

Abstract

Amid growing authoritarianism worldwide, particularly in Eastern Europe, authoritarian regimes like Russia have effectively seized control over the media to shape public opinion. This thesis explores how Russian state-controlled television, specifically Channel One, normalises the state's irredentist doctrine and expansionist policies, thereby generating public support for them. The study analyses the primary frames and techniques employed by Channel One in its coverage of Russian irredentism, situating this within the broader context of the country's imperialist history and aspirations. Through systematic monitoring of Channel One's news coverage, the research examines the normalisation techniques of irredentism through prime-time news broadcasts of "Vremya." The findings discuss Channel One's active engagement of various societal segments in defining a "new and shared reality," introducing new "norms" and promoting them as universally supported, underpinned by a language of absolute truths, while completely excluding critical voices. The study contributes to the understanding of the normalisation process facilitated by state-controlled television in Russia, highlighting the role played by journalists and media representatives in this effort, both directly and indirectly. Furthermore, the thesis provides a foundation for research on the normalisation process through media, particularly television, within authoritarian and irredentist contexts.

Keywords

Irredentism, authoritarianism, normalisation, state-controlled media, Eastern Europe, Russia, South Caucasus, Ukraine, journalism

Title

Televised Imperialism: Normalisation of Russian irredentism in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus through state-controlled Channel One's news journalism, following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine