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**Securitisation of Russia by the Obama administration as it relates to
the Ukrainian crisis.**

Master's thesis

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Abstract

The purpose of this Masters's thesis is to examine the securitisation of Russia by the Obama administration after the beginning of the Ukraine crisis. The main research question is to what extent has the Obama administration securitised Russia since the crisis began.

This study applies the theoretical framework of securitisation that was originally developed by the Copenhagen School as well as additional contributions to the framework by other authors. The methodology of the study is based on Lene Hansen's model of discourse analysis. In the empirical analysis section of this study both frameworks will be applied to analyse the official foreign policy discourse of the Obama administration as articulated by President Barack Obama himself in his official statements on Ukraine and Russia.

The study finds that while elements of securitisation are clearly present and emergency measures against Russia have been implemented, which could be considered proof of successful securitisation, the situation does not constitute full securitisation of Russia because elements of securitisation are consistently countered with desecuritisation, often within the same speech or statement.

Keywords: Securitisation, desecuritisation, the US, Russia, Ukraine, discourse analysis

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Introduction

In 2008 Barack Obama became the President of the United States. One of his first foreign policy initiatives was to improve relations with Russia. He called for a 'reset' in relations and aimed to find more areas where the US and Russia could cooperate. In the beginning of 2014 the Crimean peninsula was annexed by Russia and an armed conflict between Ukraine and separatist forces in Eastern Ukraine, which are believed to be supported by Russia, began. This conflict is still in progress and the international community has placed responsibility for this on Russia. This has led to a significant worsening of relations between the US and Russia even leading some to speculate on the possibility of a new cold war. The goal of this analysis is to study the official discourse of the US within the framework of securitisation theory to see if and to what extent has the Obama administration securitised Russia and re-articulated it as a security threat. The author expects to find that while relations have worsened and elements of securitisation are present in US official discourse, Russia has in fact not been fully securitised by the US. The many instances of securitisation are countered by desecuritisng moves and frequent calls for a diplomatic solution to the issues.

This analysis will use the theory of securitisation originated by the Copenhagen School. The theory posits that security issues are created in discourse by defining them as security issues. This is done using speech acts that follow a certain structure and the grammar of security. The author will also use contributions to securitisation theory by other well-known authors on the topic such as Thierry Balzacq, Juha Vuori, Michael C. Williams, and Mark Salter who have further explained the assumptions of the theory as well as applying them to new cases and expanding the theory to include not only speech acts but non-verbal elements of communication as well as redefining it as a sustained practice. On the topic of desecuritisation, Lene Hansen's interpretation will be explained and applied to the case at hand.

The chosen methodology for this case study is qualitative discourse analysis. More specifically the author will use Lene Hansen's method of poststructuralist discourse analysis and the first intertextual model in that method. Discourse analysis is the

suitable method for this analysis, as it is recommended by the Copenhagen School and employed often on cases of securitisation. Also Lene Hansen's model shares basic assumptions with securitisation theory. For instance that foreign policy and by extension security issues are defined through discourse and by applying and creating identities in said discourse.

This study is important in many ways. Firstly, it allows for better understanding of the process of securitisation. Securitisation has become a fairly popular approach in recent years and thus it needs to be better understood and implemented. Increasing the amount of case studies where it is used contributes to this. In addition, securitisation can be used to significantly widen the scope of security issues that entities in international relations may face. This also creates a potential situation where almost anything can be articulated into a security issue, which is potentially dangerous. To avoid this and to avoid the view that any contentious relationship between states is automatically securitised, it is important to understand the conditions that need to be present for securitisation to take place and to know the threshold for securitisation in international relations.

Furthermore, the state of relations between the US and Russia affect the security and politics of many other countries as both are major influences in the international sphere with significant allies. A fully securitised relationship between the two could pull their allies into conflict with either the US or Russia or with the allies of either state and significantly affect their political situation, both in the domestic and international field. Because of this it is important to understand the state of affairs between the two. For US allies and specifically NATO members, it is important to understand the US position on Russia as that could affect their own foreign policy as well as have significant effects on the actions of NATO.

The original contribution of this study is to add to the understanding of securitisation theory by applying it to a recent and quite special case where securitisation and desecuritisation are happening simultaneously. This also helps demonstrate the different forms and levels securitisation can take in practice. In addition, this study helps give a

better understanding of recent relations between US and Russia and demonstrates how the still ongoing Ukrainian crisis has affected international relations between the two important states and by extension their allies.

1. Theoretical Background

The concept of securitisation is mainly associated with the Copenhagen School (CS) of security studies. The most prominent members of the school are Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver and their book “Security: A New Framework for Analysis”, co-written with Jaap de Wilde, is considered the seminal work of securitisation theory (Munster 2012). This chapter will give an overview of securitisation as seen by the CS, cover some criticisms and developments of the theory by other authors, and also discuss the concept of ‘desecuritisation’.

1.1. The Copenhagen School

The positions and theories of the Copenhagen School grew out of a wider debate on whether the security agenda should be widened to include threats that were not military in nature or not. The traditional view connects security issues almost exclusively with the military and the use of force. The newer approach aims to widen the security agenda and claim security status for issues in other sectors (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 1). There are potential problems created by widening the security agenda. In the traditionalist view, widening the security field too much could result in destroying its intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to solve important security problems. In addition, the wider agenda for security means that the state is expected to engage more in a broader range of issues and this could be dangerous and even counterproductive. The aim of the Copenhagen School’s main work is to incorporate the traditional view and to construct a coherent framework to define and analyse the field of security (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 3-5).

When it comes to a wider theoretical background the CS identifies itself as constructivist. This means that they view security as being socially constructed. They also see social relations in general as socially constructed but less apt to change quickly like the security field. Rather, identities and how people interact between each other are more stable and constitute a framework within which actors operate (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 203-205).

One of the main concerns of the Copenhagen School is what actually constitutes an international security issue. They claim that security is essentially about survival so anything that threatens the survival of a unit is a security threat. Because security threats are special in nature, the use of extraordinary measures is justified. This has traditionally been used to justify the use of force, but has also allowed governments to take other special powers to battle existential threats (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 21). What constitutes an existential threat varies in different sectors and is connected to the referent object of the sector. For example in the military sector the referent object is usually the state while in the political sector it is usually the sovereignty of the state or its ideology that needs to be protected. Also, different supranational entities like the EU or NATO could be threatened by the reversal of their integration processes in which case both units would cease to exist (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 21-22).

1.1.1 The process and language of securitisation

In essence, “security” is the move that frames an issue as being outside the normal rules of politics or even above politics. This means that securitisation could be seen as an extreme version of politicisation. Issues can be non-politicised, which means the public does not deal with it at all; politicised, which means the issue is part of public policy and requires government decisions on how to handle them; or securitised, meaning the issue is presented as an existential threat and dealing with it requires special measures outside normal political procedure (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 23-24). Something can be designated an international security issue because it can be argued that it is more important than other issues and thus can take priority. If this specific issue is not tackled all others become irrelevant because the actors will no longer be able to handle them (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 24). By defining something as a security issue, the actor claims the right to handle it with means that otherwise might not be acceptable, such as secrecy, additional taxes, limiting rights or focusing energy and resources on this issue. The CS considers “security” as a self-referential practice because an issue does not become a security issue necessarily because an existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as an existential threat in the practice of “security” (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 24).

The Copenhagen school sees the process of securitisation as a speech act. Speech act theory states that certain statements do more than describe reality. Rather these statements do things (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 26). Because these utterances do not aim to describe something objective, they cannot be judged as being true or false (Balzacq 2010: 61). The speech act of securitisation has a specific rhetorical structure that includes survival and priority of action because otherwise it might be too late. An issue is dramatised, presented as an issue of highest priority and then labelled as *security* (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 26). ".../by labelling something as *security* an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means," (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 26). It is these speech acts that will be the focus of the research. Securitisation theory studies who can successfully speak or do security, under which conditions and with what effects. In terms of studying the speech act, it is important to note that the word "security" does not need to be used in the speech act. There are also certain issues that do not constantly need to be dramatised because they are already accepted as security issues. It is assumed that when such issues are discussed, they are already a matter of urgency and security (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 27).

According to the CS, an internal condition of a securitising speech act is following the grammar of security. This means that within the speech act there is a plot that includes existential threat, point of no return, and a possible way out of the situation. A securitising speech act also has two main conditions related to its external aspect. Firstly, the speaker or the securitising actor must be in a position of authority. This does not exclusively mean official political authority. Secondly, there should be objects that are generally considered threatening that could be referred to in the speech acts. These include weapons such as tanks or even hostile sentiments and referring to them could facilitate successful securitisation (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 33).

According to the Copenhagen School, discourse that presents something as an existential threat does not immediately create securitisation. Framing something as a security threat is called a *securitising move* and actual securitisation takes place when the audience accepts that the issue framed is indeed a security issue and requires special measures. This does not mean that the acceptance has to come in a free discussion, but

mostly that in democratic societies securitisation cannot simply be imposed so there is some need to argue a case for securitisation. The Copenhagen School's concept of securitisation does not require any special measures to be actually adopted. Simply that the securitising move gain enough resonance that special measures could be justified and taken in the future (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 25).

An important measure of securitisation is the extent to which it affects relations between actors. A securitising move can seriously upset relations among actors and change the rules of conduct internationally. While a securitising move is usually internal, between the speaker and the audience (most typically within a state between an authority figure and its people), a successful securitising move gives the speaker permission to override rules and the following actions can affect relations between actors (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 26). It is also important to note that a speech act in itself could already alter relations between actors. For example, if a state identifies another as hostile or dangerous and posing an existential threat, the state identified in such a way might start to act differently and maybe prepare for conflict with the state that sees it as a security threat.

Successful securitisation has three components or steps: an existential threat, emergency action, and effects on the relations between units (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 26). For example, an existential threat to a state could exist without anyone doing anything about it or emergency measures could be adopted and normal rules of procedure broken without framing an existential issue that would justify such actions, but in both these cases securitisation as such does not exist.

Securitisation is in itself an intersubjective process that does not determine whether a threat is objectively real but deals with perceived threats. When an actor securitises an issue, it does not matter whether this was done in response to an actual threat or not. Regardless, the securitising actor will behave differently than they would have otherwise and this has real consequences. What does matter is whether other actors in the international field see the threat as well because this will affect their behaviour in response to the situation and affect relations between actors in general (Buzan, Wæver,

Wilde 1998: 30-31). For example, if a state in NATO securitises another state and takes steps against that state, this will not only affect the relationship between these two states but also between the securitising actor and his allies. The latter may accept and agree that there is a threat and even join in the steps taken or see the other as paranoid and condemn their actions. Both possibilities have far reaching consequences for the international system.

1.1.2. Units involved in securitisation

According to the Copenhagen School, there are three types of units involved in securitisation: referent objects, securitising actors and functional actors. Referent objects are the entities that are being threatened by the perceived existential threat and that also have a legitimate claim for survival. The securitising actor is the actor that declares something as a security threat and that something, mostly the referent object, is being threatened by this threat. Functional actors are actors that do not fit into either of the previous categories but can still strongly influence the security decisions in a given sector or field (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 35-36).

Traditionally the most successful referent object of securitisation is the state. It is the most traditional unit in international relations and security studies, and has a certain built-in legitimacy for survival. Also, it has been found that size could be a determining factor in what is a successful referent object. A small group of people or even one individual is usually too small to merit widespread concern and action for ensuring their security and survival. On the opposite end of the scale would be groups such as humanity in general, which also thus far have not been successful referent objects. The state or middle scale objects in general are more successful because smaller groups engage and communicate within themselves and thus create a stronger feeling of “we” which might motivate members of that group to protect it in case of an existential threat (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 36-37).

However, scale is not the only reason states or nations have been most successful as the referent objects of security. Other middle-level referent objects such as multinational firms have not been successful because they can rarely claim a legitimate right to

survival. In fact, the economic sector has only been successfully securitised in extreme cases where its survival is linked to the survival of another referent object, like a state (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 37-38). In addition, system level objects are increasingly becoming referent objects. This means that the range of possible referent objects for security is widening and could include humanity in general and also systems of rules or principles governing international relations could be successful referent objects for security (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 38).

A securitising actor is a person or a group that performs the securitising speech act. These are usually political leaders, governments, lobbyists, pressure groups etc. Buzan, Wæver and Wilde (1998: 40-41) point out that the actor can sometimes be more difficult to identify because the individual performing the speech act is usually a representative of a much larger group. It could be problematic to determine, for instance, whether a high-ranking military officer is speaking on behalf of his unit, the military in general or the entire state. One of the ways to solve this problem would be to view how others react. If other states or actors hold the state responsible for the words and actions of the speaker than the state is designated as the actor. Also, in the case of countries the actor is easier to determine because governments usually have strict rules in place on who can speak on its behalf (Buzan, Wæver and Wilde 1998: 40-41). In the context of this paper it will be assumed that the person speaking is in fact representing the view of the US government as a whole and the speaker in question was selected so that they could legitimately represent the state.

In this paper, the aim is not to discuss whether Russia is an actual existential threat to the US, but whether it has been presented as such by the Obama administration. The author will also not be examining whether the securitising acts were successful or not. The aim is to examine how the Obama administration reacted to the role Russia played in Ukraine and if it then deemed it a sufficient threat to merit securitisation on an international and domestic scale. In addition, the functional actors in this case will not be specifically determined or analysed. Rather this analysis will be focused on official discourse.

1.2. Criticism and developments by other authors

This subchapter will discuss some criticisms that have been directed against the Copenhagen School as well as developments by other authors on the topic of securitisation. They will be discussed consecutively because in many cases the criticism gives way to a development of securitisation theory from the same author.

The Copenhagen School has attracted a lot of criticism on a range of issues. Some of it is on a purely theoretical basis in that the criticisms deal with the theoretical assumptions and methods that are used by the CS and also bring out areas that have perhaps not received enough attention in their approach to the theory and these will be discussed later in this chapter. However, there are also criticisms that suggest the concept of securitisation as being inherently dangerous. The main criticism applies to all theorists that aim to widen the security agenda in that widening it might lead to a situation where everything is a security issue. The CS has already addressed this criticism in the main book explaining securitisation theory. In the view of the Copenhagen School, widening the security agenda is an act that has serious political consequences and as such requires careful analysis on what is meant by a security problem and then applying that understanding to a range of issues. Without such careful consideration the CS agrees that all problems could be seen as security problems and that this is a threat (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 195). Their aim, in fact, is to create a very specific framework that would make it possible to avoid such indiscriminate widening and seek to widen and limit the security agenda at the same time. As such they place several limits on what is security and who can make security (Williams 2003: 513-514). These limits have been explained more thoroughly in the section that explains the Copenhagen School's theory.

Williams brings out another potential problem in securitisation theory regarding societal security. The Copenhagen School states that the focus of societal security is its identity, and if that identity is destroyed, the society will no longer live as itself. According to the criticism such a construction defines societies as only having one identity and this threatens multiculturalism. It could also potentially legitimise intolerance and exacerbate conflicts that already exist within societies (Williams 2003: 519). This is

also partially addressed in the book mainly used in this work. The CS theorists themselves bring out as one of disadvantages of their constructivist approach that they are not able to counter securitisation by stating that an issue is not a security problem or that something else is more important (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 206). As previously mentioned, securitisation is not concerned with the objectivity of a threat but studies how threats are constructed and perceived. The CS has also acknowledged the dangers of widening the security agenda indiscriminately. In addition, Williams himself counters this criticism by saying that the critic has essentially missed the point of the approach. He brings out that the Copenhagen School has a very radical approach to the concept of security and that securitisation is an extreme situation. The single identity is only brought out and constructed in the case of a perceived existential threat, and in that case the logic of 'friends and enemies' is invoked. The construction of a single unifying identity aimed against the single identity of the threat or enemy is what distinguishes a securitised situation from a simply politicised one. In a normal situation the identity of a society or the identities within a society are flexible and negotiable (Williams 2003: 519-520).

While he counters some of the criticism the CS has faced, Williams (2003) brings out a weakness in securitisation theory that is directly tied to its focus on speech and linguistics. The Copenhagen School's approach is very focused on language. Security itself is a speech act, securitising moves must follow a specific "grammar of security", and security must be spoken from a position of authority. This approach, however, does not take into account the increasingly important role televisual media and images play in the world. While speakers often still focus mainly on the text, it is increasingly difficult to separate the language from the images surrounding it. Issues in society are often accompanied by specific images and these images can vary and thus influence how an issue is seen in society. They can also be constantly reproduced deliberately to frame an issue in a specific way and can thus also influence the process of securitisation (Williams 2003: 525-527). While the Copenhagen School gives effective tools for analysing the language of securitisation, no such tools exist for images. There are several important analytical questions that do not have an answer. For example, how do images influence viewers and the potential audiences of securitisation, how can images

be used to help securitise or desecuritise issues and how are they connected to the speech acts of securitisation (Williams 2003: 527). While the analysis of images as part of discourse is an important part of securitisation and something that needs to be developed, it is not relevant to this study as it focuses solely on written language.

Juha Vuori brings out that the concept of securitisation is centred on Europe and on democratic societies. This is mainly because the theory was developed in the context of European politics and the act of securitisation is often understood as the process of moving certain issues outside the democratic process (Vuori 2008: 65-66). He aims to explicate the concept of securitisation and then adapt it so that it can be used to describe the process in non-democratic societies. He posits that securitisation serves different political purposes in different contexts and to understand this process better it needs to be studied in as many different contexts as possible (Vuori 2008: 67-68). He also emphasises that many believe that non-democratic systems do not need to justify or legitimise their use of extraordinary measures, but in his opinion that is not true. Every social system needs a certain amount of legitimacy to survive and every ruler needs followers. Because of this even dictators need to justify their use of extreme measures to a certain extent (Vuori 2008: 68). Every society has rules and if in a democratic society successful securitisation can allow for the use of non-democratic procedures then successful securitisation in a non-democratic society allows decision makers to break some other rules such as morality. In non-democratic societies securitisation can be used to reproduce the current political order or to keep citizens in line (Vuori 2008: 69).

To apply his theory to other types of societies, Vuori starts by examining the basis of securitisation theory - speech acts. Speech acts are the basic form of human communication and they can be divided into five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, declarations. These are simplified types and actual speech acts are usually more complex. This means that one sentence could contain several of these types, while a whole section of speech could also just be one type of speech act. He also demonstrates that the CS concept of a securitising speech act can be divided into three elementary speech acts: claim, warning, and request (Vuori 2008: 74). To put it in CS terms, the claim could be that an existential threat exists and threatens the

referent object, the warning could be that this needs to be handled right away or it would be too late, and the request could then be for special measures to be adopted or a certain policy passed to counter this threat.

Vuori uses these elementary speech acts to analyse securitisation and shows that according to their structure, securitising acts can have different goals. The main focus of the CS is securitisation that is used to legitimise a future course of action. He introduces four other possible types of securitisation, which are securitisation for raising an issue on the agenda, securitisation for deterrence, securitisation for legitimating past acts or for reproducing the security status of an issue, and securitisation for control (Vuori 2008: 75-76). While non-democratic systems may have less need to legitimise their future actions, securitising for control or for reproducing the security status of an issue could be very important. There are two types the author finds relevant in the current work: securitisation for legitimising future acts and securitisation for deterrence. The main elements for the first type have been extensively discussed in the Copenhagen School section of this paper and reiterated above. Securitisation for deterrence is aimed at the referent subject of the securitisation or the threat itself and it warns about possible future action. Securitisation for deterrence also starts with a claim and a warning like the one aimed at legitimising future actions but it ends with a declaration. By declaring that something is a threat, the declarer gains special powers and these powers are then used to deter the possible actions of the threatening actor (Vuori 2008: 79-82). Essentially, the idea would be to threaten the source of the threat with possible future consequences that might then discourage them from further action.

The concepts that Vuori introduces allow for a more detailed study of securitisation as a speech act and they also widen the scope of securitisation studies. Analysing all of the speech acts through his lens of elementary speech acts and how they are constructed remains outside the scope of this analysis. Also, his method of analysing securitisation in non-democratic societies is not relevant in this case as we are studying the US which is democratic. However, the author will be using his concept of securitisation for deterrence to analyse the securitising moves made by Obama.

Michael C. Williams (2011: 212) summarises the main criticisms levelled against the Copenhagen School by authors that favour a more sociological and pragmatic view of securitisation. For securitisation to reach its full potential several concepts are in need of further development and, in some cases, redirection. The criticisms run along two main lines. The idea of security as a speech act is too thin and formal to capture the dynamics and forms that securitisation can take. The other is that while the CS does define securitisation as an interactive concept where the relationship between the securitising actor and the audience is crucial, the CS does not develop this concept almost at all and thus does not include the different forms that securitisation can take depending on the audience and context (Williams 2011: 212-213). Nowadays, many view securitisation not as a speech act but as a dynamic pragmatic process, which is influenced by many other symbolic practices in addition to speech, such as images, gestures as well as the audience toward whom the securitisation is directed (Williams 2011: 212-213).

Thierry Balzacq also highlights many weaknesses in securitisation theory. For example, the CS states that securitisation is successful when the audience accepts it but how to know when exactly an audience accepts that there is indeed a security problem, remains radically under-theorised (Balzacq 2011a: 6). Also, the CS sees securitisation as a self-referential practice rooted in speech acts and as an intersubjective process. Many theorists find that the two concepts are in conflict with each other and that the CS actually leans toward security as a self-referential act. This view is supported by the fact that while intersubjectivity should be connected with the audience and the acceptance of the audience is deemed important, the actual analytical framework ignores the audience (Balzacq 2011a: 20). He also mentions that the CS singles out three units of analysis but leaves out two that in his opinion are equally important - the audience and the context of securitisation (Balzacq 2011b: 35). The aim of Balzacq's view of securitisation is to try and fix these issues and create concepts for the sections that remain under-theorised.

Thierry Balzacq is one of the most cited authors of securitisation after the members of the Copenhagen School and he also provides a specific framework that views securitisation not as a philosophical process (a speech act) but as a sociological one (Balzacq 2010: 57). He defines securitisation as a pragmatic act; a sustained

argumentative practice aimed at convincing a target audience, based on what it knows already, that a specific development is threatening enough to warrant immediate action (Balzacq 2010: 60). The following section illustrates the proposed sociological view of securitisation and the view of securitisation as a pragmatic act and a sustained practice.

Balzacq (2011a: 1) defines the theory of the CS that focuses on speech acts and discursive practices as the philosophical view of securitisation. In contrast, the sociological view that he seems to prefer sees securitisation in terms of practices, context and power relations that function in a society (Balzacq 2011a: 1). He points out that the philosophical view reduces securitisation to a conventional procedure or even a bet that depends on certain conditions for the act to be successful. The sociological view sees securitisation as more of a process that happens within a set of circumstances in a society. If the speech act theory aims to establish universal rules for how securitisation is communicated, the sociological view seeks to examine how actors use various tools of persuasion such as metaphors, stereotypes etc. to achieve their goal (Balzacq 2011a: 2). The audience of securitisation is important in both views, but the CS sees the audience as a set category and a passive recipient of securitising speech acts that then either accepts or rejects the bid for securitisation. The sociological view posits that the securitising actor and the audience influence and construct each other simultaneously (Balzacq 2011a: 2). Finally, securitisation is seen as a performative and performatives are analysed in the context of the actors and their habits within the surrounding social field. In other words, securitisation manifests as a constructed engagement of actors in a specific structural environment (Balzacq 2011a: 2). Essentially this means that securitisation is constructed in a specific sociological context at a given time.

Thierry Balzacq (2011a) lays out three core assumptions of the sociological variant of securitisation. The first is the centrality of the audience. The Copenhagen School states that successful securitisation has only taken place when the audience of the speech act accepts that something is a security issue, but does not define when such acceptance has taken place or what kind of audience is actually required. Balzacq (2011a: 8-9) states that in order for an issue to be securitised an ‘empowering audience’ must agree with the claims made by the securitising actor. The ‘empowering audience’ is the audience

that has a direct connection to the issue and can enable special measures to be adopted by the securitising actor. This support and enabling of actions can come in the form of general moral support for the actor or also through official decisions or statements by different institutions, such as a vote in Parliament to adopt measures or a statement by the UN (Balzacq 2011a: 8-9).

The second assumption is the codependency of agency and context. The CS states that securitisation and whether something is a security issue or not does not depend on objective reality, but on the way an issue is framed. Balzacq (2011a: 13) argues that successful securitisation requires that the statements made by the securitising actor must be connected to an external reality. If there is indeed visible evidence of a threat that could be pointed out during the speech act, the empowering audience would be more likely to accept that a security problem indeed exists. This is in some sense explored by the CS by stating the need for the *grammar of security* which includes a reference to generally threatening objects like weapons (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 33) but they did not require a reference to actual reality, such as tanks being currently positioned at the border of a state. Balzacq states that when the concept of security is used it forces the audience to examine the context they are in and identify the conditions that warrant securitisation (Balzacq 2011a: 13).

The third assumption concerns the *dispositif* and the structuring force of practices. In essence it means that certain security practices and policy measures that are in place in a society also affect the way securitisation is done in society. Each measure used gives information about the type of threat that is being securitised and affects the practices of securitisation (Balzacq 2011a: 15-18). Basically, Balzacq says that the CS speech act concept of securitisation deals with how security issues are created, but does not examine how they are actually constructed. He sees securitisation as something that is facilitated by a configuration of different circumstances rather than caused by the power of one speech act (Balzacq 2011a: 18).

Another important development by Balzacq is the concept of 'referent subject'. The referent object is that which is being threatened by the existential threat (state,

democratic rule, etc.), but the referent subject is that which is the existential threat (Balzacq 2011b: 36). For instance, the referent subject could be a neighbouring state with a nuclear arsenal that is considered threatening. It is important to note that Balzacq only very briefly mentions this concept along with the referent object and defines the two simply as “what is threatened and what is threatening” (Balzacq 2011b: 36). In the context of this analysis, the referent subject will be analysed similarly to the referent object as they were defined together by Balzacq.

Balzacq’s view will not be used fully in this work, but some of his concepts will be used in the analysis. For example, the concept of an empowering audience will be applied and the author will identify and analyse the referent subject in a similar manner to the referent object. Also, this work will be analysing the speech acts by Obama over a longer period of time as part of a sustained argumentative practice rather than as individual speech acts that create securitisation.

Mark B. Salter also points out that the solely linguistic model cannot account for the complex political procedures involved in securitisation (Salter 2011: 117). The Copenhagen School has inherited a statist, decisionist and rather monolithic view of speech acts. This has led to criticism and the view that political context, audience and history should play a bigger part in analysing and understanding speech acts (Salter 2011: 118). Salter (2011: 119-120) also argues that the success or failure of securitisation cannot be a binary that is based on the success or failure of a single moment. He sees it as more of process with several steps that determine the success or failure of securitisation. He proposes an analysis of securitisation, more specifically the failure or success of securitisation that is based on four questions:

- 1) To what degree is the issue discussed as part of wider political debate?
- 2) Is the issue accepted or rejected as an existential threat?
- 3) Is a proposed solution to the threat accepted or rejected?
- 4) Are new or emergency powers accorded to the securitising actor? (Salter 2011: 120)

In short, Salter argues that an issue must be deemed important enough to be discussed politically before it can be successfully securitised and the threat must be accepted as existential. He also states that possible solutions to an existential threat are often part of securitising moves and as such, acceptance of these solutions can be proof of successful securitisation, and, in his opinion, even a requirement. Finally, securitisation has taken place when new policies have been put in place to handle the existential threat or when new emergency powers have been given to the securitising actor (Salter 2011: 120-121). He also stresses that emergency measures are significant in determining the success or failure of securitisation. The CS does not require that measures are actually adopted, but in Salter's view an issue's resonance with the public is too unstable to measure and thus does not prove successful securitisation (Salter 2011: 121-122). Several of the elements included in Salter's model are part of the analysis of securitisation as seen by the Copenhagen School and will be discussed in this work in that context, but the question of whether the issue was part of wider political debate will be added to the analysis.

There are many theorists who aim to create a better framework for whether securitisation has been successful or not and many of them have the view that securitisation has only taken place if it has been successful. The aim of this work is not to specifically analyse the success of securitisation. Rather the goal is to analyse elements of securitisation as they occur in US discourse and to examine if securitising Russia was in fact the goal. In the analysis, measures taken in response to the situation in Ukraine will be included as an element of securitisation and as emergency measures that could be considered confirmation of successful securitisation. However, the level of success of securitisation will not be the focus of this thesis.

1.3. Desecuritisation

In contrast to the process of securitisation, this paper will also be examining instances of desecuritisation. The concept of desecuritisation is, in the view of many authors largely under-theorised and open to interpretation (Hansen 2012a: 527). The Copenhagen School has defined desecuritisation as the conceptual twin or opposite of securitisation. According to them, desecuritisation essentially means moving issues out of the security sphere and back into the ordinary public sphere (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 29). This

seems to imply specific moves made to desecuritize, but some theorists view securitisation as simply allowing issues to drop out of the security sphere by no longer securitising them. Juha Vuori (2011: 191) views desecuritisation as a conscious move away from securitisation and states that it could take the form of a specific speech act. He also points out that desecuritisation can be understood as deconstructing the collective identities and the logic of friends and enemies that was invoked during securitisation. Desecuritisation is in essence the opposite of securitisation and it happens “away from” or “out of” securitisation (Hansen 2012a: 530), which would imply that before desecuritisation can happen, securitisation needs to have happened or be happening. In terms of analysing desecuritisation, Hansen has shown that while speech acts can indeed be effectively used to counter securitisation, they do not possess a specific rhetorical structure like securitising moves do. She states that one cannot declare an issue as no longer being a threat because a speech act like that would still use the logic and language of security. Desecuritisation still happens as a result of speech acts, but there is no specific structure for a desecuritising act (Hansen 2012a: 530).

The Copenhagen School gives a definition for desecuritisation but the concept is not developed further in the main book of the CS. This allows for desecuritisation to be analysed through a wide range of political theories and also creates very different ways in which desecuritisation is understood and applied. In addition to the approaches given above, there are some who view desecuritisation as being dependent on new enemies. It can happen when a new threat rises and the old one is deemed less relevant and is thus desecuritized or when an issue is moved into the sphere of normal politics and no new threat arises (Hansen 2012a: 527). Building on the many readings and applications of desecuritisation, Hansen brings out four types of desecuritisation. Change through stabilisation means that the issue is discussed in terms other than security and the situation is more stable, but the larger conflict is still in place. Replacement means that another issue replaces the old security problem. Rearticulation happens when an issue is moved back into the sphere of ordinary politics because the original threats have lessened, and desecuritisation through silencing is when an issue is de-politicised and no longer discussed (Hansen 2012a: 529). Rearticulation also means that the issue is removed from the sphere of securitisation by actively proposing political solutions to

the problems in question and it also includes a conscious move away from the friend-enemy distinction (Hansen 2012a: 542-543).

In this paper, desecuritisation will be viewed as a deliberate act because not discussing an issue cannot be effectively analysed. The main type examined is rearticulation. The author will try to find instances where the US has given statements or acted in a way that would indicate that the US views Russia as a regular country and would like to normalise relations. The study will also look for instances where friend-enemy distinctions are deconstructed or rearticulated. Change through stabilisation will be included if the analysis of discourse shows that this could be happening. The other two types will not be applied to this case. Because the goal of this analysis is to study how the US acted towards Russia, bringing in another potential security issue to see if it replaced Russia would not be beneficial. Silencing does not fit this case because the crisis in Ukraine is an ongoing conflict and as the analysis of discourse will show, it is still part of political discussion and definitely not de-politicised.

Desecuritisation will be examined to see if the US has indeed tried to move Russia into the ordinary sphere of politics and diplomacy. If this turns out to be so, then it can be argued that the US has not tried to securitise Russia or at the very least has tried to reverse previous securitisation. This paper will be analysing several speech acts that in the author's view function as desecuritising moves. Because there is no specific structure for desecuritising acts, these speech acts will be identified not by specific elements or constructions but rather by general content. If there is evidence that the US, in its official discourse has attempted to move Russia out of securitisation and restore normal relations, this will be touched upon in the analysis.

2. Methodology

2.1 Discourse analysis

The chosen method for this study is qualitative discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is the study of actions that are carried out when language is used in specific contexts and the meaning given to language. In short it can also be defined as: “The study of language in use” (Gee, Handford 2014: 1). The author considers discourse analysis to be the most suitable for the study of securitisation for several reasons. First of all, the group that originated the theory, The Copenhagen School suggests that the best way to study securitisation is through discourse. In fact, they state that is the obvious method because the aim is to see when and how something is established as a security threat. The defining criterion of security is textual, as there is a specific rhetorical structure that has to be located in discourse. Their suggested technique is very simple: to read looking for arguments that take the rhetorical and logical form defined as security (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 176-177). They also suggest studying texts that are central. This means that if an issue is deemed important enough, it should come up because the instance itself is sufficiently important. For example, if an issue is brought up in a general debate or speech, that issue is deemed important because actors in these situations must prioritise the topics they bring up (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998: 177).

Discourse analysis as a theory and method also has many things in common with securitisation theory and holds similar assumptions. For example, securitisation theory states that security threats are security threats because they are represented as such. Discourse theory assumes that foreign policies rely upon representations and these representations are articulated in language (Hansen 2012b: 106). Also similarly to securitisation theory, discourse analysis does not judge whether a representation found in discourse can be considered true or false, but rather what the political implications of adopting a particular representation are (Hansen 2012b: 103). The recommendation from the originators of the theory along with key shared assumptions make it a suitable method for studying securitisation and as such the chosen method for this paper.

Lene Hansen (2007: 5-6) more specifically proposes a model of poststructuralist discourse analysis. She states that the poststructuralist research program assumes that policies depend upon representations or threats, countries, security problems or other issues they are meant to address. Foreign policies need to give meaning to the situation at hand as well as the actors or other objects within the situation and these meaning are articulated through specific identities of other states, regions as well as the identity of the actor itself (Hansen 2007: 5-6). This approach is quite similar to the theory of securitisation which also includes constructing the enemy or threat or representing it in a way that gives it a threatening identity as well as constructing a Self that needs to be protected, and then creating policies that are meant to battle this issue or threat. Because of this Lene Hansen's method of poststructuralist discourse analysis will be applied to the case at hand.

In poststructuralism, "language is social and political, an inherently unstable system of signs that generate meaning through a simultaneous construction of identity and difference" (Hansen 2007: 17). Poststructuralism posits that objects, subjects, states and other objects are only given meaning and identity through their construction in language. Language is not an objective tool that registers data and there is no objective or true meaning to which language refers (Hansen 2007: 18). Language can be seen as political, which means that it is a site for the production of identities and subjectivities. Seeing foreign policy as a discursive practise implies that policy and identity are interlinked. Identity comes into being through the discursive enactment of foreign policy, but the same identity is used to legitimise the policies that have been proposed (Hansen 2007: 21).

The construction of identity is central in Hansen's model of discourse analysis. She says that the identity of a state both creates and is itself a product of foreign policy. These identities are constructed through differentiation and linking (Hansen 2007: 23-24). This means that the Self is defined in some relation to the Other. The goal for the makers of foreign policy is to present a policy that seems legitimate and enforceable to its audience. Because of this, creating a link between the identity of the actor (e.g. a state)

and its policy that makes the two seem compatible is at the centre of political activity (Hansen 2007: 28).

Hansen also states that for issues to become questions of security they need to be successfully constructed as such within political discourse (Hansen 2007: 33-34). In addition she ties the construction of security to the building of a national Self that is in need of protection from a threatening Other (Hansen 2007: 34). In the context of securitisation theory the Self would be connected to the referent object. This is in line with both the main theory of securitisation as well as the discussion about employing a friend-enemy distinction to create securitisation and again shows that Hansen's method of discourse analysis shares similar assumptions and theoretical bases with the chosen theory for this study. Thus it can be considered a suitable method.

“Official foreign policy discourse is the discourse through which state action is legitimised/...” (Hansen 2007: 59-60). For the study of official foreign policy discourse, Hansen proposes three models, the first of which is used in this study. The following section will give an overview of this model.

The first model is based directly on official discourse and focuses on political leaders who have the official authority to sanction foreign policies and also on actors who are directly involved in executing these policies. The model identifies texts produced directly by these actors such as speeches and interviews as well as texts that have an intertextual influence on the discourse. Hansen brings out three specific methodological guidelines. Firstly, is that texts can be either single-authored or produced in dialogue with other actors such as journalists or political opponents. Secondly, intertextual references may be made in support of a proposed policy or as a response to important events or criticism from opponents. Thirdly, intertextual links can be identified from either references made by the political leader being studied or as they are brought up by secondary sources (Hansen 2007: 60). An example of this would be a journalist asking a question that brings up a historical link or a criticism. The second model that Hansen proposes focuses on a wider political debate that includes media representations and political opposition. The third model is divided into two versions, 3A and 3B. 3A

focuses on cultural representations found in mediums such as film and television, and 3B focuses on marginal political discourses like social movements, academics and non-governmental organisations (Hansen 2007: 64).

The first model is clearly the most appropriate in this study as its analytical focus is on the discourse of heads of state, governments, senior civil servants etc. and the object of analysis is official texts along with intertextual references. The goal of analysis for the first model is the stabilisation of official discourse through intertextual links and the response to critical discourse (Hansen 2007: 64). This is in line with the goal of this work, which is to analyse the official discourse and policy as presented by the head of state and to identify the main arguments that are present in official discourse as well as show how consistent it has been. However, the intertextual links and responses to criticism will not be explicitly identified, as that would be outside the scope of this study. When Obama responds to criticisms in his discourse or refers back to his own statements, this will be mentioned.

The first model of intertextual analysis is also selected because that model and more widely Hansen's method of discourse analysis has been used successfully in several other similar studies that also studied securitisation in official discourse (Raaper 2012, Kullamä 2013, Gering 2014, Oksaar 2014). Additionally, in securitisation, it is important to study a securitising actor who has actual authority to create successful securitisation and thus selecting a very high ranking state official like the President and studying their official discourse is appropriate.

Hansen proposes four elements that comprise a complete research design. These are the intertextual model, the number of actors, the temporal perspective and the number of events (Hansen 2007: 75). The selection of the intertextual model is made from the models Hansen described and which have been explained above. Essentially the model selection determines what types of texts by what kind of actors within the wider foreign policy sphere are included in the analysis. The number of actors refers to the number of Selves - states, nations, or other foreign policy subjects - examined in the study and determines for example, whether to study several countries or only one. There are also

different options for how to choose the actors included in the analysis, especially when studying multiple actors. One option is to study how different actors responded to the same issue. Another would be to contrast the discourse of the Self with the Other's perspective (Hansen 2007: 75-76). This study will be analysing one actor.

The temporal perspective determines whether events are analysed in one particular moment or through a longer historical analysis. There are several variations available in terms of how many moments to examine. A study could include comparisons of a small number of events through to a longer historical analysis that could include several centuries (Hansen 2007: 77-78). The final element is the number of events studied. The term 'event' is broadly defined and could include a policy issue such as the Maastricht Treaty or wars, which are more traditionally seen as events in history. The number of events included is influenced by the temporal perspective. If one event is chosen as the focus of analysis then it is a temporal one moment study. However, if several events are chosen then the studies are constructed using one of two dimensions. The events can be related to each other by the issue (events in a particular region over time) or by the time in which they occur (multiple issues in the same time period) (Hansen 2007: 78).

The research design of this particular study includes the study of one foreign policy actor, one event, one moment, and the intertextual model selected is Hansen's first model, which only deals with official discourse. The foreign policy actor or Self examined in this study is the US. The one event analysed is the Ukrainian crisis and the moment in time studied is January 2014 to April 2016.

Hansen's methodological approach also includes advice on choosing specific texts to study. She states that material should be selected by two criteria. First, the majority of texts should be from the time under study, but historical texts should also be included. Second, the study should include key texts that are often quoted but also texts that establish a more general basis for the identification of general discourse. It is important to note that primary texts, such as statements, speeches and interviews are given priority in poststructuralist discourse analysis. However, secondary texts such as broader analysis and discussions of primary texts can provide important background information

on current representations found in discourse as well as give historical background (Hansen 2007: 82-83).

Regarding the selection of texts in the case of contemporary material, Hansen gives three criteria that should be met, especially when using models 1 and 2. Selected texts should include clear articulation of identities and policies, they should be widely read and attended to, and they need to have the formal authority to define political positions. She also brings out the State of the Union addresses by American presidents as meeting all three criteria and in a table giving an overview of types of texts she simply writes that presidential addresses in general meet all three criteria (Hansen 2007: 85, 87).

2.2. Sample

This section will explain the selection of texts included in discourse analysis. In this paper, the texts selected for analysis fall mainly within the time period starting from January 2014 and ending with December 2015, but a few texts from 2016 were included. The crisis in Ukraine is still ongoing but December 2015 was selected as an initial end point to clarify the scope of the analysis and to avoid having to continuously add new texts to the analysis. A few extra texts from early 2016 were added later but were limited to early April of 2016. The speaker analysed is Barack Obama himself. The focus of this research is to study the official discourse of the US as it relates to Russia's role in the Ukrainian crisis and Barack Obama as the current president of the US is the best person to analyse as he has the highest authority to determine foreign policy for the US and also has significant influence on the international field in general. Also the amount of statements he has made on Ukraine in this timeframe gives plenty of material for a thorough discourse analysis.

In terms of the types of texts selected, this paper focuses on presidential statements. As explained above, presidential statements meet all three criteria suggested by Hansen for analysis of official discourse and thus should reflect the official position of the US. All the texts were taken from the official White House web page under the section "Speeches and Remarks" (The White House 2016). This selection was made again to

make sure that these speeches and statements reflect the official discourse and as they were published by the government, this can be assumed to be the case. The method for the final selection of texts was fairly simple. As the texts on the web page are organised chronologically, the author simply started from the beginning of 2014 and selected all the texts where the speaker was listed as President Obama. Then the author went through the texts and selected the ones where the crisis in Ukraine or relations with Russia were mentioned. Some texts that only mentioned either Ukraine or Russia in passing as a topic for an upcoming meeting or as a small example of foreign policy among other states were excluded as they did not contain any specific policy positions or contain any significant information regarding how the US views Russia. It is important to note that this study analysed only written transcripts of speeches and statements. Because of this, non-verbal elements of speech such as body language, tone, gestures etc. that theorists of securitisation have brought out as relevant to the analysis of speech acts were not included.

The texts include speeches, statements and also press conferences where the president answers questions and replies to comments made by others. In cases where the President was addressing the public or the press with another head of state, only Obama's statements and replies were included. Practical policy implementation, such as adopting emergency measures, is mostly also taken from Obama's own statements. Main sanctions will be touched upon in the section outlining the Ukrainian crisis and Russia's actions, but the President also gives a fairly good overview of the measures adopted. In addition, a few select texts were taken from early 2016 just to have an idea on what US foreign policy and discourse in regard to Russia is like. An in depth interview with Barack Obama published in April 2016 in *the Atlantic* was also included in the analysis to illustrate his views on Russia in general.

The author also followed the recommendations of the Copenhagen School in regard to selecting texts that are central. Among the texts chosen for analysis are State of the Union addresses which are considered very important, a speech given by Barack Obama in front of the UN, several speeches made in front of foreign audiences as well as statements and press conferences given with other heads of state where both parties

discussed the topics of their meetings and general policy positions. These instances are all fairly important and reflect the importance of the topics that are discussed. Speaking time is also limited and this is especially the case in regard to meeting and statements given with others. Topics that will be discussed are usually agreed upon ahead of time and prioritised because the time for meetings is usually limited. This shows that the texts selected were central and reflected the priority of the issue. All together 44 texts from the White House page were analysed and 33 of them are referred to in this study. The interview published in *the Atlantic* was analysed in addition to these texts. As stated earlier, some were left out because they only mentioned Ukraine in passing or simply reiterated previous views and policies. As will be demonstrated in the analysis, Obama's discourse on the subject is quite consistent so the author did not find it necessary to include all instances of essentially the same idea. Some texts are also referenced only as an example of the kind of occasions where the topic of Russian action in Ukraine came up because they too contained the same rhetoric and thus would not have given new insight. However, they are useful in illustrating the scope of political debate surrounding the crisis.

2.3. Course of analysis

The empirical analysis in this study will commence in four main steps. First, the author will give an overview of US-Russian relations before the crisis focusing mainly on the policies of the Obama administration before the events in Ukraine. Second, the author will go over the crisis in Ukraine starting with the anti-government protests in the end of 2013 also briefly mentioning sanctions imposed by the US as they occurred. Third, the work will analyse in depth the elements of securitisation in statements by Barack Obama, and finally, a similar analysis will be conducted in regard to instances of desecuritisation. Additionally, a brief comparison with US discourse related to Iran will be conducted as Iran could be considered a case of full securitisation by the US.

Analysis of the texts was not conducted by statements or chronologically. This study analysed the texts by the elements of securitisation. For example, the author went through the texts selected and found instances where President Obama had referred to the referent object of securitisation, in this case, shared norms and rules about how

countries interact. This was done to show clearly whether the required elements of securitisation were actually in place and also alternatively to show instances of desecuritisation. This was also done in part due to the large amount of texts analysed. Going through each of them individually and showing how securitising or desecuritising moves were made in each text would have been outside the scope of this work, but at the same time selecting only a few key texts would have, in the author's opinion, damaged the credibility of the analysis. The large number of texts allowed for a more generalised view of the discourse and its consistency over time and thus also shows more clearly the degree to which securitisation has in fact taken place. Selecting only, for example, longer speeches given to large audiences could have shown a degree of securitisation not supported by the general foreign policy discourse of the President. In addition, analysing the elements of securitisation separately as they occurred over the course of this crisis also clearly demonstrates that securitisation or, in contrast, desecuritisation is a longer sustained process not limited to separate speech acts as posited by Thierry Balzacq.

3. Empirical Analysis

3.1. Foreign policy of the Obama administration before the Ukrainian crisis.

This subchapter aims to give a brief overview of Barack Obama's policy toward Russia prior to the crisis in Ukraine.

Many think that relations between the US and Russia were at their lowest point since the 1980s when Obama took office. There were disagreements in many areas since the 1990s but relations were significantly worsened by the US' plan to build missile defence facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic and by the Georgian crisis of 2008 where the US sided with Georgia (Hornát 2016). Relations were also worsened by the continuing expansion of NATO, which Russia strongly objected to and the 'colour revolutions' that happened in Georgia and Ukraine in the early 2000s that reinforced the Russian view that they were under a political offence. Russia objected to the inclusion of Georgia and Ukraine into NATO and actually succeeded in stopping the granting of membership action plans to both countries during the NATO Bucharest Summit in 2008 (Ditrych 2014: 79).

The reset policy in relations between the US and Russia was first announced by Vice President Joe Biden in February 2009. The aim of this policy was to improve relations between the two countries and to find areas for cooperation (Stent 2012: 126). In March 2009 Secretary of State Hillary Clinton presented the Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov with a symbolic 'reset' button to symbolise a new era in relations between the two countries (BBC 2009). In July 2009, Barack Obama gave a speech in Moscow that also called for a reset of relations between the two countries. He stated that the US wants to see a strong and prosperous Russia that can cooperate with the US on different issues. He also said that viewing the US and Russia as opposites and rivals that compete for spheres of influence is out-dated. In the speech he also mentioned possible cooperation on the Iran nuclear program and on stopping nuclear proliferation (Harding, Weaver 2009).

The Obama administration sees the reset policy as a success that has benefitted US interests on different issues, helped the management of international security and created the basis for future cooperation and better relations between the two countries in the long term (Deyermond 2013: 500). There are several concrete achievements that Washington sees as a result of the reset policy. One of the most important signs of improved relations was the signing of a new START agreement. Another area of cooperation was the Iran nuclear program. Russia supported a resolution in the UN to introduce tougher sanctions on Iran and also cancelled a planned delivery of S-300 missiles to Iran. There was also significant cooperation with regard to Afghanistan. For instance, Russia facilitated transport of military personnel and lethal as well as non-lethal materials to and from Afghanistan (Stent 2012: 126-127). Russia also supplied helicopters to Afghan authorities and worked with the US to reduce Afghan drug supply and the two countries cooperated on the accession of Russia in the WTO, which was approved in 2011 after discussions had lasted almost two decades. The Obama administration saw Russian membership in the WTO as economically beneficial to the US due to increased trade between the two and because it would integrate Russia more fully into the global economy (Deyermond 2013: 502-503). This suggests that the Obama administration sought to create a partnership with Russia and to involve it more in world affairs.

There were other areas of successful cooperation mostly due to the establishment of the Bilateral Presidential Commission (BPC) that included working groups on a wide range of issues. In addition, the general tone of relations improved, as well as personal relations among the senior members of both governments (Deyermond 2013: 503). These examples are brought out not to claim that the reset policy has been particularly successful. Judging that is not the purpose of this analysis. Rather these different areas of cooperation, the change of tone in relationships, and mainly the change in attitude of the US toward Russia illustrate that relations improved between the countries and also shows that the US did not treat Russia as a securitised entity or a security threat to the US.

Even in 2012, when many were saying that the reset policy has completely failed, Obama still did not see Russia as a major threat to the US. In fact, in a debate with Mitt Romney during the 2012 elections, he referenced Romney's opinion that the biggest geopolitical threat to the US is Russia and essentially dismissed it saying that that view belongs in the 1980s and that the Cold War has been over for 20 years (Nexon 2014).

With the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis relations have significantly worsened with the US siding with Ukraine and, along with several other countries, imposing significant sanctions against Russia. For instance, in the spring of 2014 the US imposed three rounds of targeted sanctions against Russian individuals and businesses linked to the Russian government (Ditrych 2014: 83). Furthermore, in the beginning of 2016 it was announced that the Pentagon has placed Russia on the top of its list of national security threats (The New York Times 2016). This shows that relations between the two countries have in fact declined. The aim of the current analysis is to examine whether this has also fundamentally changed the way the Obama administration sees Russia.

3.2. Timeline of the Ukrainian crisis.

This section will give a brief overview of the events in Ukraine starting from late 2013 and ending with May 1, 2016. It will mostly use news sources and a significant part of the second half of the crisis will be based on the continuously updated and very thorough timeline of the crisis published by the Centre for Strategic and international Studies (hereafter CSIS).

The Ukrainian crisis began in November 2013 when President Viktor Yanukovich decided to abandon a trade agreement with the EU and instead seek closer ties with Russia. This started a period of civil protests aimed against the Ukrainian government that quickly turned violent (Yekelchuk 2015: 3). In February 2014 Viktor Yanukovich was removed from office, new presidential elections were set for the 25th of May, and an interim government was formed. On February 23 Pro-Russian protesters gathered in Crimea to protest the new government in Kiev (Al Jazeera 2014).

The protests in Crimea quickly escalated and on February 27 armed men in unmarked uniforms started occupying government buildings, airports and military facilities in Crimea (Yekelchuk 2015: 5). In the beginning of March 2014 Putin got approval from the Russian parliament to use military power in Ukraine and Russian troops started heading towards Crimea. On March 6, 2014 the Crimea parliament voted in favour of joining Russia and on March 11, the regional parliament declared independence (Al Jazeera 2014). On March 16, a referendum was held in Crimea on joining Russia and the official results stated that over 95 per cent of voters supported this and on March 18, Vladimir Putin signed a treaty that absorbed Crimea into Russia (Yekelchuk 2015: 5).

The first round of US sanctions against Russia came in response to Russia's actions in Crimea. On March 6, President Obama issued an executive order that authorised blocking property of individuals and entities that contribute to the destabilisation of Ukraine, but no names were included (The White House 06.03.2014). On March 17, the first round of sanctions against Russia by the EU and the US was implemented as a list of targeted individuals was added to the executive order and on March 20 the list of individuals targeted by the sanctions was extended (Al Jazeera 2014; The White House 17.03.2014, 20.03.2014).

In the beginning of April, similar events started unfolding in Eastern Ukraine. Pro-Russian activists seized government buildings in the cities of Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv, and called for referendums on their independence from Ukraine. Clashes in Eastern Ukraine continued throughout the spring and summer between pro-Russian groups and the Ukrainian military as rebels seized control over several cities in Eastern Ukraine (BBC 2014b). On July 17, a Malaysian Airlines flight was shot down by a surface-to-air missile believed to come from an area controlled by pro-Russia forces. All 298 people on board were killed. This further exacerbated the tensions in the area as international investigators had difficulties accessing the crash site and retrieving the bodies as well as the black boxes of the aircraft (Al Jazeera 2014).

On August 5, Russia started building up forces on the Ukrainian border and continued military exercises that had been held intermittently since the beginning of the conflict.

There were also accusations of Russia firing across the border into Ukraine (Al Jazeera 2014). On September 5, after talks attended by representatives of Ukraine, Russia, the OSCE and the rebels operating in Eastern Ukraine, the first Minsk agreement was signed between Ukraine and the rebels prompting a ceasefire between the parties (Al Jazeera 2014, BBC 2014a). Despite the ceasefire, shelling continued on behalf of both parties and within a few days reports of renewed fighting in Donbass emerged (CSIS 2016). Additional sanctions were implemented on September 12, 2014. These sanctions targeted Russia's largest bank, Sberbank, a major arms producer, and several companies that conduct deepwater and shale oil exploration (Mohammed, Trott 2014). On September 19, a new round of talks was held in Minsk and a buffer zone of 30 kilometres was created between the parties. Despite efforts, fighting continued and Ukraine blamed the pro-Russian separatists for violating the ceasefire (CSIS 2016).

On October 23, 2014 amid continuing clashes, a leader of the separatist movement announced an official end to the ceasefire and stated that they will try to take more cities. On November 12, NATO reported that Russian equipment including tanks, and Russian troops have been seen entering Ukraine and on November 30 a Russian convoy entered Ukraine without the governments permission. This was the eight such convoy to enter Ukraine and while Moscow claims it was carrying humanitarian aid for the fighters in Eastern Ukraine, the Ukrainian government claims that the trucks were used to smuggle in military equipment (CSIS 2016). On December 18, 2014 Obama signed a bill that authorised new sanctions against Russia and that also authorised lethal aid to Ukraine (Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty 2014). On December 19, 2014 Obama announced the implementation of new sanctions that prohibited the export of US goods and services into Crimea (The White House 19.12.2014).

In February 2015 new talks in Minsk started. A preliminary ceasefire was agreed on February 10 and on February 12, a new Minsk agreement was announced that included an immediate ceasefire as well as a long-term plan to address wider political concerns by the end of 2015. This was called the second Minsk agreement or also Minsk II (CSIS 2016). In addition to the ceasefire, the main points of the agreement included the withdrawal of heavy weaponry by both sides, effective monitoring of the situation by

the OSCE, negotiations on the political future of parts of Donetsk and Luhansk and on holding local elections in these areas, full amnesties for everyone involved in the conflicts and immediate release of hostages and prisoners. The agreement also stipulated that Ukraine undergo constitutional reform and restore all social and economic links with the areas affected by the conflict. In addition, Ukraine will restore full government control over the state border and all foreign armed groups and weapons will be removed from Ukrainian territory (BBC 2015).

Even after the extensive agreement in Minsk fighting continued and implementation of the agreement stalled with both Russia and separatist leaders accusing the Ukraine government of not following through. NATO also put pressure on Russia and the separatist leaders to live up to the Minsk agreement (CSIS 2016). On May 27, 2015 it was reported that Russia has started amassing forces and weaponry near the border of Ukraine including tanks and rocket launchers. Most of this equipment had insignia and other identifying marks removed sparking concerns about a planned invasion (Tsvetkova 2015). On June 24, 2015 leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany met to discuss the situation in Ukraine and the need to implement the Minsk agreement and to de-escalate the situation was stressed by the German foreign minister (Euronews 2015).

On July 30, 2015 the Obama administration again widened the scope of their sanctions against Russia. On September 1, 2015 another ceasefire was ordered to coincide with the beginning of the school year the following weeks saw a significant decline in violence including a day without shelling for the first time since the conflict began (CSIS 2016). In the beginning of October 2015 leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany (also known as the Normandy Format) met again to discuss and ensure the implementation of Minsk II and the next day, both sides started to remove weaponry from the front lines. However, in the beginning of November ceasefire was again violated by both sides and fighting continued prompting Ukraine to threaten to send heavy weaponry back to the front lines (CSIS 2016). After a meeting of the Normandy Group on December 30, 2015 the implementation of the Minsk II agreement was extended into 2016. On February 12, 2016 a new ceasefire was agreed among the

Normandy Group set to begin on February 15. At the end of February the German foreign minister stressed again that Ukraine needed to implement the reforms agreed upon in the Minsk II agreement and in the beginning of March Barack Obama signed an order to extend sanctions against Russian officials. As of May 1, 2016 fighting in Eastern Ukraine was still ongoing and the ceasefire agreed upon only days before on April 29 had been violated (CSIS 2016).

Throughout the crisis, Russian forces were believed to be operating inside Ukraine while Russia vehemently denies these accusations. On September 24, 2014 NATO reported that Russia was significantly pulling back conventional troops from Ukraine (BBC 2014b), which would imply that Russian troops were in fact present in Ukraine. In January 2015, the Ukrainian government said that Russia had 9000 troops in Ukraine and demanded their removal while Russia claimed that it is falsely accused (Baczynska 2015). In December 2015 Putin admitted to having military specialist on the ground in Ukraine but still denied having traditional Russian troops in the country (Walker 2015).

3.3. Elements of securitisation in Obama's speeches and other public statements.

When looking at the reset policy and then how relations between the countries have changed after the start of the Ukraine crisis it is easy to assume that the US has now securitised Russia or at the very least is treating it like a security threat. The sanctions along with the rhetoric accompanying them do create that impression. The purpose of this chapter is to apply the theory of securitisation to the rhetoric of the US to analyse whether securitisation has taken place and if the Obama administration sees Russia as an existential threat and a security issue for the US. The analysis will be conducted by elements of securitisation.

3.3.1. The securitising actor

One of the most important elements of securitisation is the securitising actor. The securitising actor is the actor who can securitise an issue for the relevant audience. This

means that he or she needs to have significant authority in front of the audience he or she is speaking to in order for the audience to accept an issue as a security problem. The securitising actor in this study is the US and more specifically President Barack Obama. In terms of authority, the US and by extension, its leader the President hold significant weight in the world as a leading member of several important organisations (UN, NATO, G8 etc.) and as an economic and military power. In that sense, the ability of the US to securitise something for other countries of the world should not be in question, and this is especially true in Europe as the EU and European countries separately are considered important allies to the US and many are also members of NATO. In addition, the President is the highest leader of the United States so someone who would have more authority to speak on behalf of the country and to formulate and articulate its foreign policy would be difficult to find. Because of this, the author believes that Barack Obama has the authority to securitise issues for both the US and other countries in the world, especially in Europe. Thus, he is a capable securitising actor with significant authority and suitable for this analysis.

3.3.2. The referent object of securitisation and existential threat

This section will analyse what could be considered the referent object of securitisation in the public statements made by Barack Obama. It will also discuss the existential threat to the referent object as presented in Obama's statements. These elements will be discussed together because in most statements the referent object and the threat it is facing are named together. Also, according to the CS, the referent object is not a referent object of securitisation unless it is said to be facing an existential threat.

The analysis will show that in almost all instances, the referent object is the shared rules and norms of conduct between states. In fact, the more traditional referent objects - states - rarely come into question in his speeches. There is little to no discussion about the survival of the US or even Ukraine, which is at the centre of events. As the author will demonstrate, using Obama's public statements, he does not claim that the US, Ukraine or any other European country is facing an existential threat from Russia.

The referent object could instead be defined as the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty. Using Obama's own words: "In Ukraine, we stand for the principle that all people have the right to express themselves freely and peacefully, and have a say in their country's future," (Obama 28.01.2014). This statement was made in reference to the protests and internal political unrest that was happening in Ukraine at the time but it is the first instance where the Ukrainian crisis and the fact that the US is involved because of principles that need protecting were mentioned. He also stated later in the year when Crimea had already been annexed:

.../And that's what's at stake in Ukraine today. Russia's leadership is challenging truths that only a few weeks ago seemed self-evident -- the borders of Europe cannot be redrawn with force, that international law matters, that people and nations can make their own decisions about their future. (Obama 26.03.2014c)

In several speeches and statements he also says that European peace as a whole is being threatened by the violation of these norms. For example "Russia's aggression against Ukraine threatens our vision of a Europe that is whole, free and at peace," (Obama 05.09.2014). In Brussels, after a EU-US summit on March 26, 2014, President Obama gave a press conference with European Council President Van Rompuy, and European Commission President Barroso. During this press conference Obama confirmed that in his view, Russia's actions are not just about Ukraine. More specifically, he said:

Russia's actions in Ukraine aren't just about one country; they're about the kind of Europe -- and the kind of world -- that we live in./.../And Europe's progress rests on basic principles, including respect for international law, as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations. That's what Russia violated with its military action against Ukraine. (Obama 26.03.2014a)

In this case he did not claim the existence of an existential threat but said that the norms were violated and also stressed that these norms are indeed important as they allow countries to develop and operate in peace and that these norms have allowed peace to reign in Europe. Because he connects peace in Europe to these rules that are now being

threatened, he is giving these rules a legitimate claim for survival. He is implying that as these rules are the basis of peace, without them peace in Europe could be threatened.

In a speech given in Poland, Obama again tied the referent object and the threat it is facing very effectively by declaring:

.../is that basic principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty and freedom, the ability for people to make their own determinations about their country's future is the cornerstone of the peace and security that we've seen in Europe over the last several decades. And that is threatened by Russian actions in Crimea, and now Russian activity in eastern Ukraine. (Obama 03.06.2014)

Essentially he is saying again that what is being threatened in Ukraine is not the survival of Ukraine or any other country for that matter, but the basic principles that govern the way states behave in international relations. He also again ties the progress and prosperity experienced by many European countries to the observance of these norms, thus again stressing their value and giving them a legitimate claim for survival, which is essential for a referent object to be a successful part of securitisation.

Obama also defines the existential threat as being urgent and something that could spread. For instance he asserted that:

.../we cannot stand by when the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a nation is flagrantly violated. If that happens without consequence in Ukraine, it could happen to any nation gathered here today. (Obama 28.09.2015)

This is a clear expression of urgency and an existential threat. If a norm is violated once, it does not necessarily mean that it is no longer in force or observed. The suggestion that similar events could occur in other places in the future seems to suggest that the principles governing relation between states are being threatened to a point where they could cease to matter or even exist. Thus, these norms are facing an existential threat and if they are not enforced now, it might be too late.

3.3.3. The Referent Subject

The referent subject, according to Balzacq is that which is the existential threat and also the issue or entity being securitised (defined as a security issue). According to Barack Obama, Russia is very clearly responsible for the existential threat. In many of his statements, he has said that Russia is the one threatening the norms and rules that govern relations between states and violating international law. In addition to the annexation of Crimea, Obama puts responsibility for violence in Eastern Ukraine squarely on Russia. In a statement made on July 18, 2014 he does not say they are Russian troops or that Russia has invaded Eastern Ukraine but he does very strongly state that the separatists fighting there have significant support and equipment from Russia and it is in the power of the Russian government to de-escalate the situation (Obama 18.07.2014).

It is important to note that the referent subject of securitisation can be also seen as not being Russia but more specifically Russian actions in this current situation. Obama does not state that Russia is threatening international norms simply because of who they are as a state. Neither does he describe Russia in negative terms. Rather he brings out Russia's actions in Ukraine and in this case also says that Russian forces are indeed in Eastern Ukraine. For instance:

We agree -- if there was ever any doubt -- that Russia is responsible for the violence in eastern Ukraine. The violence is encouraged by Russia. The separatists are trained by Russia. They are armed by Russia. They are funded by Russia. Russia has deliberately and repeatedly violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. And the new images of Russian forces inside Ukraine make that plain for the world to see. (Obama 28.08.2014)

While this does place the responsibility for the situation in Ukraine on Russia, it does not define Russia as *being* the threat. Rather he continuously states that *Russia's actions* are threatening the referent object and this is also illustrated in the statements defining the referent object and existential threat. For example again: ".../That's what Russia violated with its military action against Ukraine," (Obama 26.03.2014a) and ".../And

that is threatened by Russian actions in Crimea, and now Russian activity in eastern Ukraine,” (Obama 03.06.2014).

Another example of securitising Russia’s actions rather than Russia is Obama saying:

Russia’s actions in Ukraine challenge this post-war order. Here are the facts. After the people of Ukraine mobilized popular protests and calls for reform, their corrupt President fled. Against the will of the government in Kiev, Crimea was annexed. Russia poured arms into Eastern Ukraine, fueling violent separatists and a conflict that has killed thousands. When a civilian airliner was shot down from areas that these proxies controlled, they refused to allow access to the crash for days. When Ukraine started to reassert control over its territory, Russia gave up the pretense of merely supporting the separatists, and moved troops across the border. (Obama 24.09.2014)

To securitise Russia as a country and to constitute that it is a threat to the international order and norms, it would have been more effective to simply state that Russia is threatening international order and norms. Also, in regard to the previous statements, Obama could have securitised Russia as a country by claiming that Russia continuously breaks these rules or that it does not respect the same values as other European countries do. Rather Obama chose to place the focus very directly on this current situation and did not make generalisations or define Russia as an enemy.

Because of these statements, and the ones discussed later where Obama tries to desecuritise Russia, the author would argue that in Obama’s view it is not Russia itself that is the threat but rather it’s current course of action is the threat to international security.

The statements where Obama is defining Russia or its actions in Ukraine as the threat to international security are also the ones that most often tie the situation and the existential threat to an external threatening reality for the audience. As discussed in the theory section, references to threatening objects like weaponry in general could help the securitising actor gain acceptance and in Balzacq’s view securitisation requires references to an external reality. Obama makes repeated references to the current

violence in Eastern Ukraine, the fact that Ukrainian territory was annexed, and the fact that foreign troops were moved across the border. Another example of such references is

Now, Russia has extraordinary influence over these separatists. No one denies that. Russia has urged them on. Russia has trained them. We know that Russia has armed them with military equipment and weapons, including anti-aircraft weapons. Key separatist leaders are Russian citizens. (Obama 21.07.14)

Not only does this statement again reinforce that Russia is responsible, it also has clear references to threatening weapons that are at that moment being used in and against Ukraine. This would be an example of a statement that makes the audience look around them to confirm these claims and if this statement is proved to be accurate, it could increase the likelihood of successful securitisation.

3.3.4. Emergency measures

This section will discuss the emergency measures adopted to counter the defined security threat, which in the context of this paper is the Russian intervention in Crimea and Ukraine or more generally Russian actions. According to the Copenhagen School, an important measure of successful securitisation is emergency measures that are outside the ordinary sphere of politics because such actions show that an issue has been accepted as a security threat. In addition, Salter's theory, discussed earlier in this paper, states that securitisation has taken place when emergency measures have been adopted or when emergency powers have been given to the securitising actor.

While there are no emergency powers given to either Obama or the US, there are three types of emergency measures implemented as a response to the crisis in Ukraine – economic sanctions, emergency aid to Ukraine, and increased US military presence in Eastern Europe. This section will not specifically cover the amount of aid, the number or identities of persons and companies affected by sanctions or exactly where, when and how many troops were stationed but rather examine these as they are mentioned in

Obama's statements. A general outline of the sanctions has been given in the part that covered the course of events in Ukraine.

The author will also discuss securitisation for deterrence in this section because in several cases the deterring declarations were made with the introduction of emergency measures and Obama also often explicitly stated that measures are being taken to deter further action. When analysing emergency measures, it should also be considered whether the measures were taken in response to the issue being securitised or whether they were simply a change from earlier policy and unrelated to the current situation. In the case of this work all measures taken were in fact related to Russia's actions and this is evidenced in Obama's discourse and will be shown in the analysis. This is also important because the focus of this analysis is Obama's response to Russia's role in the Ukrainian crisis and theoretically sanctions could be imposed for other reasons as well or to punish or deter action in other areas.

Economic sanctions

As stated before one of the main measures used by the US and also by the EU in response to Russia's role in the crisis in Ukraine was economic sanctions. This section will show the language used when these sanctions were announced and how they were formed as a direct response to the crisis. An important factor in securitisation is urgency and priority. As said by the CS theorists, an existential threat must take precedence over other issues because it is possible that the actors affected by the threat will not be there to deal with it later. The fact that the crisis in Ukraine and countering Russia's actions was indeed considered urgent and a priority is best evidenced by the economic sanctions. These sanctions meant that regular business was halted in many areas with Russia. This in itself shows that they were an emergency measure. In addition, the sanctions hurt not only Russia's economy but also that of the US and especially the EU. This implies that punishing and potentially stopping Russia's actions were considered more important than maintaining economic ties and the potential benefits for continued business with Russia.

There are also several instances where Obama affirms that these sanctions hurt the US and the EU but that protecting the norms that govern the way states interact is more important. For example, Obama stated that he is taking steps to impose sanctions on sectors of the Russian economy and also recognises that this may have adverse effects on the global economy but this is necessary to uphold the rules that govern relations between countries in the 21st century (Obama 20.03.2014). On March 26, 2014 Obama again expressed that he recognises the impact that extensive sanctions have on the economies of other countries as well but he also still saw them as being necessary and something that European countries and the US have taken into consideration (Obama 26.03.2014a). He also stated later in the year that “Europeans have to stand up for those ideals and principles even if it creates some economic inconvenience,” (Obama 05.06.2014).

In terms of making it clear that these sanctions are indeed imposed on Russia as a direct reaction to their actions in Ukraine, this was done when the first round of sanctions were announced by Obama on March 17, 2014. More specifically he said “Today, I’m announcing a series of measures that will continue to increase the cost on Russia and on those responsible for what is happening in Ukraine,” (Obama 17.03.2014). This language directly tying sanctions to the crisis in Ukraine continued throughout Obama’s responses to the crisis. For instance

Based on the executive order that I signed in response to Russia’s initial intervention in Ukraine, we’re imposing sanctions on more senior officials of the Russian government. In addition, we are today sanctioning a number of other individuals with substantial resources and influence who provide material support to the Russian leadership, as well as a bank that provides material support to these individuals. (Obama 20.03.2014)

On July 16, 2014 Obama imposed new sanctions against Russia and again directly tied them to the crisis in Ukraine by saying: “Finally, given its continued provocations in Ukraine, today I have approved a new set of sanctions on some of Russia’s largest companies and financial institutions,” (Obama 16.07.2014). These are just a few

examples of sanctions taken against Russia but they make it clear that these measures were taken as a response to Russia's actions in Ukraine and as such are significant when determining if Obama securitized Russia or not.

Support for Ukraine

Another part of the emergency measures taken by the US, in cooperation with European partners is providing significant aid to Ukraine to help them battle the threat to their sovereignty from within and to help stabilise the country and, by extension, the region. Early on in the crisis Obama urged US Congress to pass legislation that would allow the US to provide significant economic assistance to Ukraine and stressed that this needs to be done right away (Obama 20.03.2014). Later in 2014 Obama announced significant economic aid for Ukraine by saying, "We're supplementing the assistance that the IMF is providing with \$1 billion in additional loan guarantees, and we've discussed additional steps that we might take to help during this reform and transition process," (Obama 04.06.2014a).

In the beginning of 2015, Obama reaffirmed that they will continue to support Ukraine as the crisis continues by announcing

We will continue to work with the IMF and other partners to provide Ukraine with critical financial support as it pursues economic and anti-corruption reforms. We discussed the issue of how best to assist Ukraine as it defends itself, and we agreed that sanctions on Russia need to remain fully in force until Russia complies fully with its obligations. (Obama 09.02.2015)

This is just another example of continued economic support for Ukraine that would in all likelihood not be given in a more stable situation. Additionally as it was connected with helping Ukraine as it defends itself against Russia while Russia is kept under pressure from sanctions, it is quite clearly a measure taken in response to this significant crisis.

In addition to financial help, the US along with NATO also provided Ukraine with military assistance. In June 2014, when asked about what kind of military assistance the

US is willing to give to Ukraine Obama responded “During this crisis we have provided them nonlethal assistance that's been critical for them,” (Obama 03.06.2014). The next day Obama announced additional aid and also mentioned the type of assistance they had and continued to give to Ukraine.

We've discussed additional steps that we can take to help train and professionalize the Ukrainian law enforcement and military so they can deal with some of the challenges that are still taking place in certain portions of the country. And, in fact, today we announced some additional non-lethal assistance that we can provide -- things like night vision goggles that will help a professional Ukrainian military force do its job. (Obama 04.06.2014a)

In addition to aid given by the US he called for NATO members to give additional non-lethal military aid to Ukraine.

.../our Alliance is fully united in support of Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and its right to defend itself. To back up this commitment, all 28 NATO Allies will now provide security assistance to Ukraine. (Obama 05.09.2014)

At first, all assistance given to Ukraine was non-military and definitely non-lethal, however as the crisis progressed, the measures being considered expanded. For example, Obama stated during a press conference:

Now, it is true that if, in fact, diplomacy fails, what I've asked my team to do is to look at all options -- what other means can we put in place to change Mr. Putin's calculus -- and the possibility of lethal defensive weapons is one of those options that's being examined. (Obama 09.02.2015)

Giving military aid in the first place is significant for many reasons. First of all a military response to issues is connected to the traditional view of security and would imply that even without a widened perspective on security issues, the crisis in Ukraine would be considered a security issue for the US. In addition, considering lethal military assistance to Ukraine demonstrates an even bigger commitment to it as a security issue. Because lethal assistance was not actually granted, it could also be considered an

instance of securitisation for deterrence, which will be examined more in the last section of this subchapter.

Increased military presence in Europe

Another example of a military response to the crisis and the threat created by Russian actions is the significantly increased military presence in Europe. This was done to reassure NATO allies and other countries in Eastern Europe that they will be protected and to deter Putin from further action. For example, Obama said

.../we're demonstrating the power of American strength and diplomacy. We're upholding the principle that bigger nations can't bully the small -- by opposing Russian aggression, and supporting Ukraine's democracy, and reassuring our NATO allies. (Obama 20.01.2015)

This statement includes several important elements. First of all the sentence about demonstrating American strength is quite clearly referencing the fact that some actions taken by the US had the goal of deterring Russia from further action and to show that the US is ready to respond to any increased threat. Obama also explicitly mentioned reassuring NATO allies, which is one of the goals of increased military presence and this military presence and is mentioned often in his statements. He also declared that:

We're investing in capabilities that our military needs to deter aggression and defend our security and that of our allies. And this includes increases in our posture in Europe to reassure our NATO allies in light of particularly increased aggressive actions by Russia. (Obama 05.04.2016)

In this case he again makes it clear that these moves were done to deter further action and to show that the US with its allies is ready to respond if necessary. Obama also again very clearly states that this was done in response to Russia's actions thus connecting this increased military response to the current crisis.

Securitisation for deterrence or even simply actions for deterrence come in two main formats in Obama's statements. The first is outlined above in the increased military presence and in those cases Obama himself says that the aim is to deter. In other cases it

is done by announcing measures that are being discussed and might be implemented if Russia does not stop its current actions in Ukraine for instance: “The next step is going to be a broader-based sectoral sanctions regime,” (Obama 02.05.2014). The possibility of lethal aid mentioned in a previous section is also a deterring statement as it is said to be used only if Russia continues on its course.

A more explicitly deterring statement came shortly after the Malaysian flight was shot down and the situation in the area had not improved and Russian aggression had not lessened. Obama stated that “But we've also made it clear, as I have many times, that if Russia continues on its current path, the cost on Russia will continue to grow,” (Obama 29.07.2014). In this case Obama himself references previous statements promising stronger responses and this one is no different. At that point several rounds of sanctions were already in place but Obama explicitly states that additional measures will be taken if the situation does not improve. This is quite clearly meant for the leadership of Russia and aimed at changing their view on whether continued action is worth the possible consequences. He went even further a few days later by saying that

But what we can do is say to Mr. Putin, if you continue on the path of arming separatists with heavy armaments that the evidence suggests may have resulted in 300 innocent people on a jet dying, and that violates international law and undermines the integrity -- territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, then you're going to face consequences that will hurt your country.
(Obama 01.08.2014)

This is a clearly deterring declaration aimed not at the audience that could approve further measures to be taken against Russia but at Russia to show the potential consequences to their actions.

3.3.5. The empowering audience and the crisis in wider political debate.

This section will discuss the concept of an empowering audience, as it is present in the discourse about the crisis as well as examine to what extent was Russia and the crisis in Ukraine part of a wider political debate. These will be discussed together as the audience and the instances where the crisis was discussed are connected. As explained

earlier in this study the extent to which an issue is discussed as part of a wider political debate could be considered an important measure of securitisation. The CS states that securitisation could be considered an extreme form of politicisation, which means that it is a matter of public debate and requires government action. Therefore an issue would need to be political before it is securitised and the purpose of this section is to briefly analyse the extent of political debate surrounding Russia and its actions. The political debate will be limited to the US and to meetings attended by Obama as the goal is to study the extent of securitisation by the US.

The sheer number of statements analysed for this study shows that the issue of Russian action in Ukraine is quite important in the political sphere. This is also evidenced by the occasions on which the topic was addressed and the range of audiences involved in this issue. There are two types of audiences to the securitising or desecuritising moves studied – the domestic audience and the international audience. The domestic audience is empowering as it has the ability to approve or reject moves made by the president and through Congress also approve or reject the measures that Obama aimed to use to counter the situation. On the topic of Ukraine and Russian actions in Ukraine the President addressed the American public on several occasions. Ukraine was mentioned in three State of the Union speeches (Obama 28.01.2014, 20.01.2015 and 13.01.2016), which shows that it is indeed significant in the general political sphere of the US and that the approval of the domestic audience is important. Obama also made a number of statements over the course of the crisis to the domestic audience specifically on the situation on Ukraine and some were even named “Statement by the President on Ukraine” (Among others Obama 17.03.2014, 20.03.2014, 18.07.2014, 29.07.2014). The topic also came up at press conferences given by the President in Washington DC (Obama 01.08.2014, 02.10.2015) and in meetings with military leadership (Obama 05.04.2016).

In the case of the domestic audience Obama also directly addressed Congress and requested that the proposed measures to counter Russian actions be approved as shown in the section on emergency measures. Because Congress was directly addressed and in fact has the means to approve or reject measures they are a great example of an

empowering audience. As sanctions and significant funds for assisting Ukraine and increasing military presence in Europe were in fact approved by Congress and the measures implemented, it could be said that securitising moves in the case of Ukraine were successful, as they were accepted by the audience.

Another sphere of political debate and by extension a different audience for the crisis on Ukraine is the international field. The international audience is significant because almost all measures taken by the US were in cooperation with the EU or NATO. As shown earlier, the military assistance given to Ukraine was in cooperation with NATO allies as was the increased military presence in Eastern Europe. Financial assistance was given in cooperation with IMF and sanctions were discussed and implemented together with the EU. Significantly because the EU arguably suffers more due to the economic sanctions, convincing them of the necessity of these measures could be even more important than convincing the domestic audience. In addition, sanctions are quite ineffective when only applied by one country so convincing European allies is very important. One of the most significant examples of a speech given to an international audience is one delivered to the UN General Assembly. In that case the potential audience was almost the entire world and in the speech Obama repeated his usual rhetoric in the case of Ukraine, which is to name Russia as responsible for threatening significant international norms and also emphasise the importance of those norms (Obama 24.09.2014). He also discussed Ukraine in front of the General Assembly a year later (Obama 28.09.2015). To bring up this topic at such an important event clearly shows the importance of the issue not only in the context of establishing general importance in the sphere of international politics but also in applying the CS recommendation to study central texts and instances as they show what are the most important topics.

The topic of the crisis in Ukraine and Russian actions was also discussed in several meetings and subsequent joint press conferences with foreign heads of state like Angela Merkel (Obama 02.05.2014, 09.02.2015) and David Cameron (Obama 05.06.2014, 16.01.2015), meetings with the leadership of the EU (Obama 26.03.2014a), Secretary Generals of NATO (Obama 26.03.2014b, 26.05.2015, 04.04.2016), and the NATO

summit (Obama 05.09.2014). Furthermore it was the central topic of important speeches delivered by Obama to different audiences in Europe (Obama 26.03.2014c, 04.06.2014b, 03.09.2014b). In all of these speeches and statements Obama continued to stress the importance of supporting Ukraine and protecting the international norms at stake as well as naming Russia as clearly responsible. Such widespread discussion on the topic of the crisis in Ukraine demonstrates that it is indeed discussed as part of wider political debate and also that it is considered important enough to take precedence in many important meetings.

The purpose of this section was to demonstrate that in addition to elements of securitisation being present in statements made by President Barack Obama, the underlying conditions, that the issue is deemed important in wider political debate and that the securitising speech acts are addressed to an empowering audience, are fulfilled as well.

3.4. Instances of desecuritisation in Barack Obama's public statements.

Based on the earlier section, it could be quite easy to conclude that Russia or at least Russian actions in Ukraine have been effectively securitised as the conditions for securitisation have been met. There is a clear securitising actor that within a wide political debate on the issue and while addressing an empowering audience identifies the referent object and the referent subject, shows an existential threat as well as demonstrates why the referent object needs to survive, and proposes several different emergency measures to counter the threat that are put in force. While it can be shown that there are clear elements of securitisation in Obama's statements about Ukraine and/or Russia, almost every statement he makes also includes elements of desecuritisation, often in the form of a bid for Russia to normalise relations. Obama stresses on many occasions that he does not wish to make an enemy of Russia and also, that NATO does not see Russia as an enemy. In a statement made on March 20, 2014, during which Obama clearly named Russia as being responsible for threats and

announced sanctions, he also said “Diplomacy between the United States and Russia continues,” (Obama 20.03.2014). Furthermore, he states that Russia has a different path available as soon as they start seeking a diplomatic solution to the situation with Ukraine and that in this case they would have the support of the international community. Obama says that Ukraine should not have to choose between Russia and the US or the West in general (Obama 20.03.2014). If desecuritisation is defined as moving something into the realm of ordinary politics then emphasising continuing diplomatic relations with Russia can be considered a desecuritising move. In addition, Obama stressing the possibility of a diplomatic solution as soon as Russia agrees to it shows his reluctance to securitise Russia completely, and his statement about not having to choose between Russia and the US indicates that he does not wish to see Russia as being the enemy or even on the opposite side of the US.

There are several other statements and quotes in the period from 2014 to the end of 2015 in which Obama follows a similar rhetorical structure. He identifies Russia as responsible for events in Ukraine, mentions sanctions, and the norms that the US is fighting for with these sanctions but then stresses the possibility of normalising relations and finding a diplomatic solution. The following are a few examples of such statements made by Obama, more specifically the sections where he stresses the diplomatic and friendly solution to the issue.

.../And that's why, throughout this crisis, we will combine our substantial pressure on Russia with an open door for diplomacy. I believe that for both Ukraine and Russia, a stable peace will come through de-escalation -- direct dialogue between Russia and the government of Ukraine and the international community. /...(Obama 26.03.2014c)

.../And our hope is, is that, in fact, Mr. Putin recognizes there's a way for him to have good relations with Ukraine, good relations with Europe, good relations with the United States. But it cannot be done through the kinds of intimidation and coercion that we're seeing take place right now in eastern Europe [Ukraine]. (Obama 02.05.2014)

Moreover, a different path is available – the path of diplomacy and peace and the ideals this institution is designed to uphold. The recent cease-fire agreement in Ukraine offers an opening

to achieve that objective. If Russia takes that path – a path that for stretches of the post-Cold War period resulted in prosperity for the Russian people – then we will lift our sanctions and welcome Russia’s role in addressing common challenges./.../And that’s the kind of cooperation we are prepared to pursue again—if Russia changes course. (Obama 24.09.2014)

These are all clear bids for de-escalation and desecuritisation of the issue. Hansen’s concept of desecuritisation through rearticulation involves actively proposing political solutions to the issue and that is exactly what Obama is doing in all of these instances and other’s which have not been quoted above. These statements show a clear desire for desecuritisation by Obama.

One of the most important elements of desecuritisation is breaking the friend-enemy distinction. The logic of friends and enemies or Us vs. Them is often used in securitisation and because of that a dismantling of that distinction shows desecuritisation quite effectively. There are several instances where Obama very clearly rejects the view that Russia is somehow the opposite or an enemy of the US. For instance he said “.../But it is not in the cards for us to see a military confrontation between Russia and the United States in this region,” (Obama 28.08.2014). Additionally he stated earlier in the year “.../Understand, as well, this is not another Cold War that we’re entering into./.../The United States and NATO do not seek any conflict with Russia,” (Obama 26.03.2014c).

Obama has been very clear throughout his response to this crisis that he does not see Russia as an enemy to the United States, NATO or Europe. To emphasize this he said “Our NATO Alliance is not aimed “against” any other nation; we’re an alliance of democracies dedicated to our own collective defense,” (03.09.2014b). This statement is again a clear step away from any friend-enemy distinction and also a statement that emphasises that the US and NATO do not wish also to be seen as the enemy to Russia.

A further step away from such opposition is Obama’s constant reassurance that the US does not wish to weaken Russia or isolate it. If a state has a fully securitised view of another and sees it as an enemy and a threat it would be easy to assume that the goal of that state would be to weaken the source of the threat. In the current case, if Russia is

the threat, a weak Russia could be the goal as it is then potentially less threatening. This seems to be the opposite of Obama's approach to Russia. In fact Obama makes a point of stressing that that is not what the US wants. In several statements regarding the situation in Ukraine he says in different ways that the US is interested in a Russia that is strong, capable and that participates in the world in a constructive way. For example: "So America, and the world and Europe, has an interest in a strong and responsible Russia, not a weak one," (Obama 26.03.2014c) and "I've said consistently our preference is a strong, productive, cooperative Russia," (Obama 03.09.2014a). Obama also said

And I just want to emphasize here once again /.../ we are not looking for Russia to fail. We are not looking for Russia to be surrounded and contained and weakened. Our preference is for a strong, prosperous, vibrant, confident Russia that can be a partner with us on a whole host of global challenges. And that's how I operated throughout my first term in office. (Obama 09.02.2015)

All of these statements emphasise that the US does not wish to eliminate or weaken a state that it views as a threat to international security in the author's view demonstrates again even if Russia is the referent subject of securitisation and not Russia's actions, then Obama in fact does not wish to securitise Russia. This has been shown above in the statements mentioned and was once again reiterated in Estonia where the President said:

We have no interest in weakening Russia. It's a nation with a rich history and a remarkable people. We do not seek out confrontation with Russia. Over the past two decades, the United States has gone to great lengths to welcome Russia into the community of nations and to encourage its economic success. We welcome a Russia that is strong and growing and contributes to international security and peace, and that resolves disputes peacefully, with diplomacy. (Obama 03.09.2014b)

On this occasion Obama not only said that they do not wish to weaken or isolate Russia, he also references his previous 'reset' policy and seems to suggest that that is still the goal. Additionally he again emphasises that the US does not want to be in conflict with

Russia and does not see it as an adversary and even goes so far as to praise Russia as a country.

In an earlier section discussing emergency measures, giving military aid to Ukraine and increasing US military presence was shown as a possible military response to a security problem. Obama himself does not seem to look at it that way. In fact he said: “We are not taking military action to solve the Ukrainian problem. What we’re doing is to mobilize the international community to apply pressure on Russia./...” (Obama 28.08.2014). This again seems like a clear step away from securitisation. If military action is taken traditionally to counter security threats then ruling out military action would imply it is not a serious security threat for the US. He also said earlier in 2014 that

Now, keep in mind I think I’ve been very clear that military options are not on the table in Ukraine because this is not a situation that would be amenable to a clear military solution. (Obama 17.04.2014)

Both statements can be seen as a step away from the traditional security and military aspects of this issue as well as a reassurance that the US will not put troops on the ground in Ukraine. Emphasising this could serve to appease the US public that they are not entering another war or it could also reassure Russia that a full blown conflict is not in the cards between the two countries. In the interview published in *The Atlantic* Obama quite clearly said that Ukraine is not worth going to war over

There are ways to deter, but it requires you to be very clear ahead of time about what is worth going to war for and what is not. Now, if there is somebody in this town that would claim that we would consider going to war with Russia over Crimea and eastern Ukraine, they should speak up and be very clear about it. (Goldberg 2016)

By saying that, Obama is making it very clear that Ukraine will not be a reason for the US to go to war against Russia effectively severely limiting possible responses to the crisis and also undercutting the security status of the crisis in Ukraine and Russia’s role in it.

Another slightly controversial tactic that Obama has employed is implying that Russia is not strong and therefore not a strong threat. If this was indeed done to desecuritize Russia, it was most likely a desecuritising move aimed at the domestic audience to lessen the image of Russia as a threat to the US and also potentially to assuage fears about the US becoming weaker. This was most clearly evidenced by the following statement from Obama:

Russia is not stronger as a consequence of what they've been doing./.../And what I've consistently offered -- from a position of strength, because the United States is not subject to sanctions and we're not contracting 4 percent a year -- what I've offered is a pathway whereby they can get back onto a path of growth and do right by their people. (Obama 02.10.2015)

Essentially he is saying that Russia is in a weaker position in the world than the US and this is even done through a direct contrast between the two. This view was repeated in his speech to the UN General Assembly. He referenced the view also held by many Americans that Russia is a resurgent force and that the new Cold War is imminent and responded by pointing out that Russia is not stronger than before but rather weaker and that "Sanctions have led to capital flight, a contracting economy, a fallen ruble, and the emigration of more educated Russians," (Obama 28.09.2015). This implies again that he does not share the view of a possible new Cold War between the two and that he believes Russia is now weaker than before and thus a less formidable rival and in the interview given to *The Atlantic* he says:

.../And the notion that somehow Russia is in a stronger position now, in Syria or in Ukraine, than they were before they invaded Ukraine or before he had to deploy military forces to Syria is to fundamentally misunderstand the nature of power in foreign affairs or in the world generally. (Goldberg 2016)

In the same interview he makes it clear that while he understands that Russia could be dangerous he does not consider it a top threat to the US and instead sees the most threatening country potentially being China and also defines climate change as a potential existential threat (Goldberg 2016).

In addition to the desecuritising discourse emerging from Obama, there are also examples of continued cooperation between the two countries and US policy reflects a continuing outreach towards Russia aimed at repairing relations. For example, it was reported that in December 2014, with sanctions aimed against Russia in force and armed conflict in Ukraine continuing, a lengthy review of foreign policy toward Russia was conducted and Obama made a conscious decision to continue finding points of co-operation with Russia. Secretary of State John Kerry has continuously been in contact with Sergei Lavrov and has reportedly discussed potential cooperation on issues like Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea and Syria (Rogin 2014). This policy has been reflected in Obama's discourse. For example he said

There's never been a point in time in which we said that we don't want Russia or other countries that may have differences with us on a whole host of other things to avoid working with us against ISIL. (Obama 24.11.2015)

Here Obama says that they have differences with Russia but that there are still areas where they can cooperate effectively and can be partners. Grouping Russia with other countries that have differences with the US seems to suggest that their current relationship with Russia is not worse than with others and that this disagreement does not destroy the relationship between two countries. In another statement he praises the nuclear cooperation still happening with Russia by saying

Working with Russia, we're on track to eliminate enough Russian highly enriched uranium for about 20,000 nuclear weapons, which we are converting to electricity here in the United States. (Obama 01.04.2016)

In conclusion the author would argue that because the two countries still communicate and cooperate and because Barack Obama in his rhetoric has continuously moved away from a friend-enemy distinction in relation to Russia and actively proposed a political solution to the issue it can be said that Obama has actively desecuritised Russia consistently throughout the crisis.

3.5. Comparison with Iran

To illustrate the extent that securitisation can take, the author will discuss the securitisation of Iran by the US. This was mainly done by the Bush administration in the early 2000s but will constitute a comparison for levels of securitisation. In terms of securitising Iran, an important moment came in 2002 when Bush defined the concept of *the axis of evil*. This meant a group of states including Iraq, Iran and North Korea that are inherently evil and enemies to the US (Brennan 2008: 172). In 2006 a renewed version of *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* was published and according to that document the US government was obligated to predict and neutralise potential threats to the state using all necessary measures. In the same document Iran was identified as the single most dangerous country to the US (Dunn 2007: 20). Essentially this paper says that if Iran is deemed threatening enough, military action against the country is warranted and could even be pre-emptive. In some academic articles, Iran is characterised as ‘aggressive’, ‘anti-American’, and even murderous (Pollack, Takeyh, 2005) and a US academic Joshua Muravchik even called upon President Bush to bomb Iran before leaving office (Dunn 2005: 21).

The rhetoric against Iran has significantly softened during Barack Obama’s term in office, but there are still significant differences in how he talks about Iran and how he talks about Russia. If Iran is defined as inherently evil, untrustworthy and a country that sponsors terrorism and sees the US as its biggest enemy then, as shown above, the discourse regarding Russia does not reach those levels. The discourse against Iran touched upon its identity and said that Iran is inherently dangerous, but in discourse regarding Russia the criticism is aimed against the actions of the country, not the identity of the country. In addition, Obama stated that “There are no guarantees that negotiations will succeed, and I keep all options on the table to prevent a nuclear Iran,” (Obama 20.01.2015) but in the case of Russia using military force against Russia has never been discussed as an option and even sending military aid to Ukraine to help fight the separatists supported by Russia has been limited to non-lethal assistance. This all implies that Iran is considered a worse security threat to the US than Russia.

Even though Obama's rhetoric regarding Iran is significantly softer than that of his predecessor he still defines Iran as an enemy while going out of his way to show that Russia is not considered its enemy. This means that the friend-enemy distinction that was consistently rejected by Obama in regard to Russia and is often employed in cases of securitisation is clearly present in the case of Iran. For example in the interview given to *The Atlantic* in April 2016 he stated "Iran, since 1979, has been an enemy of the United States, and has engaged in state-sponsored terrorism, is a genuine threat to Israel and many of our allies, and engages in all kinds of destructive behavior," (Goldberg 2016). This rhetoric is in very clear contrast to the way Obama has talked about Russia and shows that while Iran could be considered securitised as a country, the view on Russia is not as extreme. The author would argue that in addition to the active desecuritisation rhetoric shown above, this comparison with a state defined as an enemy in no uncertain terms, shows that Russia has in fact not been fully securitised by the US.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the discourse of the Obama administration toward Russia since the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis to see whether Russia has been securitised and treated like a security threat to the US. This was done using President Obama's public statements as he is the highest representative of the country and thus has the authority to speak on foreign policy and securitise issues for the US and even internationally. The analysis was conducted using the framework of securitisation as created by the CS and further developed by other authors. The study also applied Lene Hansen's model of discourse analysis and more specifically the model designed specifically to analyse official discourse.

After examining Barack Obama's statements, the author argues that while elements of securitisation are clearly and effectively present in Barack Obama's discourse to the extent that securitisation can even be judged as successful, it has been consistently countered with clear elements of desecuritisation. Even without the comparison to Iran and even if Russia is considered the referent subject of securitisation in Obama's discourse it is quite clear that securitising Russia was not the aim of Barack Obama's policy as he consistently desecuritised Russia and went out of his way to clarify that the US does not see Russia as an enemy. Because of this the author would claim that Russia has not been securitised by the Obama administration. Rather it would seem that Obama's goal was to effectively respond to a crisis happening in Europe and to make it clear that this is an issue of extreme and existential importance while simultaneously trying to not alienate Russia completely. His frequent bids for de-escalation and diplomacy would also suggest that even if Russia is now securitised for the US, which could be argued as it was named a significant security threat by the Pentagon, this was not the aim of Barack Obama's policy.

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Kokkuvõte

Obama administratsiooni poolne Venemaa julgeolekustamine seoses Ukraina kriisiga

Käesoleva magistritöö eesmärk on uurida Obama administratsiooni poolset Venemaa julgeolekustamist pärast Ukraina kriisi algust 2014. aastal. Eesmärk on eelkõige analüüsida Barack Obama enda ütlusi ja teha kindlaks, kas ja millisel tasemel julgeolekustamine tõepoolest aset leidis.

Töö uurimisteema on oluline nii teoreetilisest kui ka praktilisest vaatepunktist. Julgeolekustamine on muutunud üheks rahvusvaheliste suhete populaarsemaks teooriaks ning seetõttu on selle avamine ja mõistmine väga oluline. Venemaa ja USA vahelised suhted on olulised väga paljude riikide jaoks kuna mõlemal tegutsejal on palju liitlasi, kelle välispoliitikat need kaks suurriiki oluliselt mõjutavad. Julgeolekustatud vaade USA poolt Venemaale toob kaasa reaalseid poliitilisi tagajärgi nii mõlemale neist kui ka mõlema liitlastele, mistõttu on oluline mõista, missugune on USA vaade tegelikult.

Töö esimene peatükk annab ülevaate uurimuse teoreetilisest raamistikust, mis baseerub eelkõige Kopenhaageni koolkonnale ja nende julgeolekustamise käsitlele. Kopenhaageni koolkonna juured on konstruktivistlikes käsitlustes ning nende teooria käsitleb julgeolekuohtude konstrueerimist läbi kõneaktide, mis ei kirjelda lihtsalt ümbritsevat reaalsust, vaid mõjutavad seda ise. Kopenhaageni koolkond väidab, et julgeolekuprobleem tekib siis, kui miski defineeritakse kui julgeolekuprobleem ja eksistentsiaalne oht. Eksistentsiaalne oht annab tegutsejatele õiguse kasutada probleemi lahendamiseks erakorralisi meetmeid ning tõstab probleemiga tegelemise välja tavapoliitika sfäärist.

Kopenhaageni koolkond eristab julgeolekustamises kolme eri tüüpi tegutsejaid või ühikuid. Need on julgeolekustav tegutseja, kes on autoriteetsel positsioonil ning kes oma kõneaktidega üritab publikut veenda, et eksisteerib julgeolekuoht; referentobjekt,

mis on see, mida konkreetne julgeolekuoht ähvardab ning millel on õigus ellujäämisele; ja funktsionaalsed tegutsejad, kes ei sobi eelmistesse kategooriatesse, aga mõjutavad oluliselt teatud valdkonna julgeolekusfääri.

Lisaks Kopenhaageni koolkonnale kasutab käesolev töö analüüsis teiste teoreetikute panuseid julgeolekustamise teooriasse. Näiteks Thierry Balzacqi poolt sisse toodud referentssubjekt, mis tähendab subjekti, mida konkreetne eksistentsiaalne oht ähvardab ja volitusi või võimu andev publik (empowering audience), kellel on võim kas aksepteerida või tagasi lükata julgeolekustava sammu tegija poolt välja pakutud erakorralised meetmed eksistentsiaalse ohuga võitlemiseks. Lisaks rakendab käesolev analüüs ka tema käsitlust julgeolekustamisest kui pikemaajalisest protsessist, mitte vaid üksikutest kõneaktidest. See peegeldub empiirilise analüüsi ülesehituses, mis analüüsib julgeolekustamist elementide kaupa ning näitab nende elementide kohalolu diskursuses pikema ajaperioodi vältel. Julgeolekustamise analüüsis rakendab autor ka Vuori poolt välja toodud julgeolekustamist heidutuse eesmärgil, mis lisandub tavakäsitlusele, kus julgeolekustamist kasutatakse enamasti tulevikus võetavate erakorraliste meetmete legitimeerimiseks ning Salteri käsitlust, mis lisas olulise küsimusena teema positsiooni laiemas poliitilises arutluses.

Oluline osa analüüsis on ka julgeolekutustamisel. Julgeolekutustamine (desecuritisation) on Kopenhaageni koolkonnas defineeritud kui julgeolekustamise vastand ja liikumine julgeolekustamisest välja. Lene Hansen on selle mõiste käsitlusse teinud olulisi panuseid ning tema julgeolekutustamine läbi probleemi reartikuleerimise on peamine käsitus, mida selle töö julgeolekutustamist arutav peatükk rakendab. See tähendab, et julgeolekutustamine toimub kui teadlik samm julgeolekustamisest eemale ning ka seda tehakse läbi kõneaktide. Probleemi reartikuleerimine või ümber sõnastamine tähendab, et kõneaktides pakutakse aktiivselt probleemile poliitilist lahendust ning liigutakse eemale eristusest sõber vs vaenlane.

Töö metodoloogiline raamistik baseerub Lene Hanseni poststrukturealistliku diskursuseanalüüsi mudelile. See töö rakendab konkreetsemalt tema esimest intertekstuaalset mudelit, mida kasutatakse ametliku diskursuse analüüsiks. See mudel

keskendub eelkõige ametlikele ja poliitiliselt laiale publikule mõeldud avalikele ütlustele. Kuna töö eesmärk on analüüsida Barack Obama avalike ja ametlikult avaldatud ütluste põhjal tema administratsiooni Venemaa suunalist välispoliitikat on ametliku diskursuse analüüsiks mõeldud mudel kõige sobivam.

Uurimuses kasutatavate tekstide valikul järgib autor nii Hanseni kui ka Kopenhaageni koolkonna soovitusi. Kopenhaageni koolkond soovitas valida analüüsiks tekstid, mis on poliitilises arutelus kesksed, sest see näitab potentsiaalse julgeolekuprobleemi üldist olulisust. Hansen tõi oma mudeli kirjelduses näitena välja presidentide ütlused ning töö analüüsis kasutati Valge Maja poolt avaldatud Barack Obama avalikke kõnesid ja muid sõnavõtte, mis puudutasid Ukraina kriisi või suhteid Venemaaga. Analüüsi kaasati ka pikem intervjuu Obamaga, mis avaldati ajakirjas *The Atlantic* 2016. aasta aprillis.

Uurimuse empiirilise analüüsi peatükk annab kõigepealt ülevaate Obama Venemaa suunalisest välispoliitikast enne Ukraina kriisi ja seejärel ülevaate Ukraina kriisi käigust. Julgeolekustamise empiiriline analüüs teostatakse julgeolekustamise elementide kaupa. Need elemendid on julgeolekustav tegutseja, referentobjekt ja eksistentsiaalne oht, referentsubjekt, erakorralised meetmed, võimu andev publik ja teema laiemas poliitilises arutelus. Julgeolekutustamist analüüsitakse eraldi protsessina eraldiseisvas alapeatükis. Kõigis analüüsi osades kaasatakse ütlusi erinevatest ajahetkedest 2014. aasta algusest kuni 2016. aasta kevadeni ning julgeolekustamise ja julgeolekutustamise elementide olemasolu näidatakse Obama retoorika näitel. Viimasena lisatakse empiirilise analüüsi lõppu võrdlus Iraaniga. Iraani võib lugeda üheks USA retoorikas tugevalt julgeolekustatud tegutsejaks ning võrreldes retoorikat, mida kasutatakse Venemaa kohta retoorikaga, mida kasutatakse rääkides Iraanist saab võrrelda ka julgeolekustamise taset.

Analüüsi tulemusena leiab autor, et julgeolekustamiseks vajalikud elemendid on selgelt Barack Obama diskursuses olemas ning seda võib ka teoreetikute käsitle alusel lugeda edukaks julgeolekustamiseks, kuna publik tundub nõustuvat probleemi püstitusega ning erakorralisi meetmeid rakendati Venemaa vastu. Sellele vaatamata väidab autor, et Venemaa ei ole Obama administratsiooni poolt täielikult julgeolekustatud, kuna kriisi

algusest peale on Obama diskursuses selgelt olemas ka julgeolekutustavad liigutused ja pidevalt on rõhutatud probleemi diplomaatilist lahendust, koostöö jätkumist teistel teemadel ning seda, et USA ei näe Venemaad oma vaenlase ega vastasena. Seetõttu võib väita, et tegemist on kas mõõduka julgeolekustamise või tasakaalustatud lähenemisega, kus olulise probleemiga üritatakse tegeleda efektiivselt, aga samal ajal ei soovita Venemaad tõrjuda ega isoleerida, vaid pigem rohkem rahvusvaheliste suhete sfääri integreerida.

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