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Securitization of Soft Power in a Highly Securitized Environment

(Master's dissertation)

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Foreword

With this dissertation, I am finishing my double degree master studies of Russian, Central and East European studies at University of Glasgow and University of Tartu. This last two years were very rewarding for me. I gained a lot of new knowledge and built skills, which will help me both in my professional and in my personal life. Hopefully, this thesis is a good example of how I was able to put these skills into use.

This dissertation is one of the largest academic projects I have achieved so far. It took me several months to finish it. I went through different stages, some more interesting, other rather boring. Sometimes I felt desperate, other times I experienced the feelings of discovering something novel. All of this helped me to grow, keep my focus and discipline. In the end, I was able to successfully finish the work, which you now hold in your hands. I am hoping that this dissertation will enrich the scientific community with new knowledge.

Although my dissertation is an individual project, several people helped me while working on it. I would like to thank them at this place. First of all, I would like to thank all members of faculty and staff that I got into contact during my studies in Glasgow, Tartu and Kiev. I am very grateful especially to Dr. Mykola Hnatyuk, who was my advisor during my study trip to Kiev. He provided me with many interesting insights and advices concerning my work. More importantly, however, he was able to arrange access to conferences and other events taking place in Kiev for me. Thanks to this, I could then approach experts to conduct interviews, as a part of my thesis. Another important person in this regard is the military attaché at the Slovak Embassy in Ukraine, Ivo Gahír. He not only provided me with moral support especially in the early stages of my stay in Kiev, he was also able to arrange a meeting with some other people with whom I conducted interviews. I would also like to thank Jano Orlovský from the Open Society Foundation in Bratislava for similar aid.

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they found some time for my project. Their insights were very valuable and they helped me construct a more complete picture of the situation in Ukraine.

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INTRODUCTION

Since its declaration of independence from the Soviet Union, Ukraine has been a highly divided society. In simplified terms, the country has been divided into the West and the East, not only geographically but also politically. The Western part generally tends to support integration of Ukraine in the Euro-Atlantic structures, whilst the Eastern part has been supportive of the Russian geopolitical view of the world. These two views have battled over the power in Ukraine for the past quarter of a century. As a result, a country, which used to be a backbone of the Soviet economy, and one of its richest parts, became one of the poorest countries in Europe and an international battlefield.

After the Euromaidan revolution, forces preferring the Euro-Atlantic orientation of Ukraine came to power. Ukraine signed the association agreement with the European Union, with a view of joining this international structure in the future. Similar aim is present regarding the NATO.

However, Russia views this development as contrary to its own interests. Russian president Putin described the events as a coup d'état co-organized by the Western forces (Interfax 2014). They consider the War in Donbass a civil conflict because of this development (Russkaya Vesna 2017). The reports from the international organizations have stated, that Russia has military presence in the area, though (Segodnya 2018).

Besides these hard measures, Russia also tries to influence Ukrainian population on its side. To do this, Russia uses various methods, some of which can be included under the

umbrella term of Russian soft power. Using Russian language, media, the Orthodox Church and common historical memory, Russia attempts to sway Ukrainians on their side.

Russian soft power is a concept that has enjoyed some attention, especially in the last ten years. Many authors both in Russia and abroad have studied it. From the work of many authors (Tsygankov 2006, Vapler et al. 2010, Bobylo 2014, Budaev 2015), we are very well able to find out what is the Russian conception of soft power. Another group of authors extended their focus. Instead of discussing the soft power creation, they studied the reaction of countries that are the target of Russian soft power. While some of them looked at the effectiveness and appeal of soft power (Osipova 2014, Cheskin 2017), others examined the subversive tactics and effects of the phenomenon (Ćwiek-Karpowicz 2013, Van Herpen 2015, Grigas 2016).

In my dissertation, I follow, in a way, this latter group of authors. Because Russia has already breached the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, the politicians in Ukraine tend to view the influence of Russia as threatening. As a result, they will try to make such actions that would seemingly secure Ukraine from these Russian efforts.

However, as I specify below, soft power is about attraction and non-violent methods to influence other countries. It is therefore puzzling how someone can consider a non-violent action as a threat. I believe that this issue requires some clarification. Therefore, I dedicate my work on this dissertation to this issue. Thus, the focus of my dissertation will be on the securitization tendencies of Ukraine regarding Russian soft power. My research question is “how does Ukraine securitize Russian soft power efforts”. The focus will be on how Ukrainian politicians define the threat and what they offer to do about it.

This approach is novel from three points of view. First, although some authors have expressed their views that Russia tries to undermine the stability and divide societies with its soft power effort, there have been few studies on the reaction of the target states. Second, there has been no studies, which try to examine the relationship between soft power and securitization. Lastly, only a few studies have employed the securitization theory in a highly securitized environment, which Ukraine is, due to its war with Russia. My dissertation thus

has a potential to develop the theory of securitization in a scenario, which has not been in the focus of scholars up to this point.

Dissertation outline

This dissertation will be divided into three chapters, excluding the introduction and conclusion.

In the first chapter, I will define my theoretical concepts. First, I will introduce the securitization theory. I will define the crucial concepts of threat and political security. Furthermore, I will introduce how securitization can be used to react to security threats. The theory will also allow me to formulate predictions, which I will test through the examination of the case study. Second, I will talk about the concept of soft power. I will introduce its traditional understanding, as devised by Joseph Nye. I will pay the most attention to the concepts of attraction and repulsion, and use additional theoretical literature to develop my arguments. I will also look at the literature written by Russian academicians, in order to draw a more concrete picture of what Russian soft power is. I will end up with a definition of what Russian soft power is. This will help me in the further stage, when I will try to ascertain the reaction of Ukraine, through the lens of securitization theory.

The second chapter will be methodology. In this part, I will introduce the methods in use. In general, there will be four issues to discuss. First is the research design. I will introduce the methodology of a case study and the way I am going to look at one case. Second is the gathering of data. I will be different textual sources, which record discourse, as my data. I will further support the data with expert interviews. I will introduce these methods of data gathering, their weaknesses and strengths, as well as forms of triangulation. The third issue is the question of analysing the data, for which I will be using discourse analysis. I will also introduce this method in the methodology chapter. The last issue is the selection of data to examine. I will explain why I focus on certain instances when Russian soft power is securitized.

The third chapter will be empirical. I will bring in the gathered data. The first part will be descriptive. I will show what discourses were used in parliamentary debates and look for the frames of security. The second part of the empirical chapter will be analytical. I will find out if and how the discourse of security was used in order to face the threat of Russian soft power. I will also present my argument based on the findings.

In the last chapter I will conclude my dissertation. I will present my findings in a concise fashion and reflect on them. I will also judge the strengths and weaknesses of the study, and make recommendations for further research.

1. THORETICAL PREDICTIONS

1.1. Securitization theory

The scholars of so-called Copenhagen school, namely Ole Waever and Barry Buzan, first developed the theory of securitization. These authors realized that the narrow focus of the security in military terms was not sufficient to understand the post-Cold War world (cf. Waever 1995, Buzan et al. 1998, Buzan & Waever 2003). Theorists then went to use the concept of securitization on wide range of different issues from economy to welfare, environment, cultural identity, etc.

Waever (1995) understands that the questions about security are usually risen in the situations when the national sovereignty or independence is threatened. This is mostly a state-centric approach, although Waever acknowledges that we can go beyond the notion of a state when talking about securitization. These may be the conceptions of society and identity (Abulof 2014).

The developed theory of securitization is supposed to answer how the security problems are created, and how the security is consequently translated into policy. Thus, the question that securitization theory is supposed to answer is not what security is, but what it does (Guzzini 2011).

It is important to note that Waever (1995) does not consider security to be a state where no danger exists. Rather, he speaks about security as a situation where both a threat

exists, and simultaneously a solution to the problem is offered. Insecurity, on the other hand, is the situation where a threat exists, but there is no solution offered. Therefore, he says that security is a speech act. Only when we talk about security, when we name a perceived problem to be as such, security is being created. Considering this from a state-centred view, it is safe to say that a security problem arises when the policy elites – securitizing actors – talk about it as such. It then allows them to take the necessary means to defend the state security or national sovereignty. From this, it is clear that only the national elites can be the actors of the speech act “security”, because only they hold access to the means to stop the threatening situation to develop further.

Authors (Buzan et al. 1998) argue that securitization is one of the ways in which politics can answer a current issue. In order to securitize an issue, it needs to be “presented as an existential threat” (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 24). The actors usually claim that the issue needs to take absolute priority when dealing with it. It also allows the political actors to take measures, which would otherwise not be necessary or acceptable. However, as Abulof (2014) points out, in the literature on securitization, the empirical data hardly ever supports that the actors of securitization talk about existential threat. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the limits when the securitization begins and ends.

Some authors argue that in order to securitize, politicians need to abandon normal politics and use extraordinary means (Williams 2003). However, considering that securitization theory can be applied beyond the area of military, it is not always necessary to disregard standard political procedure. It suffices, therefore, to construe the issue as a threat (Sjöstedt 2008), or, make a securitizing move (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 25). Additionally, Roe (2012) argues that extraordinary politics can happen when the decisions are made hastily, without much deliberation and discussion. This is also in line with the Schmittian logic of securitization as presented by Williams (2003). It is a right of a sovereign to decide whether a securitizing action must be taken.

Following this literature, I will therefore consider that securitization starts to occur, when a securitizing move is made. That is, securitization is starting to happen

when actors of security – usually the elites – define a threat and offer a solution. It also has to be extraordinary in some terms. Thus, a securitization is only happening when the solution goes contrary to usual rules, or breaches liberties or basic rights. The threshold, whether we can talk about securitization or politization is in the description – a threat is invoked, and in the solution – a breach of generally accepted liberties or rights is offered. In terms of time, a bill needs to be accepted fast from its introduction. I use a threshold of half a year¹ from the introduction, for a securitizing move to fulfil the requirements of a securitization.

However, just talking about the issue is not sufficient to complete the securitization. The audience must respond to the elite discourse, and understand the issue as threatening. The audience is not always the same. In some cases, it may be members of the parliament or other kind of committees. It can be other public officials, whose support of an issue can be crucial, such as bureaucracy or army. There is of course the public as well, whose voice and understanding is important especially in the liberal democracies (Vuori 2008).

Balzacq (2011) claims that the elite discourse wishing to securitize an issue needs to be aligned with the feelings and views of the audience. Therefore, rather than being merely a speech act, securitization is a process in which an agent is looking to persuade the audience to support the security action (Balzacq 2005). It starts with a securitizing move; that is a speech act, which claims that there is a threat. It ends by finding the support of the audience, and taking the necessary action (Roe 2008).

For that reason, authors (Roe 2008, Balzacq 2011, p. 9) distinguish between moral and formal support. Parliaments and official institutions, which can give a legislative or other kind consent on taking extraordinary measures to battle the threat, give formal support. This formal support is crucial, because it legitimizes the action taken. Moral support than lies

¹ This is based on the average time in the European countries, even though a bill can take between a few days up to many months to get passed. Parliamentary Institute Research Centre (2014) of Montenegro compiled a list of European countries with an average time to pass a bill. Ukraine is not mentioned, but an average length of passing a bill in other countries is between half a year and one year. Considering that securitization presumes quick adoption, the lower border of this range is, in my opinion, a fair threshold.

within the public. Mobilisation of the public is also important, because it may have an impact on the actual success of securitization (Roe 2008).

When a problem is defined as a threat by a political actor, it needs to resonate with the audience, in order to excuse further action. Addressing the audience with pronouns like “we”, “us”, or “our”, helps the actor to persuade them that they are on the same wave. Reaching back to collective memories, articulating the feelings and perceptions that the audience holds are other efficient techniques of persuasion (Balzacq 2011, p. 8-11).

Considering that the process of securitization implies the “us” vs. “other” distinction leads us to another important point. As Williams (2003) points out, securitization theory has its roots in the binary *friend vs. enemy*, introduced by Carl Schmitt (1932/2007). Securitizing the issue means that the actors are willing to go into a conflict with the potential enemy.

Furthermore, Schmitt is invoked also in the case of the extraordinary means, which are necessary to be taken in the case of security problem. It aligns with the power of the sovereign, who has the means to pronounce a state of emergency, in order to take a specific decision. Although Abrahamsen (2005) says that the decision to securitize the issue may also be a result of trying to hide other problems through securitizing, the sovereign must take the decision to go beyond the normal politics (Williams 2003). Furthermore, he needs to gain support for such a move from the audience.

Therefore, I will consider securitization to be completed, when the parliament votes on an issue and gives it the formal support. Although I will not be able to examine the extent of the moral support – the reaction of the public – in its full extent, I will examine how some parts of the public reacted, when the securitizing move was made.

1.1.1. Objects of securitization

For this research, two particular strands of securitization are important, namely political and social security. Basically, securitization is the means to secure survival. As Waever points out, “[a] state that loses its sovereignty does not survive as a state, a society that loses its

identity fears that it will no longer be able to live *as itself*'. This means that for the survival of a state, the preservation of its sovereignty is crucial. For the survival of the nation, it is the preservation of its identity (Waeber 1995, p. 67). Even though, as McDonald (2008) shows, these two strains are often fused together for conceptual purposes, Waeber argues for their separateness. In the following paragraphs, I will shed some light on these areas of securitization.

1.1.1.1. Political security

Threats to the state sovereignty may be various. They may entail military threats. These are, however, of no concern to this project, considering that the focus of it is on soft power, rather than hard (military) measures. There are, nevertheless, other, non-military threats, which can be used to securitize the situation. As Buzan et al. (1998, p. 142) point out, political threats mainly aim to weaken the state's ability to organize itself, to decrease its legitimacy. They can range from pressuring the government through inciting secession, coups and other undermining acts. These actions may be a preparation for later military occupation, but not necessarily.

Threats in the political arena can be directed towards the idea of the state or its institutions. Threatening idea of the state means to threaten its political ideology (Vuori 2008) or the constituting nationalism. Such threats can then lead to destabilization of the situation within the country, by invoking lack of legitimacy or by supporting ethno-national identities hostile to the current regime, or even by claiming that the state should not have a right to autonomy. By doing this, there is a chance that the state sovereignty is undermined. Considering that the aim of a state is to hold complete sovereignty over its territory and population, invoking such threats can lead to take extraordinary action, in order to safeguard the sovereignty (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 152).

If we talk more concretely about such external threats, those related to ethnic diversity within the state are quite common. An external form of such threats can arrive especially when an outside power claims it has a right to take some part of the population under their

protection. In the case of the formative ideology of the state, it may be threatening for a state when a foreign power tries to advance the ideas, which are contrary to general understanding of the working of the state (Buzan et al. 1998, p, 153).

The governments are the securitizing actors in the area of political security. They will apply securitization approach when they feel that the government may be threatened. In the liberal democracies, the governments hold a legitimate power over the state. Therefore, if they call for a securitizing action, it is presumed that this legitimacy is being threatened from outside. It is thus also legitimate to defend the internal structure and cohesion of the state, when such an event occurs (Vuori 2008).

In some cases, a threat to political security may be understood as a threat to the national interest. However, this national interest may also be understood in ethnic terms. Therefore, a threat to the nation means the threat to certain ethnic identity (Abulof 2014). This brings us to the second conception of security described below.

1.1.1.2. Societal security

There are more nuances when talking about the societal security. As written above, societal security concerns itself with protection of identity. There may be a problem, however, in defining society and their identity. This is true for both a majority society and their identity, and a minority within a country. As Roe (2004a) points out, some scholars found the original definition by the authors of securitization theory insufficient and inaccurate. This is mostly because identity is a fluid category that pertains mostly to individuals (cf. McSweeney 1996). Nevertheless, as Buzan and Waever (1997) argue, identity is created in an intersubjective way. An identity of an individual does not mean anything, unless an individual can relate to other members holding similar characteristics. Additionally, there is a possibility to observe how a society wishes to defend its identity from a more objective point of view. This is because at a certain point of observation the identity has its more or less discernible and distinct features (Waever 2008, p. 583).

However, these may largely blend, especially in the case of Ukraine. Even though there is at least one “objective” (Roe 2004a, p. 47) factor of identity, namely the language, it does not always find its way into the intersubjective definition of either Russian or Ukrainian identity (Kulyk 2016). Nevertheless, as Waever (2008, p. 584) points out, as long as individuals identify with a certain identity, we can talk about a common identity. This is especially true when this identity gets politicized, and individuals thus choose to position themselves on one side or the other. This is of course our case, because we look at the reaction of politicians to influence of Russia.

There are at least three different ways how to approach the concept societal security, as Waever (1995) points out. The state can consider a national minority to be a threat to its security. Immigrants or asylum seekers in a country may create a similar situation of insecurity. Secondly, the central government can use securitizing arguments when it sees that the threat originates from its own society (cf. Wilkinson 2007). Lastly, authors (Waever 1995, Buzan et al. 1998, Roe 2004a, 2004b) talk about the threat to societal identity from above. This may include the question of national identity within the European Union, the identity of migrants coming to a different country, or identity of national minorities within a particular state. When these communities feel threatened by the force from above, they can apply the discourse of securitization, arguing to protect their own identity.

In our case, I will only consider the first situation. This happens when another threatens the national or ethnic identity. This brings us back to the abovementioned conception of “us” vs. the “other” dichotomy. The threat may come from the national minority that is present in the country (Waever 1995). Because the societal identification can exist across the borders (Herd & Löfgren 2001), the threat to national identity can come from abroad as well. The more the there is the encouragement of the other identity, in our case Russian, the more can the native identity feel threatened (Roe 2004a, p. 43).

This is especially true when we take into the account the triadic nexus of Rogers Brubaker (1996). It says that besides the actual agenda of the minority within a state, there is also a separate agenda pursued by the minority’s “kin-state”. It may, or may not align with

the actual agenda of the minority. Therefore, just because of a presence of Russian speakers, Russia may find it appropriate to maintain its influence in the neighbouring countries. In response, Ukraine may securitize the issue of the national minorities, namely the issue of Russian speakers. Or, more specifically, Ukrainians will try to securitize their national identity as opposed to the Russian imperial conception of “older” and “younger brother” (Kappeler 2014).

Therefore, through securitization, holders of the identity will try to maintain their traditions, culture or religion and avoid existential threats to them. By considering the “other” identity as a threat, the actors will try to diminish its influence, and reinforce the “our” identity (Swimelar 2013).

However, this “us” versus “other” dichotomy can actually lead to divisions in the society. This is true once the “other” is geographically not separate, but is internal to the geographical space. Abbas (2018) points out to the fact that securitization may result in undermining of the social cohesion and dividing the society.

1.1.1.3. Objects of securitization summary

Having conceptualized what I understand as securitization, I will follow with conceptualization of objects of securitization. Even though Wæver distinguishes societal and political security as two distinct objects, Abulof (2014) argues that these may actually overlap. This is also true, because, as argued above, the identity can be politicized.

Therefore, in my dissertation, I will focus on such securitizing efforts that will have in their aim securitizing of sovereignty, political regime, as well as ethnic, linguistic or religious identity. As will be shown below, Russia tries to influence the views of the Ukrainians using soft power in all of these aspects. I will therefore look for instances when both political and societal security are invoked.

Additionally, as Williams (2003) points out, the media are an important player in this regard. Their portrayal of the situation, the distinction between “us” and “them”, can set the

tone of the discourse. Having the capacity to inform and influence, they may also be considered as a threat to the nation's security. Thus, it will also be important to look at how Ukrainian security agents deal with this particular threat.

1.2. Soft power theoretical conceptualization

1.2.1. Power as a concept

When talking about power, it is important to clarify certain terms. The most important of those is the term power. Robert A. Dahl (1957) was one of the first who tried to conceptualize this word for the scientific study. He admits that previous authors as ancient as Plato and Aristotle, or more recent scholars like Hobbes or Weber, worked with the concept. Nevertheless, he also points out to the terminological vagueness of the word power. It is often substituted for the words influence or control, to which it is closely related. Yet, from his observation, he comes with a working definition of power that stipulates: "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (Dahl 1957, p. 202-3). However, very importantly for our research, Dahl refuses to equate power with causality, rather he considers it a relation. This means that having power does not necessarily mean that the expected results will appear. Dahl suggests measuring power on a probability bases then.

A few years after Dahl's article, a couple of American authors came with an idea, which sought to resolve an emerging discord, mainly between sociologists and political scientists on the nature of power (Bachrach & Baratz 1962). The former group, also called the elitists, argued that power tends to be centralized. On the other hand, the latter group, who named themselves pluralists, claimed that power is largely diffused. The couple of authors completely rejected the elitist point of view as flawed, and admitted to the pluralists that power means to participate in the decision-making procedures. However, they go deeper into this idea, by saying the following: as its first face, power happens when A creates rules and decisions, which effect the B. In its second face, power means to influence the

institutional set-up, in which decisions are made. More precisely, power means to be able to set agenda, to influence what is or is not discussed, what it is that the decisions are made about.

Yet, as Steven Lukes (2005, p. 25) pointed out, this approach was largely influenced by the idea that we can indeed predict actions and consequences from the observation of actors' behaviour. He agrees that there are certain decisions that are made consciously. Nevertheless, he also suggests that decision-makers work unconsciously in a particular way because the historically inherited systemic setting makes them do so. This setting is influenced by culture, history and social structure. Therefore Lukes (2005, p. 26) relates the execution of power to "collective forces and social arrangements".

Additionally, Lukes (2005, p. 27) realizes that power is not only making other person to do what you want, in Dahlian sense. Power also means to influence the views, to form the desires of another person. The argument here is that shaping the wants of other people results in them doing what you wish them to do. To sum up Lukes' addition, whether and how people act depends on the historical and social setting. Nevertheless, both their action and non-action has an impact on other people in shaping their opinions and thus desires. Therefore, Lukes adds to two faces of power – actual decision-making and setting the agenda – a third one, and that is the ability to influence or persuade others to follow your will.

1.2.2. Soft power

This gave a basis for the concept of soft power, which is coined by Joseph Nye. As he observes (Nye 2004b, p. 3) people may behave in certain way not because somebody commands them to do so, but because of other reasons, such as attraction of ideas or moral authority. This attraction, or admiration, of others can be called soft power. Another name for the soft power can be "power over opinion", as described by Edward H. Carr (1946, p. 108). If a country maintains this kind of authority, it can influence others to pursue a similar development. This kind of power is important in the international relations, because it allows

the countries holding soft power to persuade others to do things without coercing them through the use of force (Nye 2004b, p. 5).

When exercising power, it is important to hold certain power resources. In the domain of hard power, these can be money, military capabilities, economic strength, etc. In the domain of soft power, according to Nye, power resources are those that create attraction. Among these may be values, culture, policies and institutions (Nye 2004b, p. 8). An important soft power resource is also economy, because strong economy makes a particular country attractive for others (Nye 2013). Therefore, certain power resources are the same for hard and soft power. In the time of economic or military decline, a country may lose some of its soft power as well. It becomes less able to influence international arena and loses its attractiveness. Nevertheless, this relationship is not a one-way street. As Nye observes, a small entity like Vatican has certain soft power, even though its military is virtually non-existent. Similarly, certain actions of the Soviet Union, such as invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, harmed Soviet attractiveness, even though its military and economic power continued to rise (Nye 2004b, p. 9).

According to Nye, there are three sources of soft power – culture, domestic policy and foreign policy. Culture is about influencing the intellectuals as well as masses, producing something attractive. If a country has rich culture, it may become the trend setting actor. This characteristic is important if you wish to influence the international space, or just individual countries (Nye 2004b, p. 12).

Domestic policies are also influencing for soft power. If in some countries people think that what you are doing at home is wrong, they are less likely to follow your lead. This is also true when your foreign policy is incorrect. On the other hand, support of certain values in the international arena – such as human rights or democracy – maybe an important way to grow a country's soft power in the eyes of foreign actors (Nye 2004b, p. 13-14).

However, there can be international institutions, which can help enhancing soft power. They may legitimize the actions of a certain country, and thus more attraction and less coercion is in use. Countries can form international norms in a way consistent with their

values (Nye 2004b, p. 14). It is then easier for them to sway other countries on their side, because their actions are considered legitimate.

1.2.2.1. Attraction and repulsion of soft power

More than soft power resources, therefore, there is the crucial notion of attraction, and its obverse, repulsion. This is true from both theoretical and methodological point of view (because of the problem of measuring soft power (cf. Nye 2004b, p. 6)). Studying attraction and repulsion helps us to understand the working and effectiveness of soft power.

Nye understands that the knowledge of soft power resources is important. Nevertheless, he stresses that it is not as enough to enumerate the power resources, but rather to ask whether they have created the desired effect, that is whether they have created attraction on the side of receiver (Nye 2013).

The context matters for the attraction to work. Attraction does not have the same strength or even direction everywhere. While somewhere certain cultural feature is attractive, among other peoples it may have an opposing direction (Nye 2004b, p. 11-12). “Soft power depends [...] upon the existence of willing interpreters and receivers” (Nye 2004b, p. 16). Thus, soft power and the direction of its effect depends on the attitudes of the targeted people (Berger 2010).

Nye understands attraction as a complex phenomenon, but his explanation on the actual working of it is vague. On a personal level, Nye (2011, p. 92) argues, people are attracted to those, who share similar characteristics and opinions with each other. On the level of states, there are three “qualities”, namely “benignity, competence and beauty (charisma)”, which generate attraction. He stresses, however, that having these qualities is not enough. There is always the perception of the target country that plays the role. Nevertheless, Hayden (2012, p. 44) points out to the fact that from the analytical point of view, these qualities can again only be considered as soft power resources.

Therefore, it is important to further specify how to approach attraction, so that we can avoid considering soft power to be a catch-all term. A range of authors (e.g. Bially-Mattern 2005, Cheskin 2017, Feklyunina 2016, Hayden 2012, Solomon 2014) who went to further develop the theory of soft power, link attraction with communication, language, narratives and identity.

Such an approach lies in the social-constructivist ontology, which refuses the idea of objectivist reality². If the reality is not objective, neither is knowledge. Rather, our understanding of the world is created through interpretation of previous pieces of knowledge, which shape how we perceive the reality (Guzzini 2007). Because we use language to formulate our perceptions of the world and to communicate them, Bially-Mattern sees reality, and consequently the idea of attraction, as a “sociolinguistic construct” (Bially-Mattern 2005, p. 585). This is in line with Nye’s statement that attraction is “socially constructed” (Nye 2011, p. 84, cf. also Solomon 2014). As mentioned earlier, power is a relational phenomenon (Dahl 1957). So is the concept of attraction. A country can be attractive only *to* another country. Therefore, analysing attraction as a communicative process seems to be a fruitful way to tackle the issue. For attraction to work, it requires the knowledge of socio-cultural context from the side of the agent, and the correct usage of rhetoric (Hayden 2012, p. 56).

The link of socio-cultural context and language can be traced back to theories of language of Jürgen Habermas. He claims that in order to have a fruitful discussion, there needs to be a “common lifeworld” (Risse 2000, p. 10) between the communicating parties. This means that the parties in the discussion need to have shared concepts about the world as well as a similar social identity. Otherwise, they are unable to understand each other nor relate to one another. On the other hand, if there is a common understanding than a correct use of words in a right context is a way to create attraction of one country over another. The

² According to different interpretations of constructivism (constructivism about facts, constructivism about justification and constructivism about rational explanation) (Cf. Boghossian 2006), we may treat the concept of “reality” differently. It is not my aim to discuss constructivist epistemology at this place. Suffice to say that many constructivist scholars only consider the *social* world to be constructed (cf. Guzzini 2007)

link between the words and attraction materializes on the side of the targeted country. If the agent of soft power uses right words or “narratives” (Roselle et al. 2014), they can resonate within the targeted country.

However, we must not understand the usage of certain words or narratives as an ad hoc decision in order to persuade the target country. Rather, a country creates its “communicative strategy” (Bially-Mattern 2005, p. 600), which is rooted in the understanding of the “self”. If the representation of reality in such a communicative strategy of an agent is found to be captivating by the target country, we may speak of attraction. The target country wishes to become like the agent. One might thus say that the target country identifies and shares the conception of reality with the agent country (Hayden 2012 p. 45). Therefore, discourse is important when studying identity (Solomon 2014). It allows us to grasp the narratives and words, and explicitly state how the notions of “us” and “other” are created.

Nevertheless, analysing merely the discursive element of identity is not sufficient. We cannot say that the fact that a country identifies with the conception of reality of another one is not just the working of rhetoric. If this was so, we would be able to say that a similar idea about the working of the world would be sufficient to relate one country to another. However, Bially-Mattern (2005, p. 601) as well as Li (2016, p. 82) show that when a relationship between two countries is strained, the power of attraction disappears. Solomon (2014) also argues for this because wording by itself is unable to explain the reaction of the audience.

Therefore, we must also include the emotional element when talking about attraction and identification (Roselle et. al 2014, Solomon 2014). Solomon points out that emotions play a role in constructing the idea of self and the other. Therefore, rather than building an identity through rationalization, emotional factors affect the process. The reason for such an argumentation is that individual emotions are an important element in determining what quality of an affection is created between individuals, and analogically, entities such as states. Therefore, he argues that we need to account for “affect” to grasp the “force” of the words

(Solomon 2014, p. 729). According to him, the “affect” gives the language its real meaning and makes the discourse intelligible for the audience.

However, and crucially for our research, we cannot understand the affection or attraction as a one-way process. While certain ideas, words or norms can create a positive feeling, and thus make the target country of soft power to follow them, in different circumstances these phenomena can have an opposite direction. Rather than attract, they can repulse (Nye 2004a, p. 92, Nye 2004b, p. 96, Rothman 2011). One of the ways how a country can create repulsion is by behaving in an arrogant way (Nye 2004b, p. 63, Gomichon 2013).

There is one more important point, and that is the fact that societies are not homogeneous. Feklyunina (2016) rightly points out that the concept of soft power is usually used to countries, with other countries being the target of it. However, she understands that when talking about narratives, we can expect a more heterogeneous audience. The reason for this is that there is never one concrete identity set in stone, but different groups construct their identity differently. There can thus be many different audiences in the same country, and they may interpret the same act differently. For that reason, Feklyunina argues that soft power influence of one actor over another will be stronger whenever a larger number of relevant audiences share the identity narratives, and vice-versa.

1.3. Securitization of Soft Power

The crucial question for this dissertation is “can soft power be securitized?”. Because the soft power attraction depends on a context, certain narrative is attractive to one group, but repulsive to other group, as Feklyunina (2016) argues. Therefore, if securitizing actors wish to securitize soft power, their aim must be to attempt to diminish its attractiveness. Thus, if soft power is perceived as a threat, securitizing actors must either make an effort to make the alternative view more attractive, diminish the potential of soft power, or a combination of these.

Obviously, as argued above, if soft power attractiveness is founded on the common worldview and emotional attachment, just the former approach is not very viable. It is quite improbable that people, who have a certain viewpoint, would change it for an alternative one without any change of the context. However, using securitizing moves, security actors can change the context in such a way that the potential of soft power is lowered. Arguing for security, they can try to lower the ability of a foreign country to use its soft power tools, eliminate its channels of influence.

These efforts do not necessarily need to be effective in actually reducing the attraction of other country. After all, that is not what securitization is about. The most important with regard to securitization is to name a threat and offer a solution. Whether this is followed by actual reduction of an objective threat is inconsequential, as the perceived threat is subjective by itself.

Therefore, under securitization of soft power I understand the following: efforts to reduce the soft power of other country or the attempts to decrease its possibility to influence through the soft power tools. I will further develop this conceptualization after I specifically introduce the concept of Russian soft power. This is because the understanding of Russian soft power differs from the original concept of Nye. This will help me to define what I mean when talking about Russian soft power, and allow me to specify what securitizing efforts Ukraine can do about this phenomenon.

1.4. Overview of Russian soft power

In the following paragraphs, I will introduce the sources of Russian soft power, and show how Russia deploys them to influence other countries. I use both the Russian academic sources as well as sources from Western journals. It is interesting to observe the dichotomy: many Russian authors (cf. Demidov 2014, Kharkevich 2014, Matveyenko and Galayeva 2015, Mekhdiyev and Guliyev 2016) see Western soft power as problematic and destabilizing. On the other hand, many authors in the West (cf. van Herpen 2015, Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015, Grigas 2016) judge Russian soft power as problematic. I will try to

take both views into account, in order to define the concept of soft power in such a way, that allows for the study of securitization.

1.4.1. History of Russian influence abroad

Russia has tried to influence world politics through attraction and showing an example for some time. We can trace their soft power efforts back to the time of Soviet Union. The socialist regime, which promised the end of exploitation and subsequent prosperity, was attractive to many people around the world. This image later suffered as a consequence of Soviet military interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia (Nye 2004b, p. 9). Nevertheless, even if current Russia is not an ideological successor to the Soviet Union, Kremlin is able to utilize at least some soft power resources inherited from the previous regime (cf. Grigas 2016, p. 14).

However, in the nineties, we could see a decline in effective foreign policy. This was mainly the result of socio-economic and other problems related to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, some post-Soviet countries, which would naturally be considered to be in the sphere of Russian influence, entered the EU, NATO, or at least took steps to do so. After the Orange revolution in Ukraine in 2004, the leader of the committee for international relations in the Russian Duma, complained about the situation. He understood that Russia was not doing enough to attract people actively in the post-Soviet states. Unlike the states of the West, Russia had no appealing narrative, and expected that its influence would come without any effort (Kosachev 2004).

Still, we cannot say that there was no policy at all during the nineties. There were at least some attempts made. As Sergunin & Karabeshkin (2015) point out, Russian officials see the aim of foreign policy as two-fold. First, it is about targeting “compatriots” in the countries around Russia. Second, it is about improving Russia’s image worldwide. This second objective is done by influencing foreign audience through information. We can safely say that at least the former aim was being put to practice in the Yeltsin’s era.

1.4.2. Russian compatriot policy

The existence of Russian compatriots stems from the peculiar nature of internal politics within the Soviet Union and its consequent collapse. During the existence of the USSR there was a lot of movement from the Russian lands into other republics. This included post-famine Eastern Ukraine and other parts of the country during the era of industrialization. Subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 meant that around 25 million Russian speakers finished up outside of Russian borders (Grigas 2016, p. 60).

Several policy documents as well as actions tied to the situation of compatriots were made as early as the nineties. The Yeltsin's administration used compatriots to justify its foreign policy towards the Baltic states, notably Estonia and Latvia. The question of withdrawal of Russian forces from these countries was tied, besides other reasons, to the citizenship situation of Russian speakers living there. There were also several documents, which treated the relations of compatriots with Russia, as well as more or less widely defined who a compatriot is (Grigas 2016, p. 65-68). Still, until the very end of Yeltsin's presidency, Russian compatriot policy largely respected independent nations around it. This is probably because there were seemingly more pressing issues for the Russian government at that time.

The 1999 federal law was the first to define the term compatriot, although quite vaguely. It included any former citizen of the USSR to be a compatriot. In addition, descendants of the citizens of the USSR could be compatriots, provided they were not of the titular nationality of the foreign country. This would include almost 150 million people to be eligible to be compatriots. The law did not provide for personal identification with Russia, other than the use of language and disposing of certain characteristics, such as religion or habits (Russian Federation 1999, art. 1, 3). Later change in the law from 2010 conditioned the affiliation to compatriots on active safeguarding and development of Russian language and culture (Russian Federation 2013, art. 3).

1.4.3. Russian influence beyond compatriots

Other sources of Russian soft power have been studied by both Western and Russian authors for some time. The bulk of the literature appeared in the second decade of the 21st century. Authors acknowledge the fuzziness and lack of conceptual clarity of the idea. Nevertheless, some effort has been made to make use of this concept on endeavour of Russian foreign policy.

Russian soft power is based on Soviet legacy. In some parts of the world, Soviet Union had a positive image, on which Russia wishes to build its reputation. To a large extent, we can speak about certain positive feelings towards the former Soviet union in some of the countries of the CIS. However, it seems that in many areas Russia is unable to create strong enough influence to continue its soviet legacy (Vapler et al. 2010, Leonova 2013, Bobylo 2014, Grigas 2016).

As Vapler et al. (2010) point out, Russian resources of soft power, as described by Nye (2004b), are often insufficient. Russian culture may perhaps have some appeal to people, especially close to its borders in the so-called post-Soviet space. Russia can still portray itself as a country with high culture and large potential in the field of science and technology. Nevertheless, this potential seems to be attractive only in some countries of Central Asia. Other post-Soviet countries, especially in Europe, do not tend to share this opinion. Wider spread of the culture has only a limited success, despite the Ministry of Culture's support of international performances (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015) of well-known ensembles.

In terms of domestic policy, Russia is struggling with making its political system attractive to others. Still, there are some areas, which can create a certain amount of attraction. This is especially the standard of life, which clearly rose after the disastrous nineties. In addition, the overall stability within the country and the politics of strong hand may have an appeal to some people particularly in the developing states (Rukavishnikov 2011, p. 88). As far as foreign policy goes, Russian effort to make itself the guarantor of security in the post-Soviet space is again only partly accepted, especially by some of the Central Asian countries (Vapler et al. 2010).

Other sources of Russian soft power include the language, the Russian Orthodox Church, higher education, information channels, sport and cultural exchanges as well as Russian diaspora (Leonova 2013, Budaev 2015). There are other potential resources, which are, however, not so actively deployed: multiculturalism and multi-religiosity of the Russian state, its natural resources and the status of a space-conquering country.

Attempts to widen the range of Russian influence beyond post-Soviet space have been made. There is some cooperation in the field of higher education. Many universities offer places for foreign students (Rukavishnikov 2011, p. 81). There is an international cooperation between Russian universities and their foreign partners. Academics, especially in the Baltic Sea region, also have opportunities to cooperate with Russian universities. Nevertheless, Russian universities attract students mostly from the Russian neighbourhood because of their research quality (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015).

Other ways to make Russia more attractive have been made as well. There has been a tendency to portray Russia as a trustworthy economic partner, both as an investor and a supplier as well as a place to invest. Russia also wanted to advance “universal values” (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015, p. 354). This included countering extremism and helping improving the rights of a child but also more Russia specific values like multi-culturalism and inter-religious tolerance.

This multi-culturalism may actually be one of the most powerful resources Russia can offer (Leonova 2013). Russia sees itself as a civilization with its specific features. It has been able to integrate many different ethnicities and religions within itself, with a fair amount of success. This can be presented to the world as some kind of identity, from which other countries can learn (Osipova 2014).

Nonetheless, there are problems with this ambition of Russia. Foreign countries see that Russia constantly fails to uphold to universal values such as rule of law and democracy. Its economic and social system generally does not seem to be too attractive for foreigners. Or, speaking more concretely, the western welfare state, freedom to pursue life goals and the level of life standards tend to be more attractive to many countries, especially to the West of

Russia. Furthermore, its attempt to further values like stability and sovereignty as attractive features of the state as opposed to the Western ideals (Osipova 2014) largely suffered after the annexation of Crimea and invasion of Eastern Ukraine.

Russia also struggles with attracting Russian speakers in the near abroad, especially in the West. Even though they generally tend to uphold Russian culture and sometimes even the current political representation, they choose to pursue their education and their life ambitions in Europe or North America (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015).

For these reasons, the endeavour of Russian soft power is mostly directed towards the promotion of Russian language (Vapler et al. 2010, Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, more than 100 million people outside of Russia were fluent in Russian language (Rukavishnikov 2011, p. 79). This knowledge of language can be used through dissemination of both high and low cultures. In many countries in the Russian neighbourhood, Russian language popular music as well as TV, films and books are still very influential among all generations (Grigas 2016, p. 30).

Russian World (Русский Мир), is one of the institutions, which is supposed to spread and support the usage of Russian language and to promote Russian culture (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015). It was established by the decree of the Russian president Putin back in 2007. Unlike similar foreign organizations of Western world, such as the British Council or Alliance Française, it has clear and strong ties with the government of Russia. The organization tends to support only those Russian speakers outside of Russia, who feel loyal to the current regime in Russia (Grigas 2016, p. 32). One of its proclaimed functions is also a struggle against history falsification and protection of Russian speaking “compatriots” (Conley et al. 2011, p. 13).

Budaev (2015) sees much of the potential in the work of NGOs. Besides the above-mentioned Russian World and Rossotrudnichestvo, there are others, such as Council on Foreign and Security Policy, Russian Centre for Political Research, Open Government foundation etc. Their aim is to spread the view of Russia, which is not a reflection of the foreign media, but rather real Russian people. One of the ways to do this is to educate

compatriots about the history of Russia in a truthful way. This includes a correct interpretation of the history of the Second World War and the heroism of Russian nation in this conflict against Nazism (Matveyenko and Galayeva 2015). However, the reach of these organizations is still limited, because they lack experience, concrete strategies and centralized support.

Additionally, Russian Orthodox Church is an important soft power resource. The church supports people abroad and gives them moral and spiritual support. It has its place in supporting the traditional values, of which Russia is very fond (Budaev 2015). In the years after the fall of the USSR, many Russians abroad saw the successful rapprochement between the state and the Church as a positive development. Thus, the church helped to create trust between the Russian compatriots and the Russian state (Rukavishnikov 2011, p. 80). Besides that, the Orthodox Church cooperated in negotiations between the countries in the times of crisis, such as during and after the war in Georgia or in Ukraine. This is especially helpful in the countries with tradition of religious freedom, because the Orthodox Church can thus act without much fear of suspicion or persecution (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015). However, some countries see the influence of Russian Orthodox Church as problematic as well. The person of patriarch Kirill is especially controversial, as he tends to support the current regime of Russia with much enthusiasm. His public statements clearly support this opinion. He has defended the concept of Russian world as well as certain aspects of Russian foreign policy (Grigas 2016, p. 32).

1.4.4. Soft power as a problem

There are other possible strategies in deployment of soft power. Although they go beyond the traditional understanding of Nye, both Russian (Demidov 2014, Kharkevich 2014, Matveyenko and Galayeva 2015, Mekhdiyev and Guliyev 2016) and foreign (Ćwiek-Karpowicz 2013, Van Herpen 2015, Grigas 2016) authors agree that we may include these strategies within the concept of soft power. They are also in line with the definition proposed in the concept of Russian foreign policy. It considers the soft power to be “a complex tool to solve foreign policy tasks with the support of civil society potential, information,

communication, humanitarian and other methods and technologies alternative to the classical diplomacy” (Russian Federation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013, §20). We already covered the “civil society” potential in the paragraphs above. I will bring a few notes on the other areas as well.

Methods, which we can describe as humanitarian, are surely part of Russian soft power arsenal. Russian ministry of foreign affairs has founded an organization called Rossotrudnichestvo, which is supposed to promote Russian language and help with cultivation of Russian culture abroad. Russia claims that their understanding of humanitarian help consists of creating inter-cultural dialogue and helping compatriots abroad, rather than direct government involvement in cases of violation of human rights (Osipova 2014). Nevertheless, there was a history of such interventionism, especially in the nineties. At that time Russia questioned the situation of human rights of its compatriots in the Baltic States, and used it to further their foreign political agenda (Grigas 2016, p. 34-35).

The question of human rights also pops out when Russia claims that foreign countries’ policies towards Russian compatriots are fascist. Such an endeavour has a clear domestic aim, however. This kind of framing allows portraying Russia as anti-fascist as well as helping her to utilize the Soviet historical memory as a bulwark against fascism (Grigas 2016, p. 35). This is also helpful with regard to the Russian society, as it allows for identity making. Labelling other countries, such as Baltic States, Ukraine but also the United States as fascist is beneficial in creating self – other distinction. It also strengthens the ideological background of Russian identity, which is based on the victory in the Second World War and anti-Americanism (Grigas 2016, p. 50).

In the area of information and communication, Russia is also very active. Russia engages in a campaign of disseminating very biased information. It is usually very successful among the domestic population, which often lacks access to other than the state-owned media. However, there is also a significant transnational appeal. First, among the compatriots, who prefer receiving information in Russian language. Second, among the foreign audiences, which are targeted by Kremlin sponsored news agencies, such as Russia

Today and Sputnik (Grigas 2016, p. 44-45). Some authors argue that Russian aim is to undermine the sovereignty of other countries through such information warfare (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015, cf. Demidov 2014, Mekhdiyev & Guliyev 2016).

There is one more area of Russian influence worth mentioning, namely creating and supporting Kremlin friendly economic and political networks (Ćwiek-Karpowicz 2013, Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015, cf. Kharkevich 2014,). It could probably fit under “other methods alternative to the classical diplomacy” in the Foreign Policy concept. Russia cooperates with Russian compatriots and other friendly figures, provides finances and organizational support. Although we could consider in a way a legitimate interest, these networks are often tied to corruption and preferential treatment. They are generally in conflict with Europe-wide standards of conduct, and thus weaken the countries from the inside.

1.4.5. Russian soft power summary

If we want to define Russian soft power, the definition in the concept of Russian foreign policy is fairly accurate: a **complex tool to solve foreign policy tasks with the support of civil society potential, information, communication, humanitarian and other methods and technologies alternative to the classical diplomacy** (Russian Federation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013, §20). It covers many different tools that authors define as sources of Russian soft power. We can include Russian Orthodox Church within the civil society, use of Russian language and the mass media within the information and communication, and so on.

Concerning Russian soft power, I conclude that it struggles with efficacy. Russia’s traditional soft power resources, are not sufficient to pursue their agenda. The use of alternative means is often met with suspicion or fear of undermining the sovereignty of countries. Certain forms of Russian endeavour may be considered attractive, but this mostly pertains to Russian speakers. Therefore, this group is also the main aim of Russian soft power. Considering that Russia often tends to pursue its own agenda, rather than honestly

support their compatriots, the result is that Russian soft power generally tends to divide the societies, and create a defensive reaction from foreign countries.

There is another factor, however, which helps fuelling the negative view of Russia. Most of the countries that gained independence are in the process of identity creation. Often they tend to position themselves in the “self-other” dichotomy, against their former oppressor, the Russian nation (Rukavishnikov 2011, p. 80, Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015).

In the following paragraphs I will summarize my theoretical and conceptual findings and make predictions about how Ukraine will react to this phenomenon.

1.5. Theory summary and predictions

From the analysis of Russian soft power, I concluded that it can be considered as a threat in the countries around it. This is because of the specific nature of Russian soft power. In the following paragraphs, I will point out to the reasons why I think so.

First, unlike soft power of other countries, such as the USA or France, a lot of Russian soft power is sponsored by the state. The Kremlin thus have much more power over the ways how Russian influence is utilized in the countries around it. Moscow controls and finances different institutions, which are defined as the instruments of soft power, and thus it shapes the direction and aims of it. It co-finances the NGO’s, friendly to the regime. These then work abroad targeting mainly people attracted to the Russian worldview, which may have a destabilizing effect.

Second, unlike the soft power of other countries, Russian soft power mostly targets the Russian speakers. Indeed, there are ways and instruments to influence the public at large. Nevertheless, the pronounced aim of Russian soft power is to protect its “compatriots” abroad. Another issue tied to this is the question of language. Russia wishes that the Russian language remained the lingua franca in the region of the former Soviet Union. It can help spreading Russian culture and make Russia attractive for Russian speakers to visit it, or even spend some part of their live there. However, because the organizations like Russkiy Mir

target mostly only those people, who already identify with the Russian conception of compatriots, their endeavour may actually be counterproductive and alienating.

Third, the wider conception of Russian soft power, as defined by the Russian Federation Ministry of the Foreign Affairs (2013) includes humanitarian aid to the compatriots. This is especially questionable when Russia uses its influence and argues for the right to aid its compatriots in the foreign countries. This seems like a clear case for a threat to national sovereignty. We could see these instances in the Baltic countries in the nineties, and perhaps more blatantly with the case of humanitarian convoys to the occupied territories of Eastern Ukraine. Even if we could accept these interventions as justifiable, the argumentation why this happens just does not hold together. Accusations of foreign governments to be fascist, and thus excusing its intervention is hypocritical. As mentioned above, soft power may become repulsive if the ideals seem to contradict the reality. Therefore, a securitizing reaction is a rational response.

Additionally, biased information that Russian sponsored media spread can also be considered as a threat. This is because Russia often attacks either the ideology or identity of other nations, especially when they position themselves as pro-European. This is also true with business and political networks, which work contrarily to the interests of the nations neighbouring Russia.

Thus, we clearly have several instances when the exercise of Russian soft power can be considered as a threat. The research question of this dissertation asks how this effort can be countered, that is, how Russian soft power is securitized.

The link between the theories of securitization and soft power is the following. There are different utilizations of soft power that can be considered a threat to political sovereignty and legitimacy. An outside actor wishes to de-stabilize the country through its effort. At the same time, the policy-making elites react to the outside pressure, wishing to preserve their sovereignty. Additionally, there are also instances, when we can see a threat to the society and its conception of identity. In this case, both the policy-making elites and the society as a whole are of our interest. They will try to portray the issue as a threat to the nation's

interest, and take counter-measures. These should supposedly safeguard the national interest and uphold the sovereignty, integrity and unique identity of the country and the nation against the soft power efforts from abroad.

Therefore, I presume that there will be instances when Ukraine will try to counter the influence from abroad. These may include the laws about the state language, religion, education, historical memory, laws and efforts countering the information warfare, etc. My aim is to find out what these instances are, what arguments are used to propose such efforts, and assess whether securitization is in place. This last part means that I will try to find out whether these efforts are formulated in security terms, whether extraordinary measures are invoked, and how the audience reacts to them. I will therefore assess the securitization efforts as a reaction to Russian soft power.

Therefore, I presume that Ukraine will invoke security when talking about: the Orthodox Church, the Russian language and the Russian-language media production, and the national memory. To test this prediction, I will examine the laws and the discussions that politicians had about them. Notable, these laws will include the laws about religion, education, language, media and de-Sovietisation. I will provide the argumentation for this selection in the section below.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this part of the thesis, I will introduce my methods. As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, there are four things to consider: the design of the study, data gathering method, analysis and the choice of observations. I will dedicate a section to each of these questions in this part of the thesis.

2.1. Design of the study

My dissertation uses a single case, or rather single subject, design. Generally, single case studies follow qualitative methodology, which is true for my dissertation as well. That means that I will try to use in-depth knowledge and a holistic description of the phenomenon. I will also be using triangulation in order to support my statements by various sources (Gerring 2007, p. 17-18). Additionally, case studies are generally well suited to answer the “how” research questions, just as mine is (Andrade 2009).

More specifically, I am going to use the Disciplined Interpretative Case Study approach. This form of examining a case allows us to examine the event by using a theory in a new environment. As I have already mentioned, there has been little application of securitization theory in a country that wages war. Furthermore, no attempts on using the securitization theory concerning soft power influence from other countries have occurred. It can help us to refine the theory, show new applications of it, and narrow or widen the range of use of it (Odell 2001).

An interpretative case study, however, bears a risk of researcher's bias. It is possible that the interpretation I will offer in this dissertation will differ from that of other people (Andrade 2009). Nevertheless, having in mind that the theory of securitization requires to take the views of the audience into account, I will attempt to cover these in such a way, that different opinions are included.

I cannot cover the entire history of Russian and Ukrainian relations in this dissertation of course; therefore, certain limitation is important (Gerring 2007, p. 19-20). In terms of geographical scope, I am only focusing on one country, namely Ukraine. In terms of time, I am only focusing on the events that have been happening since the change of the government in 2014, so called Euromaidan. Although the design is single case, there will be more than just one observations, namely four. I will be looking at the debates about the laws that concern the Orthodox Church, the use of Russian language, the Russian language media and Russian based websites, and the use of Soviet symbols and terminology. The argumentation for this selection is provided below.

2.2. Data gathering

There are two main sources for my data: debates and statements regarding particular laws – securitizing moves and expert interviews to support the written sources. Especially the former way of gathering data is widely used in the study of securitization (e.g. Herd & Löfgren 2001, Morozov 2002, Sjöstedt 2008), because it allows to study discourse and argumentation. As for the written sources, I will examine the transcriptions of parliamentary debates on the particular laws. I will also look for statements of politicians about these particular laws on their personal websites, social media profiles and in the newspapers. I will be mainly looking at the politicians, who are presenters or collaborators on the particular bill. These will help me to establish, whether the elite discourse indicates that a securitizing move is made.

I will also examine the published responses to these securitizing moves. The reason for this is two-fold. First, the argumentation of the actors opposing securitizing moves will help me to establish whether extraordinary action beyond normal politics is taken. Such

reactions will come from the political opposition, but also from international institutions, which evaluate the situation in Ukraine. Second, the evaluation of these will help me to show the wider picture as well as to establish whether formal support was achieved. As for the moral support of the public, I will try to find the results of surveys, which ask about the certain moves or laws.

My second main source of data are expert interviews. I am using semi-standardised interviews. I have prepared a set of questions. They deal with soft power influence in general and more specific attitudes towards the bills and securitizing moves that have occurred in Ukraine. There have been five experts that I interviewed. Two of them come from the academia (Svetozar and Ladislav), two of them are from non-governmental research centres (Dobroslav and Borislav) and one of them is working for a delegation of a certain European intergovernmental structure in Ukraine (Vladimir). I have anonymised the participants names, and I will only refer to them under a pseudonym. Their answers will corroborate the findings from the electronic sources, and help answer questions, why certain development occurred.

2.3. Data analysis

To analyse the data, I am using the discourse analysis (Neumann 2008, p. 62). This method is helpful to analyse texts and gather meaning from them, and is widely used in the study of securitization (Balzacq et al. 2016). Because I am using textual data – considering that my interviews are transcribed – this is an obvious way to approach the issue. It can help us to find out why a certain reaction was made, in my case, why politicians argue for a certain securitizing move, what counterarguments are provided etc.

I will be looking at the texts mentioned above. From them, I will determine what kind of discourse is used in order to support a securitizing move. It will help me to analyse, whether the same degree of security is invoked in different situations. Additionally, I will be able to find out which measure or a tool of Russian soft power is considered to be the most threatening. It will therefore help me very well to answer my research question.

2.4. Selection of observations

I will be focusing on four instances, when Ukrainian politicians made securitizing moves concerning Russian soft power. I will be talking about the efforts to diminish the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Russian language, the Russian influenced historical memory and Russian informational warfare. These issues are commonly talked about, when researching Russian soft power (Osipova 2014, Feklyunina 2015, Grigas 2016, Cheskin 2017).

Furthermore, these four cases represent a good sample of Russian soft power. All of them are somewhat typical of this Russian endeavour. All of these are linked to the Russian state or Russian conception of reality. They are clearly external measures, meaning that they are primarily directed towards the outside audience, rather than the internal population of Russia (unlike other, more domestic policies). Some of them are regarded as legitimate way of attraction (language), others could be understood as a more hard way of influence (information warfare), yet others can be positioned in between (Church, historical memory). Therefore, there is a potential to both attract people in Ukraine as well as a potential to regard these issues as a threat. Thus, it will allow me to analyse different concepts, approaches as well as outcomes of the securitization.

3. DATA

In this part, I will introduce the instances, in which countermeasures to Russian soft power were made. Based on the conceptualizations in the theory part of this thesis, I will determine, whether we can talk about securitization. If so, I will show how the soft power is securitized.

3.1. Separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate

3.1.1. General situation

At this particular moment, there are four main branches of eastern rite in Ukraine (Kozelsky 2014). The first of them is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP). From historical and legal point of view, this is the oldest Orthodox Church in Ukraine. It was first formed in the 10th century, under the jurisdiction of Constantinople. Throughout the centuries and as a result of several schisms, wars of conquest, revolutions and other historic events, the Church fell under the jurisdiction of Moscow patriarchate. In 1990, the church gained self-governance and wide autonomy, although the highest dignitaries are chosen by Moscow, and abide to the will of Moscow patriarchate. According to their self-published statistics, they are the largest church in Ukraine, with the most parishes. Additionally, this is the only church that is deemed canonical, meaning that other Orthodox churches around the world recognize the church as legitimate.

The second church is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kiev Patriarchate. It was formed after the fall of the Soviet Union as a result of a schism. The patriarch of the Orthodox Church Filaret wanted to make Ukrainian Church autocephalous, meaning completely separate from Moscow, and recognized as such. However, many of the bishops and other dignitaries did not agree with this move, and they remained under the jurisdiction of Moscow. Still, this church has become the second largest, considering the number of parishes. Furthermore, after the conflict in Eastern Ukraine has begun, many more new parishes have transferred from the Moscow into Kiev patriarchate. However, this church is not canonical, meaning that other Orthodox churches around the world do not recognize it as legitimate.

The third church is called Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. It was first formed in the time of Russian revolution, when Ukraine declared its independence from Russia. During the Soviet times, it survived mainly abroad. In Ukraine, It was resurrected in the early 1990s. Just like the Orthodox Church of Kiev Patriarchate, it does not enjoy international recognition.

The last relevant church is Greek Catholic church in Ukraine. Unlike the Orthodox Churches, the members of the Greek Catholic church recognize the Roman pope as their spiritual leader. Nevertheless, the church rituals and daily services resemble those of the Eastern Orthodox churches. If Ukrainian churches were to merge, it is questionable whether the believers of this rite would actually convert. Nevertheless, it is worth to mention that this church co-exists on the Ukrainian territory.

From the point of view of security and Russian influence, the UOC MP is viewed as the most problematic, and several efforts have been made to reduce its influence.

3.1.2. Efforts to diminish influence of Russia through church

3.1.2.1. Bill on the special status of UOC MP

One of the first attempts to decrease the influence of the Moscow patriarchate, and as a consequence, Russia, was a draft bill 4511 (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2016b). Officially called the bill *about the specific status of religious organizations, which are controlled from the countries deemed aggressors by the Ukrainian parliament*, it was proposed in 2016. It did invoke the notions of security, therefore we can clearly see a securitizing move. The committee, which proposed the bill, argued that the law would help the government to secure the Ukrainian society. It further stated that there might be attempts to influence the society and threaten territorial integrity, as well as state sovereignty, through the religious organizations. Therefore, the bill stipulated that the religious organizations have to register at the ministry of culture. The registration must pass the specialist committee. Additionally, ministry of culture would also have a right to approve higher echelon dignitaries into their functions. In case of breaches, the ministry of culture can take the registration away from the religious organization and ban it.

One of the proposers of the bill, Dmytry Tymchuk, found it important to protect Ukraine from the aggression. Even before the war, the Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate was a tool for Russian and anti-Ukrainian propaganda. After the war, the members of the Church and its spiritual leaders were supposed to be helping the terrorists in Donbass, hiding weapons and even leading people into battles. Additionally, a “Tu Quoque” argument is used, saying that the Church itself was intervening in the state affairs (Tymchuk 2017).

Another member of the parliament co-responsible for the bill introduction, Oleksandr Bryhynets, argued that the current situation was strange. According to him, Russian Orthodox Church habitually repeated the position of Russia, namely that Crimea is Russian. Since UOC MP is subordinate to the Moscow Patriarchate, it should mean that this religious organization also supports such a view. This is clearly a breach of Ukrainian interests, as

such a stance supports territorial disintegration of Ukraine. Therefore, as he argued, the bill is supposed to make the UOC MP to declare its loyalty to Ukraine and its integrity (TSN 2017).

However, it seems that the audience was not convinced that this bill is necessary. The proposal raised opposition from the Church and the Opposition Bloc politicians. On the day the bill was supposed to be discussed, members and priests of the UOC MP organized a protest in front of the Verkhovna Rada (TSN 2017). Additionally, even the politicians from the coalition were not persuaded that the bill in its current form is worth breaching the separation of church and state principle. Therefore, the Verkhovna Rada did not discuss the bill at its plenary session (Ukrainska Pravda 2017). Later that year, even the president of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, declared that he would not sign this kind of a law. He argued that, despite the Russian aggression, it has not been necessary to curb basic freedoms or go contrary to the Constitution of Ukraine (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2017e).

This bill fulfils two of my conditions towards a securitizing move. Those who argue for it use the discourse of threat to national sovereignty and integrity. Thus, the threat was clearly named and distinguished. Furthermore, by requiring the state approval for appointing Church heads, the bill seems to go counter the Article 35 of the Ukrainian Constitution (Konstytutsiya Ukrainy 1996), which stipulates that the church and the state are separated from each other. That would fulfil the extraordinary measure condition. However, the parliament did not discuss the bill with much urgency. It took about a year for it to be scheduled for a deliberation. In the end it was not discussed at all. Additionally, the president refused to sign such a bill. Thus, the bill did not get enough of a formal or moral support. It thus was a securitizing move, but not a successful attempt of securitization.

3.1.2.2. The call of the president of Ukraine to patriarch of Constantinople

On the 18th of April, president of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko wrote a letter to the patriarch of Constantinople Vartholomeos I (President of Ukraine 2018). The president called the patriarch the leader of the orthodox world, and asked him to grant a Tome about autocephaly

of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. President claimed that the patriarch of Constantinople is the only person, who can grant such a declaration, because of the historical place of Constantinople and Ecumenical nature of the Constantinople patriarchy.

The text of the appeal does not contain any mentions to security per se. The document, however, talks about the historical justice, and claims that such an act would improve religious freedom in Ukraine and help foster a peace between the faiths in Ukraine. Furthermore, the president hints that such a document would help fulfil the strengthening of Ukrainian independence.

President Poroshenko also called the Verkhovna Rada to support his appeal. The parliament discussed the letter on the very next day after publishing (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2018). While introducing the statement, the speaker of the parliament Andriy Parubiy called it a question of historical importance for Ukraine. As he stated, the issue did not only concern religion, but also independence and security of Ukraine, as well as the existential question for the Ukrainian nation itself.

President himself appeared in the parliament in order to explain his statement and call for its support. Besides the already claimed statements, president also said that the independence of the Ukrainian church would help Ukraine to get rid of the relics of the “Russian world”. Namely, Ukraine would be able to get rid of the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church, which is, in his words, dangerous for the state. He clearly mentioned that the separation from the Russian Orthodox Church is a necessary move, because Kremlin uses the church as a tool for subversive influence in Ukraine. This is because, as interviewee Borislav explains, since the reign of Peter I, Russian government has held the power over the Church. The president called for the national unity in the battle against the aggressor and stated an intention to fight anybody, who wishes to go against the interests of Ukraine, and undermine the cooperation with the Constantinople patriarchy.

The deputy for the Opposition Bloc Yuriy Boyko claimed that this question again goes contrary to the separation of state and church principle. He suggested that the question should be dealt with through the interfaith dialogue, rather than through legislative means.

Andrii Shypko of the Revival party largely repeated this argument. Furthermore, he claimed that this question was never raised during the campaign before the elections. Therefore the deputies do not have a delegated right to vote on this kind of a move. He thus suggested organizing a referendum.

The UOC MP took a similar stance, using the argument of separation of church and state (Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate 2018). Furthermore, they argued that the canonical, not state law regulates the status of the church. Moreover, the UOC MP rightly argued, that Orthodox Churches around the world do not recognize the remaining two Orthodox Churches in Ukraine as canonical. Therefore, the only way to unite the Churches in case of autocephaly, is by joining these into the UOC MP.

The parliament, in the end, supported the move with a majority (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2018), so we can talk about formal support. However, when looking at the moral support of the population, Ukrainians were divided into three camps, according to the survey of the Fund “Democratic Initiatives” (Fond Demokratychni Initsiatyvy 2018). Only around 31% supported the creation of autocephaly. Other 20% were against it. The largest portion, 35%, did not care about the issue. Additionally, most of the people (57%), as well as a plurality of those, who supported the creation of autocephaly (41%), did not want the authorities to be a part of the question of the church.

This is a borderline case of securitization. While some of my thresholds for a successful securitization were passed, namely the time and threat depiction, as well as gaining formal support, the extraordinary measure is questionable. The UOC MP as well as some of the opposition politicians argued that this is a breach of separation of state and church principle. However, the move itself was nothing more than an appeal to the patriarch. As the interviewee Dobroslav explains, the move does not preclude anybody from following his or her faith, and asks the Patriarch of Constantinople to interpret the situation in Ukraine. In addition, the support of the population was rather lukewarm. It therefore seems that also in this case we only deal with the securitizing move, rather than a successful securitization of soft power.

3.2. The place of Russian language in Ukraine

According to the latest survey of Razumkov Centre (2017), 92% of citizens of Ukraine identify as ethnic Ukrainians, whilst 6% identify as ethnic Russians. When the question was posed on the mother tongue, 68% of respondents consider Ukrainian as such, 14% consider Russian to be their mother tongue, and 17% named both of the languages. In terms of using the language for communication outside of the house, 53% use mostly Ukrainian language, 23% mostly Russian and 24% both languages equivalently. Thus, we can see that Russian language can be used as a resource of soft power by Russia.

In the following paragraphs, I will what efforts Ukraine made to securitize the use of Russian language in their country.

3.2.1. Laws on quotas in the mass media

Between 2014 and 2016 the Ukrainian National Committee on Television and Radio Broadcast banned around 80 televisions from broadcasting in Ukraine (Rahutskaya 2017). As a second step, the Ukrainian parliament adopted two laws, which regulate the use of language in radios and on televisions. Simply said, the laws stipulate the necessary use of the Ukrainian language in the broadcast.

The first law concerns the broadcast in the radio. The law (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2016d) stipulates that radio stations should play one in three songs in Ukrainian language. Furthermore, the spoken word on the radio stations should be at least 60% in Ukrainian. When discussing this law, deputies were using the arguments of security (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2016c). The deputy for the coalition party Oleh Medunysya claimed that this law weakens the spiritual and informational aggression of Russia. Additionally, he claimed that those that would not vote for the law would in fact be voting for further Russification as well as spiritual and informational occupation of Ukraine. Similarly, Iryna Podoliak of Self Reliance party claimed that Ukrainian language is in a similar threat, as it was during the Soviet times. Therefore, she argued that the law on broadcast is very important to adopt.

Vyacheslav Kyrylenko of Our Ukraine party used the argument of national security in his presentation as well.

Ukrainian politicians did use the language of securitization when talking about the law about *language of audiovisual means of mass information* (Verkhovna Rada 2016f) as well. In the statement of reasons to this law, the proposers of the law claimed that the legislation must defend the interests of the country by all means and stabilize the situation. The proposers understood that the mass media effect the opinions and the views of the society about the events that happen in the country. However, much of the Ukrainian public received the information from the sources in the language of the country – aggressor. Therefore, the bill proposed to increase the use of Ukrainian language in the TVs, and especially demanded the use of Ukrainian language in the news broadcasts. The proposers argued that such a law would help Ukrainian interests and decrease the tension in the country.

When the bill was discussed in the parliament (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2017d), the speaker of the parliament Andriy Parubiy told the deputies that the law was crucial. He stated that the speech had become a weapon in a hybrid war. Leaving the weapon to the enemy would be a mistake. Thus, he claimed that passing this law would be another step towards increasing the informational security in the country. Viktoria Siumar of People's front argued that passing the law means stripping the Kremlin's propaganda of its means.

The opposition, however, disagreed with this view. Mykola Skoryk of the Opposition bloc argued that the quotas on TV would bring new discord into the Ukrainian society. Additionally, as he claimed, the law reduces the rights of Russian speakers in Ukraine. Furthermore, he claimed that the law would not achieve the end the deputies wish for – having more people watching Ukrainian language programs. Instead, many people will switch to satellite and internet televisions, the content of which is much harder to control (TASS 2017). Mostly Russian speaking TV station Inter considered the law as going against the rights of citizens (Inter 2017).

Both of the laws received necessary support in the parliament. Thus, in terms of formal support, we can talk of a success of a securitizing move. In terms of moral support of

the population, the result is more nuanced. Democratic Initiatives Fund together with Razumkov Centre conducted a survey of Ukrainians about the support for the quotas on TV. Only 48% of respondents supported the quotas, while 24% opposed them. For 16% the law did not matter. The results differed according to the region, Eastern parts of Ukraine having the lowest support for the quotas, obviously (Fond Demokratychni Inicyatyvy 2017).

Considering the speed of adopting these laws, the law on quotas on radio took quite short to be adopted. The law was asked to be prepared in early June 2016. Already in a few weeks, the parliament adopted the law through a quick procedure in the first reading (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2016e). In case of the law on Ukrainian language on TVs, this took a little longer. The government gave its proposal to the parliament in late October 2016. The parliament took a decision on the law in June 2017 (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2016f).

In these cases, I believe, we are dealing again with a borderline situation of securitization. We clearly have the threat perception and depiction. We can see formal support, and some sort of moral support. At least in case of the quotas on music, we also have quick enough decision. The law on TV was not adopted as fast, but it only overpassed my threshold by two months. However, again as in the case about religion, the issue of extraordinary measures is questionable. The opposition politicians and Russian language radio claimed that this law go against the rights of Russian speaking population, namely the right on information. However, as interviewees Vladimir and Borislav point out, Ukraine has a right to protect its informational space from Russian propaganda, which is also supported by the international organizations. Therefore, talking about extraordinary measures in this case is difficult, and it depends on a point of view.

3.2.2. Law on education

The law on education also spawned a heated discussion about language, the relationship between Russian language and threat as well as argumentation of security. The most problematic article of the law was no. 7, which allows for education in the language of

national minority in the pre-school and elementary school, but most of the subjects at the secondary schools should be taught in Ukrainian.

The minister of education Liliya Hrynevych (2018) stepped up to defend the law, which her ministry proposed. She claimed that the right education could help improve the national security. She said that if the children do not speak the official language, it decreases their possibilities to gain education. As a result, their possibility to engage in life within the country is lower, which gives the way for manipulation. Additionally, language enclaves are a threat to territorial integrity, as the minister explained at the NATO summit. She explained with the case of Crimea and Donbass, where most of the schools educated in Russian. She said that the purpose of the law is to integrate the local society, in order to avoid such situations (Radio Svoboda 2018). The minister of foreign affairs, explaining to the delegation of European commission repeated the argument of national security, when talking about the issue. He claimed that being unable understand necessary terms in Ukrainian may be threatening in case an individual is a member of the defence forces (Yevropeyska Pravda 2017).

When the law was discussed in the parliament (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2017b), an independent deputy Oleh Musiy stepped up against the possibility of making Russian language second language of instruction. He claimed that the language of the aggressor country cannot be the language of instruction, and such a proposal would return Ukraine under the Russian yoke. Andriy Illenko of Freedom party proposed a similar argument. He claimed that the war started because there were no Ukrainian schools in Donbass and Crimea. Furthermore, he said that wherever there is Ukrainian language, Russian tanks would not be able to get.

The Opposition bloc published a statement, in which they claimed that the law goes against the constitution and violates the rights of the minorities (Opozyciynny blok 2017c). Furthermore, they claimed that the law works as another wedge between the people in Ukraine. The law not only segregates people according to their mother tongue, it also precludes reintegration of Donbass into the country. The party pointed out to the fact that the

member of the European Union, namely Hungary, declared its discontent about the law. Thus, the law may retard the integration of Ukraine into the European structures (Opozyciynyy blok 2017d).

The law was sent to Venice Commission of the Council of Europe to find out whether it is in line with the European standards and international covenants to which Ukraine is a party. The Commission in fact expressed many concerns (Venice Commission 2017). It stated that the law is vague, and it does not specify in any concrete way in which the workload is going to be divided between the Ukrainian and minority languages, or that the implementation of the law will be difficult due to lack of appropriate teachers and teaching material. Furthermore, there are concerns that are more serious. Although the Commission admits that it does not have enough of background information, its analysis has concluded that the law may in fact go contrary to the Ukrainian Constitution. The Commission came to this conclusion because the Constitution states that the existing rights cannot be reduced. Additionally, the Commission expressed its doubts whether the law will effectively bring forward the aims it wishes to, namely the ability of children to speak Ukrainian well enough upon the completion of their secondary schooling.

Yet another argument of the Venice Commission (2017) is quite relevant for this research. Considering that the law stipulates that additional subjects can be taught in the language of the European Union. This means that Russian language speakers can be discriminated against. As the Commission points out, such categorization is against the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe, to which Ukraine is a party.

It is difficult to ascertain the moral support of this law. The only relevant data on this can come from Razumkov Centre's (2017) survey. They asked how Ukrainians see certain reforms proposed by the government. In this survey, only 26% of respondents said they support the educational reform, of which the law was part. On the other hand, 42% said their view of the reform is negative (ZN.UA). This is of course a very raw measurement of the

moral support for this particular law. Nevertheless, I can approximately claim that the law received only a limited moral support.

If we talk about the speed of adopting this law, we cannot really talk about any swift action. The government initiated the work on the law in the parliament in February 2016. It was passed around one and a half year later, in September 2017 (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2016a).

Again, we have a case for borderline securitization. We can clearly talk about depiction of threat and security argumentation. There was formal support of the parliament. Furthermore, in this case we can also talk about the extraordinary measures, as it seems that the government went contrary to the European standards, and possibly also against its own constitution. However, the moral support seems to be lacking, and the speed with which the decision was taken does not indicate, that we can talk about a securitizing move.

3.3. Historical memory and de-Sovietisation

Another tool of Russian soft power, as described in the literature, is its historical memory. More specifically, the authors see the victory of the USSR over the Nazi regime of Germany as one of the most important historic achievements of the Soviet Union and Russia as its successor. For long time, Ukraine was in the informational sphere of influence of Russia, and repeated the Russian interpretation of history, as interviewees Vladimir and Borislav explained. This may have inhibited the growth of Ukraine, as the director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance Volodymyr Viatrovych (2015) pointed out. He explained that the lack of de-communization was the reason why the neo-soviet regime of Yanukovich came to power. Furthermore, lack of such laws prevent Ukraine from becoming a European and democratic country. He claimed that those who hold the soviet values dear are the most important supporters of the Russian military intervention in Ukraine. Thus, as the director pointed out, the de-communization is not the question of history, but of national security.

Thus, the way Ukraine securitized the historical memory is certainly a case to be observed in this dissertation.

3.3.1. Laws on de-Sovietisation

The Ukrainian parliament passed four laws that were included in so-called de-Sovietisation pack. They were namely: the law about communist and national socialist totalitarian regimes and prohibition of their propagation; the law on immortalization of the victory over Nazism in the Second World War; the law on legal status and memory of fighters for independence of Ukraine in the 20th century; and the law about access to archives of the “organs of repression” of the totalitarian communist regime. The parliament passed all of the laws on the 9th of April 2015 using a quick procedure. The laws were prepared fairly fast, and discussed within a half a year of their preparation (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2015b).

The parliament started to discuss the law about the fighters for Ukrainian independence first. The above-mentioned director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance Volodymyr Viatrovych came with his opening statement. He said that this law pays the debt to those who fought for the independence of Ukraine against the Bolshevik forces from Russia. Following the director’s presentation, the deputy speaker Andriy Parubiy, who led the plenary session, continued. He said that the war against Russian imperialism and occupation in Ukraine has been going on for a hundred years. Other speakers, who discussed the law, also pointed out to similar reasons for the necessity to pass this law. Oleh Medunytsha of the National front claimed that in the past Ukraine copied the foreign historical view of the events in Ukraine. The reason for this was to occupy Ukraine, first ideologically and then territorially. He furthermore stated that those who would not vote for the law, would be voting against Ukraine and for the enemy, working for the Russian aggressor. Ihor Mosiychuk of the radical party claimed that this law not only honours those who died in the early 20th century, but also those who are dying now in the Eastern Ukraine. Mykhailo Holovko of the Freedom party stated that the law means that Ukraine is getting rid of the Russian shackles. Yuriy Lutsenko of the Petro Poroshenko bloc claimed that this law

is not only honouring the heroes of Ukraine, who fought against the occupation. It is also a signal that Ukraine is a free country, and has a right to pass the laws freely.

When the second law, on the victory over Nazism was discussed, it was again introduced by Volodymyr Viatrovyh. He stated that Russia uses soviet myths about the Second World War to fight against Ukraine. This is a threat to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. Similar argument was used in the statement of reasons prepared by the committee, which discussed the law. As the committee argued, the aim of the law was not to allow the totalitarian regimes to get to power in Ukraine any time in the future. Additionally, the purpose of the law was to eliminate the threat to sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security of the country. Although the committee admits that the law might infringe on the freedom of thought, this is allowed by the constitution of Ukraine if the issues of national security are in question (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2015a).

This law also established that localities, which are called after former communist dignitaries, must change their names. In relation to this, President of Ukraine (2016) Poroshenko said that this move is also important for the security of Ukraine. He linked the question with the issue of hybrid war, saying that ideology always precedes the hard power. Therefore, he warned that when changing the names of the cities and towns, citizens must not use old imperial names. He explained that this would play into the plans of the Russia, in creating their space of Novorossiia.

As with all the previous laws, the Opposition Bloc did not agree with the moves (Opozyciynny blok 2017b). They declared that especially the law on rejection of totalitarian systems goes against the Constitution of Ukraine and international standards. They claimed that the law goes against the constitutional rights to run for public offices, as well as the freedom of speech. The bloc was also using the arguments of OSCE and the Venice commission to support their statements.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Dunja Mijatović truly expressed her concern about the laws, especially the one condemning the totalitarian regimes and the one honouring the fighters for the independence of Ukraine. She stated that the laws might

infringe on the freedom of speech and freedom of the media, because of their vague wording. As a result, the media might encounter unjust persecution from the authorities. She said that, although the information that the media may forward is contested, there is a role for the free speech in the democracy. She expressed her concern that the laws may actually undermine the progress Ukraine has made in building its democracy (OSCE 2015).

The Venice Commission (2015) also expressed similar concerns. The commission declared that the law is written in vague terms, even though it bans a large amount of symbols, statements and other items. According to the commission, the interpretation of the law is therefore very difficult, and it is quite hard to foresee whether a particular article can or cannot be used in a certain situation. Notably, the commission criticized that the law uses wordings such as “other symbols [...] or their fragments”, “or other attributes”, “or other elements”. Furthermore, the commission found out that the scope of symbols related to Nazi ideology is much shorter than that of Communist ideology. While the latter bans the symbols from the Soviet era Ukraine, the former only includes the symbols from Nazi Germany, and omits any items of Ukrainian Nazi collaborators. Moreover, the law does not clearly define the term propaganda, and it thus it can easily be mistaken for just expression of opinions. However, the commission admits that the aim of the law may be to protect the democratic regime and decrease the possibility of a disorder. Nevertheless, the commission stated that the laws may inhibit the public debate in the country, and discourage people from engaging in the public arena. Therefore, some of the aspects of the law may in fact have the opposite effect than the proposers have intended.

Additionally, the Venice Commission (2015) expressed its concern about the effect of the law on the freedom of the media in the country. The harsh penalties proposed in the law may discourage journalists from engaging in their work – namely inform the public and engage in the monitoring of the government. The commission voiced its dissatisfaction about the possibility of censorship of the media. The vagueness of the law together with the possibility to ban certain media outlets in case of breaching the law was very disconcerting for the Commission. Furthermore, the wording of the law allowed for extrajudicial banning of such outlets.

Therefore the Opposition bloc (Opozyciynyy blok 2017b), decided to ask the Constitutional court to decide whether the law is in line with the constitution. In their statement, they expressed their concerns not only related to the technical character of the law, but also its possible outcomes. They said that the law puts a wedge in the Ukrainian society and creates threats for the government of Ukraine.

This latter concern did actually materialize in Ukraine. While some of the towns and cities started to change the names right after the passage of the law, other locations backlashed. The mayor of Poltava Oleksandr Mamay declared that the law was wrong. Therefore, the town did not prepare to change the names of the streets. Although the director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance Volodymyr Viatrovykh called such a behavior a sabotage, it took more than two years for the town to form a committee, which proposed the change of streets names (Slovo I Dilo 2015). In other cases, some of the authorities decline to change the names, even though they obviously do not comply with the law. This is the case of several locations with the name Oktiabrske. The authorities decline that this name has anything to do with the Soviet past. In other cases, the authorities decline the names proposed by citizen groups, or decline to act at all (Dorosh 2015).

The Ukrainian branch of Amnesty International also pointed out to the breaches of civil rights as a result of this law. After a brawl in Dnipro, between the citizens carrying soviet symbols and the veterans of Anti-terrorist operation in the east of Ukraine, the police arrested several people. The director of Amnesty International in Ukraine Oksana Pokalchuk said that the law returns Ukraine to the times of the Soviet Union, because it allows to arrest people based on their expression of the opinion (BBC 2017).

Additionally, when looking at the sociological surveys we can say that the divisive aspect of the laws is present. The survey of the Ukrainian Institute for the Future showed that 52% of Ukrainians support the politics of de-communization, while only 20% are categorically against it (Radio Svoboda 2016). A more detailed survey of the sociological group Reyting (2016), which asked about particularities of the law, showed more diverging results. The survey shows that 48% of Ukrainians support the banning of the Communist

ideology, while 36% are against it. On the other hand 33% support the banning of the Nationalist ideology and 40% are against. There are large differences again between the East and the West of the country. While the easterners have a problem with banning Communism – only 18% are for it, the westerners are more open towards the nationalist ideas. Only 20% support the banning of it. As for the dismantling of the statues of Lenin, 41% support the idea, while 48% are against it. Similar situation concerns the changing of the names of the localities. As many as 57% are against this, while only 35% support it. Thus, talking about moral support for this set of laws is difficult.

Overall, the set of laws dubbed the “de-communization” package is almost a straightforward case for securitization. There was a definition of threat as well as its linkage to Russia. The laws, of course, offered a solution. There was a formal support from the parliament, and the decision was taken quickly. We can probably talk about the extraordinary measures in this case, as argued by the Venice commission as well as the opposition. The only part that might be missing is the moral support of the population. Nevertheless, approximately half of the population did support the package as it was, so we can talk about at least partial moral support in this case.

3.4. Efforts to reduce the influence of Russia through information

As discussed in the theoretical part, Russia uses information to influence people in Ukraine. For that reason Ukraine has taken several measures to reduce this influence. I am going to discuss them in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1. Banning of Russian social networks

Ukraine was preparing to ban some of the Russian websites for some time. The advisor to the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Zoryan Shkiryak introduced this plan in February of 2017 (Kizilov 2017). On the 15th of May 2017, the president of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko signed a decree on the recommendation of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2017a). This decree instituted sanctions against persons

as well as legal entities that operate on the territory of Ukraine. Among the banned entities were also Russian social networks VKontakte and Odnoklassniki.

President pointed out to the fact that Russia engages in propaganda and hybrid war all over the world. Therefore, new and more powerful measures to counter these efforts are in place (112.ua 2017). The Security Service of Ukraine supported the president in this view. In their press release, they claimed that Russia uses internet sites and social networks to spread anti-Ukrainian appeals. They are supposed to persuade the citizens of Ukraine to organize radical protest actions and engage in violence. The security services of Ukraine demanded the providers of these sites to fight against such moves, but they met no response. Therefore, the Security Service decided to make such measures, which would block the access to these sites from the territory of Ukraine (Sluzhba bezpeky Ukrainy 2017).

The Ministry of Information Policy supported the move of the president. In the preparatory document of the Ministry, Russian social networks were not on the list to be banned. However, after the discussion with the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, the ministry conceded that the Russia uses the website as a tool in the hybrid war, and they are therefore a threat to the territorial integrity (Ministerstvo informatsiynoi polityky Ukrainy 2017).

My interviewees Dobroslav and Ladislav pointed out to the fact that Russian secret services had access to these websites, and they could use the personal information shared through these websites. Vladimir supported this claim with an information that has relation to the national security. Because some of the soldiers on the Eastern front were using the social sites, Russian secret service could locate their positions. It happened that the pro-Russian forces directed precise attacks to the positions of Ukrainians, probably using this information to their advantage.

In fact, the Ukrainian security forces knew that Russian secret services might have an access to these sites. However, back at the time the Security Service argued that they have no means to block these sites from the territory of Ukraine (Radio Svoboda 2014).

As soon as this decree went into force, it spawned a lot of negative reaction. One of the first to react was the speaker of the Ombudsman of Ukraine Mikhailo Chapliha. He pointed out to the fact that only a court can demand to block a website (UNIAN 2017). The Human Rights Watch also declared its discontent. They said that the block of the websites is a step against the freedom of expression and information, and that president Poroshenko is trying to control the discourse in Ukraine (Human Rights Watch 2017).

Similarly, the Reporters Without Borders (2017) called for the revoke of the ban. The head of Reporters Without Borders' Eastern Europe and Central Asia desk Johan Birr said that the decree is an act of censorship, despite the security situation of Ukraine. He further stated that this move goes contrary to the freedoms of information and expression, and it is not adequate considering the stated goals. In an interview with Deutsche Welle (2017), the German director of the organization Christian Mihr proposed that Ukraine should rather support good quality journalism, than ban the networks where such news can spread.

British human rights organization Article 19 (2017) also said that this decision would most likely affect the citizens' freedoms to access information. They expressed the concern that Ukraine has been pursuing people expressing their opinions online, which has led to self-censorship. Furthermore, the organization pointed out to the fact that the banning of entire websites should only come as a last resort in fighting against improper messages on the internet. Such a decision should only come through a legitimate decision, and should be proportionate to the proposed goals.

Furthermore, the Council of Europe (2017) included this instance in their report on internet blocking around Europe. The commissioner Nils Muižnieks pointed out to the fact that blocking of websites goes contrary to the Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. He expressed his concern that the decision was arbitrary, it did not follow the proper legal procedure and it was quite unpredictable.

Ukraine did answer the alert raised by the Council of Europe. In their response they repeated the argumentation that the goal of the banning is to increase security in light of Russian aggression. They also pointed out to the fact that Russia has used its online services

as part of its hybrid war against Ukraine. Thus, they claimed that the response to these threats was adequate (Official position of Ukraine 2017).

Some politicians who have supported securitizing moves earlier also expressed their discontent. Serhiy Leshchenko (2017), who ran for Petro Poroshenko bloc in the 2014 elections and then split from the party, wrote a blog about the presidential decree. He claimed that banning of social networks is an authoritarian move, rather than a fight against Russian propaganda. He compared the social sites to a tool, through which a threat can arrive, but so can a tractor or tank drive on a road. He accused the president that all of his efforts are part of the presidential campaign. According to Leshchenko, president is trying to take attention away from corruption and other important issues in Ukraine, to his fight against the aggressor.

As usual in these cases, the Opposition bloc also criticized the move. In their statement the party claimed that this move showed that the government does not wish to strengthen democracy in the country (Oppozitsiynyy blok 2017a). Therefore, because the party considered this move to go against constitutional and civil rights, they decided to ask the Constitutional court to examine the decree (Interfaks Ukraina 2017).

The argument that the decree does not have a power to ban a website, and only a court should have such power was reluctantly taken into account. A group of deputies started to prepare such a law in July 2017 (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2017). However, although the deputies wanted the parliament to discuss it, they did not find enough support to put it on the daily programme. Therefore, the bill has not been discussed yet (Tkachuk 2018).

In the meantime, the Human Rights Information Centre already criticized the proposal. One of their workers, lawyer by profession, Oleksandr Burmahin (2018) claimed that the bill would bring censorship to the country, it would give unnecessarily large powers to the authorities. Furthermore, he reminded that the purpose of state control over the internet is not to censor the unwanted opinions. Rather, the purpose is to secure the privacy for individual users of the internet and a safe enjoyment of their rights. Additionally, he accused

the proposers of the bill of being unaware of the current standards in the area of information politics, and that they did not take into account any of the international criticism.

If we want to talk about the support of the population, the NGO called Detector Media (2017) gives us an answer. In a large survey on the media literacy and measures against Russian propaganda, they also asked the questions on the support of certain restrictive measures. The survey showed that only 30% of people support the move to ban Russian social networks, while 46% are against it. There are again regional differences. While 53% of people living in the Western region think that the move brings security to the state, around 60% of people in the Southern and Eastern regions think that the decree restricts the rights of citizens. Thus, the move gained very little moral support.

To conclude this part, the decree of the president was certainly a securitizing move. The arguments of the president and of the members of the other authorities of power clearly showed that this move was made in order to protect Ukraine from the Russian threat. This support of other authorities can be counted as formal support in some way. However, when a group of deputies wanted to legalize this move through the passage of a law, they did not get enough support even to discuss the law. I could speculate that this was the strategy of the ruling party, to give the president more powers. Thus, the move was also quite extraordinary. As many foreign observers have claimed, the move went against the international standards. Some of the domestic experts claimed that the move was going against the constitution, or that the president did not have any legal power to make such a move. In terms of speed, it is difficult to assess. The Russia passed the law according to which the social sites are under the control of the Russian Secret Service as soon as August 2014 (Golitsyna & Nikolskiy 2014). The Ukrainian police declared that they are planning to ban the sites in February 2017. In May, the president signed the decree. Then in July 2017, some of the deputies decided to work on a bill to legalize this move. The bill has not been passed till this day. Thus, the reaction to the threat was quite long. However, the time between the declaration that the threat is there and the actual securitizing move was only a few months. Nevertheless, the lack of moral support does not allow me to count this instance as a successful securitization. I will thus only call it a securitizing move.

3.5. Data Analysis and Summary

In the previous paragraphs, I examined roughly four instances when Ukraine attempted to reduce the possibility of Russia to use its soft power. In this part of the dissertation, I am going to look at them from a more holistic view, and try to make some generalizations from the data.

My conditions for a securitization were a) Naming the threat and offering a solution; b) Making an extraordinary move; c) Working quickly; d) gaining formal support; e) gaining moral support. Only when all of these conditions were fulfilled, I called a move a successful securitization. Otherwise, it was only a securitizing move.

In all of the instances, the first condition was fulfilled. The politicians always considered certain tool of Russian soft power as threatening and they offered a way to counter it. Whether the solutions were efficient is not a question that the theory of securitization looks to answer. Nevertheless, I think it is important to look at whether the solutions work or not, because it gives us answers for the evaluation of other conditions. Most of the times, the effectiveness was lacking. In case of the church, the appeal to the patriarch did not solve the issue of multiple churches in Ukraine. In case of language in education, the law did not attack the problem of low quality Ukrainian teaching and lack of textbooks. In case of de-communisation, the often vague wording may be a problem. Last, in the case of banning Russian social networks, the ineffectiveness is obvious. The users of the internet can simply use proxy servers to go around the ban, and the authorities even said they would not persecute them.

In case of the second condition, going beyond the normal politics, this was also fulfilled most of the times. The politicians used the security situation in Ukraine, the hybrid war from Russia, as an excuse to go against the constitution or international standards. They did so despite the opposition threatening to appeal to the constitutional court and international organizations expressing their concern. The interviewee Borislav understands this. He claims that 4 years ago, most of this moves would not be possible, and Russia would be able to

influence Ukrainians freely, as it was during the Yanukovich regime. The interviewee Svetozar instead said that the government needs the war, to take attention away from other problems, like oligarchy, corruption and living standards. In light of the fact that the solutions proposed were not very effective, this judgement makes much sense. The government is unable to do much about the problems in Ukraine, and thus it concentrates on other things and makes some moves just for effect. Arguing with securitization is an effective way to make one issue prioritized over the other.

In case of the third condition, the speed of the decision taken, only a few of the moves fulfilled it. Most of the times, however it took more than a year for the authorities to make a certain move. In a case of an objective threat, this is quite incomprehensible. Several times even the deputies voting on the issues were complaining that a certain move should have been done quite some time ago already.

If we are talking about formal support, most of the cases show this. The result here may be skewed by the fact that I was using mostly the laws and the acts that got passed. If I also focused on the moves that were eventually scrapped, this condition would probably not get as many instances of a positive result as it did. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that the opinions of most of the proponents of a securitizing moves resonated with their fellow deputies and other politicians. Therefore, it was fairly easy to get formal support for securitizing the Russian soft power efforts.

In terms of moral support however, this was more difficult. One of the reasons may be the fact that Ukraine is a divided country, with divided identities. Some of the Russian speakers may understood the moves against the Russian soft power as the moves against them. The deputies never argued that they want to go against the citizens of Ukraine. Rather they claimed that they wish to build unity. Nevertheless, they did not restrain themselves from calling certain people or institutions, such as TVs to be the agents of Kremlin, and called for a battle against them. Such an argumentation clearly created the “us” vs. the “other” dichotomy, which may have contributed to the lack of moral support for certain issues. It also

seems that rather than bringing actual solutions, many of these moves brought a new division to the country.

3.5.1. Important findings regarding the theory

Concerning the theory of securitization, we can say that the argumentation with security during the war is fairly common. It allows the securitizing agents to gain much of a formal support. However, it does not always mean moral support as well. From my observations, the securitizing moves have brought division in the country as well as a lot of backlash.

Additionally, in terms of securitizing soft power, many of the decisions brought only partially effective solutions to diminishing the scope and space for influence from abroad. As I predicted in the theoretical section, if soft power is attractive to some parts of the society, fighting against this views does not necessarily change the views themselves. Although Ukraine was able to lower the manoeuvring space for Russian propaganda and influence, the surveys show that the attractiveness of these issues did not diminish. This is probably related to the question of societal and identity securitization. If an individual's identity is different to those making the securitizing move, the individual positions himself or herself negatively towards those moves. For that reason we have seen many securitizing moves, but only a handful of truly successful cases of securitization.

In my opinion the question of securitizing identity in a highly divided country needs more research. However, in this view, Ukraine seems to be sui generis case. At this moment I cannot think of any other country around the world in a similar situation. The Ukrainians are a majority in their country, but Russians have a very strong kin state on their side. This kin state is much bigger and stronger in terms of resources than Ukraine. For that reason securitizing moves only resonate with the population when they are particularly consensual. Even then the division is visible, as each side takes a particular part of the consensual decision as relevant to them.

Nevertheless, especially one particularity that stems from this finding is important for the general knowledge. As predicted in the theoretical section, the strict division between political and societal security did not materialize. On the contrary, the arguments, which politicians used, often invoked both sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as the security of identity or national unity. Therefore, based on my observations, strict differentiating between these two strains of securitization is blurring the whole picture, and is thus unnecessary.

When talking about particular conditions for a successful securitization, I think I made a good decision focusing on all the five conditions separately. I have shown that fulfilling all of the five conditions for a successful securitization is difficult even in a country, where a threat is objective, because the country is at war. Therefore, my research confirms the objection of many of the authors: ideally fulfilling all of the conditions for securitization is very difficult.

Especially two of the conditions were fulfilled only occasionally – the speed with which the decision was taken and the moral support of the audience. Both of these conditions, of course, depend on their conceptualization and the way of measuring. My decision to only count the decisions taken within half a year was perhaps a bit strict. Nevertheless, in case of an objective threat, avoiding the taking of a decision may mean jeopardizing the existence of a society. I understand that Ukrainian politicians have much work to do; Ukraine is trying to enter Euro-Atlantic structures etc. However if the threat is really existential, all of these should give way to the securitizing moves. This did not happen as often as one would expect. This does not mean that we should scrap the issue of hasty acceptance of a move from the securitization theory. It does tell us, however, something about how objective is the threat invoked by subjective securitization.

When talking about the moral support, this should affect the effectivity of the securitizing move. Taking just the example of banning the Russian social networks, we can see that the lack of moral support did influence the way in which this move is implemented. Although the providers of internet closed the Russian websites, many people found their way

to circumnavigate the ban using proxy servers and other tools. From this, I judge that including the issue of moral support within the theory of securitization is crucial, because it helps us distinguish between a securitizing move and a successful securitization.

This last part also tells us something regarding the theory of securitization. The moves often lacked moral support of the society. Rather, these moves brought division to the society. This was predicted considering the division in the Ukrainian society. However, such an outcome is probably not very desirable from the point of view of the decision-makers. I suggest that researchers could shed more light on this divisive aspect of the securitization as a political strategy. The difference between the uniting and divisive securitization is in my opinion crucial.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation I looked at how Ukraine is trying to securitize the issue of Russian soft power. More specifically, I looked at how Ukrainian politicians try to diminish the space for spreading Russian soft power in their country.

Using the theory of securitization and the concept of soft power, I arrived to some interesting conclusions. My dissertation suggests that in a country, where the war is being waged, politicians can use the securitizing moves fairly easily to counter soft power. However, the effectiveness of their moves is questionable.

The methodology of this dissertation was a case study. I focused only on one particular country, namely Ukraine. Ukraine is a very specific case, because of its division in terms of identity and language, as well as the fact that the country is in war with Russia. Although the design of a case study does not allow me to generalize much of my results, some insights may be interesting for the future research. Because of the war, the politicians may have overused the rhetoric of security, even though this was not necessary. The securitizing rhetoric may also have brought divisions into the society.

From this outcome, I would suggest for further research to look more at the outcomes of securitization – whether it brings the proposed results, and whether it does not have more dividing rather than uniting effect.

To conclude, my study can also be used as a stepping point for those, who wish to research Russian soft power in Ukraine, or any other country in the region, as well as the reaction of a country to this strain of Russian foreign policy. Thus, I have fulfilled the goals of this dissertation.

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Abstract

The subject of this master thesis is securitization of Russian soft power in Ukraine. Looking at the case of Ukraine through the lens of securitization theory, the work tries to answer the question whether securitization of Soft power is possible, and how it is done. The theory predicts that it is possible to perceive threat of the political and societal security and devise a solution to curb this threat, even using extraordinary measures outside the scope of normal politics. The specificity of Russian soft power is discussed. Based on this discussion I propose that Russian soft power can indeed be viewed as a threat and therefore securitized. Using the method of discursive analysis, I analyse the statements of politicians about the proposed laws, which are supposed to decrease the attractiveness of Russian soft power in Ukraine. Supportive documents, such as statements of the opposition politicians, international organizations and other figures, as well as public surveys help me ascertain whether the conditions for securitization were fulfilled. The observation shows that the securitizing actors, who then make the securitizing move, can perceive soft power as a threat. It happens only rarely, however, that all the conditions for a successful securitization are fulfilled. Therefore, I suggest observing and examining conditions for securitization separately.