander and Smith, 1993; Hansen, 2006). For example, immigrants are sometimes constructed as uneducated, uncooperative, barbaric, dirty, dark, and criminal, as opposed to the nationals, who are constructed as educated, cooperative, civilised, clean, enlightened, and law obedient. Here, the Other – immigrants – is constructed within the country, where the Self is the nation that is threatened by the Other from within. The Other can also be constructed outside the country. It can be a personality (i.e., Vladimir Putin or Fidel Castro), a group (i.e., Al Qaeda or ISIS) or another state or region (i.e., Iran or Africa). These actors are constructed as criminal, aggressive, dangerous, authoritarian, offensive, and using hard power, as opposed to the Western leaders, groups, or countries, which are law obedient, peaceful, safe, democratic, defensive, and using soft power.

The radical Other can also vary. Hansen (2006) introduces the concept of *degrees of difference and Otherness* to account for the difference between enemies in their ‘different degrees of radicalization’ (e.g., more radical or less radical Other). Here, the Other is understood as less radical when it ‘is constructed as radically different yet also as part of the Self’ (Hansen, 2006: 45). For example, Russia will be a less radical Other to Denmark than North Korea, as there have always been disputes throughout the history about whether Russia is a part of Europe. Hansen gives an example of the Bosnian war, showing how the radical Other was discursively split into two identities – a radical Other (Balkan men) and a non-radical Other (Balkan women):

... as part of the construction of the ‘Balkans’ as radically different in Western discourse, an aggressive ‘Balkan’ masculinity was articulated. This, however, not only constituted ‘the Balkans’ as Other but also split the Balkan subject into two gendered parts: ‘Balkan women’ were victims of aggressive masculinity and therefore in need of Western protection. This gendering of the Balkans destabilised the construction of uniform radical Balkan identity as well as abrogation of any Western responsibility for the course and casualties of the war (Hansen, 2006: 45).

Wæver, on the other hand, argues that ‘in addition to Others (cast as radically different and potentially threatening enemies) there are, for instance, friends and relatives ... as something different from both self and Other, as close and yet different’ (Wæver, 2002: 24). As such, in the logic of constructing a friend, the Self may merge with the Other without completely losing its identity. Denmark remains a part of the Nordic countries and the EU without losing its Danishness. However, the other Nordic countries are closer friendly Others to Denmark than the EU countries. This differentiation of friend-

ship shows different degrees of closeness – the construction of a more or less close friendly Other.

Based on Hansen and Wæver, I introduce two concepts: the degrees of friendship and the degrees of hostility. The concept of *degrees of friendship* helps to investigate the construction of a more friendly and a less friendly Other. The concept of *degrees of hostility* helps to understand the creation of a more hostile and a less hostile Other. As the Other is defined by the national narrative, constructing the degrees of its friendship or hostility in particular situations would either reinforce its position in the national narrative (i.e., strengthen friendship or hostility) or modify it (i.e., weaken friendship or hostility). The importance of the concepts of degrees of friendship and hostility lies in demonstrating how the conflict can be discursively escalated or softened and how cooperation can be discursively improved or challenged.

By utilizing this framework, one can demonstrate how these degrees of friendship and hostility constitute the saviours of the disaster. When constructing the saviour, the enemy of the state moves from a hostile to a less hostile Other if it is presented as providing help to the victims; and vice versa, the enemy of the state moves from a hostile to a more hostile Other if it is constructed as not providing assistance to the sufferers. Similarly, the friend of the state becomes a more friendly Other if it is viewed as assisting the victims; and vice versa, the friend of the state becomes a less friendly Other if it is understood as not helping. As such, the articulation of degrees of friendship and hostility helps to understand how national narratives change: whether they are reproduced or modified. It also helps to demonstrate how ontological security is constructed: whether it is presented as assured or threatened.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Belarus and Ukraine had two Others to consider as a candidate for an enemy or a friend: Russia (Eastern orientation) and Europe (Western orientation). Different groups in the society advocated for different choices about the Other to occupy the position as a friend or an enemy. In Belarus, the leadership of Aleksandr Lukashenko constructed Russia as a friend and Europe as an enemy. The Belarusian official narrative glorified the Soviet past, close ties with Russia, bilingualism (active Russian language and passive Belarusian), and separation from Europe (Ioffe, 2007). Most Belarusians accepted this narrative, as Belarus emerged from the Soviet Union with a strong pro-Russian sentiment (Dryzek and Homes, 2002). The Belarusian opposition, led by the Belarusian Popular Front movement, constructed Russia as an enemy and Europe as a friend. The Belarusian opposition narrative emphasised anti-Soviet and anti-Russian rhetoric, references to Vilnius as a ‘golden age’ period of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, embracement of European values, and the Belarusian

language, culture, and village (Titarenko, 2007). This narrative was foreign to the majority of the Belarusian people and remained unpopular (Leshchenko, 2004).

In Ukraine, the eastern part of the country looked at Russia as its friend and Europe as its enemy, while the western part saw Russia as an enemy and Europe as a friend (Kuzio, 2001). The Ukrainian pro-Russian leadership (Leonid Kuchma, 1995-2004;⁴² Viktor Yanukovich, 2011-2013) promoted both Ukrainian and Russian cultures, bilingualism and the acceptance of similarities with Russian history. The Ukrainian pro-European leadership (Leonid Kravchuk, 1989-1994; Viktor Yushchenko 2005-2010; Petro Poroshenko, 2014-present) promoted European values and distance from Russia and the Soviet past and advocated the use of the Ukrainian language. None of these narratives was accepted by a clear majority, as each of them prioritised only a particular part of the population (Kuzio, 2001). The construction of Russia and Europe as enemies and friends in the national narratives of Belarus and Ukraine will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Introducing enemies and friends to the national narrative of the newly emerged states implied a certain view on ontological security. As we have seen in Chapter 2, ontological security can be constructed by agents with authority (i.e., officials, experts, media, intellectuals, and religious leaders) through the articulation of collective identities or ideologies. As enemies and friends can be one of the building blocks of the collective identities, establishing enemy-friend orientation in the post-Soviet countries meant stabilisation of routines and internalisation of guidance for thinking and acting. Defining enemies implied locating threats to ontological security of the Self, while proclaiming friends meant settling on its guarantors. Ontological security organised around the post-Soviet geopolitical orientation substituted the Soviet ideology. The post-Soviet geopolitical orientation proposed new guidelines for a national identity (i.e., pro-Russian or pro-European instead of Soviet) and a political system (i.e., autocratic or democratic instead of communist). Ontological security based on the post-Soviet geopolitical orientation also became a new way of perceiving the human and technological insecurity brought about by Chernobyl.

As such, trauma management becomes constituted by enemies and friends from the national narratives in a victim country. Trauma management discourse consists of several competing narratives. Each of these narratives has its own enemies and friends. For example, the Belarusian trauma management discourse consists of competing narratives of the Belarusian

⁴² Kuchma can be considered as positioning Ukraine between Russia and Europe but keeping historical and cultural ties with Russia (Korostelina, 2013: 69).

leadership (in which Russia is a friend and Europe is an enemy) and the Belarusian opposition (in which Russia is an enemy and Europe is a friend). Trauma management discourse occurs when the competing actors systematically reproduce or modify the idea of friendship or hostility from their national narratives through assigning and evaluating the responsibility for handling the disaster. One of these competing narratives can achieve a hegemonic status. The possibility of achieving a hegemonic status will be discussed in Chapter 4. Trauma management discourse does not occur when the competing actors do not systematically reproduce or modify the idea of friendship or hostility from their national narratives through assigning and evaluating the responsibility for handling the disaster.

As such, when I refer to *trauma management discourse*, I mean the concert of competing narratives about the responsibility for coping with the disaster in a victim country.⁴³ When I refer to a *trauma management narrative*, I imply a narrative of a particular actor within a trauma management discourse in a victim country. As will be shown in the empirical part of the monograph, Belarus produced a trauma management discourse. Two Belarusian antagonistic actors systematically constructed enemies and friends when referring to the responsibility in the Chernobyl management. Ukraine, on the other hand, did not produce a trauma management discourse. Two Ukrainian antagonistic actors did not systematically construct enemies and friends in combating the consequences of the disaster. When I say systematically, I mean the presence of a certain discursive mechanism (blaming, praising or comparing) that constructs ethical or traumatised identities to give meaning to the responsible over time (to be discussed shortly) and is linked to the national narratives of a victim country. The presence of trauma management discourse demonstrates that there is a contestation over meaning about the responsibility in the society and several competing ways to assure ontological security. The absence of trauma management discourse shows that there is no contestation in the society over the responsibility, and a dominant way of understanding ontological security is not established. As such, a trauma management narrative becomes a story about the alleviation of ontological insecurity (i.e., human and technological insecurity as collective traumas of the direct participants) that, in turn, constructs a certain vision of ontological security in general (for the whole nation). Trauma man-

⁴³ As Eyerman demonstrates, 'cultural trauma discourses are broader and deeper than trauma narratives, as there may be several competing narrative accounts within the cultural trauma discourse' (2011:152). Similarly, from a discourse-analytical perspective, Mottier argues that 'narratives are possible forms of discourse, while discourses include (but are not reduced to) narratives' (Mottier, 2005: 260).

agement discourse is a contestation over the hegemonic story about the alleviation of ontological insecurity of the victims and reassurance of ontological security of the nation. In general, trauma management demonstrates how societies can be united or divided and how conflicts can be escalated or smoothed.

By presenting enemies or friends in a new role as help providers, trauma management reproduces or modifies the degrees of friendship or hostility that the national narratives advocate. The enemy moves either to a more or a less hostile Other (shift in the degree of hostility), while a friend moves to a more or less friendly Other (shift in the degree of friendship). This shift contributes to a certain construction of ontological security: either as assured or threatened. For example, if an enemy of a victim country is praised in a public sphere for providing assistance to combat the consequences of the disaster, his identity as an enemy moves to less hostile. An example is the official Belarus praising European countries (enemies) for their aid:

Recently, I have been at the Minsk train station to welcome back Chernobyl children from Berlin. I could not recognise my young friends. They looked so fresh, healthy, happy, and careless ... Let them often recall their holidays and the people who gave them three weeks of complete and normal human life (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1994: 2).

In this case, Germany is constructed as a Belarusian friend. This construction destabilises the idea of Europe as an enemy in the official national narrative by flashing the friendship with Germany as an individual European state. It also shapes the understanding of ontological security by presenting the human insecurity of the Chernobyl children as alleviated. Similarly, if a friend of a victim country is blamed in a public sphere for not participating in the coping processes at the territory of a victim country, its identity as a friend moves to a less friendly Other. An example is the official Ukraine blaming Russia: 'The brotherly Russia – the successor of the USSR – has not been taking part in the liquidation of the consequences of the disaster at the Ukrainian territory...' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 20 April 1996: 1b). Russian friendship is undermined by not living up to the identities of 'the brotherly Russia' and 'successor of the Soviet Union' and withdrawing from the provision of help. This also creates an idea of threatened ontological security.

At the same time, the identity as an enemy or a friend can become divided into 'good' guys that help and 'bad' guys that do not. If an enemy or a friend is split into positive and negative identities, then the idea of hostility or friendship is destabilised, and the national narrative and understanding of ontological security become ambiguous. For example, while praising certain

European countries for aid (such as Germany in the previous example), the official Belarus blamed the official institutions of the EU for the lack of aid:

Some Western countries are today spending lots of money in order to support the opposition at the territory of our state. Even the TACIS program has been adjusted for this matter...How do you think millions are planned to be spent? Not to support the affected people in the Chernobyl zone but to finance the oppositional media (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 18 April 1998: 5).

Blaming the official institutions of the EU (the TACIS programme of the European Commission) reproduced the idea of hostility with Europe in the official national narrative of Belarus and presented it as a threat to ontological security.

To conclude, the construction of saviours in trauma management reproduces or modifies the degrees of friendship or hostility defined in the country's national narratives. Enemies of the state either move to a more hostile Other, if they are presented as not contributing to managing the disaster, or to a less hostile Other, if they are presented as providing assistance. A similar situation is seen with friends. Friends of the state either move to a more friendly Other, if they are presented as assisting with handling the consequences of the disaster, or to a less friendly Other, if they are constructed as not doing so. Changing the degrees of friendship and hostility through a trauma management narrative contributes to a reproduction or modification of the national narrative of the victim country and, hence, shapes the idea of ontological security of the citizens.

3.1.1 Blaming and Praising as Discursive Mechanism of Trauma Management

The significance of change in a national narrative through trauma management depends on the way the degrees of friendship and hostility are constructed over time. As mentioned before, the construction of responsibility occurs through the discursive mechanism of blaming and praising. Blaming constructs an actor as failing to fulfil its responsibility, while praising presents an actor as fulfilling its responsibility well. Praising contributes to the idea of assured ontological security, while blaming constructs ontological security as being threatened. Blame and praise are performative speech acts (Austin, 1962; Goffman, 1959; Searle, 1969). They do not just describe or express the pre-given identity but rather act or 'bring into being that which they name' (Mottier, 2005: 260). Blaming and praising are discursive mechanisms of the illocutionary acts of 'blame' and 'praise'. A speaker, when uttering an illocutionary act, accomplishes an action of blame or praise. Praise is understood as a speech act that brings into being positive attributes of an

actor through approval, admiration, or commendation. Blame is seen as a speech act that brings into being negative attributes of an actor through disapproval, censure, or condemnation.

I introduce three types of possible discursive moves in blaming and praising over time: (a) constant blaming *or* constant praising; (b) simultaneous blaming *and* praising; and (c) temporary blaming *or* praising. *Constant* blaming stabilises the negative identity of the actor (hostility); *constant* praising hegemonies its positive identity (friendship). If the friend is constantly praised for assistance over time, then the idea of friendship is reproduced, the national narrative is reinforced, and the idea of ontological security is assured. If a friend is constantly blamed over time, then the idea of friendship is questioned, the national narrative is changed, and the idea of ontological security is threatened. If an enemy is constantly blamed over time, then the idea of hostility is strengthened, the national narrative is reproduced, and ontological security is constructed as threatened. If an enemy is constantly praised over time, then the idea of hostility is softened, the national narrative is modified, and the idea of ontological security is assured.

Constant blaming and praising works through ‘the most elementary rhetorical technique’ called repetition (Hajer, 1995: 130). Repetition works synchronically (several texts blame or praise a particular actor in one or several data sources simultaneously) and diachronically (several texts blame or praise a particular actor in one or several data sources continuously). Constant blaming and praising was observed in the Belarusian alternative media, in which Russia was constantly blamed over time, while Europe was constantly praised. In this case, the Belarusian alternative media reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition, in which Russia was an enemy and Europe was a friend. Reproducing the oppositional national narrative also reproduced the understanding of ontological security: Russia was seen as a threat to the Belarusian ontological security, while Europe was understood as its guarantor. To guarantee ontological security, Belarus needed to join Europe; being under Russia would only bring ontological insecurity to the Belarusian people. When we observe constant blaming or praising, we can talk about the systematic construction of a trauma management narrative. Constant blaming or praising corresponds either to a tragic or romantic narrative genres (to be discussed in Chapter 5).

Simultaneous blaming and praising over time divides the actor into ‘good guys’ (by praising) and ‘bad guys’ (by blaming). As mentioned above, the same actor receives multiple identities: It can be presented as both a friend and an enemy. If a friend or an enemy is simultaneously praised and blamed over time, its identity is split and becomes ambiguous, destabilising the national narrative and the idea of ontological security. Splitting the subject can

happen within one text or across different texts present in one or several data sources synchronically (simultaneously) and diachronically (continuously). Repetition of simultaneous blame and praise takes place over a long period of time. An example is Ukraine, where both official and alternative media constructed multiple contradictory identities of enemies and friends over time. By having ambiguous identities of enemies and friends, ontological security is also seen as ambivalent. When we observe simultaneous blaming or praising over time, we cannot talk about the systematic construction of a trauma management narrative. Simultaneous blaming and praising corresponds to an ironic narrative genre (to be discussed in Chapter 5).

Blaming the same actor *temporarily* (at one point of time) and *temporarily* praising it (at another period of time) changes an identity of an actor over time. This change can take place towards a negative direction (from praising to blaming) or towards a positive direction (from blaming to praising). In this case, the same actor can be presented as a more friendly or hostile Other at one point of time, but as a less friendly or hostile Other at another. If a friend is initially praised at a particular point of time but blamed at another point of time, the idea of friendship is relaxed, the national narrative is modified, and ontological security is constructed as threatened. And vice versa, if a friend is initially blamed at a particular point of time but praised at another point of time, then the idea of friendship is strengthened, the national narrative is reproduced, and ontological security is presented as assured. A similar situation is seen with an enemy. If an enemy is initially praised for providing assistance during a particular period of time but later blamed for not doing so, the idea of hostility is reinforced, the national narrative is reproduced, and ontological security is seen as threatened. Vice versa, if an enemy is initially blamed at one period of time but praised at a different period of time, the idea of enmity is softened, the national narrative is changed, and ontological security is viewed as assured. This trend was observed in the Belarusian official media, which praised both its friend Russia and its enemy Europe during the 1990s, but then blamed both of them during the 2000s. As such, the idea of Russia as a friend was weakened over time, while the idea of Europe as an enemy was strengthened. The change in the role of Russia as a friend and the role of Europe as an enemy also shaped the perception of the Belarusian ontological security: Russia and Europe were no longer seen as its guarantors. When we can observe temporary blaming or praising and its shift over time, we can talk about the systematic construction of a trauma management narrative. Temporary blaming or praising corresponds either to a tragic or romantic narrative genres (to be discussed in Chapter 5).

As we will see in the analysis chapters, the trauma management discourse in Belarus was produced through two antagonistic narratives: temporary blaming and praising of Russia and Europe and its shift over time (Belarusian official media) and constant blaming of Russia and constant praising of Europe (Belarusian alternative media). In Ukraine, no trauma management discourse was produced because of absence of antagonistic narratives: Both the official and alternative media blamed and praised Russia and Europe simultaneously. The construction of Others saviours through constant, simultaneous, and temporary blaming or praising is illustrated in Table 3.1.

It is important to stress that not every blame and praise automatically reproduces or modifies the roles of enemies and friends in the national narratives. The identities of enemies and friends from the national narratives should be made visible in a trauma management narrative to be considered as reproduced. The trauma management narrative can also produce new identities of enemies and friends, which modify national narratives. New identities modify national narratives when they have constant or temporary presence in a public sphere and are more visible than other identities in trauma management narratives of both antagonistic actors.

To conclude, blaming and praising as discursive mechanisms in trauma management change the degrees of friendship and hostility in the representation of the responsible actors. Repetition of blame or praise over time gives this representation a discursive significance. The discursive significance can be achieved through constant, simultaneous, or temporary blaming or praising. If we have constant or temporary blaming or praising, we can talk about the systematic construction of a trauma management narrative in a tragic (hostility) or a romantic (friendship) genre. If we have simultaneous blaming and praising in an ironic narrative genre, then we cannot talk about the systematic presence of a trauma management narrative. If we have several competing trauma management narratives that are produced either from constant or temporary blaming or praising, we can talk about the construction of a trauma management discourse (the case of Belarus). If we have several trauma management narratives that are created from simultaneous blaming and praising, we cannot talk about the articulation of a trauma management discourse (the case of Ukraine).

Table 3.1 Others Saviours and Degrees of Friendship and Hostility in Trauma Management

Degrees of friendship/ hostility (Others Saviours)	Discursive mechanism (blaming/praising)	Discursive mechanism (repetition)	Friendship/ hostility construction	National narrative	Ontological security construction	Trauma management narrative (systematic)
Friend	Praised	Constant/ temporary	Strengthened	Reproduced	Assured	Yes
	Blamed	Constant/ temporary	Weakened	Modified	Threatened	Yes
	Praised/blamed	Simultaneous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	No
Enemy	Praised	Constant/ temporary	Weakened	Modified	Assured	Yes
	Blamed	Constant/ temporary	Strengthened	Reproduced	Threatened	Yes
	Praised/blamed	Simultaneous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	No

3.1.2 Ethical Identities as a Product of Blaming or Praising in Trauma Management

Blaming the Other for the lack of assistance or praising the Other for providing aid constructs ethical identities of saviours and victims. *Ethical identities* are related to the notions of space and time and construct the responsibility of actors through morality and ethics. Hansen states that an articulation of an ethical identity ‘invoke a particular moral force, a call for action that in response constitutes the spatial and temporal identities of those involved as well as those called upon to intervene’ (Hansen, 2006: 50). *Spatial identities* are linked to the notion of the continuity of space and include a reference to geography – the territorial boundaries, soil, and nature. They construct ‘boundaries and thereby the delineation of space’ of other peoples and communities (i.e., ethnic minorities or nationalities), states and regions (i.e., the West, Europe, and Russia) and continents (i.e., Africa and Latin America) (Hansen, 2006: 47). *Temporal identities*, on the other hand, refer to the possibility of change, transformation, progress, and development. Hansen links temporality to the degrees of superiority and inferiority of the states:

The temporality of the Other is constituted in relation to the temporality of the Self: if the Other is constructed with a temporal identity similar to the one of the Self, or if it is articulated as an object in a time different from the one of the Self (Hansen, 2006: 48).

Spatial and temporal identities are interlinked, as space itself is not that meaningful without temporality – the progress of this space in relation to Others. For example, the candidate countries for the EU membership are understood as capable of changing themselves, so that they can move from a temporally backward Other to a progressive Self of the EU. The countries that are not viewed as potential candidates for the EU membership may be seen as incapable of change and stuck in their barbarism and backwardness.

While Hansen studies how the West produces its own responsibility and identities of the ‘Rest’, this project shows how ‘the Rest’ assigns and evaluates the responsibility of the West (Europe) and East (Russia). It looks at the construction of ethical identity in cases *before* the aid was provided (as begging for aid or an anticipation of aid) and the evaluation of ethical identity in cases *after* the aid was delivered (as expressing gratitude for aid or frustration with its lack). While Russia is a sole country, Europe consists of many countries, including the EU member states. As such, a definition of Europe will include the individual European countries (including the EU and non-EU member states, such as Switzerland and Norway), the EU as a political entity (the official institutions of the EU), and the European countries as

members of international organisations (the UN and the G7). The USA and Canada are excluded, as they do not fall under the definition of Europe, even though they fall under the definition of the West. As such, when I use the term ‘West’ or ‘international community’, I refer to ‘Europe’ or Western Europe. The focus on Europe is made to account for the idea of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Belarus and Ukraine. In these national narratives, Europe is understood as either *a destination* towards a Western orientation or *a space left behind* towards an Eastern orientation. The place of Europe and Russia in the national narratives in Belarus and Ukraine is discussed in Chapter 4.

As such, ethical identity in handling the consequences of the disaster constructs two subject positions: a *help provider* (saviour) and a *help receiver* (victim). It creates difference between the actors because of their unequal roles: One provides the aid, the other receives it. This difference sets temporal hierarchies and constructs dependence of one actor on the other, where one is active and the other is passive. The identity as a help provider and a help receiver may vary depending on what motives are assigned to them in relation to aid provision and reception. The responsibility for a disaster is assigned and evaluated on the basis of what spatial and temporal identities the help provider possesses. For example, the West may be understood as a help provider to Chernobyl not because it is situated in the western part of the hemisphere, but because it is rich. Russia may be viewed as a help provider not because it is located geographically close to Ukraine and Belarus, but because it was the successor of the Soviet Union.

Ethical identity can also construct the subject positions of *equal partners*, where foreign actors (saviours) are viewed as cooperating with the victim states on an equal basis.⁴⁴ Both parties are presented as equally contributing to this cooperation, and therefore, the temporal status is discursively omitted. For example, Belarus and Ukraine, as Chernobyl victim countries, are presented as cooperating with the international community on the research about the health effects of radiation. Another variation of subject positions can be *problem solver* (saviour) and *solutions receiver* (victim). Compared to equal partnership, the solutions receiver (victim) does not participate in the activities of the problem solver (saviour) and has a passive status. The problem solver has an active status and understands the problem in global terms rather than only within the scope of the victim state. The temporal relationships are implicitly assumed, but not explicitly stated. For example, Ukraine, as a victim of Chernobyl (solutions receiver), is presented as

⁴⁴ Ethical identity as equal partners can also be constructed through the discursive mechanism of uniting.

complying with international nuclear safety standards established by the international community (problem solver). As such, we can distinguish several subject positions of a saviour: help provider, problem solver, and equal partner. The subject positions of a victim are help receiver, solutions receiver, and equal partner, respectively.

As such, subject positions created by ethical identities through blaming or praising become roles assigned to actors (i.e., Others as saviours and Selves as victims) in a trauma management narrative. The ethical identities shape the degrees of friendship and hostility of the enemies and friends, presented as saviours, and create the possibility of reproducing or modifying the national narratives. They also construct a certain understanding of ontological security as threatened or assured by the saviours.

The subject positions formed by ethical identities have discursive power when they are linked to the discourse on politics, economy, history, status, or humanism. As such, several types of temporal identities can be formulated in the articulation of ethical identities: apolitical, political, economic, symbolic, and historical (Table 3.2). These are analytical types that are in a constitutive relationship with each other and therefore not always ontologically separable. Some of them can have more discursive weight than others; some can be leading, while others can be supplementary.

These identities can be articulated in a public sphere without reproducing or modifying national narratives. When do they reproduce or modify these narratives? If ethical and temporal identities draw on the characteristics of the enemies and friends from the national narratives, then they reproduce these narratives. If ethical and temporal identities construct new elements in the trauma management narrative, then they modify the national narratives. The modification of the national narratives takes place when the newly brought elements are present in a public sphere over a prolonged period of time, are more articulated than other identities, and are the point of consensus or contestation between the competing actors. Ethical and temporal identities neither reproduce, nor modify national narratives, if they do not rely on the elements from these narratives and do not produce new elements through the trauma management. I will discuss these identities below.

Apolitical identities are a type of temporal identities that present ethical responsibility based on *humanism* rather than interests, power, profit, or other instrumental reasons. Apolitical identities are constructed through praising and articulate a help provider as *philanthropic*. A help receiver may be state institutions, state officials, population, or the nation state in general and can be viewed as rescued, as in the following example:

Thank God the Belarusian people have many friends that are always eager to help! The national oncological and haematological centre for children was created thanks to the Austrian Republic, whose government has donated five million dollars. Thanks to our Austrian friends, the bone marrow transplantation ward will operate in the hospital (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 27 April 1996: 1).

Table 3.2 Ethical Identities and Other Temporal Identities

Identity	Characteristic	Subject positions	
		Other	Self
Ethical	Help provision	Help provider	Help receiver
	Problem solving	Problem solver Equal partner	Solutions receiver Equal partner
Other temporal identities:			
Political	Political culture	Democratic Individualistic	Authoritarian State dependent
	Domination	Dominating	Subordinate Resisting
	Orientation	Pro-Self	Pro-Other
Apolitical	Humanism	Philanthropic	Rescued
Economic	Wealth	Richer	Poorer
Symbolic	Status	Superior	Inferior
Historical	Connectedness	Connected	Connected
		Disconnected	Disconnected
		Past perpetrator	Past victim
		Past victim	Present victim

In this quote, the Belarusian people (help receiver) are understood as rescued by the philanthropic Austrian government (help provider). The construction of the national oncological and haematological centre, where the Chernobyl children of Belarus could have bone marrow transplantations, is viewed as the rescue.

The construction of Austria as a philanthropic help provider shapes the Belarusian official narrative by destabilising the idea of Europe as an enemy. Praising Austria (calling it ‘friends’ twice) conveys the idea of Europe as a guarantor of the Belarusian ontological security. As Austria is involved in treating the ill Belarusian children, it is seen as contributing to the alleviation of the post-Chernobyl human insecurity in Belarus. This changes the degrees of friendship with Europe in the Belarusian official narrative from a hostile Other to a less hostile Other.

The articulation of the apolitical identity as a single speech act, however, does not have discursive power. Apolitical identities achieve discursive significance when they are constantly repeated in a public sphere over time or during a particular period of time. In the Belarusian official media, the evaluation of the responsibility of the European countries in handling Chernobyl through apolitical identities was made temporarily during 1992-2005 (20 April to 2 May). It was present in 15 articles out of a sample of 19 articles on Europe. As such, the apolitical identity turned out to be the most articulated ethical identity in the Belarusian official media. Its long-term presence in a public sphere contributed to the construction of a trauma management narrative. It shaped the official national narrative of Belarus, in which Europe became a friend in relation to Chernobyl issues and created a certain understanding of ontological security as guaranteed by Europe.

In addition, the above-mentioned quote articulated *economic identities* because of the aid ('five million dollars') that the Austrian government (richer) provided to Belarus (poorer). Economic identities is another type of a temporal identity articulated through blaming or praising. They construct two subject positions based on material wellbeing or *wealth*: richer and poorer. Actors with richer identities are understood as more responsible for help than actors possessing poorer identities. Economic identities can either discursively improve the idea of friendship (if the rich Other is presented as having the possibility to help and helps in practice) or weaken it (if the rich Other is constructed as being reluctant to help despite having such an opportunity). The richness of the Other is seen as a guarantee of ontological security of the Self. Economic identities are usually linked to other temporal identities, such as the apolitical identity (as in the Austrian case mentioned above), the political identity (as in the Western case of domination to be presented below), and the historical identity (as in the Russian case of disconnectedness to be discussed below).⁴⁵

⁴⁵ One of the telling examples of the construction of ethical identity on the basis of economic identities (beyond enemies and friends from a national narrative) is the representation of Cuba by the official Ukraine: 'I would like to address Cuba with the kindest words. This country is going through a difficult period. And, here, the folk wisdom comes: The poor are more generous. Cuba has been supporting and is supporting Ukraine in the recuperation of children. We are sincerely grateful for that. I do not want to say that the rich do not help us, but they have many more opportunities than Cuba' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1994: 2). Cuba is presented as poorer ('is going through a difficult period') but a generous help provider ('supporting Ukraine in the recuperation of children'). It is juxtaposed to the richer West ('have many more opportunities than Cuba'). The West is understood as capable, while Cuba is presented as philanthropic. This juxtaposition destabilises the idea of the West as the only monopolist on aid and the only

Historical identities are linked to both spatial and temporal identities, constructing connectedness or disconnectedness with the historical Others. Connectedness and disconnectedness can be viewed as a positive or a negative tendency and articulated through praising or blaming. Connectedness and disconnectedness determine the level of success in help provision or problem solving. If connectedness or disconnectedness is viewed as a positive tendency, it is seen as contributing to problem solving. If connectedness or disconnectedness is understood as a negative tendency, it is seen as preventing the successful problem solving to take place. Connectedness and disconnectedness shape degrees of friendship and hostility and present ontological security as assured or threatened. If the historical Other is praised for providing aid (and connectedness is presented as a positive issue in the national narrative), then the idea of friendship is reinforced, and ontological security is seen as assured. If the historical Other is blamed for not providing aid (and disconnectedness is understood as a negative issue in the national narrative), then the idea of friendship is challenged, and ontological security is viewed as threatened.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Belarus and Ukraine had to rearticulate their space and the direction of change. Seeing space and time through connectedness with Russia implied either a drive for development or an obstacle for development. Similarly, understanding space and time through disconnectedness with Russia meant either a push for progress or a fall into the backwardness. The example of the reproduction of connectedness is the official Belarus praising Russia for help: 'We have been left almost alone with this tragedy throughout all these years. The only state that supports us is fraternal Russia, which has allocated 171.8 million Russian roubles'.⁴⁶ The historical connectedness from the official national narrative is reproduced through the reference to 'fraternal' relations. The historical connectedness is understood as a ground for aid provision and a way to be healed from Chernobyl. By reproducing historical connectedness, the national narrative is reinforced, and the idea of friendship is strengthened. Russia is presented as a guarantor of the ontological security of the Belarusian people. Historical identities also acquire discursive power when they are constantly repeated in a public sphere. Reproduction of historical connectedness with Russia in the Belarusian official media took place temporarily (1996-1998, 20 April to 2 May) in six articles from a sample of 26 articles on Russia (during the time of building the Russia-Belarus Union State). Tempo-

philanthropic. Rather, the Western identity is constructed as motivated by capabilities and not by humanism.

⁴⁶ http://naviny.by/rubrics/society/2008/04/24/ic_articles_116_156796/.

rary praise contributed to the construction of a trauma management narrative.

An example of construction of disconnectedness is the alternative Ukraine blaming Russia for the absence of aid: 'Russia as the successor of the Soviet Union has not taken further part in the affairs and funding at the territory of Ukraine since September 1991' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).⁴⁷ The historical disconnectedness is constructed through the reference to the breakup of the Soviet Union, which is viewed as something negative, as Russia stopped taking care of Ukraine. Russia is wished to be a help provider on the basis of its historical connectedness ('the successor of the Soviet Union') and Ukraine is wished to be a help receiver ('funding at the territory of Ukraine'). Disconnectedness with Russia is understood as a threat to the Ukrainian ontological security. This historical identity, however, was not salient in the Ukrainian media. As such, it did not contribute to the construction of a trauma management narrative.

Historical connectedness can also be established with the states traumatised by different events in the past. These states can either be connected historically to the victim country (be its enemies or friends) or have no historical connection (be just random states in the world). This historical identity can articulate two types of subject positions. The first type of subject positions is based on the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim: A perpetrator from the past tragic event becomes a help provider to a victim of a current tragic event. The victim is understood as traumatised twice (first by the tragic event created by the perpetrator in the past and later by another tragic event with a different perpetrator):

I survived the fascist occupation in Minsk. And now I sometimes think about who we have become. Why do the losers of the war treat the grandchildren [Chernobyl children] of its winners with such care and warmth? Is it a feeling of guilt? I don't know, maybe it is. But I will tell you the truth: I am sincerely grateful to those who help us in such hard times (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1994: 2).

Two events and subject positions come together: WWII and Chernobyl, Germany and Belarus. Belarus is understood as traumatised twice; by WWII ('survived the fascist occupation') and Chernobyl ('such hard times'). Germany is viewed as a past perpetrator ('the losers of the war') and a current help provider ('treat the grandchildren with such care and warmth'). As such, two types of temporal identities are articulated: the historical identity (connectedness) and the apolitical identity (humanism). The identities estab-

⁴⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chernobyl_desyat_let_tragedii.html.

lished between the countries through the past tragic event are modified by new identities created by a new tragic event. As WWII is a national foundational myth of the official Belarus (Savchenko, 2009) and Nazi Germany is understood as a *historical enemy*, presenting today's Germany as a Chernobyl help provider produces an identity of Germany as a *contemporary friend*.

At the same time, Germany being a part of Europe is viewed as a *contemporary enemy* in the official national narrative of Belarus. The introduction of the ethical identity of Germany as a philanthropic help provider of Chernobyl destabilises the unified European identity as an enemy, relaxes the idea of hostility, and shapes the Belarusian national narrative. The ethical identity based on historical connectedness achieves discursive power when articulated in a public sphere on a constant basis. In the Belarusian official media, the explicit reference to WWII was made only once. However, Germany was the most praised country of all other European states as a philanthropic help provider over time (12 articles during 1992-2005 (20 April to 2 May) out of 15 articles praising Europe). As such, the German identity as a philanthropic help provider destabilised the German status as a historical enemy (a past perpetrator) and the European status as a contemporary enemy in the Belarusian national narrative. Germany was seen as a guarantor of ontological security in Belarus. More specifically, friendship with Germany was understood as an alleviation of the post-Chernobyl human insecurity through providing treatment to the Belarusian Chernobyl children. As such, temporary praise of Germany contributed to the construction of a trauma management narrative.

The second type of subject positions produced by historical identities is the shared victimhood between the states traumatised by different events in the past. These states may not have historical relations with each other and may not view each other as enemies or friends. They can create friendship based solely on their perceived common past experience. A victim of a different traumatic event from the past becomes a help provider to a victim from a current traumatic event of the present. For example, Japan was presented as a help provider to Belarus after Chernobyl:

Japan, having gone through the horrors of the atomic bomb, cannot neglect the tragedy that happened in your country. As a sign of humanism, Japan delivers medicine and medical equipment to heal people who were affected by the catastrophe and sends radiation medicine experts... The Japanese government will be continuing to support Belarus in this area (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 2a).

Japan is presented as a previously traumatised by Hiroshima and Nagasaki and as a help provider to a presently traumatised by Chernobyl Belarus. Common victimhood is established between these states, which previously had nothing in common, through the common reference to the nature of the traumatic event – the atom. The focus on the victimhood is the nuclear effects on the human beings. Japan's attempts to alleviate the human insecurity of the Belarusian victims are understood through the constructed historical connectedness between Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Chernobyl.

The introduction of a new friend into the national narrative modifies this narrative by adding a new actor into the plot and a new guarantor of ontological security. The stabilisation of a new friend in the national narrative occurs by the constant repetition of this ethical identity in a public sphere. In the case of official Belarus, Japan was presented as a help provider during 1992-1998 (20 April to 2 May) in seven articles. After the Fukushima accident took place in 2011, these identities reversed and the Belarusian official media presented Japan as a victim and Belarus as a saviour of Japan. As such, the story of friendship continued, but their roles as victim and saviour were reversed. Belarus was presented as a guarantor of ontological security to Japan:

The fate of Belarus is to become a pilot area in addressing and eliminating the consequences of a man-made disaster. When the news reported about Fukushima, our experience was invaluable for the Japanese. More than 30 delegations from the country of 'the rising sun' have visited Belarus during the last year (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 2013).⁴⁸

This is an example of how a trauma management narrative can be created out of actors not related to geopolitical enemies or friends in a national narrative.⁴⁹

Political identities are also a type of temporal identities produced through blaming to construct saviours and victims. I distinguish between political identities based on orientation, political culture, and domination to construct help providers and help receivers. Political identities based on *orientation* are linked to the geopolitical orientations of saviours and victims towards their friends (i.e., pro-Russian Belarus and pro-Belarusian Russia). Political identities based on *political culture* refer to the values of the political system of either a help provider or a help receiver. Alexander and Smith (1993) identify two types of discourse of civil society through which social

⁴⁸ <http://www.sb.by/viewpoint/146920/>.

⁴⁹ The example of Japan will not be discussed in the empirical chapters of the monograph and is presented here to make a theoretical point.

problems can be argued: liberty and repression. These two discourses stand in opposition to each other, and the values they convey can be paired in binary codes. Inspired by these discourses, I introduce binary oppositions such as democratic/authoritarian and individualistic/state dependent to represent political identities based on political culture (state system, authorities, or regime). If a help provider is represented as democratic and a help receiver as authoritarian, then absence of aid or reluctance to help is argued through these dichotomies.

For example, the reluctance of the European leaders to engage in the Chernobyl problem solving is understood through ideological antagonisms: ‘The Chairman of the European Commission told the Ukrainian leadership that he would participate in the Chernobyl summit only if Lukashenko would not attend. The EU considers Lukashenko’s foreign and domestic policies unacceptable and hostile’ (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).⁵⁰ The Belarusian leader, Aleksandr Lukashenko, was presented as authoritarian (‘foreign and domestic policies as unacceptable and hostile’) against the democratic standards of the EU. In this identity construction, the Belarusian alternative media reproduced the national narrative of the opposition, which saw Europe as a friend. The Belarusian alternative media only discussed this identity in 2011 (in 4 articles from 20 April to 2 May), and hence, its discursive power was limited: Its contribution to the construction of a trauma management narrative was temporary.

Political identities of *domination* are linked to power exercise between the powerful (help provider) and the powerless (help receiver). There can be two types of subject positions: dominating and subordinate or dominating and resisting. In the first case, the powerless accepts the domination of the powerful. In the second case, the powerless resists the domination of the powerful. For example, the Ukrainian politicians presented Ukraine as subordinate and Europe as dominating. They tried to change the Ukrainian identity from subordinate to resisting: ‘We should search for the points of contact instead of pushing Ukraine unilaterally to fulfil Western requirements without providing it with the adequate compensations’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 1996: 2). Ukraine is presented as subordinate (‘pushing Ukraine unilaterally to fulfil Western requirements’), but it does not want to be so (‘we should search for the points of contact’), while Europe is understood as dominating (‘without providing it with the adequate compensations’). This identity is also linked to the symbolic identity of the superior Europe and inferior Ukraine, as discussed below. This hierarchy is seen as a threat to ontological security and a barrier to becoming friends. The discursive

⁵⁰ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53775>.

sive power of the political identity of domination depends on repetition in a public sphere. As this identity was temporarily present in a public sphere *simultaneously* with the identity of Europe as a philanthropic help provider and did not rely on the elements from the national narratives, it did not contribute to a systematic trauma management narrative construction.

Symbolic identities are another type of temporal identity that constructs the identities of a help provider and a help receiver on the basis of *status*. They form two subject positions: superior and inferior. The wider the gap between actors with a superior status (help providers) and actors with an inferior status (help receivers), the more difficult it becomes to improve a relationship with the enemy or to maintain a relationship with a friend. For example, during the visit of the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation to France to discuss Chernobyl issues, the following remark was made: 'Ukraine should make France turn its face towards Ukraine without losing our self-esteem ... It would not be nice if the Ukrainian parliamentarians were treated as provincials in France' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).⁵¹ The help receiver is the Ukrainian parliamentarians, who are understood as inferior ('provincials in France', 'losing our self-esteem'), while the help provider France is seen as superior ('turn its face towards Ukraine'). The European friendship is presented as problematic because of the symbolic boundary, which is difficult to cross. As this identity was not articulated frequently, it did not have a discursive power to contribute to a trauma management narrative. The symbolic identities are usually articulated together with apolitical, political, or economic identities.

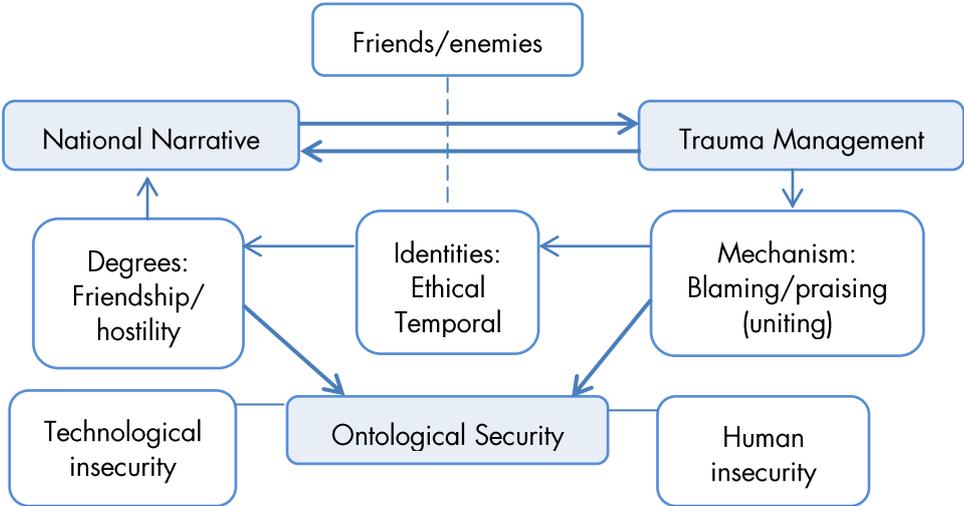
To conclude, blaming or praising enemies or friends for assistance in trauma management articulates ethical and temporal identities (i.e., apolitical, political, economic, historical, and symbolic). These identities shape the degrees of friendship and hostility, ontological security, and national narratives in the victim countries. A trauma management narrative is constructed when ethical identities are present in a public sphere during a certain period of time or on a constant basis.

To sum up on the section, trauma management is a type of a cultural trauma that focuses on the construction of saviours and victims. The construction of saviours takes place through blaming or praising geopolitical enemies and friends for assistance or lack of assistance on the basis of construction of ethical and temporal identities. Trauma management modifies the degrees of friendship or hostility in the national narrative and shapes the ontological security of the citizens by either presenting it as threatened or as-

⁵¹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

sured. A change in a national narrative implies a modification of the moral framework in newly emerged states. This change contributes to either unification or division in the society, and the escalation or smoothening of a conflict with geopolitical enemies and friends. As such, trauma management discourse is a contestation between different stories about the alleviation of human and technological insecurity that creates a certain understanding of ontological security. Figure 3.1 illustrates the trauma management process and how trauma management shapes national narratives and ontological security. The next section will have a closer look at Selves (victims) as saviours.

Figure 3.1 Trauma Management Process through the Construction of Others Saviours



Note: Arrows in the figure represent the working of a constitutive process of trauma management for analytical purposes and *not* a causal process.

3.2 *Selves* Saviours and *Selves* Victims

Saviours need not only be constructed from the outside Others. They can also be someone from the national community. The attribution of responsibility for salvation – its assignment and evaluation – is made through the representation of national actors. These actors could be the state with its institutions, experts, and leaders. One of the ways to construct the national saviour is to relate it to the outside Other.⁵² The outside Other can be an enemy or a

⁵² The construction of the national saviour does not need to be related to the outside Other. It can be a particular representation of the authorities to legitimise or delegitimise their actions. For example, the Belarusian official media praised the state authorities in the following way: ‘State authorities made difficult decisions to revive this beautiful area of Belarus with its troubled destiny ... Changes were made to adopt new,

friend, as we have seen above, or it can be another victim. In the case of Chernobyl, Russia as the outside Other had multiple identities – an enemy, a friend, and a victim. Hence, Russia could be constructed as the Other saviour and the Other victim at the same time. In this section, Russia would be theorised as the Other victim in relation to two other victims – Belarus and Ukraine. The discursive mechanism in this case becomes *comparing* the success in problem solving (policymaking) between the victims; that is, the Others and the Selves. Comparing is a discursive mechanism by which a discourse ‘constitutes its object’ through normalisation of certain subjectivities and exclusion of others (Foucault, 1972: 39; 1977). Comparing brings into being positive, comparative, or superlative degrees of an identity. Comparison can also include other discursive mechanisms such as blaming, praising, and uniting. *Uniting* is a discursive mechanism that omits differences and constructs identities of actors as similar to each other.

A trauma management narrative is constructed out of comparison and evaluation of the performance of different victims through the degrees of problem solving. The *degrees of problem solving* construct subject positions such as a better problem solver, a worse problem solver, and an equal partner. If the Other victim is an enemy or a friend in the national narrative, then comparing the policies of the Self with the policies of the Other can shape these narratives (Table 3.3). If the enemy is constructed as a worse problem solver, then its negativity from the national narrative is reproduced and ontological security of the Self is presented as assured. If the friend is portrayed as a worse problem solver, then its positivity from the national narrative is modified and ontological security of the Self is presented as assured. The de-

unorthodox methods of ecologically safe production in agriculture and industry ... Social problems were urgently solved: building kindergartens, schools, roads, houses, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, and other infrastructure that, today, allow us to live, raise children, and look towards the future’ (documentary film *Bol’ Moya – Chernobyl*, 2011). In comparison, the Ukrainian official media constantly blamed the state authorities: ‘The officials ... did not find time to work on the state programme to liquidate the consequences of Chernobyl ... The unified decision-making centres for coordinating, organizing, and solving Chernobyl problems are still absent’ (*Uryadovy Kurjer*, 27 April 2011). ‘The level of radionuclides exceeds the norm in more than 30 per cent of households in the 500 affected communities, and no one cares ... We should be ashamed that after 15 years, we have not been able to resettle all those who should have been resettled immediately because of milk contamination ...’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 20 April 2001). Since the focus of this monograph is the Other, there will be no discussion of the construction of the national saviours on their own. This discussion is made in the article ‘Trauma Management: Chernobyl in Belarus and Ukraine’ in *The British Journal of Sociology* (forthcoming).

degrees of problem solving can shape national narratives and ontological security, if they are repeated over time (constant or temporary comparison) in a public sphere. If the degrees of problem solving are present only as a sole speech act without repetition, or if several contradictory constructs are articulated simultaneously, then they do not shape national narratives and ontological security.

Table 3.3 Selves Saviours and Degrees of Problem Solving in Trauma Management

Degrees of problem-solving (Selves Saviours)	Discursive mechanism (repetition)	National narrative	Ontological security construction	National leadership	Trauma management narrative (systematic)
Better problem solver	Constant/temporary	Modified	Assured	Legitimised	Yes
Worse problem solver	Constant/temporary	Modified	Threatened	De-legitimised	Yes
Equal partner	Constant/temporary	Ambiguous	Assured/Ambiguous	Legitimised	Yes/No
Better/equal/worse problem solver	Simultaneous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	No

If the Self is constructed as a better problem solver, then the Other is constructed as a worse problem solver. This construct legitimises the national leadership, de-legitimises the Other, and shifts the assurance for ontological security from the Other to the Self. If the Self is constructed as a worse problem solver, then the Other is presented as a better problem solver. This construct de-legitimises the national leadership, legitimises the Other, and presents own state as a threat to ontological security.⁵³ A trauma management narrative becomes a story about problem solving (policymaking) of the Self in comparison with other victims. It is a story about the alleviation of human and technological insecurity to achieve ontological security. Trauma management discourse then is a collection of competing stories about the success of problem solving of the Self, where one of these stories can achieve a hegemonic status.

The failure of the national saviour can be constructed by presenting one's *own state as a worse problem solver* and other victim countries as better problem solvers. An example is the official Ukraine constructing its own Chernobyl social policies as worse than the Russian social policies in the nuclear area:

⁵³ Legitimation and de-legitimation of actors can also produce degrees of friendship and hostility discussed in the previous section.

Russia is regularly financing the federal program for rehabilitation of people that were affected by the nuclear tests in Ural. Ukraine, on the contrary, is cutting Chernobyl benefits from the state's budget as there is no money to fulfil this law article (*Fakty i Kommentarii*, 28 April 2009).⁵⁴

This statement presented Russia (the Other victim) as a better problem solver and Ukraine (the Self victim) as a worse problem solver. It constructs the policies of the Other as legitimate, but the policies of the Self as illegitimate. The discursive power of this comparison can work when it is repeated constantly in the public sphere. In the Ukrainian case, it was not a regular representation and, hence, did not contribute to the understanding of the Ukrainian authorities as a threat to the ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens.

The success of the national saviour can be constructed through the presentation of one's *own state as a better problem solver* than other victim countries. For example, the official Belarus constructed its Chernobyl social policies as better than those of Russia and Ukraine:

Such legislation and practical activities in protecting the population and rehabilitating the territories do not exist in any other affected country, richer in resources and opportunities ... Neither in Ukraine, nor in Russia do school pupils and college students get free meals and recuperation ... In Russia, the radiation safety norms are less standardised and less demanding than in Belarus (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 2006).⁵⁵

This statement presented the policies of the Others as illegitimate. In turn, it constructed the policies of the Self as legitimate. By presenting the Self as a better problem solver than the Other victims, ontological security was constructed as assured.

This comparison can have discursive power when it is articulated repeatedly in a public sphere. In the Belarusian case, the 2000s was the time when the Belarusian leadership started to build its statehood and construct a national identity to differentiate Belarus from Russia (Leshchenko, 2004; Ioffe, 2007). One of the ways to differentiate Belarus from Russia was through the Chernobyl policies. This differentiation took place in seven articles during 2001-2013 (20 April to 2 May). The value of the friendship between Russia and Belarus changed as Belarus presented itself as less dependent on Russia through the Chernobyl problem solving. Constructing Belarus as a better problem solver by (temporarily) comparing it to Russia (and Ukraine) contributed to the articulation of a systematic trauma management narrative,

⁵⁴ <http://fakty.ua/18597-my-dazhe-spali-v-respiratorah-snimali-ih-tolko-chtoby-poest->

⁵⁵ <http://www.sb.by/post/51066/>.

shaped the national narrative of the official Belarus and constructed the idea of ontological security as assured.

The identity of a national saviour may not be constructed if the affected states are presented as equal partners. Equal partners combat the disaster jointly without differentiating between a better or worse problem solver. *Equal partnership* brackets the differences between the victim countries in order to unite them under one umbrella of victimhood and problem solving: 'The representatives of the Ministries for the Emergency Situations between the two states work together and have signed a common program for the liquidation of the Chernobyl consequences between Russia and Belarus for 1998-2000' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1998: 4). This statement does not refer to the differences in the Chernobyl consequences between Belarus and Russia but unites them as one victim under a joint programme of overcoming. Assurance of ontological security is seen in mutual cooperation rather than in help provision or better problem solving. The leaderships of both the Self and the Other are presented as legitimate. Constructing the identities of equal partners may contribute to trauma management if they either reproduce previous or construct new relations between enemies and friends through repetition (constant or temporary).

As such, the ranking of victims in the problem solving creates the identities as worse/equal/better problem solvers. I call these identities *traumatised identities* (Table 3.4). Similar to ethical identities, traumatised identities rely on the construction of space (victims from other countries) and time (progress of other victims in combating the consequences of the disaster in relation to the Self). The core here is a discursive inversion in temporal identities when a smaller state can position itself as superior against a larger state. This inversion can be achieved by articulation of temporal identities such as economic (richer-poorer) and symbolic (superior-inferior). Political identities based on geopolitical orientation (pro/anti-Other), on the other hand, can be used to construct similarities in problem solving and omit differences.

The construction of *symbolic identities* helps strengthen the argument about the Self as a better problem solver. For example, the official Belarus presented itself as a better problem solver than Russia by symbolically constructing its policies as superior than the Russian:

The Customs Union first adopted the regulations and norms according to the Russian standards. However, we have not relaxed our standards towards Russian ... Our experts believe that if our companies bid for softer rules, our

established strict system of protective measures will suffer. And this is unacceptable (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2013).⁵⁶

In this case, Belarus received a status as superior ('our established strict system of protective measures') and Russia a status as inferior ('have not relaxed our standards towards Russian'). Ontological security was presented as no longer guaranteed by Russia but by own state. The understanding of friendship was preserved, but its value in the Belarusian national narrative changed: Belarus was presented as no longer subordinate to Russia but as an independent state. It also constructed the Belarusian experts as more legitimate than Russian.

Table 3.4 Traumatized Identities and Other Temporal Identities

Identity	Characteristic	Subject positions	
		Other	Self
Traumatized	Traumatization	Less/equal/more/most traumatized	Most/more/equal/less traumatized
	Problem solving	Better/worse problem solver	Worse/better problem solver
		Equal partner	Equal partner
Other temporal identities:			
Political	Orientation	Pro-Self	Pro-Other
Economic	Wealth	Richer	Poorer
Symbolic	Status	Superior/inferior	Inferior/superior

The construction of *economic identities* can be used for the same purpose: to strengthen the position of a better problem solver that is also presented as economically weaker. For example, the official Belarus reprinted an article from the Russian newspaper *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* that claimed that Belarus was poorer but managed Chernobyl better than richer Russia: 'Why is it that *Chernobyl'tsy* in the smaller brotherly Belarus are having much better social security today? Where does Belarus have the money from that we [Russians] do not?' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 2002: II). In this case, ontological security in Belarus was constructed through better social security policies than in Russia. This presented the Belarusian authorities as more legitimate than Russian. Russia was presented as having more financial resources but failing to use them properly. The official national narrative of Belarus was reproduced by preserving 'brotherly' relations, but modified by changing a guarantor of ontological security from Russia to own state. The idea of

⁵⁶ <http://www.sb.by/viewpoint/146920/>.

friendship with Russia changed its value: Belarus was presented as symbolically superior, while Russia was constructed as symbolically inferior *despite* economic difference.

On the other hand, the construction of *political identities* can be used to omit the differences in problem solving and strengthen similarities. For example, the official Belarus advocated for equal partnership with Russia despite the fact that the Chernobyl problems they had to combat were of a different nature: 'Even though there was almost no evacuation of the population there [in Russia], our countries have to overcome quite similar problems. Obviously, it is more effective to do so jointly' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2007: I). In this case, the similarities to base cooperation on were not stated precisely but assumed ('our countries have to overcome quite similar problems'). Assuming similarities reproduced the Belarusian national narrative and Russia's role as a friend. It constructed legitimacy of both Belarusian and Russian authorities.

In addition to comparing the victim countries on the basis of their performance in policymaking, the traumatised identity can rank them according to their level of traumatisation. As such, trauma management is constructed out of comparison of the victim countries through the degrees of traumatisation (Table 3.5). The *degrees of traumatisation* create the representations of less/equally/more/most traumatised. They either construct similarity between the states by presenting them as equally traumatised (shared victimhood) or differentiate them on the basis of who is less, more, or the most traumatised (different victimhood). Shared victimhood is constructed through the discursive mechanism of uniting, which de-nationalises the disaster. Different victimhood is articulated through the discursive mechanism of comparing, which nationalises the disaster.

The degrees of traumatisation alone are less likely to reproduce or modify a national narrative, even if other victims are considered to be enemies and friends. The degrees of traumatisation are more likely to shape national narratives when articulated in combination with the degrees of problem solving (i.e., less traumatised and a worse problem solver vs more traumatised and a better problem solver). The degrees of traumatisation can also reproduce or modify the idea of ontological insecurity: human insecurity (i.e., environment or health) or technological insecurity (i.e., nuclear energy and power plants). The ranked representations have discursive power, if they are constantly or temporary repeated in a public sphere. A trauma management narrative becomes a story about victimisation (traumatisation) of the Self in comparison to other victims. It is a story about the continuation of human and technological insecurity that prevents ontological security to take place.

Trauma management discourse then is a competition of the stories for a hegemonic status about the level of traumatising of the Self.

Table 3.5 Selves Victims and Degrees of Traumatization in Trauma Management

Degrees of traumatization (Selves victims)	Discursive mechanism (repetition)	Ontological insecurity construction	Disaster nationalisation	Trauma management narrative (systematic)
Most/more traumatised	Constant/temporary	Reinforced	Yes	Yes
Less traumatised	Constant/temporary	Reproduced	No	No
Equally traumatised	Constant/temporary	Reproduced	No	Yes/No
Most/more/equally/ less traumatised	Simultaneous	Reproduced	No	No

An example of the *differentiation between the victim countries* compares their level of contamination: ‘Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine have all been exposed to the radioactive attack. However, in relative terms, Belarus was the most damaged. One-fourth of the territory with two million people was contaminated with radio-nuclides’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2007: 1). In this example, Belarus is presented as the most damaged. The damage done is understood through the reference to the amount of the Belarusian population affected and the amount of the national territory contaminated. This construction reproduces the idea of human insecurity (i.e., environment and health). It also contributes to the nationalisation of the disaster by particularising the Belarusian damage. However, if the comparison was made on the financial burden of Chernobyl, then the Ukrainian official media would claim that it was the most traumatised of all:

Ukraine has spent 7.35 billion USD [out of 12.6 a total financial loss in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia of 12.6 billion USD] financing the costs for the liquidation of the consequences of the catastrophe alone for the past 14 years (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2006: 5).

This understanding of traumatization includes the costs of the maintenance and decommission of the Chernobyl power plant at the Ukrainian territory that Belarus and Russia do not have. Here, the Ukrainian official media reproduces the idea of technological insecurity. It also nationalises Chernobyl by particularising its damage.⁵⁷ Repetition is what gives these constructs dis-

⁵⁷ At the same time, the level of traumatization can vary depending on who is presented as a traumatiser: ‘Recently, we have been receiving alarming news from Ukraine about the old sarcophagus being in danger, with the possibility of a new local disaster’. Before

cursive power. Neither the Belarusian, nor the Ukrainian official media constructed the difference in damage on a constant basis. Thus, the constructions of different levels of traumatisation did not play a significant role in the trauma management. Only the Belarusian alternative media conveyed this comparison repeatedly during 2006-2011.

One example of construction of *equally traumatised* identities is the following: ‘The essence of this ecological tragedy is that the ecosystems in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia are filled with radioactive caesium. Caesium moves in the biological chain and gets into human bodies’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).⁵⁸ This example produced a common identity as a victim for the three victim countries based on the possession of the radioactive caesium. It did not differentiate between the victim countries on the basis of the amount of radioactive caesium each country received. The construction of common victimhood did not contribute to a nationalisation of the tragedy because of emphasis on similarities. It reproduced the idea of human insecurity (i.e., environment). It emphasised similarities between victim countries instead of differences through the discursive mechanism of uniting.

To conclude, the construction of the Self in trauma management is made through the discursive mechanisms of comparing and uniting, which produce traumatised identities (Figure 3.2). The construction of the Self articulates two identities: Self saviour and Self victim. The Self saviour is produced through the degrees of problem solving; the Self victim is constructed through the degrees of traumatisation. The degrees of problem solving compare the success or failure of the victims in policymaking. If the Self presents itself as a better problem solver than the Other, then the Other is presented as a worse problem solver (and vice versa). The degrees of problem solving contribute to the legitimation or de-legitimation of policies and, hence, the actors who pursue them. They also can shape national narratives in the country and the idea of ontological security. The degrees of traumatisation rank the level of damage done to the affected countries and establish who is the most and least traumatised.

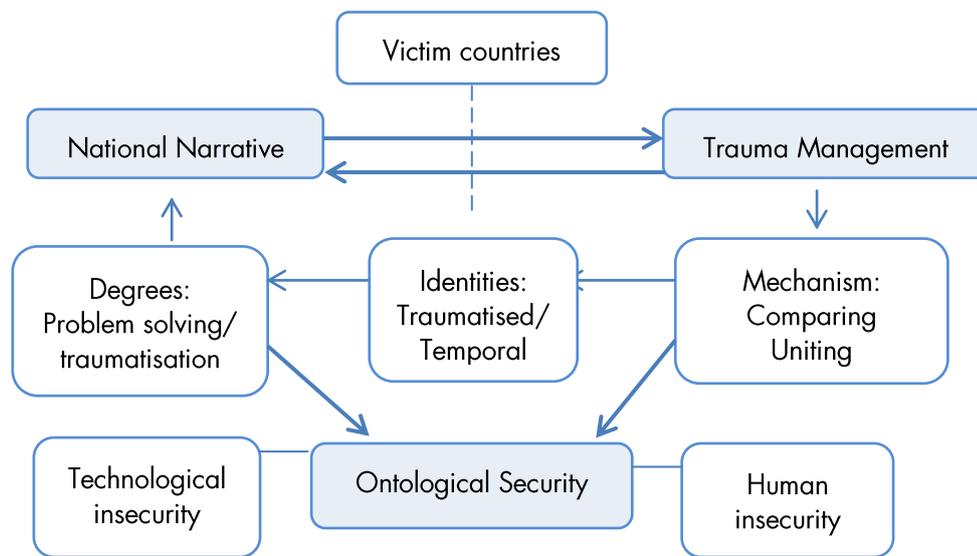
The more the damage is claimed, the more the victim country nationalises the traumatic event. The nationalisation of the disaster reproduces the idea of ontological *in*security (human and technological insecurity). As such,

Ukraine closes down the power plant, ‘the Belarusian people would be disturbed by the rumours about Chernobyl’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1997: 1-2). Here, the official Belarus presents itself as victimised and reproduces the idea of ontological insecurity by constructing Ukraine as a danger generator. This differentiation between the two victims contributes to the nationalisation of the tragedy by Belarus.

⁵⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horoshoby_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

a trauma management narrative becomes a story about overcoming the disaster by comparing victim countries in their level of traumatisatisation and success in problem-solving. Trauma management discourse is a contestation over the hegemonic story about overcoming the disaster on the basis of the level of traumatisatisation and success in problem solving.

Figure 3.2 Trauma Management Process through the Construction of Selves Saviours



Note: Arrows in the figure represent the working of a constitutive process of trauma management for analytical purposes and *not* a causal process.

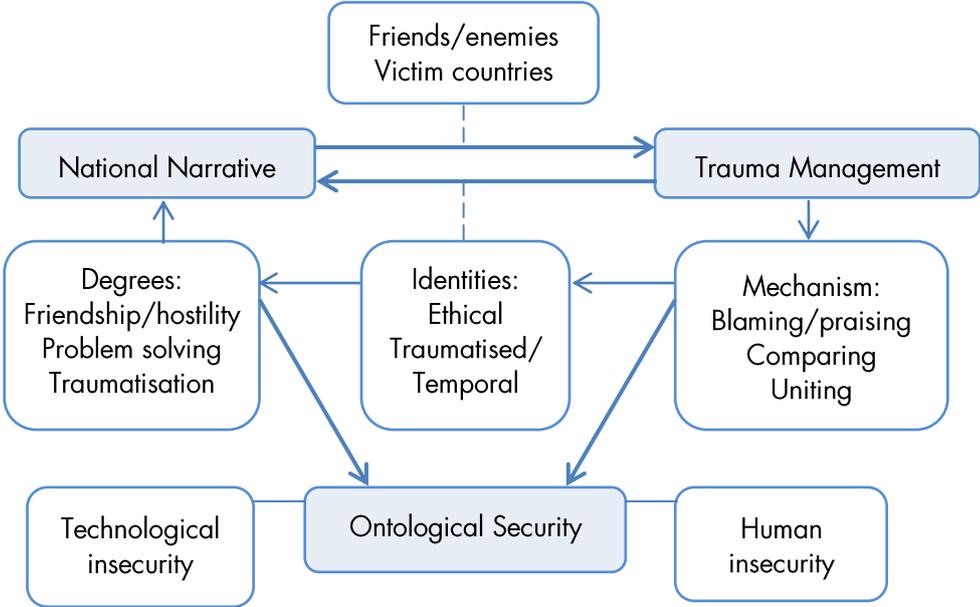
To sum up on Chapter 3, trauma management is a narrative about responsibility and victimhood. It constructs the responsibility of saviours for coping with the ongoing consequences of the disaster and victimhood of the affected states. The responsibility of the Others saviours is constructed through the discursive mechanism of blaming and praising, which articulates ethical identities. This construction shapes the degrees of friendship and hostility with enemies and friends. It reproduces or modifies the country's national narrative. It also constructs a certain understanding of ontological security of the citizens. It creates an understanding of the conflict with enemies and friends as escalated or smoothed and cooperation as improved or spoiled.

The responsibility of the Selves saviours is produced through the discursive mechanisms of comparison (which may also include blaming and praising) and uniting. These mechanisms articulate traumatised identities. They shape the degrees of problem solving among the victim countries. The degrees of problem solving in turn shape national narratives and construct a certain vision on ontological security. They also create an understanding of certain actors and their policies as legitimate or illegitimate. The victimhood

of the Selves victims is also produced through the discursive mechanisms of comparing and uniting. These mechanisms also articulate traumatised identities. They create the degrees of traumatising between the victim countries. The ranks between the victims reproduce the idea of ontological insecurity (human and technological insecurity) and create an understanding of the disaster as nationalised or de-nationalised.

The construction of the responsibility of Others saviours and Selves saviours, as well as the victimhood of Selves victims can play out in a trauma management narrative in different ways and change during a particular period of time. For example, during the 1990s, the official Belarus constructed Others as saviours of Belarus from the Chernobyl consequences. This construction shaped the position of Russia and Europe as enemies and friends in the Belarusian national narrative. They were presented as guarantors of the Belarusian ontological security. However, during the 2000s, its discourse changed, and it started to construct the Self as a saviour from Chernobyl. Russia and Europe were no longer seen as the guarantors of the Belarusian ontological security. Rather, the Belarusian state was constructed as a saviour. Table 3.6 and Figure 3.3 summarise all the main elements of trauma management. Figure 3.3 adds together the elements from Figure 3.1 (Others saviours) and Figure 3.2 (Selves saviours and Selves victims).

Figure 3.3 Trauma Management Process through the Construction of Others Saviours, Selves Saviours, and Selves Victims



Note: Arrows in the figure represent the working of a constitutive process of trauma management for analytical purposes and *not* a causal process.

Table 3.6 Saviours and Victims in Trauma Management

Actors	Construction	Degrees of Otherness	Discursive mechanism	Identities	Trauma management	Discursive result
Others saviours	Responsibility	Friendship Hostility	Praising Blaming (Uniting)	Ethical Temporal	Shapes national narratives and ontological security	Conflict escalation/ resolution Cooperation improvement/ spoiling
Selves saviours	Responsibility	Problem solving	Comparing Uniting Praising Blaming	Traumatized Temporal	Shapes national narratives and ontological security	Legitimation/de-legitimation of actors/policies
Selves victims	Victimhood	Traumatization	Comparing Uniting	Traumatized Temporal	Reproduces ontological insecurity	Disaster nationalisation/ de-nationalisation

Chapter 4.

Public Sphere in Trauma Management

Until now, we looked at how trauma management can be constructed discursively in the text. The previous chapter argued that trauma management takes place when competing actors rely on a certain national narrative to give meaning to the responsibility. If actors do not use the competing national narratives to construct the responsibility, trauma management does not carry symbolic weight. The symbolic weight of trauma management shows that there is a contestation in the society over the dominant way of assuring ontological security.

This chapter looks at the socio-political context of text production and how it can facilitate or restrict a certain construction of trauma management. Apart from being linked to the national narrative of a country, trauma management also depends on the public sphere in which it can be articulated, and the operators of this public sphere are agents. This chapter theorises how trauma management can be constructed in the mass media of the transitional societies with fragile moral frameworks, fragile civil society, and authoritarian states. It introduces two types of the public sphere: disconnected and hierarchical. It argues that trauma management is more likely to be constructed in the disconnected publics. The disconnected publics consist of two antagonistic public spheres. Trauma management discourse occurs as each party of the disconnected publics interprets the traumatic occurrence through *their* moral framework, to *their* audience, by *their* elites, in *their* public sphere. Trauma management discourse is less likely to take place in the hierarchical public sphere. The hierarchical public sphere consists of multiple sub-publics. These sub-publics operate within one common hierarchical public sphere and do not fully employ antagonistic moral frameworks.

The chapter argues that a hegemonic status of a trauma management narrative is more likely to be achieved in a state-controlled media to which the majority of the population is exposed to and identifies themselves with. The hegemonic trauma management narrative is less likely to take place in a society with a sociologically fragmented population who do not identify themselves with the proposed narrative. The chapter also elaborates on each of the case studies on Belarus and Ukraine; that is, historical background, national narratives, implementation of these narratives, and media ownership.

4.1 Public Sphere in the Transitional States

Public sphere is a social forum where public discussion takes place. It depends on the functioning of institutional arenas and the possibilities provided to different actors to obtain access to the means of symbolic production. As Alexander argues, the construction of a cultural trauma depends on whether journalists are independent of 'political and financial control', religious leaders 'exercise independent influence', courts have 'room' for the independent 'entrepreneurial legal' activities, educational policies are 'a subject to mass movements of public opinion', and the governmental bureaucratic procedures are decentralised and monitored by the parliament (Alexander, 2004: 21).

If a public sphere is state-controlled, it becomes more difficult for the carrier groups with the contested meanings to spread their word. Before the Soviet Union collapsed, the public sphere was state-controlled and therefore silent about the consequences of Chernobyl. Words were used to create lies but not to provide enough information to the people. The Communist Party's lies constructed a 'happy' narrative presenting the situation as under control. This 'happy' narrative continued to be present in a public sphere for three years during 1986-1989:

Between May 1986 and the beginning of 1989 the official optimistic narrative about successful 'liquidation' of the accident's consequences and the return to a normal life remained dominant in the Soviet media. The press, radio and television which were totally under the control of the State and the Communist Party described heroic deeds of the emergency workers fighting radioactive contamination (the so-called liquidators), the solidarity of the Soviet people facing the disaster as one united family, and the efficiency of the central and local authorities in dealing with everyday problems related to evacuation, health control, and clean-up operations (Kasperski, 2012: 84).

As such, during the first three years after Chernobyl, it was not possible for the carrier groups to emerge in the Soviet public sphere, to contest the state narrative, or to articulate a cultural trauma. Agency was exercised only through rumours, gossip, jokes, and anecdotes (Kurti, 1988; Stsiapanau, 2010: 145). They functioned as words to create meaning about what happened. However, *glasnost* and political liberalisation, introduced by Gorbachëv during the 1980s, eased the access into the Soviet public sphere (Wanner, 1998: 33). The publishing of the first maps of the radioactive contamination of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia in 1989 was one of the key events leading to the explosion of public discontent and debate. Another key event was the resignation of the first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party of Ukraine, Vladimir Shcherbitskiï, which paved the way for more public de-

bate. The political context of *perestroika* facilitated the emergence of carrier groups, who addressed broader socio-political problems, as we have seen in Chapter 2.

As Friedrichs argues, ‘In a totalitarian society, critically questioning official legitimacy is repressed or suppressed; in a relatively democratic society, a certain level of such questioning and even outright attacks upon official legitimacy are expected, accounted for, and at least partially tolerated’ (Friedrichs, 1980: 549). Compared to Chernobyl, where official silencing practices continued for three years, in Three Mile Island,

the media coverage ... was dramatic, and for several days the episode remained the lead item in the news. Anxieties were raised about the potential hazards of increased radioactivity in the surrounding area and about the possibility of a nuclear explosion (Neal, 2005: 153).

In addition, the public could express its dissatisfaction with the nuclear energy in order to protect its own ontological security: ‘Nuclear power plants throughout the country were surrounded by picket lines and active protest against the use of nuclear power ... even experts could not agree on the feasibility, safety, and efficiency of nuclear power plants’ (Neal, 2005: 156).

Another example is the explosion of the reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant. After the accident took place in Japan in 2011, the public could criticize the government and obtain alternative information in the Internet. As Mitsuhiro Fukao, an economics professor at Keio University in Tokyo said,

Since the accident, the government has tried to continue its business-as-usual approach of understating the severity of the accident and insisting that it knows best. But the people are learning from the blogs, Twitter and Facebook that the government’s food-monitoring system is simply not credible (Elliot, 2013: 13).

At the same time, the government acknowledged that their national narrative of advanced technology and safety (mentioned in Chapter 2) was no longer working. Prime Minister Naoto Kan said: ‘Through my experience of the March 11 accident, I came to realize the risk of nuclear energy is too high. It involves technology that cannot be controlled according to our conventional concept of safety’ (Elliot, 2013: 19). The EU countries as distant observers of Fukushima put their power plants under stress tests and made plans to stop and decommission some of them. As one of the IAEA reports states,

The Fukushima accident had highlighted the fact that even countries with a high level of nuclear safety and a well-developed infrastructure were vulnerable. The

paradigm shift that had taken place had resulted in calls for stress tests and a review of safety standards and emergency preparedness systems.⁵⁹

To understand how trauma management has been developing after the collapse of the Soviet Union, one has to look at the transformation of the public sphere after 1991. Both Ukraine and Belarus had different trends of constructing their public spheres. Below, I introduce two types of public spheres (i.e., disconnected and hierarchical) to theorise the Belarusian and Ukrainian cases on the example of mass media. Jacobs argues that mass media ‘consists of multiple, frequently nonrational, and often contestatory public spheres’ (Jacobs, 2000: 1996). Fraser introduces a concept of ‘subaltern counterpublics’ to account for the excluded groups from the Habermasian universal public sphere. Subaltern counterpublics form ‘parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs’ (Fraser, 1992: 67). While Fraser studies the subpublics of the Western world, Benda and Jirous introduce the concepts of a ‘parallel society’ or an ‘independent society’ to account for the dissent in the non-Western authoritarian societies. They understand a society as divided in a state-controlled public sphere and an alternative public sphere. According to Jirous, an alternative public sphere is characterised by ‘kindness, tolerance, respect for the opinions of others, the acceptance of different human beings with love’ (Jirous, cited in Benda, 1988: 227).

As the Ukrainian and Belarusian cases are the societies in transition, their post-Soviet public spheres are more complex. Belarus can be characterised as the ‘disconnected publics’ (Bekus, 2010: 177). Disconnected publics differ from Fraser’s subaltern counterpublics representing ‘the total polarisation of the public sphere’ (Bekus, 2010: 177). According to Bekus, the disconnected public spheres disagree on the ‘fundamental issues of life in the state, as well as to understanding of the national essence of this state’ (Bekus, 2010: 170). Disconnected publics also differ from Jirous’s ‘parallel society’, as their alternative public sphere is not characterised by high morals and inclusiveness but is closed and dogmatic. The alternative public sphere is ‘only limited by their own political convictions and their own stream of information’ (Bekus, 2010: 176). As such, none of these divided public spheres ‘is interested in processes going on in the “opposing camp”’ (Bekus, 2010: 176).

Bekus calls this disinterest an ‘invisible wall’: ‘The arguments used by both sides only take into consideration the people on their side of the wall. They are aimed at and capable of convincing people who have already agreed

⁵⁹ http://www.iaea.org/About/Policy/GC/GC55/GC55Records/English/gc55or-3_en.pdf.

and accepted them' (Bekus, 2010: 176). This leads to the situation where the possibility 'to choose ... to agree or disagree, to accept or reject' information from both public spheres is literary absent (Bekus, 2010: 176). This differs with the initial understanding of the public sphere in cultural trauma, where 'individuals can either accept or reject the way that a particular event is interpreted and reconstructed'. 'Rather than one side informing the other, meaning-making is a constant back and forth' (Schmidt, 2014: 251). In the disconnected publics, there is no back and forth argumentation or any interaction *between* the antagonistic sides of the wall; carrier groups and audiences from one side of the wall do not engage in deliberation with another. Only the carrier groups and audiences *within* each side of the wall can communicate on the meanings of life. As such, the wall is created between two worlds, each having their own carrier groups and audiences. While not interacting with each other, each side of the wall constructs the identity of another side of the wall from their own perspective. According to Bekus, in the disconnected public spheres,

... society resembles two movie theatres divided by a wall, where two different movies about their life are being projected onto either side of the wall. What's more, each projection is self-sufficient and complete enough to provide a full picture of the world. The other side of the wall can also be seen from one's own side of the screen, without having to be interested in the real existence of those people, or their opinions, desires, and problems (Bekus, 2010: 176).

Each of the disconnected spheres ends up having their own media and institutions, their own audience, and their own national narrative (moral framework). The moral framework of one public sphere mutually excludes the moral framework of another and is placed in a binary opposition to it. Each of the disconnected publics also has their own carrier groups (politicians, experts, and journalists), who interpret events through *their* moral framework in *their* public sphere. As such, two parallel, ontologically opposing worlds have no point of convergence, and each of them claims to represent a certain vision of the society.

The media of each of the disconnected publics does not compete for readership because their readers are already divided into opposite world views on *their* side of the wall. In the disconnected publics, 'there is no competitive media environment, in which "informational myths" compete on equal conditions for consumer's attention' (Bekus, 2010: 177). The absence of competition in the disconnected publics brings a new insight to our understanding of media as a carrier group of trauma making. It contributes to Alexander's work, which argues that mass media competes for readership and

reports a ‘sometimes exaggerated and distorted production of “news” in mass circulation newspapers and magazines’ (Alexander, 2004: 18).

Besides having opposite worldviews (i.e., being disconnected through different national narratives), the disconnected publics also represent a problem of ‘stratificational hierarchies’ (i.e., being disconnected on the basis of structural grounds). ‘Stratificational hierarchies’ imply ‘the uneven distribution of material resources and the social networks that provide differential access to them’ (Alexander, 2004: 21). In the *state-controlled* disconnected public sphere, all the institutional arenas of trauma making are controlled by the state, and hence, the state bureaucracy, legal system, and media are a part of one whole. The media therefore becomes ‘the governmental power to channel the representation process’ (Alexander, 2004: 21). They have the ability to restrict the access to the institutional arenas within the state-controlled public for the non-state public. In the *non-state* disconnected public sphere, all the institutional arenas of trauma making are privately owned and receive external funding.⁶⁰

As such, one can argue that in the disconnected publics, trauma narratives will be polarised and constructed according to the national narratives, audience, and the ‘stratificational hierarchies’ of each side of the wall. Each disconnected public would produce their own trauma management narrative on the basis of their own moral framework in their own institutions. Because of the disconnectedness, the state-controlled trauma management narrative would easily achieve hegemonic status, as the contested narrative of the non-state actors would remain outside their side of the wall. In the newly emerged states, where the moral framework is fragile and in the making, trauma management discourse may not only reproduce, but also modify and enrich the moral frameworks of each side. The modification of the national narratives would also shape the level of disconnectedness between the antagonistic parties.

For example, when constructing the responsible for the long-term Chernobyl management, the carrier groups from the non-state public sphere reproduced the national narratives of the Belarusian opposition. They adhered firmly to their pro-European moral framework and continued to interpret

⁶⁰ As in the following example: ‘For the Belarusian opposition, domestic electoral success and state financing lie outside the realm of possibility. But international popularity – and funding – are attainable. Trips abroad by some opposition politicians thus seem to play a disproportionate role when compared to party activities aimed at developing the domestic base.’ [<http://belarusdigest.com/story/political-opposition-belarus-movements-instead-parties-22698>]. As such, while the state-controlled public sphere is focused on the domestic audience, the non-state public sphere is concentrated on the international (Western) audience.

Chernobyl and the responsible actors by blaming Russia (enemy) and praising Europe (friend) throughout 1996-2011. The carrier groups from the state-controlled public sphere, on the other hand, modified their national narrative over time. They praised both their friend Russia and their enemy Europe during 1994-2000 but blamed them during 2000-2014. This shift in constructing enemies and friends contributed to the modification of the official national narrative (Table 4.3).

Another public sphere that can be introduced through the example of Ukraine is the *hierarchical public sphere*. It represents a different variant of the structural problem of 'stratificational hierarchies'. It emerges with multiple 'subpublics' that have different 'weight' in providing information. Compared to the disconnected public spheres where there is a complete split between the symbolic and structural resources through the 'invisible wall', the hierarchical public sphere does not have a wall and includes everyone within. However, its participants do not have equal access to this within. There is an internal split between the state and oligarchs on the one side (who have the most access to the public sphere) and the independent media on the other side (who has the least access to the public sphere). The state and oligarchs can merge and exercise power over the information production. Only the independent media can contradict the state and business representations. Ryabinska describes the link between the state and oligarchs in the following way:

Oligarchic ownership of the media enhances the risk of introducing centralised control over the media. When a media market is divided between a few owners highly dependent on politics, it is easier to obtain their compliance to serve a ruling political group than would be the case if media owners were more numerous and more independent (Ryabinska, 2011: 16-17).

While the hierarchical public sphere can have multiple divisions in the stratificational hierarchies (i.e., state, oligarchs, and independent actors), the relationship between the existing national narratives and the audience can be different. The likelihood that carrier groups from different stratificational hierarchies will articulate a particular national narrative will depend on its acceptance by the audience. If there are two competing national narratives and the audience is sociologically divided on their basis, applying one of these national narratives at the expense of the other can escalate the conflict within the sociologically fragmented population. Abstaining from articulating a particular national narrative by the carrier groups can lead to either a smoothing or a suppression of the conflict. In other words, even when different carrier groups have access to the same public sphere, although unequal, their use of the national narrative to construct responsibility for the calamity will

depend not only on this access, but also on the level of sociological polarisation within the audience. Hence, the logic of the hierarchical public sphere is the following: The more sociologically polarised the population, the less likely the carrier groups would apply a specific national narrative in order not to escalate the conflict. The logic of the disconnected publics is the following: The less sociologically fragmented the audience (in the state-controlled public), the more likely the carrier groups (in the non-state controlled public) would apply an antagonistic national narrative.

As such, in Ukraine, none of the actors studied (official and alternative media) used their antagonistic national narratives to systematically construct the responsible for the long-term Chernobyl management. In both official media (state-controlled) and alternative media (independent), Europe was blamed and praised simultaneously during the entire period studied (1992-2011). This trend (i.e., simultaneous blaming and praising) remained stable regardless of changes in the country's leadership, stratificational hierarchies, and national narratives. Russia, on the other hand, was neither systematically blamed nor praised. This means that in Ukraine, trauma management discourse was not constructed⁶¹ (Table 4.5).

As such, one can distinguish the tensions *between* the carrier groups and *within* the audience. The case of the *hierarchical* public sphere shows that two types of tension are at work: (a) tensions between the carrier groups that are organised around state and oligarchs (against each other) and independent media (against the state and oligarchs); and (b) tensions within the population (eastern or western Ukraine) on the basis of antagonistic national narratives (pro-Russian or pro-European). In this case, it is harder to construct a master trauma management narrative about the society that would satisfy all. The case of the *disconnected* publics shows that there is only one type of tension between the state and non-state carrier groups, but there is no tension within the population (i.e., there is no eastern or western Belarus with different national narratives about the Selves). In this case, it is easier for the state to construct a master trauma management narrative to satisfy the state-controlled audience.

This logic contributes to Eyerman's understanding of polarisation as an important condition for cultural trauma emergence. Eyerman argues that for a cultural trauma to take place, there should already be the 'underlying and ongoing tensions and conflicts' about collective identities or values that carrier groups can bring into the public sphere and articulate through words.

⁶¹ When I say that trauma management discourse was not constructed, I imply that it was not related to the national narratives in a systematic manner, and not that there was no any discourse at all.

While Eyerman applies this logic to the Western societies with their established moral frameworks, developed civil societies, and democratic states, this study proposes the logics of trauma making in the newly emerged societies with their fragile moral frameworks (based on their orientation towards the greater powers), fragile civil societies, and authoritarian states (centralised or oligarch-ruled states). As such, the construction of trauma management may be facilitated by a) the possibility of the antagonistic carrier groups to mobilise material resources and obtain access to the public sphere; b) the application of competing national narratives by antagonistic carrier groups in a public sphere; and c) the appeal of the national narratives to the people they are advocated to. The differences between the disconnected publics and a hierarchical public sphere are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Public Spheres: Disconnected and Hierarchical

Public Sphere	Disconnected Publics	Hierarchical Publics
National narratives (moral frameworks)	Pro-Russian	Pro-European
Media ownership (stratificational hierarchies and carrier groups)	State-controlled Non-state	State-controlled Oligarch-owned Non-state
Audience (population)	Pro-Russian	Pro-Russian Pro-European
Trauma management discourse	Yes	No

The following demonstrates the differences between the disconnected publics (Belarus) and a hierarchical public sphere (Ukraine).

4.2 Disconnected Public Spheres: Belarus

The Belarusian disconnected public spheres consist of the state (as one public sphere) and non-state groups (as another public sphere). The majority of the citizens are exposed to the state-controlled public sphere and 'have not encountered any other version of the socio-political world or any other versions of their own reality' (Bekus, 2010: 176). 'For many Belarusians the picture of the world proposed by the official media is close and relevant, just as the picture drawn by the independent media appears to be close and appropriate for others' (Bekus, 2010: 174). Bekus refers to the public opinion polls from the Independent Institute of Socioeconomic and Political Studies (IISEPS) and shows that state newspapers experience a higher level of trust from the Belarusian citizens than non-state newspapers (55.3 % vs. 38.5 % in

2005). Bekus argues that not just state power, propaganda, or restrictions of access to the state public sphere for the non-state actors counts. Rather, the convergence of the ideas and values that the state media propagates and that people can identify themselves with is what matters. The following will introduce the historical background of the Belarusian nation, its national narratives and implementation, as well as the media ownership in the disconnected publics.

4.2.1 Historical Background

Belarus, compared to Ukraine, has been a homogenously-minded society: 'Belarus does not have its own equivalent of either Ukraine's Galicia or Crimea' (Ioffe, 2007: 360); 'Belarus has no ethnic conflicts of any note' (Dryzek and Holmes, 2007: 81). Nowadays, the population of Belarus is inhabited with 78 per cent Belarusians and 13.5 per cent Russians (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002: 80-81).

In the past, the Belarusian territory was included in Kievan Rus' (882-1251), the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) (1251-1569), and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569-1795) (Ioffe, 2003). From the beginning of the late eighteenth century, Belarus was under Russian influence; that is, the Russian Empire (1795-1917) and the Soviet Union (1922-1991). Only during a few brief periods of time was Belarus not controlled by Russia; that is, during the German rule (1917-1918) and the Polish rule (1918-1922). This produced 'an unusually strong cultural attachment to Russia' (Ioffe, 2007: 349). Akudovich argues that all the 'triumphs, accomplishments, and delights [of the Belarusian people] are either of communist or colonial origin' (cited in Ioffe, 2007: 371).⁶²

Ioffe states that 'Until the second decade of the twentieth century, even a common name of the people we now call Belarusians, a verbal denominator of identity that would transcend localism, was missing' (2007: 352). The Communist era was the first time for Belarus to acquire its own territory and its name. Ioffe argues that it was 'the longest period of Belarusians' national-

⁶² WWII was one of them. Savchenko demonstrates that Belarus contributed to the victory of the Soviet Union in WWII because it fought against the Nazis virtually on its own and helped the Soviet Union to win time for strategic planning (2009:117). This was the first time in history that Belarus was admitted and particularised. Savchenko shows that the narrative of WWII 'had become firmly ingrained in the national psyche of Belarusians. For most Belarusians, heroic images of their country's struggle against the German invaders remain central to their national identity' (2009:117-118). This is important to keep in mind when studying how Germany is portrayed in relation to the Chernobyl help provision to Belarus (as was also mentioned in Chapter 3).

ly conscious existence to date' (2007: 371). As Dryzek and Holmes show, 'Belarus was in many ways an economic success story in the Soviet era, in comparison both with other parts of the Soviet Union and with its own past' (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002: 79). Belarus had delayed urbanisation, and it happened exactly in the Soviet Union, where Belarusians became 'the assembly hall of the Soviet Union'. During the Soviet times, 'Belarus was transformed from a nameless province of the Russian Empire, with ninety-seven per cent of peasants among the native population into an advanced industrial state with universal education' (Leshchenko, 2004: 337). These developments created 'the perception that Soviet identity was a natural consequence of modernisation' and made Belarus 'a republic with the highest standard of living in the USSR' (Leshchenko, 2004: 337). In BSSR, 'the Soviet economic and social principles were most fully observed' compared to other republics (Leshchenko, 2004: 337).

4.2.2 National Narratives

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, two antagonistic projects emerged: the pro-Russian and the pro-European. The *pro-Russian* project glorified the Soviet past, close ties with Russia, bilingualism (active Russian language and passive Belarusian), and separation from Europe (Ioffe, 2007). It was initially built on the historiography of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union and developed further by Belarusian official scholars such as Pavel Yakubovich, Eduard Skobelev, and Lev Krishtapovich from Lukashenko's presidential administration (Ioffe, 2007: 366). It is an inclusive national narrative in which the entire Belarusian 'population (all citizens) regardless of any level of consciousness or languages' are included into the concept of the Belarusian nation (Titarenko, 2009: 3).

In the *progressive* part of this narrative, Belarus is seen as 'a branch of the Russian nation', while the BSSR is viewed as a 'culmination of Belarusian historical development' (Leshchenko, 2004: 336). Russia plays a very important role as an identity marker of 'Slavic brotherhood' (Pershai, 2006: 624). It is seen as 'the "older brother" of Belarus and Ukraine, which are represented as smaller, less developed and dependent "relatives"' (Pershai, 2006: 624). Therefore, the future goal is 'a reunification with Russia (and possibly other former Soviet states) with the ultimate goal of rebuilding the lost paradise of the Soviet Union' (Pershai, 2006: 624). The Russian language is understood as a language of 'culture and civilisation' (Buhr et al., 2011: 428).

The *tragic* part of the pro-Russian narrative focuses on polonisation (the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1569-1795), the German occupation (the creation of the Belarusian People's Republic, 1918-1919), and Nazism (the

collaboration of the Belarusian Central Council or the Belarusian Central Rada with Nazi Germany, 1943-1944). Polonisation is seen as a threat to the Russian roots (Bekus, 2010: 187). The military German occupation and the creation of the Belarusian People's Republic in 1918 are understood as an attempt to overthrow the Soviet rule (Ioffe, 2003: 1255; Bekus, 2010: 194). The collaboration of the Belarusian Central Council⁶³ with the Nazis during 1943-1944 is seen as immoral and shameful. Therefore, Europe's historical influence on Belarus should be treated with suspicion, as it deprives the Belarusians of their 'true' Slavic roots.⁶⁴

The *pro-European* project was linked to the 1980s movement *Adradzenne* (Belarusian intellectuals such as Vladimir Orlov, Gennadii Saganovich, and Yan Zaprudnik) and the pro-Western political party the Belarusian Popular Front (with Zyanon Poznyak as a leader). It was later picked up by scholars such as Vladimir Abushenko, Valentin Okudovich, Valeriï Bulgakov, Igor' Bobkov, and Andreï Dŷn'ko (Ioffe, 2007: 355; Titarenko, 2009: 3). It emphasized anti-Soviet and anti-Russian rhetoric, references to Vilnius, embracement of European values, as well as the Belarusian language, culture, and village (Brzozowska, 2003; Titarenko, 2007; Bekus, 2008). Their concept of the Belarusian nation is very exclusive: It is restricted only to the intellectuals who propagate it (Titarenko, 2009: 3; Pershai, 2006: 630).⁶⁵

The *progressive* part of the pro-European narrative sees Belarus as 'a European nation' and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (9th-18th centuries) as giving it its 'European roots' (Ioffe, 2007: 355; Buhr et al., 2011: 427). Enlightenment, Reformation, and Counter-reformation, Byzantine and Roman influences, Catholicism and Calvinism are considered as the European development in Belarus (Bekus, 2010: 199-200). The European values of civil society, rule of law, rights, and liberties are juxtaposed to the 'Asian' Russian values of administrative power, inseparability of property, and domination of bureaucracy (Bekus, 2010: 198). It is believed that 'democratization is impossible without joining Eu-

⁶³ The present-day Belarusian opposition is their followers: The Belarusian Popular Front uses the same flag and emblem as the Nazi collaborators.

⁶⁴ It is important to point out that the tragic part of the Belarusian pro-Russian narrative has a tragic narrative genre and not apocalyptic, whereas the tragic part of the Belarusian pro-European narrative has an apocalyptic genre (this reasoning through the narrative genres is inspired by Smith, 2005).

⁶⁵ 'Those people who appreciate the Soviet past, speak Russian instead of Belarusian, have not read nationalist historians (e.g., Vladimir Orlov or Mikola Ermalovich) are considered backward and are called 'Belarusian plebs', 'social province', 'marginals', 'irrational' (Okudovich, 2004, cited in Titarenko, 2009: 5; Gapova, 2006, cited in Pershai, 2006: 629).

rope; that Europe is a community of nation-states; and that without linguistic Belarusification, we cannot become a nation and are doomed to remain a Eurasian satrapy' (Ioffe, 2007: 360).

Table 4.2 Mapping National Narratives in the post-Soviet Belarus

	Pro-Russian Belarus	Pro-European Belarus
Friend	Brotherly Russia	'Return to Europe'
Enemy	Capitalist West Belarusian nationalists	Imperial Russia Pro-Russian population Belarusian authorities
Future	Eastern orientation Slavic unity Integration with Russia Commonwealth of Independent States Separation from Europe Corporatism (authority, stability, community)	Western orientation European unity Integration with Europe EU membership Separation from Russia Democracy (individualism, entrepreneurship, rights)
Past (progressive)	Glorious Soviet & Slavic heritage Kievan Rus' Soviet victory in WWII Orthodox Church Slavic culture	Glorious European heritage Polotsk Principality, Grand Duchy of Lithuania Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth Belarusian People's Republic Catholicism and Calvinism Enlightenment, Reformation, Counter-Reformation Democratic values (rule of law, rights) Battle of Grunvald 1410 Battle of Vorsha 1514 (against Russia)
Past (tragic)	Polonisation (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) German occupation (Belarusian People's Republic) Nazism (collaboration with the Nazi, <i>Kuropaty</i>) The breakup of the Soviet Union	Colonisation (Russian Empire and the Soviet Union) Russification (language and culture) <i>Kuropaty</i> as Stalin's genocide The end of WWII as Soviet occupation

The *tragic* part of the pro-European narrative is the post-European history (18th-20th centuries in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union). As Vladimir Ruda put it, 'there are nine centuries of European history ... and two centuries of "Asianness"' (Ruda, cited in Bekus, 2010: 199). Russia is viewed as a 'cause of all the nation's sufferings' (Leshchenko, 2004: 336). 'Disassociating Belarus from Russia is ... the central idea of the project' (Ioffe, 2007: 356). Preserving Russian as a language of communication is 'a step backwards' (Buhr et al., 2011: 427).

The two antagonistic Belarusian national narratives are presented in Table 4.2. This table will be an important guide when we look into the Chernobyl trauma management narratives in Belarus in the chapters of analysis and see how much they reproduce or modify the existing national narratives.

4.2.3 Implementation of the National Narratives

The pro-European project was advocated by the Belarusian Popular Front (BPF) – a movement that emerged during the late 1980s and held anti-Soviet and anti-Russian positions. As we have seen in Chapter 2, the BPF was one of the carrier groups of the continuous Chernobyl traumas during the 1980s. During 1990-1995, the BPF became one of the parties in the Belarusian parliament. However, it was not among the popular ones. It received 12.9 per cent of votes in the presidential elections in 1994 (when Lukashenko won for the first time) and no parliamentary seats at the parliamentary elections in 1995. They employed ‘the “Bolshevik’s methods” of coercion in order to impose their new national identity project quite quickly’ (Titarenko, 2009: 4).

The unpopularity of the pro-European national narrative within the Belarusian population can be understood through the mistakes the BPF made during the 1990s: (a) ‘referred to the glory of a distant age, with which little personal connection could be felt’ (Leshchenko, 2004: 337); (b) praised a massacre of Russians as a triumphal event of the Belarusian history that ‘appeared immoral to many Belarusians’ (Leshchenko, 2004: 336); (c) praised its collaboration with the Nazis to fight against the Soviet Union and argued that WWII was the Soviet occupation, and Belarusians were not heroes (Ioffe, 2007: 367); (d) ‘advertised “rural” ways of life and the language which had been looked down upon by the “advanced” urban population’ (Leshchenko, 2004: 337); (e) ‘considered itself as the only legitimate representative of the Belarusian nation’, pushing the rest of the Belarusian population ‘to intellectual Genocide’ (Titarenko, 2009: 5).

Leshchenko argues that ‘identity politics was arguably one of the gravest mistakes BPF made; the party failed to account for the historical and social context of the country to which they applied their theoretically feasible policies’ (Leshchenko, 2004: 337). And further:

By dismissing the Soviet period as a tragic mistake, the BPF implicitly suggested that people should dismiss large parts of their own lives. Thus, instead of streamlining its version of national identity into the existing social outlook, the BPF inflicted a clash in popular mentality (Leshchenko, 2004: 337).

Titarenko presents similar arguments:

A lot of Belarusian population, especially current urban citizens, moved to the cities after the World War Two. They became educated Soviet middle class or qualified working class, improved their standard of living during the Soviet time, so, there were no reasons for them to call the Soviet history the ‘period of oppression’: It was almost ‘golden age’ for many of them. They did not want to ‘return to Europe’ as they felt comfortable with their Soviet past and patriotic presence (Titarenko, 2009: 5).

Other scholars (Gapova, 2002; Pershai, 2006; Ioffe, 2007; Bekus, 2010; Buhr et al., 2011) have echoed the same reasons for the unpopularity of the BPF. Even some of the oppositional members accepted their defeat: ‘We invited the Belarusian people to the country where nobody lives apart from historical and cultural creatures and phantoms. Obviously, the people did not accept the invitation to nowhere’ (Okudovich, cited in Bekus, 2010: 842).

The failure of the pro-European project opened the doors to the project of the Belarusian president, Aleksandr Lukashenko. During 1994-2000, Lukashenko pursued the pro-Russian moral framework (Leshchenko, 2004). However, beginning from 2000, a new idea emerged of ‘continued independence and sovereignty of the Belarusian state and people’ (Buhr et al., 2011: 429). Ioffe (2007) calls this project ‘Creole’, which is neither pro-Russian, nor pro-European. In this project, the focus is less on the outside Others but on the inside Selves. It has received increasing attention since the conflict in Ukraine began in 2014. Even a new term of ‘soft Belarusisation’ emerged in this regard.⁶⁶ As we will see in the analysis chapters, the idea of ‘Creole’ is also present in the representation of Russia in regard to its participation in the Chernobyl trauma management during the 2000s. It is one of the reasons why Russia and Europe were regarded as saviours of Belarus during the 1990s, but the Belarusian state took this role during the 2000s.

4.2.4 Media ownership

‘Stratificational hierarchies’ play an important role in how these projects are advocated in a public sphere. The pro-Russian project is advocated in the Belarusian state-controlled public sphere (official media), while the pro-European project is presented in the Belarusian non-state public sphere (alternative media). ‘Unfavourable conditions⁶⁷ for independent media have

⁶⁶ <http://belarusdigest.com/story/soft-belarusization-new-shift-lukashenkas-domestic-policy-22434>.

⁶⁷ The state authorities have restricted the access to the state public sphere for non-state groups. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) named Belarus as one of the “10 most censored countries” (1997-1998), and in 2005, the International Press Institute (IPI) called Belarus the country with the worst conditions to conduct journalistic work in

made them incomparably weaker than the state media' (Leshchenko, 2004: 345). The state newspapers in Belarus have much higher circulation numbers compared to the non-state newspapers. For example, the circulation of the official newspapers is 500,000 copies (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, the newspaper of the Administration of the President) and 119,500 copies (*Respublica*, the newspaper of the Belarusian government). In comparison, the circulation of the non-state newspapers is only 30,000 copies (*Narodnaya Volya*, the pro-opposition newspaper) and 6,000 copies (*Nasha Niva*, the newspaper of the united oppositional forces of Belarus). Many state institutions are voluntarily forced to subscribe to the state newspapers (Bekus, 2010: 174). 85 per cent of all the Belarusian newspapers are state-controlled (Pilibaityte, 2010: 87). As 80 per cent of the Belarusian citizens are employed at state-owned institutions (Leshchenko, 2004), they are all exposed to the state newspapers.⁶⁸

Between 2006 and 2008, the Belarusian public could only purchase two non-state newspapers, *Belgazeta* and *Belarusy i Rynok*, from the newsstands. All other non-state and pro-opposition newspapers were denied print in the state printing houses and distribution by the state postal services (Bekus, 2010: 172-173). In 2008, however, with pressure from the EU, the two pro-oppositional newspapers (i.e., *Narodnaya Volya* and *Nasha Niva*) returned to Belarus to be distributed through the state printing and postal services.

Europe (Bekus, 2010: 171-172). After the Belarusian president Aleksandr Lukashenko came to power in 1995, an amendment to the criminal code in 1998 introduced imprisonment for insulting the president (up to five years), fines, and jail sentences for anti-presidential slogans (Bekus, 2010: 171). The publishing of information that 'damages the honour and dignity of government officials' and 'presents false information about political, social, military, or foreign policy in Belarus, is 'harmful to Belarus's security interests' and can be punishable (cited in Bekus, 2010: 171). The Belarusian media directive 'On Enhancing Counter-Propaganda Activities Towards Opposition Press', issued in March 1998, 'forbids state officials to make any documents available to independent media and bans government advertising in all but state-run venues' [<http://www.cpj.org/enemies/frameset.html>], as well as prohibits 'any foreign financial support for the press' (Bekus, 2010: 172).

⁶⁸ Even if people do not read the state newspapers, the popularity of the opposition newspapers in the Belarusian language remains very low. For example, the online readership of the newspapers and news sites in the Russian language is much higher (1,466 visits to the independent news portal *www.naviny.by* and 1,354 visits to the independent newspaper *Belaruskaya Delovaya Gazeta (BDG)* on a random day of August 2005 compared to 39 visits to the main oppositional newspaper *Nasha Niva* (Ioffe, 2007: 357-358).

Because of disconnection of the non-state publics from the state-controlled publics, the West has become the financial and moral guide of the Belarusian non-state public sphere. For example, the website *www.kamunikat.org* was founded by the American and Polish governments and non-governmental organisations in 2010, containing a wide collection of many oppositional periodicals, books, and videos available to the public. Poland has launched the Belarusian opposition TV channel *Belsat* (<http://belsat.eu/ru/>), while Lithuania accepted the European Humanities University (<http://www.ehu.lt/en>) at its territory in 2005 as the Belarusian social science university in exile. Bekus argues that the existence of the two disconnected publics in Belarus ‘is not a political problem in itself’, as one can find this phenomenon in the Western democracies, too. Rather, its total antagonism of the ‘invisible wall’ is a problem. Table 4.3 demonstrates the specifics of the Belarusian disconnected publics and its relation to trauma management.

As such, in the *disconnected* publics, the majority of the population belongs to the state-controlled public sphere. The carrier groups in the state-controlled public sphere create a master trauma management narrative that appeals to the majority through the reference to the national narrative. By using the antagonistic national narrative, the non-state public creates its own trauma management narrative to de-stabilise the hegemonic status of the master trauma management narrative (but it remains within the public sphere of the non-state carrier groups). The practice of articulating two antagonistic trauma management narratives (one in a state-controlled public sphere and the other in a non-state public sphere) through the reference to different national narratives creates a trauma management discourse. A trauma management discourse is in flux and can change over time when each of the carrier groups makes adjustments in its trauma management narratives. Each trauma management narrative is produced through a systematic blaming, praising, or comparing of the responsible by constructing their ethical or traumatised identities continuously over time.

Table 4.3 Disconnected Public Spheres (Belarus)

Disconnected publics	Period	National narrative	Application of national narrative	Media ownership	Hypothetical trauma management	Actual trauma management	Modification of national narrative
Transitional (Stanislav Shushkevich)	1991-1994	Pro-Europe	Exit Russia Enter Europe	Abolition of censorship	Blame Russia Praise Europe	Ambiguous	None
State-controlled (Aleksandr Lukashenko)	1994-2000	Pro-Russia	Return to Russia Not enter Europe	Censorship by the authorities	Praise Russia Blame Europe	Praise Russia Praise Europe Victimise Self	Reproduced Modified
	2000-2014	Pro-Russia	Distance Russia Not enter Europe	Censorship by the authorities	Ambiguous Blame Europe	Blame Russia Blame Europe Praise Self	Modified Reproduced
Non-state (Belarusian Popular Front)	1991-2014	Pro-Europe	Exit Russia Enter Europe	Independent	Blame Russia Praise Europe	Blame Russia Praise Europe Victimise/praise Self	Reproduced Reproduced

4.3 Hierarchical Public Sphere: Ukraine

Compared to Belarus, where the disconnection works through one moral framework per one stratificational hierarchy (with the majority of the population falling under the state-controlled public), in Ukraine, national narratives do not necessarily match the stratificational hierarchies but correspond to the population divide. There are two moral frameworks (i.e., the pro-Russian and pro-European), two groups of the population who identify themselves with these moral frameworks (i.e., the eastern and western Ukrainians), and three stratificational hierarchies (i.e., the state-controlled media, oligarch-owned media, and independent media). While in Belarus, the same actors had the same national narrative in a public sphere over time, in Ukraine, actors changed five times, and so did their national narratives. Every new president came with the opposite moral framework (either pro-Russian or pro-European) from his previous counterpart. However, the two antagonistic moral frameworks have never been exercised in full by their different advocates, as each advocate adjusted these frameworks in different ways. For example, advocating the pro-European moral framework did not imply playing by the Western rules of the media ownership. The following will present the historical background, national narratives and their implementation, and the media ownership in the hierarchical public sphere in Ukraine (Table 4.5).

4.3.1 Historical Background

Like Belarus, eastern Ukraine had been under the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union for 300 years by 1991, spoke Russian, and was predominantly populated by ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians. There were only few fluctuations of borders during 1918-1920 and 1941-1943 (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002: 115). Unlike Belarus, western Ukraine had several partitions with different parts of it being under the Austro-Hungarian Empire (until 1918), the Russian Empire, Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. All these parts were not unified until after WWII, with some of them becoming Ukrainian for the first time in history. Unlike Belarus, 'Ukraine has no "normal" national boundaries in the past to serve as a reference point' (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002: 115). As such, east and west of Ukraine 'have different histories, shared experiences, and moral values; these were developed in fundamentally different state structures and empires for centuries and thus have divergent geopolitical vectors of development and assessments of the past' (Korostelina, 2013: 297). Ukraine is divided into four cultural and linguistic zones: western Ukraine (15 %), north-central or historic Ukraine (33

%), south-eastern Ukraine or the lands of Catherine the Great and Peter the Great with a mixed population (28 %), Donbas and Crimea (before 2014) or the lands of the Soviet development with a Russian population (20 %) (Korostelina, 2013: 302). As such, one can see that half of the geographical territory of Ukraine had a Russian historical influence, and a much smaller part of it was influenced by Europe. From a pro-Western Ukrainian perspective, this division is characterised in the following way:

The most divergent regions by culture and mentality – the West and the East – are furthest from each other, with the ‘swamp’ in the middle of the country between them. The West-East divide extends from core differences: in the West, there is support for Ukrainian independence and democracy based on deep historical heritage, national consciousness, connections with European history, Magdeburg law, and the Ukrainian national movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; in the East, a post-colonial pro-Russian and Soviet sector was developed in the nineteenth century and again in the 1930s. The North region is ‘authentic Ukraine’, comprising Kievan Rus’, where Ukrainians have lived on their own land under different regimes but preserved their own culture and identity. The South is a Ukraine colonized during the Russian Romanov dynasty and during the Soviet period; people there retain Russian identities and Soviet mentalities (Korostelina, 2013: 302-303).

As such, the post-Soviet Ukraine is characterised through the following tensions between ‘anti-Russian, pro-European West and a more pro-Russian South and East’ (Malan, 2011, cited in Korostelina, 2013: 294). On the one hand, ‘the West of the country around Lviv (part of Austria-Hungary only a century ago and part of interwar Poland), is Western-looking, built against Russia as the significant rival’ (Malan, 2011, cited in Korostelina, 2013: 294). On the other hand, ‘the Eastern and Southern parts of the country see themselves as more organically linked to Russia’ (Malan, 2011, cited in Korostelina, 2013: 294).⁶⁹

4.3.2 National Narratives

The west-east dichotomy formed the basis of two antagonistic moral frameworks: the pro-European and pro-Russian. The *pro-Russian* national narrative embraced both the Ukrainian and Russian cultures, bilingualism, and similarities with Russian history, such as WWII as a Soviet and Ukrainian victory. The *progressive* part of the pro-Russian national narrative talks about ‘Slavic unity’, ‘brotherly relations’, and ‘Russian rootedness’ (Protsyk, 2008: 4). The Slavic unity implies common historical and cultural heritage

⁶⁹ When I refer to eastern Ukraine throughout the text, I imply both east and south of Ukraine.

between Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians and linked to the Kievan Rus' (the 9th century). Brotherly relations mean that Ukraine and Russia form 'a coherent cultural whole' rather than two distinct ethnic groups (Shulman, 2004: 39). Russian rootedness implies that Russian culture and language in the Ukrainian territory are the result of an organic historical development rather than Russian colonisation. The Soviet Union is considered the time of scientific and technological progress: 'Ukraine was one of the 10 most developed countries in the twentieth century, with high levels of economic development and technological progress ... There was a tolerant co-existence of these two communities [Russians and Ukrainians] during the period of the USSR based on a common Soviet identity' (Korostelina, 2013: 300). The bright future is drawn in the close relations with Russia and the CIS as an organic continuation of the historical, cultural, traditional, linguistic, and identity ties between Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians (Shulman, 2004: 40). The pro-Russian national narrative is more appealing to the inhabitants of the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine.

The *tragic* part of the pro-Russian narrative is seen in the Westernisation of Galicia, the OUN/UPA⁷⁰ collaboration with the Nazis, and the breakup of the Soviet Union. The western parts of Ukraine, primarily Galicia, are thought to have undermined the Eastern Slavic identity of spirituality, community, personal ties, and non-materialistic values by acquiring 'materialistic, individualistic and impersonal, and less spiritual' Western values (Shulman, 2004: 40). The collaboration of OUN/UPA with the Nazis is understood as a crime against the Ukrainian people. *Holodomor* (Death by Forced Starvation, 1932-1934) is seen as 'a result of a class struggle that took place in many parts of the USSR' (Korostelina, 2013: 310) but 'is used by the peo-

⁷⁰ The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) was a military wing of OUN. 'The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) ... fought a guerrilla war against both the Soviet Union and, at times, against units of the German Nazi army during the World War II. At the beginning of the war, the OUN proposed to Germany the creation of a Ukrainian army that would fight alongside Germany army until a "final victory". The OUN was hoping that Nazi Germany would allow the formation of a Ukrainian state. However, the Nazis did not approve of this plan. They arrested the leadership of OUN. Later, leaders of the OUN were released. The main enemies targeted by the OUN were Soviet partisans and troops of the Soviet Army. Although the OUN did conduct raids against the Nazi army in 1944, the OUN also allied with the Nazis later that same year to fight against advancing Soviet troops and partisans. The OUN conducted ethnic cleansings of Poles and Jews on the territory of Western Ukraine. Following WWII, the underground cells of OUN-UPA would kidnap and murder local teachers and heads of collective farms in Western Ukraine because these Ukrainians were working for the Soviet order.'
[<http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/02/04/wars-of-past-and-wars-of-present/>].

ple of Western Ukraine – people who never experienced it – for their own political purposes, capitalizing on the human tragedy. Though Ukrainians were also complicit in these crimes, they prefer not to admit it’ (Korostelina, 2013: 299). Therefore, Ukraine has to protect its Eastern Slavic values, as ‘since independence, this has given way to the growth of regional patriotism, increases in ethno-cultural movements, an emphasis on ethnic differences, and willingness to sacrifice the unity of Ukraine by Ukrainian nationalists’ (Korostelina, 2013: 300).

The *pro-European* project propagated ‘authentic’ Ukrainian history that was based on hatred towards Russia and the Soviet past, embracement of Western values, and restriction in using the Russian language. The *progressive* part of the pro-European national narrative is linked to ‘a common European Christian culture’ (Korostelina, 2013: 297). ‘Imperial Russian and then Soviet domination thereby served to distort, but not eliminate, the essentially Western and European nature of Ukrainian culture’ (Shulman, 2004: 41). The Ukrainians are presented as possessing European values such as individualism, freedom, democracy, and tolerance as opposed to Russian paternalism, dependence, authority, and aggression. The Ukrainians are also viewed as sharing the same European historical territory by having being a part of Poland and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Western humanism, Renaissance, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, and Magdeburg law are claimed to have taken place in Ukraine. That is why, in future, ‘the symbolic erosion of the boundary between Ukraine and Europe’ should take place in order to strengthen ‘the European nature of Ukraine’ (Shulman, 2004: 41). The ethnic Ukrainian identity is used as a ‘push for democracy’ (Protsyk, 2008: 4) and is more appealing to the citizens of the western Ukraine.

The *tragic* part of the pro-European national narrative is built around concepts such as ‘indigenusness, colonialism and Russification’ (Protsyk, 2008: 4). The indigenusness implies that Russians have no deep historical roots in the Ukrainian land. The Ukrainian language, culture, history, and symbols have nothing in common with the Russian. Colonialism means that Russians came to Ukraine from outside and colonised it. Russification implies that Russians suppressed the indigenous Ukrainian culture and language by imposing their own. That is why there is nothing organic about the presence of the Russian-speaking population and culture at the territory of Ukraine. It describes the historic events of *Holodomor* as an act of Soviet genocide and the end of WWII as the Soviet occupation. As Ukraine is viewed as a ‘post-colonial, post-genocidal, post-totalitarian’ society (Korostelina, 2013: 302), it ‘should defend its independence from Russian influence in both politics and education’ (Korostelina, 2013: 310). ‘Union with

Russia ... is a Russian idea brought from outside, one that Russia is using to fuel internal Ukrainian conflicts for its own benefit' (Korostelina, 2013: 305).

Table 4.4 summarises the two antagonistic national narratives in Ukraine. This table will be the guide when studying the Chernobyl trauma management narratives to see whether they reproduce or modify them.

Table 4.4 Mapping National Narratives in the post-Soviet Ukraine

	Pro-Russian Ukraine (Kuchma & Yanukovich; Ukrainians – east & south)	Pro-European Ukraine (Kravchuk, Yushchenko, Poroshenko; Ukrainians – west)
Friend	Brotherly Russia	Civilised Europe
Enemy	Materialistic West Ukrainian nationalists	Colonial Russia Russian-speaking population
Future	Eastern orientation Slavic unity Integration with Russia Commonwealth of Independent States Separation from Europe Collectivism (authority, dependence)	Western orientation European unity Integration with Europe EU membership Separation from Russia Democracy (individualism, market, rights)
Past (progressive)	Glorious Slavic heritage (Soviet Union, Russian Empire & Kievan Rus') Orthodox Church Byzantine culture Non-materialistic values (spirituality, community) Soviet victory in WWII Khmelnysky uprising against the Polish rule	Glorious European heritage (Galicia as a part of Poland & Austro-Hungary) Greco-Catholic Church Humanism, the Renaissance, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Magdeburg Law Democratic values (rights, freedoms) OUN/UPA fighting against the Soviets Cossack autonomy from the Russian Empire rule
Past (tragic)	Materialistic values (individualistic, impersonal) <i>Holodomor</i> as a class struggle Galicia as Nazi collaborator The breakup of the Soviet Union	Totalitarian values (collectivistic, patriarchal) Colonisation (Russian Empire and the Soviet Union) Russification (language and culture) <i>Holodomor</i> as Stalin's genocide The end of WWII as Soviet occupation

4.3.3 Implementation of National Narratives

Both pro-Russian and pro-European Ukrainian elites were present in the government and parliament and had their members elected as president. During Leonid Kravchuk (1991-1994) and Leonid Kuchma (1994-2005), there was an attempt to reach 'an inclusive, civic nation rather than one based on ethnicity and culture' (Shulman, 2004: 36). Therefore, none of the national narratives were practiced in full. Both of the presidents 'enacted policies that give citizens of all ethnic backgrounds equal political and eco-

conomic rights' (Shulman, 2004: 36). Some argue that this led to 'suppression of cultural conflict' rather than solving it, as Ukraine was 'exiting the sphere of Russia' but 'failing to enter the space of Europe' (Korostelina, 2013: 296).

When pro-European Viktor Yushchenko (2005-2010) came to power, he started to prioritise 'nationalism and the dominance of one cultural group over others' and 'encouraged expunction of the Russian language and the development of strong social boundaries vis-à-vis Russia, portraying Russia as an enemy of Ukraine' (Korostelina, 2013: 297). This prioritisation of one group of the society over the other and demonisation of Russia polarised the Ukrainian nation, so that the next elections were won by his ideological opponent Viktor Yanukovich (2011-2013). Yanukovich returned to the Kuchma style of identity politics that 'avoided nation-building' and 'aggressive imposition of cultural or ethnic identity' (Korostelina, 2013: 297). However, he did not propose an alternative way of going about the Ukrainian national project. Even though he smoothened the nationalism of Yushchenko, some claim that he still 'underscored Eastern ideas from Ukraine's Soviet past and a Russian model alien to the people of Western Ukraine' (Korostelina, 2013: 302). After the Maidan protests and Yanukovich fleeing to Russia in 2013, the new Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko (2014-present) is returning to the pro-European project. As we will see in the chapters of analyses, no president practiced their national identity projects in the representations of Russia and Europe in regard to Chernobyl.

4.3.4 Media Ownership

Szostek points out that the Ukrainian media of the post-Soviet times has been 'pluralistic and far from transparent, reflecting the nature of Ukrainian politics' (2014: 467). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Leonid Kravchuk abolished the official censorship and the state no longer had a monopoly on media ownership. Leonid Kuchma reintroduced self-censorship, and oligarch-controlled media resembled the previously state-controlled media.⁷¹ 'The media published materials propagating the policies of the president and the government and remained silent about their misconduct because they were forced to' (Ryabinska, 2011: 10). During Viktor Yushchenko, the media 'began to praise political leaders or criticize their rivals for pay' (Ryabinska,

⁷¹ In 1998, 'top public officials and government agencies started to file libel suits against newspapers, television companies, and journalists for publishing critical materials'. This shift made the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) name Kuchma as one of the 'Ten Worst Enemies of the Press' during 1999-2001

[<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/media-ukraine-domain-the-state-the-oligarchs-or-the-public>].

2011: 10). This led to the situation where ‘censorship by the authorities’ changed to ‘censorship by money’ (Ryabinska, 2011: 10). Viktor Yanukovich ‘implemented a return to centralized control over the media, as practiced under Kuchma’ (Ryabinska, 2011: 10). By the end of 2011, the state controlled 50 per cent of newspapers and periodicals and 35 per cent of TV and radio outlets, while the rest were privately owned (Ryabinska, 2011: 6). As Ryabinska resumes,

What is specific to Ukraine, however, is the predominance of oligarchs as owners of its media. These industrial-financial magnates are ‘external’ to the media industry, because their main business interests are not in the media but in steel, coal, energy, banking, and other spheres. They see media ownership as a means to further their economic interests, which depend extensively on political decisions. They use the media to gain political weight in order to influence these decisions. Oligarchic ownership of Ukraine’s major media considerably constrains their autonomy. Because they are politics-driven rather than market-driven, Ukraine’s most important media enterprises are anything but politically independent (Ryabinska, 2011: 16).

Apart from the state-controlled and oligarch-owned media in Ukraine, there are also media of ‘somewhat smaller audiences that pursue an independent or critical line’ (e.g., the newspapers *Zerkalo Nedeli*, *Den*, and *Kommentarii*; the magazine *Ukrainskiy Tyzhden*; the website *Ukrainska Pravda*; and the cable TV channel *TVi*). (Szostek, 2014: 467). However, the ‘state authorities have been known to discipline unfavorable media by refusing to deliver publications that have criticized them’ (Ryabinska, 2011: 7). Hence, ‘Ukrainian private media have to operate amid legal uncertainty and disregard for the rule of law...’ (Ryabinska, 2011: 5). In other words, the polarisation in the Ukrainian stratificational hierarchies can be understood through the independent media having contested stories against the state-controlled and oligarch-owned media.

As such, in the *hierarchical* public sphere, the population adheres to different national narratives. Attempts are made by carrier groups to either homogenise this discursive conflict by abstaining from using the antagonistic national narrative or polarise it even more by relying on a specific moral framework. It is not possible for a master trauma management narrative to take place as no clear majority would accept it. The carrier groups have to adjust their antagonistic national narratives and apply them only partially when they articulate them to the entire population. They can also articulate a particular national narrative in full, but then it would be appreciated only by one group of the audience and create tensions with the other group. By not articulating two antagonistic trauma management narratives on the basis of

competing national narratives, a trauma management discourse is prevented from taking place.

Table 4.5 Hierarchical Public Sphere (Ukraine)

Period	President	National narrative	Application of national narrative	Media ownership	Hypothetical trauma management	Actual trauma management
1991-1994	Leonid Kravchuk	Pro-Europe	Exit Russia Enter Europe	Abolition of censorship	Blame Russia Praise Europe	Ambiguous
1994-2005	Leonid Kuchma	Pro-Russia	Exist Russia Not enter Europe	Censorship by authorities	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
2005-2010	Viktor Yushchenko	Pro-Europe	Exit Russia Enter Europe	Censorship by money	Blame Russia Praise Europe	Ambiguous
2011-2013	Viktor Yanukovich	Pro-Russia	Return to Russia Not exit Europe	Censorship by authorities	Praise Russia Ambiguous about Europe	Ambiguous
2014-present	Petro Poroshenko	Pro-Europe	Exit Russia Enter Europe	Censorship of the Russian media by authorities	Blame Russia Praise Europe	To be seen

To sum up on the public sphere chapter, disconnected publics are divided into two autonomous spheres: a state-controlled and a non-state. Each of them has their own institutions, audience, and moral framework. The population is exposed to the state-controlled public sphere and is predominantly homogenous in a sociological sense (i.e., is not divided on the basis of a moral framework). As such, carrier groups in the two disconnected publics articulate two antagonistic trauma management narratives that form a trauma management discourse. Each of these narratives can change over time and hence shape the national narrative on each side of the disconnected public sphere. It is easier for the state to articulate a hegemonic trauma management narrative, as there is no contestation present in the state-controlled public sphere, only outside of it. At the same time, if the state-controlled public sphere articulates a national narrative that appeals to the people, it becomes easier to obtain public consent. In the hierarchical public sphere, on the other hand, it is harder to articulate a hegemonic trauma management narrative, as there are divisions between the antagonistic carrier groups within the same public sphere and antagonism within the sociologically fragmented population (on the basis of different national narratives). Hence, the articulation of a particular national narrative is not practiced in full. As

such, a trauma management discourse would less likely be constructed in a hierarchical public sphere.

To conclude, Part II has presented a concept of trauma management to analyse the construction of responsibility for dealing with the long-term consequences of a disaster in which the main actor is a saviour. The construction of trauma management depends on the ability of powerful actors to mobilise competing stories about overcoming the consequences of the disaster on the basis on the national narrative. The ability of the powerful actors depends on the use of certain discursive constructions and the type of public sphere they are embedded in. Trauma management can take place after the traumatic occurrence is over when its consequences are understood to have prolonged effects.

The importance of the concept of trauma management lies in the following. First, trauma management contributes to the escalation of a conflict with the foreign actors or its resolution; it can also contribute to an improvement or a deterioration of a cooperation. The role of trauma management in shaping the conflict or cooperation with the foreign countries lies in its link to the national narratives. National narratives construct a country's enemies and friends. Trauma management narratives either reproduce or modify the roles of enemies and friends in the national narratives. If the role of the enemy is reproduced, then the conflict is seen as escalated. If the role of the friend is reproduced, then the cooperation is understood as strengthened. Vice versa, if the role of the enemy is modified, then the conflict is viewed as smoothed. If the role of the friend is modified, then cooperation is presented as weakened. These shifts are especially important for the newly emerged countries in the process of transition that are still trying to find themselves and their place in the world. They demonstrate how actors can discursively improve or spoil relations with foreign states through the construction of a certain story about overcoming the consequences of the calamity. Presenting the escalation of a conflict or deterioration of a cooperation contributes to the understanding of ontological security as threatened. Constructing the resolution of a conflict or improvement of a cooperation contributes to the understanding of ontological security as assured. Articulating a certain vision of ontological security produces a certain way of thinking and acting in finding oneself in the daily routines.

Second, by reproducing or modifying national narratives, actors also reproduce or modify a certain vision of the Self. Trauma management can either improve the image of the domestic leadership and strengthen their legitimacy through the representation of overcoming the disaster or spoil this image and challenge their legitimacy. Trauma management can either construct a positive national identity of a country that manages the consequenc-

es of the tragic event successfully or produce a negative identity of a state incapable of dealing with the consequences of the traumatic occurrence. The production of a positive or a negative identity of the Self in relation to the Other contributes to a certain understanding of ontological security. Ontological security is viewed as assured if the Self and the Other are evaluated in positive terms. Ontological security is seen as threatened if the Self and the Other are evaluated in negative terms.

Third, trauma management also shapes national fragmentation in the society and contributes to the unification or division of the groups within the nation state. It can either reproduce or modify the political divisions between the opponents or the sociological fragmentation within the population. Trauma management can either strengthen or challenge the sociological homogeneity of the population; it can also fuel or suppress the sociological heterogeneity of the people. The type of a public sphere (disconnected or hierarchical) would guide how a trauma management can contribute to the unification or division of the society. If a public sphere is state-controlled, then the trauma management narrative of the state can obtain a hegemonic status and contribute to the homogeneity of the population. Non-state groups can create their trauma management narrative outside the state-controlled public sphere. If a public sphere is not fully state-controlled and different groups can have access to it, their success in mobilising a particular trauma management narrative would depend on how many people would identify themselves with it. If the population is heterogeneously-minded, it is less likely that any trauma management narrative would receive a hegemonic status. Unification of different groups contributes to the understanding of ontological security as assured. Division of different groups produces an understanding of ontological security as threatened.

PART II.

TRAUMA MANAGEMENT: THE METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Don't let us forget that the causes of human actions are usually immeasurably more complex and varied than our subsequent explanations of them.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot*

Part II consists of only one chapter – Chapter 5 – which is dedicated to the research strategy and methodology of the study. This chapter presents the research strategy and methodology applied in the study. It, first, outlines the ontological and epistemological positions that this monograph takes. It touches upon issues such as generalisability, relations of constitution, comparative case studies, abductive logic of reasoning, and the researcher's self-reflexivity. It then looks at data collection, selection, coding, and analysis. It discusses the media sources used for the analysis, the process of their collection online and on a microform, the process of selective coding, and the process of their analysis through the thematic and discourse methods.

Chapter 5.

Research Strategy and Methodology

5.1 Ontological and Epistemological Stands

This monograph positions itself within the constructivist ontology and interpretive epistemology. *Constructivist ontology* is often called ‘ontology of becoming’ (Green, 2002: 11). Klotz and Lynch argue that structure and agency stand in a relationship of mutual constitution by the ‘inherent inseparability of language, practices, identities, and institutions’ (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 44). On the one hand, ‘actors define who they are and what they want with reference to the dominant rules and ideologies of their time’ (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 11). On the other hand, by defining their own identities, actors either reinforce or challenge the established structures. As Marsh and Stoker argue, ‘by creativity of accident, in a moment of contingency, they [actors] choose one of many possible sets of meanings, thereby building certain interpretations around themselves and “constituting” one world from many that were otherwise possible’ (Marsh and Stoker, 2010: 88).

Cultural trauma theory relies on constructivist ontology. It is based on the premises of cultural sociology such as the autonomy of cultural structures (i.e., moral framework) and the creativity of agency (i.e., carrier groups). By giving equal attention to the structure and agency, cultural trauma theory argues against structural determinism, according to which moral frameworks are ‘speaking themselves through men and without their knowing’ (Levi-Strauss, 1964: 20). Rather, cultural sociology holds that carrier groups as agents employ creativity in applying a moral framework to read events: ‘Actors face choices in allocating events to sacred and profane codes and in selecting and fitting a genre from the pool of contenders that, they believe, best explains the passage of events’ (Smith, 2005: 45). The task of the cultural trauma theorist is then to trace and document the production or reproduction, legitimisation or de-legitimisation, transformation or disappearance of structures by agents. In the context of this monograph, the task is to show how the media as an actor reproduces or transforms structures through the construction of trauma management narratives (i.e., national narratives and ontological security).

Structures are both ideational and material as the ideas and materiality stand in a constitutive relationship to each other, reinforcing or undermining each other. Hansen argues that ‘neither ideas nor materiality have a mean-

ingful presence separate from each other' (Hansen, 2006: 22). For example, Russia as a country (material structure) comes into being only when articulated as an enemy or a friend of Belarus or Ukraine (ideational structure). At the same time, this articulation can take place in another material structure – a state-controlled public sphere. What is articulated in a state-controlled public sphere is presented through the ideational resources of this particular place in a particular period of time. The division into state-controlled and non-state public spheres takes place because of the actors' disagreement on moral frameworks that they would like to advocate. As we will see in the analysis chapters, in Belarus, the political actors operate in two separate public spheres and advocate two antagonistic moral frameworks. In Ukraine, the political actors operate within one public sphere and do not advocate antagonistic moral frameworks.

While constructivist ontology focuses on being in the world, *interpretative epistemology* looks at how this being can be studied. Actors construct their being in the world through representations. The representations are articulated through language. The linguistic constructions become temporarily stabilised when dominant actors agree on what constitutes a certain phenomenon at a particular point of time and place. As representations 'privilege more fluid depictions and suggest greater contestation' (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 9), other actors can contest the dominant representations with opposing interpretations of the world. Language, as a carrier of certain representations,

is not a transparent referent for what it designates nor does it merely 'mirror' or 'reflect' an external world, but, instead, plays a role in shaping or 'constituting' understandings of that world, and is itself, in this sense, one of the 'ways of worldmaking' (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 53).

Hansen argues that 'it is only through the construction in language that 'things' – objects, subjects, states, living beings, and material structures – are given meaning and endowed with a particular identity' (Hansen, 2006: 18). In order to 'see' the representations constructed through language, interpretative epistemology focuses on studying 'meaning-making in context', which 'requires researchers' central attention to the concepts used by the human beings they study' (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 53). These concepts can be specific to a particular community and correspond to their 'local knowledge' ('experience-near'). They can also transcend localism and be applicable to different contexts regardless of geographical and historical positionings of the communities ('experience-distant') (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 53).

Cultural trauma theory relies on interpretative epistemology. Contrary to Geertz, who prioritised experience-near concepts, cultural trauma theory focuses on the development of experience-distant concepts. Smith argues that one needs to combine Geertz's 'thick description' of the 'Balinese mind' (1973) with the generalisable narrative genre theory. Smith stands for 'repeated instantiations of particular cultural structures rather than of unique conjunctions and unrepeatable, locally situated meanings' (Smith, 2005: 39-40). This allows 'the marshalling of multiple strands of data into a patterned order', showing 'how invisible structures can be inferred from parts' (Smith, 2005: 38). Smith, together with his colleague Alexander, terms this interpretative project as structural hermeneutics. At the same time, Smith admits the importance of contingency in meaning-making: "There will be gaps and overlaps in the resulting mosaic. There will be no "whole", but we can create a number of individuated pictures of sometimes better, sometimes weaker resolution' (Smith, 2005: 37).

The task of the cultural trauma theorist then becomes the excavation of the experience-distant and experience-near concepts in the linguistic constructions of texts. The content of the experience-distant concepts is filled with experience-near concepts that are context dependent to a particular community under study. In this way, the idea of the Geertzian thick description is not undermined: Rather than placing experience-distant and experience-near concepts in antagonism to each other, they should be looked at in a tandem. To define the experience-distant concepts, Smith particularly points to cultural codes and narratives that can be found in any text of any society. Cultural codes consist of binary oppositions between two representations (i.e., good-evil). Narratives consist of genres (i.e., tragedy, romance, or irony) that place binary codes in the plot, turning them into characters (i.e., a good character in the genre of romance but an evil character in the genre of tragedy). Cultural codes and narratives as experience-distant concepts constitute a form, while their content is shaped by the experience-near concepts. For example, the concept of a moral framework is experience distant. As every society has its own moral framework, its form will be filled with experience-near content of a particular society under study.

In regard to this project, the concepts of saviours (Russia and Europe) and victims (Belarus and Ukraine) are experience distant. The meaning they receive is experience near (i.e., brotherly or fraternal Russia vs imperial or colonising Russia). The experience-near concepts help determine what narrative genre a trauma management narrative belongs to (i.e., brotherly or fraternal Russia can belong to the genre of romance, while imperial or colonising Russia can belong to the genre of tragedy). I will return to this in section 5.4.

The reference to experience-distant concepts shows that the interpretative epistemology of cultural sociology ‘acknowledges but also reduced complexity’ (Smith, 2005: 43). The reduction of complexity speaks to the question of *generalisability*. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow argue that generalisability is an activity of positivist scientists who aim to put ‘responsibility for the applicability of “findings” from one research setting to potential other *on the shoulders of the researchers*’ (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 47). Interpretive researchers, on the other hand, are focused on contextuality. They move ‘the responsibility for the applicability of learning to other research settings from the researchers to the readers of the research’ (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 48). In other words, in positivist science, the generalisation of the results is the responsibility of the researcher. In the interpretive science, it is the reader who decides whether and to what extent the researcher’s findings fit other contexts. Klotz and Lynch take a medium position and stand for ‘context-dependent generalisations about behaviour and language’ (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 15). They argue that ‘given a particular set of social, historical, and/or spatial conditions, people are likely ... to reproduce dominant practices’, transform the established structures, or introduce new ones (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 15).

Cultural trauma theory also takes a medium position by proposing a general theory with a heuristic character. It means that every single case under study has its own dynamics and specifics based on experience-near concepts. The researcher needs to find the balance between the general and the particular when studying the case; that is, who the agents are, what moral framework they employ, in what public sphere, what the composition of the audience is, what moral framework they appeal to, who owns the media, and so on. The heuristic character of trauma management as a concept of cultural trauma theory is demonstrated in Chapter 12 with a brief look at two other cases: the Philippines and Vietnam.

Another important aspect of constructivist-interpretive research is the relationship between the phenomena under study. Constructivist research privileges *the relations of constitution* over causality. However, the position towards causality varies. Some scholars argue that causality and constitution are incompatible and should not be mixed. Hansen, for example, argues that because of the linguistic ontology and discursive epistemology, it is not possible to separate the studied phenomena from each other, as they are relational and do not exist out there beyond language (Hansen, 2006). Others believe in constitutive causality but dispute about the degrees of causal effects (Lebow, 2009; Jackson, 2010; Kurki and Suganami, 2012). Some scholars stand for contextual causality and search for a context-dependent mechanism (Maxwell, 2004). Others defend constitutive causality, arguing that

ideas and identities affect people's choices, relations, and actions (Lebow, 2009). Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, for example, argue that constitutive causality can 'explain events in terms of actors' understandings of their own contexts, rather than in terms of a more mechanistic causality' (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 52).

In cultural sociology, cultural structures have causal power on people's motivation, interests, and actions. Smith argues that

culture can be thought of as a "cause" in a surprisingly public and social sense. Cultural causation is not only about invisible processes of reasoning within the mind, but rather about the witnessable public activity of sense making and persuasion (Smith, 2005: 48).

To Smith, culture is an independent variable that can explain actions and choices that actors make. In my contribution to cultural trauma theory, I depart from claiming causality but rather focus on constitutive relations. In this sense, I take a position of the scholars who argue for separation of causality and constitution. In my understanding of the autonomy of cultural structures, neither does trauma management cause the reproduction or change in national narratives, nor do national narratives cause the emergence and transformation of trauma management. For this causality to take place, two variables (i.e., national narratives as a dependent variable and trauma management as an independent variable, or vice versa) should be analytically separable. Rather than being separable, national narratives and trauma management constitute each other. It is a matter of agents' choice whether and to what extent to employ national narratives to construct trauma management. This choice is not caused by external factors but is a matter of contingency.

Similarly, neither does trauma management cause ontological security, nor does ontological insecurity cause trauma management. Rather, trauma management gives meaning to the ontological security of a population by assigning meaning to the ontological insecurity of the victims. As such, ontological insecurity and ontological security are constitutive parts rather than separable variables of trauma management. Likewise, media ownership does not cause trauma management. Nor does the sociological fragmentation of a population on the basis of moral frameworks cause trauma management. Media ownership and the sociological division of an audience are viewed as a context that constitutes events, people, and structures. Context is not a separable variable. Rather than causing phenomena, it constitutes them when it brings them into being. Therefore, when I separate the concepts in this monograph, I do so for analytical and theoretical purposes, not causal purposes.

Another important question to raise for the constructivist and interpretive sciences is the possibility of *comparative case studies*. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow reject case selection as a plausible feature of interpretative analysis and argue for case access instead. They argue that ‘case selection is driven by the goal of building general theory: cases do not have values in and of themselves’ (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 52). Hansen, on the other hand, argues that one can construct a general theory and propose an in-depth case study to support it. She calls this case study a ‘case plus study’, arguing that ‘it is not a test as the basis propositions ... are constitutive rather than causal’ (Hansen, 2006: 11). Bearing the heuristic focus of cultural trauma theory in mind, comparing cases for the reason of development of a general theory does not necessarily ignore the values of the cases themselves. As stated in Chapter 1, in addition to contributing to cultural trauma literature, this monograph also contributes to the case-specific literature by bringing new in-depth knowledge to it. As such, this monograph focuses on both the possibility to generalise and contribute to cultural trauma theory (understanding the theory through the case) and the uniqueness of the cases under study (understanding cases in their own right).

As such, the cases selected for this study can be described as deviant (the Chernobyl nuclear disaster), most similar (the post-Soviet Belarus and Ukraine), and context- and process-oriented. Drawing on Burawoy’s extended case method, Small argues that ‘deviant or unique cases are especially interesting, because they provide for ways of developing or extending theories’ (Small, 2009: 21). As has been already mentioned, the purpose of this study is to contribute to the cultural trauma theory. The Chernobyl disaster is identified as a *deviant* case to accomplish this task. There are several deviations to consider. First, the construction of trauma management took place, not after the tragic event itself during 1986-1991, but after the second external event (i.e., the collapse of the Soviet Union) starting from 1992. This made the construction of trauma management go hand-in-hand with the construction of the new moral frameworks. Second, the construction of trauma management took place in societies with state-controlled media. This allowed re-considering the place of the state in cultural trauma management and suggesting its equal role as an arena of trauma making together with non-state groups. It also proposed to rethink the role that the media play in trauma construction by pointing to the absence of competition between state-controlled and non-state public spheres. Third, the construction of trauma management took place around the event, with its ongoing health and environmental consequences. This allowed distinguishing the construction of saviours as responsible for dealing with the ongoing consequences of the disaster. It also allowed seeing how the ontological security of a population can

be constructed by articulating the alleviation of the ontological insecurity of the directly affected victims.

Furthermore, Belarus and Ukraine as victim countries are defined as *the most similar* cases. Smith argues that for a comparison to be ‘instructive’, the cases under study should have ‘sufficient resemblance’, but also ‘variability in historical outcomes’ (Smith, 2005: 40). As for the sufficient resemblance, both Belarus and Ukraine were a part of the Soviet Union, have been affected by Chernobyl, and have become independent in 1991. Both countries share a territorial border, a Slavic historical heritage, an Orthodox religion, and have a Russian-speaking population. As for variability in historical outcomes, in terms of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, Belarus and Ukraine differ in the material damage received (population and territory affected) and the possession of nuclear facilities (power plants). In terms of the broader socio-political context, they differ in the sociological fragmentation of the audience (homogeneously- or heterogeneously-minded population) and the media ownership by the carrier groups (state-controlled, non-state, or oligarch-owned). The broader socio-political context, discussed in this study, only covers the issues directly related to the theoretical development (i.e., moral frameworks, audience, and carrier groups). A detailed description of the broader socio-political context was carried out in Chapter 4 through reference to a public sphere.

The sufficient resemblance made it easier to arrange a data collection over the same period of time (1992-2014) and decide on the linguistic and contextual units of analysis in the within-case and cross-case comparisons. Ethical, traumatised, and temporal identities, identified in the data through the thematic analysis (see section 5.4), were chosen as the linguistic units of analysis to compare between the four media sources. Moral frameworks, audience, and media ownership were chosen as the contextual units of analysis. Both countries had similar antagonistic moral frameworks for meaning-making (pro-Russian and pro-European) and similar media ownership (state-controlled and non-state). However, while in Belarus, the population was defined as homogeneously minded (not divided on the basis of antagonistic moral frameworks), in Ukraine, the population was defined as heterogeneously minded (divided on the basis of the antagonistic moral framework – pro-Russian in eastern Ukraine and pro-European in western Ukraine). While in Belarus, the public sphere was defined as disconnected (state-controlled public sphere vs non-state public sphere), in Ukraine, the public sphere was defined as hierarchical (the same public sphere with state-controlled, non-state, and oligarch-owned carrier groups). The identified variability in historical outcomes and the sufficient resemblance of the cases were taken as a guide for the conceptual and theoretical claims. They also

served as a contextual guide to understanding why Belarus produced trauma management discourse, but Ukraine did not. The sufficient resemblance and variability in historical outcomes were discussed in Chapter 4.

The Chernobyl case study is also defined as *context and process oriented* rather than variable and variance oriented (Maxwell, 2012). It is process oriented as it traces the development and transformation of trauma management narratives over time. It is context oriented as it is an in-depth case study of the two post-communist societies in transition that focuses on the historical contingency. Context- and process-oriented case studies are useful for theory development as they are exploratory in nature and thus open to new theoretical anomalies and surprises. The scope conditions (limitations or boundaries) of the context and process-oriented case study for the theory development in this monograph are the following: Countries that experienced a traumatic event with ongoing consequences are non-Western and post-colonial, and have state-controlled media and greater powers as identity orienteers (also to be discussed in Chapter 12).

Another question that constructivist and interpretative researchers may ask is whether research is inductive, deductive, or both. Deductive research is theory-driven: The concepts are first identified in the theory and later applied to the empirical materials (Crabtree and Miller, 1999). Inductive research is data driven: Rather than assigning pre-established concepts to the empirical data, the researcher allows new concepts to emerge from the data itself (Boyatzis, 1998). *Abductive research*, on the other hand, combines the elements of both deductive and inductive approaches (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012; Timmermans and Tavory, 2012). As Klotz and Lynch argue,

Interpretation requires at least some key concepts to guide the selection of relevant information. In turn, those concepts result from researchers trying to understand, and act within, their socially constructed world. Theory and evidence thus inform each other. The more credible claim combines the insights of studies that rely on generalisation with others that stress detail (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 21).

The abductive logic of reasoning works as follows: ‘The literature is missing something, in that it does not provide an adequate explanation of what the researcher has encountered in field experiences or in archival documentation of events, thoughts, experiences, and so forth’ (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 34). This missing part in the theoretical literature becomes a puzzle discovered in the empirical data. The abductive logic of reasoning does not follow ‘first this, then that’ steps of deduction or induction. Rather, it has ‘a much more circular spiral pattern’ (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 28).

As this research is exploratory and the aim is to contribute to cultural trauma theory, it adopts the abductive logic of reasoning. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 provided a detailed discussion of how the concepts of this study were developed. For example, Giddens's theoretical concept of ontological security was adjusted to two empirical concepts of human and technological insecurity. These concepts helped to account for the victims' interpretation of health, environmental, and technological effects of Chernobyl. The concept of trauma management was created on the basis of cultural trauma theory and empirical materials to account for the construction of the saviours' responsibility for dealing with the ongoing consequences of the disaster. The concept of traumatised identity was theorised from data to better understand the existing theoretical concepts of ethical and temporal identities as developed by Hansen. So did the concepts of the degrees of friendship and hostility, traumatisation, and problem solving. The discursive mechanism of blaming from Eyerman was accompanied with praising, comparing, and uniting from the data. The concepts of disconnected and hierarchical publics were developed through the regional literature to account for the theory of the public sphere in societies with state-controlled media, and so on.

The last point to mention in this section is *researcher's self-reflexivity*. As Schwartz-Shea and Yanow argue,

a critical reflexivity calls on researchers to think deeply about the ways in which their own research communities are historically constituted, such that a particular socio-political contexts shape, in previously unarticulated or unrecognized ways, the research questions asked or the very concepts used to investigate phenomena (Schwartz Shea and Yanow, 2012: 102).

For example, 'the researcher's own acceptance or criticism of liberal values will influence – at least to some extent – both the general research agenda and the resulting analysis' (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 12).

Regarding this study, I outline several personal experiences that could have possibly shaped the interest and understanding of the topic under investigation. I am Belarusian by nationality, coming from an area close to Chernobyl. My grandfather was a Chernobyl liquidator and died five years after the disaster from cancer. My grandfather's participation in Chernobyl and his immediate death were less likely to influence the interpretations of data as I was 10 months old when Chernobyl exploded and five years old when my grandfather died. At the same time, when the Chernobyl disaster took place, my mother took me away to Moscow where we lived for one year until some information became available. This personal experience can be defined through the concept of human insecurity – my mother's interpretation of what happened in Chernobyl, her perception of how dangerous it was,

and the action undertaken in this regard. Another example of human insecurity was the social practices – a constant medical check of the thyroid gland (twice a year) for children born before and after 1986 during my childhood and adolescence. I also carry an identity of a Chernobyl child who travelled for recuperative visits abroad: three times to Italy (at the age of 11, 12, and 14), Germany (at the age of 13), and Sweden (at the age of 15). I remembered this experience when I theorised the representations of Europe as philanthropic and called for more research on how trips of the Chernobyl children to Europe shaped the perception of friendship or antagonism between Europe and Belarus.

In addition, my grandmother was a WWII veteran and survived a blockade of Leningrad by the Nazis. This experience, however, was less likely to influence the research process, as I discovered already during the data reading that Germany was among the top humanitarian aid providers to Belarus. As for the values and political stands, I do not have strong emotional or ideological attachment to the political actors discussed. I agree with Michel Foucault, who argued that the overthrow of one discursive order does not invite liberation of individuals but is just an invitation to another discursive order to substitute the previous one. Nor am I in favour of the polarised binarism between Russia and Europe. Living in Europe, I do not hate Russia (unlike the pro-European Belarusian opposition) and would not be offended if someone was confused and called me Russian instead of Belarusian. Nor do I hate Europe and would not be offended if someone called me European. In this sense, I do not take sides of any of the parties studied. Following the spirit of Mother Teresa, who said that ‘I will never attend an anti-war rally; if you have a peace rally, invite me’, I point out the example of Chernobyl as an alternative way to improve the relations between Belarus and Europe without escalating the conflict with Russia. I have documented all the translated codes (in a form of quotes, summaries, or paraphrases) in the analysis chapters in order for the reader to see where the concept development, interpretative analysis, and conclusions came from to reduce the possibilities of my own subjective judgements.

5.2 Data Collection

The data used for this analysis were official and alternative newspapers from Belarus and Ukraine. One official and one alternative newspaper for each country were chosen (four in total). To be able to conduct cross-country (synchronic) and cross-history (diachronic) analyses, the following criteria were adopted for newspaper choice: availability in a public sphere over time (1992-2014, 22 years), accessibility to the researcher (online and on micro-

form), different media ownership (state-controlled and non-state), elitist status (serious and central rather than peripheral and entertaining).

For the official (state-controlled) newspapers, the Belarusian official newspaper *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* (330 articles) and the Ukrainian official newspaper *Golos Ukrainy* (430 articles) were chosen as the most circulated. Articles that mention Chernobyl were selected on *each* anniversary of the disaster (26 April) between 20 April and 2 May 1992-2014 (760 articles in total). *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* was founded in 1927. Since 1994, it has been an official newspaper of the administration of the Belarusian President, with a circulation of 500,000 copies published five times per week in Russian. It is the most circulated newspaper in Belarus. The articles were accessed on microform (1992-2000) and online (2001-2014). For 1992-2000, the articles were collected through the interlibrary loan from the Aarhus University Library and the Microform Room at the Sterling Memorial Library (New Haven, USA). They were looked through page by page on the microform. For 2001-2014, the articles were collected online through the newspaper website www.sb.by by entering the word 'Chernobyl' in the search engine. The Microform Room at the Sterling Memorial Library also had articles for the period 2001-2008; the period 2009-2014 was absent. The articles collected online for 2001-2008 were double-checked with the same articles on the microform. Not all articles in hard copies were uploaded online. The number of articles on microform exceeded the number of articles published online for the same issue. At the same time, some newspaper issues or particular pages of the same issue were missing on the microform. When the newspaper issue was missing for 20 April, the previous newspaper issue was chosen to substitute it (the issue for 18 or 19 April, depending on availability). When the newspaper issue was missing for 2 May, the following newspaper issue was chosen to substitute it (the issue for 3, 4, or 5 May, depending on availability). The newspaper issues missing in between 20 April and 2 May were not substituted.

As for *Golos Ukrainy*, it is an official newspaper of the *Verhovnaya Rada* of Ukraine (the Ukrainian Parliament). Its circulation varies from year to year between 200,000 and 500,000 copies. It is published in two languages – Ukrainian (*Holos Ukrayiny*) and Russian (*Golos Ukrainy*). Since 1991, it has been one of the most circulated newspapers in Ukraine. Compared to *Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, *Golos Ukrainy* is not accessible online for free (only the issue of the current day may be downloaded from the website www.golos.com.ua for free). That is why all the collected articles were accessed through microform at the Aarhus University Library and the Sterling Memorial Library. The Microform Room at the Sterling Memorial Library provided the articles for the period of 1992-2008 in Ukrainian. The remain-

ing period (2009-2014) was accessed online through the website of two other major newspapers: *Fakty i Kommentarii* (2009-2010) and *Uryadovy Kuryer* (2011-2014). *Fakty i Kommentarii* is owned by the Ukrainian oligarch Viktor Pinchuk (son-in-law of former president Leonid Kuchma). With 1.100,000 copies, it is the most circulated tabloid in Russian. It has published news and opinions since 1997 but offers no analysis. The articles for 2009-2010 were accessed online through the newspaper website www.fakty.ua. The articles for 2011-2014 were accessed online through the website of *Uryadovy Kuryer*, www.ukurier.gov.ua/uk. *Uryadovy Kuryer* is the Ukrainian state-controlled newspaper. It is a newspaper of the executive branch of the government (the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine). It has been issued since 1990 with a daily circulation of between 120,000 and 200,000 copies. The reason why *Golos Ukrainy* was chosen over *Uryadovy Kuryer* as a main representative newspaper of the Ukrainian official media for this study was difficulties in obtaining access to the earlier issues of *Uryadovy Kuryer* on microform (1992-2010). To my knowledge, only the Library of Congress in Washington DC has earlier editions of this newspaper. For convenience, when I refer to the Ukrainian official media and the selected newspaper *Golos Ukrainy*, I imply the articles coming from *Golos Ukrainy* (1992-2008), *Fakty i Kommentarii* (2009-2010), and *Uryadovy Kuryer* (2011-2014).

For the alternative (non-state controlled) newspapers, the Belarusian partisan liberal newspaper *Nasha Niva* (36 articles) and the Ukrainian non-partisan liberal newspaper *Zerkalo Nedeli* (30 articles) were chosen as the most known. In the alternative newspapers, articles that mention Chernobyl were selected on *every fifth* anniversary of the disaster (i.e., 1992,⁷² 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011) between 20 April and 2 May, when the achievements or failures in coping with Chernobyl were discussed the most (66 articles in total). While the data collection for each year in the official newspapers was important to trace change over time and main themes of the discourse, the data selection in the alternative newspapers aimed at seeing whether there was a struggle over meaning going on between state and non-state publics.

Nasha Niva is the oldest pro-oppositional newspaper published in Belarusian. It was founded in 1906 and re-established in 1991. As mentioned in Chapter 4, today its circulation is 6,000 copies. This newspaper was chosen over another popular pro-opposition newspaper *Narodnaya Volya* with circulation of 30,000 copies due to the problematic access to the earlier issues of the newspaper, especially during the 1990s. For 1992 and 1996, the arti-

⁷² As mentioned, the first fifth anniversary of Chernobyl is 1991. However, as the Soviet Union still existed in 1991, the first independence year 1992 was taken as a reference point to the first fifth national Chernobyl anniversary in Belarus and Ukraine.

cles from *Nasha Niva* were accessed through the website *Kaminikat*. As mentioned in Chapter 4, this website is funded by the Polish government in collaboration with the USA and contains the collection of different Belarusian alternative press and literature. For 2001, 2006, and 2011, the articles were accessed online through the newspaper website (www.nn.by).

As for *Zerkalo Nedeli*, it is an alternative newspaper with the initial owner from USA, but now funded by Western investors. It is published in both Russian and Ukrainian. It has been nominated for different national awards within journalism. The circulation is 57,000 copies. An online archive contains all issues from 1994 (www.zn.ua). The articles for 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011 were accessed through this archive. No articles were collected from this newspaper for 1992. Table 5.1 summarises the collected newspapers.

Table 5.1 Newspapers: Name and Number of Articles

Ownership	Ukraine	Belarus
State/official (760)	<i>Golos Ukrainy</i> (430)	<i>Sovetskaya Belorussiya</i> (330)
Non-state/alternative (66)	<i>Zerkalo Nedeli</i> (30)	<i>Nasha Niva</i> (36)
In total (826)	460	366

5.3 Data Selection and Coding

After the newspapers had been collected, they were coded. Before the coding process started, I familiarised myself with the theory of cultural trauma and with the data sample from each collected newspaper. As mentioned, the data sample consisted of articles from each fifth Chernobyl anniversary. In addition, I read articles published between 25-27 April in the years 1987-2014. I have also looked at data samples from other newspapers and journals to make sure that the discourse holds in other sources. I looked at *Respublika*, *Zvyazda*, and *Belaruskaya Dumka* (Belarusian official media); *Narodnaya Volya*, *Belaruskaya Vedamastsi*, *Navini BNF*, *Pagonya*, *ARCHE*, and *Belarusian Review* (Belarusian alternative media); *Ukrainskaya Pravda*, *Postup Lviv*, *Suchasnist'*, *The Ukrainian Weekly*, *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, and *The Ukrainian Quarterly* (Ukrainian alternative media); and others. I have also watched documentaries such as *Bol' Moya – Chernobyl* ('Chernobyl Is My Pain', 2010)⁷³ and *Doroga Po-tihon'ku Zarastaet* ('The Abandoned Road', 2010)⁷⁴ (Belarusian official media); *Belyi Parus nad Pripyat'u*

⁷³ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjxS7PbYOys>.

⁷⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4RgMDEwads&spfreload=10>.

(‘White Sail over Pripyat’, 2011)⁷⁵ and *Chernobyl dlya Evropy* (‘Chernobyl for Europe’, 2014)⁷⁶ (Belarusian alternative media); *History of the Catastrophes: Chernobyl, The Lost World* (2011)⁷⁷ (Ukrainian alternative media); and others.⁷⁸ Consulting other sources was important for the purpose of triangulation (intertextuality), so that ‘a particular historical interpretation might be more convincing if the author had been able to incorporate a broader range of archival materials’ (Klotz and Lynch, 2007: 21). These sources, however, were not systematically documented in the analysis chapters.

In the studied data samples, I found several theoretical anomalies. In addition to representing the perpetrators who caused the disaster or initially failed to respond to it (deductive), the construction of saviours in dealing with the ongoing consequences of the disaster took place (inductive). The main actors in the construction of responsibility for the ongoing consequences of the catastrophe were not perpetrators and victims, as cultural trauma suggests, but saviours and victims. The construction of the saviours’ responsibility for overcoming the ongoing consequences of the disaster was defined as the process of trauma management. The construction of the saviours’ responsibility was a much more discussed topic than the construction of perpetrators in quantitative terms. It took place in 185 articles in the Belarusian official media and in 186 articles in the Ukrainian official media. In comparison, the construction of the perpetrators’ responsibility took place in 16 articles in the Belarusian official media and in 47 articles in the Ukrainian official media. This quantitative aspect supported the argument for the need of studying saviours as new actors in cultural trauma theory.

As such, the coding of the collected data in the four selected sources was focused on saviours; this, actors constructed as responsible for dealing with the ongoing consequences of the disaster. Perpetrators were also coded. The samples of their codes were presented in Chapter 2. The coding strategy was thus selective (Jenner and Titscher, 2000). The coding process began with the official newspapers and proceeded with the alternative newspapers. Codes consisted of either a sentence or the whole paragraph in an article. They belonged to politicians, scientists, victims, or journalists. Saviours were coded as domestic actors (leaders, politicians, state institutions, experts, and opposition) and international actors (individual states and international or-

⁷⁵ <http://belsat.eu/ru/films/38087/>.

⁷⁶ <http://belsat.eu/ru/films/38109/>.

⁷⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjKCI_TorbNE.

⁷⁸ The list of different Chernobyl documentaries can be found at http://chernobylsecret.my1.ru/index/filmy_o_chernobyle/0-14.

ganisations). The domestic actors were represented in 106 articles in the Belarusian and Ukrainian official media. The international actors were mentioned in 79 articles in the Belarusian official media and 80 articles in the Ukrainian official media. Individual states included victim countries of the same calamity (Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia), victim countries of a different calamity (Japan and Germany), and non-victim countries (USA and Europe).

Among the international actors coded, Russia and Europe were the foreign actors chosen for the study in this monograph. Before I state my reasons for this choice, I briefly discuss the number of articles in which Russia and Europe were mentioned; that is, 52 articles in Belarus and 49 articles in Ukraine. The Belarusian official newspaper *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* had 42 articles (26 articles for Russia and 19 articles for Europe).⁷⁹ The Ukrainian official newspaper *Golos Ukrainy* had 32 articles (19 articles for Russia and 13 articles for Europe). The Belarusian alternative newspaper *Nasha Niva* had 10 articles (6 articles for Russia and 5 articles for Europe). The Ukrainian alternative newspaper *Zerkalo Nedeli* had 17 articles (14 articles for Russia and 12 articles for Europe). These articles composed the basis for the analysis chapters. All codes from these articles (as a sentence or a paragraph) were translated by the author and documented in the analysis. They were either translated as direct quotes, paraphrased, or summarised. Table 5.2 summarises the quantitative representations of Russia and Europe in the media.

Table 5.2 Representations of Russia and Europe: Number of Articles and Share in the Media

Media	Number of articles representing actors				Share of representations (%)			
	Russia	Europe	External actors	In total	Russia		Europe	
					External actors	In total	External actors	In total
Belarus official	26	19	79	330	32.9	7.9	24.1	5.8
Belarus alternative	6	5	13	36	46.2	16.7	38.5	13.9
Ukraine official	19	13	80	430	23.8	4.4	16.3	3.0
Ukraine alternative	14	12	24	30	58.3	46.7	50.0	40.0

⁷⁹ Both Russia and Europe could be mentioned in the same article. In that case, the same article was counted twice for both Russia and Europe.

5.4 Data Analysis

In this section, I briefly state my reasons for focusing on Russia and Europe as important actors in trauma management and how they were analysed. As Eyerman argues, cultural trauma is a reflection on the foundations of the collective identity (deductive). As Chapter 4 showed, Russia and Europe were the collective identity orienteers for Belarus and Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Being collective identity orienteers implied their roles as enemies or friends in the national narratives of Belarus and Ukraine. The argument was made that the representation of Russia and Europe as saviours in trauma management could either reproduce or modify the identities of Russia and Europe as enemies or friends in the national narratives. To find out whether this was the case, the task was to consult the secondary literature on the Belarusian and Ukrainian national identities (reviewed in Chapter 4) and see how the national narratives constructed Russia and Europe. The representations of Russia and Europe from the secondary literature (deductive) were then compared to the identities of Russia and Europe from the data (inductive). The elements from the secondary literature were presented in Chapter 4 (including Tables 4.2 and 4.4). The identities from the data were presented in Chapter 3 (including Tables 3.2 and 3.4).

If the representations of Russia and Europe from the national narratives were identified in the studied newspaper articles, the argument was made that the trauma management narrative reproduced the national narrative. This was the case in the Belarusian alternative media. If the representations of Russia and Europe from the national narratives were not identified in the studied media, two possible arguments followed. The first argument was that the trauma management did not reproduce the national narrative and thus did not have symbolic power. This was the case with the Ukrainian media, both official and alternative. The second argument was that the trauma management produced new identities of Russia and Europe that modified the national narratives. This was the case with the Belarusian official media. This modification could take place when a new identity element was articulated in a public sphere over time, had a hegemonic status over other identity elements, and had a contestation or a consensus in the rival media sources (see Chapter 3).

The identities were identified in the data through two types of analysis: thematic (content) and discourse (meaning). First, the thematic analysis was conducted to find out what kinds of identities were constructed in the coded quotes on Russia and Europe. Second, discourse analysis was applied to see whether these identities were related to the national narratives. I will discuss

each of these analyses in the following. As Fereday and Muir-Cochrane argue,

thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon. The process involves the identification of themes through 'careful reading and re-reading of the data'. It is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006: 3-4).

The theme then is defined as 'a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon' (Boyatzis, 1998: 161). The search for common themes was carried out inductively by reading the coded quotes on Russia and Europe in four data sources. The codes of other international actors (USA, Canada, Japan, China, Cuba, and international organisations) were also consulted to see whether the identified themes applied to the actors beyond Russia and Europe. In Chapter 3, an attempt was made to provide an extensive answer to what kind of trauma management elements could be found in the text. Therefore, this section will only look at these elements briefly and focus more on the elements not mentioned in Chapter 3 (i.e., narrative genres, Table 5.3).

The common themes identified in four media sources were responsibility, traumatisation, politics, humanism, economy, history, and symbolism. These themes were identified as they constructed a certain relationship between a saviour (Russia and Europe) and a victim (Belarus and Ukraine) or between the victims (Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine). For example, the theme of responsibility articulated the relationships of help provider/help receiver, problem solver/solutions receiver, and equal partners; the theme of traumatisation produced the relationship of less/equally/more/most traumatised, worse/better problem solver and equal partners; the theme of politics constructed the relationship of dominating/subordinate; the theme of humanism articulated the relationship of philanthropic/rescued; the theme of economy produced the relationship of richer/poorer; the theme of history constructed the relationship of connected/disconnected; the theme of symbolism articulated the relationship of superior/inferior.

These themes showed that unlike the binary codes between a perpetrator and a victim in cultural trauma theory (polarised relationship between good and evil), the relationship between the saviour and the victim or between the victims in trauma management was built on temporality (hierarchical relationship between the provider and the receiver or between victims as problem solvers and traumatised). In other words, the classification on sacred (victim) and profane (perpetrator) was not the only way to construct trauma

management. Both saviour and victim could be as sacred, as profane. Hansen's concept of temporality was used to define this hierarchical relationship. The identified common themes were conceptualised through her terminology of temporal identities (i.e., political, apolitical, economic, historical, and symbolic) and ethical identities (i.e., responsible).⁸⁰ Traumatized identities were a new concept, developed inductively through the data. Temporal, ethical, and traumatized identities were presented in Chapter 3 (Tables 3.2 and 3.4).⁸¹ The two main identities, ethical and traumatized, served as a guide to organise the analysis chapters and to compare the four media sources (Chapters 6 and 7 on Belarus and Chapters 9 and 10 on Ukraine). Temporal identities were presented as supporting ethical and traumatized identities.⁸²

⁸⁰ Hansen (2006) understands identity as discursive and relational. Identity is not intrinsic to a particular actor and is always constructed through discourse. Identities come into being when agents articulate them through language in a public sphere. The relational ontology of identity lies in its resemblance and difference between actors that can be traced through the discursive epistemology of linking and differentiation.

⁸¹ It is important to note that while Smith represents the scholarship of structural hermeneutics, Hansen is a post-structuralist scholar. The combination of these scholarships in this project accounts for the specificity of the case study. This specificity is seen in paying more attention to the contingency in identity construction, its change over time, the presence of two antagonistic identities assigned to the same actor at the same time, the presence of two antagonistic narrative genres at the same time, and so on. This attention to contingency is prioritised by Hansen but also admitted by Smith (as seen above). As the main focus of this study is a trauma management discourse that consists of different narratives about saviours and victims and their participation in overcoming ontological insecurity, the presence of actors (saviours and victims) and the plot (overcoming ontological insecurity) gives trauma management a structure. The goal then becomes to study the contingencies within the assumed structure. The trauma management becomes a narrative with a contingent content.

⁸² After the identities were identified, the degrees of Otherness (Hansen, 2006), which bring temporal difference between saviour and victim, were established. Three degrees of Otherness were identified in the data: friendship and hostility, traumatization, and problem solving. The discursive mechanisms, which brought them into being, were also identified. As Eyerman (2011) argues, the construction of responsibility in cultural trauma takes place through blaming in a public sphere. Blaming is also one of the discursive mechanisms of trauma management (deductive). At the same time, the data showed that trauma management has three more discursive mechanisms to offer: praising, comparing, and uniting (inductive). Blaming was identified as constructing the degrees of hostility and worse problem solving (inductive). Praising was found as constructing the degrees of friendship and better problem solving. Comparing was established as creating the degrees of problem solving (better/worse problem solver) and traumatization (most/more/ less traumatized). Uniting, on the other hand, was found as

After the codes were sorted out in relation to what identities they constructed, each identity was checked for its presence in the media source over time and compared to the same identities from other media sources. The particular period of time during which the identity of interest was present in a public sphere was checked for the simultaneous presence of other identities. All the identities were studied for the stability or instability in the meaning they assigned to Russia or Europe. For example, in the Belarusian official media, Europe received two contradictory identities: political and philanthropic. On the one hand, these identities were present in different time periods. Philanthropic Europe was present during 1992-2005, while political Europe was present during 2010-2011. On the other hand, even when the political Europe was articulated during 2010-2011 (in relation to the political institutions), it was still destabilised by the philanthropic identity (in relation to the citizens). Other actors (the Belarusian alternative and the Ukrainian official and alternative media) were also checked for the construction of political and philanthropic identities to make the comparison possible.

After establishing identity persistence or its change over time and pairing identities present in a public sphere simultaneously, they were contrasted with the representations of Russia and Europe in the national narratives. This was done to see whether these identities reproduced or modified the national narratives or whether they were not related to them. This was important to understand the discursive or symbolic 'weight' that these identities carried. For example, the identity of 'brotherly' Russia from the pro-Russian national narrative was reproduced in the identity of 'historically connected' to Russia from the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian official media. On the other hand, the identity of a 'worse problem solver' from the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian official media modified the identity of 'greater and more developed Russia' from the pro-Russian national narrative.

The linguistic terms from the national narrative are not necessarily identical to the terms in the trauma management narrative. They could also either be synonyms or carry the same meaning that they have in the national narrative (i.e., 'brotherly' in the national narrative and 'historically connected' in the trauma management narrative; 'greater and more developed' in the national narrative and 'worse problem solver' in the trauma management narrative). To claim the reproduction or modification of the national narrative through the trauma management narrative is to see the same identity

omitting the degrees of Otherness and constructing similarity instead of difference (equal problem solving and equal traumatisation). The discursive mechanisms and the degrees of Otherness were discussed in Chapter 3.

being repeated in a public sphere over time (temporarily or constantly). For example, the identity of 'historically connected' Russia was repeated temporarily during 1996-1998, while the identity of a 'worse problem solver' was repeated temporarily during 2001-2013.

As mentioned, the establishment of the link between trauma management and national narratives is important to claim its symbolic 'weight'. Similar identities identified in the data could be articulated in different media sources, but in one media source, they might be linked to national narratives, while in another media source, they might not. This means that in one media source, they might carry discursive weight, but in another media source, they might not. This was the case with Belarus and Ukraine: While the Belarusian official and alternative media linked their identities to national narratives, the Ukrainian official and alternative media did not. For example, in the Ukrainian media, the identities of 'richer' and 'dominating' Europe implied a 'business-as-usual' relationship between Ukraine and Europe. The 'business-as-usual' relationship implied disputes between the developed and developing countries and was not related to the national narratives. In the Belarusian media, on the other hand, the same identities implied a 'value clash' relationship between Belarus and Europe. A 'value clash' relationship implied that the conflict between the democratic Europe and the authoritarian Belarus was linked to either pro-European or pro-Russian national narratives.

The strategy of finding out whether identities identified through the thematic analysis corresponded to the identities from the national narratives can be described as *discourse analysis*. Discourse analysis goes beyond the manifest content and helps to uncover the latent content. It helps to grasp not only the form, but also the meaning carried by a particular identity. Discourse analysis is what Krzyzanowski calls 'in-depth analysis ... undertaken after the investigation of key topic of discourse' and 'encompasses subsequent examination of the structures of discourse located "deeper" than its aforementioned contents' (Krzyzanowski, 2010: 83). As such, discourse analysis in this monograph aims to find out (a) what meaning the identities identified in the data carry (whether they are related to broader systems of meaning, such as national narratives), and (b) in what broader socio-political context this meaning is constructed (who are the message senders and message receivers and in what public arenas the message is transmitted).

In addition to identifying what elements were reproduced or modified from the national narrative, the task of the discourse analysis was to identify what narrative genre these reproduced or modified elements belonged to. The importance of identifying the narrative genre lies in its ability to construct a certain vision of ontological security of the nation, to encourage soli-

clarity, lead to isolation, or bring in self-reflexivity of the community. National narratives usually consist of progressive (heroes or friends) and tragic (villains or enemies) parts. Trauma management can reproduce or modify either one or both of these parts. Progressive narratives correspond to a narrative genre of romance, while tragic narratives correspond to a narrative genre of tragedy. Jacobs and Smith argue that *narrative genres* bring ‘force to representation, making narrative events concrete by linking temporal and spatial relationships to a plot and its characters’ (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 67).

Romantic (progressive) narratives are constructed around ‘a “theme of ascent” in which individuals and collectivises move towards a more perfect state’ (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 68). Romantic narratives are built around utopian discourse. They ‘assume the existence of powerful and overarching collective identities that can unite persons in the pursuit of this utopian discourse’ (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 68). On the one hand, romantic narratives carry a positive moral connotation. They bring ‘solidarity, common identity, and a sense of destiny’ (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 68). On the other hand, romantic narratives carry a negative moral connotation. They

tie individuals and communities too closely to national agendas, providing little room for critical thought, little space for acknowledging contingency and difference within the national community, and no opportunity for constructing a solidarity in common with those excluded from the national community (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 68).

In a romantic trauma management narrative, the theme of ascent is related to the construction of a successful overcoming of the consequences of a catastrophe in which the saviour plays a crucial role. The symbolic power of this narrative lies in its reproduction or modification of a progressive part of a national narrative. As we will see in the case of Belarus, the official media constructed a trauma management narrative in a romantic genre. During the 1990s, the saviours were Russia and Europe; during the 2000s the saviour changed to the Belarusian authorities. In both time periods, the genre was romance, in which the saviour was combating the consequences of the catastrophe successfully.⁸³ Being articulated in a state-controlled public sphere, the romantic trauma management narrative ‘can operate as an ideology that both legitimates authoritarian rule and motivates actors to confer an excess of sovereign power upon the state’ (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 69).

⁸³ Even though Europe as a saviour was articulated in the tragic genre during the 2000s, the Belarusian state was presented as a saviour in a romantic genre during this time. By contrasting the failure of Europe and the success of the Belarusian state, the genre of trauma management narrative was romantic.

In contrast to the genre of romance, *the tragic narrative* is built around the 'theme of descent', in which the personalities or communities move from a perfect to a disgraced state of being. Instead of unity and solidarity, the tragic narratives construct 'social isolation and atomization' (Smith, 2005: 20). The victim is constructed as 'innocent and largely passive ... who has been sadly let down by the poor decisions, bad luck, and the evil doing of others' (Smith, 2005: 20). At the same time, the victim is incapable of taking the problem solving in its own hands and depends on others. In a tragic trauma management, the theme of descent is related to the construction of failure in overcoming the consequences of the catastrophe, in which the saviour is viewed as a betrayer. The symbolic power of a tragic trauma management narrative lies in its reproduction or modification of the tragic part of a community's national narrative. As we will see in the case of Belarus, the alternative media constructed a trauma management narrative in a tragic genre. Russia was seen as a betrayer and Belarus as an innocent victim. The Belarusian authorities were also viewed as betrayers when they cooperated with Russia.⁸⁴ Being articulated in a non-state public sphere, the tragic trauma management narrative functioned as 'a revolutionary form of exit' that stands against the 'loyalty' to a state-controlled public sphere in order to preserve its identity and not be assimilated and marginalised (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 69). At the same time, it preserved its own teleological understanding of the utopian future and vision of a collectivity.

Romantic and tragic narratives together constitute a trauma management discourse. Being focused either on the themes of ascent or descent, both romantic and tragic trauma management narratives lack reflexivity.⁸⁵ Trauma management does not reproduce progressive or tragic parts of national narratives when it corresponds to the genre of irony. *Ironic narratives* 'permit the formation of multiple identities and allow for the construction of multiple and overlapping reflexive communities' (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 71). Like romantic narratives, ironic narratives have positive and negative sides. On the one hand, ironic narratives are built around reflexivity. They are 'more open and contested', allowing 'to deflate and combat the power/conformity nexus points ... illuminating differences in worldviews' (Ja-

⁸⁴ Even though Europe was articulated as a potential saviour in a romantic genre, Russia was presented as a current saviour in a tragic genre. The temporal difference in salvation practices between Russia and Europe gave the trauma management narrative a tragic genre.

⁸⁵ Elsewhere (Zhukova, forthcoming in *The British Journal of Sociology*), I called a romantic trauma management narrative a narrative of maximum progress and a tragic trauma management narrative a narrative of minimum progress in overcoming a disaster.

cobs and Smith, 1997: 70-71). On the other hand, ironic narratives can ‘slip from healthy critique toward fatalism and disengagement’, ‘generate anomie rather than purpose and commitment’, and construct ‘anti-solidaristic, directionless culture of despair’ because of absence of ‘positive goals and destination narratives’ (Jacobs and Smith, 1997: 73-74). A trauma management narrative with an ironic genre lacks symbolic power as it corresponds neither to the progressive part of a national narrative, nor to its tragic part. As we will see in the case of Ukraine, both official and alternative media constructed a trauma management narrative in an ironic genre, in which praise and blame went hand-in-hand. There was no clear vision of who the saviour was, what the agenda for overcoming the consequences was, and who was caring it out. The ironic trauma management narratives of Ukraine did not produce a trauma management discourse.

Table 5.3 Narrative Genres in Trauma Management

Trauma management narrative genre	Construction	Media source	Relation to national narratives	Relation to ontological security
Irony	Social reflexivity	Ukrainian official and alternative media	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Tragedy	Social isolation	Belarusian alternative media	Tragic part	Threatening
Romance	Social solidarity	Belarusian official media	Progressive part	Assuring

The reproduction or modification of national narratives through the representation of Russia and Europe was argued to construct a certain vision of ontological security. By representing how the saviours succeed in alleviating the human and technological insecurity of the victims (genre of romance), the idea of assured ontological security for the whole society was produced. The representation of how the saviours failed to succeed in alleviating the human and technological insecurity of the victims (genre of tragedy) produced the idea of threatened ontological security for the whole nation. This argument was developed through the *abductive logic of theory construction*. The concept of ontological insecurity was borrowed from Giddens (deductive), but modified and presented as human and technological insecurity (inductive). Human insecurity was constructed around topics in the data such as health and environment, while technological insecurity was articulated around the topics of power plants and nuclear energy (inductive). It was also divided into two concepts: ontological security of the nation and human and technological insecurity of the victims. The ontological security of the nation

came into being by representing the victims' alleviation of human and technological insecurity. Chapter 2 gave empirical examples how these concepts were developed.

Finally, the reproduction or modification of national narratives and construction of a certain vision of ontological security was argued to be shaped by *the socio-political context* in which the discursive articulations took place. As Schwartz-Shea and Yanow argue,

the possibility of the multiplicity of meanings is one of the things that makes connections to context critical for both the conduct of interpretative research and its design: the reasons things take these particular forms and not others has to do with their specific contexts of time and place (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012: 46).

Context 'grasps the dynamic relation between physical "setting" and discursively-funded (social) actions undertaken therein by different individual and collective actors' (Krzyzanowski, 2010: 78). Contexts, however, 'are not just "out there" or "given" but are also, to large extent, based on subjective factors and reliant on the dynamic processes of their discursive negotiation' (Krzyzanowski, 2010: 78).

Public sphere was taken as an example of a broader socio-political context in which trauma management was articulated by the agents who applied a certain moral framework. Two main meaning makers were identified (state-controlled and non-state media, as well as oligarch-owned media in Ukraine), two main moral frameworks (pro-Russian and pro-European), and two types of audience (homogeneously and heterogeneously minded). The argument was made that trauma management discourse takes place when actors belong to different public spheres (state-controlled and non-state) and articulate antagonistic moral frameworks (pro-Russian and pro-European, in romantic and tragic narratives genres) that appeal to the audience of that particular public sphere. Trauma management discourse does not take place when actors belong to the same public sphere and do not articulate antagonistic moral frameworks (use the ironic genre), as the audience is divided on the basis of moral frameworks and does not support any particular version of it. Table 5.4 summarises the types and levels of analysis in this study.

Table 5.4 Types and Levels of Analysis in Trauma Management

Types of analysis	Focus	Example
Thematic (content)	Identification of the themes as identities in the text	Ethical, traumatised, temporal (political, apolitical, economic, historical, and symbolic)
	Identification of the discursive mechanisms	Blaming, praising, comparing, uniting
	Identification of the degrees of Otherness	Friendship and hostility, traumatisation, problem solving
	Identification of the identity presence in the text and across texts synchronically and diachronically	Constant, temporal, or simultaneous presence with other identities
Discourse (meaning)	Identification of the presence/absence of the elements from the national narratives in the identities in the texts	Dominating and richer (as power exercising or business-as-usual)
		Historically connected (as colonising or brotherly)
		Democratic (as autonomous or imperial)
	Authoritarian (as protected by the state or power-exercising), etc.	
Identification of the narrative genres in the elements from the national narratives in the text	Tragic, romantic, or ironic genres	
Abductive (theory data)	Identification of the anomalies in the data and context to consider as elements for cultural trauma theory development	National narratives (pro-Russian and pro-European)
		Population (divided or united)
		Media ownership (state-controlled and non-state)

PART III.

TRAUMA MANAGEMENT: THE EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Part I introduced the concept of trauma management and its categories abductively. It used the existing theories and empirical examples from the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe. Part II presented the research strategy and methodology of the study. Part III, on the other hand, focuses on the empirical case in more detail. It shows how the concepts from Part I work in four media sources. Each media source is studied separately and the concepts are applied accordingly.

Part III is arranged around two cases – Belarus and Ukraine. Chapters 6-8 are dedicated to trauma management in Belarus. Chapter 6 looks at the representations of Russia in the official (state-controlled) and alternative (non-state) media. Chapter 7 documents the representations of Europe in the official and alternative media of Belarus. These chapters draw on the theoretical Chapter 3 and show that both official and alternative media constructed antagonistic trauma management narratives. The official media linked the representations of Russia and Europe to the pro-Russian national narrative. The alternative media linked the representations of Russia and Europe to the pro-European national narrative. Linking the trauma management narratives to the antagonistic national narratives formed trauma management discourse.

Chapters 9-11 look at trauma management in Ukraine. Chapter 9 is dedicated to the representations of Russia in the official (state-controlled) and alternative (non-state) media. Chapter 10 shows the representations of Europe in the official and alternative media of Ukraine. These chapters draw on the theoretical Chapter 3 and demonstrate that both official and alternative media constructed similar trauma management narratives. They did not systematically link the representations of Russia and Europe to the pro-Russian and pro-European national narratives of Ukraine. Trauma management discourse was not constructed.

As such, Part III is arranged around representations of Russia (Chapters 6 and 9) and Europe (Chapters 7 and 10) in the official and alternative media of Belarus and Ukraine. Chapters 8 and 11 conclude on the representations of Russia and Europe in Belarus and Ukraine (Figure III.I). Chapters 6-7 and 9-10 ask whether trauma management discourse was constructed in the media of Belarus and Ukraine and whether it shaped national narratives and onto-

logical security in these countries. Chapters 8 and 11, on the other hand, aim at reflecting on the data through the analysis of the broader socio-political context of text production and reception. These chapters look at whether the constructed trauma management narratives are visible in the public sphere and accepted by the audience. They draw on the theoretical Chapter 4.

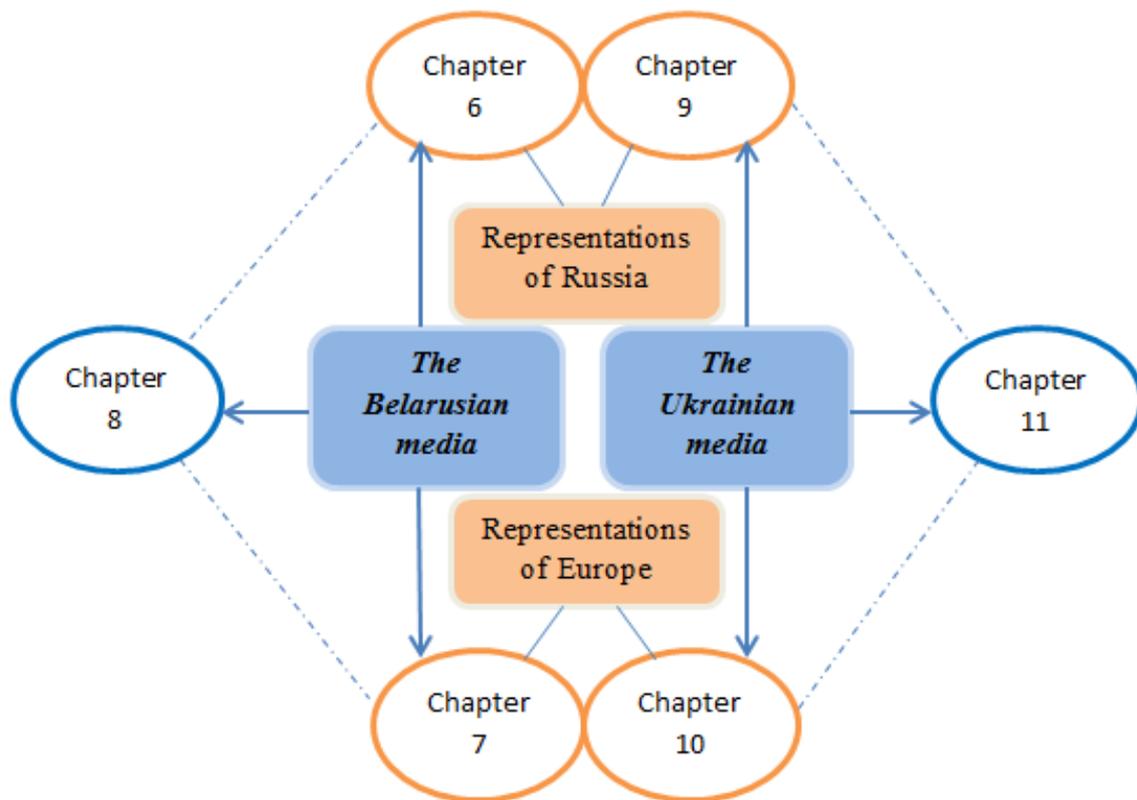
Some of the empirical examples from Part I are also repeated in Part III. In Part I, a quote from the empirical example was used to introduce a particular category of trauma management. Part III, on the other hand, does not provide every single quote with extensive comments in relation to a particular theoretical category. The textual analysis of each media source is arranged around the construction of ethical and traumatised identities. These identities are mentioned in a chronological order. Each identity has its own subsection. Each subsection provides with the quotes from the data to document the articulation of a particular identity in a particular newspaper article. Short comments are made on how these identities shape national narratives and ontological security of a victim country. This type of data presentation aims to ensure descriptive, interpretative, and theoretical validity.⁸⁶

Each analysis section for a particular media source is provided with a table to illustrate how the presented data is linked to the theoretical concepts and their categories (Tables 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 9.1, 9.2, 10.1, and 10.2). The *columns* of the table illustrate the representations that construct similarities (to the left) and differences (to the right) between the victim and the saviour. Similarities present the identities that do not create the degrees of Otherness (i.e., equally traumatised and equal partner). Differences illustrate the identities that create the degrees of Otherness (i.e., more/less traumatised and

⁸⁶ *Descriptive validity* is the content of the material – the documentation of quotes from the data that are observable. As the data for this monograph has been collected in three foreign languages (Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian), all the quotes have been translated and documented in the analysis chapters. Some of them are direct quotes; others are paraphrased sentences or a summary of the paragraphs. *Interpretative validity* is the interpretation of content or what the documented quotes mean. It includes researcher's reflection on the broader socio-political context where these quotes were produced. It is 'grounded in the language of the people studied and rely as much as possible on their own words and concepts' (Maxwell, 2002: 49). Interpretative validity helps to establish whether the documented quotes are related to the national narratives in the victim countries and how these narratives are promoted in a public sphere and received by the audience. *Theoretical validity* is based on linking the data to the theoretical concepts of the study – the concept of trauma management and its categories (i.e., ontological security, national narratives, moral framework, discursive mechanisms, identities, degrees of Otherness, carrier groups, audience, disconnected publics, and hierarchical public sphere).

better/worse problem solver). Each column of a similarity or difference presents a time period and a number of articles where the studied identities were mentioned. The *rows* of the table illustrate the articulated ethical and traumatised identities followed by other temporal identities (i.e., economic, historical, political, apolitical, and symbolic). The rows of identities are matched with the columns of similarities and differences. The bottom rows demonstrate how the constructed similarities or differences are linked to the main concepts of trauma management – ontological security, national narrative, discursive mechanism, and the degrees of Otherness. Ontological security can be constructed as assured, threatened or ambiguous. National narrative can be reproduced, modified or ambiguous. Discursive mechanism can be blaming, praising, comparing, or uniting. The degrees of Otherness can be friendship, hostility, traumatising, or problem solving.

Figure III.I Outlining the Chapters for the Empirical Analysis



Chapter 6. Trauma Management in the Disconnected Publics of Belarus: The Representations of Russia

This chapter is dedicated to the representations of Russia in the Belarusian official and alternative media in relation to the Chernobyl topic. It investigates whether trauma management discourse was constructed in Belarus, whether it reproduced or changed national narratives of the Belarusian authorities and opposition, and whether it shaped ontological security. The chapter demonstrates that the Belarusian media constructed trauma management discourse. While the official media modified the pro-Russian national narrative of the Belarusian authorities, the alternative media reproduced the pro-European national narrative of the Belarusian opposition.

6.1 Trauma Management in the State-Controlled Public Sphere: The Representations of Russia in the Belarusian Official Media

This section looks at the construction of a trauma management narrative through the representation of Russia in the Belarusian official media. It shows that the progressive part of the national narrative of the Belarusian elites was reproduced. Russia was praised as a friend who helped and presented as a saviour without whom Belarus would not manage Chernobyl (during the 1990s). The possibility of salvation was seen not just in receiving aid from Russia but also in close cooperation with the country. The progressive part of this narrative was changed when the role of Russia lost its value: It was still seen as a friend, but it no longer was a saviour (during the 2000s). Rather, it was the Belarusian state itself that took this job. Russia was seen as a worse problem solver than Belarus. Belarus no longer needed to look to Russia for help or to keep up with their common Chernobyl policies. Belarus became independent and more successful than Russia in Chernobyl problem solving.

In this vein, the pattern of representation of Russia in the Belarusian official media changed over time. It shifted from temporary praising (during the 1990s) to temporary comparing and blaming (during the 2000s). The identity of Russia changed from a philanthropic help provider (ethical and

historical identities) to an equal partner (traumatised and political identities) and to a worse problem solver (traumatised, economic, political, and symbolic identities). Change over time was clearly observed here: 1996-1998, 1996-2007, and 2001-2013, with some overlaps between different identities in different time periods.

In contrast, the identity of Belarus changed from help receiver to equal partner to a better problem solver. The identities of better and worse problem solvers stressed that Belarus had less material resources and was more affected by Chernobyl but managed Chernobyl better than richer and less affected Russia and Ukraine. The number of articles for each of these changing time periods was also even: six articles in 1996-1998 for help provider and help receiver, six articles in 1996-2007 for equal partners, and seven articles in 2001-2013 for worse and better problem solvers.

The representations of Russia depended on the representations of the Belarusian state. The more positive the representation of Russia, the less positive the representation of the Belarusian state. The less positive the representation of Russia, the more positive the representation of the Belarusian state. This constellation of identities demonstrated that a trauma management narrative in the Belarusian official media shaped the Belarusian national narrative and the vision on ontological security. The ontological security of the Belarusian citizens no longer depended on big brother Russia. Rather, it was the Belarusian authorities that took care of the ontological security of its citizens independently.

Table 6.1 summarises the representations of Russia in the Belarusian official media. It shows that 16 articles constructed difference and nine articles constructed similarity. The articulation of difference and similarity contributed to the reproduction and modification of the elements from the pro-Russian national narrative and construction of a certain vision of ontological security. The degrees of Otherness (friendship, traumatisation, and problem-solving) were articulated through the discursive mechanisms of blaming, praising, comparing, and uniting. These discursive mechanisms constructed ethical and traumatised identities, constituted by temporal identities (political, apolitical, economic, historical, and symbolic).

As presented in Chapter 5, the data collection for the official media was carried out for a period of 22 years (1992-2014) between 20 April and 2 May each year. Russia was mentioned in 26 articles out of 79 articles about external actors, corresponding to 32.9 per cent of the representation of all external actors and 7.9 per cent of the total number of articles about Chernobyl. As such, it was a visible actor among the external players quantitatively, but less significant in the Chernobyl topic overall. However, as we will see, Russia did become a significant Other in qualitative terms, as its representations

in the Chernobyl trauma management relied on the pro-Russian national narrative.

Table 6.1 Trauma Management, the Representation of Russia: The Belarusian Official Media

Identities	Similarity (9)		Difference (16)		
	1996, 1998 3 articles	1996-2007 6 articles	1996, 1998 6 articles	2007 1 article	1993-1994 2 articles, 2001-2013, 7 articles
Ethical					
Russia	-	-	Help provider	-	-
Belarus	-	-	Help receiver	-	-
Traumatized					
Russia	Equally traumatized	Equal partner	-	Less traumatized	Worse problem solver
Belarus	Equally traumatized	Equal partner	-	Most traumatized	Better problem solver
Political					
Russia	-	Pro-Belarusian	-	-	Dominating
Belarus	-	Pro-Russian	-	-	Resisting
Apolitical					
Russia	-	-	Philanthropic	-	-
Belarus	-	-	Rescued	-	-
Economic					
Russia	-	-	-	-	Richer
Belarus	-	-	-	-	Poorer
Historical					
Russia	-	-	Connected	-	Connected
Belarus	-	-	Connected	-	Connected
Symbolic					
Russia	-	Equal	-	-	Inferior
Belarus	-	Equal	-	-	Superior
Ontological security	Ambiguous	Assured	Assured	Threatened	Assured
National narrative	Ambiguous	Reproduced	Reproduced	Modified	Modified
Discursive mechanism	Uniting	Praising Uniting	Praising	Comparing	Comparing Blaming
Degrees of Otherness	Traumatization	Problem solving Friendship	Friendship	Traumatization	Problem solving Friendship

These representations are discussed in detail below: help provider (1996, 1998), equal problem solver (1996-2007), worse problem solver (1993-1994, 2001-2013), equally traumatised (1996, 1998), and less traumatised (2007).

6.1.1 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (6 articles in 1996(3) and 1998(3))

During 1996-1998, the Belarusian official media particularised Russia and praised it for being the only actor that provided help. Ethical (apolitical and historical) identities constructed two subject positions – help provider (Russia) and help receiver (Belarus). Apolitical identities articulated Russia as philanthropic and Belarus as rescued. Russia was represented as the only philanthropic help provider in six articles – three times in 1996 and three times in 1998. Historical identities were produced through words such as ‘brotherly’ and ‘fraternal’. They explained Russian aid through its close historical ties to Belarus. Russia was placed in a narrative of ‘Big brother saves his little brother’, in which cooperation with Russia regarding the Chernobyl issues was understood as a salvation of the Belarusian people. Ontological security of the Belarusian citizens was constructed by telling a story of how a ‘big brother’ takes care of the human insecurity of the Chernobyl victims of his ‘little brother’. This discursive construction reinforced the role of Russia as a close friend in the official national narrative of Belarus.

The main discursive mechanism used to represent Russia was praising. Examples of Russian material aid included provision of recuperative treatment to the Belarusian Chernobyl victims in the Russian sanatoriums, the construction of a pharmaceutical plant in Belarus to produce amino acids, provision of financial assistance according to bilateral agreements, and provision of aesthetic education to the Belarusian Chernobyl victims.

In the 10th mourning speech, the president of Belarus expressed a special gratitude to ‘the fraternal Russian people’ for helping Belarus to liquidate the consequences of Chernobyl (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 2b). The President presented an example of Russia providing Belarus with the possibility to use its sanatoriums for the Belarusian *Chernobyl'tsyto* to have recuperative treatment (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 1a). He constructed an understanding of the Russian aid through the close historical ties (‘fraternal’) between Belarus and Russia. Common Chernobyl victimhood and superiority of Russia in material resources were not considered the main reasons of aid. This understanding reproduced the role of Russia as a close friend in the progressive part of the official national narrative of Belarus.

In the same newspaper issue, Minister of Emergency Situations of Belarus Ivan Kenik stressed that Russia was the only country among the rest of

the CIS republics⁸⁷ that allocated the financial support to Belarus according to the bilateral agreement during 1993-1996. He added that all the promises from other CIS countries to assist Belarus just remained on paper (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 1b).⁸⁸ By comparing Russia to other CIS countries, Kenik particularised Russia. This meant that from all other possible historical friends, Russia stood out as the best and most helpful and reliable. This articulation reproduced the role of Russia as a friend in the progressive part of the Belarusian national narrative.

Similarly, in 1998, during a discussion of foreign aid from different countries, the Belarusian President 'specifically emphasized the assistance of the brotherly Russia' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 5 May 1998: 1). In this case, Russia was particularised and compared not only to the former Soviet countries, but also to the rest of the world. Close historical ties with Russia were presented as a reason for substantial assistance. This quote again reproduced the role of Russia as a friend in the Belarusian official narrative. Alleviation of human insecurity in Belarus was understood as a Russian contribution. Another example of the Russian assistance was given by the Belarusian journalist Andrei Efremov. He pointed out that Russia helped Belarus build a pharmaceutical plant to be opened in 1999 to produce amino acids (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 1998: 8). Amino acids were planned to be used in nutrition to prevent the radioactive particles to contaminate a human body. This could be useful for the inhabitants of the Chernobyl territories. Russia's contribution to the production of amino acids was again understood as a way to alleviate human insecurity in Belarus.

In 1998, the Belarusian president acknowledged the contribution of the volunteers and artists from Russia to the Chernobyl work:

⁸⁷ In 1991, the Commonwealth of the Independent States – the CIS (with 9 official, 1 participating, and 1 associate members) emerged. The official members are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Ukraine has the status of a participating member but not an official member, as it did not ratify the Charter of the Treaty. Turkmenistan has the status of an associate member. Georgia left the CIS in 2008 after the conflict in the South Ossetia and Abkhazia and remains the only post-Soviet country not linked to this organisation. The capital of the CIS is Minsk.

⁸⁸ 12 years later, in 2008, Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus Aleksandr Kosinets expressed the same opinion regarding the Chernobyl cooperation between Russia and Belarus in the Union State: 'We have been left almost alone with this tragedy throughout all these years. The only state that supports us is fraternal Russia that has allocated 171.8 million Russian roubles' [http://naviny.by/rubrics/society/2008/04/24/ic_articles_116_156796/].

The President awarded the participants of the Cossack ensemble 'Kubans' of the Russian city Krasnodar with the title 'An Honorary Artist of the Republic of Belarus' ... for their highly professional skills, active participation in the aesthetic education of the Belarusian population, and substantial work in performing at the areas affected by Chernobyl (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1998: 1).

In this case, Russia was seen not only as a provider of material assistance, but also as an aesthetic and educational mentor. Russia's cultural activities at the Chernobyl areas were understood as a way to alleviate human insecurity in Belarus. This articulation reinforced the role of Russia as a close cultural friend in the Belarusian national narrative.

Even when Russia could not help its 'little brother', the Belarusian official media did not blame it for that. The article from 25 April 1996 discussed Russia's position in G7. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Andreï Sannikov complained that Belarus was not invited to participate in the G7 summit. One of the topics of the summit in 1996 was nuclear energy security, including a closure of the Chernobyl power plant and transportation of the radioactive wastes across borders. One of the journalists asked Sannikov whether Russia had any chance to propose the G7 members to invite Belarus as the country most affected by Chernobyl to take part in the summit. Sannikov replied that 'it could, but probably Russia was more preoccupied with other things, and being a new member it did not have a decisive voice there' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 1996: 3). This understanding implied two Russian identities: a member of the club of the most influential countries in the world and the Belarusian 'big brother'. This article positioned Belarus in between the two Russian identities. On the one hand, Russia was believed to 'defend' Belarusian interests in front of the international community. On the other hand, Russia was understood as not capable of doing it as it was seen as a weaker country compared to other G7 partners. This logic of reasoning presented the limits of Russia's capacity to assist Belarus, but reproduced the Russia's position as a close friend in the Belarusian national narrative.

Hence, ethical identity of Russia as a help provider reproduced its role as a 'big brother' in the progressive part of the national narrative of the official Belarus during 1996-1998. Human insecurity of the Chernobyl victims could be alleviated only with the help of Russia. This, in turn, would lead to the assurance of the ontological security of the Belarusian citizens.

6.1.2 Traumatized Identity – Equal Partner (6 articles in 1996, 1998(3), 2000, and 2007)

In addition to being the only philanthropic help provider to Belarus during 1996-1998 (ethical identity), the Russian identity was also constructed as an equal partner (traumatized identity). It overlapped with the identity as a help provider during 1996-1998 and continued to be articulated further until 2007. This presents a gradual shift of the Belarusian identity from a dependent help receiver to an interdependent partner. This identity was placed in a narrative of 'Big brother and little brother are equal partners'. The Belarusian official media presented Russian aid as a result of cooperative equal partnership rather than dependent relationship. This partnership was explained through the framework of the Russia-Belarus Union.⁸⁹ The reference to the Russia-Belarus Union as a project of political integration produced pro-Russian (in Belarus) and pro-Belarusian (in Russia) identities. The point of unity was not ethical (apolitical and historical identities, as in the previous case of aid provision) but equally traumatized (political) identities. Russia was understood as another traumatized country and a political ally. As such, the possibility to alleviate human insecurity was seen in the creation of a common framework of cooperation with Russia. This understanding strengthened Russia's position as a friend in the progressive part of the Belarusian official narrative.

The discursive mechanism used was praising and uniting. Words such as 'common grief', 'similar problems', 'joint efforts', 'common programmes', 'unification of legislation', 'common regulatory framework', and 'maintenance of the state register' characterised the construction of the Russian-Belarusian partnership. More specific activities mentioned were the implementation of the preventive measures to regulate the presence of radio-

⁸⁹ The Union State of Russia and Belarus emerged in 1996. This Union State aimed to harmonise the political, economic, and cultural spheres between the two countries. The framework of the Union State also set a common policy to combat the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster in the two countries. Starting from 1998, three Union programs were implemented: 1998-2000, 2002-2005, and 2006-2010, and the programme for 2013-2016 is on its way. The programmes have aimed at increasing the economic cooperation between the two states, create a unified dataset on citizen's illnesses, rehabilitate the affected lands and forests, initiate agricultural activities, and fight the socio-psychological problems. In addition, the Chernobyl information centre of Belarus and Russia was opened (The Russia-Belarus Information Centre RBIC), containing legislation and research on the Chernobyl topic available to the public. The Russia-Belarus Journal 'Revival of Our Homeland' is a journal produced by this centre.

nuclides in the crop and livestock production, development of technology to obtain clean forest products and nutrition enriched with additives.

In the 10th mourning speech, the president of Belarus stated that ‘one of the main goals of the Russia-Belarus integration is the joint efforts of the two states to liquidate the consequences of Chernobyl’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 2b). He expressed his personal accountability for the Chernobyl programmes, stating that ‘as a Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Russia-Belarus Union, I assure you that our common Chernobyl programmes will not only remain on paper’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 2b). Similarly, Chairman of the House of Representatives of the Belarusian Parliament Anatoliĭ Malafeev remarked that the unification of the legislation between Russia and Belarus would lead to effective Chernobyl problem solving (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 24 April 1998: 1a). These statements constructed the political identities of orientation: pro-Russian (Belarus) and pro-Belarusian (Russia). They presented the necessity for Russian-Belarusian integration as a way to solve Chernobyl problems. This reasoning was strengthened by the personal accountability of the Belarusian president in the matter (‘I assure you that our common Chernobyl programmes will not only remain on paper’). This vision reproduced the role of Russia as a friend in the progressive part of the Belarusian national narrative. This role shifted from a close historical Other to a contemporary partner with a common traumatic experience that needed a response.

The equally traumatised identities were articulated in 1998. The Belarusian president said that ‘Chernobyl became a common grief that united the two countries even stronger’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 5 May 1998: 1). They constructed commonality between Russia and Belarus on the basis of Chernobyl. At the same time, some articles acknowledged that the levels of traumatisation in Belarus and Russia were different. However, this was not seen as an obstacle for establishing cooperation. Valeriĭ Gurachevskii, the official responsible for Chernobyl science and the international cooperation within the Ministry for Emergency Situations, stated that, ‘Even though there was almost no evacuation of the population there [in Russia], our countries have to overcome quite similar problems. Obviously, it is more effective to do so jointly’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2007: 1). Gurachevskii acknowledged that Belarus and Russia experienced different levels of consequences from Chernobyl: Russia as the less affected did not have to organise an evacuation of people. Nevertheless, the difference in the levels of damage was not the main reason for cooperating. Gurachevskii stressed that the countries had to deal with ‘similar problems’ but did not specify what those problems were. If cooperation was established on the basis of traumatic effects, then Belarus and Ukraine would be the countries to share similar problems. How-

ever, the cooperation was established through the logic of ‘who is my better friend’ rather than ‘who is traumatised in the same way’. In this case, the political identities informed the traumatised identities.⁹⁰

To strengthen the traumatised (political) identities of Russia and Belarus, the Russian-Belarusian cooperation was presented as more fruitful than cooperating with Ukraine to combat Chernobyl. During the workshop, dedicated to the 12th anniversary of Chernobyl in Minsk, Deputy Minister for Emergency Situations of Belarus Igor’ Rolevich stressed that the Russian-Belarusian cooperation reached a ‘qualitatively new level’ thanks to the established Union State. He emphasised that ‘the representatives of the Ministries for Emergency Situations between the two states work together and have signed a common program for the liquidation of the Chernobyl consequences between Russia and Belarus for 1998-2000’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1998: 4). The alleviation of human insecurity was seen as a result of the formalisation of the relationship between Russia and Belarus. As the cooperation between Russia and Belarus produced positive results, it was seen as legitimate. Rolevich proposed Ukraine to join this cooperation, stating that ‘such a move from our southern neighbour would be very welcomed’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1998: 4). Ukraine was constructed through the spatial identity of ‘our southern neighbour’, rather than any other identity of commonality (i.e., traumatised, historical, or political identity). Differentiating Ukraine from Russia and Belarus strengthened the importance of the political identities of pro-Russian Belarus and pro-Belarusian Russia and created a political boundary with Ukraine. It reinforced the role of Russia as a friend in the progressive part of the Belarusian national narrative and differentiated Ukraine from Russia.

Ukraine was not the only actor against whom the identity of the Russia-Belarus Union State was articulated. The Belarusian academic Evgeniï Konoplya differentiated Russia and Belarus from the rest of the world (implying the West) when he remarked that ‘while the international community have lost interest in Chernobyl for the past years, the Russia-Belarus Union gave it a great deal of attention’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2000: 2). He discussed the ongoing work between the two countries on the common regulatory framework, maintenance of the state register, preventive measures to regulate the presence of radio-nuclides in the crop and livestock

⁹⁰ One could argue that cooperation between Belarus and Ukraine was less obvious because of Ukraine’s possession of the Chernobyl power plant, meaning that they had different problems to solve. At the same time, Russia also had nuclear power plants, so the cooperation between Russia and Ukraine was relevant from a technological point of view.

production, development of technology to obtain clean forest products and nutrition enriched with additives (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2000: 2). By presenting the results of the ongoing work within the framework of the Russia-Belarus Union, Konoplya constructed the rest of the world as being reluctant to provide aid, which was, however, no longer needed. Ontological security could have been assured through the cooperation with Russia alone.

Hence, traumatised identity of Russia as equal partner reproduced its role as a 'big brother' in the progressive part of the national narrative of the Belarusian authorities during 1996-2007. Human insecurity of the Chernobyl victims could be alleviated not through aid, but equal partnership between Belarus and Russia. This, in turn, would lead to the assurance of the ontological security of the Belarusian people.

6.1.3 Traumatized Identity – Worse Problem solver (9 articles in 1993, 1994, 2001, 2002(2), 2005, 2006, 2011, 2013)

During the 2000s (and twice during the 1990s), the Belarusian official media produced an identity of Russia as a worse problem solver. Through this identity, praise was given to Belarus itself. The Belarusian official media no longer praised the Russian assistance or Russian-Belarusian partnership in combating Chernobyl. Rather, it evaluated the Russian domestic Chernobyl policies and compared them to the Belarusian policies. It constructed the Russian Chernobyl policies as ineffective. The narrative transformed from 'Big brother and little brother are equal partners' to 'Big brother carries out worse policies than its little brother'. This contrast helped to improve a weak peripheral Belarusian identity of a small country, to construct its uniqueness, and to legitimise the governance of the state institutions and leadership. This representation was also strengthened by economic (poorer Belarus and richer Russia) and symbolic (inferior Russia and superior Belarus) identities. Russia was no longer seen as an important actor in assuring ontological security in Belarus. Instead, the Belarusian state was presented as managing the consequences of Chernobyl independently. By introducing the Belarusian state as a main contributor to the alleviation of human insecurity, the Belarusian official media legitimised its policies and leadership. The progressive part of the Belarusian official narrative also changed: Russia was no longer portrayed as an example to follow.

The discursive mechanisms used were comparing and blaming. Belarus was presented through phrases such as 'better social security', 'our established strict system', 'very strict regulations', and '10 times stricter norms'. Russia was portrayed with statements such as 'less standardised and less demanding norms', 'richer in resources and opportunities', and possessing 'the surplus' from the budget. The Belarusian official media also linked

Ukraine to Russia to strengthen comparisons and construct them as worse problem solvers. The direct comparison of the Belarusian policies to the Russian took place in 1993, 2001, 2002(2), 2011, and 2013. The comparison of Belarus to Russia and Ukraine took place in 1994 and 2006. These comparisons began during the early 1990s (1993-1994), vanished during the late 1990s (1995-2000), and then intensified again during the 2000s (2001-2013).

During the 1990s, only one article presented Russia as a poor problem solver. The article from 21 April 1993 informed that Russia failed to resettle its people from the compulsory evacuation zone to new areas because of unfinished housing construction and lack of infrastructure (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1993: 2). This article constructed a deepening of human insecurity in Russia but did not refer to Belarus. Starting from 2001, the Belarusian official media directly reprinted articles from the Russian media that represented the Russian Chernobyl policies as ineffective. These articles blamed the Russian state for inappropriate Chernobyl policies and poor treatment of victims (4 articles in 2001, 2002(2), and 2011). Some of them just informed about the situation with Chernobyl in Russia, without directly comparing it to Belarus. Other articles directly compared Russia to Belarus, constructing the Belarusian Chernobyl policies as better. By reprinting articles from the Russian media, the Belarusian official media presented the human insecurity in Russia as deepening. It questioned the legitimacy of the Russian policies. By showing that the Russian media evaluated the Belarusian Chernobyl policies positively, the Belarusian official media presented human insecurity in Belarus as alleviated and policies of the Belarusian state as legitimate.

The informative articles about the Chernobyl situation in Russia were printed twice: in 2001 and 2011. The article from 26 April 2001, written by Russian MP Stanislav Kovalev from Bryansk (one of the contaminated areas in Russia), blamed the Russian state for not taking care of the Chernobyl problems. He presented the situation with human insecurity as alarming. He blamed the Russian state for not providing the Chernobyl victims with proper social security and not introducing the effective radiation control to prevent the consumption of radioactive food. Regarding the social security, Kovalev blamed the controversies in the Russian legislation. Regarding the consumption of radioactive food, Kovalev accused the ineffective radiation control in Russia. He argued that the consequences of these bad policies led to an increase in the presence of the radioactive strontium and caesium in milk, mushrooms, and wild berries. As milk, mushrooms, and berries represented an important part of the daily nutrition of the rural inhabitants in the contaminated areas, human insecurity was seen as deepening. Kovalev also stat-

ed that no one investigated the contamination of soil by americium-241. This led him to the following conclusion: ‘Maybe, again, it is in no one’s interests to make these data public? In the same way as, 15 years ago, attempts were made to cover up the scope of the Chernobyl catastrophe’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2001).

This conclusion implied that the Russian policies and approach to the Chernobyl problem solving had not changed after the Soviet times. According to Kovalev, the secrecy in providing information, the irresponsible and ignorant attitude towards the Russian people continued in post-Soviet Russia. Reprinting this article in the Belarusian official media portrayed the situation with human insecurity in Russia as catastrophic. Even though it did not mention Belarus, the presence of other articles in which the Belarusian state was praised constituted an indirect comparison that the Belarusian Chernobyl policies were better.

An article of a similar content was reprinted from the Russian newspaper *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*⁹¹ in the Belarusian official media on 21 April 2011.⁹² The Russian journalist Larisa Ionova discussed the conditions of the Chernobyl clean-up workers in Russia. She criticised the Russian state for the lack of compensations (indemnification) and social benefits (subsidised nutrition and health care) to the Chernobyl victims. Again, the problem with human insecurity was understood as the fault of the Russian state. As social benefits were not provided in full, the Chernobyl victims could not afford proper health care and nutrition.

The direct comparison of Russia and Belarus in the reprinted articles from the Russian media occurred twice in 2002. The article by the Russian journalist Oleg Lar’ko discussed the problems regarding the benefits to the Russian clean-up workers and drawbacks in the legislation that took these benefits away. The journalist stated that ‘Today, the Russian clean-up workers do not understand what benefits they actually had and what was left from those’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 2002: II). He blamed the Russian authorities for ‘putting up bureaucratic barriers’ for the laws to work properly for the people. The article compared the Russian situation to the Belarusian, stating that Belarus treated its clean-up workers better than Russia:

Why is it that *Chernobyl’tsy* in the smaller, brotherly Belarus are having much better social security today? Where does Belarus have this money from that we [Russians] do not? Why, from the surplus of 300 billion RUB distributed by the government and parliament in the autumn last year, did the Russian clean-up workers not get anything again? (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 2002: II).

⁹¹ This is a Russian government daily newspaper: www.rg.ru.

⁹² <http://www.sb.by/post/115690/>.

In this quote, the situation with human insecurity in Russia was presented as deepening, while in Belarus, it was presented as improving. This representation consisted of economic identities of poorer Belarus and richer Russia ('smaller Belarus', 'where does Belarus have this money from?'), historical identities of close ties ('brotherly Belarus'), and symbolic identities of superior Belarus and inferior Russia (Belarus 'having much better social security today'). The article constructed the idea that even though Belarus was smaller in size and resources, it did a better job in managing Chernobyl than greater and more powerful Russia ('the surplus of 300 billion RUB', 'the Russian clean-up workers did not get anything again'). The role of Russia in the progressive part of the Belarusian national narrative changed: It was still brotherly but no longer superior.

Another article, reprinted from the Russian news agency ITAR-TASS, presented the Belarusian radiation norms as much stricter than the Russian. The article quoted Belarusian scientist and governmental official Yakov Kenigsberg, who said:

The norms of possession of radio-nuclides in meals and water have been tightened. At the moment, the republic [of Belarus] is applying the norms for the basic products that were established in 1999 and are similar to those in Russia and Ukraine. Nevertheless, the established norms for the presence of strontium-90 in meals are about 10 times stricter than in Russia (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 2002: II).

Presenting the Belarusian norms for the presence of strontium-90 in nutrition as stricter than in Russia implied that human insecurity in Belarus was taken better care of than in Russia. As human insecurity was dealt with successfully in Belarus, the Belarusian policies and leadership were understood as legitimate.

In addition to reprinting articles from the Russian newspapers that either criticised Russia or praised Belarus, the Belarusian official media published their own articles comparing Belarus to Russia. In the article from 26 April 2013, Belarusian state journalist Yuliya Vasilishina presented Belarus as having more stringent standards regarding the presence of the radioactive strontium in food than Russia. Vasilishina gave empirical examples to strengthen her comparison, supporting them with figures:

The launch of the Customs Union with Russia and Kazakhstan⁹³ introduces the necessity to harmonise the standards for permissible levels of radio-nuclides in

⁹³ A new organisation, the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, was created in 2010 to enhance the economic cooperation. Ukraine did not wish to become a member of the Customs Union.

food. There are some discrepancies to consider. Belarus, as compared to Russia, has very strict regulations regarding the presence of strontium. For example, the permissible norm for bread and milk is 3.7 Bq per kilogram, while our neighbours have a norm of 25 Bq. Similarly, for baby food we have a norm of 1.85 Bq, while over there, it is 20 Bq (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2013).⁹⁴

Even though Belarus was integrating with Russia in the Customs Union, this quote presented Russia as a threat to Belarus's strict norms. The article constructed Belarus as symbolically superior to Russia ('Belarus, as compared to Russia, has very strict regulations'). The numerical examples were used to support this claim (3.7 Bq vs 25 Bq and 1.85 Bq vs 20 Bq). This representation constructed distance between Russia and Belarus ('our neighbour', 'over there'), which was different from what was previously articulated when Russia was represented as a philanthropic help provider ('brotherly', 'fraternal'). Russia was understood as experiencing more human insecurity than Belarus. In order to prevent Russia from deepening human insecurity in Belarus, Belarus had to defend its policies. This interpretation changed the position of Russia in the progressive part of the Belarusian national narrative: Russia became symbolically inferior and not that close to Belarus. It was not history that determined the ties between Russia and Belarus but present-day policies. This comparison constructed Belarus as a country with more responsibility, rules, and order than Russia, and to be an example to follow:

The Customs Union first adopted the regulations and norms according to the Russian standards. However, we have not relaxed our standards towards Russia, even though we could do that and sell products with a higher presence of radionuclides. Our experts believe that if our companies bid for softer rules, our established strict system of protective measures will suffer. And this is unacceptable. Belarus intends to insist that our standards should be taken as a basis for regulation of the radiation levels in products in the Customs Union. This argument is reflected in the draft of the fourth Russia-Belarus Union State programme on overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2013).⁹⁵

This quote again demonstrated the construction of a superior symbolic identity of Belarus over Russia ('we have not relaxed our standards towards Russia', 'our standards should be taken as a basis for regulation of the radiation levels in products in the Customs Union'). The Belarusian standards implied the continuation of the policies of alleviation of human insecurity. If Belarus decided to follow the Russian standards, it would lead to negative outcomes

⁹⁴ <http://www.sb.by/viewpoint/146920/>.

⁹⁵ <http://www.sb.by/viewpoint/146920/>.

and undermine the protective measures ('sell products with higher presence of radio-nuclides', 'our established strict system of protective measures will suffer'). This logic was again different from the logic of the 1990s when the identities as equal partners were constructed. The identities as equal partners articulated the necessity of creating the Russia-Belarus Union State in order to seek salvation. In comparison, the identities as better/worse problem solvers presented Russia as putting 'sticks' into the Belarusian Chernobyl policy 'wheels'.

The Belarusian official media also compared Belarus to both Russia and Ukraine (in 1994 and 2006). The first article of this kind appeared in 1994. Ivan Kenik, the Chairman of the Goskomchernobyl⁹⁶ and the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Belarus, remarked that the Belarusian neighbours, Russia and Ukraine, received more benefits during the Soviet times. However, they cut them after the collapse of the Soviet Union. One of them was the extension of the retirement age for those who lived in the evacuation zone before the accident and for those who left the zone or resided in the areas of the primary and secondary resettlement. He stressed that Belarus would not remove these benefits from its own people (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1994: 2). Already at the initial stage of managing Chernobyl after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Belarusian official media emphasised that its social security policy would be more generous than in Russia and Ukraine. By having generous social security, the Belarusian official media constructed an understanding of alleviation of human insecurity. At the same time, it set the tone of comparison of policies between the countries, pointing their fingers at those who did worse and publicly acknowledging those who did better. This article, however, appeared before the Belarusian president came to power and did not represent a state policy of being the best among the rest.

Another article that compared Belarus to Russia and Ukraine appeared 12 years later. In contrast to the previous article from 1994 that established the ideal level of social security in Belarus, this article evaluated the achieved results. It was the time when the Belarusian state policies were already acknowledged by the international organisations and even by the Belarusian alternative media.⁹⁷ The article from 21 April 2006 contained an extensive interview with the Belarusian state officials and scientists, who discussed the problem of living with Chernobyl. They praised the Belarusian Chernobyl legislation and policies, arguing:

⁹⁶ Goskomchernobyl was the Belarusian State Committee for the Consequences of the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster during 1990-1994.

⁹⁷ See the representation of Russia as a worse problem solver in section 6.2.

Such legislation and practical activities in protecting the population and rehabilitating the territories do not exist in any other affected country, richer in resources and opportunities ... Neither in Ukraine, nor in Russia do school pupils and college students have free meals and recuperation ... In Russia, the radiation safety norms are less standardised and less demanding than in Belarus (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 2006).⁹⁸

These experts implied that even though Belarus was poorer, it had better Chernobyl policies than richer Russia and Ukraine ('richer in resources and opportunities'). These policies included free nutrition and recuperation of the Belarusian Chernobyl children, better standardised and more demanding radiation safety norms, as well as better legislation and practice of protecting the population and rehabilitating the contaminated territories. The understanding of being poorer with better policies constructed the idea of alleviation of human insecurity and presented the policies of the Belarusian state as legitimate. In comparison, the legitimacy of the Russian and Ukrainian policies was questioned as their human insecurity was presented as less alleviated.

Even when the disputes between Russia and Belarus in their Chernobyl cooperation were mentioned, the Belarusian official media defended the official position of the Belarusian state and blamed Russia for misbehaviour. It did so through the articulation of the political identities of dominating (deceitful) Russia and resisting (trustworthy) Belarus. The article from 22 April 2005 commented on the publication in the Russian newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*.⁹⁹ This newspaper accused Belarus of selling radioactive products to Russia: 'This year, Belarus will activate its exports of agricultural products to Russia from the area affected by the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe, presenting them as clean and harmless to health' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 22 April 2005: 2). The article from the Russian newspaper presented Belarus as trying to deepen human insecurity in Russia by exporting radioactive agricultural products to the Russian market. The Belarusian journalists blamed the reliability of the data sources that this material was built on: 'No concrete facts about how the "dirty" milk and meat could enter Russia were provided in this newspaper' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 22 April 2005: 2). By counter-arguing, the Belarusian official media constructed the Russian media as unfriendly to Belarusian politics and policies.

Hence, traumatised identity of Russia as a worse problem solver modified its role as a 'big brother' in the progressive part of the national narrative

⁹⁸ <http://www.sb.by/post/51066/>.

⁹⁹ This newspaper's website is www.ng.ru. It became notoriously famous for publishing material representing special interests for bribes and illegal remuneration.

of the Belarusian authorities during 2001-2013. Russia was no longer seen as an important actor in assuring ontological security in Belarus. Instead, the Belarusian state was presented as managing the human insecurity of Chernobyl independently. The Belarusian official media also articulated other identities (equally traumatised and less traumatised) to represent Russia. These identities did not contribute to the pattern of change in a trauma management narrative, but are worth mentioning for a general understanding of the complexity of representations.

6.1.4 Traumatized Identity – Equally Traumatized (3 articles in 1996(2), 1998)

During 1996-1998, the Belarusian official media articulated both Russia and Ukraine as equally traumatized states. The identity as equally traumatized included common victimhood and a unified approach of the three countries in dealing with the consequences of Chernobyl. This representation constructed an understanding of alleviation of human insecurity by sharing a common problem and solving it together. The discursive mechanism used was uniting. The phrases used to express common victimhood and shared problem-solving activities were ‘commemoration ceremonies’, ‘joint appeal’, ‘mutual cooperation’, ‘intergovernmental agreements and accords’, and ‘consensus’. These representations, however, did not shape the narrative about the national community of the Belarusian elites and did not condition ontological security in Belarus.

Three articles presented common victimhood in 1996(2) and 1998. One of them discussed a symbolic commemoration ceremony that young people of the three countries organized to express their sorrow (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 20 April 1996: 1). Another article from 27 April 1996 referred to the joint appeal of the Belarusian, Ukrainian, and Russian ambassadors to the American and international community in the Washington Print Club to call for humanitarian, medical, and scientific assistance in the Chernobyl issues (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 27 April 1996: 1). This article constructed a common identity as a Chernobyl victim for Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. It differentiated them from the USA and the international community, which were seen as possible rescuers. The humanitarian aid from abroad was understood as a way to alleviate human insecurity in the three victim countries.

Another article discussed the mutual cooperation between the three victim countries during the workshop in Minsk dedicated to the 12th anniversary of Chernobyl. The cooperation between these countries was described as a consensus of ‘always being close and productive’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1998: 4). Particularly, this article stressed that ‘if 5-6 years ago, the countries had to build this cooperation through personal contacts between

ministries and departments, it is now officially established through the inter-governmental agreements and accords' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1998: 4). Hence, traumatised identity of Russia as equally traumatised neither conditioned the ontological security of Belarus, nor shaped the pro-Russian national narrative.

6.1.5 Traumatized Identity – Less Traumatized (1 article in 2007)

The identity of Belarus as the most traumatized compared to Russia and Ukraine was articulated only once in 2007. The discursive mechanism used was comparing. The article from 26 April 2007 presented Belarus as the most damaged country of all. Valeriï Gurachevskii, representative of the Ministry for Emergency Situations, stated: 'Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine have all been exposed to the radioactive attack. However, in relative terms, Belarus was the most damaged. One-fourth of the territory with two million people was contaminated with radio-nuclides' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2007: 1). This quote presented several comparisons of the damage ('one-fourth of the territory with two million people'). The trauma of Chernobyl was seen through the lenses of environmental damage (the amount of contaminated territory) and human suffering (the number of people affected). As such, human insecurity in Belarus was presented as more deepened than in other states. By being the most damaged, Belarus was differentiated from its 'big brother' Russia. As this identity was constructed only once, it did not contribute to shaping the Belarusian national narrative and ontological security.

To sum up, the representation of Russia in the Belarusian official media constituted the process of construction of a trauma management narrative. It brought in and modified the elements from the national narrative of the Belarusian officials (pro-Russian moral framework). The change in the representations of Russia was crucial. From being the only help provider, the Russian identity moved to an equal partner and, further, to a worse problem solver. The representations of Belarus experienced the opposite shift: from a help receiver to an equal partner to a better problem solver. As a result, the Belarusian official media created a story about a country that suffered the most but managed the consequences of the catastrophe best. This means that the narrative of the Chernobyl trauma management contributed to the transformation of the national narrative of Belarus. The level of success of the narrative of the Chernobyl trauma management depended on the role that the Belarusian state played in it. The better the Belarusian state was presented in managing Chernobyl successfully, the worse the Russian representation became. Hence, Russia was more of a measure of the Belarusian success rather than a condition of it.

This change over time can be illustrated through the ‘big brother-little brother’ relationship: from ‘Big brother helps its little brother (1996-1998, 6 articles) to ‘Big brother and little brother are equal partners’ (1996-2007, 6 articles) to ‘Big brother carries out worse policies than its little brother’ (2001-2013, 7 articles). The change over time in the representation of Russia from positive to negative and of Belarus from neutral to very positive, shaped the understanding of ontological security and the role that Russia played in the Belarusian national narrative. While ontological security was presented as assured most of the times, the country responsible for assurance changed. Russia was seen as a main guarantor during the 1990s, but the Belarusian state itself took this role starting from the 2000s. The introduction of the Belarusian state as a main contributor to the alleviation of human insecurity portrayed its leadership as legitimate. Russia was no longer understood as a ‘big brother’, always more capable and better equipped than its ‘little brother’, Belarus. Rather, Belarus itself possessed all the good qualities that ‘big brother’ could learn from. In other words, while Russia was still seen as a friend, it was not a friend that Belarus depended on. This means that the constructed trauma management narrative transformed the Belarusian national narrative and shaped ontological security of the Belarusian people.

6.2 Trauma Management in the Non-State Public Sphere: The Representations of Russia in the Belarusian Alternative Media

This section looks at the construction of a trauma management narrative through the representation of Russia in the Belarusian alternative media. It shows that the media reproduced both tragic and progressive parts of the pro-European narrative of the Belarusian opposition. In the tragic narrative, Russia was presented as an enemy, whereas Belarus was seen as a victim falling under the power of the enemy. Being linked to Russia meant subordination and threatened ontological security in Belarus. In the progressive narrative, Belarus possessed more autonomy and agency to take care of itself. Being separated from Russia implied the possibility to become independent and assure ontological security. In both tragic and progressive narratives, the role of Russia in the destiny of Belarus was de-legitimised.

These representations of Russia followed a pattern of constant blaming. The construction of Belarus, on the other hand, had a contingent pattern of representation. It was blamed in 1996 and 2011, when the Belarusian authorities were accused of a close cooperation with Russia. It was praised in 2001 and 2006, when the Belarusian authorities or intellectuals were presented as

carrying out work independently of Russia. In this vein, the positive representations of Belarus and, hence, the possibility to become independent and assure ontological security, depended on its distance from Russia. The more distance Belarus had from Russia, the more positive was the representation of Belarus; the less distance Belarus had from Russia, the more negative was the representation of Belarus. This means that Russia was a key actor in the narrative of the Chernobyl trauma management, and hence, its representation contributed to the reproduction of the opposition's national narrative.

As demonstrated in Chapter 5, the data collection for the alternative media was carried out for each 5th Chernobyl anniversary (1992, 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011) for the period 20 April to 2 May. During these five years, Russia was mentioned in six articles out of 13 about external actors. This number of articles occupied 46.2 per cent of the articles representing the external actors and 16.7 per cent of the total number of articles on the Chernobyl topic. This means that almost half of the representations of external actors in the Chernobyl topic were about Russia, giving it an important role quantitatively. It was also visible in the Chernobyl topic overall. In qualitative terms, Russia was also very important: It contributed to the reproduction of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition.

Table 6.2 summarises the representations of Russia in the Belarusian alternative media. It shows that the Belarusian alternative media articulated traumatised, historical, and political identities to represent Russia. These identities constructed difference between Belarus and Russia and no similarities. The degrees of Otherness such as friendship, traumatising, and problem-solving were constructed through the discursive mechanisms of blaming and comparing. Each of the representations is demonstrated below under the identities as dominating (1996, 2011), disconnected (2001), worse problem solver (2006), and less traumatised (2006, 2011).

Table 6.2 Trauma Management, the Representation of Russia: The Belarusian Alternative Media

Identities	Difference (7)			
	1996, 2011 3 articles	2001 1 article	2006 1 article	2006, 2011 2 articles
Ethical				
Russia	Unequal partner	-	-	-
Belarus	Unequal partner	-	-	-
Traumatised				
Russia	-	-	Worse problem solver	Less traumatised
Belarus	-	-	Better problem solver	More traumatised
Historical				
Russia	-	Disconnected	-	-
Belarus	-	Disconnected	-	-
Political				
Russia	Dominating	-	-	-
Belarus	Subordinate Pro-Russian	-	-	-
Ontological security				
	Threatened	Assured	Assured	Threatened
National narrative				
	Reproduced	Reproduced	Reproduced	Reproduced
Discursive mechanism				
	Blaming	Comparing Blaming	Comparing Blaming	Comparing
Degrees of Otherness				
	Hostility	Hostility	Problem-solving	Traumatisation

6.2.1 Ethical Identity – Unequal Partner (3 articles in 1996 and 2011 (2))

The Belarusian alternative media constructed the ethical identity of Russia as unequal partner based on power relations in 1996 and 2011. Russia was seen as dominating and Belarus as subordinate. The official Belarus was also presented as pro-Russian and accepting its subordinate status voluntarily. It reproduced the tragic part of the opposition's national narrative about Russia as an imperialistic enemy. The discursive mechanism used was blaming.

The article from 26 April 1996 reported about the opposition protest called 'the Chernobyl Way': 'The BPF headquarters announced that Moscow sent 50 officers from their special purpose military unit to Belarus 10 days

before the protest rally “the Chernobyl Way” took place in Minsk’ (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 1996: 2). The article questioned the legitimacy of Russia with its military troops at the territory of a sovereign state. The deployment of troops from Russia at the Belarusian territory constructed Russia as dominating and Belarus as subordinate.

Furthermore, as the decision to build a new nuclear power plant at the Belarusian territory was made in 2006, and the first steps towards the construction were made in 2008, the Belarusian alternative media linked the topic of Chernobyl to the construction of a new power plant. This topic was discussed at the commemoration ceremonies of Chernobyl and protest rallies dedicated to Chernobyl. Chernobyl became an argument to assign new blame to Russia for its actions in the area of nuclear energy. Russia was blamed with renewed force for being the country building the power plant at the Belarusian territory. The article from 26 April 2011 articulated two types of political identities. Belarus was seen as pro-Russian (in its orientation) and subordinate (on its own will) to the dominating Russia:

The Baltic States are planning to build a new power plant at the site of the previous Soviet Ignalina power station with either French or South Korean technologies. Meanwhile, Aleksandr Lukashenko is starting to build a power plant in Ostrovets with Russian technology and according to the standards of the Russian energy system. This construction will increase Belarusian dependence on Russian energy resources even more. Today, this dependence already reaches 90 % (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹⁰⁰

The Belarusian alternative media constructed the official Belarus as pro-Russian in its orientation (‘Aleksandr Lukashenko is starting to build a power plant in Ostrovets with Russian technology and according to the standards of the Russian energy system’) and differentiated it from the Baltic States, which were understood as pro-Western (‘The Baltic States are planning to build a new power plant at the site of the previous Soviet Ignalina power station with either French or South Korean technologies’). The identity as pro-Russian was linked to the Belarusian identity as subordinate and Russian identity as dominating (‘increase Belarusian dependence on Russian energy resources even more’, ‘Today, this dependence already reaches 90 %’). This articulation constructed an understanding of a threatened technological and human security: The construction of the power plant with the help of Russia at the Belarusian territory was a threat to the wellbeing of the Belarusian people. It reinforced the role of Russia as imperialistic in the tragic part of the Belarusian opposition narrative.

¹⁰⁰ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53778>.

The articulation of the Russian identity as dominating and Belarusian identity as subordinate continued in another article from 26 April 2011. A participant in the opposition rally ‘the Chernobyl Way’, Aleksandr Mekh, stated that ‘Only Russia benefits from the construction of the power plant, as it invests money, builds a site of strategic importance, provides jobs to its employees, and even exports energy. Belarus only receives a dangerous site’ (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹⁰¹ He described the unequal subordinate relations between Belarus and Russia through cost-benefit representation. Russia was understood as making a profit through the construction of the nuclear power plant at the Belarusian territory (‘Only Russia benefits,’ it invests money’, ‘builds a site of strategic importance’, ‘provides jobs to its employees’, and ‘even exports energy’). In contrast, Belarus was seen as only having costs from this endeavour without benefits (‘only receives a dangerous site’). This understanding constructed a threat to both technological and human security in Belarus. The technological site was seen as the possibility of a second Chernobyl. Human security of the already affected Belarusian citizens could be under attack again. This interpretation questioned the legitimacy of both the Russian and Belarusian authorities. Similarly, the leader of the Belarusian Popular Front Party Alekseï Yanukevich ‘expressed concerns regarding the construction of the power plant with Russia...’ (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹⁰² The word ‘concerns’ signified the risk of a threatened ontological security if Russia was in charge. This representation of Russia again reproduced its imperial place in the tragic part of the Belarusian opposition narrative. The Belarusian opposition claimed that Russia had already revealed its ‘best’ qualities when the Chernobyl disaster took place. That is why Russian technology and leadership were seen as only causing harm and not to be trusted.

Hence, ethical identity of Russia as unequal partner reproduced its role as imperial in the tragic part of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition during 1996-2011. The Belarusian alternative media constructed ontological insecurity of the Belarusian citizens by representing Russia as threatening human and technological security in Belarus.

6.2.2 Historical Identity – Disconnected (1 article in 2001)

In 2001, the Belarusian alternative media discursively disconnected Belarus from Russia through the articulation of the historical identity. Russia was presented as past-centred, while Belarus was seen as present- and future-centred. This articulation changed the role of Russia in the opposition’s na-

¹⁰¹ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53779>.

¹⁰² <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53779>.

tional narrative from a major actor to a marginal actor. Russia could become a marginal actor if Belarus could leave their commonly shared historical experience in the past and move forward. This reorientation from the past to the future was linked to the progressive part of the Belarusian national narrative. The discursive mechanisms used were blaming and comparing.

In the article from 23 April 2001, journalist Boris Tumar condemned the idea of seeing Chernobyl through the lens of Russia. He criticised the oppositional Belarusian writer Svetlana Alexievich and her literary work *The Voices from Chernobyl*:

Alexievichskii Chernobyl is about metaphysical and irrational evil that one cannot fight... Alexievichskaya Belarus proposes a catalogue of unfortunate destinies, everything is dead in it. ... It is a symbol of 'Oh yeah, Russia', a country that is easier to bury than to improve (*Nasha Niva*, 23 April 2001).¹⁰³

In this quote, Tumar questioned the historical link of Belarus to Russia. Russia was seen as a country possessing negative qualities ('a country that is easier to bury than to improve'). These qualities had a bad influence on how Chernobyl could be understood and handled in Belarus ('metaphysical and irrational evil', 'one cannot fight', 'a catalogue of unfortunate destinies', 'everything is dead in it'). In order to be healed from Chernobyl, Belarus had to leave the symbol of 'Oh yeah, Russia' behind.

Tumar argued that the symbol of 'Oh yeah, Russia' was the way the Western world understood Belarus. He gave an example of Belarusian tourists who came to Spain and brought matrëshkas and vodka as souvenirs. When they presented themselves as Belarusians, Spaniards replied, 'Oh yeah, Russia'. Tumar complained: 'This stubborn refusal to acknowledge our identity hurts our people immensely. How come? Why do they take us for these Russians? ...'. In this quote, Tumar blamed Europe for creating the obstacles for the Belarusian identity to flourish ('stubborn refusal to acknowledge our identity', 'take us for these Russians'). Tumar argued that the identity of 'Oh yeah, Russia' had deep historical roots:

If you look deeply, 'Oh yeah, Russia' is an oriental stereotype of 'the Russian', 'a deep Russian soul', 'the mind-set difficult to understand', 'troïka', 'vodka', and 'samovar'. This is the stereotype that the West produced, but the Russian mentality creatively redesigned and traumatically applied to itself: 'We are the ones you would like us to be'... Only by getting rid of this stereotype can Russia become a modern Western civilisation. Only by creating a positive image of 'Oh yeah, Belarus' will we be able to enter the future (*Nasha Niva*, 23 April 2001).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=95403>.

¹⁰⁴ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=95403>.

In this vein, Tumar saw the persistence of the ‘Oh yeah, Russia’ identity as a practice the West was reproducing (‘an oriental stereotype’, ‘the stereotype that the West produced’). Russia, on the other hand, just followed this stereotype (‘the Russian mentality creatively redesigned and traumatically applied to itself’, ‘We are the ones you would like us to be’). In order to prosper (‘become a modern Western civilisation’), Russia had to change its image (‘getting rid of this stereotype’). It is interesting to notice the emphasis on the Western centrism in this quote: In order to prosper, Russia had to become Western. In other words, if it did not move closer to the West, it would remain in its ‘Oh yeah, Russia’ stereotype. As Belarus was a part of Russia historically, this stereotype was applied to it as well. In order to get rid of it, Belarus had to create its own contemporary stereotype with a positive moral characteristic (‘creating a positive image of “Oh yeah, Belarus”’). This new positive image could help Belarus to move forward (‘we will be able to enter the future’). This new positive image could be a way to heal from Chernobyl and assure ontological security.

Tumar saw the solution to the problem of ‘Oh yeah, Russia’ and embracement of the identity of ‘Oh yeah, Belarus’ in the artistic work of a non-partisan photographer, Anatoliï Kleshchuk:

When one looks at Kleshchuk’s photographs, one never says ‘Oh yeah, Russia’. This is because Kleshchuk sees the world in a very positive light, appreciating an individual and his property, things that make us all human. ...His images are not anticipating the end of the world (*Nasha Niva*, 23 April 2001).¹⁰⁵

Tumar continued that for Kleshchuk

the children of Chernobyl are desperately clinging onto their lives, their parents are desperately fighting for their children’s lives, while Belarusians are fighting for Belarus. ...Nothing is dead here, not even radiation; everything is born for something and remains something. This is a country where one has a place to live and work (*Nasha Niva*, 23 April 2001).¹⁰⁶

In this vein, Tumar linked the positive image of ‘Oh yeah, Belarus’ to the solution of the Chernobyl problem. He agreed with Kleshchuk that Belarus was a present-centred country with positive outlooks (‘a country where one has a place to live and work’, ‘Belarusians are fighting for Belarus’, ‘everything is born for something and remains something’). Possessing these positive features helped Belarus to deal with the consequences of Chernobyl (‘the children of Chernobyl are desperately clinging onto their lives’, ‘their parents are

¹⁰⁵ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=95403>.

¹⁰⁶ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=95403>.

desperately fighting for their children's lives', 'nothing is dead here, not even radiation'). In other words, the positive image 'Oh yeah, Belarus' was a path to alleviating human insecurity.

Tumar advocated to develop Kleshchuk's vision of Belarus and Chernobyl in the present rather than to continue with Alexievich's vision of Belarus in the past: Alexievich has made 'a terrible anti-advertising of Belarus to the world ... If I was our authorities, I would organise an exhibition of Kleshchuk's photographs in every country where the book of Alexievich is sold ...' (*Nasha Niva*, 23 April 2001).¹⁰⁷ By linking Belarus to Kleshchuk's positive understanding of life, Tumar rejected the historical identity of Belarus of 'Oh yeah Russia'. He advocated for the contemporary identity of Belarus based on its own uniqueness. This contemporary identity was free from comparisons of Belarus with Russia or any other country. For Tumar, instead of blaming or praising Russia, Belarus should focus on its positive self-centredness.¹⁰⁸ Having a positive identity of the present (as Kleshchuk suggested) could assure ontological security. Being stuck in the negative identity of the past (as Alexievich promoted) would only threaten ontological security.

Tumar's argument was partially similar to the Belarusian official story. While the Belarusian state initially built a positive identity of Belarus by working together with Russia, it started to differentiate its achievements in the national Chernobyl policies from Russian after some time. Tumar, on the other hand, proposed to leave Russia in peace as a point of departure and create its own 'Oh yeah, Belarus' identity without being compared to other countries.

Hence, historical identity of Russia as disconnected reproduced its role as an enemy in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition in 2001. Ontological security of the Belarusian citizens could be assured by disintegrating with Russia.

6.2.3 Traumatized Identity – Worse Problem Solver (1 article in 2006)

In 2006, the construction of the negative Russian identity and the positive Belarusian identity continued. This time, the focus was on a different level of

¹⁰⁷ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=95403>.

¹⁰⁸ Tumar was one of the few journalists in the alternative newspaper who would propose to focus on the positive and contemporary rather than on the negative and the past. The negative and the past are the traditional themes in the Belarusian opposition narrative. According to Tumar, reading Belarus through the Russian historical past and hierarchical identity was a no-way-out from dependence and, hence, from ontological insecurity.

success in the Chernobyl policy-making. Russia was presented as a worse problem solver, while Belarus was understood as a better problem solver. Praising the Belarusian state for good results constructed its policies and the authorities who implemented them as legitimate. Blaming the Russian state for bad Chernobyl management produced an understanding of the Russian state's policies and authorities involved as illegitimate. In this vein, while the negative role of Russia in the tragic part of the Belarusian national narrative was reproduced, the role of the Belarusian authorities as the opposition rivals changed from negative to positive. The discursive mechanisms used was comparing and blaming.

The article from 26 April 2006 was reprinted from the Russian newspaper *Moskovskij Komsomolets*.¹⁰⁹ It blamed Russia for bad Chernobyl management but praised Belarus for taking care of its Chernobyl problems thoroughly. The article directed blame towards Russia in two policy areas: resettlement of victims and zone maintenance. The article blamed Russia for not resettling its inhabitants away from the contaminated zone:

Compared to the Belarusian and Ukrainian radioactive zone, where people were evacuated, the Russian towns of the Bryansk region, such as Vyskov, Novozymbkov, and Zlynka, as well as the neighbouring villages, are still populated with tens of thousands of inhabitants (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2006).¹¹⁰

This implied that while Belarus and Ukraine took care of the human insecurity of the zone inhabitants and evacuated them, Russia did nothing and contributed to the deepening of human insecurity at its contaminated territories. This quote united Belarus with Ukraine in the Chernobyl problem solving and distanced them from Russia. Distancing Belarus from Russia reproduced the role of Russia as an enemy in the tragic part of the Belarusian national narrative.

This article constructed the differences in the quality of the policies in Russia and other affected states because of the attitudes these countries had towards the problem: 'In Belarus and Ukraine, Chernobyl became a problem of national importance, while in the Bryansk region of Russia, it was only local. That is why in Russia, the problem is portrayed as non-existent' (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2006).¹¹¹ This quote implied that by constructing a problem as a matter of national importance, one could deal with it in a better way. By constructing the problem as too unimportant to pay attention to, one could

¹⁰⁹ It is a Russian daily newspaper publishing sensational or provocative news (www.mk.ru).

¹¹⁰ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=1587>.

¹¹¹ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=1587>.

justify the lack of intervention. As such, because Belarus and Ukraine nationalised Chernobyl, they could deal with human insecurity in a more profound way. As Russia placed this problem at the local level, its human insecurity was seen as deepened.

In this article, Belarus and Ukraine were linked together as good policy-makers, while Russia was presented as irresponsible. This construction was partially similar to the Belarusian official media's representation of the Belarusian Chernobyl state policies as better than the Russian. At the same time, it differed from the Belarusian official media by linking Belarus to Ukraine and differentiating them from Russia. The Belarusian official media, on the other hand, claimed to have better policies than both Russia and Ukraine.

In addition, the Belarusian alternative media particularised the Belarusian achievements without making references to Ukraine. It did so by blaming Russia for not taking care of its radioactive zone. It stated that Belarus, compared to Russia, cut all its radioactive forest and took away the radioactive layer of soil from its contaminated territory next to the Russian border (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2006).¹¹² Russia, however, left this territory without any maintenance: 'The forest stands alone and breathes radiation ... birds are not singing ... the villages are hidden in this forest and have abandoned houses' (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2006).¹¹³ This comparison implied that while the Belarusian state worked on alleviating human insecurity, the Russian state did not take care of it at all. Human insecurity was understood through the problems of the environment: the presence of radiation in the woods and soil. This negative representation of Russia reproduced its role as a bad guy in the Belarusian opposition narrative. Similarly to the Soviet reluctance to take the catastrophe seriously, the modern Russian state was understood as continuing with the Soviet practices in the post-Soviet era. At the same time, the role of the Belarusian authorities in the opposition narrative changed from bad guys (the tragic part) to good guys (the progressive part) who were presented as taking care of Chernobyl properly.

The strategy of reprinting articles from the Russian newspapers that represented Russia in a bad light and Belarus in a good light was similar to the strategy that the Belarusian official media used. While the Belarusian official media was a part of the state and praised the state authorities they supported and worked for, the Belarusian alternative media praised the Belarusian state, which was their rival. This showed that blaming Russia was a much more established phenomenon for the Belarusian alternative media than blaming the Belarusian authorities. The Belarusian state could even be

¹¹² <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=1587>.

¹¹³ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=1587>.

praised if it did not engage with Russia. Hence, the domestic conflict between the Belarusian authorities and opposition could be resolved, if the former stopped being attached to Russia.

Hence, traumatised identity of Russia as a worse problem solver reproduced its role as an enemy in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition in 2006. The Belarusian alternative media constructed ontological security of the Belarusian citizens as assured by managing Chernobyl independently of Russia.

6.2.4 Traumatized Identity – Less Traumatized (2 articles in 2006 and 2011)

In addition to being a worse problem solver, the Belarusian alternative media constructed Russia as a less traumatized and Belarus as more traumatized. The discursive mechanism used was comparing. By presenting Belarus as more affected than other countries, the Belarusian alternative media constructed human insecurity in Belarus as more deepened than in Russia. It reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition by differentiating it from Russia through the level of traumatization by Chernobyl.

The article from 26 April 2006 was reprinted from the Russian newspaper *Moskovskij Komsomolets*. It argued that Russia was not affected by Chernobyl in the same way as Belarus and Ukraine: ‘Chernobyl catastrophe ... hit Ukraine and Belarus, but touched Russia only tangentially’ (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2006).¹¹⁴ Here, Belarus and Ukraine were constructed as equally traumatized compared to Russia, which was understood as less traumatized. The more substantial Chernobyl effect on Belarus and Ukraine was described by the word ‘hit’, while Russia was only ‘touched’. This articulation presented Belarusian and Ukrainian human insecurity as substantially deepened compared to Russian. It also created a common victimhood between Ukraine and Belarus but not Russia. This understanding, on the one hand, shaped the tragic part of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition by shifting the role of Russia from an enemy to another Chernobyl victim. On the other hand, it reproduced the boundary drawing between Russia and Belarus by differentiating Russia as less traumatized than Belarus and Ukraine.

In 2011, the status of Belarus as a Chernobyl victim was reinforced. Belarus was constructed not only as more traumatized compared to Russia and Ukraine but as the most traumatized by Chernobyl. In this case, Belarus was discursively differentiated from both Russia and Ukraine and stood alone in its victimhood. The discursive move from a more traumatized to the most traumatized country reinforced the understanding of human insecurity as

¹¹⁴ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=1587>.

deepening. The reference to Belarus as the most traumatised was again made by a Russian representative. Alekseï Okeanov, Head of the Department of Radiation Hygiene and Epidemiology and professor at the Sakharov University in Moscow, stated that ‘In Belarus, people started to get cancer four years after the iodine attack on the entire population, whereas in Ukraine and Russia, in two years later as those countries received a smaller dose of radiation exposure’ (*Nasha Niva*, 20 April 2011).¹¹⁵ In this quote, Belarus was the most traumatised (‘the iodine attack on the entire population’), while Russia and Ukraine were less traumatised (‘received a smaller dose of radiation exposure’). The level of traumatisation was delayed in Ukraine and Russia (‘people started to get cancer... two years later’). This quote clarified the difference of traumatisation between the countries: the exposure of the human bodies to the radiation that caused cancer in their organisms. Belarus had more of instances than Russia and Ukraine.

Hence, traumatised identity of Russia as less traumatised reproduced the negativity of Russia in the tragic part of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition during 2006-2011. The Belarusian alternative media constructed ontological security of the Belarusian citizens as threatened by being more traumatised by Chernobyl than Russia. The media presented the disaster as nationalised in Belarus, but de-nationalised in Russia.

To sum up, the Belarusian alternative media constructed a trauma management narrative through negative representations of Russia. These representations contributed to the reproduction of the pro-European national narrative that saw Russia as an enemy. The representations of Belarus were contingent, with both positive and negative attributes attached. Negative representations were assigned when the Belarusian authorities moved closer to Russia, while positive representations were given when Belarus distanced itself from Russia. As such, successful trauma management depended on whether Belarus could deal with Chernobyl independently from Russia. If it could, ontological security could be assured and the Belarusian authorities would be seen as legitimate. If it could not, ontological security would be threatened, and the Belarusian authorities would be understood as illegitimate. In this case, Russia was a condition of successful trauma management in Belarus. The domestic conflict between the Belarusian authorities and the opposition could be resolved if Russia was removed from the Belarusian life.

¹¹⁵ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53486>.

6.3 Conclusion: Trauma Management in the Disconnected Publics of Belarus. The Representations of Russia

This section summarises the results of the analysis of the representations of Russia in the Belarusian official and alternative media. It shows that Russia was an important actor in constructing trauma management narratives in both the official and alternative media. The Belarusian official media modified the national narrative of the Belarusian officials and presented ontological security of the Belarusian citizens as assured. The Belarusian alternative reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition and portrayed the state of ontological security as conditional upon the Belarusian attachment to Russia.

The representations of Russia in *the Belarusian official media* depended on what role (active or passive) the Belarusian state played in the Chernobyl trauma management at a particular point of time. When the Belarusian state was presented as incapable of dealing with Chernobyl alone and calling Russia for help, Russia was constructed in a positive light. When the Belarusian state was presented as contributing to the alleviation of human insecurity in Belarus, Russia was constructed in a negative light. The Belarusian official media portrayed ontological security as assured all the time; first, with Russia as a main contributor (1990s) and, then, with the Belarusian state (2000s). Initially (1990s), the Belarusian state was not presented as contributing to the alleviation of human insecurity. It was Russia that was praised for dealing with the problems of Belarus. For example, the Belarusian official media constructed a political identity of orientation (pro-Russian Belarus and pro-Belarusian Russia) to argue for the need of political unification with Russia in order to be able to manage Chernobyl and alleviate human insecurity (1996-2007, 6 articles). It also constructed the historical identity of close ties between Belarus and Russia (1996-1998, 6 articles) to legitimise the ethical identity of Russia as a help provider to Belarus. Over time (2000s), the Belarusian state entered the stage as a saviour of its own people. Russia lost its status as a problem solver and was blamed for its inefficiency. The Russian identity as a worse problem solver was the most articulated identity in the Belarusian official media (1993-1994, 2001-2013, 9 articles). It was supported by the economic identity, arguing that poorer Belarus was managing Chernobyl much more effectively than richer Russia. Russia was still seen as a friend (reproducing the progressive part of the official national narrative of Belarus), but its value changed (modifying the progressive part of the official national narrative of Belarus).

Compared to the Belarusian official media, in which the level of success in assuring ontological security depended on who was the main guarantor (Russia or the Belarusian state), ontological security in the *Belarusian alternative media* could be assured *only* if Russia was not involved in it. If the Belarusian state could manage Chernobyl without Russian help, ontological security was seen as assured. If the Belarusian state could not manage Chernobyl alone and included Russia in the Chernobyl problem solving, ontological security was seen as threatened. Hence, Russia's absence (and not its passive-active presence) in Belarus was a condition of successful trauma management. Whereas in the Belarusian official media, the change over time in the representation of Russia could be clearly observed, there was no such change in the Belarusian alternative media. Its commitment to removing Russia from Belarus remained stable: Only when all 'bridges connecting Russia and Belarus were burnt' could Belarus assure ontological security.

The Belarusian alternative media presented the historical ties with Russia as a reason of a threatened ontological security in Belarus (2001). The voluntary subordination of Belarus to Russia was understood as a reason for a threatened ontological security in Belarus (1996, 2011). The Belarusian alternative media proposed to leave Russia as their point of departure in the Belarusian national narrative and look to the future instead. Only by becoming self-centred could Belarus assure its ontological security. It saw the possibility of assuring ontological security when the Belarusian state did not cooperate with Russia but became independent of it. To present the Belarusian state as becoming distant from Russia, the Belarusian alternative media articulated Russia as a worse problem solver. Similar to the Belarusian official media, the Belarusian alternative media criticised Russia for worse Chernobyl policies and praised the Belarusian state for better policies (2006). This was an interesting observation as the Belarusian alternative media did not accuse the Belarusian authorities (their political rivals) of dealing with Chernobyl poorly. The Belarusian authorities could actually transform themselves into good guys if they said 'goodbye' to Russia. They would remain bad guys if they maintained their friendship with Russia. In addition, the Belarusian alternative media included Ukraine to the pool of good policymakers and victims, while the Belarusian official media understood Belarus as the only better policymaker and the most victimised (2007).

In other words, regarding the Belarusian official media, it was Russia's *presence* in the Chernobyl problem solving (regardless of positive or negative representations) that constituted the assurance of ontological security. What changed was the value attached to Russia: It was still a friend (reproducing the national narrative) but no longer important for the survival of Belarus (changing the national narrative). In the Belarusian alternative media, it was

Russia's *absence* that determined the success of the assurance of Belarusian ontological security. Even the Belarusian officials could become good guys (changing the national narrative) if they could decouple themselves from Russia, which was always an enemy (reproducing the national narrative). As such, the representations of Russia in the Chernobyl trauma management shaped the Belarusian national narratives and the understanding of ontological security in both media.

Chapter 7. Trauma Management in the Disconnected Publics of Belarus. The Representations of Europe

This chapter looks at media representations of Europe in relation to the Chernobyl disaster in the Belarusian official and alternative media. The purpose of the chapter is to show whether trauma management discourse was constructed, whether it reproduced or modified the Belarusian national narratives, and whether it shaped ontological security. The chapter demonstrates that the Belarusian media constructed trauma management discourse. While the alternative media reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition, the official media transformed the national narrative of the Belarusian authorities.

7.1 Trauma Management in the State-Controlled Public Sphere: The Representations of Europe in the Belarusian Official Media

This section looks at the construction of a trauma management narrative through the representation of Europe in the Belarusian official media. It shows that the Belarusian official media divided Europe into good guys (the individual European states, their NGOs, businesses, and governments) and bad guys (the European institutions and authorities). While the European charities were constantly praised during 1992-2005, they ceased to be so after 2005. Instead, during 2010-2011, the European institutions and politicians were articulated as bad guys.

Praising Europe (1992-2005) modified the tragic part of the official national narrative of Belarus. The European countries and their charities, businesses and governments were seen as philanthropic help providers, while Belarus was understood as a rescued help receiver. This relationship was based on humanism and charity. Germany was the most represented philanthropic help provider (12 articles out of 19 during 1992-2005). The identity of a philanthropic help provider overtook the historical and traumatised identities of a WWII loser and perpetrator. This identity shift softened the hostility in the tragic part of the Belarusian official national narrative and encouraged friendship between Germany and Belarus. Similarly, presenting

other European countries (Austria, France, Italy, Ireland, Switzerland, and the Netherlands) as philanthropic help providers constructed an understanding of Europe as a friend.

Blaming Europe (once in 1998 and during 2010-2011) reproduced the tragic part of the official national narrative of Belarus. The European political institutions and authorities were seen as help providers who were dominant and richer. Not charity and humanism but power as a struggle over values was at stake. By blaming the European institutions and politicians for their failure to help Belarus and for exercising power, the Belarusian official media presented the Belarusian authorities as legitimate.

Table 7.1 summarises the representations of Europe in the Belarusian official media. As mentioned in Chapter 5, in the Belarusian official media, the European countries and institutions were discussed in 19 articles out of 79 articles about external actors. They occupied 24.1 per cent of the representation of all external actors and 5.8 per cent about Chernobyl topic. As such, Europe was a visible actor among the external players quantitatively, but less significant in the Chernobyl topic overall. However, as we will see, Europe did become a significant Other in qualitative terms, as its representations in the Chernobyl trauma management contributed to the modification of the Belarusian national narrative and the construction of a certain understanding of ontological security.

The number of positive representations of Europe prevailed over negative representations: 17 articles versus four. Positive representations modified the degrees of hostility into friendship through the discursive mechanism of praising. Negative representations reproduced the degrees of hostility through the discursive mechanism of blaming and comparing. Half of the negative representations took place because of a particular political scandal. Blaming, praising, and comparing constructed identities such as ethical, traumatised, historical, political, apolitical, and economic.

These representations and their change are shown below, starting with Germany as a philanthropic help provider (12 articles during 1992-2005), proceeding with other European states as philanthropic help providers (5 articles during 1996-2005), and finishing with the European institutions as dominant and richer help providers (4 articles during 1998-2011).

Table 7.1 Trauma Management, the Representation of Europe: The Belarusian Official Media

Identities	Difference (19)		
	1992-2005 12 articles (Germany)	1996-2005 5 articles (European states)	1998, 2010-2011 4 articles (European institutions)
Ethical			
Europe	Help provider	Help provider	Help provider
Belarus	Help receiver	Help receiver	Help receiver
Traumatised			
Europe	Perpetrator trauma	-	-
Belarus	Double traumatised	-	Most traumatised
Historical			
Europe	Past perpetrator	-	-
Belarus	Past victim	-	-
Political			
Europe	-	-	Dominating
Belarus	-	-	Resisting
Apolitical			
Europe	Philanthropic	Philanthropic	-
Belarus	Rescued	Rescued	-
Economic			
Europe	Richer	Richer	Richer
Belarus	Poorer	Poorer	Poorer
Ontological security	Assured	Assured	Threatened
National narrative	Modified	Modified	Reproduced
Discursive mechanism	Praising	Praising	Blaming Comparing
Degrees of Otherness	Friendship	Friendship	Hostility

7.1.1 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (Germany) (12 articles in 1992(2), 1994, 1995, 1996(3), 1998(3), 2001, 2005)

During 1992-2005, Germany was articulated as the country that provided aid the most. This was mentioned in 12 articles. The articles constructed the ethical identity of Germany as a help provider who helped a victimised Belarus that was understood as a help receiver. This ethical identity was linked to the

apolitical identity of philanthropic Germany and rescued Belarus. Among the German organisations mentioned were the Union of German Charity Funds, Heineken Deutschland, Henkel KGaA, and the Otto Hugo Institute. Economic identities of richer Germany and poorer Belarus were also mentioned but were less salient than the philanthropic identities. Human insecurity was expressed through children's diseases such as diabetes, endocrinological diseases, and thyroid gland cancer. Human insecurity was presented as alleviated because of the provided support from Germany.

The discursive mechanism used was praising. Germany was praised through phrases such as 'their talent to do good', 'the German efforts', 'their kind initiative', 'help us in such hard times', 'provide complete and normal human lives to our children', 'save the Belarusian children', 'do everything possible for the children', and 'treat children with such care and warmth'. Germany was praised for providing the Belarusian children with the recuperative visits abroad, sponsoring medical equipment and treatment, undertaking visits, and organising conferences.

The German aid to the Belarusian children was one of the most discussed topics among other types of the German assistance. It was mentioned in seven articles out of 12 during 1992-2005 and related to the recuperative visits of the Belarusian children to Germany and to the German assistance with medical care and equipment. One of these articles (21 April 1994) referred to Germany as a WWII perpetrator. In addition to ethical identities, it articulated historical and traumatised identities. The article quoted Yadviga Malishevskaya, a retired teacher from the Belarusian State University:

I survived the fascist occupation in Minsk. And now I sometimes think about who we have become. Why do the losers of the war treat the grandchildren of its winners with such care and warmth? Is it a feeling of guilt? I don't know, maybe it is. But I will tell you the truth: I am sincerely grateful to those who help us in such hard times. I feel joy and learn from their talent to do good (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1994: 2).

On the one hand, this quote reproduced the known historical identities of Belarus as a WWII winner and Germany as a WWII loser. It also constructed the traumatised identities of Germany as a WWII perpetrator ('feeling of guilt') and a double-traumatised identity of Belarus ('survived the fascist occupation' and 'such hard times' after Chernobyl). On the other hand, this quote transformed the German historical and traumatised identity of a war perpetrator to an ethical apolitical identity of a philanthropic help provider ('their talent to do good', 'care and warmth' and 'help us in such hard times'). This identity shift underlined the generational aspect of the Belarusian-German relationship: While Nazi Germany traumatised the previous genera-

tion of the Belarusians in WWII, the modern Germany was saving the current generation of Belarusians from the Chernobyl trauma.¹¹⁶

The same article gave an example of Germany as the Belarusian saviour. The Belarusian journalist shared his opinion on the Chernobyl aid:

Recently, I have been at the Minsk train station to welcome back Chernobyl children from Berlin. I couldn't recognize my young friends. They looked so fresh, healthy, happy, and careless. They brought huge suitcases full of presents. From Germany. Let them often recall their holidays and the people who gave them three weeks of complete and normal human life (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 21 April 1994: 2).

This quote constructed the Belarusian children as 'fresh, healthy, happy, and careless' thanks to the Germans who were 'people who gave them ... complete and normal life' and 'huge suitcases full of presents'. This representation constructed human insecurity as alleviated and the Germans as friends of Belarus.

The life of the Belarusian children in Germany was described in the article from 25 April 1992 entitled 'Four Short Weeks'. The Belarusian citizen A. Nagornov from the Minsk Region told a story about a group of Belarusian teenagers visiting Germany:

When we arrived there, we thought that four weeks would be a long time, but they went so fast. Everything was well organized every day and hour. We participated in sports events, visited entertainment performances, the zoo and historical places. In the end, we had a big farewell concert (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 1992: 4).

¹¹⁶ As Svetlana Bodrunova, one of the Chernobyl children visiting Germany, remembers, 'In post-Soviet Belarus, in the country that lost one in four of its people in World War II, and especially in Gomel (which, with only three buildings remaining and almost all inhabitants killed, suffered most), West Germany was often mentioned in a negative context: either nazist (purely negative) or capitalist (negative but envious). For example, some of the best pieces of literature in Belarusian were dedicated to World War II. They were studied in every school in "Belarusian literature", a compulsory discipline, and the depiction of Germans there was inevitably negative. As we went to Germany for the first time, some of us recalled the "fascist" theme, but the good treatment we received went much beyond the expectations of the boys and girls who had never travelled outside the Gomel region, and the antagonistic background was overcome easier than one could expect. However, on the other hand, one could feel that a possibility to help Belarus was, for many Germans, to some extent a way to overcome the post-World War II syndrome, to fill the guilt gap. The countries most active in collaboration with the Chernobyl charities in the first period after the disaster were Germany and Italy' (Bodrunova, 2012: 17).

The article from 30 April 2005 again mentioned Germany, together with Italy, as the countries that offered recuperative visits to the Belarusian children in their homes. In this way, the German identity of a WWII was transformed into an identity of a Chernobyl saviour. As Germany was a part of Europe, its new identity of a saviour destabilised the idea of Europe as an enemy in the official national narrative.

The German provision of medical treatment and equipment to heal the Belarusian children was another topic of praise. It was articulated in four articles from 1992, 1995, 1996, and 1998. The praise was expressed through phrases such as 'save the Belarusian children', 'do everything possible for the children', and 'so grateful for a kind initiative'. The article from 30 April 1992 stated that the Union of German Charity Funds and the company Heineken Deutschland worked on a project 'to save the Belarusian children'. They were to build study and recreation sanatoriums at the ecologically clean territory of Belarus (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 30 April 1992: 1). Similarly, the article from 22 April 1995 informed about the opening of a study and recuperation centre for the Chernobyl children called 'Hope' in the town of Vileika, where Germany was one of the sponsors to build this centre (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 22 April 1995: 3). The German identity of a saviour constructed the human insecurity of the Chernobyl children as alleviated and the relations between Belarus and Germany as improved.

Furthermore, the article entitled 'Everything Best for the Kids' discussed the German aid to a centre for children's endocrinology that treated children with diabetes and other endocrinological diseases. The article expressed gratitude to the German businesses for their aid:

We are so grateful for a kind initiative of the German chemical company Henkel KGaA, who provided us with the financial assistance to rearrange a playing room, where kids spend almost all their free time in-between the medical treatment (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 4 May 1996: 1).

Similarly, the article from 24 April 1998 informed that the German Otto Hugo Institute provided assistance with screening more than 10,000 Belarusian children for thyroid gland cancer (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 24 April 1998: 2). The construction of friendship with Germany presented the idea of human insecurity of the Belarusian children as alleviated.

During 1996-1998, the Belarusian state media acknowledged the German efforts in business, research and education areas in relation to the Chernobyl affairs in four articles in 1996(2) and 1998(2). The article from 25 April 1996 informed about a business trade fair in Hannover where Belarus presented a special section about 10 years of work on the liquidation of the consequences of the disaster (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 25 April 1996: 1). An article on the

following day, 26 April 1996, discussed the results of this trade fair. It referred to the Belarusian president, who said:

Belarus would be very grateful to receive international assistance, including from Germany. He thanked Germany for the already provided help, stressing that the entire Belarusian leadership was very glad to welcome the German efforts in establishing cooperation (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 4).

Here, the praise ('very grateful', 'thanked', 'very glad to welcome') was directed at the German politicians and included a political aspect. It meant that traumatic experiences could unite countries with different political systems and cultures rather than separate them ('already provided assistance', 'receive international assistance', 'establishing cooperation').

In addition, the article from 24 April 1998 informed about the round table that took place in Belarus on the questions of the natural environment in the affected territories, with Germany as one of the participants (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 24 April 1998: 1b). Another article from 30 April 1998 discussed the aid from Germany, which was one of the members of the Rotary Club together with Australia, who sponsored the computerisation of the state medical library to increase information retrieval for the medical personnel (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 30 April 1998: 4).

Constructing Germany as a philanthropic help provider to Belarus through the articulation of ethical and apolitical identities transformed its historical and traumatised identity of a war perpetrator and a contemporary identity of a European enemy. Germany was divided into two entities – the Nazi Germany of the past that traumatised Belarus and the modern Germany that helped Belarus. The new ethical apolitical identity of Germany shaped the Belarusian national narrative and encouraged friendship between the two countries united by traumas. It also destabilised the unified European identity as an enemy and relaxed the idea of hostility. Ontological security of the Belarusian citizens was assured by constructing the human insecurity of the Belarusian children as alleviated.

7.2.2 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (Other European Countries) (5 articles in 1996(2), 2001(2), 2005)

Parallel to Germany, the organisations of other European states¹¹⁷ not related to the Belarusian historical past were praised for assisting Belarus during

¹¹⁷ The European states have been participating in humanitarian assistance to the Chernobyl children, providing them with medical support, recuperative visits and material aid. Italy, Germany, the UK, and Ireland have been particularly active in this area of support. Irish initiatives include Chernobyl Children International, Chernobyl Children

1996-2005. The praise took place in four articles in 1996, 2001(2), and 2005. Similar to Germany, the European countries with their charities, businesses and governments were understood through the ethical apolitical identities of philanthropic help providers, whereas Belarus was seen as a rescued help receiver. Germany was also mentioned together with other European states in two articles in 2001 and 2005.¹¹⁸ The Belarusian official media presented human insecurity as alleviated by demonstrating that the European charities took care of the Belarusian victims. By articulating the European ethical identities based on charity, the hostility between Belarus and Europe in the official national narrative of Belarus changed into friendship. Economic identities of richer Europe and poorer Belarus were also mentioned but were less salient than philanthropic identities.

The discursive mechanism used was praising. The phrases to express praise were 'thanks to friends', 'strong humanitarian wave', 'deeply touched by our sorrow', 'common sorrow', 'compassion, partnership and community', and 'simple and kind people'. The human insecurity was presented through words such as oncology, hematology, and bone marrow transplantation. The topics discussed were humanitarian assistance (1996-2001) and recuperation of children in the European countries (2001-2005). Austria, France, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands were praised for humanitarian assistance, while Italy was also praised for helping to recuperate the Chernobyl children.

The article from 27 April 1996 expressed gratitude to the Austrian government and the Swiss company Zepter for their humanitarian support, calling them friends three times in one paragraph:

Thank God the Belarusian people have many friends who are always eager to help! The national oncological and hematological centre for children was created thanks to the Austrian Republic whose government has donated five million dollars. Thanks to our Austrian friends, the bone marrow transplantation ward will operate in the hospital. The well-known Swiss company 'Zepter' has granted equipment for the catering department of the centre, dishes and thermo-trays

Appeal, Friends of the Children of Chernobyl, the Barna Chernobyl Group, Chernobyl Child Aid, and so on. The British initiatives are Chernobyl Children's Project, Chernobyl Children Life Line, Aid Convoy, British Humanitarian Aid, Friends of Chernobyl's Children, Children of Chernobyl Fund Wells, Heart Hope Help, Trust for Chernobyl Children, and so on. The Italian funds are ANPAS Toscana, Un Sorriso Per Chernobyl, Aiutiamoli a Vivere, Comitato per L'Accoglienza dei Bambini di Chernobyl, Associazione Garda Solidale ONLUS, Progetto Humus, Associazione La Rondine, and so on [<http://www.belarusguide.com/chernobyl1/chlist.htm>].

¹¹⁸ These two articles were also mentioned in the discussion of the German identity as a help provider in the previous subsection.

worth one hundred thousand dollars. One can hope that, thanks to our Austrian and Swiss friends, the centre will begin treating children by the end of this year (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 27 April 1996: 1).

The gratitude to Austria and Switzerland, who were represented as ‘friends who are always eager to help’, was expressed through phrases such as ‘thanks to the government of the Austrian Republic’, ‘thanks to our Austrian friends’, and ‘thanks to our Austrian and Swiss friends’. Their economic identities as being richer were articulated through the reference to the worth of the aid (i.e., five million dollars from the Austrian government and one hundred thousand dollars from the Swiss company). Their actual assistance was presented as ‘the national oncological and hematological centre for children was created’, ‘the bone marrow transplantation ward will operate in the hospital’, ‘granted equipment for the catering department of the centre, dishes and thermo-trays’, and ‘the centre will begin treating children by the end of this year’. These representations changed the hostility between Belarus and Europe in the official national narrative of Belarus into friendship. Friendship with Austria and Switzerland was understood as an alleviation of the post-Chernobyl human insecurity through providing humanitarian assistance.

Many European countries were praised for their humanitarian aid in the article from 26 April 2001. It stated that Chernobyl did not separate different countries from each other but united them in common sorrow:

The Chernobyl echo not only reached other nations, but has created a strong humanitarian wave. Hundreds, if not thousands, of representatives from German, French, Italian, Irish, and Dutch funds, missions, and unions have arrived and are continuing to arrive these days to Belarus (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2001).¹¹⁹

The article described this relationship as ‘compassion, partnership, and community’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 2001).¹²⁰ By articulating ethical identities based on charity, the European status as a contemporary enemy in the Belarusian national narrative was relaxed. Europe was seen as the guarantor of the Belarusian ontological security.

The author of another article in 2001 entitled ‘I Grew Up in the Zone’, was a young girl, Irina Chernobaï, who lived in the Chernobyl area all her life. She remembered with gratitude the aid delivered to the damaged regions from all over the USSR and her recuperation trips to Italy. In Italy, she spent a whole month living with the ‘simple and kind people with the modest family budget’. She said that ‘emotional Italians have been deeply touched by

¹¹⁹ <http://www.sb.by/post/4103/>.

¹²⁰ <http://www.sb.by/post/4103/>.

our sorrow' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 28 April 2001).¹²¹ The idea of 'a modest family budget' emphasised a philanthropic approach to aid based on simplicity, kindness, and emotion, rather than financial superiority of the Europeans in the first place. The article from 30 April 2005 again mentioned Italy, together with Germany, as countries that offered recuperative visits to the Belarusian children (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 30 April 2005).¹²² Praising the European countries for help destabilised the identity of Europe as an enemy in the official national narrative and encouraged friendship. Friendship with Europe implied an alleviation of the human insecurity of the Chernobyl victims.

Ireland was also constructed as a philanthropic help provider engaged in the organisation of the Chernobyl children's recuperative visits and provision of humanitarian assistance. 'Chernobyl Children's Project' was among the charities praised for organising the recuperation of 800 Belarusian children in 1996 (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 26 April 1996: 2c).

Hence, the Belarusian official media constructed the Italian people as kind, simple, emotional, and economically modest. It also saw them, together with the German, French, Irish, and Dutch people, as compassionate, cooperative, and expressing solidarity. The Austrian and Swiss people were portrayed as friendly. Constructing the European countries through the ethical apolitical identities of philanthropic help providers helped decrease the hostility in the Belarusian national narrative and encourage friendship through morality rather than politics. It constructed human insecurity of the Chernobyl victims as alleviated and ontological security of the Belarusian people as assured.

7.2.3 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (The European Institutions) (4 articles 1998, 2010, 2011(2))

While, during 1992-2005, the individual European countries and their charities and businesses were praised for their philanthropic approach towards the Belarusian Chernobyl victims, during 2010-2011 (and once in 1998), the European institutions were blamed for not helping with Chernobyl and using aid as a political tool to enhance their political interests. Four articles blamed the European institutions in 1998, 2010, and 2011(2). The European Commission (blamed 3 times) was among the official institutions of the EU blamed.¹²³ The *Euronews* TV channel (blamed once) was among the Europe-

¹²¹ <http://www.sb.by/post/4222/>.

¹²² <http://www.sb.by/post/43317/>.

¹²³ In 1994, Belarus became a member of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership (EaP) by signing the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

an news providers blamed.¹²⁴ This blame reproduced the already known Belarusian national narrative of Europe as being an enemy. In this vein, in the Belarusian official media, the positive articulation of the Europe (1992-2005) changed to negative (2010-2011) over time.

The identities that helped to attach blame to the European institutions were political and economic. The European institutions were seen as dominating and richer, while Belarus was understood as resisting this domination in its noble poorer status. The relationship of domination and resistance was linked to the antagonism between democracy and autocracy and their struggle over values. When constructing and evaluating the responsibility of Europe in dealing with Chernobyl, the Belarusian official media blamed the European institutions but praised the Belarusian authorities. The contrast between Europe and Belarus portrayed the Belarusian state as legitimate but the European institutions as illegitimate.

The Belarusian official media blamed the European institutions and politicians through phrases such as ‘does not support the affected people’, ‘has no associations with Belarus in relation to this tragedy’, ‘does not mention Belarus’, ‘people abroad cannot understand’, ‘finances the oppositional me-

(PCA), which established a legal framework of the ENP and EaP. The EU-Belarus relations have not developed. The PCA, signed on March 1995, was frozen in 1997 because of political disagreements and misunderstandings between the EU and Belarus, including the Belarusian orientation towards Russia instead of the EU. Without progress with the PCA, it is not possible to move towards the Association Agreement. Therefore, the only documents that the bilateral relations between Belarus and the EU relied on were the Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013, the National Indicative Program 2007-2010, and the National Indicative Program 2012-2013. Currently, the relations are based on the Strategy Paper/Multiannual Indicative Paper 2014-2017 and Country Strategy Paper 2014-2020. The Conclusions of the Council of Foreign Affairs from 15 October 2012 is the document substituting the PCA. One example of the EU-Belarus cooperation on Chernobyl is the EC programmes of border control to make sure that the radioactive Chernobyl wastes do not reach the EU through the territory of Belarus. In 2007 and 2008, two EU programmes on combating illicit trafficking of nuclear materials (Radbel) were implemented. At the same time, the EU cooperates with the UN on Chernobyl, one example being the EU-UNDP project ‘Combat the Negative Effects of the Chernobyl Disaster in Belarus’.

¹²⁴ The *Euronews* Channel TV is *not* an official institution of the EU, compared to the European Commission or the European Parliament, for example. It is a leading European news provider that includes corporate entities of such countries such as Ireland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy, Portugal, as well as Russia, Turkey, and Morocco. Nevertheless, being ‘the most-watched news channel in Europe’ and spreading the European soft power, this organisation is included in the section of the European institutions [<http://www.euronews.com/the-station/>].

dia', 'introduces sanctions', 'they are villains', and 'they are not fair actors'. These phrases articulated the identity of the European institutions as ignorant and opportunistic. In contrast, the identity of the Belarusian people was constructed through the following phrases: 'the calamity not produced by ourselves', 'being in the wrong time and place', 'the country that has been most damaged', and 'the nation which has gone through the horrible war [WWII] and Chernobyl'. In this case, the Belarusian nation was understood as an innocent victim. The Belarusian authorities were presented as saviours: 'the state is giving one fourth of its budget' and 'the traditional "Chernobyl" visits of the President to the affected regions'.

One of the examples of this articulation was given by the president of Belarus in his appeal to the Belarusian nation on 18 April 1998:

Believe me, some Western countries are today spending lots of money in order to support the opposition at the territory of our state. Even the TACIS program¹²⁵ has been adjusted for this matter. This program is in the government at the moment, waiting to be approved. How do you think millions are planned to be spent? Not to support the affected people in the Chernobyl zone but to finance the oppositional media. It is clearly stated how much, where and to whom ... The Western tax-payers are giving money to support the Belarusian people who have been affected by the Chernobyl catastrophe and to support the state, which is spending one fourth of its budget on minimization of the consequences of this disastrous calamity. A calamity that was not produced by ourselves, by the way (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 18 April 1998: 5).

In this quote, the Belarusian people were presented through a traumatised identity: 'have been affected by the Chernobyl catastrophe', 'the affected people in the Chernobyl zone', 'the calamity not produced by ourselves'. The political (dominating) and economic (richer) identities of the European institutions were constructed through the following phrases: 'millions are planned to be spent', 'today spending lots of money', 'to support the opposition at the territory of our state', 'to finance the oppositional media', and 'not to support the affected people in the Chernobyl zone'. The political identity as dominating was not simply linked to the unequal power relations between the developed and developing countries, but to the ideological struggle over values (i.e., the official EU financing the Belarusian opposition to spread democracy). The European citizens were presented through economic (richer), but apolitical (philanthropic) identities: 'the Western taxpayers' who were 'giving money to support the Belarusian people that have been affected

¹²⁵ TACIS –The EU technical assistance to the Commonwealth of the Independence States after the collapse of the Soviet Union by the European Commission: <http://cu4eu.by/en/>.

by the Chernobyl catastrophe and to support the state'. The Belarusian state was presented through a philanthropic identity: 'giving one fourth of its budget on minimization of the consequences of this disastrous calamity'.

As such, Europe was divided into two opposite poles – the political institutions of the EU (the TACIS programme of the European Commission) and the ordinary European people (the 'Western taxpayers'). The political institutions of the EU were represented as bad guys, while the European people were articulated as good guys. The European people gave their money to the Belarusian Chernobyl victims, while the political institutions of the EU redistributed them according to their political purposes. The political institutions of the EU financially supported the Belarusian opposition instead of the Chernobyl victims. In this case, the political institutions of the EU were linked to the Belarusian opposition, whereas the European population was linked to the Belarusian people and the Belarusian authorities. The opportunism of the political institutions of the EU was juxtaposed to the attention of the Belarusian state, which spent 25 per cent of its budget on Chernobyl policies. This comparison constructed the Belarusian state and its Chernobyl policies as legitimate, but the European institutions as illegitimate. The victimhood of the Belarusian people was reinforced by pointing out that Chernobyl came to Belarus from the territory of another country, and hence, Belarus was innocent and was not bearing any responsibility for the causes of the disaster. The separation of the European people from the political institutions of the EU was similar to how the Belarusian official media separated the charities and businesses of the individual European states that provided aid on the basis of philanthropy from the political institutions of the EU that did not. In this vein, the only enemy of Belarus was the political institutions of the EU, but not the citizens, charities and businesses of the individual European countries. The political institutions of the EU were understood as exercising the imperialistic practices by interfering in the home affairs of the sovereign state. This understanding shaped the role of Europe in the Belarusian national narrative in which the enemy was reproduced (the political institutions of the EU) and at the same time modified into a friend (the European people).

The blame towards the European institutions was reinforced during 2010-2011. This time, the European institutions went beyond the EU institutions and were criticised for ignoring Chernobyl. The journalist Igor' Kolchenko blamed the *Euronews* TV channel for not acknowledging the status of Belarus as a Chernobyl victim but only reporting about the Ukrainian and Russian victimhood. He juxtaposed the negligence of Europe with the Belarusian authorities who provided care to the Belarusian Chernobyl victims:

On the day of the Chernobyl anniversary, the *Euronews* TV channel showed the commemorative ceremony in Ukraine. It also showed mourning events in Moscow. Belarus was not mentioned ... As is well known, the radioactive cloud, formed over Chernobyl on 26 April 1986, moved to the north. From 21 regions of the Gomel area [one of the six areas in Belarus], 20 got contaminated ... Maybe, if our diplomats and politicians raised this painful topic in every possible meeting abroad, the situation would be different. However, maybe it is even better that the world does not have associations with Belarus in relation to this tragedy. Do people, who were unlucky 24 years ago for being at the wrong time and place, need this publicity? These people need not just compassion, but attentive doctors, healthy food, and a well-paid job. These are exactly the problems raised during the traditional 'Chernobyl' visits of the President to the affected regions (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 28 April 2010).¹²⁶

Similar to the quote in 1998, this quote reinforced the innocence of the Belarusian people in regard to the Chernobyl catastrophe, presenting them as 'unlucky' and 'being at the wrong time and place' when it happened. It also reproduced the Belarusian status of the most traumatised country ('the radioactive cloud ... moved to the north', 'from 21 regions of the Gomel area, 20 got contaminated'). However, instead of blaming the European institutions for political conditionality, they were blamed for forgetting the Belarusian Chernobyl and not raising this problem in the European public sphere ('Belarus was not mentioned', 'the world does not have associations with Belarus in relation to this tragedy'). Meanwhile, the Belarusian authorities were presented as remembering victims and taking care of them ('attentive doctors, healthy food, and a well-paid job'). This care was personified by the visits of the Belarusian president to the Chernobyl areas. The discursive comparison constructed the Belarusian authorities as legitimate and the European institutions as illegitimate.

In 2011, the blaming of the European institutions for pressing on with their political conditionality was renewed. The president of Belarus blamed the European institutions for supporting the Belarusian opposition and introducing political sanctions instead of helping the Chernobyl victims. This blame was the outcome of a political scandal that broke out in April 2011. Ukraine planned to ask for international assistance to build a new sarcophagus over the destroyed reactor at the Chernobyl power plant. It arranged an international conference of donors in Kiev in line with the 25th Chernobyl commemoration ceremonies to discuss financial assistance. The president of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, was one of the participants. He presented an ultimatum to the Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanu-

¹²⁶ <http://www.sb.by/post/99598/>.

kovich: If the Belarusian president attended the conference, Barroso would not come. As a result, Ukraine chose Barroso over Lukashenko and did not invite the Belarusian president to participate in the conference and the Chernobyl commemoration ceremonies in Kiev.

The president of Belarus was interviewed in the Belarusian media on this matter. He was asked about the idea of applying for EU funding to solve the current Chernobyl problems. The journalist stressed that the Belarusian opposition had just received 80 million Euros from the EU. The president answered: 'I will not ask anything from them...If they were fair actors – they know this problem and tragedy well – they would help us' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 27 April 2011).¹²⁷ He presented the EU politicians as unfair and reluctant to help ('they know this problem and tragedy well', 'if they were fair, ... they would help'), while the Belarusian leader was portrayed as resisting this behaviour ('I will not ask anything from them'). Being politically dominating, the EU institutions were presented as economically richer, supporting the Belarusian opposition with 80 million Euros. Through these representations, the EU institutions were constructed as illegitimate, while the Belarusian authorities were presented as legitimate. The reference to the support of the Belarusian opposition constructed the conflict between the official Belarus and the official EU as a struggle over values. The domestic conflict between the Belarusian authorities and the opposition was presented not as internal and national, but external and geopolitical.

Another comment the president made was related to the introduction of the EU economic sanctions to Belarus: 'They are villains! ... How is it possible to introduce sanctions against the country that has been most damaged!?' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 27 April 2011).¹²⁸ He constructed the EU politicians as 'villains' that introduced sanctions, while Belarus was presented as 'the most damaged country'. The victimhood of Belarus was reinforced through the blame of an actor who could be a potential help provider. This blame reproduced the position of Europe as an enemy in the Belarusian official national narrative and presented the European institutions as illegitimate. The reference to the political pressure from the enemy and the Belarusian victimhood constructed ontological security as threatened. The reproduced conflict was not a struggle over the material resources (money and power), but ideational resources (democracy and autocracy).

Similarly, Anatoliĭ Glaz, a member of the Belarusian parliament, also described the actions of the European politicians as political pressure and disturbance of peace:

¹²⁷ <http://www.sb.by/post/115942/>.

¹²⁸ <http://www.sb.by/post/115942/>.

Unfortunately, people abroad cannot understand why political stability in Belarus is so important for us. I usually explain my Western colleagues that the nation, which has gone through the horrible war [WWII] and Chernobyl, wants to live in peace, harmony and tranquillity, without sharp fluctuations and shocks (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 22 April 2011).¹²⁹

In this quote, Graz generalised the European politicians to the ‘people abroad’ and ‘Western colleagues’. The conflict he constructed was based on the misunderstanding (‘people abroad cannot understand’, ‘I usually explain my Western colleagues’) and adherence to different needs. The European politicians were pushing Belarus into ‘sharp fluctuations and shocks’, whereas Belarus was resisting and wanted to have ‘peace, harmony, and tranquillity’. The conflict was portrayed as a struggle of values between Europe that wanted to democratise Belarus and Belarus that was resisting the European pressure. The Belarusian victimhood was also reproduced (‘the nation, which has gone through the horrible war [WWII] and Chernobyl’). While the European politicians were constructed as illegitimate, the Belarusian authorities were presented as legitimate by adhering to stability and peace against foreign fluctuations and shocks.

The construction of Europe through the political identity of dominating and Belarus as resisting reinforced the hostility in the Belarusian official national narrative and reproduced the EU-Belarus conflict. At the same time, the division between the European institutions (bad guys) and European citizens (good guys) was preserved.

To sum up, the Belarusian official media constructed a trauma management narrative through the representations of Europe. In 15 articles out of 19, Europe was praised through the articulation of the ethical apolitical identity of a philanthropic help provider. It was blamed in four articles through the articulation of the political identity of dominating and economic identity of richer. Praise prevailed during 1992-2005, whereas blame prevailed during 2010-2011 (and once in 1998).

During 1992-2005, Europe had a new role as a philanthropic help provider in the tragic part of the Belarusian national narrative. Individual European states, such as Austria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands were praised for providing aid. The charities, businesses, and governments of the European states were presented as saviours of the Chernobyl victims. This articulation changed the status of Europe as an enemy in the Belarusian official narrative to a friend. Ontological security was shaped by presenting human insecurity as alleviated. Germany was the most articulated country among all other European states. Its new and modern ethical

¹²⁹ <http://www.sb.by/post/115774/>.

apolitical identity as a philanthropic help provider helped to transform its historical identity as a Nazi perpetrator and its contemporary identity of a European enemy.

However, during 2010-2011, the Belarusian human insecurity was presented as no longer alleviated by Europe. The European politicians were portrayed as wanting to alleviate human insecurity of the Belarusian people only on the basis of political conditionality. This construction corresponded to the Belarusian national narrative according to which Europe played the role of an enemy who was politically dominating and economically richer. The Belarusian official media presented the Belarusian authorities as taking care of the Chernobyl victims. The emergence of this moral contrast between the European institutions and the Belarusian leadership constructed the European politicians as illegitimate and the Belarusian officials as legitimate. At the same time, Europe was still divided: The European people were seen as good guys and the European institutions and politicians as bad guys.

7.2 Trauma Management in the Non-State Public Sphere: The Representations of Europe in the Belarusian Alternative Media

This section looks at the construction of a trauma management narrative through the representation of Europe in the Belarusian alternative media. It shows that the Belarusian alternative media reproduced the traditional roles of Europe in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. It did not divide Europe into good and bad. Europe was always good but the official Belarus bad.

The Belarusian alternative media did not articulate Europe as an actor in the Chernobyl affairs during 1996-2001. It started to do so during the period of 2006-2011. The Belarusian alternative media constructed Europe as a philanthropic help provider and Belarus as a profiteer. It portrayed the Belarusian people as free riders who enjoyed the status as a victim and received humanitarian aid instead of taking responsibility for themselves (in 2006). In 2011, the media employed political identities to reproduce the EU as democratic and Belarus as authoritarian and pro-Russian. These media representations portrayed the Belarusian state as illegitimate and the official EU as legitimate.

Both the Belarusian official and alternative media discursively linked the Belarusian state with the Belarusian people. While in the Belarusian official media, the people and the state were good guys, in the Belarusian alternative media, they were understood as bad guys. Unlike the Belarusian official me-

dia, the alternative media articulated Germany only once. Germany was understood as a representative of the Western world and not particularised as a separate actor. No references to WWII were made.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the European countries were mentioned in five articles out of 13 about external actors in the Belarusian alternative media. It occupied 38.5 per cent of the representation of all external actors and 13.9 per cent about the Chernobyl topic. Table 7.2 summarises the representations of Europe in the Belarusian alternative media on the basis of differences produced by the articulated identities. The discursive mechanism used was praising. It articulated friendship as the degree of Otherness. The Belarusian people and their state, on the other hand, were blamed.

Table 7.2 Trauma Management, the Representation of Europe: The Belarusian Alternative Media

	Difference (5)	
	2006	2011
Identities	1 article	4 articles
Ethical		
Europe	Help provider	-
Belarus	Help receiver	-
Political		
Europe	Individualist	Democratic
Belarus	State dependent	Authoritarian Pro-Russian
Apolitical		
Europe	Philanthropic	-
Belarus	Profiteer	-
Ontological security	Threatened	Threatened
National narrative	Reproduced	Reproduced
Discursive mechanism	Praising	Praising
Degrees of Otherness	Friendship	Friendship

The following will demonstrate the representations of Europe in the Belarusian alternative media through the articulation of ethical, political, and apolitical identities. Europe was represented as a help provider (2006) and democratic (2011).

7.2.1 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (1 article in 2006)

The Belarusian alternative media problematised the role of the humanitarian aid from the Western world. The ethical identity of Europe as a help provider was linked to the apolitical identity as a philanthropic and carried a positive moral connotation. However, the Belarusian ethical identity as a help receiver was connected to the apolitical identity as a profiteer and had a negative moral value. The Belarusian alternative media argued that the foreign aid only contributed to the already negative Belarusian national identity as a ‘passive’ people. It constructed the Belarusian people as incapable of being independent from both the outside world and their own state. This contradicted with the constructed relationship between Europe as a help provider and Belarus as a help receiver in the Belarusian official media, in which aid was seen in a positive light and the Belarusian people were understood as rescued. The European states mentioned as the most representative states from which the humanitarian aid came were Germany and Italy:

Having been disappointed with our own professionals and elites, it was easy to decide that foreigners should help us. We considered the humanitarian aid from many international charities, nations, and governments of the Western world as something natural and taken-for-granted. It helped us forget about the problems of Chernobyl. New pressing issues emerged instead: how to secure a recuperative visit of children or relatives somewhere in Germany or Italy; how to get medicine, medical supplies, clothes, and food free of charge; how to become a victim of Chernobyl without sacrificing everything in our lives (*Nasha Niva*, 29 April 2006).¹³⁰

This article coded Europe as a philanthropic help provider through phrases such as ‘foreigners will help us’, ‘the humanitarian aid ... as something natural and taken-for-granted’, and ‘helped us to forget about the problems of Chernobyl’. The identity of the Belarusian people as help receivers or profiteers was presented through phrases such as ‘become a victim of Chernobyl without sacrificing everything in our life’, ‘secure a recuperative visit of children or relatives’, and ‘get medicine, medical supplies, clothes, and food free of charge’.

The representation constructed people’s reluctance to be responsible for their own lives and profiting from the rich Europe. At the same time, the article juxtaposed the abilities of Europe with the Belarusian state, which was presented as incapable (‘disappointed with our own professionals and elites’). In this case, Europe was presented as legitimate, while the Belarusian authorities as illegitimate. The article reproduced the role of Europe as a

¹³⁰ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=1634>.

friend in the progressive part of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition, but problematised the identity of the Belarusian citizens as dependent on aid.

In another quote from the same article, the problematisation of the relationship between the Belarusian people and Europe shifted to the relationship between the Belarusian people and their state. The identity of the Belarusian people as help receivers or profiteers of Europe changed to an identity as dependent on the Belarusian state, which was presented as a centralised provider:

When sending children abroad became impossible, and obtaining goods and medicine became possible only through the State Department, people quickly accepted this, too. The important thing was that someone should have continued to decide everything for us without our involvement; it did not matter whether it was our own state or foreign organisations... The state, of course, is better than foreigners, as it always divides equally between everyone. Even when there is nothing left to divide, except the hole of the donut, the main thing is that everybody will receive equally little. Well, except for the selected, of course. But Chernobyl has nothing to do with it (*Nasha Niva*, 29 April 2006).

Europe stopped being a help provider ('sending children abroad became impossible') and the state took over ('obtaining goods and medicine became possible only through the State Department', 'the state, of course, is better than foreigners', 'it always divides equally between everyone'). The state, however, was not praised for this contribution but blamed for prioritising the 'selected' in the redistribution of goods over the 'masses' ('even when there is nothing left to divide', 'everybody will receive equally little', 'except for the selected, of course'). The Belarusian people were presented as not caring much who was providing them with aid ('people quickly accepted this', 'it did not matter whether it was our own state or foreign organisations'), unless this aid was provided ('someone should have continued to decide everything for us without our involvement').

On the one hand, the article constructed the problem of dependence as a structural matter rooted in the Belarusian people themselves. The Belarusian population was understood as irresponsible and helpless, relying either on the outside world or their own state in solving their problems rather than taking personal responsibility for their own lives. On the other hand, the problem of dependence was seen as the fault of the Belarusian authorities, who sustained this status quo. This representation criticised the intervention of the state in the social security of the population (Soviet collectivist value), stripping them of individualism (Western democratic value). It reproduced the conflict of values articulated in the national narrative of the Belarusian

opposition who prioritised the European democratic values over the Soviet centralised values or the current Belarusian collectivist values.

Hence, the constructed ethical identities were not so much assigning a particular moral connotation to Europe as much as representing the Belarusian people and their state in a negative light. They articulated Belarusian identity as a profiteer from Europe and state dependent on the Belarusian authorities. The article reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition, in which Europe was a friend but the relationship between the state and the people was problematic. It constructed ontological security as threatened because of people's dependence on the state and lack of individualism.

7.2.2 Political Identity – Democratic (4 articles in 2011)

The year 2011 was dedicated to the discussion of the political scandal between Belarus, Ukraine, and the EU. As mentioned in section 7.1, the President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, put an ultimatum to Ukraine regarding his participation in the international donor conference in Kiev: If the Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko attended this conference, Barroso would not come. Lukashenko became frustrated and verbally abused the Ukrainian and EU leaderships.

The articulation of this scandal in the Belarusian alternative media presented the Belarusian ontological security as threatened. It reinforced the perceived ideational conflict between the official Belarus as an enemy and Europe as a friend in the Belarusian opposition narrative. It portrayed the Belarusian leadership as illegitimate. It also presented the relationship with a similarly traumatised friend, Ukraine, as spoiled. The media articulated political identities based on the political culture to represent the conflict. Europe was portrayed as democratic and Belarus as authoritarian. In this case, the Belarusian authorities were at the centre of attention rather than the Belarusian people, as in a previous article from 2006. Ethical identities as a help provider and help receiver were not articulated any longer.

The Belarusian alternative newspaper presented different criticisms of the Belarusian president in four articles in 2011 but defended the EU politicians and the Ukrainian leadership. It linked the Belarusian opposition to the official EU and Ukraine but differentiated it from the official Belarus. The Belarusian alternative media cited the Ukrainian politicians who argued against Lukashenko. For example, Yuriï Kostenko, the leader of the Ukrainian People's Party, said that 'the Chairman of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, whom Lukashenko called an asshole, promised to take part in the arrangements in Kiev on the condition of the absence of the Belarusian

leader' (*Nasha Niva*, 27 April 2011).¹³¹ The Belarusian alternative media defended Jose Manuel Barroso's position, stating that he was protecting EU's values against the 'unacceptable' and 'hostile' policies of Belarus:

The Chairman of the European Commission told the Ukrainian leadership that he would participate in the Chernobyl summit only if Lukashenko would not attend. The EU considers Lukashenko's foreign and domestic policies unacceptable and hostile (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹³²

These quotes reproduced the conflict between Europe and the official Belarus in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. They constructed the Belarusian ontological security as threatened and the Belarusian leader as illegitimate. Some articles rejected the idea that there was an ultimatum from Barroso to the Ukrainian authorities regarding Lukashenko's participation in the conference. The Belarusian alternative media cited the representative from the European Commission, who stated that it was not true that Barroso placed a condition on Ukraine: 'This condition has never been set. It is not clear who is interested in spreading these lies' (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹³³ This quote indirectly implied that the official Belarus was 'spreading lies', while the official EU was honest and innocent ('this condition has never been set'). It reinforced the conflict between Europe and the official Belarus in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. The Belarusian authorities were portrayed as illegitimate and ontological security in Belarus was constructed as threatened.

As a result, Lukashenko used hard language and called the EU politicians 'rascals' and 'assholes', and the Ukrainian authorities 'nitty', according to the alternative media (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹³⁴ The Belarusian alternative media also presented the comments of the Ukrainian politicians on this matter. For example, Stepan Khmara, an Ukrainian politician and activist, said that Lukashenko 'used completely unacceptable words towards Ukraine and also Jose Manuel Barroso, the rank-and-file European official' (*Nasha Niva*, 27 April 2011).¹³⁵ In addition, the Belarusian alternative media quoted the representatives of the European Commission, who justified themselves by non-recognition of Lukashenko's presidency and viewing his rule as dictatorial: 'We do not accept him as a democratically elected leader. We do not have a practice of commenting on the statements of ordinary citizens'

¹³¹ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53810>.

¹³² <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53775>.

¹³³ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53788>.

¹³⁴ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53775>.

¹³⁵ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53810>.

(*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹³⁶ This quote constructed Lukashenko as ‘non-democratically elected’ and an ‘ordinary citizen’. By rejecting his status as president of Belarus, his role and significance in the Chernobyl activities was devaluated. As he was ‘non-democratic’ and an ‘ordinary citizen’, there was no need for the EU to invite him to Ukraine to commemorate Chernobyl together or to provide assistance. Such problem solving could only work with the countries that were considered democratic. The identity as being democratic implied that the EU had the legitimacy to call Lukashenko names, but the Belarusian president had no such right as his identity was authoritarian. By devaluating Lukashenko’s status and his ability to cooperate, ontological security was constructed as threatened. The conflict between the official EU and the official Belarus was reproduced in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition.

In addition to rejecting Barroso’s ultimatum, the Belarusian alternative media denied the introduction of the EU sanctions to Belarus. As it was shown in the section 7.1, Lukashenko blamed the EU officials for introducing sanctions to Belarus. The Belarusian alternative media criticised Lukashenko for claiming that such sanctions existed:

As is well known, the EU has not introduced any sanctions against Belarus. At the same time, the EU warned that in case of new repressions against the Belarusian population, including imprisonment of the presidential candidates, new anti-Lukashenko measures can be introduced. At the moment, the EU leadership pursues the politics of ignoring Aleksandr Lukashenko and his associates (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹³⁷

This quote again reduced all the problems concerning Chernobyl to being about the different political systems and values. Belarus was seen as authoritarian (‘new repressions against the Belarusian population’, ‘imprisonment of the presidential candidates’), whereas the official institutions of the EU were seen as democratic, fighting with authoritarians (‘the EU warned’, ‘new anti-Lukashenko measures can be introduced’, ‘the EU leadership pursues the politics of ignoring’). It again reproduced the conflict between the official EU and the official Belarus in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. It presented Lukashenko as threatening ontological security in Belarus.

¹³⁶ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53788>.

¹³⁷ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53775>.

At the same time, this quote set Lukashenko apart from the Belarusian population and the presidential candidates. The Belarusian opposition was linked to the Belarusian population, and in that way, the Belarusian opposition media tried to widen the gap between Lukashenko and the Belarusian opposition. This went against the logic of the Belarusian opposition, which would not normally relate themselves to the population but rather linked the population to the Belarusian state, as shown earlier in this section. By linking the Belarusian opposition to the Belarusian population, the Belarusian alternative media made the impression that not only the Belarusian opposition leaders were repressed in Belarus but the entire Belarusian population. The idea that the Belarusian population did not associate themselves with the Belarusian opposition and considered them as propagating hostile, unfamiliar, and foreign ideas was silenced.

Nor did the Belarusian alternative newspaper comment on the EU's financial assistance to the Belarusian opposition to fight Lukashenko. Instead, the newspaper quoted Lukashenko himself, whose statement was a good example of the official EU-Belarus antagonism:

We are their [Western] competitors. We are their ideological rivals. We are people who promote a different way of life ... We are dangerous for them. And it is not just about dictatorship and democracy ... We do not need this kind of democracy (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹³⁸

This quote presented the official Belarus as 'competitors', 'ideological rivals', 'people who promote a different way of life', and who are 'dangerous' for the EU. Quoting Lukashenko implied that the escalated conflict between the European Commission and the official Belarus was his fault. This quote reinforced the Belarusian opposition's national narrative of Europe as being a friend and the official Belarus as being an enemy.

A similar blame that widened the gap between the EU and Belarus was articulated in relation to the construction of a new power plant. Technological insecurity was at stake: To build power plants with Russia meant a second Chernobyl; to build power plants with the developed world promoted security and safety. As such, the EU was presented as legitimate, while the legitimacy of Russia and the official Belarus was questioned. The article from 26 April 2011 blamed Lukashenko for building the power plant with Russia rather than with the EU:

The Baltic states are planning to build a new power plant at the site of the previous Soviet Ignalina power station using the technologies from France or South Korea. Meanwhile, Aleksandr Lukashenko is starting to build a power

¹³⁸ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53775>.

plant in Ostrovets using Russian technology and in cooperation with the Russian energy system (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹³⁹

This quote raised a broader conflict between Russia and the West, where Belarus was standing at geopolitical cross-roads. As the Belarusian opposition supported the EU, it was logical for them that power plants were to be built with EU money. As they hated and rejected Russia, it was logical for them not to build the power plant with Russia. Hence, the binary constructions of the actors in the area of technological security reinforced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. Human insecurity was also threatened by implying the possible dangers from using Russian technology.

This article also quoted Lukashenko, whose position was different: ‘The Baltic states stated that they will build a unified power plant. Poland will build its own. So why are we falling into a rage? It is because we are forced to. We are their competitors...’ (*Nasha Niva*, 26 April 2011).¹⁴⁰ Here, Belarus was again seen as a ‘competitor’ to the EU, reinforcing the conflict between the official Belarus and the EU and reproducing the national narrative.

Hence, the political scandal in 2011 was an event that the Belarusian alternative media drew on to escalate the conflict between the official Belarus and the EU. It reproduced the role of Europe as a friend in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. Questioning the legitimacy of the Belarusian leadership constructed ontological security as threatened. The alternative media relied on the political identities of the democratic EU and authoritarian and pro-Russian Belarus to construct its argument. As such, it aligned itself with the official EU and Ukraine against the official Belarus.

To sum up, the Belarusian alternative media blamed Belarus (its people and its leadership in 2006 and its leadership in 2011) but praised the European states, charities, and governments (2006) as well as the EU officials and institutions (2011). In 2006, it constructed ethical apolitical identities of Europe as a philanthropic help provider and Belarus as a profiteer as well as ethical political identities of an individualist Europe and state dependent Belarus to give meaning to the actors and their relations. In 2011, the Belarusian alternative media constructed political identities of the EU as democratic and Belarus as authoritarian. The Belarusian alternative media presented ontological security as threatened by coding the Belarusian leadership as pursuing authoritarian policies and quarrelling with the EU and the Ukrainian leadership. As such, the Belarusian alternative media reproduced Europe as a friend of the Belarusian opposition but an enemy of the Belarusian state.

¹³⁹ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53778>.

¹⁴⁰ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53778>.

7.3 Conclusion: Trauma Management in the Disconnected Publics of Belarus. The Representations of Europe

This section summarises the results of the analysis of the representations of Europe in the Belarusian official and alternative media. It shows that Europe was an important actor in constructing trauma management narratives in both media. The Belarusian official media modified the national narrative of the Belarusian officials and presented ontological security of the Belarusian citizens as conditional upon the European identity (philanthropic or political). The Belarusian alternative media reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition and portrayed ontological security as threatened by the Belarusian authorities.

The representation of Europe in *the Belarusian official media* depended on what identity (philanthropic or political) Europe had. During 1992-2005, the Belarusian official media represented the financial well-being of Europe through humanism. Those possessing resources shared them with those who did not. It represented the European states, charities, and businesses as saviours of the Belarusian children and helpers to overcome the consequences of Chernobyl. This representation, besides constructing human insecurity as alleviated, softened the antagonism in the Belarusian official narrative and encouraged friendship and mutual understanding between Europe and Belarus. In addition, the identity as a saviour from Chernobyl rather than a WWII perpetrator shaped the German identity in the Belarusian official national narrative.

The shift of focus from the humanitarian assistance to power relations in the representations of Europe took place during 2010-2011 (and once in 1998). The Belarusian official media articulated the money of the official EU as immoral, directed to the fulfilment of the unjust purposes. Instead of supporting the Belarusian victims (just purposes), the official EU spent its money to support the Belarusian opposition (unjust purposes). The Belarusian official media saw the Belarusian opposition as an interest group who advocated for the interests of the EU. The polarisation of the identities of the EU and Belarus reproduced the role of Europe as an enemy in the Belarusian official narrative. It constructed the European institutions as illegitimate and the Belarusian state as legitimate.

In the *Belarusian alternative media*, the representations of Europe produced an understanding of the Belarusian ontological security as threatened. The representation of the humanitarian aid from Europe focused *not* on Europe, but on the Belarusian people and their state. The Belarusian alternative

media accused the Belarusian people of dependence on the foreign aid and their state of stimulating it. The humanitarian aid was understood as contributing to the dependence and free-riding of the Belarusian people. This construction reinforced the negativity of the Belarusian people and their state in the Belarusian opposition narrative. It reproduced the role of Europe as a friend and the Belarusian state as an enemy.

The Belarusian alternative media defended the political stands of the EU, but condemned those of the official Belarus. By defending the values of the EU, the Belarusian opposition media aligned itself with the EU against the official Belarus. This representation reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition with Europe as a friend and the official Belarus as an enemy. It presented ontological security as threatened because of the Belarusian leadership.

Hence, by representing Europe, the Belarusian alternative media reproduced the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. Europe was constructed as a political friend. Ontological security was threatened not because of Europe, but because of the Belarusian leadership. The Belarusian official media, on the other hand, made both positive and negative representations of Europe. It divided Europe into bad guys and good guys. The representation of the bad guys reproduced the official national narrative, while the representation of the good guys modified it. The modification of the official national narrative constructed philanthropic Europe as a friend, but political Europe as an enemy. Philanthropic Europe was presented as a guarantor of ontological security in Belarus. Political Europe was seen as a threat to the Belarusian ontological security.

Chapter 8. Trauma Management in the Disconnected Publics of Belarus: Reflection

Chapters 6 and 7 documented the quotes from the data for the purpose of descriptive validity (using thematic analysis), interpretative validity (using discourse analysis), and theoretical validity (using the abductive logic of reasoning introduced in Chapter 3). They focused on the meaning of the texts' content. This chapter, on the other hand, looks at the meaning of the documented quotes through the prism of the broader socio-political context they are embedded in (using discourse analysis and the abductive logic of reasoning introduced in Chapter 4). It focuses on the production of the texts by the carrier groups and their reception by the audience.

The chapter asks (a) whether the trauma management narratives of the Belarusian official and alternative media are equally popular among the Belarusian population, and (b) whether the Belarusian authorities and the opposition have equal possibility to spread this ideational resource in a public sphere through their material means. It argues that as the Belarusian official media is state-controlled and advocates a pro-Russian moral framework acceptable to the majority, their trauma management narrative is more popular. As the Belarusian alternative media is non-state and advocates a moral framework foreign to the majority, their trauma management narrative remains unpopular and unknown.

The chapter uses additional data sources to understand the popularity and visibility of the trauma management narratives in a public sphere such as media reports, documentaries, official documents and statements, academic literature, surveys, and think tank analytics. It will be of interest to the scholars working with the Belarusian studies, as well as Western policymakers cooperating with Belarus. It also serves as a conclusion to the case study on Belarus.

8.1. Trauma Management in the Non-State Disconnected Public Sphere: Content, Popularity, and Visibility

This section summarises the representations of Russia and Europe in the non-state public sphere and reflects on the broader socio-political context in which these representations were produced.

8.1.1 Russia as an Enemy, Europe as a Friend, and the Belarusian Authorities In-Between

As presented in Chapter 4, the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition views Russia as an enemy. Russia is assigned qualities such as imperial, colonising, Asian, power-exercising, and dominating. These qualities belong to a tragic part of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. They are considered threatening to ontological security in Belarus. Europe, on the other hand, is seen as democratic, civilised, practising civil rights and liberties, and having a rule of law and civil society. These qualities describe a progressive part of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition. European values are seen as a possibility to assure Belarusian ontological security.

The Belarusian opposition reproduced these qualities of Russia and Europe in its trauma management narrative. Russia was constructed in a tragic narrative genre as dominating, past-oriented, and a worse problem solver, incapable of healing the collective traumas (human and technological insecurity) of the Chernobyl victims. To assure ontological security, Belarus had to break off all relations with Russia. Europe, on the other hand, was the actor that could provide Belarus with ontological security. It was presented in a romantic narrative genre through values such as democracy and individualism (responsibility of victims for their own lives and independence from the state). To heal from Chernobyl and achieve ontological security, Belarus had to move closer to Europe.

Individualism of the citizens and democratic leadership – the qualities reproduced from the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition – were juxtaposed to the qualities of the Belarusian officials, such as people's dependence on the state and an authoritarian leadership. Chernobyl could not be overcome if the population was state dependent and had a strong administrative rule. These qualities were presented as posing a threat to the ontological security of the Belarusian nation. Chernobyl could be overcome if people internalised the European qualities of individualism and democracy, became responsible for their own lives, and freed themselves of the dependence on the state. This would result in ontological security.

While reproducing the traditional roles of Russia (enemy) and Europe (friend), the Belarusian alternative media positioned the Belarusian official elites within the dichotomy between Russia and Europe. When they were portrayed as cooperating with Russia, they were constructed as a similar enemy to Russia (subordinate, pro-Russian). A good example of positioning the Belarusian authorities within the dichotomy between Russia and Europe is the following (from section 7.2):

The Baltic states are planning to build a new power plant at the site of the previous Soviet Ignalina power station using the technologies from France or South Korea. Meanwhile, Aleksandr Lukashenko is starting to build a power plant in Ostrovets using Russian technology and in cooperation with the Russian energy system.¹⁴¹

However, when the Belarusian official elites were constructed as trying to solve their problems independently from Russia, they were presented as a less hostile enemy than Russia (better problem solver). By differentiating the Belarusian officials from Russia, the Belarusian alternative media constructed the domestic conflict not between the Belarusian authorities and the Belarusian opposition, but between the Belarusian opposition and Russia. This conflict could be resolved if the Belarusian elites gave up on Russia and pursued independent policies. As such, the conflict between the Belarusian domestic groups was not constructed as internal and national, but as external and geopolitical. Ontological security depended on the direction of this conflict; only when the Belarusian elites removed Russia from Belarusian life could the Belarusian people have ontological security.

When positioned vis-à-vis Europe, the Belarusian officials were portrayed as having an antagonistic political system (authoritarian) and constructed as an enemy of Europe. As we have seen in the example from section 7.2, 'The Chairman of the European Commission told the Ukrainian leadership that he would participate in the Chernobyl summit only if Lukashenko would not attend. The EU considers Lukashenko's foreign and domestic policies unacceptable and hostile'.¹⁴² It was not possible for the Belarusian elites to transcend their hostility in the eyes of the Belarusian opposition. Therefore, the conflict between the Belarusian opposition and the Belarusian officials was again constructed not as internal (national), but external (geopolitical).

¹⁴¹ <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53778>.

¹⁴² <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=53775>.

This conflict could be resolved only if the Belarusian elites were removed from power and the Belarusian opposition took over. Ontological security depended on the direction of this conflict; only when the Belarusian elites were removed from Belarusian life and Europe was introduced to it could the Belarusian people have ontological security. In other words, the Belarusian elites had two identities in the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian alternative media: They were the good guys when represented vis-a-vis Russia and the bad guys when represented vis-a-vis Europe. This positioning implied that the Belarusian wellbeing and, hence, identity was measured not against its domestic actors, but against its geopolitical Others.

8.1.2 Is the Alternative Trauma Management Narrative Visible and Popular?

As summarised above, the Belarusian alternative media proposed to resolve human and technological insecurity in order to reach ontological security through the pillars of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition; democracy and individualism. The question is whether these pillars are popular among the Belarusian population and whether they are widely present in a public sphere. The answer is that this trauma management narrative clashes with the minds of ordinary Belarusians and, hence, cannot be considered as popular. The absence of this trauma management narrative in the state-controlled public sphere makes its visibility limited and the content unknown for the majority of the Belarusians.

The Belarusian citizens do not consider democracy as an important pillar of their life. According to the 2010-2014 World Value Survey (WVS),

When asked to rank the importance of democracy on a ten-point scale, from absolutely important to not at all important, only a quarter of Belarusians chose the former. For comparison, nearly two thirds of German respondents and half of Polish respondents said democracy was absolutely important.¹⁴³

The same survey showed that ‘Relatively few Belarusians believe that choosing leaders in free elections constitutes an essential feature of democracy. Free elections are twice as important in Germany and Sweden, for example’.¹⁴⁴ Charnysh summarised the results of the WVS with the following sen-

¹⁴³ <http://belarusdigest.com/story/belarusians-world-values-survey-east-or-west-21633>.

¹⁴⁴ <http://belarusdigest.com/story/belarusians-world-values-survey-east-or-west-21633>.

tence: 'Belarusians are becoming more religious, privilege economic security above other concerns, and remain suspicious of democracy'.¹⁴⁵

This means that the first pillar, democracy, advocated in the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian opposition, is foreign to the Belarusian people. The political identity of the Western individualism does not appeal to the Belarusian people either. Lashuk gives an example of Germany:

Belarusians often look down at their German acquaintances. They go to Germany with a feeling of 'Germany is a great country, only that there are too many Germans living there'. They think the country is well-organised and approve of the efficiency of their German friends. Then, however, they deplore that things are different than in Belarus: people are coldhearted and they generally lack solidarity with each other.¹⁴⁶

Lack of solidarity with each other is a critique of Western individualism from the people who have 'communal and antientrepreneurial ethos' as one of the pillars in the national narrative of the Belarusian officials (Ioffe, 2007: 367). As such, both pillars, democracy and individualism, promoted in the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian opposition, seem foreign to the Belarusian people. Chapter 4 also gave examples of why the pillars of the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition do not appeal to the Belarusian people.

In addition to the unpopular moral framework of the Belarusian opposition, Chapter 4 showed that the media of the Belarusian non-state disconnected public sphere is removed from the state-controlled public sphere. It means that the development of the ideational resource (democracy and individualism) is restricted by the material resource (absence of an access to the state-controlled public sphere for the representatives of the non-state public sphere). For example, the opposition TV Channel *Belsat* is located in Poland and has three documentary films about Chernobyl on its website. Two of them articulate a trauma management narrative in the apocalyptic genre: The films *Belyi Parus nad Pripyatiu* (translated as 'The White Sail over Pripyat', 2011)¹⁴⁷ and *Chernobyl dlia Evropi* (translated as 'Chernobyl for Europe', 2014)¹⁴⁸. Both films were produced after 2006 as a response to the idea to construct a power plant at the territory of Belarus with Russian money. The release of the films corresponds to a time period when the Belarusian

¹⁴⁵ <http://belarusdigest.com/story/belarusians-world-values-survey-east-or-west-21633>.

¹⁴⁶ <http://belarusdigest.com/story/germany-and-belarus-why-people%E2%80%99s-diplomacy-doesn%E2%80%99t-work-8859>.

¹⁴⁷ <http://belsat.eu/ru/films/38087/>.

¹⁴⁸ <http://belsat.eu/ru/films/38109/>.

alternative media constructed Belarus as state-dependent and authoritarian and Europe as democratic (2006, 2011). *Belyi Parus nad Pripyatiu* presents the life of the inhabitants of the third (15–40 Ci/km²) and fourth (5–15 Ci/km²) Chernobyl zones in Belarus as catastrophic. This film contradicts the representations of the Belarusian state as a better problem solver presented in the Belarusian alternative media (2006). This contradiction shows that there is inconsistency within the discourse of the Belarusian opposition as well. *Chernobyl dlia Evropi* portrays the construction of a power plant as a threat at the borders of Europe (a perpetual trauma in Schmidt sense). As the non-state public operates outside the mainstream public sphere, their trauma management narrative is not visible and known to the audience in a state-controlled public sphere. As the policy memo of the European Council on Foreign Relations from May 2015 states,

The Belarusian opposition, although it is made up of brave and committed people, can reach only a very limited number of Belarusians, especially since many of its leaders and activists now operate from abroad... Unlike in Ukraine, the opposition is nearly completely cut off from decisionmaking in the country and from the state-controlled media, which remain the main source of information for majority of people. Very few people, therefore, either know much about the opposition and its problems or support it.¹⁴⁹

Hence, the alternative trauma management narrative is not popular among the Belarusian citizens. Neither its content of democracy and individualism (as an ideational resource), nor its presence in the non-state public sphere (as a material resource) contributes to its popularity and visibility among the Belarusian people. This is an important observation to take into consideration for those people who study Belarus, work with Belarus, or try to promote democracy. The promotion of the democratic values in Belarus is linked to the rejection of Russia. This is done in the country that is highly pro-Russian in its sentiment. The majority of the population considers Russian as their mother tongue, has Orthodox religion, reads Russian literature, gets news from the Russian press, has relatives and friends in Russia, and views it as a good 'big brother'. What the Belarusian opposition proposes is to reject the very essence of life the Belarusian people live. As democracy is associated with the rejection of Russia, it gets a very negative moral connotation and encourages suspicion from the population. In other words, it is not democracy *per se* that is rejected, but the meaning assigned to it (i.e., rejection of Russia). As the Belarusian opposition has been promoting the same

¹⁴⁹ http://belarusdigest.com/sites/default/files/ecfr_ostrogorski_centre_-_from_sanctions_to_summits_-_belarus_after_the_ukraine_crisis.pdf.

content of its pro-European narrative during 1992-2014, with Russia as an enemy of Belarus, the Belarusian people have formed a certain understanding of democracy as linked to hatred to Russia. If the Belarusian opposition wants the Belarusian people to accept democracy, they should first change their meaning-making practices and de-link democracy from the rejection of Russia.

As we have seen in Chapter 4, the very reason why Lukashenko came to power in 1994 through the means of the democratic elections was people's rejection of the democratic candidates. The democratic candidates proposed to forget Russia and to move quickly to Europe. They used the same script that other Eastern European countries applied to move away from communism. The specificity of every post-communist country, its historical, cultural, social, and political context was not considered. This script approach has led to the opposite result it had aimed to achieve. Instead of democracy, the meaning-making advocated by the Belarusian opposition has led to the consolidation of power and authoritarianism.

The reliance on the same script is continuing up till today. As such, for 24 years the Western world has been sponsoring the Belarusian opposition and blaming Lukashenko for their unpopularity. The very idea that the content the Belarusian opposition advocated to the Belarusian people was rejected by them, with or without Lukashenko's contribution, was ignored. What Lukashenko did in response to these practises was to (a) apply a moral framework that appealed to the majority of the people and (b) restrict the access to the state-controlled public sphere for the promoters of the alternative moral framework that was unpopular among the people anyway. So what can happen if the state-controlled media becomes independent? Would then people start liking democracy from the very first day? No, they will not. At least not until the meaning-making of democracy will be differentiated from hating Russia.

As such, this monograph proposes to launch more studies of where and why people of 'the Rest' of the world do not like democracy and why the West has failed in its democracy promotion practices. These studies should not start with the assumption that the only reason democracy does not work is the authoritarian leadership, but look more specifically at the cultural, historical, and social context in the countries of interest. The first step to start with is to answer the question about how 'the Rest' views the West and understands Western democracy. This step should be done before introducing democracy in practice.

8.2 Trauma Management in the State-Controlled Disconnected Public Sphere: Content, Popularity, and Visibility

This section summarises the representations of Russia and Europe in the state-controlled public sphere and reflects on the broader socio-political context these representations are embedded in. It starts with the representations of Europe and continues with the representations of Russia.

8.2.1 Dividing Europe into Good and Bad Guys

In the national narrative of the Belarusian officials, *Europeis* presented as an enemy. Europe possesses qualities such as materialism, individualism, impersonalism, and unspirituality. It is a threat to Slavic qualities such as non-materialism, community, personal ties, and spirituality. That is why ontological security in Belarus can be assured only by the Slavic identity. The European identity can only threaten Belarusian ontological security.

This reasoning, however, was partially modified in the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian officials. Europe itself was divided into good guys and bad guys. The bad guys threatened Belarusian ontological security with their alien values, and the good guys did not impose values but tried to establish dialogue. The bad guys were represented by the European institutions (including the official institutions of the EU). They imposed their values as a condition of aid provision. For example (from section 7.1): ‘They are villains! ... How is it possible to introduce sanctions against the country that has been most damaged!’¹⁵⁰

The good guys were represented by the individual European states, governments, businesses, charities, and citizens. They neither imposed conditionality, nor promoted values; rather, they provided help. For example (from section 7.1): ‘Thank God the Belarusian people have many friends who are always eager to help! The national oncological and hematological centre for children was created thanks to the Austrian Republic...’ (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 27 April 1996: 1).

In this way, two European identities were formed: the political and the philanthropic identities. Political Europe reproduced the status of Europe as an enemy in the national narrative of the Belarusian state. Philanthropic Europe modified the status of Europe and constructed it as a friend in the national narrative. As a result, the European identity moved from hostile to less hostile. Political Europe was seen as a threat to the Belarusian ontological

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.sb.by/post/115942/>.

security with its alien values. Philanthropic Europe was understood as an assurance of ontological security in Belarus through its humanism.

This logic of differentiation between political and philanthropic Europe remains understudied. As mentioned in Chapter 1, social science is focused only on political Europe and its representation in the Belarusian public sphere (Stsiapanau, 2010; Kasperski, 2012, 2013). It overlooks the representations of philanthropic Europe, its importance for understanding Belarus, and the prospects for improving the relations with Belarus through a people-to-people approach. Few people know that Chernobyl is one of the few events around which the contacts between Belarus and Europe have been continuing despite political disputes. For example, Germany is the most praised European country in the Belarusian official media.¹⁵¹ Chernobyl children who travel to Germany are among the few other groups of Belarusians who travel abroad. In 2011, for example, the other three groups included Belarusian students with a grant, Belarusian women who were married to German men, and Belarusian men who went to buy a car in Germany (before the increase of a customs tariff on imported cars). Similarly, the members of the Chernobyl partnerships and aid committees are among the few groups of Germans who actually travel to Belarus. In 2011, the other two included businessmen and men who were married to Belarusian women.¹⁵²

In this way, Chernobyl has been one of the few ways to establish people-to-people interaction between Europe and Belarus. The humanitarian aid was praised by the Belarusian politicians not only because it did not present

¹⁵¹ This praise also corresponds to the people's perception of the German contribution to helping Belarus. Ioffe referred to the national survey conducted by IISEPS in April 2006: 'The survey posed the question "In your opinion, which foreign country rendered the biggest help to Belarus in combating the consequences of Chernobyl?" Germany was number one with 21.3 per cent of respondents, putting that country on top of the list; Russia was a distant second with 9.2 per cent of respondents; Italy, USA, Poland, and Japan followed with 7.2 per cent, 5.5 per cent, 5.3 per cent, and 3 per cent, respectively' (Ioffe, 2007: 5).

¹⁵² There may be a different side to the aid issue. As Lashuk argues, 'The meetings of friendship associations and partnership committees are based on the assumption that Belarus is an underdeveloped country that needs material support. People collect old clothes and tinned food in Germany in order to send it to Belarusian towns. Most of them have not been to Belarus for several years, otherwise they would know by now that nowadays, it is difficult to distinguish a German teenager from a Belarusian one by their appearance'. In other words, the European aid, on the one hand, reduces hostility between the political rivals but, on the other hand, reinforces the identities of developed Europe and underdeveloped Belarus [<http://Belarusdigest.com/story/germany-and-belarus-why-people%E2%80%99s-diplomacy-doesn%E2%80%99t-work-8859>].

a threat to their power (unlike the official institutions of the EU), but also because it represented an important aspect of the life of the Chernobyl families (As mentioned earlier, Belarus had 35 per cent of its population affected by Chernobyl)¹⁵³ and, hence, constituted the moral framework that the politicians could adhere to.

The Belarusian alternative media, on the contrary, blamed the Belarusian people for their dependence on the European aid. It overlooked the humanitarian aid as a practice of opening up Western Europe to Belarus after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This is how one of the Chernobyl children, now academic, Svetlana Bodrunova, describes the experience of the Chernobyl children's 'health trips' to Europe during the 1990s:

It seems the 'Chernobyl children' were the first pool of post-Soviet kids who systematically, and in large numbers, travelled to Western Europe, some ten years earlier than our mates in Russia or other CIS countries could afford. The impressions received at such an early age when we were not ready to critically assess them left a magnificent imprint on our future life goals. ... We started to look at our own reality with altered eyes; we were given a chance to realise the difference, and it was striking. I won't exaggerate if I say that thanks to the group trips we could grow up faster, as we could not help comparing and thinking over these comparisons, many of which appeared drawn in black and white (Bodrunova, 2012: 18).

This reflection demonstrates that Chernobyl has become a 'bridge' between Western Europe and the post-Soviet younger generation. The Chernobyl children who visited Western Europe constructed a temporal identity – the difference between the way of life in the transitional Belarus and the developed Europe. This temporal identity has become a way to see how life can be and that it can be different. Instead of being exposed to only one identity of a political Europe (as an enemy), the Chernobyl children have discovered a new identity of a philanthropic Europe (as a friend). Bodrunova continues,

France and Italy often provided examples where kids visited school lessons (due to the fact that the school year ended in June rather than in May as in Belarus), participated in regular activities of personal development, and went to family feasts and picnics, as well as to the church – which they had never done before,

¹⁵³ More than 25,000 Chernobyl children had the possibility to go on recuperative visits to the USA organised by Chernobyl Children's Project during 1991-2008. The Chernobyl Children's Project International (CCPI) in Ireland received more than 17,000 children during this period. The German charity Children of Chernobyl alone recuperated 66,000 children in the summer of 1994 (Ioffe, 2007: 5). Overall, 500,000 children are at risk in Belarus. [<http://www.independent.ie/lifestyle/health/families-plead-for-ban-on-children-leaving-belarus-to-be-overtaken-26475062.html>].

in secularized Belarus where only the older generation was usually involved into religious practices (Bodrunova, 2012: 19).

Bodrunova's article is among the few publications of the Western social science (to my knowledge)¹⁵⁴ that studies the construction of the identity of a philanthropic Europe. She also rightfully spots how the term 'Europe' is understood and used by the Belarusians: 'we called every country to the West from us' "Europe" (Bodrunova, 2012: 15). As such, praise for aid in the Belarusian official newspaper was something familiar to ordinary Belarusians and constituted both public and private spheres of life. Chernobyl has become a way to construct Europe not only as political and power exercising, but also philanthropic and compassionate. This construction was articulated by both politicians and citizens and was based on consensus. Even the USA, considered as the most hostile enemy of Belarus, was extensively praised for its aid in the Belarusian official media during the 1990s (9 articles). The website of the Embassy of Belarus to USA states the following:

Belarus has never been interested in deteriorating relations with the U.S. On the contrary, normalizing bilateral relations on the basis of mutual respect and partnership remains one of the priorities of Belarus's foreign policy ... Cooperation with American charitable organizations which render Chernobyl-related assistance to Belarus is continuing. With charitable assistance worth of \$10.6 million, the United States has become the 3rd largest donor country (after Switzerland and Germany) for Belarus in 2013.¹⁵⁵

Likewise, the website of the USA Embassy to Belarus states the following:

¹⁵⁴ Another article, which partially touches upon the recuperative visits of the Chernobyl children to Germany, is published by Melanie Arndt (2010). She argues that 'The dispute about the usefulness and appropriateness of taking child-recuperation abroad was – and in some cases still is – divided into defined supporters and opponents. The supporters stress among other things the importance of the multifaceted (democratic) experience they gain abroad, while the opponents fear a "cultural shock" and emphasise the advantages of recreation in "clean" areas in Belarus' (Arndt, 2010: 303). She, however, understands the philanthropic identity through the lenses of the political identity, arguing that the aim of humanitarian aid is a political democratisation: 'Many initiatives hope that the experience the children have gained with their West German host families will contribute to a democratization of the political situation in Belarus. To what extent former "Chernobyl children" have indeed internalized Western democratic values, whether they really are connected with their stay in Germany, whether those values have matured into action, and whether "Chernobyl youth" does indeed stand for a democratic public as some initiatives explicitly aspire to in their aims, still needs to be investigated' (Arndt, 2010: 303).

¹⁵⁵ http://usa.mfa.gov.by/en/bilateral_relations/

Throughout the years of anything but a smooth relationship with Belarusian authorities, the United States has maintained its commitment to the Belarusian people whose lives in the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear accident are still missing the advantages of market economy and democratic values.¹⁵⁶

Even though market economy and democracy were mentioned as pillars of the USA foreign policy, they were not presented as a political conditionality of aid provision in this case. This again demonstrates that Chernobyl was seen as a way to establish cooperation regardless of political rivalry between Belarus and the West.

At the same time, attempts were made to link the philanthropic identity of Europe to its political identity. As *BBC News* stated in 2005, ‘now Belarusian President Alexandr Lukashenko has threatened to ban such trips, saying children are being corrupted by capitalism.’¹⁵⁷ The trips were not banned, however, but the Belarus Foreign Ministry introduced restrictions in 2009:

Visits for rehabilitation are now authorized only to countries that have a special intergovernmental agreement with Belarus ... For now, Belarus has such agreements with Italy, Ireland and Germany. Negotiations are ongoing to sign the agreement with another 20 countries, including the US and Canada.¹⁵⁸

This was the result of the political scandal that broke out in 2008, when one of the Chernobyl children – 16-year-old Tatyana Kozyro – refused to return to Belarus from USA and asked for asylum.¹⁵⁹ This time period corresponded with the discursive disappearance of praise of philanthropic Europe in the Belarusian official media after 2005 (as mentioned earlier, the praise to Western Europe in the studied newspaper was given during 1992-2005). At the same time, when blame prevailed during 2010-2011, it was directed at the political institutions of the EU and decoupled from the European people, who continued to be constructed as good guys.

Before concluding on this result, it is worth mentioning how the Belarusian official media represented the domestic actors through enemies and friends. The Belarusian official media, similarly to the alternative media, linked its domestic rival – the Belarusian opposition – to the representation of enemies. While the Belarusian alternative media placed the Belarusian authorities between its enemy (Russia) and friend (Europe), the Belarusian of-

¹⁵⁶ <http://minsk.usembassy.gov/us-belarus.html>.

¹⁵⁷ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4485003.stm>.

¹⁵⁸ http://chernobyl.undp.org/russian/docs/belarus_23_anniversary.pdf.

¹⁵⁹ http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/caucasus_crisis/index/cc_articles/goble/goble_2008/goble_0908/goble_0920_chernobyl.html.

ficial media represented the Belarusian opposition only through its political enemy (Europe), without linking it to its friend (Russia).

The Belarusian opposition was presented as a similar enemy to Europe and was seen as a product of the official institutions of the EU. For example (from section 7.1): 'Believe me, some Western countries are today spending lots of money in order to support the opposition at the territory of our state. ... Not to support the affected people in the Chernobyl zone but to finance the oppositional media' (*Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 18 April 1998: 5). It was not possible for the Belarusian opposition to move to a less hostile enemy. Therefore, the conflict between the Belarusian officials and the Belarusian opposition was constructed as geopolitical rather than domestic. The conflict could be resolved if the Belarusian opposition stopped representing the EU's political interests at the territory of Belarus. The Belarusian people could have ontological security when the Belarusian opposition and the political EU stopped interfering in the internal affairs of the sovereign state.

Hence, while the Belarusian opposition prioritised political Europe as its friend in its trauma management narrative, the Belarusian officials stressed philanthropic Europe as its friend and political Europe as its enemy. By doing so, the rigidity of the enemy-friend dichotomy attached to Europe in the national narrative of the Belarusian state was destabilised. While the identity of a political Europe, promoted by the Belarusian opposition, was not popular among the Belarusian population, the critique of this identity by the Belarusian authorities appealed to the Belarusian citizens. The identity of a philanthropic Europe, constructed by the Belarusian officials, was also accepted by the Belarusian population; many of them personally participated in aid reception from Europe. The popularity of the representations of Europe (as an ideational resource), constructed by the Belarusian authorities, was also strengthened by their presence in the state-controlled public sphere (as a material resource).

This conclusion is also important for people who do research on Belarus and try to establish cooperation with it. While there is a misunderstanding of why democracy does not work in Belarus, there is also a lack of knowledge about what works. A people-to-people interaction between the Chernobyl victims (especially children) and the ordinary families who work with them in Western Europe is one of the areas that require attention and research. If the promotion of a political Europe failed, other ways of establishing dialogue should be found. The identity of a philanthropic Europe is one of them. More identities of Europe can be introduced such as technological, economic, educational, cultural, historical, volunteer, exchange, and so on. Compared to the identity of a political Europe, these identities should not wave conditionality packages in front of the face, but search for the points of con-

vergence, experience sharing, and mutual understanding. When hostility and suspicion leave the stage, the identity of a political Europe can have a more natural ground for flourishing. Implanting the identity of a political Europe without resolving hostility in the first place does not lead to good results.

This problem has been recognised only recently, with the current Ukrainian crisis. As the policy memo of the European Council on Foreign Relations from May 2015 argues,

The EU and Belarusian officials conduct very little meaningful interaction, and the Belarusian opposition has traditionally been preoccupied with human rights issues. Therefore, nearly all other potential areas for cooperation between the EU and Belarus, such as education and the economy, have been marginalised ... The EU's pro-democracy sanctions policy toward Belarus has failed to promote political reform and arguably pushed Belarus closer to Russia.¹⁶⁰

The problem of prioritising the cooperation between the official EU and the Belarusian opposition over the dialogue between the official EU and the Belarusian authorities has also been acknowledged by the European Council on Foreign Relations:

The West has focused on educating human rights and opposition political activists about the EU and its values. But the Belarusian bureaucracy, the most influential group in Belarusian society, has much less understanding of the EU.¹⁶¹

Therefore, the policy memo proposes the following:

Now the EU has to focus not just on fostering democracy but on strengthening Belarusian society, which will help European interests in the long term... Brussels should increase its work in experience transfer and should intensify educational programmes for officials (particularly the younger ones), focusing not on general geopolitical contradictions but on practical technical regulations, standards, and procedures. By engaging officials at all levels in meaningful cooperation, the EU will stimulate appetite for reforms in Belarus.¹⁶²

This monograph agrees with these conclusions of the European Council on Foreign Relations and proposes the identity of a philanthropic Europe as one

¹⁶⁰ http://belarusdigest.com/sites/default/files/ecfr_ostrogorski_centre_-_from_sanctions_to_summits_-_belarus_after_the_ukraine_crisis.pdf.

¹⁶¹ http://belarusdigest.com/sites/default/files/ecfr_ostrogorski_centre_-_from_sanctions_to_summits_-_belarus_after_the_ukraine_crisis.pdf.

¹⁶² http://belarusdigest.com/sites/default/files/ecfr_ostrogorski_centre_-_from_sanctions_to_summits_-_belarus_after_the_ukraine_crisis.pdf.

of the examples that helped to construct friendship between Belarus and Europe regardless political disagreements.

8.2.2 Devaluating Friendship with Russia

In the national narrative of the Belarusian officials, Russia is presented as a friend. Russia possesses qualities such as Slavic, brotherly, spiritual, communal, non-materialistic, and as having common historical roots with Belarus. These qualities determine the ontological security of the Belarusian citizens. In the Chernobyl topic, Russia gradually changed its status as a friend in the national narrative of the official Belarus. The role of Russia as a saviour moved from the only saviour of Belarus to a worse problem solver. During the 1990s, Russia was constructed as the only friend that helped: 'We have been left almost alone with this tragedy throughout all these years. The only state that supports us is fraternal Russia...'¹⁶³ During the 2000s, however, Russia was constructed as a worse Chernobyl problem solver than Belarus: 'In Russia, the radiation safety norms are less standardised and less demanding than in Belarus'.¹⁶⁴

This shift did not spoil friendship but changed its value. The construction of Russia as a less important actor in the Belarusian life relaxed the idea of the Belarusian attachment to Russia (big brother-little brother relationship). Instead, the Belarusian state was presented as performing as a saviour. The representation of the Belarusian state as a saviour constructed the Belarusian authorities as legitimate. The ontological security of the Belarusian citizens no longer depended on the external actors. Rather, it was the Belarusian authorities that took care of the ontological security of its citizens.

The reason for these changes can be found in the delayed construction of the official Belarusian statehood and, hence, Belarusian national identity (Leshchenko, 2004; Ioffe, 2007; Buhr et al., 2011) and in the construction and sustainability of the legitimacy of the Belarusian authorities. As mentioned in Chapter 4, while during the 1990s, the focus of the national narrative of the Belarusian authorities was the similarities of Belarus with Russia, during the 2000s, the official Belarus began to move away from its strong adherence to Russia and focus on 'a strong stance on Belarusian self-determination' (Buhr et al., 2011: 429). As Buhr et al. argued in 2011,

¹⁶³ http://naviny.by/rubrics/society/2008/04/24/ic_articles_116_156796/.

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.sb.by/post/51066/>.

This position has gained popularity with the population and with the President himself in the past 10 years. President Lukashenka has made a point of ‘standing up to Russia’ in gas price disputes, and couches much of his criticism of Russia in terms of defending Belarusian sovereignty (Buhr et al., 2011: 429).

The idea of becoming more independent from Russia was supported by the Belarusian population. The September 2014 poll from the Institute for Independent Social and Economic Political Research (IISEPS) showed that only 23 per cent of respondents supported the unification of Belarus and Russia, while 54 per cent of respondents were against it and in favour of Belarusian independence.¹⁶⁵ Similarly, Zhurzhenko shows that ‘at least half of the population supports nation building a la Lukashenka and has already internalized the symbols and narratives of official “Belarusianness”.’¹⁶⁶ Distancing Belarus from Russia is another important phenomenon in understanding Belarus (in addition to praising Europe for the ‘health trips’ of the Chernobyl children). As shown above, the Belarusian alternative media constructed the Belarusian elites as less hostile than Russia when they did not cooperate with it. As Russia is a main enemy of the Belarusian opposition and the Belarusian officials are slowly moving towards constructing Belarus as an independent state and no longer a Russian vassal, this can either deflate the antagonism between the domestic parties of the disconnected publics or encourage a non-state public sphere to search for a new approach to oppose a state-controlled public sphere.

On the other hand, the practises of the Belarusian authorities of distancing Belarus from Russia show that while the radical proposals of the Belarusian opposition of leaving Russia and joining Europe failed, the moderate proposal of the Belarusian authorities of becoming independent from Russia was accepted among the Belarusian population. The difference is that while for the Belarusian opposition the main goal is to break off the relations with Russia, for the Belarusian authorities the goal is to break off the dependence, but not friendship *per se*. In other words, while the Belarusian opposition views Russia as an enemy, the Belarusian authorities do not construct hostility with Russia when arguing for independence. The absence of hostility towards Russia constructs the idea of independence as more convincing for the Belarusian population.

At the same time, distancing Belarus from Russia does not imply coming closer to Europe. As the analysis showed, during the 1990s both Russia and

¹⁶⁵ <http://belarusdigest.com/myth/are-belarusians-pro-russian-365>.

¹⁶⁶ <http://www.aspeninstitute.cz/en/article/4-2013-lost-in-transition-struggles-over-identity-in-post-soviet-ukraine-and-belarus/>.

Europe were praised for aid, but during the 2000s they were blamed. Neither Russia nor Europe, but the Belarusian leadership has become a centre of attention. Blaming Russia and Europe helped to construct the Belarusian leadership as legitimate and justify the consolidation of power. Hence, another reason to present Russia as a worse problem solver than Belarus in the Belarusian official media was to preserve the legitimacy of the Belarusian officials. As the *Belarus Digest* argues,

In the absence of free elections, it is difficult to estimate the level of support for Lukashenka. During the years of relative prosperity, as a result of generous Russian subsidies, most Belarusians passively tolerated the regime. However, the situation is changing because of the economic crisis, which resulted from Russia's cuts to subsidies to Belarus. Despite censorship in the state media and propaganda campaigns, many Belarusians have become disillusioned with Lukashenka.¹⁶⁷

Even if the popularity of Lukashenko is declining, it does not mean that the popularity of the Belarusian opposition is increasing. As the policy memo of the European Council on Foreign Relations states,

Belarusians are becoming increasingly sceptical about the authorities, but this has not translated into support for the opposition. According to one recent poll, only 16 percent of people trust political parties and 60 percent do not trust them. None of the opposition leaders has the support of more than 4 percent of the population.¹⁶⁸

As one of the Belarusian opposition members, Valentin Okudovich, remarked:

It does not make sense to think that the situation will change if there is somebody other than Lukashenka at the helm of power. It is not us but the 'Belarusian people' who elected him, and the same 'people' will throw him out (sooner or later), and then again they will elect not our but their own president; and we will again write about Belarus as a hostile territory (cited in Ioffe, 2007: 371).

Another pro-opposition intellectual, Svetlana Alexievich, presented similar arguments:

I was asked why our own [Vaclav] Havel did not emerge in Belarus. I replied that we had Ales' Adamovich, but we chose a different man. The point is not that we

¹⁶⁷ <http://belarusdigest.com/myth/does-lukashenka-have-support-average-belarusians>.

¹⁶⁸ http://belarusdigest.com/sites/default/files/ecfr_ostrogorski_centre_-_from_sanctions_to_summits_-_belarus_after_the_ukraine_crisis.pdf.

have no Havels, we do, but that they are not called for by society' (cited in Ioffe, 2007: 373).

As Ioffe concludes, 'Lukashenka's management style and his charisma as a peasant-born upstart have been and still are to the liking of many Belarusians' (Ioffe, 2007: 373). Hence, the declining attachment of the Belarusian citizens to Russia and the decreasing popularity of the Belarusian authorities have not resulted into the support of the Belarusian opposition and the desire to move closer to Europe. The policy memo of the European Council on Foreign Relations cited the Belarusian president Lukashenko:

No one will replace Russia for us. And when we are in dialogue with the West, with the EU, with America, with others, we ask [only] one question, and I talk about this openly – will you replace Russia for us? No. Then why did you have to pull us on this?¹⁶⁹

This means that fluctuations in identity constructions are possible, but the pro-Russian and pro-European structures applied by the Belarusian opposition and the Belarusian authorities remain important. In order to introduce change into these structures, they should be gradual and not directed towards downgrading each other, but focused on the 'grey zones' to search for the points of convergence (like a philanthropic identity of Europe or an identity of Russia as a worse problem solver). The study of 'grey zones' should be the priority of the future research. Instead of reproducing the existing rival structures of Belarus either as pro-Russian or pro-European, the search for cooperation areas should become the goal of the researchers and policymakers.

To sum up on chapters 6-8, trauma management discourse, on the one hand, reproduced the conflict in the disconnected publics but, on the other hand, modified it. It revealed what kind of changes are going on *within* each disconnected public sphere and *between* them. As for the changes *within* each public sphere, the representation of Russia and Europe as actors of the national narratives played a crucial role in shaping this conflict. While a non-state public sphere stood firmly to its moral framework, in which Russia was a political enemy and Europe was a political friend, the state-controlled public sphere divided its enemy Europe into a political Europe (enemy) and a philanthropic Europe (friend) and changed the role of Russian friendship from the only friend that helps to a friend that manages Chernobyl worse than Belarus. This revealed where each of the antagonistic actors stands in their approach towards enemies and friends. As regards the Belarusian op-

¹⁶⁹ http://belarusdigest.com/sites/default/files/ecfr_ostrogorski_centre_-_from_sanctions_to_summits_-_belarus_after_the_ukraine_crisis.pdf.

position, ontological security could be assured by distancing itself from Russia (and breaking all the relations) and moving towards a political Europe. As regards the Belarusian authorities, ontological security could be assured by independence from Russia (but preserving friendship), independence from a political Europe (preserving hostility), but cooperation with a philanthropic Europe (preserving friendship).

As for the changes *between* each public sphere, by representing enemies and friends, both parties of the disconnected publics constructed each other. The construction of each other showed the type of conflict that the disconnected publics have, the level of polarisation between them, and the presence or absence of possibilities to resolve this conflict. It showed that the constructed conflict was not national but geopolitical. It was a conflict between Russia and Europe on the one side over spreading their values and identities and domestic actors on the other applying or rejecting these identities. A resolution of the conflict between the domestic rivals could take place if the Belarusian officials moved away from Russia, which was an enemy of the Belarusian opposition, or if the Belarusian opposition moved away from the political Europe, which was an enemy of the Belarusian officials.

Hence, in Belarus, the trauma management discourse was a reproduction and transformation of the 'clash of civilisations' on the basis of antagonistic national narratives. The representation of the process of overcoming the tragedy and the construction of its saviours and victims were coded through the civilisational values and identities of the participants. Each actor proposed and promoted an opposing understanding of how ontological security could be achieved on the basis of their geopolitical orientation.

Chapter 9. Trauma Management in the Hierarchical Public Sphere of Ukraine. The Representations of Russia

This chapter looks at the representations of Russia in relation to the Chernobyl disaster in the Ukrainian official and alternative media. The purpose of the chapter is to understand whether trauma management discourse was articulated, whether it reproduced or modified national narratives in Ukraine, and whether it shaped ontological security. The chapter shows that, unlike Belarus, the Ukrainian media did not link its trauma management narratives to the narratives of the national community.

9.1 Trauma Management in the State-Controlled Public Sphere: The Representations of Russia in the Ukrainian Official Media

This section investigates whether a trauma management narrative was constructed in the Ukrainian official media through the representation of Russia. It shows that the Ukrainian official media constructed a trauma management narrative without systematically relying on the national narratives. Its trauma management narrative, thus, did not carry symbolic weight. Neither the role of Russia as an enemy nor its role as a friend was systematically articulated. These constructions were occasional and less frequent. Russia was blamed twice: once for not helping Ukraine (1996) and once for making Ukraine dependent on the Russian nuclear technology (2007). Russia was praised also twice. One article praised Russia for supporting the art of the Ukrainian liquidator (2003), while another praised Russia for having better Chernobyl policies (2009). The blame was directed at the Ukrainian state: It neither had good Chernobyl policies, nor helped the Chernobyl artists. Russia as another victim of the same tragic event who worked together with Ukraine to cope with the consequences of Chernobyl was the most articulated identity (11 articles out of 19). By being blamed and praised simultaneously, Russia was represented in an ironic narrative genre.

The representations of Russia in the Ukrainian official media are presented in Table 9.1. The Ukrainian official media articulated traumatised, ethical, historical, and economic identities to represent Russia. The discursive

sive mechanisms used were uniting, blaming, praising, and comparing. The degrees of Otherness included friendship, hostility, problem-solving, and traumatisation. Russia was represented as having more similarities with Ukraine (15 articles) than differences (4 articles).

Table 9.1 Trauma Management, the Representations of Russia: The Ukrainian Official Media

	Similarity (15)		Difference (4)		
	1994-2014 11 articles	1996-2007 4 articles	1996, 2003 2 articles	2006 1 article	2009 1 article
Identities					
Ethical					
Russia	-	-	Help provider	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	Help receiver	-	-
Traumatized					
Russia	Equally traumatized	Partner	-	Less traumatized	Better problem solver
Ukraine	Equally traumatized	Partner	-	Most traumatized	Worse problem solver
Economic					
Russia	-	-	-	-	Richer
Ukraine	-	-	-	-	Poorer
Historical					
Russia	-	Connected	Disconnected	-	-
Ukraine	-	Connected	Disconnected	-	-
Apolitical					
Russia	-	-	Philanthropic	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	Careless	-	-
Ontological security	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Threatened	Threatened
National narrative	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Modified	Modified
Discursive mechanism	Uniting		Blaming Praising	Comparing	Comparing Praising
Degrees of Otherness	Traumatization	Problem solving	Hostility Friendship	Traumatization	Problem solving

As stated in Chapter 5, the data from the official media was collected over a period of 22 years (1992-2014) from 20 April to 2 May. There were 19 articles out of 80 discussing Russia as an external actor in the Ukrainian official media. They occupied 23.8 per cent of the representation of external actors

and 4.4 of the Chernobyl topic. As such, Russia was a visible actor among others in the post-Chernobyl work in quantitative terms but was not visible in the Chernobyl topic in general. Neither did it become a significant Other in qualitative terms. The constructed identities of Russia neither echoed nor modified its role as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives and, hence, did not shape the Ukrainian ontological security.

These representations are demonstrated below under the following identities: equally traumatised (1994-2014), partner (1996-2007), help provider (1996, 2003), less traumatised (2006), and better problem solver (2009), with many of them overlapping during particular time periods.

9.1.1 Traumatized Identity – Equally Traumatized (11 articles 1994, 1996 (2), 1998 (3), 2001, 2004(2), 2006, and 2014)

The identity of Russia as equally traumatised together with Ukraine and Belarus was the most articulated identity throughout 1994-2014. It constructed similarities between the three victim countries, uniting them under one umbrella of victimhood in 11 articles. The Ukrainian official media also articulated ethical identities of the rest of the world as help providers, while the three affected states were understood as help receivers.

The discursive mechanism to articulate the identity of equally traumatised was uniting. The phrases used to articulate these three victims were ‘Russia, Belarus and Ukraine as the three affected states’, ‘the thyroid gland cancer as a typical disease in Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia’, ‘the officials from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus raised the question of medical and biological consequences’, ‘Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus draw the public’s attention to the problems of nuclear safety’, ‘victim countries that need financial assistance’, ‘support the appeal of the parliaments of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine’, ‘scientific research and coordination between Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus’, ‘Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia work on a common conception of international cooperation’, and ‘Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine made a common statement in the UN’.

The article from 23 April 1996 referring to the G8 meeting stated that thyroid cancer could become a typical disease in Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia that would require many resources to deal with (*Golos Ukrainy*, 23 April 1996: 1). In this quote, the identity as equally traumatised was based on a commonly shared disease, thyroid cancer. The three victim countries were no longer united by historical ties and Slavic roots but by the recent phenomenon of thyroid cancer. This disease was seen as a reason of a deepening human insecurity. Similarly, the article from 25 April 1998 presented new Ukrainian L-thyroxin pills, supported by the European project TACIS. It argued that the pills could heal the thyroid gland problems ‘not only in

Ukraine, but in Belarus and Russia, and could become a substantial help in combating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 25 April 1998: 4). On the one hand, the Ukrainian official media articulated thyroid cancer as a common Chernobyl legacy shared by the three countries. On the other hand, Ukraine was seen not only as a victim but also as a saviour of the Belarusian and Russian Chernobyl victims. The Ukrainian identity was divided: It was linked to Belarus and Russia through victimhood and to the EU through partnership. The linking of Ukraine to the EU gave it a new role as a help provider in relation to the other two victim countries. This understanding constructed the possibility of alleviating human insecurity. Russia became a victim that Ukraine could cure. As thyroid cancer was not linked to the Russian identity as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine, it did not shape the Ukrainian ontological security. Nor has it become a new element of the Russian identity as a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives.

The cooperation between the victim countries and the European Commission was also articulated in the article from 29 April 1998. It discussed the results of the international conference where officials from the European Commission, Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus raised questions regarding the medical and biological consequences of the disaster. In this article, Ukraine was no longer divided into the two identities as a victim and a help provider. It had the identity as a victim who cooperated with the European Commission together with other victims. Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus were seen as help receivers, while the European Commission was understood as a help provider. The article stressed that the three victims cooperated with the European Commission to find solutions to the problems of human and technological security. They discussed the programs of rehabilitation of the affected territories, usage of the radioactive wastes, and the development of prevention systems in the future (*Golos Ukrainy*, 29 April 1998: 2). The article constructed the idea that human and technological insecurity could be alleviated through the cooperation between the three victims and the European Commission. It also presented the unity between Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia on the basis of the common Chernobyl heritage that ought to be dealt with. As this representation was not linked to the Russian identity as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives, it did not shape the Ukrainian ontological security.

The identity as equally traumatised was also differentiated from the whole world. The parliamentary hearings dedicated to the 10th anniversary of Chernobyl printed the recommendations of the Ukrainian Parliament to 'support the appeal of the parliaments of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine to the heads of states, international organisations, and international scientific com-

munity during the 10th anniversary of Chernobyl' and to call for assistance (*Golos Ukrainy*, 20 April 1996: 1a). This quote constructed the three countries as victims and the rest of the world as help providers. The alleviation of human and technological insecurity was seen in the receiving of assistance from abroad. Similarly, the article from 24 April 2004 presented the Red Cross and the Red Crescent as organisations that helped 'the three affected states of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 24 April 2004: 5). This article again presented the three countries as victims and the Red Cross and Red Crescent as help providers. The differentiation of the three victim countries from the world constructed the idea that human insecurity could be alleviated by receiving aid. It also created an understanding of unity between Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia on the basis of Chernobyl. By not being linked to the Russian identity as an enemy or a friend from the Ukrainian national narratives, the Ukrainian trauma management did not shape the ontological security and did not modify the role of Russia in its national narratives.

Despite the fact that Russia and Ukraine started a conflict in eastern Ukraine in 2014, the identity as equally traumatised was still articulated in the article from 26 April 2014. It referred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, stating that on the 28th anniversary of Chernobyl, 'the delegations of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine made a common statement in the UN, proposing to work out a new conception of international cooperation in combating the consequences of the Chernobyl tragedy' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2014).¹⁷⁰ Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia were presented as victims or help receivers, while the UN was seen as a help provider. The alleviation of human and technological insecurity was understood through the continuing cooperation with the UN. This also shows that the Russian identity as an enemy in the Ukrainian conflict was not articulated in relation to the Chernobyl topic. Russia was still seen as another victim similar to Ukraine. By not being linked to the identity of Russia as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives, a change in the understanding of ontological security of Ukraine did not occur. Nor was there a change in the understanding of the Russian identity as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives.

In addition to constructing an equally traumatised identity through the differentiation of the three victim countries from the rest of the world, the Ukrainian official media presented Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus as equal problem solvers that worked together in solving their problems. The article from 25 April 2001 discussed the results of the international conference ded-

¹⁷⁰ <http://www.golos.com.ua/Article.aspx?id=328955>.

icated to the 15th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe. It proposed to have ‘more pragmatism in the scientific research and coordination of practical measures in the liquidation of the consequences of the catastrophe between Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 25 April 2001: 2). This article articulated common victimhood and presented an understanding that human and technological insecurity could be alleviated through collaboration in research and practical matters. Similarly, the article from 23 April 2004 referred to the Ukrainian MP, Yuriï Salomatin, who proposed the medical experts from Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia ‘to work on a unified international conception of the established norms of radiation exposure before and after the tragedy’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 23 April 2004: 2). It constructed unity between the victim countries on the basis of the Chernobyl traumatisation. However, this unity did not have the symbolic weight as it was not linked to the Russian role as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. Rather, the relationship was presented as ‘business-as-usual’ and did not shape the ontological security of Ukraine.

Two more articles articulated a common traumatised identity during the 1990s. The article from 26 April 1994 mentioned Russia, Belarus, and Estonia as the victim countries that needed financial assistance (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1994: 5a). In this article, the Ukrainian official media broadened the common victimhood and included Estonia to the pool of the victim countries. The possibility of alleviating human insecurity was understood through the receiving of financial assistance. Another article from 5 May 1998 informed about the motor rally that took place at the territories of the three states – Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus – in order to ‘draw the public’s attention to the problems of nuclear safety’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 5 May 1998: 16). This article constructed a common geographical space to deal with technological insecurity. By not being linked to the national narratives of Ukraine, these representations did not carry symbolic weight, did not shape the role of Russia as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives, and did not change the understanding of ontological security in Ukraine.

In this vein, the equally traumatised identity constructed a common victimhood between Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus and differentiated it from the rest of the world. The idea of common victimhood shaped the understanding of unity that Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia had. This unity was based not on the common roots, but on the common Chernobyl traumatic legacy. The Ukrainian official media understood the alleviation of human and technological insecurity through receiving aid from the rest of the world, and from carrying out research and practical activities together with Russia and Belarus. The Ukrainian official media did not refer to the role of Russia as an enemy or a friend from the national narratives. As such, Russia did not condition

ontological security in Ukraine. The Russian role as an enemy or a friend was neither reproduced, nor modified.

9.1.2 Traumatized Identity – Partner (4 articles in 1996, 2006 (2), and 2007)

The second-most articulated identity in the representations of Russia in the Ukrainian official media was a partner. This representation also constructed similarities between Ukraine and Russia. In comparison with the previously mentioned identity of equally traumatized, the identity of partnership did not include Belarus. It was produced through the articulation of traumatized and historical identities. Traumatized identities referred to the common traumatic experience shared, while historical identities were linked to the common Soviet technological heritage. The discursive mechanisms were uniting and blaming.

Russia was represented as a partner in two areas: (a) organisation of commemoration ceremonies and development of common Chernobyl policies together with Ukraine; (b) sharing the same Soviet RBMK reactors.¹⁷¹ The joint commemoration and policy practices were articulated twice in 2006 on the basis of the traumatized identity. The article from 21 April 2006, entitled ‘Searching for a Mutual Understanding and Dividing Property’, informed about a phone conversation between the President Yushchenko and President Putin. The topics of discussion were social security and honours of the clean-up workers, preparations for the 20th anniversary of Chernobyl, and participation of the G8 in the liquidation of the Chernobyl consequences (*Golos Ukrainy*, 21 April 2006: 1). Another article from 27 April 2006 referred to RIA Novosti,¹⁷² informing that Putin officially honoured 12 clean-up workers in the Kremlin (*Golos Ukrainy*, 27 April 2006: 3). Compared to the Belarusian official media, in which the representation of Russia as a partner was based on the linkage to the Russia-Belarus Union State through political and traumatized identities, the Ukrainian official media did not link Russia and Ukraine to any political organisations. They were just traumatized countries that cooperated with no references to the necessity of this cooperation. Ukraine could manage the Chernobyl consequences with or without Russia. Cooperation with Russia was understood as one of the ways to alleviate human and technological insecurity, but not the *only* way. As such, the repre-

¹⁷¹ RBMK reactor is a high power channel-type reactor (Russian: Реактор Большой Мощности Канальный).

¹⁷² RIA Novosti is Russia’s international news agency translated as Russian News & Information Agency.

sentation of Russia as a partner did not condition ontological security in Ukraine. It neither relied nor modified the national narratives of Ukraine.

Another topic of discussion was the destiny of a similar Soviet type of reactors possessed by Russia and Ukraine. It was raised twice, in 1996 and 2007, and was based on historical identity. The article from 20 April 1996 was published before the power plant was closed. It presented the opinion of the Russian director general of the Rosenergoatom,¹⁷³ Evgeniï Ignatenko, who stated that it was better not to shut down the Chernobyl power plant but to renovate the reactors, using Russia as an example, where three out of four reactors were reconstructed and the fourth was planned to be reconstructed in the following year (*Golos Ukrainy*, 25 April 1998: 8). This quote constructed the continuation of the Soviet legacy and the technological links between Russia and Ukraine. It presented a positive outlook of the future by proposing to renovate old reactors rather than get rid of them all together. As such, the alleviation of technological insecurity was seen in improvements of old reactors. Quoting the Russian expert, this article reproduced the progressive part of the Ukrainian pro-Russian narrative, in which Russia was seen as a friend. The next article from 27 April 2007 was published after the Chernobyl power plant was shut down in 2000. It had a different view on the situation with the Soviet technological legacy: 'Our substantial technological problem is that all our reactors, as well as fuel assemblies, have been engineered in Russia' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 27 April 2007: 3). Instead of looking positively to the future, this quote problematised the current situation with the nuclear reactors. Technological insecurity was seen as deepening because of the Soviet past that Ukraine needed to distance itself from. This articulation constructed an understanding of Russia as a historical burden. It reproduced the tragic part of the Ukrainian pro-European narrative.

Hence, when mentioned in the topic of common commemoration and Chernobyl policy making, Russia was seen as one of the victims to cooperate together. This identity did not reproduce or modify the national narratives of Ukraine. When discussed in connection with the Soviet type of reactors, the role of Russia in relation to technological security changed from a friend to an enemy. This identity reproduced the tragic part of the pro-European national narrative of Ukraine (with Russia as an enemy) but transformed the progressive part of the pro-Russian national narrative (with Russia as a friend).

¹⁷³ Rosenergoatom is the Russian nuclear power station operations subsidiary of Atomenergoprom. Atomenergoprom is a holding company for all Russian civil nuclear industry.

Being mentioned only once and not having a hegemonic status among other identities, the Russian role as an enemy did not have discursive weight. It means that the identity of Russia as a partner did not *systematically* reproduce or modify the national narratives in the Ukrainian official media. As such, Russia as a partner had an obscure role in relation to ontological security in Ukraine.

9.1.3 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (2 articles in 1996 and 2003)

Apart from constructing similarities through the identities as equally traumatised and partners, the Ukrainian official media also constructed differences between Ukraine and Russia. One of them was a representation of Russia as a help provider and Ukraine as a help receiver. They were mentioned in two articles in 1996 and 2003. In 1996, Russia was blamed for not helping Ukraine, but in 2003, it was praised for assisting Ukraine. The change from blame in 1996 to praise in 2003 was occasional and did not correspond to a particular pattern of representation. The discursive mechanisms used were blaming and praising.

The case of blame was articulated in 1996 when Russia was accused of not helping Ukraine during the parliamentary hearings dedicated to the 10th anniversary. The participants of the hearings stressed that Ukraine was left alone to deal with the disastrous consequences of the catastrophe: ‘The West is feeding us mostly with promises, while the brotherly Russia – the successor of the USSR – has not been taking part in the liquidation of the consequences of the disaster at the Ukrainian territory’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 20 April 1996: 1b). Here, Russia was accused together with the West. While the West did not receive any particularisation, Russia was labelled through the historical identity (‘brotherly’ and ‘successor of the USSR’). This labelling implied tragedy and criticism rather than appreciation of common historical heritage. Common historical heritage was understood not as a way to alleviate human and technological insecurity, but as a reason for its deepening. This was the opposite logic of the Belarusian official media, which saw the close historical ties with Russia as an opportunity for salvation. This reasoning reproduced the understanding of Russia as an enemy in the tragic part of the Ukrainian pro-European narrative but undermined the understanding of Russia as a friend in the progressive part of the Ukrainian pro-Russian narrative.

Instead of being blamed, Russia was praised for supporting the Ukrainians in 2003. The article from 23 April 2003 praised the Moscovites for being interested in the ecological artwork of the Chernobyl clean-up worker and famous Ukrainian painter Oleg Velenok. The Russians proposed him to have

an exhibition in Moscow together with other world-famous artists. The article juxtaposed the Moscovites to the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture and local authorities in Kharkov, who had ignored the artist's work. The article blamed the Ukrainian authorities, stating that 'we can only hope that maybe, after three years, the importance of the topic of clean air will reach the officials responsible for culture, as we are all breathing the same air' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 23 April 2003). In this case, Russia was praised and the Ukrainian authorities were blamed. The Russians were understood as philanthropic help providers or saviours, while the Ukrainian authorities were seen as betrayers who ignored the voices of their own citizens. This understanding reproduced the role of Russia as a friend in the Ukrainian pro-Russian narrative and smoothed its enemy status in the Ukrainian pro-European narrative. This representation questioned the legitimacy of the Ukrainian authorities and their ability to cope with Chernobyl. It also divided the Ukrainian society into the Chernobyl victims and the Ukrainian authorities. The Chernobyl victims were linked to Russia and understood as good guys. The Ukrainian authorities were juxtaposed against them and seen as bad guys.

As such, Russia was blamed in 1996 but praised in 2003. This change over time was opposite to the change of the Russian identity as a partner (discussed above). Russia as a partner was praised in 1996 but blamed in 2007. This means that the representations of Russia had an ambiguous character. They did not reproduce or modify the Ukrainian national narratives in a systematic manner. Nor did they shape the Ukrainian ontological security. Rather, blame and praise were articulated simultaneously, hand-in-hand. Simultaneous blaming and praising did not give discursive weight to a trauma management narrative.

9.1.4 Traumatized Identity – Less Traumatized (1 article in 2006)

Another identity that constructed differences between Russia and Ukraine was based on the level of traumatization. In 2006, the Ukrainian official media emphasised greater financial losses that Ukraine had to deal with compared to the other two affected states. Ukraine was presented as more traumatized and Russia and Belarus as less traumatized. The discursive mechanism used was comparing. The article from 26 April 2006 stated that Chernobyl affected the territories of Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, resulting in a total financial damage of 12.6 billion USD. However, 'Ukraine has spent 7.35 billion USD [out of 12.6 billion USD] financing the costs for the liquidation of the consequences of the catastrophe alone for the past 14 years' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2006: 5). The Ukrainian state media understood Ukraine's status as the most traumatized in financial terms (7.35 billion USD out of 12.6 billion USD). The trauma of Chernobyl was seen as a financial burden

that the independent Ukraine had to carry alone. Particularising Ukraine as a victim constructed Chernobyl as a national tragedy of Ukraine. Being mentioned only once, this identity did not contribute to disaster nationalisation in Ukraine.

9.1.5 Traumatized Identity – Better Problem solver (1 article in 2009)

The last identity to construct the differences between Ukraine and Russia was based on the level of success achieved in dealing with the consequences of the disaster. In 2009, the Russian policies regarding the nuclear victims were presented as better than the Ukrainian policies. Russia was understood as a better problem solver, while Ukraine was understood as a worse problem solver. This representation was different from the Belarusian official media, which consistently presented Russia as a worse policymaker than Belarus. The identity as a better problem solver was linked to the economic identities of richer Russia and poorer Ukraine. Praising the Russian social security and blaming the Ukrainian policies contributed to an understanding of deepening of human insecurity in Ukraine but facilitation of human insecurity in Russia. This interpretation also changed the role of Russia in the Ukrainian national narratives towards a positive actor. It is worth noticing that it was not Chernobyl that the Ukrainian media used as a point of reference. It was a general social policy towards the nuclear victims (including those affected by the nuclear tests) in Russia. Abstracting from Chernobyl and generalising social policies to all types of nuclear victims stripped Ukraine and Russia from their unity on the basis of common Chernobyl victimhood. It constructed an understanding of Russia as a distant Other, but with positive qualities. The article from 28 April 2009 told the story about the clean-up worker Ivan Lazar' from Donetsk:

Today, the honoured liquidator is struggling together with his fellows in misery for health benefits in courts, but without any success. Russia is regularly financing the federal programme for rehabilitation of people affected by the nuclear tests in Ural. Ukraine, on the contrary, is cutting Chernobyl benefits from the state's budget, as there is no money to fulfil this law article (*Fakty i Kommentarii*, 28 April 2009).¹⁷⁴

In this quote, Russia was presented as a better problem solver ('is regularly financing the federal program for rehabilitation of people'). Ukraine, on the contrary, was seen as a worse problem solver ('is cutting Chernobyl benefits

¹⁷⁴ <http://fakty.ua/18597-my-dazhe-spali-v-respiratorah-snimali-ih-tolko-chtoby-poest->

from the state's budget') and poorer than Russia ('there is no money to fulfil this law article'). As a result, the state of human insecurity in Ukraine was understood as worsened ('the honoured liquidator struggling together with his fellows in misery for health benefits in courts, but without any success'). This identity constructed an understanding of the Ukrainian authorities as illegitimate and Russian authorities as legitimate. It gave Russia a positive moral connotation in its role as a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. As this identity was constructed only once, the Russian identity as a better problem solver did not condition the Ukrainian ontological security and did not modify the Ukrainian national narratives.

To sum up, the Ukrainian official media constructed a trauma management narrative, but did not systematically refer to the Ukrainian national narratives. It did not reproduce or modify the role of Russia as a friend or an enemy in these narratives. It was blamed and praised simultaneously over time. The most frequent identity was equally traumatised, according to which Russia was seen as another Chernobyl victim, as Ukraine and Belarus. This understanding constructed similarities on the basis of victimhood. Unity between the three former Soviet republics was seen not through the lenses of Slavic roots and historical heritage, but through the necessity to deal with the ongoing consequences of the Chernobyl disaster.

9.2 Trauma Management in the Non-State Public Sphere: The Representations of Russia in the Ukrainian Alternative Media

This section investigates whether a trauma management narrative was constructed in the Ukrainian alternative media through the representation of Russia. It shows that, alike the official media, the Ukrainian alternative media constructed a trauma management narrative without systematically relying on the national narratives. It means that the trauma management narrative did not have discursive power. The most articulated identity of Russia was another victim (8 articles out of 14). It constructed common victimhood between the three affected states, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. As Russia was presented as another victim and not as an enemy or a friend, this identity did not reproduce or change the national narratives of Ukraine. Another popular identity to represent Russia was a world problem solver. The role of Russia as a part of the international community decoupled Ukraine from Russia. Stretching the pool of victims and including other affected European countries also de-particularised the Russian and Ukrainian victimhood. It

de-nationalised Chernobyl from Ukraine and stretched it to the rest of the world.

Table 9.2 Trauma Management, the Representation of Russia: The Ukrainian Alternative Media

Identities	Similarity (10)		Difference (5)	
	1996-2011 8 articles	2011 2 articles	1996 1 article	2001, 2011 4 articles
Ethical				
Russia	-	-	Help provider	Problem solver
Ukraine	-	-	Help receiver	Solutions receiver
Traumatised				
Russia	Equally traumatised	Partner	-	-
Ukraine	Equally traumatised	Partner	-	-
Symbolic				
Russia	-	-	-	Superior
Ukraine	-	-	-	Inferior
Economic				
Russia	-	-	Richer	-
Ukraine	-	-	Poorer	-
Historical				
Russia	-	-	Disconnected	-
Ukraine	-	-	Disconnected	-
Ontological security	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Threatened	Ambiguous
National narrative	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Reproduced	Ambiguous
Discursive mechanism	Uniting	Uniting	Blaming	Praising
Degrees of Otherness	Traumatisation	Problem solving	Hostility	Problem solving

Table 9.2 demonstrates the representations of Russia in the Ukrainian alternative media. The Ukrainian alternative media articulated traumatised, ethical, symbolic, economic, and historical identities. The discursive mechanisms used were uniting, blaming, and praising. The degrees of Otherness included hostility, problem-solving, and traumatisation. The media constructed more similarities (10) between Ukraine and Russia than differences (5). It used an ironic narrative genre.

As stated in Chapter 5, the data for the alternative media was collected for each 5th Chernobyl anniversary (1992, 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011) for the period from 20 April to 2 May. Russia was mentioned in 14 articles out of 24. It occupied 58.3 per cent of the representation of external actors and 46.7 per cent of the total number of articles about Chernobyl. This means that Russia was the most mentioned actor among the external actors and one of the most important topics in the Chernobyl discussion in general. However, as we will see, the quantitative importance did not correspond to the qualitative importance. The discursive representations assigned to Russia did not contribute to the reproduction or modification of the Ukrainian national narratives and did not condition the understanding of ontological security in Ukraine.

The representations of Russia are discussed in detail below under equally traumatised (1996-2011), partner (2011), help provider (1996), and problem solver (2001, 2011).

9.2.1 Traumatized Identity – Equally Traumatized (8 articles in 1996(3), 2001, 2006, and 2011(3))

Equally traumatised was the most articulated identity in the Ukrainian alternative media. It constructed similarities between Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus in eight articles during 1996-2011. Compared to the representations in the Ukrainian official media, in which the equally traumatised identity was understood through partnership (focusing on what countries did to deal with Chernobyl or what should be done to manage it), the Ukrainian alternative media dedicated more attention to the state of traumatising itself (what the damage was). While the focus on partnership (the Ukrainian official media) implied the attempts to alleviate human and technological insecurity through cooperation, the articulation of traumatising (the Ukrainian alternative media) talked about the depth of human and technological insecurity. The Ukrainian alternative media also mentioned cooperation, not in policies or science but in the organisation of the commemorative ceremonies. This understanding constructed unity between Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus not on the basis of historical roots, geography, or culture, but on the basis of a common experience of being contaminated by radiation. At the same time, this unity had an ambiguous character: The Ukrainian alternative media introduced other European countries into the pool of Chernobyl victims and, thus, de-particularised Chernobyl, presenting it as a global rather than a national or regional problem. This representation neither shaped the national narratives of Ukraine, nor presented a certain vision of the Ukrainian ontological security.

The phrases used to articulate a common traumatised identity were ‘the artists from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus participated...’, ‘the trilateral meeting between the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus is expected...’, ‘the number of evacuees in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia was...’, ‘the Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian territory was contaminated...’, ‘the research done by Ukrainian, Russian, and Belarusian scientists...’, and so on. This identity was articulated through a discursive mechanism of uniting.

One of the topics to construct common victimhood was based on the level of contamination (1996(2), 2011). The Ukrainian prime minister, Nikolaï Azarov, said that ‘over 145,000 square kilometres of Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian territory were contaminated with radio-nuclides as a result of the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 2011).¹⁷⁵ Radio-nuclides were seen as a reference point of unification between the three victim countries and a reason for human insecurity. Similarly, journalist Lidiya Surzhik stated that ‘The essence of this ecological tragedy is that the ecosystems in Ukraine, Belarus (three quarters of the territory),¹⁷⁶ and Russia are filled with radioactive caesium. Caesium moves in the biological chain and is absorbed in human bodies’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁷⁷ This article particularised radio-nuclides and presented caesium as a cause of human insecurity in the three countries. As caesium polluted the environment and could become a part of the daily nutrition of humans, human insecurity was understood as alarming. One of the ways to deal with the radioactive contamination was to evacuate people from the areas with high concentration of radio-nuclides. Journalist Bogdan Kostyuk stated that ‘the number of evacuees in Ukraine reached 160,000, 150,000 in Belarus, and 75,000 in Russia ...’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁷⁸ The evacuation of people was, on the one hand, understood as an alleviation of human insecurity by preventing them to be exposed to radiation. On the other hand, it was seen as a deepening of human insecurity as people had to leave their homes and go to unknown places against their will. The articulation of the equally traumatised identity on the basis of a continuing presence of radiation constructed the commonality between Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. It,

¹⁷⁵ http://zn.ua/ECONOMICS/azarov_uscherb_ukraine_ot_chernobylya_-_180_mlrld_dollarov.html.

¹⁷⁶ Providing an example of the amount of territory contaminated in Belarus in brackets gave it the status of more traumatised compared to the rest of the states.

¹⁷⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horosho_by_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

¹⁷⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/zloveschaya_ten_sarkofaga.html.

however, did not have discursive power, as it was not linked to the Russian role as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives.

At the same time, the three victim countries were not the only ones understood as traumatised. The Ukrainian alternative media also included other European states in the Chernobyl victimhood (1996, 2001, 2006). The Ukrainian professor and scientist Valerii Glazko stated that ‘The highest levels of concentration of volatile radio-nuclides and fuel particles have been detected in Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. However, more than half of the total volatile materials settled outside of these countries’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 21 April 2006).¹⁷⁹ Even though this article constructed Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia as the states most damaged by Chernobyl (‘the highest levels of concentration of volatile radio-nuclides’), it also presented other states as seriously affected (‘more than half of the total volatile materials’). Another article from 26 April 1996 expanded the pool of Chernobyl victims beyond the mostly affected, without differentiating between their levels of traumatisa-tion, geography, hierarchy, or history: ‘Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Poland, Norway, and Sweden cannot use thousands of hectares of their fertile land in agriculture for many decades to come because of Chernobyl’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁸⁰ Human insecurity was expressed through the possession of soil contaminated with radio-nuclides that was impossible to use for agriculture. This representation did not carry symbolic power as it did not echo the Russian identity as an enemy or a friend from the national narratives of Ukraine. By bringing other countries into the community of victims, the Ukrainian alternative media de-particularised Ukraine, as well as Russia and Belarus, in relation to Chernobyl. Broadening the scope of the Chernobyl consequences to the global scale implied the presence of human and technological insecurity beyond the Ukrainian borders.

In another article, however, the victimhood of the three Chernobyl victim countries was differentiated from the rest of the world. The West had become a distanced Other in relation to the question of aid. The West was presented as richer and dominating and the three victim countries as poorer and subordinate. The Western wealth and power were understood through the instrumental rather than philanthropic approach to the Chernobyl problem solving. Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus were seen as victims unable to stand against the powerful and rich West. The Ukrainian scientist Valerii Kukhar stated the following: ‘As the West gives money, it also orders music. The West can spend its money on whatever it wants. Because of that, the research

¹⁷⁹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/kogda_esche_zhili_prababushki_alfa_beta_gamma_i_praded_uran.html.

¹⁸⁰ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/zloveschaya_ten_sarkofaga.html.

done by our [Ukrainian] scientists, Russian scientists from the Kurchatov Institute, and Belarusian scientists received very little consideration from the West' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 20 April 2001).¹⁸¹ As the West was more powerful and rich ('gives money', 'orders music', 'can spend its money on whatever it wants'), it was difficult for the victim countries to resist this power ('the research done by our scientists ... received very little consideration from the West'). Even though there was a discursive binary construction between the West and the victim countries, it was understood as 'business-as-usual' relations between the developed and developing world. It was not linked to the role as enemies or friends in the national narratives and struggle over values.

Finally, the equally traumatised identity of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus was also constructed by demonstrating how the three states organise and participate in the official commemorative events together (1996, 2011(2)). It created a commonality on the basis of victimhood rather than common historical roots. Some articles presented the commemorating activities as a result of political integration rather than Chernobyl unification. As journalist Viya Korenkova said, 'The artists from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus participated in the joint concert at the Sports Palace in Kiev on 26 April 1996. This concert resembled the jointly produced political relations between these states' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁸² She understood the alleviation of human insecurity through the established political partnership rather than the commonly shared victimhood. Other articles informed about the official commemoration meetings between the leaders of the victim countries: 'The trilateral meeting between the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus is expected to take place on 26 April. During the meeting, Viktor Yanukovich, Dmitriï Medvedev, and Aleksandr Lukashenko will commemorate the victims of the disaster' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 25 April 2011).¹⁸³ The article from 21 April 2011 echoed this message: 'The trilateral meeting of the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus is planned to take place on 26 April' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 21 April 2011).¹⁸⁴ This representation neither reproduced nor modified the Russian identity as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine.

As such, the Ukrainian alternative media constructed a trauma management narrative through unity on the basis of common Chernobyl victimhood.

¹⁸¹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chaes_zakryli_i_zabyli.html.

¹⁸² http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/kolokola_chernobylya.html.

¹⁸³ http://zn.ua/POLITICS/prezident_rossii_nameren_zavtra_pribyt_v_ukrainu.html.

¹⁸⁴ http://zn.ua/POLITICS/yanukovich_i_medvedev_obsudili_predstoyaschuyu_vstrechu.html.

This victimhood, however, was open for others to join. European countries were also constructed as Chernobyl victims. This victimhood was based more on the level of damage done rather than on what was to be done to alleviate this damage. The cooperation of the victim countries was also mentioned but more so in the area of commemorating ceremonies than in science and policies. The alternative media did not rely on the Ukrainian national narratives to construct a trauma management narrative. Russia was neither presented as a friend nor as an enemy but as another victim.

9.2.2 Traumatised Identity – Partner (2 articles in 2011)

The Ukrainian alternative media also constructed similarities between Russia and Ukraine (i.e., without including Belarus) through cooperation. Russia as a partner was articulated twice in 2011. Cooperation between Russia and Ukraine was based on common Chernobyl experience through the visits of the officials rather than politics or history. The discursive strategy used was uniting. One article was related to the organisation of the commemoration ceremony in Kiev dedicated to the 25th anniversary of Chernobyl:

President Viktor Yanukovich had a telephone conversation with the Russian president, Dmitriï Medvedev... The heads of state discussed the details of the upcoming visit of the leaders of the neighbouring countries to Kiev and the meeting planned on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 21 April 2011).¹⁸⁵

Similarly, the article from 22 April 2011 informed that ‘the Russian patriarch, Kirill, will visit the Chernobyl nuclear power plant during his stay in Ukraine on 25-27 April 2011’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 22 April 2011).¹⁸⁶ The informative nature of these articles neither reproduced nor modified the Russian role as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives. The lack of discursive power of these representations did not contribute to a certain construction of the ontological security in Ukraine.

9.2.3 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (1 article in 1996)

One of the differences in constructing the identities of Russia and Ukraine was related to aid. Russia was seen as a help provider that was obliged to provide assistance but failed to do so. Ukraine was understood as a potential help receiver that did not receive aid. Economic and historical identities were used to construct it. They strengthened the tragic part of the Ukrainian pro-

¹⁸⁵ http://zn.ua/POLITICS/yanukovich_i_medvedev_obsudili_predstoyaschuyu_vstrechu.html.

¹⁸⁶ http://zn.ua/SOCIETY/moskovskiy_patriarh_kirill_priedet_v_chernobyl.html.

European narrative, according to which Russia was seen as a colonial power. As in the Ukrainian official media, this identity was mentioned only once and did not carry symbolic power. The discursive mechanism used was blame: ‘Russia as the successor of the Soviet Union has not taken further part in the affairs and funding at the territory of Ukraine since September 1991’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁸⁷ The quote articulated the historical identity of Russia (‘the successor of the Soviet Union’) and its economic identity (‘funding at the territory of Ukraine’). Blame was assigned by not complying with the articulated identities (‘has not taken further part in the affairs’). Constructing Russia as responsible for the past consequences, Ukraine was justified to demand reparations.

9.2.4 Ethical Identity – Problem Solver (4 articles in 2001(2) and 2011(2))

Another difference between Ukraine and Russia was constructed through the ethical identity, according to which Russia was seen as a problem solver within the international community. Ukraine, in turn, was just a solutions receiver from the world. The Russian identity as a problem solver was linked to its expertise in nuclear power. Technological insecurity could be alleviated by having the world solve problems for Ukraine. Problem solving was based on the symbolic identity of Russia as superior, while Ukraine was just an inferior follower. The phrases used were ‘new options of improving the safety ... from Germans, French, Russians, and Americans’, ‘Russian and German scientists independently calculated’, and ‘Russia urged the IAEA to expand its area of activity’. These representations did not carry symbolic power as they neither reproduced nor modified the role of Russia as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. As they were not linked to the national narratives, they did not condition ontological security in Ukraine.

Ukrainian scientist Viktor Bar’yakhtar stated that ‘today, new options of improving the safety of nuclear power stations are emerging, especially from the Germans, French, Russians, and Americans, in order to achieve an absolutely reliable operation of the nuclear power plants’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 20 April 2001).¹⁸⁸ Russia was understood as working together with other Western powers to provide technological security around the world. Similarly, Valentin Kupnyĭ, the deputy director of the Chernobyl power plant and the head of the ‘Confinement’ site, stated that Russian and German scientists independently calculated the effects of the destruction of the old confinement

¹⁸⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chernobyl_desyat_let_tragedii.html.

¹⁸⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chaes_zakryli_i_zabyli.html.

(*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 20 April 2001).¹⁸⁹ Russia, together with Germany, was seen as a saviour who worked on the improvement of technological insecurity at the Chernobyl site. Another articulation of Russia as an important country in the area of nuclear energy was made after the explosion in Fukushima:

The UN started to talk about the new standards of the construction of nuclear power plants and transparency in their work. France offered to set up the world's most rapid reaction force for future accidents in the nuclear industry. Russia urged the IAEA to expand its area of activity. The European Union and the CIS countries urgently conducted stress tests, checking security and preparedness of the personnel in these kinds of circumstances. Germany accelerated its plans in reducing nuclear energy production with the possibility of decommissioning all the units older than 30 years (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 22 April 2011).¹⁹⁰

In this quote, Russia was presented as a part of the international community and, hence, was not linked to the role of Russia as an enemy or a friend. However, one article exposed differences between the West and Russia as problem solvers. This was done by referring to the Western and Russian journalists and their attitude towards radiation when they visited the Chernobyl zone. The colonel Aleksandr Naumov, who worked in the zone, recounted that 'The Japanese are constantly checking the counters and do not go to the dangerous places, while the British and Germans can suddenly put on their protective suits. These capitalists arrange for insurance worth half a million Euros before coming on the Chernobyl trip' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 22 April 2011).¹⁹¹ However, as Naumov argued, the Russian journalists were different: Instead of thinking about protection and discipline, they were interested in the opposite. They wanted to 'pick two pennies from a phone booth' or 'stroke a wild animal in the woods' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 22 April 2011).¹⁹² Here, the specific cultural identity of Russia of avoiding order and discipline was juxtaposed to the orderly and law-obedient Western capitalists. This representation, however, was not linked to the national narratives of Ukraine and the role of Russia as an enemy or a friend. It was a general comparison of Russia and the West without the Ukrainian involvement.

To sum up, the two most frequently constructed Russian identities were equally traumatised (together with Ukraine and Belarus) and world problem

¹⁸⁹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/sostoyanie_ukrytiya_ugrozhayusche_opasno.html.

¹⁹⁰ http://gazeta.zn.ua/TECHNOLOGIES/fukusima_uroki_ekonomiki.html.

¹⁹¹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SOCIETY/polkovnik_naumov_znaet_zonu_kak_svoi_pyat_paltsev.html.

¹⁹² http://gazeta.zn.ua/SOCIETY/polkovnik_naumov_znaet_zonu_kak_svoi_pyat_paltsev.html.

solver (a part of the international community). These identities constructed the possibility of alleviating human and technological insecurity through the cooperation between the three victim countries and receiving solutions from the world. They did not draw on the Ukrainian national narratives and did not construct Russia as an enemy or a friend.

9.3 Conclusion: Trauma Management in the Hierarchical Public Sphere of Ukraine. The Representations of Russia

This section summarises the results of the analysis of the representations of Russia in the Ukrainian official and alternative media. Compared to the Belarusian media, the Ukrainian official and alternative media did not have a sharp division in their representation of Russia in the Chernobyl trauma management narratives. The common victimhood of the three traumatised states, Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus (rather than the role of Russia as a saviour) was the most discussed topic in both media and was persistent over time (1996-2011, 8 articles out of 14 in the Ukrainian alternative media; 1994-2014, 11 articles out of 19 in the Ukrainian official media). The *Ukrainian alternative media* focused on the Chernobyl victimhood *per se*. It also broadened the scope of victims and included some European states. De-nationalising Chernobyl and stretching it beyond the Ukrainian national borders obscured its relevance for the Ukrainian nation. The further decoupling of Russia from Ukraine took place by introducing a Russian identity of a world problem solver. This identity constructed Russia as a part of international community rather than a part of Ukraine and as a country participating in solving problems of global technological insecurity. The dual identity of Russia as a part of Ukrainian victimhood and a part of international problem solving obscured its role in the Ukrainian life. The *Ukrainian official media* understood the Chernobyl victimhood as a need to establish cooperation between the affected states. There were a few deviations to this as each media articulated other identities to shape the meaning of victimhood, but they had an occasional character rather than an established pattern of representation.

As such, the Ukrainian media did not rely on the national narratives to construct their trauma management narratives. The Ukrainian official and alternative media neither reproduced nor modified the role of Russia as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. Russia did not play a role in shaping ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens. The media did not try to legitimise or de-legitimise the Ukrainian or Russian leadership

and to discursively nationalise Chernobyl. Both newspapers used an ironic narrative genre to represent Russia and its 'business-as-usual' relations with Ukraine.

Chapter 10.

Trauma Management in the Hierarchical Publics of Ukraine.

The Representations of Europe

This chapter looks at media representations of Europe in relation to the Chernobyl disaster in the Ukrainian official and alternative media. The purpose of the chapter is to understand whether trauma management discourse was constructed, whether it reproduced or modified the Ukrainian national narratives, and whether it shaped ontological security. The chapter shows that Ukraine did not link its trauma management narratives to the national narratives.

10.1 Trauma Management in the State-Controlled Public Sphere: The Representations of Europe in the Ukrainian Official Media

This section looks at the construction of a trauma management narrative through the representation of Europe in the Ukrainian official media. It shows that the Ukrainian official media constructed a trauma management narrative without relying on the national narratives. This means that its trauma management narrative did not carry symbolic power. The media used an ironic narrative genre to represent Europe. In the representations of the Ukrainian official media, Europe was divided into good guys (the European charities and the individual member states) and bad guys (the European businesses, authorities, and official institutions).¹⁹³ While in the represen-

¹⁹³ Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the EU, like Russia, established cooperation with the newly emerged states. In 1994, Belarus and Ukraine became members of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership (EaP) by signing the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which established a legal framework of the ENP and EaP. The EU made Ukraine a priority partner country, so the EU-Ukrainian relations developed much faster than the EU-Belarus relations. In 2007, the EU and Ukraine began to negotiate the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement: ‘The Association Agreement is a pioneering document: it is the first agreement based on political association between the EU and any of the Eastern Partnership countries, and is unprecedented in its breadth (number of areas covered) and depth (detail of commitments and timelines).’

tations of the Belarusian official media, this discursive division was sequential, in the Ukrainian official media it was simultaneous. The construction of multiple identities contributed to the ambivalent state of the European identity. While in the Belarusian official media, political and economic identities were read through a struggle of values, in the Ukrainian official media, they were viewed in terms of profit-making by the powerful over the powerless. Unlike the Belarusian official media, the Ukrainian official media did not pay particular attention to Germany. The German historical and traumatised identities of WWII were not articulated. Hence the constructed identities of Europe did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine and the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend was neither modified nor reproduced.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the European countries and institutions were mentioned in 13 out of 80 articles about external actors in the Ukrainian official media. They occupied 16.3 per cent of the representation of all the external actors and 3.0 per cent of the Chernobyl topic. They had neither quantitative, nor qualitative significance in the trauma management narrative of the Ukrainian official media. Table 10.1 summarises the representations of Europe in the Ukrainian official media. These representations constructed differences between Europe and Ukraine on the basis of ethical, economic, historical, political, and apolitical identities. The differences were built on both positive (8 articles during 1994-2008) and negative (5 articles during 1996-2007) representations. The pattern of representation of the European countries was ambivalent. The representations of Europe as a philanthropic help provider and dominating and rich entity are demonstrated below.

[http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine/eu_ukraine/association_agreement/index_en.htm]. The Association Agreement has become a road of political convergence of Ukraine towards the EU. The political chapters of the Agreement were signed on 21 March 2014, and the remaining chapters were signed on 21 June 2014, after the conflict with Russia started. As for the Chernobyl cooperation, the official EU has been cooperating with Ukraine together with the international community (G8, EBRD, and UNDP) in at least three major directions: the closure of the nuclear power plant, the construction of a new shelter over the damaged fourth reactor, and maintenance of the radioactive wastes at the territory of the Chernobyl power plant. A number of documents are signed, and programmes run accordingly to provide financial, technical, and expert assistance to Ukraine: the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on closure of the plant since 1995 (between G7, EC, and Ukraine); the Chernobyl Shelter Fund (New Safe Confinement) since 1997 between EBRD, EC, G8 and other states; Nuclear Safety Account (between G7 and the EC) since 1993; the Industrial Complex for Solid Radwaste Management (ICSRM) by the EC; TACIS/INSP waste management and decommission by the EC.

Table 10.1 Trauma Management, the Representations of Europe: The Ukrainian Official Media

Identities	Difference (13)	
	1994-2008 8 articles	1996-2007 5 articles
Ethical		
Europe	Help provider	Help provider
Ukraine	Help receiver	Help receiver
Historical		
Europe	-	Disconnected
Ukraine		
Political		
Europe	-	Disconnected
Ukraine	-	Dominating
Ukraine	-	Subordinate
Apolitical		
Europe	Philanthropic	-
Ukraine	Rescued	-
Economic		
Europe	-	Richer
Ukraine	-	Poorer
Ontological security	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
National narrative	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Discursive mechanism	Praising	Blaming
Degrees of Otherness	Friendship	Hostility

10.1.1 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (Human Insecurity) (8 articles in 1994, 1996(2), 1998, 1999, 2003, 2005, 2008)

The Ukrainian official media constructed an ethical apolitical identity of the European states in six articles during 1994-2008. The articulation of the ethical identity produced the subject positions of a help provider for the European states and a help receiver for Ukraine. They were based on the apolitical identities of the philanthropic Europe and the rescued Ukraine. The discursive mechanism used was praising. The Ukrainian official media praised the charities of the European states for providing humanitarian assistance (1994-1999) and rehabilitating the Chernobyl children (1996-2008). The French charities were praised (1994, 1999) for both humanitarian assistance and recuperation of children, while Bulgarian (1996), Austrian (1998), Italian (1996, 2005), and Irish (2008) organisations were praised for recuperat-

ing children abroad. The Ukrainian official media praised the following charities: 'Children of Chernobyl – France', 'Humanitarian Mission of the Supreme Schools in France', 'The Austrian-Ukrainian Partnership', 'Protect Children of Chernobyl' (Italy), and 'Help Children of Ukraine' (Germany).

Unlike the Belarusian official media, the Ukrainian official media did not particularise Germany among other European nations. The German charities were praised only twice (in 1996 and 2003) for rehabilitating the Ukrainian children. The historical and traumatised German WWII identities were not mentioned.¹⁹⁴ This means that there was no discursive change in the German identity of a WWII perpetrator to a Chernobyl saviour. This contributed to the absence of a link between the Chernobyl trauma management narrative and the national narratives of Ukraine. Nor the articulation of the philanthropic identities of other European states contributed to the modification of the Ukrainian national narratives. They did not receive any attention from the Ukrainian alternative media that could either contest or accept their status. They lacked a hegemonic status in a public sphere as they were articulated simultaneously with another identity of a political Europe. Hence, when the Ukrainian official media presented human insecurity as alleviated by reporting about the provided aid to the direct victims, the meaning of this message did not have symbolic power.

The Ukrainian official media reported about the organisation of recuperative visits abroad for the Chernobyl children; delivery of medicine, medical equipment, clothes and toys; improvement of the infrastructure of the Ukrainian children's hospitals. The phrases of praise of the European nations were 'take care of our children as if they were their own', 'protect children of Chernobyl', 'attention to our children', 'help children of Ukraine', 'readiness to strengthen aid', and 'sharing the misfortune'.

France was praised for helping Chernobyl children in humanitarian and recuperative spheres. The article from 26 April 1994 entitled 'Sharing the Misfortune' reported about a meeting that took place between Vasiliï Nesterenko, the Chairman of the People's Deputies in the Kiev City Council, and Serge Beaumont, the Chairman of the charity 'Children of Chernobyl –

¹⁹⁴ Belarus and Ukraine differ in their understanding of the role of Germany in WWII. The Belarusians and the eastern Ukrainians perceive Nazi Germany as evil and the Soviet Union as a hero who rescued them from this evil. The western Ukrainians, however, perceive both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union as evil, the more polarised moral connotation being attached to the Soviet Union. The western Ukrainians collaborated with Hitler in order to fight the Soviets. Hence, the role of the European countries in the history of western Ukraine was different to that of eastern Ukraine and Belarus. The controversial understanding of Germany in the eastern and western Ukraine contributes to the absence of the extensive praise of Germany in the Ukrainian official media.

France'. Nesterenko 'expressed his gratitude to the French friends for their attention to our children affected by the catastrophe and for their readiness to strengthen this aid' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1994: 5b). Nesterenko suggested Beaumont to finance particular targeted programs in rehabilitating children: 'Besides recuperative visits abroad, it might be better to improve the technical equipment of the children's hospitals, enrich them with the therapeutic arsenal' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1994: 5b). In this quote, the Ukrainian official constructed Ukraine's need and dependence on France by asking for more aid. Even though human insecurity of the Chernobyl children was constructed as alleviated, it did not transform the identity of Europe in the national narratives of Ukraine (for the reasons mentioned above). Another article from 24 April 1999 informed that the students from the organisation 'Humanitarian Mission of the Supreme Schools in France' brought medical equipment, medicine, clothes, and toys to the Chernobyl children of Ukraine (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 1999: 1).

Similarly, the article from 23 April 1998 expressed gratitude to the Chairman of the Austrian-Ukrainian Partnership for organising the rehabilitation of 10 groups of children from the city of Kiev and Kiev region in Austria (*Golos Ukrainy*, 23 April 1998: 1). Another article from 29 April 2005 informed about the anniversary of the charity 'Protect Children of Chernobyl', in which the Italian delegation that hosted Ukrainian children in their families took part (*Golos Ukrainy*, 29 April 2005: 2). Italy was also mentioned as a philanthropic help provider in the article on 24 April 1996 (*Golos Ukrainy*, 24 April 1996: 2). These representations presented human insecurity of the Chernobyl children as alleviated. However, they did not contribute to the assurance of ontological security in Ukraine as they did not modify the Ukrainian national narratives.

The article from 30 April 2003 was dedicated to the activities of the German charity 'Help Children of Ukraine'. The charity 'encouraged people from Munich to become "temporary parents" ... and invite the Ukrainian children on summer holidays: to host them in their homes and give them love and attention' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 2003: 6). The article stressed that 'love is the main indicator' that the volunteers from this charity work with:

Tired and scared kids get out of the bus that took them on such an important trip through the three countries [bus trip from Ukraine to Germany through Poland]. They are immediately met by many 'temporary parents' that cannot hide their tears of joy. These are the people who also pay for the whole visit of the Ukrainian children. These families together with their own children take the Ukrainian kids to museums, amusement parks, and just travel (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 2003: 6).

In this quote, the Germans were presented as ‘temporary parents’ who ‘invite the Ukrainian children on summer holidays’, ‘pay for the whole visit of the Ukrainian children’, ‘cannot hide their tears of joy’, ‘host them in their homes’, ‘give them love and attention’, ‘take the Ukrainian children together with their own children to museums, amusement parks, and just travel’. This representation and construction of humanism and compassion constructed human insecurity of the Ukrainian children as alleviated. The German aid was also mentioned in the article on 25 April 1996 (*Golos Ukrainy*, 25 April 1996: 5). By not having a frequent articulation and by not mentioning the identity of Germany as a WWII perpetrator, this representation did not contribute to the modification of the identity of Germany as a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine.

Ireland was praised in a similar way for treating the Ukrainian children well. The Ukrainian professor and radiation medicine expert Nataliya Preobrazhenskaya stated that ‘The Irish take care of our children as if they were their own’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2008: 7). She added that Ireland had a ‘mild climate and a similar nature to ours’ that contributed to the recuperation of the Ukrainian children and improved their health (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2008: 7). Bulgaria was also presented as a philanthropic help provider in the article on 24 April 1996 (*Golos Ukrainy*, 24 April 1996: 2).

Constructing the ethical identities of the charities of the European states through apolitical identities presented human insecurity of the Ukrainian children as alleviated. However, it did not play a role in modifying the national narratives of Ukraine and shaping the ontological security of the Ukrainian population. It did not have a hegemonic status as it was articulated simultaneously with another identity of a political Europe (below). It was not contested by the Ukrainian alternative media (section 10.2). It did not particularise Germany among other European states and did not modify its WWII identity.

10.1.2 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (Technological Insecurity) (5 articles in 1996, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2007)

Parallel to the construction of the philanthropic Europe, the period of 1996-2007 also saw a different ethical identity construction. It was based not on charity and humanism, but on power and domination. While the alleviation of human insecurity was linked to philanthropy, dealing with the technological insecurity stressed the political and economic interests of Europe in the sphere of nuclear energy. The Ukrainian official media understood Europe as politically dominating and economically richer, while Ukraine was seen as politically subordinate and economically poorer. This logic was linked to the construction of unequal power relationship between developed and develop-

ing countries and not to the struggle over values, unlike Belarus. As such, it was neither linked to the reproduction or modification of the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine, nor to the construction of a certain vision of ontological security.

The Ukrainian official media understood Europe as a part of the developed world, accusing the political institutions such as the European Commission and the G7 for exercising power over the powerless Ukraine. The Ukrainian official media constructed the Ukrainian state's inability to cope with the consequences of the disaster alone and saw the outside world as not helping properly to deal with the technological insecurity of the Chernobyl power plant. The historical identity of the European or non-European Ukraine, linked to the Ukrainian national narratives, was problematized only once, and hence, did not have symbolic power in the trauma management narrative.

The Ukrainian official media constructed the dominating identity of the European states and official institutions through phrases such as 'no promises have been fulfilled', 'push Ukraine unilaterally to fulfil the Western requirements', 'without providing the adequate compensations', 'close Chernobyl to calm down its own population and satisfy the atomic lobby', 'use the Ukrainian dependency and its inability to defend "firmly" its own interests', reluctant 'to provide Ukraine with credits', 'shift their defects on the shoulders of the Ukrainian people', and so on.

In comparison, the Ukrainian subordinate status was constructed as 'has been fulfilling Western demands for a long time', 'has already created all the necessary conditions for [cooperation]', 'has been left alone with these problems', 'does not have money and will not have it in the nearest future', 'grovelling in front of the West', 'the pain of Chernobyl will be left to the future generations', and 'people will completely lose any trust'.

The discursive mechanism used was blaming. France as an individual European state was blamed the most. Before the closure of the Chernobyl power plant, the French authorities were accused of pressuring Ukraine with political conditionality. After the power plant was closed in 2000, the Ukrainian official media blamed French businesses (Framatom and Novarka) involved in the post-Chernobyl work for being irresponsible and not complying with their obligations.

Before the Chernobyl power plant was closed in 2000, the Ukrainian official media criticised France more than other European states for not wishing to help Ukraine. This critique corresponded to an idea of 'business-as-usual' and was not linked to the value struggle between democracy and autocracy (like in the Belarusian official media). 'Business-as-usual' was articulated through the words such as 'agreement', 'cooperation', 'relationship', 'in-

terests', 'demands', 'assistance', and 'compensations'. In the case of Belarus, the struggle over values reproduced the role of Europe as an enemy in the official national narrative. In the case of Ukraine, 'business-as-usual' relationship did not rely on the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend and, hence did not reproduce or modify the national narratives of Ukraine.

During the official meeting in the French Senate in Paris, the Ukrainian MP Ivan Musvenko blamed France for being reluctant to build equal and positive relations with Ukraine, limiting the cooperation to the Chernobyl power plant closure:

The Ukrainian delegation has proposed to build a relationship on a positive note. What, for example, has been preventing France until now to ratify the agreement on the cooperation between Ukraine and the EU? We should work together today without waiting for the closure of Chernobyl. Ukraine has been fulfilling Western demands for a long time. We ratified NPT¹⁹⁵ and have incurred enormous losses. Jobs have been cut and research institutions have started to degrade. Our economy has been going through irreparable harm in many areas. And what did we get in the end? Ukraine has been left alone with these problems. No promises have been fulfilled (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 1996: 2).

In this quote, Musvenko constructed the unequal power relations between dominating and richer France and subordinate and poorer Ukraine. France was presented as pushing Ukraine to fulfil its demands unilaterally without giving anything back. France was 'waiting for the closure of Chernobyl', introducing 'demands', not fulfilling its 'promises', leaving Ukraine 'alone with these problems', not ratifying 'the agreement on the mutual cooperation between Ukraine and the EU'.

Ukraine, on the other hand, 'proposed to build a relationship in a positive note' and 'work together today'. Ukraine was presented as 'fulfilling Western demands for a long time', which led to 'enormous loses', 'irreparable harm' in the economic sphere, including unemployment and closure of the research institutions. In this vein, instead of rescuing Ukraine from its problems, France was blamed for creating more post-Chernobyl problems. This blame, however, did not construct a conflict of values from the national narratives of Ukraine (over a political system), but rather a general conflict between the developed and developing world (over economic cooperation). It neither reproduced nor modified the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. Hence, a certain vision of ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens was not constructed.

¹⁹⁵ Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Similarly, the head of the Ukrainian delegation to the French Senate, the Chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Council, Aleksandr Moroz, accused France, as a part of the West, of exercising power over Ukraine:

We should not build our relationship on the basis of aid but develop it through cooperation. Ukraine has already created all the necessary conditions for it. We have lots of branches of industry that can very well compete with the international requirements and standards ...This is where we should search for the points of contact instead of pushing Ukraine unilaterally to fulfil Western requirements without providing it with the adequate compensations (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 1996: 2).

Moroz constructed France as wanting ‘to build our relationship on the basis of aid’, ‘pushing Ukraine unilaterally to fulfil Western requirements’, ‘without providing it with the adequate compensations’. Ukraine, on the other hand, was presented as wanting to ‘search for the points of contact’, build relationship ‘through cooperation’, as it had ‘all the necessary conditions’ and could ‘compete with the international requirements and standards’. In this vein, Moroz struggled with the unequal power relations between France and Ukraine. It was France who promoted and practised inequality in the relations that undermined Ukrainian ontological security. Once again, the constructed conflict was about unequal economic relations between the developed and developing world, rather than political scandals between democracies and autocracies. It did not touch upon the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives. It did not shape the ontological security of the Ukrainian nation.

The same article also criticised the French Senate members for placing Ukraine at the outskirts of the European borders and, thus, constructing Chernobyl as a non-European problem: ‘Historically, France views Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine as a whole. The common European house has been built with lots of efforts. One should be careful not to destroy it’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 1996: 2). The article blamed the French authorities for ignoring Ukraine and suggesting that Ukraine was a non-European country. By presenting Ukraine as a non-European country, Chernobyl became a non-European problem that Europe did not have to solve. Moreover, the article accused the French of seeing Ukraine as ‘a threat to the common European house’ rather than a possibility to strengthen the European security. This was the only time when the reference to the national narratives of Ukraine was made, questioning the historical place of Ukraine in Europe. Being articulated only once, this identity did not carry symbolic weight and, hence, did not contribute to the reproduction or modification of the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine.

Another article from 25 April 1998 blamed Europe, as a part of the developed world, for pushing Ukraine to close the power plant in order to calm down its public and start building their own reactors:

Solving the Chernobyl problems requires billions of dollars. Ukraine does not have this amount of money and will not have it in the nearest future. If the West insists on Chernobyl's closure in order to calm down its own population and satisfy the atomic lobby, it has to pay. The payment is not about the humanitarian assistance, but about the realization of the interests of G7 and the European community. By now, the West is just using the Ukrainian dependency and its inability to 'firmly' defend its own interests (*Golos Ukrainy*, 25 April 1998: 8).

This quote articulated economic and political identities. Economic identities presented Europe as richer ('it has to pay') and Ukraine as poorer ('does not have this amount of money', 'will not have in the nearest future'). Political identities presented Europe as dominating ('insists on Chernobyl's closure to calm down its own population and satisfy the atomic lobby'; 'the payment is not about humanitarian assistance, but about the realisation of interests') and Ukraine as subordinate ('dependency and its inability to "firmly" defend its own interests'). This quote constructed the relations between the developed and developing world that was not linked to the national narratives of Ukraine. As such, it did not shape the ontological security on the Ukrainians.

After the CNPP was closed in December 2000, blame was articulated around three topics: the post-closure of the Chernobyl power plant, the construction of a burial site for the radioactive fuel, and the construction of a new confinement over the old sarcophagus. The media expressed disappointment with the West and presented blurred future prospects through the following phrases: 'leading to a serious preoccupation about the future of Ukraine, Europe, and the whole world', 'by the 21st anniversary, the results of work in the Chernobyl zone turned out to be hardly successful' warning that 'people will completely lose any trust in the world's nuclear energy', and 'the pain of Chernobyl will be left to the future generations, who will hardly understand us'.

Concerning the first topic, the Ukrainian state media accused the EC and the G7 of not fulfilling their obligations regarding the agreement signed in 1995 on the closure of the power plant (the Memorandum of Understanding). By 2002, the Ukrainian Parliament blamed these organisations six times. The article from 30 April 2002 articulated both political and economic identities. The EC and G7 were seen as financially capable but politically reluctant to compensate Ukraine for energy losses because of the closure as well as to fund the reconstruction of alternative facilities. They were seen as reluctant 'to provide Ukraine with credits for the reconstruction of Rovno and

Khmelnitsk atomic stations' in order to compensate 'for the energy deficit during the closure of the Chernobyl power plant' and to support 'the reconstruction of these new energy facilities' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 2002: 7). Hence, the constructed conflict was about 'business-as-usual' rather than a clash of values. These representations did not reproduce or modify the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend from the national narratives of Ukraine. They did not contribute to a construction of a certain vision of ontological security of Ukraine.

The second topic was the construction of the burial site for the wasted nuclear fuel from the Chernobyl power plant. This topic was raised in 2006 and 2007. The Ukrainian MP, Anatoliï Rakhanskiï, blamed the responsible parties – the French company Framatom and the international organisation IAEA – for the delayed working plan to build this burial site: 'We consider this [the delay in the construction] as one of the examples of either a technical error or corruption in the international governmental and non-governmental organizations' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2006: 3). The article presented Framatom and the IAEA as 'helpless' actors who 'shift their defects on the shoulders of the Ukrainian people, leading to a serious preoccupation about the future of Ukraine, Europe, and the whole world' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2006: 3).

This article constructed dominating (the West) and subordinate (Ukraine) political identities. It portrayed the European businesses as corrupt, technically incapable, 'helpless', 'shifting their defects on the shoulders of the Ukrainian people'. Ukraine, together with Europe and the rest of the world, was presented as victims of the French businesses and international organisations. In this case, Europe was again divided into good citizens and bad businesses. This division, however, did not contribute to the reproduction or modification of the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. Being articulated as a conflict between the developed and the developing worlds over 'business-as-usual' relations, these representations did not shape ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens.

Another article from 26 April 2007 argued that the reservoir built for the burial of the radioactive fuel by the French company Framatom turned out to be completely 'useless for exploitation' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2007: 3). The article showed that 90 million USD were thrown up in the air with 100 million USD more to rebuild the reservoir. As a result, other important projects, financed by the European countries, suffered. It stated that the Ukrainian government warned the international and the Ukrainian experts about these dangers beforehand. The article concluded that 'by the 21st anniversary the results of work in the Chernobyl zone turned out to be hardly successful. If such a "success" in handling the international Chernobyl projects is going

to continue for one or two more years, people will completely lose any trust in the world's nuclear energy' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2007: 3).

This article constructed the European businesses as damaging the projects of others, wasting resources and time, 'useless', and 'hardly successful'. The political identities of dominating were linked to the European businesses using power irresponsibly, while the identity of subordinate Ukraine meant lacking power to resist the domination and fight the irresponsibility. The powerful were again divided into the irresponsible bad guys and the good guys who also suffered from this irresponsibility. Similarly to the first topic, the conflict of the second topic was constructed around economic relations between the developed and developing countries and did not involve the articulation of the national narratives of Ukraine.

The third topic of the 2000s was the construction of a new shelter over the destroyed reactor. The article from 26 April 2007 criticised another French company, Novarka, for withdrawing from the tender that it won to build a new sarcophagus, causing delays in the construction plan and financial losses. The article encouraged the Ukrainian government to 'prioritise national interests, honesty and transparency when choosing a tender winner instead of grovelling in front of the West, in order to avoid another emergency situation' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2007: 5). It also argued that because of the failures of the European partners, 'the pain of Chernobyl will be left to the future generations, who will hardly understand us' (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2007: 5).

This article again articulated political identities of dominating Europe and subordinate Ukraine. The French businesses were presented as creating an 'emergency situation' in Ukraine by withdrawing from the tender and leaving 'the pain of Chernobyl to the future generations'. Ukraine, which 'the future generations will hardly understand', was presented as 'grovelling in front of the West'. Similarly to the first and second topics, the third topic constructed the business conflicts between the powerful and the powerless and did not bring in the discussion about the political systems, identities, and values from the national narratives of Ukraine. Hence, it did not shape the ontological security of the Ukrainian nation.

To sum up, the Ukrainian official media constructed a trauma management narrative, but did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine. The Ukrainian official media did not reproduce or modify the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives. It did not question the Ukrainian place in Europe or the European place in Ukraine on a constant basis. Rather, the representations of Europe reproduced the hierarchical understanding of Europe as a part of the developed world and Ukraine as a part of a developing world. These representations had an ambivalent pattern. Eu-

rope had two antagonistic identities, which were present at the same time. The first identity was that of a philanthropic help provider who was praised. It was articulated in eight articles during 1994-2008. The second identity was that of a politically dominating and economically richer help provider who was blamed. It was articulated in five articles during 1996-2007. The ambivalent status of representations divided Europe into good and bad guys: the European charities became positive characters in the human security sphere, while the European institutions, governments, and businesses became its antagonists in the sphere of technology. This division formed an ironic narrative genre and obscured the constructed economic conflict between the powerful and the powerless.

10.2 Trauma Management in the Non-State Public Sphere: The Representations of Europe in the Ukrainian Alternative Media

This section investigates how a trauma management narrative was constructed in the Ukrainian alternative media through the representation of Europe. It shows that the Ukrainian alternative media constructed a trauma management narrative, but did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine. The Ukrainian alternative media did not have a coherent pattern of representation of Europe and did not construct a particular understanding of ontological security.

It used an ironic narrative genre to represent Europe. Similar to the Ukrainian official media, Europe was presented simultaneously as a victim of Chernobyl and as an irresponsible problem solver. Europe was also seen as a global problem solver in the area of technological security and as exercising power over Ukraine. France and Germany were the most articulated countries of the European community. However, the German identity of WWII was not mentioned. The main constructed identities were ethical, political, and traumatised identities. Political identities were also accompanied by economic, historical, and symbolic identities.

Table 10.2 Trauma Management, the Representations of Europe: The Ukrainian Alternative Media

Identities	Similarity (6)		Difference (10)			
	1996-2001 2 articles	1996-2006 4 articles	1996 1 article	1996-2001 2 articles	1996-2011 4 articles	2001-2011 3 articles
Ethical						
Europe	Equal partner	-	Help provider	Help provider	Problem solver	Problem solver
Ukraine	Equal partner	-	Help receiver	Help receiver	Solutions receiver	Solutions receiver
Traumatized						
Europe	-	Equally traumatized	-	-	-	-
Ukraine	-	Equally traumatized	-	-	-	-
Political						
Europe	-	-	-	Dominating	Controversial	Trustworthy
Ukraine	-	-	-	Subordinate	Subordinate	Subordinate
Apolitical						
Europe	-	-	Philanthropic	-	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	Rescued	-	-	-
Economic						
Europe	-	-	-	Richer	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	-	Poorer	-	-
Historical						
Europe	-	-	-	Disconnected	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	-	Disconnected	-	-
Symbolic						
Europe	Equal	-	-	Superior	-	-
Ukraine	Equal	-	-	Inferior	-	-
Ontological security	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Threatened	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
National narrative	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Modified	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Discursive mechanism	Uniting	Uniting	Praising	Blaming	Blaming	Praising
Degrees of Otherness	Friendship	Traumatization	Friendship	Hostility	Hostility	Friendship

As discussed in Chapter 5, the European countries were mentioned in 12 out of 24 articles about external actors in the Ukrainian alternative media. It occupied 50.0 per cent of the representation of all external actors and 40 per cent about the Chernobyl topic. Quantitative significance did not echo qualitative significance: The Ukrainian alternative media did not articulate a coherent representation of Europe in relation to Chernobyl. Table 10.2 summarises the representations of Europe in the Ukrainian alternative media. The following discusses the representations of Europe in the area of human security and technological security.

10.2.1 Europe and Human Insecurity

There were three representations of Europe in the Ukrainian alternative media: philanthropic help provider (1996), equally traumatised (1996-2006), and controversial problem solver (1996-2011). Being articulated simultaneously, they produced contingency in subject positions and created multiple 'faces' of Europe. On the one hand, Europe was a Chernobyl victim itself, but on the other, it was reluctant to deal with the Chernobyl problems. This controversy of the representations did not contribute to the reproduction or modification of the national narratives of Ukraine, and hence, did not construct a particular vision of ontological security.

10.2.1.1 Ethical Identity – Help provider (1 article in 1996)

The reference to aid constructed the relationship between Ukraine and Europe through the articulation of ethical apolitical identities. The Ukrainian alternative media saw Europe as a philanthropic help provider and Ukraine as a rescued help receiver. The identity as a philanthropic help provider was not limited to Europe but was generally understood as the West. The media constructed human insecurity as alleviated by presenting the West as taking care of the Chernobyl children.

The discursive mechanism was praising. The phrases of praise were 'that is charity', 'thanks to the help', 'performed for the sick children of Ukraine under the hospital's windows', 'purchased medicine and equipment', 'paid for the construction of a new hospital building'. The Ukrainian journalist Vitya Korenkova praised Germany, as well as Canada and the USA, for providing humanitarian assistance to the Ukrainian children of Chernobyl in the medical area:

The hematologic department of the hospital № 14 'Okhmatdet' was created thanks to the help of the German Christian association 'A Human and Environment'. The musicians from the United States, Canada, and Germany performed

for the sick children of Ukraine under the hospital's windows. They have not just shared the moments of music but also purchased medicine and equipment and paid for the construction of a new hospital building. That is a true charity (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁹⁶

The actors praised were the German Christian association 'A Human and the Environment' and the musicians from Germany, the USA, and Canada. Unlike the Belarusian official media, the Ukrainian alternative media did not particularise Germany and did not link its aid to the historical and traumatic past of WWII. Being articulated only once, this identity did not carry symbolic power. It neither reproduced nor modified the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend from the national narratives of Ukraine. Hence, a certain understanding of ontological security was not constructed.

10.2.1.2 Traumatized Identity – Equally Traumatized (4 articles in 1996 (2) and 2006 (2))

Apart from constructing differences, the Ukrainian alternative media applied traumatized identities ('equally traumatized') to construct similarities between Europe and Ukraine in the area of human insecurity. It expanded the pool of affected and included many European states in the Chernobyl victimhood. These countries were not differentiated on the basis of geography, hierarchy, or history. Common victimhood emphasised the global consequences of the disaster. Common victimhood de-nationalised Chernobyl and made it a European problem. De-nationalisation of Chernobyl did not contribute to the reproduction or modification of the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. By being presented as a European problem, rather than Ukrainian, the ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens was blurred.

The discursive mechanism was uniting. The Ukrainian alternative media constructed human insecurity through the articulation of the harm done by Chernobyl to human health and the environment. The harm to the human health in Europe was articulated through phrases such as 'the mortality rate increased' and 'the infertility problem'. The harm to the European environment was presented through phrases such as 'radioactive clouds came', 'contamination of the soil by caesium-137', 'polluted territory', 'contaminated with radioactive fallout', 'cannot use fertile land in agriculture', 'ban on the production, transportation, and consumption of products', 'restrictions are in force', and 'established measures to animal products'.

¹⁹⁶ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/kolokola_chernobylya.html.

The Ukrainian alternative media constructed common victimhood between Ukraine and the European countries by listing them as affected or presenting their traumatic experiences. The Ukrainian journalist Lidiya Surzhik reported that radioactive clouds also came to the Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden and Finland) and Germany (the Alps, Bavaria) (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁹⁷ The article from 26 April 1996 stated that ‘Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Poland, Norway, and Sweden cannot use thousands of hectares of their fertile land in agriculture for many decades to come because of Chernobyl’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).¹⁹⁸ The Ukrainian professor and scientist Valerii Glazko argued that ‘There is clear evidence that the mortality rate of children under the age of one increased in the European countries in 1987. ...The infertility problem that the Europeans are increasingly facing today is a payback for Chernobyl’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 21 April 2006).¹⁹⁹ The representation of Europe as another Chernobyl victim neither reproduced nor modified its role as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. Europe was discursively taken out of a friend-enemy dichotomy. Its identity as another victim did not contribute to the construction of a certain understanding of ontological security in Ukraine.

Similarly, the Ukrainian journalist Pëtr Usatenko argued that during the 1990s, the European Commission carried out comprehensive research on the contamination of the soil by caesium-137 as a result of the Chernobyl accident. The results of the study showed that 40 per cent of the European territory was contaminated by caesium-137 (more than 4,000 Bq/m²):

More than 5 % of Ukraine, Finland, and Sweden had a high level of contamination (more than 40,000 Bq/m² of caesium-137). Over 80 % of the territory of Moldova was polluted, as well as the European part of Turkey, Slovenia, Switzerland, Austria, and Slovakia (more than 4,000 Bq/m² of caesium). The same amount of radioactive caesium covered 44 % of Germany and 34 % of Great Britain. In many countries, there is still a ban on the production, transportation, and consumption of products contaminated with radioactive fallout. For example, in the UK, these restrictions are in force on 374 farms. Some parts of Sweden and Finland established measures in regard to animal products (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 28 April 2006).²⁰⁰

As such, the Ukrainian private media constructed a common European Chernobyl victimhood, including Austria, Germany, Finland, Moldova, Nor-

¹⁹⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horosho_by_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

¹⁹⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/zloveschaya_ten_sarkofaga.html.

¹⁹⁹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/kogda_esche_zhili_prababushki_alfa_beta_gamma_i_praded_uran.html.

²⁰⁰ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/torch_zapozdalyy_doklad_o_chernobyle.html.

way, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland, Turkey, and the UK in the pool of victims. This articulation problematised human insecurity and constructed unity between Ukraine and Europe. This construction, however, did not reproduce or modify the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine and did not condition ontological security in Ukraine. The European identity was constructed outside the realm of friend-enemy dichotomy.

10.2.1.3 Ethical Identity – Problem Solver (4 articles in 1996(2), 2006, 2011)

In addition to Europe being a victim with a traumatised identity, the Ukrainian alternative media presented it through the ethical identity of a problem solver. This ethical identity was combined with the political identity as being controversial. It was assigned a negative moral connotation by exposing the disagreements about the health effects of Chernobyl and their danger potential. Ukraine was ascribed an identity as a subordinate solutions receiver. The Ukrainian alternative media constructed human insecurity as deepened by criticising the attempts of some European scientists and international organisations in normalising the consequences of Chernobyl on human bodies. The legitimacy of some of the European actors was questioned. Europe was understood as a problem producer rather than a problem solver for Ukraine. By not being linked to the national narratives of Ukraine, these representations did not carry symbolic power. They neither reproduced nor modified the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives. They did not contribute to the construction of a certain vision of ontological security in Ukraine.

The discursive mechanism used was blaming. The Ukrainian alternative media used phrases such as the following to construct the identities of a controversial problem solver: ‘the world often looks at the disaster victims as a scientist at guinea pigs’, ‘the German professors who work with the IAEA argue that Chernobyl does not harm health’, and ‘the British scientists critically assessed the official reports of the IAEA and WHO on the impact of the Chernobyl accident’, and ‘the independent scholars believe that the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster present a big problem for all of Europe’.

The controversy of the identity of Europe as a problem solver lied in the division of Europe into bad and good guys. European bad guys allied with international organisations such as the IAEA and WHO and tried to normalise the consequences of Chernobyl on human health. They were represented by the European Commission and the German professors who worked with the IAEA. The Ukrainian alternative media criticised them through the following

phrases: ‘look at the disaster victims as “guinea pigs”’, ‘argue that Chernobyl does not harm health’, have a ‘selected approach to data presentation’, ‘do not disclose but silence information’, and ‘normalise the consequences of the catastrophe’.

European good guys protested the claims of the bad guys and argued that Chernobyl did cause harm and was continuing to harm human health. The German, British, and French independent scholars were presented as good guys through phrases such as ‘condemn the infidelity and viciousness of the IAEA’, ‘do not support the IAEA ideas’, ‘reject the findings of the IAEA’, ‘oppose the information from the IAEA and WHO’, ‘critically assessed the official reports of the IAEA and WHO’, ‘conducted an independent study’, ‘understand the destructiveness of the nuclear catastrophe’, and ‘present a big problem for all of Europe’. As both representations of bad and good guys did not bring in the elements of the national narratives of Ukraine, they did not change the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend in these narratives and did not shape an understanding of ontological security in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian journalist Pëtr Usatenko argued that the finding of the European Commission that 40 per cent of European territory was contaminated with caesium-137 (more than 4,000 Bq/m²) was not disclosed. The only number made public was 2.3 per cent. This number presented only the maximum level of contamination (more than 40,000 Bq/m² of caesium-137). Lower levels of contamination (below 40,000 Bq/m² of caesium-137) were silenced. Usatenko stressed that ‘This is the number that the IAEA and WHO use to refer to the Chernobyl contamination. This situation reflects the selective approach to data presentation in these organisations’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 28 April 2006).²⁰¹

The Ukrainian alternative media argued that the selective approach to data presentation made it easier to normalise the consequences of the catastrophe. The article from 26 April 1996 stressed that ‘The German professors who work with the IAEA argue that Chernobyl does not harm health’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁰² One of the French participants at the conference ‘Chernobyl and Human Health’ complained that ‘the world often looks at the disaster victims as a scientist at guinea pigs: Let’s see what will happen to them next’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁰³ At the same time, ‘the independent scholars believe that the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster

²⁰¹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/torch__zapozdalyy_doklad_o_chernobyle.html.

²⁰² http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horoshoby_k_olenyam_v_lapladiyu.html.

²⁰³ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/goryaschaya_svecha_i_skripki_plach.html.

present a big problem for all of Europe' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁰⁴ This article gave examples of the independent scholarship:

The German Professor Edmund Lengfelder does not support the IAEA ideas. He studied the health of the people in the Gomel region of Belarus and Ukraine and totally rejected the findings of the IAEA International Chernobyl Project. Professor Lengfelder is not alone in the world of scientists and physicians who understand the destructiveness of the nuclear catastrophe. The international conference entitled 'Chernobyl: Ten Years Later' took place in Berlin and condemned the infidelity and viciousness of the IAEA (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²⁰⁵

Similarly, the Ukrainian alternative newspaper demonstrated that the British scientists conducted an independent study on available data on the release of radioactive substances into the surrounding atmosphere and the impact of the Chernobyl disaster on health. The report they produced, 'The Other Report on Chornobyl' (TORCH), opposed the information from the IAEA and WHO. 'The report critically assessed the official reports released in September 2005 by the IAEA and WHO on the impact of the Chernobyl accident' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 28 April 2006).²⁰⁶ Usatenko also argued that 'Thousands of studies were conducted on this matter, but most of them are published only in Ukrainian and Russian, which limits their availability to the international community' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 28 April 2006).²⁰⁷ These representations, however, neither reproduced nor modified the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. By dividing the European scientists on good and bad guys, the identity of Europe became ambiguous. As such, ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens was not constructed.

At the same time, the European visitors to Chernobyl, represented by the British and German, were represented as being preoccupied with the radiation. Colonel Aleksandr Naumov, who worked in the zone, recounted the attitude of the Western visitors towards the radiation: 'The British and Germans suddenly put on their protective suits. These capitalists arrange insurance worth half a million Euros before coming on the Chernobyl trip' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 22 April 2011).²⁰⁸ This quote shows that when personally encountered with the radiation, the Europeans acknowledged that they were afraid

²⁰⁴ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horosho_by_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

²⁰⁵ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/horosho_by_k_olenyam_v_laplandiyu.html.

²⁰⁶ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/torch__zapozdalyy_doklad_o_chernobyle.html.

²⁰⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/torch__zapozdalyy_doklad_o_chernobyle.html.

²⁰⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SOCIETY/polkovnik_naumov_znaet_zonu_kak_svoi_pyat_paltsev.html.

of it. However, when looking at Chernobyl from a distance, they would prefer to close their eyes on the problem.

As such, in addition to being a philanthropic help provider (1996) and equally traumatised by Chernobyl (1996-2006), Europe had a controversial political identity as a problem solver (1996-2011). Simultaneously articulated, these identities contributed to an ambiguous identity of Europe and the West in general. They neither reproduced nor modified the Ukrainian national narratives. The identities as equally traumatised and controversial problem solvers constructed human insecurity as ambiguous by, on the one hand, sharing common victimhood and, on the other, normalising the consequences of Chernobyl on human health instead of dealing with them.

10.2.2 Europe and Technological Insecurity

There were also three representations of Europe in the area of technological security: dominating help provider (1996-2001), equal partner (1996-2001), and trustworthy problem solver (2001-2011). Technological insecurity was presented as improving over time. The European legitimacy was presented as ambiguous during 1996-2001 but as improved during 2001-2011 when the identity of Europe was constructed as trustworthy. The role of Europe in the trauma management narrative both united and separated Ukraine and Europe, but did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine. As such, it did not construct a certain understanding of ontological security.

10.2.2.1 Ethical Identity – Help Provider (2 articles in 1996 and 2001)

Whereas the area of human insecurity was presented through the ethical apolitical identity of a philanthropic help provider, the area of technological insecurity was presented through the ethical political identity of a dominating help provider. Not charity or partnership but power determined the relationship between the countries. The Ukrainian identity became subordinate and not rescued. The political identities were also accompanied by economic, historical, and symbolic identities. Economic identities reproduced the identities of a richer Europe and a poorer Ukraine. Historical identities constructed Europe as a part of the West and, therefore, Western. Ukraine was constructed as a part of the East but wanting to be Western. Symbolic identity contributed to the inferior status of Ukraine and the superior status of Europe. None of these identities was hegemonic and did not modify the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives. They did not construct a certain understanding of ontological security.

Both Europe and Ukraine were assigned negative moral connotations: Europe was exercising power, while Ukraine was incapable to withstand the

European power. The Ukrainian alternative media constructed Ukraine as subordinate, inferior, poor, and Eurasian, standing against dominating, superior, and rich Europe. It used blaming as its main discursive mechanism. The cooperation between Ukraine and Europe was constructed through the prism of 'business-as-usual' relations between the developed and developing states and not as a struggle over values between democracies and autocracies. Hence, the representations of Europe did not contribute to the reproduction or modification of the national narratives of Ukraine.

France and Germany were the countries mentioned as the most powerful. The Ukrainian alternative media articulated these countries as power-exercising entities through phrases such as 'Paris does not pay attention to the objective financial difficulties that Ukraine goes through in the time of transition', 'we cannot allow the West to treat us as it did with the abolition of the nuclear weapons', 'France decided to limit the problem to the "sick" Chernobyl plant', 'France looks at Ukraine through the prism of the nuclear arms and Chernobyl catastrophe', and 'the Germans are going to close their nuclear power plants, but are increasing their production of energy there'.

In turn, the Ukrainian subordinate status was presented in the following way: 'the objective financial difficulties that Ukraine goes through', 'left alone to finance the implementation of such a serious and costly problem', 'has still to prove that it exists and, most importantly, that it will continue to exist', 'the Ukrainian parliamentarians were treated as provincials', 'members of the [Ukrainian parliamentary] delegation and journalists felt ashamed', and so on.

The Ukrainian scientist Valerii Kukhar blamed Germany for double standards in their approach to the nuclear energy: 'The production of electricity in the European nuclear power plants increased by 2 % last year. That is an interesting picture: On the one hand, the Germans are going to close their nuclear power plants, but on the other hand, they are increasing their production of energy there' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 20 April 2001).²⁰⁹ A similar blame was attached to France. The Ukrainian journalist Yuliya Mostovaya blamed France for pressing Ukraine to do what it did not want to do (i.e., close the Chernobyl power plant) in order to satisfy the French political interests. Mostovaya stated that France produced two-thirds of its energy through the nuclear power plants. In order to preserve its nuclear status, France decided to limit the problem to the 'sick' Chernobyl plant. By closing this plant, France could decrease the public mistrust and continue with its nuclear energy production and consumption (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April

²⁰⁹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chaes_zakryli_i_zabyli.html.

1996).²¹⁰ As these representations did not rely on the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine, they did not carry symbolic power. They neither reproduced nor modified the Ukrainian national narratives and did not contribute to a construction of a certain vision of ontological security.

The Ukrainian alternative media also condemned France of forcing Ukraine to implement nuclear disarmament. The Ukrainian private newspaper, like the Ukrainian official media, cited the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, Aleksandr Moroz, who made a speech during the visit of the Ukrainian Supreme Council delegation to Paris in 1996:

France looks at Ukraine through the prism of nuclear arms and the Chernobyl catastrophe. The tough requirement to get rid of SS-19 and SS-24²¹¹ in our country has been replaced by no less categorical demands to close the Chernobyl station. In both cases, Paris does not pay attention to the objective financial difficulties that Ukraine goes through in the time of transition (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹²

In his statement, Moroz articulated the political identity of the dominating France ('the tough requirement', 'no less categorical demands', 'looks through the prism of nuclear arms', 'does not pay attention') and economic identity of the poorer Ukraine ('the objective financial difficulties', 'the time of transition'). Moroz added:

Who is experiencing the vicinity of Chernobyl: people of my village, who are located 200 km away from it or the Belgians? ... We cannot allow the West to treat us as it did with the abolition of the nuclear weapons: Ukraine was left alone to finance the implementation of such a serious and costly problem (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹³

The same identities of the dominating Europe ('treat us as it did') and poorer Ukraine ('left alone to finance') were also articulated here. These identities constructed a relationship of 'business-as-usual' between the developed world and the developing countries. The developed world put political and economic conditionality that the developing world had to fulfil. As these identities did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine, they neither re-

²¹⁰ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²¹¹ Intercontinental ballistic missiles UR-100N.

²¹² http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²¹³ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

produced nor modified the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend of Ukraine. The ontological security for the Ukrainian citizens was not constructed.

In addition to blaming France for being politically dominant and economically powerful, the Ukrainian alternative media accused France of seeing Ukraine in a Eurasian light, articulating historical identities. This was the only time when the identity of Europe was linked to the national narratives of Ukraine. The newspaper argued that seeing the Ukrainian problems as not related to Europe helped France to withdraw from the responsibility to deal with them. The Ukrainian journalist Yuliya Mostovaya cited Jean-Bernard Remón, the former French foreign minister and the former French ambassador to the USSR, who said: 'You must understand that to us, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus are one inseparable whole' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹⁴ According to Yuliya Mostovaya, 'the French senator revealed the vision of the Parisian establishment on the occurring transformations in the post-Soviet space' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹⁵ Because of that, 'Ukraine, which is situated at the centre of Europe with a population of 52 million people, has still to prove on its sixth year of independence that it exists and, most importantly, that it will continue to exist. One cannot do anything but be patient and continue to prove it...' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹⁶ Mostovaya juxtaposed the past, when Ukraine was a part of Russia ('one inseparable whole') and the present, when Ukraine wanted to become independent and move towards Europe ('transformations in the post-Soviet space', 'Ukraine exists and will continue to exist'). As the articulation of this identity was done only once, it did not carry symbolic power and did not contribute to the reproduction or modification of the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the Ukrainian national narratives.

Mostovaya argued that 'the relations between Ukraine and France are developing slower and in a more complex way than with all other six countries of the G7' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹⁷ Aleksandr Moroz complained that French reluctance to see Ukraine as an equal and interesting partner made other European countries be disinterested in Ukraine: 'France

²¹⁴ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya_ukraina_i_belorussiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²¹⁵ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya_ukraina_i_belorussiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²¹⁶ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya_ukraina_i_belorussiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²¹⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya_ukraina_i_belorussiya__nerazdelimy.html.

is a special country: If we make it turn its face towards Ukraine, then the whole Europe will turn its face towards us, too' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹⁸ That is why the Ukrainian MPs came to Paris: 'To change the angle from 180 degrees to at least 179' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²¹⁹ Both Mostovaya and Moroz understood Ukraine as being in need to make an effort to have Europe's attention ('the whole Europe will turn its face towards us', 'to change the angle from 180 degrees to at least 179').

At the same time, Moroz raised the question of symbolic inferiority and superiority in the Ukraine-France relations: 'Ukraine should make France turn its face towards Ukraine without losing our self-esteem ... It would not be nice if the Ukrainian parliamentarians were treated as provincials in France' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²²⁰ The symbolic inferiority of Ukraine was constructed through the phrases 'losing our self-esteem' and 'treated as provincials'. The symbolic inferiority was also articulated by Yuliya Mostovaya, who blamed Ukraine itself, rather than France, for contributing to its status of the inferior. She blamed Ukraine for giving a bad impression to France at the Chernobyl exhibition organised during the Ukrainian parliamentary visit to Paris. The phrases she used were 'felt ashamed', 'twisted photos', and 'second-rate paintings', and 'off-key singers':

Many members of the [Ukrainian parliamentary] delegation and journalists felt ashamed during the two-hour exhibition in the Paris City Council that was dedicated to the 10th anniversary of Chernobyl. Twisted photos were pinned to the linen stands; only few of the paintings were decent, while dozens of them were second-rate and placed against the light; off-key singers of the Ukrainian folk songs have not contributed to the positive image of Ukraine (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²²¹

The fault of Ukraine for contributing to its own inferiority was presented as inability to demonstrate the best of Ukraine: 'No need to justify this with the absence of money or time: Ukraine has always been rich in painters and singers. That is why such activities should either be of good quality or com-

²¹⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²¹⁹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²²⁰ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²²¹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

pletely avoided' (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²²² The superior-inferior identities once again constructed the relationship between Ukraine and Europe as developed and developing countries. This temporal difference was not linked to the national narratives, and hence, did not reproduce or modify the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend of Ukraine. It did not contribute to the construction of the ontological security of Ukraine.

The ethical identity of Europe as a help provider was linked to the historical identity and touched upon the Ukrainian national narratives. It problematised the possibility of Ukraine to move closer to Europe. Being articulated only in one article among multiple other identities, it did not carry discursive power.

10.2.2.2 Ethical Identity – Equal Partner (2 articles in 1996 and 2001)

Whereas in the area of human insecurity, similarities between Ukraine and Europe were constructed through their equal traumatisation, the area of technological insecurity was characterised by the ethical identities of equal partners. The Ukrainian alternative media constructed technological insecurity as alleviated by reporting about the implementation of common projects. It presented Europe as not the only expert in the world: Ukraine also had expertise and could offer it to Europe. Ukraine was no longer carrying the symbolic identity as an inferior in relation to the superior Europe, but became equal to Europe. The articulation of equal partnership promoted the positive image of Ukraine as an expert. As this identity did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine, it did not reproduce or modify the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend of Ukraine. As such, it did not contribute to the construction of ontological security of the Ukrainian people.

The discursive mechanism was uniting. The words to construct similarities were 'integration', 'agreement', 'unity', 'unified', 'joint', 'common', 'recognised', and so on. The Ukrainian alternative media used phrases such as the following to construct an equal partnership: 'the integration of Ukraine into a unified system of radiation safety in Europe', 'the Chernobyl experience as the basis for a common European system of decision-making', 'the system "Infrom-Chernobyl" was recognised by the international scientific community', 'Ukraine established the Centre for Monitoring the Earth and Resources', 'unification of intellectual and economic resources', 'unification of criteria and norms for radiation safety', 'the framework for the agreement between the European Commission and Ukraine, Russia and Belarus', and

²²² http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belo-russiya__nerazdelimy.html.

‘the joint projects between Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and the European Commission’.

The article from 26 April 1996 argued that Chernobyl became a promoter in establishing an international scientific cooperation between Ukraine and the European countries:

16 international projects to study the effects of the Chernobyl accident have been implemented within the framework of the agreement between the European Commission and Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus. 200 scientific organisations were invited to participate in these projects, 50 of which were Ukrainian. It helped to unify the criteria and norms of radiation safety in case of future accidents. It helped to create prerequisites for the integration of Ukraine into a unified system of radiation safety in Europe (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²²³

The article concluded with the following: ‘The international tender has shown that even the most outstanding European companies cannot manage this task alone: One has to unite intellectual and economic resources’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 April 1996).²²⁴ Similarly, the Ukrainian scientist Stanislav Dovgii stated that ‘the West discovered Ukrainian science during the Chernobyl period’ and implemented the joint projects between Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and the European Commission (*Zerkalo Nedeli* 20 April 2001).²²⁵ He stated that the Ukrainian scientists have made many contributions in different fields. He gave an example of one of these contributions – the system ‘In-from-Chernobyl’ – that was recognised by the international scientific community. He argued that it became the basis for a common European system of decision-making in the case of future nuclear disasters. Another scientist, Valerii Kukhar, demonstrated that Ukraine established the Centre for Monitoring the Earth and Resources to monitor the emerging fires and floods (especially in the radioactive zone) through a satellite and to provide quick prevention (*Zerkalo Nedeli* 20 April 2001).²²⁶ Constructing equal partnership between Ukraine and Europe modified the Ukrainian identity as inferior and made it equal. Being articulated in a spirit of cooperation between the developed and developing countries, this identity did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine. It did not reproduce or modify the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend and did not shape the ontological security of the Ukrainians.

²²³ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chernobyl_desyat_let_tragedii.html.

²²⁴ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chernobyl_desyat_let_tragedii.html.

²²⁵ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chaes_zakryli_i_zabyli.html.

²²⁶ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chaes_zakryli_i_zabyli.html.

10.2.2.3 Ethical Identity – Problem Solver (3 articles in 2001(2) and 2011)

Whereas in the area of human insecurity, Europe was understood as a controversial problem solver with a negative moral connotation, it was understood as a trustworthy problem solver with a positive reading in the area of technological insecurity. The Ukrainian alternative media saw European countries, mostly Germany and France, as global actors in the technological area who improved nuclear safety and security. The European states were linked to other influential countries and international organisations such as the USA, Russia, UN, and the IAEA. The media understood Ukraine as a solutions receiver from these global entities. The Ukrainian alternative media constructed technological insecurity as alleviated by presenting the Ukrainian ties to the world as safe, where other countries were solving global problems and pushed Ukraine to comply with safety and security standards. As the identity of Europe was linked to the global problem solvers, it did not reproduce or modify the roles of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. The absence of a link to the national narratives did not construct a certain vision of the ontological security of Ukraine.

The discursive strategies were praising. Technological insecurity was constructed as alleviated by phrases such as the following: ‘new possibilities to improve the safety of nuclear power stations are emerging’, ‘achieve absolutely reliable operation of the nuclear power plants’, ‘talk about the new standards of nuclear power plants’ construction and transparency in their work’, ‘conducted stress tests and checked security and preparedness of the personnel’, ‘set up the world’s most rapid reaction force for future accidents in the nuclear industry’, ‘accelerated its plans in reducing nuclear energy production with the possibility of decommission of all the units’. These were the same phrases that constructed the Russian identity as a world problem solver in section 9.2.

The Ukrainian scientist Viktor Bar’yakhtar stated that ‘today, new options of improving the safety of nuclear power stations are emerging, especially from the Germans, French, Russians, and Americans, in order to achieve absolutely reliable operation of the nuclear power plants’ (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 20 April 2001).²²⁷ Similarly, Valentin Kupnŷi, the Deputy Director of the Chernobyl power plant and the head of the ‘Confinement’ site, stated that Russian and German scientists independently calculated the effects of the

²²⁷ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chaes_zakryli_i_zabyli.html.

destruction of the old confinement (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 20 April 2001).²²⁸ After the explosion in Fukushima, the Ukrainian journalist Igor' Maskalevich articulated France, Germany, and the EU, together with Russia, UN, and the IAEA as the most decisive entities in the area of nuclear energy:

The UN started to talk about the new standards of nuclear power plants' construction and transparency in their work. France offered to set up the world's most rapid reaction force for future accidents in the nuclear industry. Russia urged the IAEA to expand its area of activity. The European Union and the CIS countries urgently conducted stress tests, checking security and preparedness of the personnel to act in this kind of circumstances. Germany accelerated its plans in reducing nuclear energy production with the possibility of decommissioning of all units older than 30 years. Ukraine, however, was not going to close any nuclear facilities, but security checks started here, too. And this is good (*Zerkalo Nedeli*, 22 April 2011).²²⁹

The identity of Ukraine as solutions receiver was demonstrated in the last sentence of the above quote: 'security checks started here, too, and this is good'. The phrase 'this is good' implied that if the Western world did not provide an example, Ukraine would ignore the safety matters. As such, technological insecurity was seen as alleviated in Ukraine. These identities, however, neither reproduced nor modified national narratives of Ukraine and the trauma management did not have symbolic power.

To sum up, the Ukrainian alternative media did not rely on the national narratives of Ukraine to construct its trauma management narrative. The reference to the European identity of Ukraine was mentioned only once (1996). There was no construction of a coherent story and no particular pattern of representation observed. Hence, the trauma management narrative of the Ukrainian alternative media did not have symbolic power. The representation of Europe took place in two areas: human insecurity and technological insecurity. These representations were ambiguous in character. On the one hand, Ukraine was the victim of Chernobyl that the West helped, but on the other hand, Europe itself was the victim but did not want to solve the Chernobyl problems. Its reluctance to solve these problems lied in understanding human insecurity as the problem of the Ukrainian direct victims, rather than the European victims. Unlike the area of human security, the area of technological security was considered of mutual importance for both Europe and Ukraine, as the questions of nuclear safety and security were global rather

²²⁸ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/sostoyanie_ukrytiya_ugrozhayusche_opasno.html.

²²⁹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/TECHNOLOGIES/fukusima_uroki_ekonomiki.html.

than local. On the one hand, Europe was dominating and power exercising, but on the other hand, it was trustworthy and equal.

10.3 Conclusion: Trauma Management in the Hierarchical Public Sphere of Ukraine. The Representations of Europe

This section summarises the results of the analysis of the representations of Europe in the Ukrainian official and alternative media. Both official (1994-2008) and alternative (1996-2011) media simultaneously praised and blamed Europe and articulated similar identities. The simultaneous blame and praise and the articulation of similar identities did not contribute to the construction of trauma management discourse. The pattern of simultaneous blame or praise constructed the moderate polarisation of actors. It constituted an ironic narrative genre and created the possibility for multiple identities, especially in the *Ukrainian alternative media*. In the alternative media, the European countries were understood as Chernobyl victims, a world nuclear security and safety providers, good guys who problematised the Chernobyl health consequences and provided assistance, bad guys who normalised the health effects of Chernobyl and exercised power over Ukraine. The *Ukrainian official media*, on the other hand, constructed two antagonistic identities – a philanthropic Europe and a political Europe. These identities constructed a conflict between the developed world and developing countries, rather than linked it to the struggle of values (like in the Belarusian media). The European powers were understood as reluctant to share their financial resources with Ukraine to cope with Chernobyl.

As such, the Ukrainian media did not construct trauma management discourse as it did not link its trauma management narratives to the national narratives of Ukraine. There was neither a coherent story produced by each media nor an ongoing competition between these stories. The Ukrainian media neither reproduced nor modified the role of Europe as an enemy or a friend in the national narratives of Ukraine. The trauma management narratives did not constitute ontological security of Ukraine.

Chapter 11.

Trauma Management in the Hierarchical Public Sphere of Ukraine: Reflection

Chapters 9 and 10 documented the quotes from the data for the purpose of descriptive validity (using thematic analysis), interpretative validity (using discourse analysis), and theoretical validity (using the abductive logic of reasoning introduced in Chapter 3). They focused on the meaning of the texts' content. This chapter, on the other hand, looks at the meaning of the documented quotes through the prism of the broader socio-political context they are embedded in (using discourse analysis and the abductive logic of reasoning introduced in Chapter 4). It focuses on the production of the texts by the carrier groups and their reception by the audience.

The chapter starts with the reflection on the representations of Russia and Europe in the non-state public sphere and continues with the representations of enemies and friends in the state-controlled public sphere. It then looks at the broader socio-political context where the meaning making took place and reflects on the absence of the link between the trauma management narratives and national narratives in the hierarchical public sphere of Ukraine. It argues that in Ukraine trauma management discourse was not constructed due to the focus on the past perpetrators rather than present day saviours.

The chapter uses additional data sources to understand the absence of the trauma management discourse in a public sphere such as media reports, official documents and statements, and academic literature. It will be of interest to the scholars working with the Ukrainian studies, as well as Western policymakers cooperating with Ukraine. It also serves as a conclusion to the case study on Ukraine.

11.1. Trauma Management in the Non-State Hierarchical Public Sphere

In the pro-Russian national narrative, Russia is seen as Slavic, brotherly, spiritual, communal, non-materialistic, and as having common historical roots with Ukraine. These are the qualities that determine the ontological security of the Ukrainian citizens. Europe, on the other hand, is viewed as na-

tionalistic, individualistic, materialistic, alien, non-spiritual, and as having different historical roots in common with Ukraine. These are the characteristics that threatened the Ukrainian ontological security. The Ukrainian pro-European narrative, on the other hand, views Russia as paternalist, authoritative, and aggressive. These characteristics represented a threat to the Ukrainian ontological security. Europe, on the contrary, is seen as tolerant, democratic, and individualistic. These qualities are a door to ontological security in Ukraine.

These qualities were neither reproduced nor modified in the trauma management narratives of Ukraine. The non-state public sphere neither reproduced nor modified the role of its enemy (Russia) and its friend (Europe). The media used an ironic genre to represent Russia and Europe. *Russia* was presented as another Chernobyl victim that shared the characteristic of victimhood with Ukraine. For example (from section 9.2): ‘The highest levels of concentration of volatile radio-nuclides and fuel particles have been detected in Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia.’²³⁰ It was not constructed as an enemy, and its hostile qualities (i.e., paternalistic, authoritative, and aggressive) were not reproduced. Hence, the Russian identity did not condition ontological security in Ukraine.

In addition, Russia was presented as a part of an international community. This Russian identity was not related to its roles as enemy and friend. Rather, it was obscured and broadened to the global level. For example (from section 9.2): ‘Today, new options of improving the safety of nuclear power stations are emerging, especially from the Germans, French, Russians, and Americans, in order to achieve an absolutely reliable operation of the nuclear power plants.’²³¹

Europe was also linked to the broader identity of the West (the developed world or an international community) and had an ambiguous identity. None of its qualities from the Ukrainian national narratives were reproduced. On the one hand, Europe was presented as a part of a powerful world that could condition ontological security in Ukraine. However, this condition was not presented as the struggle over values from the national narratives but as the struggle between the developed world and the developing countries in an ironic genre. For example (from section 10.2):

Who is experiencing the vicinity of Chernobyl: people of my village, who are located 200 km away from it or the Belgians? ... We cannot allow the West to

²³⁰ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/kogda_esche_zhili_prababushki_alfa_beta_gamma_i_praded_uran.html.

²³¹ http://gazeta.zn.ua/ENVIRONMENT/chaes_zakryli_i_zabyli.html.

treat us as it did with the abolition of the nuclear weapons: Ukraine was left alone to finance the implementation of such a serious and costly problem.²³²

Hence, the condition of ontological security was not a political system or a geopolitical orientation but power and money of 'business-as-usual'. By having ambiguous identities of Europe, the Ukrainian ontological security was presented as ambiguous as well.

On the other hand, Europe was constructed as another victim of Chernobyl, similar to Russia. For example (from section 10.2): 'There is clear evidence that the mortality rate of children under the age of one increased in the European countries in 1987. ...The infertility problem that the Europeans are increasingly facing today is a payback for Chernobyl.'²³³ Constructing Europe as another victim did not condition ontological security in Ukraine. Rather, it obscured the Ukrainian victimhood and presented the tragedy not as national, but as European.

Compared to the Belarusian media, which reproduced and partially modified the identities of the domestic rivals through the representations of enemies and friends, the Ukrainian media did not construct the identities of the antagonistic domestic groups in the trauma management narrative. Therefore, neither internal nor external conflicts were reproduced or transformed by the trauma management narrative in the Ukrainian alternative media.

11.2 Trauma Management in the State-Controlled Hierarchical Public Sphere

Similarly, the state-controlled public sphere did not reproduce or modify the Ukrainian national narratives through its trauma management narrative. The media used an ironic narrative genre to represent Russia and Europe. There was no change observed in the plot of the trauma management narrative when either a pro-Russian or a pro-European president came to power. Not even when the most pro-European president, Viktor Yushchenko, ruled during 2005-2010 and applied his nationalistic moral framework in many areas of life. Neither blame nor praise, applied in the trauma management narrative, relied on the representations of enemies and friends in the national narratives in a systematic manner. Rather, they reproduced the general identity of the developed and developing states and their 'business-as-usual' relations in an ironic narrative genre.

²³² http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/poymite_dlya_nas_rossiya,_ukraina_i_belorussiya__nerazdelimy.html.

²³³ http://gazeta.zn.ua/SCIENCE/kogda_esche_zhili_prababushki_alfa,_beta,_gamma_i_praded_uran.html.

Similarly to the Ukrainian alternative media, *Russia* was presented as another victim of Chernobyl rather than an enemy or a friend. This new Russian identity transformed an understanding of Russia but did not place it in the enemy-friend dichotomy. In other words, Russia as a victim did not become a condition of the Ukrainian ontological security. For example (from section 9.1): Thyroid cancer could become a typical disease in Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia that would require many resources to deal with (*Golos Ukrainy*, 23 April 1996: 1).

Europe, on the other hand, was constructed with two controversial identities at the same time (philanthropic and economic). An example of a philanthropic identity is the following (from section 10.1): ‘The Irish take care of our children as if they were their own’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 26 April 2008: 7). An example of an economic identity (from section 10.1) includes Europe ‘pushing Ukraine unilaterally to fulfil Western requirements without providing it with the adequate compensations’ (*Golos Ukrainy*, 30 April 1996: 2).

These identities were neither a product of the national narratives of Ukraine, nor did they shape these national narratives. Unlike the Belarusian official media, which dedicated most of the construction of a philanthropic identity of Europe to Germany, the Ukrainian official media did not particularise it. Unlike the Belarusian official media, which constructed the political identity through the lenses of a struggle over values (democracy-autocracy), the Ukrainian official media presented the political identity of Europe as a struggle between rich and poor (developed-developing). For example (from section 10.1):

Solving the Chernobyl problems requires billions of dollars. Ukraine does not have this amount of money and will not have it in the nearest future. If the West insists on Chernobyl’s closure in order to calm down its own population and satisfy the atomic lobby, it has to pay. The payment is not about the humanitarian assistance, but about the realization of the interests of G7 and the European community. By now, the West is just using the Ukrainian dependency and its inability to ‘firmly’ defend its own interests (*Golos Ukrainy*, 25 April 1998: 8).

Similarly to the Ukrainian alternative media, the Ukrainian official media did not construct the domestic antagonistic groups through the representation of Russia and Europe. The domestic conflict was neither reproduced nor modified. Likewise, the geopolitical conflict was neither reinforced nor transformed through the representations of Russia and Europe.

1 1.3 The Absence of Trauma Management in the Hierarchical Public Sphere

As mentioned in Chapter 1 and 2, one of the reasons for the absence of a trauma management discourse in Ukraine is the construction of the present Self against its past Others, rather than against its present Others. One example is *Holodomor* (Death by Forced Starvation, 1932-1934), which is constructed as a cultural trauma of Ukraine in the pro-European narrative, but denied as such in the pro-Russian narrative. The pro-European narrative views Stalin and Communist Russia as past perpetrators that committed crimes against the Ukrainians because of the collectivisation practised in the Soviet Union. For example, pro-European President Viktor Yushchenko defined *Holodomor* as ‘a deliberate Act of Genocide’ in 2006.²³⁴ Pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich, on the other hand, stated in 2010 that *Holodomor* was a common tragedy for many in the Soviet Union, including the Russians and Belarusians, so it was wrong for Ukraine to nationalise it and to claim it as an act of genocide committed only against the Ukrainian nation.²³⁵ As Zhurzhenko states,

Recent opinion polls show that more than half of the population considers the famine of 1933–34 a genocide of the Ukrainian nation deliberately organized by the Bolshevik regime in Moscow. At the same time, the notion of the famine as genocide is denied by the ruling Party of Regions, and still not popular in the East and South of the country.²³⁶

Hence, while there was a struggle over the definition of *Holodomor* in Ukraine as a retrospective trauma, there was no such definition for Chernobyl regarding trauma management. The construction of the present Self against its past Others was linked to the divided population on the basis of the pro-Russian and pro-European moral frameworks and access of different actors (state and non-state) to the public sphere. As the population was divided, the carrier groups applied the antagonistic moral frameworks mostly in relation to the past events where most of the victims were already dead. At the same time, carrier groups had access to the common public sphere and, hence, there was no need for them to engage in a struggle for presence in a public space, unlike Belarus.

²³⁴ <http://www.holodomorct.org/history.html>.

²³⁵ <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/yanukovych-famine-of-1930s-was-not-genocide-agains.html>.

²³⁶ <http://www.aspeninstitute.cz/en/article/4-2013-lost-in-transition-struggles-over-identity-in-post-soviet-ukraine-and-belarus/>.

In addition to *Holodomor* from the 1930s, WWII was another traumatic event that was disputed through the pro-European and pro-Russian moral frameworks in a public sphere. Zhurzhenko problematises the memory of WWII in the following way:

Even more controversial is the new heroic narrative of the OUN-UPA, which presents the Ukrainian nationalist underground and anti-Soviet armed resistance as the only legitimate national heroes. This narrative is eagerly instrumentalized by the right wing nationalists of the 'Svoboda' party, which is meanwhile represented in the Ukrainian parliament. Banners with the portrait of Stepan Bandera, the icon of Ukrainian nationalism, and the red-black flags of the UPA can be often seen on the tribunes of football stadiums along with neo-Nazi and extremist symbols. On the other extreme of the political spectrum, portraits of Josef Stalin are used in public by Communists and Soviet war veterans, sometimes also during official commemorations.²³⁷

The Ukrainian social scientist Halyna Mokrushyna shows how the eastern Ukrainians reject the pro-European narrative of the western Ukrainians:

On May 9, 2014, the governor of the Kherson region in Southern Ukraine ... tried to talk about Hitler and his intentions to liberate Ukraine from 'tyrant' Stalin... The governor was booed by the crowd. A young woman with a child in her arms approached the governor, took the microphone out of his hands and threw it away.²³⁸

While rejecting the pro-European narrative, the eastern Ukrainians promote their pro-Russian narrative. Mokrushyna continues:

In June of 2013, a group of 148 deputies from the Party of Regions signed and sent a petition to the Polish government asking it to recognize as genocide the ethnic cleansing of Poles by the UPA in Volynnia region during the World War II ... This petition was called an act of high treason [by the western Ukrainians]; those who signed the petition were labelled haters of the Ukrainian nation and of the Ukrainian state.²³⁹

Hence, finished tragic events of the past, *Holodomor* and WWII, were represented through the pro-Russian and pro-European moral frameworks. As Chernobyl was understood as an ongoing tragic event of the present, the Ukrainian media hesitated to apply the antagonistic moral frameworks towards the victims that were still alive. Chapter 2 showed that Chernobyl has

²³⁷ <http://www.aspeninstitute.cz/en/article/4-2013-lost-in-transition-struggles-over-identity-in-post-soviet-ukraine-and-belarus/>.

²³⁸ <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/02/04/wars-of-past-and-wars-of-present/>.

²³⁹ <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/02/04/wars-of-past-and-wars-of-present/>.

become a cultural trauma in Ukraine in a retrospective sense. It raised the debate about the Chernobyl perpetrators and linked it to the national narratives of Ukraine. The chapters of analysis showed that Chernobyl has not become a cultural trauma in a sense of trauma management. The raised debate on saviours was not linked to the national narratives of Ukraine. Not linking Chernobyl to the national narratives of Ukraine contributed to the softening of the conflict between the divided population. In other words, Chernobyl trauma management has become a way of smothering the domestic and geopolitical conflict, rather than reproducing or modifying it (unlike Belarus).

However, the current crisis in Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea by Russia and war in eastern Ukraine, is becoming a continuous trauma with the present day Russia as a perpetrator. This crisis is shifting the focus from the construction of the present Self against the past Others (Ukraine vs the Soviet Union) to the construction of the present Self against the present Others (Ukraine vs Russia). Russia in this case is becoming the past and the present Other. The development of the continuous trauma of Ukraine through the current crisis with Russia as a perpetrator is a new niche for the future studies on Ukraine. The continuous trauma can also evolve into trauma management if Europe is constructed as a saviour of Ukraine from a perpetrator Russia. The case of Chernobyl can be used as an example of how to smoothen rather than escalate the conflict between Russia and Ukraine discursively. As blood was shed and many people died, the healing of the wounds between the east and the west will take time. Only a skilful approach to the discursive representations of both sides of the conflict can help to have progress in a peace process.

The newly elected president Petro Poroshenko has also started to fight with the non-transparent Ukrainian media. As mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the major problems with the Ukrainian media is the lack of transparency. Oksana Lyachynska from *Kyiv Post* shows that ‘most Ukrainian media is registered through off-shore jurisdictions, which makes impossible to get official information who owns and controls them and, as a result, influence their coverage.’²⁴⁰ For example, 43 out of 60 Ukrainian media, surveyed by the researchers from Radio Free/Radio Liberty, ‘had offshores in their structures’.²⁴¹ Lyachynska argues that a new draft law on transparency in media ownership from June 2015

²⁴⁰ <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/new-proposed-law-aims-to-reveal-true-owners-of-ukrainian-media-391237.html>.

²⁴¹ <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/new-proposed-law-aims-to-reveal-true-owners-of-ukrainian-media-391237.html>.

...obliges all television and radio organizations to submit information about their ownership structure, including their real owners, or end beneficiary owners, to the state regulatory body and to publish it on their web sites... [It may] try to extend some requirements of the ownership transparency to print media and informational agencies as well.²⁴²

If these changes are successful, the Ukrainian hierarchical public sphere will go through the transformation in which the state-controlled and oligarch-owned media may lose their power and more autonomy will be given to the non-state alternative media. At the same time, as Poroshenko himself owns Ukrainian broadcaster Channel 5 TV, the media may become more transparent, but the oligarch ownership may prevail.

²⁴² <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/new-proposed-law-aims-to-reveal-true-owners-of-ukrainian-media-391237.html>.

Chapter 12: Conclusion

As stated in Chapter 1, the aim of this monograph is to contribute to cultural trauma theory and to the specialised literature on Chernobyl and Belarusian and Ukrainian national identity. The contribution to the specialised literature, as well as Western policymaking, was presented earlier in Chapter 8 (for the Belarusian case) and Chapter 11 (for the Ukrainian case). Chapters 8 and 11 also served as conclusions for each case study. Therefore, this chapter summarises the results of the data analysis and the contributions to the specialised literature only briefly. The main focus of this chapter is to look at the implications of the concept of trauma management for cultural trauma theory, its possibility of being applied to other cases of interest, and the potential agenda for the future studies. The implications derive from the abductive logic of reasoning and theory development outlined in the theoretical Chapters 2 to 4 and empirical Chapters 6 to 11.

12.1 Trauma Management in the Disconnected Publics of Belarus and the Hierarchical Public Sphere of Ukraine: Summary

This section summarises the results of the data analysis of the Chernobyl case study in Belarus and Ukraine. It briefly reflects on the research question posed in Chapter 1: How do Belarus and Ukraine differ in the Chernobyl trauma management? The analysis has shown that both Belarus and Ukraine produced trauma management narratives. While Belarus linked its trauma management narratives to the national narratives (pro-Russian and pro-European), Ukraine did not. It means that in Belarus trauma management narratives carried symbolic power, but in Ukraine they did not. The reasons for this difference was the socio-political context where the process of meaning-making took place: the specificity of the public sphere (disconnected in Belarus and hierarchical in Ukraine), divisions within the population (united in Belarus, divided between east and west in Ukraine), and temporality in meaning-making (present-oriented in Belarus and past-oriented in Ukraine). The following discusses the specificity of each case.

12.1.1 Trauma Management in Belarus

Belarus is a country with a disconnected public sphere (state-controlled vs non-state), with the majority of the population adhering to the pro-Russian moral framework, and with the elites (officials and opposition) using the antagonistic moral frameworks (pro-Russian vs pro-European) to construct the challenges of the present. This constellation is argued to contribute to the construction of the trauma management discourse. Belarus articulated trauma management discourse with two antagonistic trauma management narratives. One trauma management narrative was produced by the official media. It represented the Belarusian authorities in the state-controlled public sphere. It relied on the pro-Russian moral framework. Another trauma management narrative was constructed by the Belarusian alternative media. It represented the Belarusian opposition in the non-state public sphere. It relied on the pro-European moral framework.

The monograph showed that the trauma management narrative of the Belarusian alternative media was not popular among the population. On the one hand, it relied on a moral framework considered foreign by the population. On the other hand, the state restricted its access to the state-controlled public sphere where the majority of the Belarusians belonged to. The trauma management narrative of the Belarusian official media was more popular among the Belarusian citizens. On the one hand, it relied on a moral framework that the population could identify themselves with. On the other hand, the state made this narrative visible by articulating it in the state-controlled public sphere.

The alternative trauma management narrative reproduced the pro-European narrative of the Belarusian opposition: hostility with Russia and friendship with Europe. Russia was reconstructed as past-oriented, aggressive, and imperial and Europe as democratic. It also reproduced the identities of the Belarusian citizens and authorities. The Belarusian citizens were reconstructed as state dependent and their authorities as authoritarian and pro-Russian. By reproducing the identities from the pro-European moral framework, the trauma management narrative served to sustain the ongoing political conflict between the domestic actors (authorities and opposition), the conflict between the domestic and geopolitical actors (official Belarus and official EU, oppositional Belarus and official Russia), and cooperation between the domestic and geopolitical actors (official Belarus and official Russia, oppositional Belarus and official EU). Ontological security of the Belarusian citizens could be achieved only by Russia's absence and Europe's presence in the Belarusian life.

The official trauma management narrative, on the other hand, modified the pro-Russian narrative of the Belarusian authorities over time: from friendship with Russia and Europe to hostility with them. Russia changed its identity from brotherly to a worse problem solver, while Europe changed its identity from philanthropic to political over time. Russia could facilitate but did not determine the Belarusian ontological security. While philanthropic Europe could assure ontological security of the Belarusians, political Europe could only threaten it. As such, both Russia and Europe, friend and enemy of the Belarusian authorities, changed their representations from positive to negative. By modifying the identities from the national narrative, the official trauma management narrative served to sustain and justify the authoritarian leadership in Belarus. It constructed the authorities of Russia and Europe as less legitimate and the authorities of Belarus as more legitimate. As a result, ontological security of the Belarusian population could be achieved by relying on the Belarusian authorities.

This finding contributed to the Chernobyl scholarship (Marples, 1996, 2006; Ioffe, 2007; Stsiapanau, 2010; Kuchinskaya, 2014), especially Kasper-ski (2013), who ignored change over time in her study of the representations of Chernobyl in a public sphere. Change over time showed that the conflict with a political Europe could be resolved by cooperating with a philanthropic Europe. It also demonstrated that Russia was no longer understood as a vital actor in the Belarusian life. By linking the representation of Russia as a worse problem solver of Chernobyl to the idea of the delayed process of nation-building, this finding added value to the scholarship on the Belarusian national identity (Ioffe, 2003; Leshchenko, 2004; Pershai, 2006; Titarenko, 2009; Bekus, 2010; Buhr et al., 2011). The monograph also contributed to the works of Arndt (2010) and Bodrunova (2012) who stressed the importance of the Chernobyl children's visits abroad for opening up Belarus to Western Europe and Western Europe to Belarus. It argued that by discursively dividing Europe into good guys (the charities and citizens as philanthropic) and bad guys (the official institutions of the EU as power-exercising and political), the idea of Europe as an enemy was destabilised. This destabilisation opened up the possibilities to see where the prospects of cooperation were possible. The monograph argued that the humanitarian aid and the recuperative visits of the Chernobyl children abroad were understood as one of the areas for cooperation. It, thus, proposed to launch further research on the impact of the Chernobyl aid on improvement of the Belarus-Europe relations (people-to-people and officials-to-officials). It also proposed to use the case of Chernobyl as an inspiration to search for more points of convergence between Belarus and Europe to improve their relations.

12.1.1 Trauma Management in Ukraine

Ukraine is a country with a hierarchical public sphere (state-controlled, oligarch-owned, and non-state), divided population (adhering either to the pro-Russian or pro-European moral framework), and elites (officials and intellectuals) who use the antagonistic moral frameworks to construct the ghosts of the past. This constellation is argued to contribute to the absence of the link between the trauma management narratives of the Ukrainian media and the national narratives of Ukraine. The trauma management narratives in the Ukrainian official and alternative media did not rely on the national narratives and there was no antagonism between them. The trauma management narratives did not substantially differ between each other in their representations of Russia and Europe. They did not have a particular pattern of change when the presidents changed.

One trauma management narrative was produced by the official media. It represented the Ukrainian authorities in the state-controlled public sphere. Another trauma management narrative was constructed by the alternative media. It represented the Ukrainian intellectuals in the non-state public sphere. Both media had a similar representation of Russia (as another Chernobyl victim) and multiple simultaneous representations of Europe (as a victim, partner, help provider, and political). This means that trauma management narratives neither reproduced nor modified the social conflict that Ukraine experienced at the domestic level (between the state and non-state groups and between the eastern and western population) and at the geopolitical level (between Russia and Europe).

The monograph showed that one of the reasons of absence of trauma management discourse in Ukraine was the temporal focus of the national narratives on the past actors, rather than the present actors, unlike in Belarus. In other words, the focus of the national narratives was not on enemies and friends of the past (perpetrators), but on enemies and friends of the present (saviours). While the finished tragic events of the past such as *Holodomor* and WWII were made cultural traumas in Ukraine, the ongoing traumatic event of the present, Chernobyl, was not. As shown in Chapter 2, while the Ukrainian media constructed the Chernobyl perpetrators (in 47 articles of the official newspaper *Golos Ukrainy*), it did not do so with the Chernobyl saviours (in 80 articles of this newspaper). This argument contributed to a better understanding of the symbolic insignificance of Chernobyl in Ukraine (Dawson, 1996; Wanner, 1998; Petryna, 2002; Marples, 2006). It also contributed to the literature on the Ukrainian national identity arguing that in Ukraine nation-building took place through the construction of the past perpetrators rather than present saviours (Solchanyk, 1994; Wolczuk, 2000;

Shulman, 2004, 2005; Kuzio, 2001, 2010; Protsyk, 2008; Korostelina, 2011, 2013). With a new crisis in Ukraine, further studies are encouraged to look at what kind of trauma is emerging and how it is challenging the temporal difference between the past perpetrators and present saviours.

The monograph also argued that the trauma management discourse was absent in Ukraine as (a) the population was divided by the national narratives and, hence, it was harder for the carrier groups to produce a hegemonic trauma management narrative to the whole population; (b) the antagonistic carrier groups operated within the same public sphere, and, hence, unlike the divided public spheres in Belarus, did not engage in a struggle over a hegemonic status of their trauma management narratives.

12.2 The Concept of Trauma Management: Implications for Cultural Trauma Theory

This section looks at the implications of the concept of trauma management for cultural trauma theory. As mentioned before, the literature defines *cultural trauma* as a discourse that emerges through meaning-making of the nature of the pain, victims, and perpetrators (Alexander et al. 2004; Eyerman, 2011; Eyerman, Alexander and Breese 2013). Cultural trauma asks: 'Is the suffering of others also our own?' (Alexander, 2004: 1). In its empirical cases, it focuses on the meaning-making of a tragic event that occurred in the past and is finished in the present (i.e., retrospective trauma).

This monograph proposed to move beyond the retrospective focus of cultural trauma theory and look at the meaning-making of ongoing tragic events. It proposed a concept of *trauma management* to study the construction of meaning in overcoming a disaster, as opposed to the construction of meaning in a tragic event itself. The aim of trauma management is to look at how different states make sense of and deal with an ongoing traumatic experience. The question that trauma management asks is the following: 'Is overcoming the suffering of our own shared by others?' Trauma management is a type of a cultural trauma discourse that defines the nature of the rescue, the saviours to implement the rescue, and the victims to be saved. There are several reasons why trauma management can be a useful concept for cultural trauma theory. These will be discussed by answering the following questions posed in this monograph: What is trauma management, and how is it constructed? How does trauma management shape the national narratives in the affected countries? How does trauma management shape the ontological security of the citizens in the victim countries? How does a public sphere facilitate or restrict the construction of trauma management? These questions, in turn, constitute answers to the main question of this monograph: How do

the consequences of the same tragic event result in different responses in different countries, and how do these responses impact the affected societies?

12.2.1 From Enemies and Friends in National Narratives to Saviours and Victims in Trauma Management Narratives

This section gives a brief answer to what trauma management is, how it is constructed, and how it shapes national narratives. Trauma management discourse consists of competing stories about the nature of the salvation, the saviours involved, and the victims to be saved. This section specifically looks at the construction of saviours and victims as constitutive parts of trauma management, while the next section focuses on the articulation of the salvation process.

Trauma management goes beyond the traditional actors of cultural trauma, namely victims and perpetrators. By shifting the focus from perpetrator to *saviour*, one can construct meaning from a traumatic occurrence through the actors who have no direct involvement in it. While perpetrators are constructed against the misfortunes of the past and are past oriented, saviours are articulated against the challenges of the present and are present and future oriented. While perpetrators are accused of causing the traumatic event and of failed immediate response, saviours can be either praised for successful assistance or blamed for their lack of it. As Chapter 2 showed, the Chernobyl perpetrators were Moscow as a centre and the Soviet system. They were the actors of a continuous trauma management narrative constructed before the collapse of the Soviet Union. They were blamed for causing the disaster and its initial mismanagement. The Chernobyl saviours, on the other hand, were Russia and Europe constructed in a trauma management narrative after the collapse of the Soviet Union. They were either praised for assistance in combating the consequences of the disaster or blamed for lack of aid.

By blaming or praising the saviours, trauma management can shape the social conflict or cooperation that goes beyond the tragic event itself. This is especially relevant when saviours are geopolitical *enemies or friends* of the victim countries. By praising an enemy for providing aid, the conflict is constructed as softened. By blaming a friend for not providing help, the cooperation is presented as spoiled. As such, trauma management contributes to the construction of the conflict with enemies as escalated or resolved and cooperation with friends as improved or spoiled. As Chapter 6 showed, the Belarusian alternative media reproduced the conflict with its enemy Russia by blaming Russia for exercising power over Belarus. Chapter 7, on the other hand, demonstrated that the Belarusian official media constructed the con-

flict with Europe (as its enemy) as softened by praising the European countries for humanitarian aid.

Constructing saviours and victims in trauma management, as opposed to perpetrators and victims in retrospective trauma, does not always require discursive polarisation (i.e., binary opposition) between the actors. Rather, *the degrees of friendship and hostility* (more/less friendly and more/less hostile actor) is what trauma management is built on. The degrees of friendship and hostility reproduce or modify the roles of enemies and friends. An enemy is represented as more hostile when it is blamed for not providing aid. A friend is portrayed as more friendly when it is praised for giving assistance. For example, the Belarusian official media strengthened friendship with its friend Russia by praising it for assistance during 1996-1998. Similarly, an enemy is constructed as less hostile when it is praised for aid provision. A friend is portrayed as less friendly when it is blamed for refusing to provide assistance. For example, the Belarusian official media relaxed friendship with its friend Russia by blaming it for worse Chernobyl policies during 2001-2013. The reproduction or modification of friendship and hostility contributes to the construction of the conflict as escalated or softened and the cooperation as improved or worsened.

Blaming or praising a saviour gains discursive weight when it is linked to a national narrative of a victim country. A national narrative assigns specific positive attributes to a friend, but negative attributes to an enemy. Blaming or praising a saviour in a trauma management narrative reproduces or modifies the roles as enemies and friends in a national narrative. It happens when the attributes of enemies and friends from a national narrative are made visible as attributes of a saviour in a trauma management narrative. For example, the Belarusian alternative media made visible the attributes from the pro-European national narrative such as past-oriented, aggressive, and imperial Russia, and democratic Europe. The Belarusian official media made visible the attributes from the pro-Russian national narrative such as brotherly Russia and power exercising Europe.

The elements of a national narrative may not be explicitly visible in a trauma management narrative to claim that blaming or praising saviours reproduces or modifies the roles as enemies and friends in the national narrative. This is especially the case when a trauma management narrative creates new elements (identities) that modify a national narrative. The new elements produced by a trauma management narrative modify a national narrative in the following cases: when there is an established pattern of representation of a particular new identity over time that acquires a hegemonic status compared to other identities and when there is either a contestation or a consensus over the meaning of this new identity between the antagonistic carrier

groups. If there is no established pattern of representation of a new identity with a hegemonic status over time and no contestation or consensus over its meaning between the antagonistic groups, then this new trauma management identity does not modify a national narrative of a particular actor.

For example, both the Belarusian and Ukrainian official media constructed a philanthropic identity of Europe over time. While in Belarus, this identity modified the Belarusian official national narrative, in Ukraine, it did not. In the Belarusian official media, the identity of a philanthropic Europe was (a) hegemonic during a particular period of time (1992-2005); (b) contested by the Belarusian alternative media, who argued that this identity reproduced the dependence of the Belarusian citizens. In the Ukrainian official media, on the other hand, the identity of a philanthropic Europe was (a) not hegemonic during a particular period of time, as it was present in a public sphere simultaneously with another antagonistic identity of a political Europe; (b) not contested by the Ukrainian alternative media. In addition, the Belarusian official media linked the philanthropic identity of Europe to its historical enemy Germany. It transformed the role of Germany from a past WWII perpetrator to a present Chernobyl saviour. Ukraine, on the other hand, did not link the identity of Germany as a WWII perpetrator to a Chernobyl saviour.

As such, the reproduction of the old roles as enemies and friends from the national narratives through a new role as a saviour in the trauma management narratives reinforces a conflict with an enemy or cooperation with a friend. The modification of the old roles as enemies or friends from the national narratives through the new roles as saviours in the trauma management narratives transforms the conflict with an enemy (smoothens or sharpens) or cooperation with a friend (improves or spoils).

As a national narrative consists of both enemies and friends, the same trauma management narrative will have *two narratives within*: a progressive narrative (about a friend and Self) and a tragic narrative (about an enemy and Self). Trauma management can be built on either one of these narratives or both of them by reproducing or modifying them. For example, the pro-Russian narrative of the Belarusian authorities had a progressive part (where Russia was a friend) and a tragic part (where Europe was an enemy). Similarly, the pro-European narrative of the Belarusian opposition had a progressive part (where Europe was a friend) and a tragic part (where Russia was an enemy).

If the distinction between the global or regional powers (potential saviours) and the subordinate states (potential victims) should be followed,²⁴³ then the majority of the victim countries would be developing or underdeveloped states with post-colonial or transitional identities. This means that they are most likely to be going through the process of positioning themselves against larger states (i.e., either their former colonisers or occupants or contemporary regional powers). By trying to find themselves in this world, the national narratives they have are not yet well established, as in the Western democracies, but fragile, in flux, and in the making. This means that trauma management becomes not a reflection on the already established and taken-for-granted national narratives that the society has, but a construction of *the national narratives in the making*. By contributing to the national narratives in the making, trauma management shapes the roles that enemies and friends are supposed to play there. For example, the official Belarus linked the trauma management narrative to the construction of the Belarusian statehood and independence where the role of Russia was gradually devaluated.

Saviours may not necessarily be foreign actors (i.e., enemies and friends) but can also be *domestic actors* (i.e., authorities and state institutions). They can be blamed or praised for performing their responsibility in dealing with the ongoing consequences or compared to the performance of other victim countries. Comparing the performance of the Self with that of other victim countries can shape the perception of legitimacy of the domestic actors. Comparing does not require polarisation and is constructed through *the degrees of problem solving* (i.e., worse/equal/better problem solver). If the domestic actors are presented as performing their duties better than the authorities of other victim countries, their actions are portrayed as legitimate. If the domestic actors are constructed as responding to the consequences of the calamity in a worse manner than the authorities of other victim countries, their actions are presented as illegitimate. Comparing the Self victim with the Others victims in their roles as saviours can legitimise or delegitimise the policies of the state and the political system of the authorities.

²⁴³ Saviours are understood as developed or developing countries that possess enough material and human resources to engage in salvation activities in case of emergencies. Victims in need of salvation are viewed as developing and underdeveloped countries that have less material capacity to respond to traumatic occurrences independently. In some cases, however, the developed world can also be portrayed as receiving aid from the developing countries (i.e., USA receiving humanitarian aid for the hurricane Katrina from the Latin American countries), while the developing world can be presented as providing help to other developing or underdeveloped states (i.e., Cuba helping Ukraine with Chernobyl).

For example, the Belarusian official media compared the policies of Belarus to Russia. It constructed its friend Russia as a worse problem solver than Belarus. It justified the policies of the Belarusian authorities by presenting them as responding to the consequences of Chernobyl better than Russia. This identity portrayed the Belarusian authorities as legitimate compared to the authorities of Russia. As Russia had a positive moral connotation as a friend in the national narrative of the Belarusian officials, a new identity as a worse problem solver modified it towards a negative identity.

Victimisation itself can be constructed not through the polarisation between victims and perpetrators, but through the ranking of victims. Comparing victims does not require polarisation and takes place through the construction of *the degrees of traumatisation* (i.e., less/equally/more/most traumatised). If the victim is portrayed as more victimised than others, the disaster becomes a part of the victim's national identity. If the victim is portrayed as equally or less victimised than others, the disaster is symbolically removed from being a part of the victim's identity. Comparing the Self victim to the Others victims in their state of victimisation can construct the nationalisation or de-nationalisation of the disaster, contribute to an identity construction of the Self or to the discursive disappearance of the disaster from own identity.

For example, the Belarusian alternative media compared the level of traumatisation of Belarus to Russia. It presented Russia as less traumatised than Belarus. This identity made Chernobyl a national tragedy of Belarus. As Russia had a negative moral connotation as an enemy in the national narrative of the Belarusian opposition, a new identity as less traumatised reproduced this negativity. The Ukrainian official and alternative media, on the other hand, did not compare the level of traumatisation of Ukraine to Russia. They constructed Russia as another victim of Chernobyl, equal to Ukraine. This representation did not make Chernobyl a national tragedy of Ukraine.

The identity construction of victims or saviours as domestic actors produces new elements not already present in the national narrative. If these new elements have a negative moral connotation, they can either reproduce the negativity of an enemy or modify the positivity of a friend in the national narratives. If these new elements have a positive moral connotation, they could either reproduce the positivity of a friend or modify the negativity of an enemy in the national narratives. The identity construction of victims or saviours as domestic actors has a discursive power over the national narratives when (a) it has an established pattern of representation and a hegemonic status over other identities over time; (b) it has either a contestation or a consensus over meaning between the antagonistic groups.

For example, in the Belarusian official media, the identity of Russia as a worse problem solver was (a) hegemonic during a particular period of time (2001-2013); (b) had consensus with the Belarusian alternative media, who argued that the Belarusian authorities performed better policies than Russian. Similarly, in the Belarusian alternative media, the identity of Russia as less traumatised was (a) hegemonic during a particular period of time (2006-2011); (b) had consensus with the Belarusian official media.

The following sums up the main points in the identity shift from enemies and friends (in a national narrative) to saviours and victims (in a trauma management narrative):

(a) Blaming the Others as enemies and friends in their roles as saviours can sharpen the conflict with an enemy and spoil cooperation with a friend. Praising the Others as enemies and friends in their roles as saviours can smoothen the conflict with an enemy and improve friendship with a friend (degrees of friendship and hostility).

(b) Comparing the Self victim with the Others victims in their roles as saviours can legitimise or de-legitimise the policies of the state and the political system of the authorities (degrees of problem solving).

(c) Comparing the Self victim to the Others victims in their state of victimisation can construct the nationalisation or de-nationalisation of the disaster, contribute to an identity construction of the Self or to the discursive disappearance of the disaster from own identity (degrees of traumatisation).

12.2.2 From Human and Technological Insecurity to Ontological Security

This section argues that by shaping the understanding of a conflict or cooperation with foreign actors (degrees of friendship and hostility), legitimising or de-legitimising own policies (degrees of problem solving), nationalising or de-nationalising the disaster (degrees of traumatisation), trauma management shapes *ontological security* within the country. It provides a brief answer to what trauma management is, how it is constructed, and how it shapes the ontological security of the citizens in the victim countries.

Besides constructing saviours and victims, trauma management also constructs the nature of salvation. Salvation of the whole society takes place by representing the alleviation of the collective traumas of the direct victims. The representation of how the responsible actors deal with the individual and collective traumas of direct sufferers constructs ontological security for the rest of the citizens. As mentioned in Chapter 2, these collective traumas were human and technological insecurity. Human insecurity included the direct victims' feeling of disorder, stress, anxiety, and loss of continuity and trust in relation to health and natural environment. Technological insecurity

included the first-hand witnesses' feeling of disorder, stress, anxiety, and loss of continuity and trust in relation to technology and nuclear energy. Representing the process of alleviating the human and technological insecurity of the direct victims through reference to the national narratives in a public sphere constructs an idea of ontological security for all the citizens.

Ontological security is the outcome of people's trust in the outside world, stabilisation of routines and daily practices, feeling of order, and absence of stress and negative emotions. Ontological security is a 'deeply sociological' phenomenon: 'Our emotions, fears, and anxieties are not natural, inherent responses', but are socially mediated (Schmidt, 2014: 250). The mediation of ontological security 'allows us to make sense of our fears and doubts, and to understand and move forward in tragic situations that otherwise defy understanding' (Schmidt, 2014: 250). Ontological security of the nation is what national narratives try to achieve through their storytelling. Storytelling about overcoming the consequences of the tragedy constructs a new sense of ontological security for the population. Ontological security of the whole nation can be constructed through reference to the collective identities. As cultural trauma theory holds, the broader audience (i.e., the nation) can identify itself with the direct victims only when the identity of the victims is constructed in relation to broader collective identities or values of the society (i.e., national or ethnic identities, democracy, human rights, freedom of speech, and so on). One of the ways to construct collective identities is by representing enemies and friends from the national narratives.

In this way, enemies from the national narratives become threats to the ontological security of the citizens, while friends from the national narratives become guarantors of the ontological security of the population. Only by creating distance to the enemy and coming closer to a friend can the Self assure ontological security for its citizens. If the enemy is exercising power and the friend cannot prevent it, then the ontological security of the citizens is seen as hard to achieve. For example, the Belarusian alternative media constructed the idea of ontological security through reference to its friend Europe: Only if Belarus became European could it achieve its ontological security and alleviate human and technological insecurity. If Belarus remained with its enemy Russia, it would only experience ontological insecurity without the possibility to alleviate human and technological insecurity. In other words, order, continuity, trust, and the wellbeing of the population could be achieved by joining Europe. Disorder, discontinuity, mistrust, and threats to the wellbeing of the nation would be the outcome if staying with Russia.

At the same time, the juxtaposition between enemies and friends may not be necessary. Both enemies and friends can be constructed either as a threat to ontological security or as guarantors of it. If both enemies and friends are

constructed as guarantors of ontological security, then only by coming closer to them can the Self assure ontological security to its people. If both enemies and friends are presented as threats to ontological security, then only by creating distance to them can the Self assure ontological security for its population. For example, the Belarusian official media constructed its own idea of ontological security that underwent change over time. During the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s, ontological security could be achieved by cooperating with big brother Russia and receiving aid from philanthropic Europe. From the second half of the 2000s, ontological security could be achieved by relying on the domestic actors rather than the outside world. Russia and Europe were seen as incapable of alleviating human and technological insecurity in Belarus and, hence, of providing ontological security. Russia was portrayed as a worse problem solver, while Europe was constructed as a power-exercising actor interested in domination rather than help provision. Therefore, order, continuity, and absence of anxiety and stress could be achieved by reliance on the domestic authorities. Disorder, discontinuity, stress, and anxiety could be achieved by continuing to rely on Russia and Europe. In this case, instead of seeing enemies as threats to ontological security and friends as its guarantors, the Belarusian official media constructed both enemies and friends as guarantors of ontological security during the 1990s, but as threats to ontological security during the 2000s. The domestic authorities changed their roles from passive receivers of ontological security from enemies and friends during the 1990s to active guarantors of it during the 2000s. In this way, constructing enemies and friends in the national narrative and presenting them as threats to ontological security portrayed the identities of the Belarusian authorities as legitimate.

As for the Ukrainian media, there was no established pattern of construction of ontological security as there was no established pattern of reliance on national narratives when constructing trauma management narratives. The Ukrainian official media constructed an ambivalent state of ontological security. Neither official, nor alternative media contradicted each other in representing Russia and Europe. In both media, Russia was presented as another victim and, hence, could not condition ontological security in Ukraine. Europe was constructed with multiple identities that did not form an established pattern of representation. Some of these identities were presented as alleviating human and technological insecurity of the direct victims, and some of them were constructed as deepening it. Their representations did not contribute to the construction of a certain idea of ontological security in Ukraine.

The aim of assuring ontological security is to reach the *routinalisation of trauma* (Alexander, 2004: 22). The routinalisation of trauma takes place

when ontological security is presented as assured. The routinisation of trauma is hard to achieve when ontological security is constructed as threatened. As the consequences of the traumatic event are understood as ongoing in real time, a routinisation of the trauma may be problematic. Rather, by trying to assure ontological security, the carrier groups try to provide ‘some sort of emotional relief’ (Schmidt, 2014: 245). The process of ‘calming down’ depends on the construction of enemies and friends and revision of saviors’ identities.

To sum up, representing the process of alleviating human and technological insecurity of the direct victims through reference to the national narratives in a public sphere constructs an idea of ontological security for all the citizens:

(a) Ontological security is presented as assured if the saviour is constructed as performing its duties right and the victim is presented as no more traumatised than others.

(b) Ontological security is portrayed as threatened if the saviour is presented as dealing with the consequences of the calamity in a morally wrong way and the victim is portrayed as more traumatised than others.

Shaping ontological security contributes to the construction of a certain idea of how the wellbeing of a population should be organised. Different understandings of who is an enemy and who is a friend produce different visions of ontological security. Both enemies and friends can be viewed either as guarantors or as threats to ontological security. This is especially the case in the newly emerged and post-colonial countries, where moral frameworks are in the making, and different groups in society contradict each other on the very core issue of identities and new geopolitical orientations: who to consider our new post-colonial enemies and friends.

12.2.3 The Public Sphere: Media Ownership and Sociological Fragmentation of the Audience

The above-mentioned points discuss trauma management through the lens of one actor constructing one trauma management narrative. However, trauma management can also form a discourse that consists of several competing narratives. In this way, besides shaping a relationship with foreign enemies and friends, legitimising or de-legitimising domestic actors, nationalising or de-nationalising the tragedy within one trauma management narrative by a particular actor, trauma management as a discourse can shape the relationship between the antagonistic domestic carrier groups who advocate different trauma management narratives. *Trauma management discourse* can reproduce (sustain) or modify (escalate or soften) the perceived hostility between the antagonistic domestic actors. This conflict is arranged around

different visions of how to go about the alleviation of individual and collective traumas to assure ontological security for the whole population. A different vision on ontological security is produced by applying antagonistic moral frameworks (national narratives) that each actor advocates. Constructing a trauma management discourse reproduces or modifies the domestic conflict between different social groups. A hegemonic trauma management narrative can emerge out of this conflict if: (a) the antagonistic groups come to an agreement on how to assure ontological security; (b) one antagonistic group has a narrative that appeals more to the audience than that of other groups; (c) one antagonistic group has more possibilities to access the symbolic means of production and present its narrative in a public sphere than other groups.

Trauma management discourse takes place in a public sphere that plays a crucial role in how antagonistic groups construct and present their competing trauma management narratives to the audience. This section thus provides a brief answer to the question of how a public sphere facilitates or restricts the construction of trauma management. It allows seeing how the composition of a society is arranged and how the contestation between different groups plays out. A *public sphere* is a social forum where society discusses their problems and concerns. Not all groups have equal access to it. Those who have establish the agenda and set the meaning-making framework of what should be represented and how. A public sphere can be shaped by the media ownership and audience fragmentation. The constellation between the media ownership (by carrier groups) and audience fragmentation (by moral frameworks) facilitates or restricts trauma management discourse and, hence, its impact on national narratives and ontological security.

Media ownership is the access to the symbolic means of production by certain powerful groups. The more polarised the media ownership between state and non-state groups, in which the state controls most of a public sphere, the greater the possibility for trauma management discourse to take place. Being threatened by the omnipresence of the state-controlled public sphere, the non-state publics will try to contest the hegemonic discourse of the state-controlled public sphere. For example, Belarus has two antagonistic publics – *disconnected publics* – one state-controlled and the other non-state. Each of them has their own moral framework: pro-Russian (state-controlled) and pro-European (non-state). Each of them has their audience: the majority of the population (state-controlled) and the minority of the population (non-state). Each of them has their own institutions: state and public institutions (state-controlled) and non-state and private institutions (non-state). This facilitated the production of the trauma management discourse. The state-controlled public produced a trauma management narra-

tive in the state-controlled media, relying on the pro-Russian moral framework appealing to the majority of the Belarusians. The non-state public produced an antagonistic trauma management narrative in the non-state public, relying on the pro-European moral framework appealing to the minority of the Belarusians.

The less polarised the media ownership between the state and non-state groups, where the state does not control most of the public sphere, the less the possibility for trauma management discourse to take place. The non-state public sphere has access to the state-controlled public sphere and, therefore, does not need to contest it for the sake of its own survival. For example, in Ukraine, there are three types of publics operating within one public sphere, the *hierarchical public sphere*: state-controlled, oligarch-owned, and non-state. Contrary to Belarus, all three of them operate within one public sphere even though they have unequal access to it. State-controlled and oligarch-owned publics can merge with each other, as they are run by people with close ties to politics. The non-state public sphere is the only one that can contradict them. As these publics are divided between themselves within one hierarchical public sphere, their polarisation depends on how popular their moral frameworks are with the audience. If the audience is itself fragmented on the basis of moral frameworks and this fragmentation does not correspond to the division between the carrier groups, the possibility for trauma management discourse to take place is limited.

In this way, media ownership alone can facilitate, but does not determine, the success or failure of a trauma management discourse. Audience fragmentation on the basis of moral frameworks is what complements media ownership. *Audience fragmentation* is the social division of the citizens on the basis of the moral frameworks. Some groups of citizens can support a particular carrier group that articulates a certain moral framework in a public sphere. Other groups of citizens can be antagonistic and against a moral framework of a particular carrier group. The likelihood of one trauma management narrative to become hegemonic is when a certain carrier group or several carrier groups propose a moral framework acceptable by the majority of the population. The remaining antagonistic groups are marginal and can share their moral framework only with a minority of the population. For example, the Belarusian official media relied on a national narrative (pro-Russian) that was more acceptable to the general public than the national narrative of the Belarusian alternative media (pro-European). As the official media represented a state-controlled public sphere, where the majority of the population received their news, this narrative became hegemonic. The likelihood that one trauma management narrative would not become hegemonic is when carrier groups cannot propose a moral framework that would be ac-

ceptable by the majority of the population, but only by the minority. For example, in Ukraine, the population was divided by their orientation towards Russia and Europe. If the carrier group prioritised one group of the population, it would automatically exclude the other. That is why, in order not to escalate this division, no national narratives were applied to articulate trauma management narratives in Ukraine.

To sum up, public sphere can facilitate or restrict the construction of trauma management depending on the constellation between the media ownership and audience fragmentation:

(a) A state-controlled public sphere can facilitate a hegemonic trauma management narrative if the official media applies a moral framework acceptable to the majority of the population. A state-controlled public sphere cannot facilitate a hegemonic trauma narrative if the official media applies a moral framework not accepted by the majority.

(b) A non-state public sphere can fail to articulate a hegemonic trauma management if the alternative media applies a moral framework not acceptable by the majority of the population. A non-state public sphere can facilitate a hegemonic trauma management narrative if the alternative media applies a moral framework acceptable by the majority.

(c) A hegemonic trauma management narrative cannot take place in any public sphere (state-controlled or non-state) if the audience is fragmented and no narrative can satisfy them all.

To understand whether a trauma management discourse is taking place, one should look at whether competing actors are present who use antagonistic moral frameworks to give meaning to the salvation process, saviours, and victims. Within each actor, one should look at whether its trauma management narrative reproduces or modifies the advocated moral framework. If it reproduces, then the conflict between the antagonistic actors is also reproduced. If it modifies, then the conflict is taking a different angle. Moreover, one should look at whether the moral frameworks the actors advocate are appealing to the broader audience and whether there is a possibility for a hegemonic trauma management narrative to take place despite being contested.

In other words, trauma management can be defined as a story (or a combination of competing stories) about overcoming the consequences of a traumatic occurrence. The discursive power of trauma management lies in the following: (a) It shapes the understanding of a conflict or cooperation with foreign enemies and friends or between the domestic actors, (b) constructs policies and actors as legitimate or illegitimate, (c) modifies victimhood by nationalising or de-nationalising the disaster, and (d) shapes the understanding of ontological security of a population by presenting it as as-

sured or threatened. Trauma management can be constructed when powerful actors with access to symbolic means of production articulate a story about overcoming a tragedy in a public sphere through the application of a moral framework (national narrative).

12.3 Can Trauma Management Be Useful in Studying Cases beyond Chernobyl?

A concept of trauma management, as a cultural trauma concept, is a heuristic device. This means that each individual case should be studied in-depth. At the same time, both concepts offer tools that can be used to help reasoning about other traumatic occurrences with ongoing consequences in transitional, post-colonial societies or countries under reconciliation.

Below, I propose two other examples to illustrate how trauma management can help to make sense of conflict escalation, resolution, or suppression. The criteria for selecting these illustrative cases were the following. They had to be non-Western and post-colonial, and have greater powers as enemies and friends. As the main case studies of this monograph were the post-Soviet countries with Russia and Europe as greater powers, the countries chosen as illustration are Asian with USA, Japan, and China as greater powers. The first case – Agent Orange (Vietnam) – is a case where a hegemonic trauma management narrative was not constructed. The second case – Haiyan (the Philippines) – is a case where a hegemonic trauma management narrative was constructed.

The way I present these cases is not dynamic but static (as a snapshot). I do not discuss change over time. I also only used sources in English, which substantially limits the access to local information. Therefore, a proper study of trauma management in these countries should be carried out by people who know the language and have access to the local public sphere.

12.3.1 Vietnam: Agent Orange (1961-1971)

The tragic event of Agent Orange is an example of a traumatic occurrence with ongoing consequences on human beings. It took place during the Vietnam War, when the USA used an herbicide to defoliate the forests and destroy the food crops of its enemies in South Vietnam. It used 11-12 gallons of Agent Orange during 1961-1971. It affected 16 per cent of the Vietnamese territory and its population of 4.5 million people. It also affected 2.8 million Americans who were fighting in Vietnam (Ngo, 2012: 2). However, despite the substantial material damage, Agent Orange neither became a cultural

trauma (in a retrospective or continuous sense), nor was it a case of trauma management.

The absence of a trauma management discourse in Vietnam can be understood by the reluctance of the government and the civil society members to raise this problem in a public sphere. Neither a trauma management narrative of particular carrier groups, nor a trauma management discourse between the antagonistic groups was present.

Charles Bailey, Head of the Ford Foundation in Hanoi, argued that ‘neither the U.S. nor the Vietnamese government wanted to discuss Agent Orange and its effects ... and most other donors did not seem to know about it’.²⁴⁴ One of the reasons for the government to not construct a trauma management narrative, according to Christopher Hitchens, was its financial incapability to compensate the victims and its vision of ‘the heroic rather than the humiliating aspects of the war’.²⁴⁵ The current Vietnamese authorities do not construct its new contemporary identity as a saviour to support their heroic historical identity of the state even though they logically could. The government understands itself as lacking the material resources that could be mobilised to create a progressive trauma management narrative. Despite having a state-controlled public sphere as a material resource to facilitate the construction of a hegemonic trauma management narrative (like in Belarus), there is lack of ideational resources to construct this narrative (unlike in Belarus).

Neither the Vietnamese nor the American government constructs the USA as a contemporary saviour of the Vietnamese people. In principle, both could position the contemporary identity of the USA as a saviour against its past identity as a perpetrator. The USA could follow the example of Germany, which has been constructed as a Chernobyl saviour (philanthropic identity) against a Nazi perpetrator (historical identity) in Belarus. However, the American government ‘has not officially apologized for its use of chemical defoliants during the war’ and, therefore, has not articulated this topic in its public sphere.²⁴⁶ Nor has it ‘sufficiently acknowledged and addressed the environmental health effects’ for the Vietnamese-Americans (Ngo, 2012: 2). The broader post-Cold War context of the reconciliation between Vietnam and the USA also prevents the Vietnamese government to articulate the USA as an enemy in the Vietnamese public sphere.

²⁴⁴ <https://www.devex.com/news/the-legacy-of-agent-orange-in-vietnam-and-us-efforts-to-make-amends-84308>.

²⁴⁵ <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2006/08/hitchens200608>.

²⁴⁶ <https://www.devex.com/news/the-legacy-of-agent-orange-in-vietnam-and-us-efforts-to-make-amends-84308>.

The Vietnamese population has its own vision on Agent Orange, unrelated to the identities of the geopolitical enemies and friends. They view Agent Orange through the religious framework of Tam Giao (a combination of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism). Human insecurity from Agent Orange, such as the birth of malformed children, is understood as a punishment for the past misdeeds from the higher forces rather than as a cause of Agent Orange. In the words of Nick Keegan, Director of Business Development at the Kianh Foundation and working with the special needs of malformed children: 'We have dealt with families who feel it is directly related to Agent Orange, but some, for cultural and spiritual reasons, think they have just been unlucky'.²⁴⁷ Human security, according to the Vietnamese people, can be achieved by expelling the disabled victims with malformations from the village communities. The US Agency for International Development (USAID), however, counters this religious framework by trying to implement programmes of including the excluded victims. 20 per cent of the USAID budget to Vietnam is spent on fighting social exclusion of people with disabilities. This is an interesting observation, as the USA views the Vietnamese malformations *not* as its own responsibility caused by Agent Orange in the past, but as a way to promote democracy with social inclusion being one of its values. Germany, in comparison, views its humanitarian aid to Belarus as healing guilt (philanthropic identity) rather than promoting democracy (political identity). As for the Vietnamese government, Tam Giao is another ideational reason that prevents the Communist Party to construct a hegemonic trauma management narrative. The governmental narrative could contradict people's beliefs and may not be supported. Therefore, unlike Belarus, where the state and the people share the same pro-Russian moral framework, which constitutes the hegemonic trauma management narrative of the Belarusian authorities, in Vietnam, the state and the people do not share the same moral framework and, thus, do not have a hegemonic trauma management narrative.

Another potential carrier group reluctant to articulate Agent Orange in a public sphere are the Vietnam War veterans, including the Vietnamese-Americans who immigrated to the USA as refugees and amount to 1.55 million people. Their strong anti-communist sentiment prevents them from addressing Agent Orange issue in a public sphere. They remain 'reluctant to collaborate with or assist the current Vietnamese government' (Ngo, 2012: 3). That is why they do not contest the American government for silencing its misdeeds and not providing the official apology for Agent Orange.

²⁴⁷ <http://www.dw.de/agent-orange-and-its-vietnamese-legacy/a-18414636>.

In other words, Vietnam has not constructed trauma management discourse. A state-controlled public sphere does indeed exist, from which the government could easily articulate its trauma management narrative on the basis of enemies and friends. A trauma management narrative could improve the official heroic narrative about the war by constructing the meaning of overcoming the consequences of this war. However, a problem is who to present as a saviour: the Self or the Other. The USA as the Other saviour has not officially apologised for Agent Orange and, hence, cannot be considered as a saviour friend. At the same time, it cannot be presented as an enemy because of a post-Cold War reconciliation process going on between the USA and Vietnam. The Vietnamese government cannot construct itself as a saviour as it (a) sees itself as lacking material resources to start a salvation process and (b) has a population who have their own reading of Agent Orange through the religious moral framework of Tam Giao. The Vietnamese-Americans as a carrier group of the victims, on the other hand, do not pressure the American government to apologise for Agent Orange, as they hold an anti-communist sentiment towards the Vietnamese government. Hence, the reluctance of carrier groups and lack of a moral framework to satisfy the majority of the population contributed to the absence of trauma management discourse in Vietnam.

12.3.2 The Philippines: Typhoon Haiyan (2013)

The Philippines is a typhoon-prone country receiving around 20 typhoons throughout the year. However, the typhoon Haiyan was the strongest Pacific hurricane that the Philippines have experienced. It hit on 8 November 2013. Haiyan affected two million people, who were displaced. It killed around 2,000 people, injured around 10,000, and made missing around 2,000 people. Its material damage is estimated beyond one billion USD. Despite being accustomed to typhoons, the Philippines constructed trauma management out of Haiyan. Different carrier groups articulated similar (consensual and non-antagonistic) narratives that resulted in a hegemonic trauma management narrative in a public sphere.

The result of this trauma management is an improvement of the friendship with the past enemy Japan and an explosion of hostility towards its contemporary enemy China. Japan was an imperial coloniser of the Philippines that lost the WWII battle to the USA on the Filipino island Leyte (the one hit by the typhoon) in 1944. China has been fuelling a long-standing territorial dispute over the South China Sea Spratly islands planned to be resolved in the international arbitration in the UN.

When Haiyan took place, the Western media, the Asian media (in English), the direct victims, and the Filipino experts and authorities praised Ja-

pan for providing assistance. Japan sent two warships, six helicopters, ten planes, and around 1,200 troops. This was the first time that Japan engaged in a large-scale operation in the Philippines since WWII. This was also ‘the largest single relief operation team ever sent abroad by Japan’s defence forces. Previous overseas missions by the SDF [Self-Defense Forces], which adheres to the country’s post-war pacifist constitution, have usually numbered in the hundreds’.²⁴⁸

The Western and Asian media, and Filipino victims, experts, and authorities presented the Japanese aid in a positive light. As Martin Abbugao from Agence France Presse reported, ‘More than 1,000 Japanese troops were offered a warm welcome in the Philippines Friday as they prepared to launch relief operations across the typhoon-devastated islands, which Japan brutally occupied seven decades ago’.²⁴⁹ The 74-year-old typhoon victim and WWII survivor Eulalia Macaya, treated in a temporary clinic arranged by the Japanese government in the city of Tacloban, said that she was glad that the former enemy returned: ‘I don’t hold any grudges anymore. There’s no more bad blood between us’.²⁵⁰ Similarly, Joji Tomioka, a doctor coordinating a civilian medical team, said that ‘Nearly 70 years ago, we were enemies. Now we’re friends. We cannot forget the past, but we must learn from history so that we will not do the same thing again’.²⁵¹ Lieutenant Jim Alagao, a spokesman for the Philippine armed forces Central Command, said that ‘the Philippines were thankful for the Japanese typhoon support, and World War II was no longer a concern for his generation’.²⁵² These examples resemble the approach of Germany as a WWII perpetrator (historical identity) who was seen as a Chernobyl saviour in Belarus (philanthropic identity).

The Western media, the Asian academics, and the Filipino victims blamed China, on the other hand, for not engaging in help enough. The headline of *The Guardian* was the following: ‘Typhoon Haiyan: China gives less aid to Philippines than Ikea’.²⁵³ And further: ‘Typhoon Haiyan turned

²⁴⁸ <http://www.japantoday.com/category/national/view/two-warships-carrying-650-sdf-troops-head-to-typhoon-ravaged-philippines>.

²⁴⁹ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/336653/news/regions/japanese-troops-welcomed-back-in-typhoon-hit-central-phl>.

²⁵⁰ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/336653/news/regions/japanese-troops-welcomed-back-in-typhoon-hit-central-phl>.

²⁵¹ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/336653/news/regions/japanese-troops-welcomed-back-in-typhoon-hit-central-phl>.

²⁵² <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/336653/news/regions/japanese-troops-welcomed-back-in-typhoon-hit-central-phl>.

²⁵³ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/14/typhoon-haiyan-china-aid-philippines-ikea>.

out to be something of a disaster for China, which initially offered paltry help and soon increased the aid ten-fold under pressure from international and Chinese media'.²⁵⁴ Zhu Feng, an international relations expert at Peking University, said that the paltry aid (100,000 USD) 'reflects the political deadlock, if not outright hostility, between the two countries.'²⁵⁵ Zheng Yongnian, a China politics expert at the National University of Singapore, said that 'China has missed an excellent opportunity to show itself as a responsible power and to generate goodwill'.²⁵⁶ *Time* reporter Hannah Beech said that 'the Chinese government has been made to look mean-spirited in front of the world community'.²⁵⁷ An example of a comment from the public opinion is the following: 'Much more was expected of China, which has the largest military in the region. But now that military force is being seen as reserved for bullying the neighbours [the Philippines] over territorial disputes, not helping neighbours in need'.²⁵⁸ As a 72-year-old typhoon victim and a former vice mayor of Tacloban, Tente Quintero, stated, 'at a time of dispute with an increasingly emboldened China over the ownership of South China Sea islands, Filipinos now saw the Japanese as friends and allies'.²⁵⁹

In this way, a hegemonic trauma management narrative, constructed out of consensus between different carrier groups (Western media, Asian media, academics, experts, officials, and victims), was produced as a response to the typhoon Haiyan. It constructed the relationship between Philippines and its historical enemy Japan as improved but the relationship between the Philippines and its contemporary enemy China as spoiled. This, in turn, modified the roles that Japan and China had in the national narratives of the Philippines. It presented Japan as a guarantor of ontological security in the Philippines and China as a threat to it.

The USA was also constructed as a saviour of the Philippines. The USA sent more than 2,000 marines and aid worth US\$20 million.²⁶⁰ The USA was a historical enemy, similar to Japan, who counter-invaded the island Leyte in 1944 and made it one of the major battlefields of the war. However, com-

²⁵⁴ <http://www.strategypage.com/qnd/phillip/articles/20131117.aspx?comments=Y>.

²⁵⁵ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/14/typhoon-haiyan-china-aid-philippines-ikea>.

²⁵⁶ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/14/typhoon-haiyan-china-aid-philippines-ikea>.

²⁵⁷ <http://world.time.com/2013/11/13/china-to-philippines-here-have-a-measly-100000-in-aid/>.

²⁵⁸ <http://www.strategypage.com/qnd/phillip/articles/20131117.aspx?comments=Y>.

²⁵⁹ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/336653/news/regions/japanese-troops-welcomed-back-in-typhoon-hit-central-phl>.

²⁶⁰ http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/SEA-01-131113.html.

pared to Japan, whose aid was presented through humanism (philanthropic identity), the assistance from the USA was constructed through power exercise (political identity). Haiyan took place during the time when the government of the Philippines negotiated the deployment of the USA military arsenal to be used at the local Filipino military bases. The USA's assistance to the Haiyan victims was read through this political context. As *Asia Times* reported, 'Washington's robust response comes against the backdrop of ongoing negotiations towards a new bilateral strategic framework agreement that would allow US troops, aircraft and battleships greater access to Philippine-controlled military bases across the country'.²⁶¹ In other words, the USA as a guarantor of ontological security was read through the political identity of power exercise rather than philanthropic.

Hence, in the case of Vietnam, trauma management discourse did not occur. While the material resource (state-controlled public sphere) was present, the ideational resource (moral framework) and the will and creativity of the carrier groups were lacking. As such, carrier groups did not articulate their antagonistic trauma management narratives in a public sphere. In the case of the Philippines, trauma management discourse did occur and resulted into a hegemonic trauma management narrative based on consensus. Unlike the Vietnamese case, the Philippines did not have a material resource (state-controlled public sphere), but had an ideational resource (moral framework) and the will and creativity of the agency. Different carrier groups articulated a similar narrative that became acceptable by all and, hence, hegemonic. In that case, trauma management discourse opened up the possibility for cooperation between the antagonistic parties.

12.4 Trauma Management and Cultural Trauma Theory: Agenda for the Future

The above mentioned examples of Vietnam and the Philippines show how trauma management can shape the roles of enemies and friends and, hence, the understanding of the conflict and cooperation with them. Further studies are encouraged in this direction, including the construction of friendship on the basis of common traumatic experience (i.e., Japan and Belarus and their atomic traumas). More comparative studies are needed in the countries where trauma management is constructed through the competition between victims (ranking victimhood on the level of traumatising to nationalise or de-nationalise the traumatic event) and problem solvers (comparing the pol-

²⁶¹ http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/SEA-01-131113.html.

icies of the victim countries between each other to legitimise or de-legitimise the responsible leadership).

As this study focused on the state as an arena of trauma management (i.e., state-controlled media), further studies are encouraged to explore other arenas where trauma is constructed and managed. International organisations, with international society as an arena of trauma management, can be one of the examples. International organisations are managers of such tragic events as wars, genocides, terrorist attacks, human trafficking, spreading of diseases, and financial crises that transcend national borders and receive international concern (i.e., Grexit, refugee crisis, ISIS, Ebola). What role do international organisations play as trauma managers? Who are their carrier groups? What moral frameworks do they apply to secure ontological security? What antagonism and with whom do they articulate and how do they deal with it? What audience do they talk to? How do their narratives secure hegemonic status? How does this, in turn, shape conflicts and cooperation between different actors?

International organisations can be actors involved in the construction of ontological security of the international community as threatened or assured. Further studies are encouraged to look at how ontological security can be achieved in post-crisis situations by representing the combat operations of the international organisations. Ontological security can be presented as assured or threatened by constructing the alleviation of collective traumas of the directly affected. The question becomes how Western centred is the construction of international ontological security? On what moral framework does this construction rely on? How is it challenged and by whom?

Temporality is another important aspect of trauma management. While this monograph focused only on saviours, the relationship between saviours and perpetrators is in need of exploration. How saviours are positioned vis-à-vis perpetrators? If international organisations are understood as saviours, how are perpetrators and victims constructed in relation to them? What kind of moral polarisation and degrees of Otherness are produced? How do they contribute to conflict resolution or escalation?

Knowing how trauma management constructs ontological security and on what moral framework it relies can help to better understand conflict escalation and resolution, cooperation spoiling or improvement, legitimation or de-legitimation of actors, policies, and countries, and internalisation or domestication of the crisis events.

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English Summary

Ukraine and Belarus were the countries most affected by the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in 1986. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the two countries had to combat Chernobyl on their own. The aim of the monograph is to compare the media representations of responsibility for combating the Chernobyl consequences in the two countries from 1992 to 2014. The goal is to show that the two victim countries assigned the responsibility for dealing with the long-term consequences of the disaster in different ways. The monograph shows that Belarus assigned the responsibility for handling Chernobyl to Russia and Europe as the country's enemies and friends, while Ukraine did not. This difference should be found in the construction of temporal identities of the responsible actors (past perpetrators or present saviours), the composition of the public sphere (state-controlled or non-state), and the sociological fragmentation of the population (pro-Russian or pro-European).

This monograph contributes to (a) the case-specific literature on Chernobyl studies and the Belarusian and Ukrainian national identities by conducting a within- and cross-country comparative diachronic analysis and (b) the theory of cultural trauma by introducing a new concept of trauma management. Trauma management is a discourse consisting of several competing stories by antagonistic actors about overcoming the consequences of a disaster. These stories are constructed around a tragic event with ongoing consequences, with saviours and victims as the main actors. The research question is the following: How do Ukraine and Belarus differ in their trauma management, and how does trauma management shape the national narratives and ontological security in these countries? The monograph argues that by constructing the roles of enemies and friends as saviours, trauma management reproduces or modifies the country's national narratives. By representing how the geopolitical enemies or friends take care of the ontological insecurity of the victims, trauma management narratives assure or threaten the ontological security of the entire nation.

The study relies on thematic and discourse analyses and abductive logic of reasoning in theory development. The monograph combines the empirical material from the Chernobyl case study with theories of cultural trauma, ontological security, and identity politics. Analysing the newspaper articles from 1992 to 2014 shows that Ukraine linked Chernobyl to the construction of the past, blaming the Soviet Union for causing and mismanaging Chernobyl. Belarus linked Chernobyl to the construction of the present, praising or blaming Russia and Europe for their assistance or lack of assistance in com-

bating the Chernobyl consequences. The monograph argues that *the different ways of assigning responsibility for dealing with the long-term consequences of the disaster should be found in the construction of temporal identities of the responsible actors*. The representations of the Soviet Union as a perpetrator served to construct the Ukrainian national narratives and ontological security against the ghosts of the past. The representations of Russia and Europe as saviours contributed to the construction of the Belarusian national narratives and ontological security against the geopolitical enemies and friends of the present.

The contextual analysis of the secondary materials on media ownerships, political systems, and national identity projects in Ukraine and Belarus shows that *the different ways of assigning responsibility for dealing with the long-term consequences of the disaster were shaped by the composition of the public sphere and the fragmentation within the population*. Belarus was defined as a disconnected public sphere where the state controls most of the media to which the majority of the population is exposed. The non-state groups operate outside the state-controlled media and are unpopular among the majority. The disconnectedness contributes to the creation of antagonistic stories about the responsibility for Chernobyl. The state-controlled media relies on a pro-Russian sentiment, with Russia as a friend and Europe as an enemy. The non-state media draws on a pro-European framework, with Europe as a friend and Russia as an enemy. As the majority of the population favours a pro-Russian framework, the story of the state-controlled media has more legitimacy. Ukraine was defined as a hierarchical public sphere where the state and the oligarchs control most of the media space, while the non-state groups control the least of it. The accessibility to a common public sphere contributes to the absence of antagonistic stories about the responsibility for Chernobyl. As the majority of the population is divided between the pro-Russian east and pro-European west, the hierarchical public sphere does not propagate a particular geopolitical orientation in order not to prioritise one group of the population over the other.

As a result, differences in assigning responsibility (the temporal identities of the responsible actors, the composition of the public sphere, and the fragmentation within the population) contributed to a different construction of the national narratives of the newly emerged states and the ontological security of their citizens. This, in turn, contributed to different ways of establishing peace between the former enemies or spoiling friendship between the former allies.

Ukraine og Hviderusland var de lande, som blev mest berørt af eksplosionen på atomkraftværket i Tjernobyl i 1986. Efter Sovjetunionens sammenbrud måtte de to lande bekæmpe Tjernobyl alene. Formålet med monografien er at sammenligne mediernes fremstilling af ansvaret for at bekæmpe følgerne af Tjernobyl i de to lande fra 1992 til 2014. Målet er at illustrere, at de to berørte lande placerede ansvaret for at håndteringen af katastrofens langsigtede følger forskelligt. Monografien viser, at Hviderusland placerede ansvaret for håndteringen af Tjernobyl hos Rusland og Europa, og det gjorde Ukraine ikke. Denne forskel skal findes i konstruktionen af de ansvarlige aktørers tidlige identiteter (tidligere gerningsmænd eller nuværende redningsmænd), sammensætningen af det offentlige rum (statskontrolleret eller ikke-statsligt) og den sociologiske splittelse i befolkningen (prorussisk eller proeuropæisk).

Denne monografi bidrager til (a) den case-specifikke litteratur om Tjernobyl-studier og Hvideruslands og Ukraines nationale identiteter ved at foretage en komparativ diakronisk analyse af landene og på tværs af landene og (b) kulturel traumeteori ved at introducere traumehåndtering som et nyt koncept. Traumehåndtering er en diskurs, som består af flere konkurrerende historier fra modstridende aktører om at overvinde katastrofens følger. Disse historier er bygget op om en tragisk begivenhed med fortsatte følger og med redningsmænd og ofre som de vigtigste aktører. Forskningsspørgsmålet er det følgende: Hvordan adskiller Ukraine og Hviderusland sig fra hinanden i deres traumehåndtering, og hvordan former traumehåndteringen disse landes nationale fortællinger og ontologiske sikkerhed? Monografien argumenterer for, at traumehåndteringen genskaber eller ændrer landets nationale fortællinger ved at konstruere fjenders og venners roller som redningsmænd. Traumehåndteringsnarrativerne sikrer eller truer hele nationens ontologiske sikkerhed ved at fremstille, hvordan de geopolitiske fjender eller venner varetager ofrenes ontologiske usikkerhed.

Studiet er baseret på tematisk analyse, diskursanalyse og abduktiv logisk argumentation inden for teoriudvikling. Monografien kombinerer det empiriske materiale fra casestudiet om Tjernobyl med teoretisk materiale om kulturelle traumer, ontologisk sikkerhed og identitetspolitik. Analysen af avisartiklerne fra 1992 til 2014 viser, at Ukraine forbandt Tjernobyl med en konstruktion af fortiden ved at beskyldte Sovjetunionen for at forårsage katastrofen og håndtere den forkert. Hviderusland forbandt Tjernobyl med en konstruktion af nutiden ved at rose eller beskyldte Rusland og Europa for deres assistance eller mangel på samme i kampen mod følgerne af katastrofen.

Monografien argumenterer for, at *de forskellige måder, hvorpå ansvaret for håndteringen af katastrofens langsigtede følger placeres, skal findes i konstruktionen af de ansvarlige aktørers tidsmæssige identiteter*. Fremstillingen af Sovjetunionen som gerningsmand havde til formål at konstruere Ukraines nationale fortællinger og ontologiske sikkerhed mod fortidens spørgsmål. Fremstillingen af Rusland og Europa som redningsmænd bidrog til en konstruktion af Hvideruslands nationale fortællinger og ontologiske sikkerhed mod nutidens geopolitiske fjender og venner.

Den kontekstuelle analyse af det sekundære materiale om medieejerskab, politiske systemer og nationale identitetsprojekter i Ukraine og Hviderusland viser, at *de forskellige måder, hvorpå ansvaret for håndteringen af katastrofens langsigtede følger placeres, blev formet af sammensætningen af det offentlige rum og splittelsen i befolkningen*. Hvideruslands offentlige rum blev defineret som afkoblet, hvor staten kontrollerer de fleste af de medier, som flertallet af befolkningen eksponeres for. De ikke-statslige grupper opererer uden for de statskontrollerede medier og er upopulære blandt flertallet. Denne afkobling bidrager til skabelsen af modstridende historier om ansvaret for Tjernobyl. De statskontrollerede medier baserer sig på en prorussisk overbevisning, med Rusland som ven og Europa som fjende. De ikke-statslige medier trækker på en proeuropæisk tilgang, med Europa som ven og Rusland som fjende. Idet flertallet af befolkningen foretrækker en proeuropæisk tilgang, har de statskontrollerede mediers historie større berettigelse. Ukraines offentlige rum blev defineret som hierarkisk, hvor staten og oligarkerne kontrollerer det meste af mediefladen (mens de ikke-statslige grupper kontrollerer langt mindre). Adgangen til et fælles offentligt rum bidrager til et fravær af modstridende historier om ansvaret for Tjernobyl. Idet flertallet af befolkningen er splittet mellem det prorussiske og det proeuropæiske, formidler det hierarkiske offentlige rum ikke en bestemt geopolitisk overbevisning for ikke at prioritere en gruppe af befolkningen over en anden.

De forskellige måder at placere ansvar på (de ansvarlige aktørers tidlige identiteter, sammensætningen af det offentlige rum og splittelsen i befolkningen) bidrog dermed til forskellige konstruktioner af de nyopståede staters nationale fortællinger og deres borgeres ontologiske sikkerhed. Dette bidrog så igen til forskellige måder at skabe fred på mellem de tidligere fjender eller forskellige måder at ødelægge venskabet på mellem de tidligere allierede.