

Abstract

Since 2014, the increased interest of academia to the Ukrainian-Russian relations was reflected in the growing number of publications on this problematics. In spite of this fact, there still exists a research gap on representations of Russia in Ukrainian discourses, which are often taken as self-obvious. This in turn may lead to incomplete understanding of Ukrainian policies towards Russia. The specific aim of this work is to provide an additional instrument for understanding Ukraine's foreign policy towards Russia. In order to provide an insight into the way the Ukrainian government perceived Russia, discourse analysis of chosen articulations was conducted. As this work demonstrates, the central element of representations of Russia in the Ukrainian governmental discourse were systematic attempts to delegitimize the Russian foreign policy towards Ukraine through undermining legitimacy of the Russian leadership. This was done in a number of ways: the discourse actively used historical dimension and constructed categorization of good and bad periods of Ukrainian-Russian relations, characterized Russia as archaic, non-civilized and aggressive, and separated Russian political elites from Russian citizens, thereby undermining internal legitimacy of the current Russian regime. At the same time, the discourse did not promote unconditional antagonism towards Russia and argued that the return to normal relations between the two states was possible.