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Hybrid Threat?

Societal Security and the Russians in the Baltics

Dissertação

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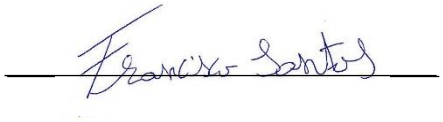
DECLARAÇÕES

Declaro que esta dissertação é o resultado da minha investigação pessoal e independente. O seu conteúdo é original e todas as fontes consultadas estão deviamente mencionadas no texto, nas notas e na bibliografia.

O candidato



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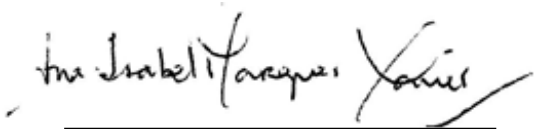

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Dedicatória

Dedico esta dissertação ao meu Pai e à minha Mãe, que sempre aturaram e apoiaram as minhas decisões.

Por favor, perdoem-me por escrever em língua estrangeira.

Graças a vocês existo e penso.

Sou um cidadão do mundo que vocês construíram.

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AMEAÇA HIBRIDA?
SEGURANÇA SOCIETÁRIA E OS RUSSOS NOS BÁLTICOS

FRANCISCO ANDRÉ MARQUES SANTOS

RESUMO

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Bálticos, Rússia, Russófonos, Segurança Societária, Guerra Híbrida

Uma larga percentagem dos habitantes dos Estados Bálticos têm origens Russas. As recentes intervenções militares por parte da Federação Russa reforçaram preocupações com a segurança em todo o espaço pós-soviético. Graças à eficiência da operação de anexação da Crimeia, a aplicação de longo termo da estratégia apelidada de guerra hibrida, que instrumentaliza a identidade como ferramenta para ganhos geopolíticos, é considerada um desafio a uma resposta militar atempada pelos aliados militares dos Estados Bálticos, do qual o contingente militar é comparativamente marginal. Isto leva à necessária aplicação de um novo paradigma de segurança humana e estatal, como método de dissuasão contra a estratégia de guerra híbrida, sendo importante questionar quais as opções de dissuasão disponíveis para os Estados Bálticos contra a guerra híbrida. A relevância do conceito de segurança societária é explorada, alicerçada numa estrutura conceptual para o seu desenvolvimento no contexto Báltico, questionando ainda como pode a segurança societária ser desenvolvida nos Estados Bálticos. Concluiremos com a pertinência do conceito para a segurança da região.

HYBRID THREAT?
SOCIETAL SECURITY AND THE RUSSIANS IN THE BALTICS

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS: Baltics, Russia, Russophones, Societal Security, Hybrid War

A large percentage of the inhabitants of the Baltic States are of Russian origins. The recent military interventions by the Russian Federation have raised security concerns all across the post-soviet space. Thanks to the efficiency of the annexation operation of Crimea, the long-term application of the strategy named as hybrid warfare, which instrumentalises identity as a tool for political gains, is considered a challenge to a timely military response by the military allies of the Baltic States, whose military contingent is comparatively marginal. This leads to the necessary application of a new paradigm of human and state security, as a dissuasion method against the strategy of hybrid warfare, leading to the questioning on the dissuasion options available to the Baltic States against hybrid warfare. The relevance of the concept of societal security is explored, and embedded into a conceptual structure for its development within the Baltic context, further exploring on how societal security can be developed in the Baltic States. We will conclude on the pertinence of the concept for the security of the region.

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Prologue

The present dissertation was written after having lived for nearly a year in Estonia. The discomfort observed in some people when dealing with the present subject only denotes the necessity of undertaking it, so as to facilitate a situation closer to harmony to all the people of the Baltics.

With the major political shift undertaken in the Baltic States, institutional and societal adjustments have accompanied it. The ever-changing conditions of our states can hardly be predicted. We can, however, with thoughtful and careful analysis of our surroundings, arrive at important conclusions on how to better influence them positively, an objective in itself crafted by argument and reason.

I have sought to comprehend the region I was living in. However close it may be to every point of a circle and its centre, there are still people who perceive bigger distances amongst their peers, and that, within a democratic system, is in itself a paradox for which it was not originally designed for. It is the persistence of these difference that ultimately endangers its foundation. The mistrusting of a state, however deviated by mandates it can be, presents either a lack of understanding of the social contract or the poor design of one.

In the European discourse, we often see the highlighting of diversity and the advantages and strengths that it gives to us. This common characteristic discovered and fostered within our continent have recently been under attack and we unite in fear of the other instead of joining forces to help one another. There is a moral dilemma in uniting in the celebration of discrimination of other identities just based on a wider interpretation of what is foreign, and it is a fallacy in itself. Hardly anything can be sustainable under such feelings. If we concentrate on issues instead of trying to focus on narratives, we can be humane instead of simply people.

Having met fellow students who take irrelevance as certain, it is with the hope for improvement that I embark in the spelling of this dissertation as a larger part of something more than just a degree.

At first, as a foreigner in the Baltics with my statistics in hand, trying to understand if it was more appropriate to say spasibo or aitäh[1], I came to realise that people don`t care. That

[1] "Thank you" in Russian and Estonian, respectively.

whilst people appreciate your attention, everyone would just want to be treated with respect, not in regards to their origin but in relation to their individual identity, which in itself is influenced by how we relate to each other.

States, built upon individual aspirations for safety, often mistake this objective as being the survival of the state in itself the main goal, instead of pertaining to the conditions of its individuals. It is in this overarching concept of human security that states interplay in dominion, either based in its own state security complex or at competition for the perception of successful mandates without understanding political fundamentals framed in any other different way than imperialism, at the expense or expanse of personal aspirations portrayed as the aspirations of all individuals, whilst narrating an approach of constructive critique when such a policy is, fundamentally, revisionist power plays.

I was never able to, at first sight, distinguish an ethnic Estonian from an ethnic Russian, but that is probably because, in the first place, I never needed to. This dissertation's brings about the objective of the state as a guarantor of security to all of its individuals, as it is possible to prove through the sovereignty of the Baltic nations and the understanding of the other and its condition within the state.

Chapter I - Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Once the Baltic States were integrated by the Soviet Union during the second World War, a major demographic shift went underway in the republics of Estonia, Latvia, and to a smaller extent, Lithuania (Parming, T 1980). While the indigenous population decreased, the total percentage of ethnic Russians increased significantly (in the first two) for reasons like war, industrialisation, natality rates, and forced migration (ibid. 1980)

Nowadays, Russians or Russian-speaking people in Latvia and Estonia represent as much as 30% (Zvidrings, P. et al 2015) of the total population, a percentage capable of challenging any perception or definition of a minority, whilst the Lithuanian security perspective on Russia can be said to emulate those of its northern neighbours.

Recent Russian foreign interventions could then be detailed as a concerted and long-term effort to coerce and destabilize these countries (Freire, M. R. 2013), signalling a threat to any countries which have similar relations between the European Union (EU) and Russian and/or comparable characteristics to those of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Crimea, Donbas and Transnistria, that is, post-soviet conflicts of different nature but common patterns of Russian influence.

Energetic dependence, strong economic relations, military superiority and capabilities, high percentages of ethnic Russians or Russian-speaking population, extensive networks of favourable or permeable individuals all present risks to the Baltic countries, which have been explored before, and are now being labelled as hybrid warfare. Societal security seems particularly helpful when trying to interpret the situation. The model is based on group identity within the state.

The objective of this dissertation is then the development of a framework for Societal Security of the Baltics, taking into account the threat posed by hybrid warfare. For the effect, this dissertation is divided in six chapters. In the first one, the historical and latest regional developments are introduced. After presenting the most relevant actors in the process of identity in the Baltics, the scope turns in the second chapter to several concepts at play within the subject`s framework, which will be useful in the development of a response to hybrid warfare, then leading us into the third chapter. Here, the different phases

of such an operation are detailed and other influencing factors, discussed. Even if a response to such operations require a more holistic and long-term approach, some measures are presented as dissuatory and resistance strategies. An holistic approach is better explored in chapter four, where the Russophone population of the Baltic countries is detailed and the answer on how to reach for assimilation is described, along with the barriers in place to fostering them. Lest the findings across the dissertation are too spread, the final chapter sums up these conclusions.

1.2. Historical Development

The state of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia proclaimed their independence in 1918, after the collapse of the Russian empire, seeing themselves as part of the Soviet Union during the 2nd world war.

Once they became independent again in 1990 , the historical narrative presented was one of illegal occupation, and the status of those who migrated to the country during this period deemed illegal by Latvia and Estonia, refusing citizenship to those who were post-war settlers and descendants, needing to prove their Latvian and Estonian language skills since the enactment of the citizenship law of 1994 and 1995 respectively, amongst other requirements. In 2013, Latvia still had 297,883 non-citizens and Estonia 90,533 stateless "aliens" (Muiznieks, N. et al. 2013). The "Singing Revolution" which serves to describe the events that led to the regaining of sovereignty by the three republics developed with an emphasis on the free expression of the culture of the titular nationals of these regions, undermined due to censorship or repression under pressure inside of the Soviet Union (Brubaker, 1992).

The post-second world war demographic shift that happened in these countries led the titular nationalities of these countries to sharply decrease in percentage, in comparison to the number of migrants arriving from other Soviet republics, creating heterogeneous societies in which the predominance of the local language and culture became increasingly under threat, that is, in Estonia and Latvia, where between 1959 and 1989, the ethnic percentage of the titular population changed from 74,6% and 62% to 61,5% and 52% correspondently (whilst in Lithuania it changed from 79,3% to 76,9%, and to 84,2% in

2011), with ethnic Russians being the larger part of these changes. In 2011, numbers had changed to 69,7% and 62,1% of the total population (Zvidrins, P. et al 2015).

To add injury, these relations are connected to the historical memory and "painful past" (Pettai, V. 2007). Russia`s foreign policy and in particular, its interventions, puts the Baltic authorities on high alert with regards to its borders and its population (Järvenpää, P. 2015). Albeit part of EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the asymmetric warfare (Rácz, A. 2015) used in the take-over of Crimea puts into question the effectiveness of these institutions, particularly if the possibility of manoeuvring their democratic principles into a question of legitimacy in relation to the countries heterogeneity in language, culture, and often conflicting interpretations of the historical narratives.

1.3. Geopolitical propositions

Following the cold war, Russia`s integration in the globalized economy and participation in the "fight against terrorism" led to an approximation western countries and institutions. This period of serenity was short-lived, considering Russia`s preoccupation with the European Union`s expansion. Influencing the regional security dynamic and establishing its "near abroad" as a sphere of influence became crucial for Russia as it sought to assert itself as a global power, anchoring itself in the Post-soviet regional dynamic aided by the argument laid out by the large number of ethnic Russians living abroad, posing the great power and global ambitions against the weak supercomplex and institutionalizing European Union (Buzan, B. and Weaver, O. 2002).

Russia`s 2008 intervention in Georgia displayed the conditions that the EU would meet in case of further expansion and characterizes the new European security architectural Russian dilemma (Fernandes, S. 2012). The colour revolutions in the post-soviet region of 2004 re-arranged Russian relations with the block. Whilst the EU`s normative power can be perceived as apolitical and the partnerships as not being prerogatives to EU membership, the same vision is not shared by Russia, which sees the post-soviet region "near abroad" within its sphere of influence and contesting it by counterbalancing influence EU`s "zero-sum game" influence (Simão, L. 2011). Simão also argues that Russia`s foreign policy is a continuation of its domestic policy since Putin`s overhauled centralised mode of governance is put into question within the countries of the post-soviet organisation of the

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), in line with the ideological determinant of the nationalist "Russian World" and Russia`s re-assertion of its sovereignty over it, relatable to its imperial history as well as its rather heterogeneous federation (Simão, L. 2016).

This is also understood by the institutional arrangements proposed by the two blocks, either by Eurasian Economic Union with its Eurasian Economic Commission, as well as the Collective Security Treaty Organization, paralleling the European Union and NATO.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States is yet another organisation which ought to be taken into account as an effort of fostering cooperation and as to create a common identity. Whilst there is an overlapping institutionalisation of the different structures mentioned, this last organisation greatly represents the security challenges present in the region as well as a positive space for Russia to cooperate with other states from the Baltic Sea Region. Existing since 1992, there have been no summits since 2014, after an EU call due to the crisis in Ukraine, even if there persists cooperation in areas such as civil protection, border control, maritime safety as well as environment related topics. Considering the somewhat loose affiliation and the focus on soft security, as well as the individual state budgeting for the different projects, Russia`s criticism of EU`s dominance over the institution (Kropatcheva, E. 2017) nevertheless displays an engagement towards different forms of regional cooperation within different forums.

1.4. Geoeconomics

It is a perspective which may as well be Clausewitz continuation of "war by other means", which, however, ought to be represented in a different way since it creates different behaviours on the actors projecting their power. Wigell and Vihma (2016) take it as being more of a covert mode of operating in the sense that geoeconomic power projection is selective accommodation. This is particular evident in their description of Russia`s differentiating natural gas prices to its European partners made transparent thanks to the EU`S regulations in 2013. It should be reminded that the block`s energy relations are one of the key factors which mandate a mutual relation of dependency, leading the different states to balance political preferences, economic relations, as well as energetic security as questions to answer.

After the cutting off of gas supplies to Ukraine in 2006, again in 2008-2009, finally Russia recurred to its armed forces, stopping the supplies again in 2014 already during the ongoing conflict in the eastern part of the country. The European institutional response lays in the advocacy of a common energy policy strategy to counter this influence. It is the effort to establish cohesive common policies that are undermined by such Russian policies, even if Russia`s more aggressive actions have led to collective responses. The selective trade-disruptions with Finland, Sweden, Poland, the Netherlands, Germany, Estonia, Latvia and the United Kingdom are yet another representation of the broader effort (Ibid. 2016).

The EU cannot guarantee hard security neither it is its primary role. This does not meant that it does not take part in shaping the security framework and normative policy. That common response to Russia`s intervention in Ukraine took the form of economic sanctions after the shooting down of the civilian aircraft MH17 in the Eastern part of the country (Orenstein and Kelemen 2016 quoting Orenstein 2014), whereas Italy, Greece, Hungary and Cyprus leaders had previously spoken out against such measures. In a broader European perspective, this is what Orenstein and Kelemen (2016) call a Trojan horse, that is, an underminer of the common EU foreign policy, in this case, vis-à-vis the relationship with Russia with whom such governments have close ties with.

The Russian effort of "creating" Trojan horses extends even further if we consider Russian support of anti-EU political parties. The French National Front has seen funding secured by a Russian banks with ties to the Kremlin, whilst reportedly, this happened in Bulgarian Ataka, Hungarian Jobbik, Greece`s Golden Dawn, and Germany Die Linke, being the most evident cases (Ibid. 2016 quoting Klapsis, Troianovski).

1.5. Triadic Nexus +1

In order to understand the situation at play, there is a need to identify the actors and fundamentally understand their relations so as to comprehend the processes which shape the identities of the Baltic societies. Brubaker`s ethnopolitical relations triadic nexus, fits the nationalising state, the national minority, as well as the external national homeland which plays a cultural influence in the moving variables of the three-way relation (Pettai, V. 2007).

As put forward by Brubaker and completed by Smith (in 2002, according to Cheskin, A. 2015), to the interplaying actors we have to add the international organisations, namely the European Union, thus completing the quadratic nexus (figure 1) along in the relations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and their correspondent Russophone minorities, whereas pertaining individuals, relate, identity, or feel estranged by each node, here collectively represented. These nodes relate with each other by discursive practices or policies, named as Stances, whilst Representations is the external perception of one field by another. The author conceptualises these relations in political, economic, and cultural sub-groups, as understood by each node, noting the different dimensions of perception in these relations (Cheskin, A. 2015).

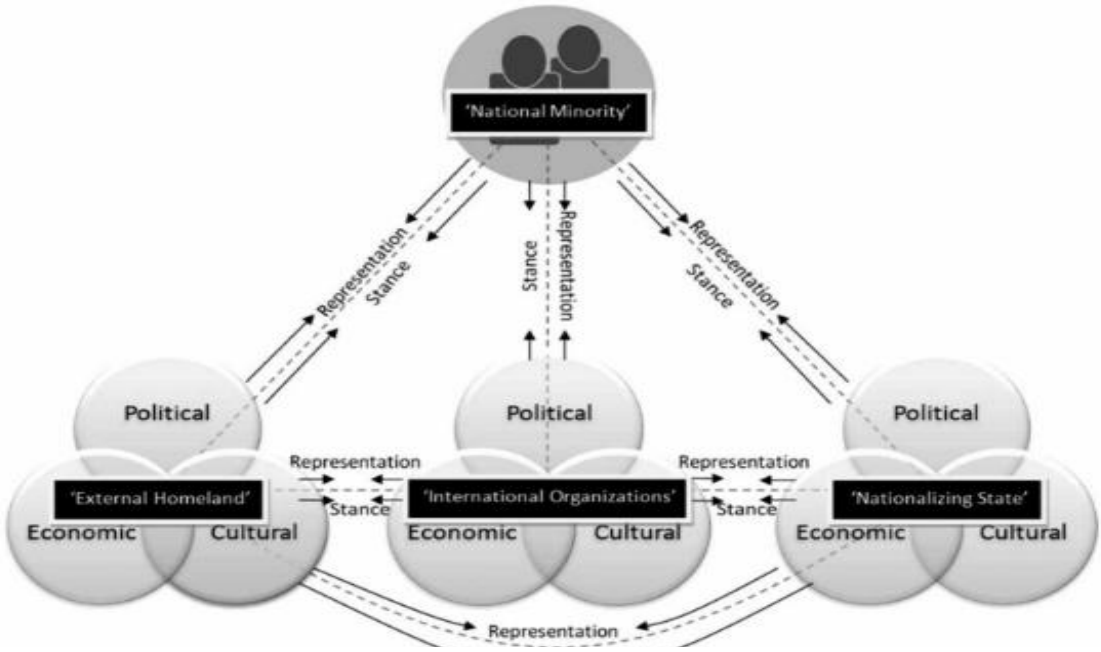

Figure 1: Quadratic Nexus, taken from Cheskin, A. 2015

As this external national homeland, we have the heir state of the Soviet Union, Russia, projecting its influence in the new independent states. The defence of a state`s interest in a foreign country is a normal part of international relations, however, the historical relation of Russia with its neighbours, whether considered positive or negative, has come under increased scrutiny since the intervention in Georgia, but particularly since the annexation of Ukraine`s Crimean peninsula and usage and fostering of separatism in the Donbas region (Shlapak, D. A. et al. 2016), in order to influence the country`s foreign policy options, also visible in the separatist region of Transnistria in Moldova (King, C. 1994). These relations are accompanied by the Kremlin favourable energetic relations, ethnic differences, military

dependence as well as dominance, permeable minorities, and a strong media presence, not distinguishable (Rácz, A. 2015) from revisionist or coercive foreign policies when its singular aspects are observed in isolation, yet all are used to develop a narrative favorable to Russia's interest in detriment to the state`s sovereignty.

Chapter II - Conceptual Framework

2.1. Creating Resistance

Different authors have articulated the problem of defending the Baltic States composed of around 6 million people against a country of 143 million people. However the only seemingly option for the prospect of a war would be through the employment of hybrid warfare methods, which in turn, "(…) works best against democracies." But against this type of threat, preparedness and deterrence seems much more feasible. Thorton and Karagiannis (2016) argue that there are grounds for sustaining a long-term employment of hybrid warfare against them. It is thanks to Russia`s previous employments of such methods that we are able to also design a long-term strategy alike, and dissect truly dissect the "conundrum" that they mention.

This is related to the tensions that a heterogeneous militarized society can bring. In fact, one of the phenomena's noted by the media after the start of events in Ukraine was the increased participation in paramilitary organisations in several European countries. The Baltics present no exception and these same organisations benefit from a tacit approval from the different governments. Their members receive military grade training from active personnel, access to weapons, and fall under the responsibility of national defence ministries (Liedekerk, A. 2015). Whichever set of laws we choose to access the legality of these paramilitary bodies, approval at a national level and NATO`s strategic recommendations go hand-in-hand with escalation of deterrent strategies as valid approaches to hybrid warfare.

Whilst Bartkowski (2015) defends the organisation of non-violent resistance, by arguing that the propositions made in Lithuania`s defence ministry 2015 guide on nonviolent civilian defence would have better served Ukraine than militarist means, this same proposition, as Huhtinen (2017) relates, seriously aggravated tensions with Russia in the process, whilst Thorton and Karagiannis (2016) note that raising defensive within the

civilian sector is difficult since this would be seen as favouring a portion of the population, hardly a favourable idea for all Baltic States since it would provide further arguments for nationalist rhetoric, which would be much more polarising in heterogeneous Latvia and Estonia, presenting dangerous grounds for expressing dissatisfaction.

2.2. Societal Security

In the Small States Winter School in Vilnius (2015), a consortium of researchers in the field of small states came together to introduce common issues pertaining to small states and the challenges presented for having a comparatively smaller defence apparatus, whereas, even if it could lead to efficient gains in bigger states, it is mostly thought upon as to be put into use by small states, that is, in line with the Scandinavian defence ministries application and the employment of the term in comparison to larger governments and their respective institutional and military apparatus, thus granting a comparative advantage in dealing with national security issues in scope. Being conditioned by the climate of the Yugoslavian wars and the fear of ethnic conflicts in the post-soviet region, Buzzan`s 1991 "People, States and Fear" Societal Security concept (Bailes, A. J. K. et al 2014) was explored and further developed by the "Copenhagen School of Security Studies", as named by its main critic (made evident in Panić, B. 2009). Considering the debate, it can be considered an evolving concept which is defined by the object and subject considered (ETTIS, 2012).

The heterogeneous characteristics of the Baltic societies serve to highlight the necessity of an identity-centric approach to security. Societal security is thereby the identification of threats perceived by individuals of a common identity within a state. The state, as an entity dependent on recognition, fosters a notion of national identity, here presenting a contrasting narrative for the people of the Baltic States.

2.3. Building on Societal Security

Due to the evolving definition of societal security, previously conducted studies conjure the term with other identified threats than the ones dealt with in this dissertation. Whilst I cannot claim to have the definite definition of the concept, I have used different sources in

order to create a fitting adaptation of societal security, accordingly to the works of the Copenhagen School of Security and the work done by the European Trends and Threats in Society Project. I have found only two papers using societal security as a framework of analysis of the Baltics. One of them deals with organised crime and narcotics smuggling, which extrapolated incompletely that threats were defined by the perception of political actors (Poljarevic, E. 2006).

The other paper deals with identity and it quotes Buzzan in asserting that it can be understood as "identity security" (Herd, G. P. et al 2001), explaining the factors that lead to the construction of a threat, namely migration as the underminer of the composition of the population trough horizontal competition ("the overriding cultural and linguistic influence of a neighbouring culture") or vertical competition (like an integration or a secessionist project).

Small by practically all counts, the Baltic States have not been specified by earlier mentioning by Bailes, who has, however, derived the practicalities of societal security for small states, as noted. She highlights in the beginning of her chapter how the practical implications of the concept have been designed by governments as effective coordination for the reduction of ad hoc events, later on showing that the concept as a security strategy is meant to permeate identity in society and thus lower the costs of having big security apparatus, particularly appreciable by small states (Archer, C. et al 2014).

The main critique of the main critic of the Copenhagen School of Security Studies Societal Security concept is on the definition of the reference object of study of societal security which, as he argues, is not sufficiently constructivist and should, therefore, not be replaced by the traditional concept of security since the objectivist view of identity is subjective in nature, attaining that such a new agenda sets political goals to security and that the widening of the scope of security in such a manner puts sets of the population in danger, advocating security for the society instead of security of society (Panić, B. 2009).

The definition presented in this dissertation falls somewhere in between the two approaches since it is thought of with particular states in mind. 15 years have passed since the first essay on societal security in the Baltics, and the western integration projects have in the meantime become a reality. Academic literature dealing with Russia`s relations with its Post-Soviet counterparts has too developed, along with Russia`s aggressive behaviour towards western expansion (particularly after the annexation of Crimea). Its foreign policy has adopted Nye`s concept of soft power, only to re-define it into non-military ways of coercion,

antagonising the initial objective of the concept: “Moscow is not able to offer them an attractive vision of integration without building patterns of strong dependence. Therefore, its proposal of close political and economic cooperation seems quite dangerous for the sovereignty and long-term development of its neighbours”. It is recognised that “Russian authorities focus most of all on loyal constituencies (such as compatriots living abroad) and seek to mobilise people who already follow Russia’s goals and principles.” (Ćwiek-Karpowicz, J. 2012), or, in other words, people who have citizenship from the Baltic States or who have simply lived in them for a recognisable part of their life.

With the validity of the concept justified, we can now turn again to McSweeney`s critical arguments which, apart from his security concept preference, can very well be added to the framework of analysis of our object. “As an act, identity relates to the ability of individuals to uphold the narrative about them as a “collective self”. As a structure, identity relates to the story from which the individuals attempt to build the identity”. Since “identity is always a narration, an active process taken by some individuals that can be understood only as a process.” (McSweeney quoted by Panić, B. 2009). The perception processes from Cheskin`s tables (later presented) serve as an example of the conditions necessary for full assimilation, full integration, full marginalisation, and full separation (Cheskin, A. 2015). Considering the active process that is identity, we find within the scope of this dissertation, the description of the necessary processes for the Russophone communities and the Baltic States to engage with a state identity that fosters societal security. The word Baltic has served to construct a common identity for the region, and so can Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania mean something else for its Russophone community, that is, with the perceived Russian state threat in mind and with the common state identity as a driver and as mean to truly achieve security.

2.4. Ethnonational Complex

Since the Baltic States are being considered, it is necessary to understand the fundamentals of their relation with its citizens, taking into account the issue of ethnocentric states, as well as the new conditions brought by independence. The process of detailing this identity comes with the realisation that it is impossible to define people and that identity is a process instead of an object. Considering the primary objective as being the development societal security,

these nuances are necessary and are set within range of the goal of security of the society inside of the state.

Heather Rae`s arguments on state formation and pathological homogenisation seem to be quite fitting with the developments idealised within the Soviet Union and in constituting post-soviet identities, regarding the initial pattern to the realm of the states systems and the distinction between insiders and outsiders, allowing for the elites to define identity in relation with these borders, often inconsiderate of individual regard. Even in relation to its history, she nevertheless affirms that at the beginning of the twenty first century, this same right to define legitimate identity is no longer unequivocally accepted as a reaction to the most outrageous treatment of subjects and citizens across the centuries and emerging trough international norms on legitimate state behaviour (Rae, H. 2002).

Acknowledging that states take primary action in developing and defining this identity, it is necessary to detail how these relations takes part. Baltic states as representatives of the ethnic majority and defendant from perceived threats to its control, create an ethnic dilemma exacerbated by the securitization of such questions in relation to the perceived threat posed by the Russian state as a revisionist power and external homeland to the national minority, creating the necessity of advancing the Baltic States citizenship model to a non-ethnocentric or heterogeneous instance as to reduce and eliminate the perception of threats within society and the other. The European Union`s (and its institutions) as an identity constructing actor and legislating body also takes part in this relation, now more than when the original framework was constructed, and ought to, justifiably, be taken into account.

History helps us in understanding the original developments. The United Soviet Socialist Republics was a federal state, which, as the name indicates, was composed of different republics. This was something that its historical leader, Lenin, accepted only as a mean of reconstituting the authority of the state and to foment alliances as a transitional arrangement in the beginning of the Union. The institutional framework in which the Soviet Union`s republics were organized started with the attribution of the names of the predominant ethnicity or nationality within the region, organizing an ethnoterritorial federalism, whilst it maintained in personal identifiers, a personal nationality or ethnicity, and so, crystallized nationalities within the Soviet institutions, which again, held the republics in its top institutional layers (Brubaker, R. 1994).

Whilst undermining the development of sub-state nationalism, these territorialism crystalized nationalism and encompassed ethnicity along with it, which led to confrontations between different personal categories even during the (last years of the) Soviet Union, as it is the case of the republic of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the Nagorno-Karabakh region (Minasyan, S, 2012). Despite the preaching of solidarity, the failure in creating the Soviet man became more visible with the re-emergence of the titular nations of each republic and their newly found/rediscovered sovereignty.

Brubaker called this the "ethnonational complex" (Brubaker, R. 1994). Explaining that nations have been based on the idea of ethnicity, driven by the correspondent elites, he ascertains that all nations are heterogeneous, yet the composed idea of ethnicity, drives the idea that states are meant for the absorption of other nations until the dominant nation fully develops its culture within the corresponding borders of the state. In our case, where the elite-driven nationality titled the state, and where this same ideal was not allowed to develop even if maintained, the returning path to independence was accompanied by the idea of threatened or undermined nationalities, in relation to decreasing percentage of ethnic titulars observed during the Soviet Union period and corresponding curtailed titular elites (Ibid. 1994).

2.5. Legal-Restorationism

The return of sovereignty meant the return of the nation-state perspective along with the concept of "Ethnic Statehood" (made obvious by the citizenship status afforded to the population who migrated during the Soviet times, based on the historical continuity of the states with the interpretation of occupation and illegality). Furthermore, the employment of "(…) a fierce and unambiguous Westward orientation(…)"(Jæger, Ø. 2000), which successfully lead to the integration in NATO and the EU, also meant the military securitization of (the perceived threat) Russia, as a chain of equivalence to the Soviet Union (Jæger, Ø. quoting Mouffle, C. Laclau, E.), in binary opposition to Europe, denoting a Self and an Other, in which Russians and the Russophone identity is included, that is, part of the population of the Baltic states. Along with the dispel of Soviet history, came the post-communist abandonment of class discourse. History has left, however, other marks in society.

Soviet Ethnic segmentation now can mean language and cultural segmentation along economic lines (Russophone migrants have traditionally occupied blue collar positions). This can be coupled with as the dispel of class-consciousness (Helemäe, J. et al 2015), since they do, to some extent overlap, along with dependency that arises from it, and the exemplative co-optation policies of citizenship granting (for special services to moderate non-citizens in Estonia, restricted to 10 per year in 1995). The model of ethnic control was first used by Lustick do document the relations between Jews and Israeli Arabs during the 1970s. The model was used to compare these processes to the Estonian case, in which the triumph of the "legal-restorationism" ideology, has created a "path-dependency" (Pettai, V. et al. 2002). Latvia also chose the same path of "legal-restorationism" trough similar measures, whilst Lithuania also presents the legal continuity of its pre-soviet state, but without the same accompanying restrictive legal framework.

Chapter III - Hybrid Warfare

3.1. Soft Power

The Russian neighbouring Baltic States possess some of these characteristics each with a degree of variables, and the Russophone media seems to work in tandem with Russian political authorities, to the extent that Russian soft power described as "influence operations" (Winnerstig, M. 2014). It is important to read it`s spheres of influence in order to securitize them in the states in question, that of course, whilst balancing any measures with the rights of minorities to develop politically and culturally inside of the states in question.

Originally conceived by Nye, soft power (Winnerstig, M. 2014) was defined as an international relations actor influence and wielding of power through the power of attraction, instead of coercion. In the Russian interpretation, it "denotes the ability of an actor to wield power in a number of non-military, non-traditional ways, such as trough disgruntled minority groups, media outlets, the entertainment industry and the domestic political system of another country", which along with energy and economic issues, "explicitly omit military means and they can be used within a multitude of adversarial contexts short of traditional, militarized conflicts" (ibid.).

Re-defining it into non-military ways of coercion, antagonising the initial objective of the concept: "Moscow is not able to offer them an attractive vision of integration without building patterns of strong dependence. Therefore, its proposal of close political and economic cooperation seems quite dangerous for the sovereignty and long-term development of its neighbours". It is recognised that "Russian authorities focus most of all on loyal constituencies (such as compatriots living abroad) and seek to mobilise people who already follow Russia's goals and principles." (Ćwiek-Karpowicz, J. 2012). However legitimate it may be considered, Russia`s soft power has aimed to use and develop the already mentioned conditions, and can thus be perceived as threatening and as being emphasised by the conditions of dependence or cultural relations alike.

3.2. Public outbursts

The 2007 Bronze Soldier riot in Tallinn, Estonia, greatly serves to illustrate identity-based friction. The events happened once the centrally located Bronze Soldier Soviet war memorial was moved to a more peripheral part of the city which led to protests by the Russian community, and eventually riots, further providing evidence for our case on the validity and necessity of the conceptual use of societal security as a mean of changing social cohesion in place of foreign threats and separatism. It presents a case where the attempt to securitize the national Estonian narrative led to the perception of threat by the Russophone community and to an identity clash[2]. It has been argued that this community has been triply marginalized, by the Estonian discourse, by the Russian discourse for the bi-lateral relations with the Estonian government and subsequent stand-off, and in the European Union`s departure from its post-World War II developed, common identity narrative, which has left little space for the debate on historical memory of the minority and the majority (Lehti, M. et al. 2008).

In Latvia, the constitutional language referendum in 2012 has so far been the biggest mass mobilizer of Russophones. It was rejected by 74, 8% of the voters (the total turnout was 70, 9%) (Silvan, K. 2014). Both the events demonstrate clashing identity issues within the two states, that is, the use of language in public life and different historical narratives, as well

[2] "The majority of collective national narratives of World War II fall within one of the two dominant plot structures, the narratives of heroism on the one hand and victimization on the other." (Lehti, M. et al quoting Confino, A. 2008)

the perceived threat by the titular nationality of the use of Russian language, in varying degrees.

3.3. Hybrid Warfare

Ever since the attack on Ukraine, the concept of hybrid warfare has been extensively reviewed by academics and military personnel alike. The successful operation in Crimea and the ongoing war in eastern Ukraine present a good point for comparison to understand the degree to which such operation can succeed or not, as well as for the preparation of strategies of resistance and deterrence against such a type of warfare.

The more inattentive scholar would brandish the term without having great consideration either for the long-term effort in the preparation of such actions or by ignoring comparisons with previous uses of similar methods. Whilst it is a useful term to refer to the events that happened in Ukraine, it needs to be observed that only the popularised branding is truly new and that there are several examples of these tactics if we take into account military research and history. A number of authors have pointed this out, as well as displayed their previous use by Soviet and Russian military (Rácz, A. 2015; Bērziņš, J. 2015; Lanoszka, A. 2016; Abbott, K. 2016). Nevertheless, whilst the more correct term of "asymmetric warfare" would be more appropriate, considering the different conditions at play within post-soviet countries as well as the marked use of these strategies by Russia, hybrid warfare is the used term since the threat perceived from it, more than just resonating with these countries, better encapsulates the conceivable weaknesses in the region in which they are more likely to be used.

The following chapter seeks to portray it, frame it within the Baltic region by identifying the different factors at play, and present different propositions made in order to engage with "hybrid" strategies and vectors of action.

3.4. Hybrid Warfare`s Phases

Labelled as its "compatriots abroad", Russia`s foreign policy aims to protect the interest of Russophones. Relying on this identity, also derives from language skills, Russia`s foreign

policy has instrumentalized this relation to annex the Ukrainian territory of Crimea, and to maintain independent Moldova coerced on its policy-making, which both evidence the set of Russia`s foreign policy instruments, exemplified in the creation and support of states of limited recognition with the objective of influencing and destabilizing the target country (Rácz, A. and Moshes, A. 2014), or, by the use of the media popularised "hybrid war", which, as explained, is merely an update of a concept which came to describe methods previously used by Soviet forces and other militaries in the employment of symmetric and asymmetric types of warfare (part of the elements used in Ukraine have been used in a Soviet overthrow attempt in Estonia as early as 1924). The popularised branding, it can be argued, was attributed thanks to the effectiveness of the operation. However, near-ideal conditions were found in the Crimean peninsula, made possible through Russia`s foreign policy preparations with identifiable non-military methods. Such employment also provides a great revision of the more than 40 years old Soviet subject of reflexive control, associated with manipulation and deception as shapers of decision making processes by an opponent (Thomas, T. 2004), as well as controlled escalation.

The great majority of authors writing on hybrid warfare which were reviewed conveyed on pretty much every aspect of the operation. Some gave preferential treatment to a specificity of the operation against others, but overall, there is a general agreement on the methods used in the intervention, from the necessary pre-conditions to their maturing, exploitation, and normalisation of the status quo, differing only in the ordering of the different aspects, basing themselves on Russian military doctrines as well as their examples. This well reflects the nature of asymmetric war alike, and the challenge of defining it.

For sake of simplicity of analysis, the different phases introduced below are the ones detailed by András Rácz, who presented one of the most complete and anticipated works on the subject (2015). His conceptual layout will be the main tool in analysing and detailing these efforts, then convened with different sources for its interpretation, having labelled the different phases as the preparatory, attack, and stabilisation phases, to which a collection of deterrence methods are presented, partly overlaying across the different phases.

3.5. Preparatory Phase

Section 1 of the preparatory phase of hybrid war ("or, in other words, those traditional measures of Russian foreign policy that may serve as the basis for a hybrid war") is the Strategic preparation, aiming to explore points of vulnerability in the state administration, economy and armed forces of the target country. It is described as following:

"Exploring points of vulnerability in the state administration, economy and armed forces of the target country. Establishing networks of loyal NGO´s and media channels in the territory of the target country. Establishing diplomatic and media positions in order to influence the international audience." (Rácz, A. 2015)

What makes this first step so challenging is that its effects only become visible in the attack phase. It is, nevertheless, possible for a country to develop active measures against them. Whilst points of vulnerability in state administration and in the armed forces can be rendered as being within the scope of good governance and loyalty to the state and its institutions, we can relate both with identification with the state, particularly if we attribute democratic values to the term governance, both worked in this dissertation within the processes of identity3 (which does not invalidate other non-counter-balancing measures).

More actively, it is through the Compatriots Policy that Russia creates the mentioned networks, through the channels of its Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Russkii Miir, and the Russian Orthodox Church amongst others. Another dissertation would have to be afforded in order to discriminate all the channels by which Russian foreign policy is articulated. They actively promote Russia`s culture, language, history, and finally, ideology (Winnerstig, M. 2014), as described in "Tools of Destabilization Russian Soft Power and Non-military Influence in the Baltic States" by FOI, the Swedish Defense Research Agency (Ibid.), certainly the most comprehensive work on Russia`s activity with its in-depth review of each country being essential to understand the relationship between the national minority and the external homeland, in particular interest, the effects of the "Compatriots Policy", along with culture and economic relations.

[3] The Baltic States fair comparatively well both in corruption perception and democratic score comparatively to other Post-Soviet states, largely reducing points of vulnerability. Furthermore, the mentioned distrust of governmental institutions by the Russophone population is counterbalanced by a high level of trust in the armed forces, allowing for at least am average level of trust in the Estonian state, better detailed ahead. Also, during the independence day of Estonia, I have identified both Russian speaking and Estonian speaking people attending it in comparable numbers.

The accompanying step would be the political preparation, in which dissatisfaction and political alternatives are fostered through the strengthening of a diversity of groups and utilising information measures against the target country. The fostered groups include organised crime groups, as well as politicians, oligarchs and business people by the establishment of profitable relations or by bribing altogether. On the operational preparation, these same contacts would be employed in a coordinated manner, along with the mobilisation of Russian armed forces for military exercises (Rácz, A. 2015).

3.5.1 Preparing Deterrence

As NATO`s Research College notes, hybrid war is a concept which some observers understand as a way for the West to avoid decisive action against Russia (Jacobs, A. and Lasconjarias G. 2015). It nevertheless presents an argument for better cooperation between the EU and NATO, as a solution for a capable and holistic engagement, both in Ukraine and in other scenarios.

As previously stated, good democratic governance might just be the best deterrent. Stamping down corruption does not allow for the establishment of profitable contacts between local and Russian authorities. Even if the lucrative connections are accounted for, then at least the central government is aware. A low-level of criminality would also prevent the fostering and networking with local criminal groups, thus reducing the manoeuvrability of “local” and/or protesters and saboteurs. Needless to say that this means broader societal effort need to be undertaken.

Considering Russian interpretation of the Euromaidan events, it would be foolish to deny any possible instrumentalisation of NGO networks by the Russian government in response, in line with Russian general Geramisov, whose research has been associated with the concept of hybrid war. In order to prevent foreign support differently aligned from the central government, it is necessary to offer pre-conditioned funds to assure loyalty within the democratic spectrum, so as to hamper the development of networks at such a level.

The same type of democratic exercise needs to be played altogether in relation to media channels, which ought to be regulated so has to prevent propaganda from disseminating within the target country. Furthermore, it should ensure that this does not prevent the

development of a pluralistic media, which needs to be fostered and funded so as to ensure the sustainability of democratic governance (further explored ahead).

Naturally, economic or cultural relations with a country that poses a threat to a state`s cohesion is an enabler of networks which can be purveyed for antagonistic purposes. Whilst disallowing them altogether is hardly the most favourable answer, there is certainly no need to favour them when such a threat persists. It is of major importance that there is no relation of dependency in whichever field that may be used to threaten national security. According to the previously mentioned paper in FOI`s research, cultural relations, however, seem to fall out of the spectrum, at least in the Baltic countries (Winnerstig, M. 2014).

Nevertheless, there are organisations which are of particular danger if infiltrated. It is important to consistently confirm the military commitment of military and border guard personnel, amongst other possible targets of strategic importance.

Overall, all of this measures are meant to prevent or at least reduce the risk of the establishment of unfavourable networks which can be exploited by an attacking country, both requiring a long-term effort.

3.6. Attacking Phase

The following attack phase seeks to combine all the explored weaknesses and engage by using covert military forces as well as the use of dissatisfied locals to create a sense of legitimacy ensured by physically blocking any possible military or political responses, enhanced by the ensuing of a monopoly on information through established media channels and the blocking of competing views, either through cyber-attacks on the infrastructure, or the physical seizing and control of it. Finally, after the capturing of administration buildings, efforts are made to establish an alternative political power based on dissatisfaction or separatist claims.

This is achieved by removing and replacing governance, command, control and communication capabilities (Rácz, A. 2015). Naturally, if there are no opposing forces within the region in question, the operation can take place without a hitch. The long-term effort made previously to the operation is meant to ensure that this happens, by creating dissatisfaction with the central government.

It is in this phase that the famed "little green men" come in. This is why a serious border control is of such importance for deterrence. In this particular case, however, Russia had a military base in Sevastopol. Needless to say that foreign military bases can pose a great threat.

Furthermore, losing one region might seem like a bargain when compared to a full-on scale invasion as posited by the snap exercises happening along the border with Ukraine. The larger threat looming in the eastern part of the country made a military defence of Crimea unfeasible, and thus, it incapacitated the Ukrainian forces from responding from fear of retaliation. Separatist efforts were not allowed to happen in the same way in the east since the border had been crossed already and continuously expanding efforts on Ukrainian territory were being undertaken, eventually taken to a halt.

3.6.1. Attacking Phase Deterrence

There is a need to ensure the fairness of democratic procedures. The right to protest is part of any healthy democracy. This does allow for some space to allow or disallow for protests to be held if these do not pose a threat to national security, so the legality of protests needs to be assured and critically assessed, unlike the unrest provoked in Ukraine. Furthermore, the security forces ought to be trained so as to be capable of defusing tense situations when these happen, and resort to as little violence as possible.

The defence of key infrastructures is crucial and needs to be assured alike. Whilst it might be possible that there is not enough security personnel capable of assuring the entirety of the infrastructure, more than just key points within it, a joint command of the military and the police could provide an answer. If not, paramilitary organisations could be employed in coordination with the military hierarchy alike. Whilst without a doubt, this does endanger civilians and risks escalation or accidents, it is nevertheless a response that can happen without weapons. The passible argument of defending unarmed civilians should also be considered and balanced by both the attacking state and the attacked one. Organising operations like the civilian-led road congestion operations like Automaidan, employed during Euromaidan, can be an effective strategy of non-military means. As Bartkowski notes, "(…) the killing of unarmed civilians during disciplined civil resistance actions can

create a moral and political outrage not only among the troops of the adversary but also among its public and the international community in general." (2015)

As for the capacities for fighting the insurgents, it did exist in Ukraine already. If we consider the anti-terrorist operation launched by the then newly elected Ukrainian President Poroshenko, we can attest that Ukraine`s conventional army is strong enough to fight back against the insurgent forces and oblige retreat. It was with the entrance of the Russian army that these same capabilities proved weaker and were taken to a halt, with no substantial advances in the control of the region having taken place ever since (the Minsk ceasefire agreements have yet to manage to stop confrontations altogether). It should be taken into account that what prevent an immediate response in Ukraine (apart from the deceptive and insurgent, local rational of the operation) was the triggering of a much larger response by Russian forces, exercising across the border, or present in large numbers in Crimea.

Poroshenko`s actions partially shifted the local population's allegiance. This is why Bartkowski suggests the preparation of nonviolent civilian defence. An action against such resistance would certainly provide a strong moral argument for an invaded country taking part in an alliance. His argument is strengthened by the fact that, after the previous Ukrainian president, Yanukovich fleeing to Russia in relation to Euromaidan, a number of public demonstrations took place across the country. The data related on Wikipedia (2017), based on a number of media sources, displays that the peak attendance for the pro-Russian protests was smaller than the pro-Ukrainian protests all across, apart from Crimean Sevastopol, and Russian bordering capital cities of Donetsk, and Luhansk. Whilst the different sources, along with the cities` geography and the hybrid warfare methods ought to oblige the questioning of the numbers, they nevertheless correspond to the places where Russia was most successful in its efforts.

It is also of importance that there is no media monopoly ensued. Certainly, the necessary means to block a concerted media pressure at this phase is essential, guaranteed by a healthy pluralistic media landscaped, and, during such a crisis, the safeguarding of journalists and broadcasting infrastructure. On the international scene, it is necessary to prevent opposing narratives from taking over the media space, which could discredit or discourage any foreign allies. This could be done by calling on allied states to convey an opposing message.

3.7. Stabilization Phase

From here on, depending on how the attacked country reacts, different steps can take place, either ensuring conventional warfare or annexation/separation of the territory, that is, according to the recent case studies of Donbas region and the Crimea peninsula.

In this last phase, a number of measures are taken in order to stabilise the order brought by the previous engagements. In order to further legitimise the emancipatory action, decisions are made for the secession or independence of the region. Having established such a base for political action, the "independent" country can request international assistance and if a war breaks out, rely on foreign state(s). Eventually, the separation of the region is beyond repair, since its previous ties and relations have been cut or have deteriorated due to military response, effectively hindering the attacked country`s capabilities in recapturing the territory and even building momentum for the separatists.

This is ensured by diplomatic support and media coverage, fostering the narrative of a successful process of separation and establishment of independence trough referendum or any other attempt of legitimising the newly asserted control in the region.

3.7.1. Stabilisation Phase Deterrence

To engage in deterring this phase, it is necessary to prevent the overarching narrative from pervading to normalcy. Making sure there still exists a free media would help to maintain the debate, as well as efforts by other states for the avoidance of recognition of new fictitious entities.

Apart from outright war, civil disobedience can be used to prevent the normal function of society under the control of a foreign power or a fictitiously narrated entity, alike Bartkowski`s example of the Polish Home Army partisan force. Non-violent resistance can also take place and can be prepared beforehand. Lithuania's Defence Ministry alarming manual in 2015 introduced a number of such methods to its civilian population (ibid.).

It is noticeable throughout this exposition that the number of possible solutions progressively decrease in accordance with the phase. The number of responses are reduced since there is a reduced control over the region, however, solutions do exist for the different

phases, and some are comparable across all three of them. This is so because they stern from wider societal efforts for a pluralist society which` benefits are noticeable on the long-term.

The encroachment of such efforts is partly conducted through media and information warfare, whose message and framing has been adapted by Russia in accordance with the country in question, and is now broadly understood as a political campaign within a wider spectrum, and somewhat novel employment of media. The following part seeks to clarify some of these efforts and partly characterise them within the Baltic countries, so as to provide transition to a broader analysis of deterrence within the Baltic States.

3.8. Information Warfare

If we start with its media positions, these efforts pursue different objectives accordingly, either by the usage and diffusion of Russian content in the Baltics or abroad. For Estonia, it aims at portraying the country as xenophobic and intolerant, to create a situation in which an aggression can be accepted as being "warranted by the Russian public; justified to the international community; and received with resignation by local governments and their populations." For Latvia, it focuses on collective memory and the Soviet/Russian interpretation of history, targeting compatriots, the more critical "neutral Russians", as well as "integrated Russians", with the objective of favouring local political parties and Kremlin favourable politicians. Finally, for Lithuania, the considerable smaller Russophone minority does not provide the same fertile ground for the Kremlin, preferring then to target western audiences in order to portray the southern Baltic state as "unreliable and not worth defending", as well as playing on the government's failures and shortcomings (CEPA, 2016)[4]. This articulation of messages can be considered part of the "humanitarian dimension" that Russia has propelled in its adoption of soft power. In a comparative study, its compatriots policy is more effective in Latvia and Estonia[5], that is where the integration process has been more challenging, whereas comparing it to other states. This should not be a surprise since "With its ethnicity policy, Estonia has contributed to the creation of an identity vacuum among the Russian-speaking population in Estonia – a vacuum that Russia

[4] The report`s choice of words is admittedly strong and it is titled "Winning the Information War". However, it is by no means diminished by the presented evidence.
[5] Compared with Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Lithuania.

can now fill with its compatriots policy." Comparing the two, there is more evidence of Russian networks operating in Latvia (Pelens, G. 2009), where Russophones are not as concentrated by region and are more evenly distributed (whilst they are more regionally concentrated in Estonia, shifting the local balance of influence).

Whilst "Russian media companies and their broadcasting services work essentially in tandem with the Russian political authorities(…)" the field of culture does not seem to play a role in attempting to influence the Baltics since "(…) there is an inherent interest in and affection for Russian culture in the Baltic states, without negative connotations." (Winnerstig, M. 2014)

Admittedly, the case for raising security concerns over the Baltic States is derived from the annexation of Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine (Shlapak, D. A. et al 2016). The division between frozen conflict and hybrid warfare becomes self-evident after the annexation and Minsk II following Minsk`s first ceasefire agreement made by the different states interested in the region. Yet the emergence of both concepts symbolises a modus operandi adopted by Moscow. There is doubt on the most desirable outcome of the incursion in Donbass considering the lack of a clear foundation for separatist identity (Rácz, A. 2014), however both cases present a security issue of an identity within the society which has been militarily exploited by a foreign state, underlying the threat posed by non-titulars which do not identify with the state they live in and foreign or native possibility of channelling this dissatisfaction. However truly feasible would separatism be without such a foreign narrative to aid it, identity has been used to create separatist entities in a country whose different cultures are comparably, way more similar than in the case of the Baltics, also considering each`s case disparate cultural and linguistic presence in public life use. Even if we dismiss these separatist identities by calling them fictitious, Ukraine`s national electoral maps have, for the most part, only highlighted foreign policy differences, between the west and the south-eastern part of the country (Frye, T. 2015) [6] and should not be used to provide evidence of separatist claims and foundations, or necessarily clashing identities. It is necessary to understand, however, that broad identification with the state and its policies are necessary for social cohesion and a unitary society (Freire, M. R. 2013).

[6] "(…) a candidate`s ethnicity and language had little impact on reported vote choice, whereas economic policy orientation toward Europe was strongly associated with vote preference. Despite the intense politicization of both ethnicity and language and the violence in eastern Ukraine vote choice has not been reduced to an ethnic or linguistic census." (Frye, T. 2015)

Chapter IV – Russophones and Assimilation

4.1. Escalation

If we aim to review hard security, the purveyor of stability is the Alliance of the North Atlantic Treaty. Russia`s use of its military superiority during the take-over of Crimea was used as a threat of an overwhelming conventional attack disguised as a military exercise at the border, capable of responding in case of military escalation in the peninsula (Praks, H. 2015).

These same "snap exercises" started to become a normality along the Baltic region. Russia`s military presence in the region is superior even when compared to the overall NATO presence. Along with the tripled number of interceptions by the NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission to 2014, it has deployed advanced weapon systems capable of denying NATO`s access to the region. Including the Air Assault Division less than 100 kilometres away from Estonia, then we must understand that NATO`s rotational presence of military contingents, its air policing mission, and deployment of military assets for training (Praks, H. 2015) presents assurance to its Baltic allies instead of full military deterrence, sought by the NATO`s collective defence 5th article, whose response would still be dependent on the decision of its 28 democracies (Ibid.). Lithuania`s Southern border would mean an easy strategic enclosure of the Baltic corridor trough Russian enclave of Kalinigrad.

However, a Russian intervention in the Baltics is mostly considered if the "hybrid warfare" tactics that were employed in Ukraine would be used again. This would be done by procuring other state`s weaknesses and vulnerabilities against its own strengths. Apart from the described military capacity differences, the Russian speaking population in Latvia and Estonia proposes a weakness of Baltic States capacities against such a form of warfare. The "ethnic factor" would be the justification for intervention in the Baltics (Praks, H. 2015), and it is a vulnerability in which the Baltic States can effectively work on as a deterrent within the military realm.

According to the EU`s Directorate-General for External Policies in regards to its Neighbourhood Policy as a purveyor of its Common Security and Defence Policy: "Political and economic stability is, thus, perceived as an important contribution to regional security, creating predictability and increasing living standards." (European Union, 2015)

It ought to be taken into account that the methods employed also derive from Russia`s military interpretation of the colour revolutions, as in the example of foreign funding of local NGO`s by the EU and its member states representing democratic interference, thus legitimising Russia`s more direct means of democratic interference, with its increasingly alienated mode of political governance at a regional and global scale (Bērziņš, J. 2015), an interpretation in line with EU`s assistance and supportive actions in the region. The political legitimacy, of the EU in the Baltics is substantially easier to justify. The Baltic States are part of the European Union, and therefore, there is legitimacy for inter-related common policies capable of providing a framework for such developments in the field of societal security.

4.2. Russophones

The newly found sovereignty of the Baltic states can be considered an elite-driven project, poised to integrate itself into western institutions, with a focus on the European Union for soft security and in the NATO for hard security. These integration prospects were met with recommendations to moderate its legislation enacted to avoid vertical and horizontal integration with Russia, presenting a clear dilemma for its elite which observed the use of Russophones as a proxy to oppose this western orientation, seen home as an independence guarantee (Archer, C. et al 2014).

This need for securitization of Russia, should not be ignored, for it has, in multiple Post-Soviet instances proven justified. It has, however, had repercussions amongst the people of the Baltic States, which often reproduce these conflicting identities in their discourse. Often, two different historical narratives have conflicted with each other, that is, the portrayal of the red army during the Second World War as liberator or occupier, with its surrounding collective memories, and its simplified dichotomy of Latvian and Russian history (Cheskin, A. 2013), also present in Estonia, and to a lesser degree, in Lithuania. Complementing this analysis: “the Baltic states have stressed the imposition of the majority language and culture on minorities while neglecting systematic efforts to address socio-economic inequality in general and ethnic inequality in particular.” (Muiznieks, N. et at 2013)

When referring to the Soviet Union, more often than not, the term "Russians" has served as a reference to its people, ignoring both the different republics, nations, and ethnicities, and even the all-encompassing term "Soviet". This type of discourse is also observable in the Baltic Republics, where the term came to serve as a description of not only Russian nationals or ethnic Russians but of other present minorities, like Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Jews, as a referent to the "alien" people that had arrived to the "Soviet West" during the Soviet Union (Kallas, K., 2016), in opposition to the reproduction of the idea of Baltic (originally encompassing Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland), which came about as a western foreign term used to describe the indigenous people who have identified with the states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, connected to its historical development and foreign interpretation and description of heterogeneous three major identities of the region (Deep Baltic, 2015).

The privileged status of the Russian language and culture within the Union often meant that other cultural institutions representative of different ethnicities were not present in other republics apart from the titular one, leading to the self-identification of these mentioned minorities with the term. These two constructions led to the generalisation of the term as a referent to the other amongst the titular Baltic population, and can still be observed today, as noted by Drechsler and Aidarov (2013) in Estonia who conclude that "(…) *the on-going Russification of non-Russian ethnic minorities in Estonia is real* (…)", and it is driven by "the logic of project management" aided by the EU`s structural funds, also provided to Latvia and Lithuania.

4.3. Demographic Evolution and Characterisation

Since the Baltic States are being considered, it is necessary to understand the fundamentals of their relation with its citizens. Taking into account the issue of ethnocentric states, as well as the new conditions brought by independence, the Russophone community, living within these states has been described and categorised. This, however, comes with the risk of simplifying a set of individuals, which, has displayed, are not monolith entities, but diverse human beings which happen to self-identity in different levels with a particular actor. The process of detailing this identity comes with the realisation that it is impossible to define people and that identity is a process instead of an object. Considering the primary

objective as being societal security, these nuances are necessary and are set within range of the goal of security of the society inside of the state. Still, some details are essential to be able to describe some characteristics which are common to the majority of the Russophone community living in the Baltic States.

Their independence industrial development and the consequent Soviet pace were at the time met with the arrival of thousands of blue-collar workers to meet the labour demands (Parming, T. 1980). Although not only ethnic Russians migrated here, their predominance led to the increasing identification of other migrants with ethnic Russians, presenting two new dominant ethnicities and culture within the Latvian and Estonian Republics. These migrants settled especially in urban areas and became the dominant population in several of the industrial regions and cities, further stressing the titular ethnic elite. To illustrate, in 1989, Latvians were a minority in 7 out of 8 biggest cities in the country whereas in Estonia the situation was of ethnic Estonians being less than 50% in 4 out of its 4 biggest cities, being, along with the other ethnic Baltics, majorly predominant in the rural areas. Apart from the capitals of Tallinn and Riga, where they have represented as much as 50%, Russian speakers in Estonia are mostly concentrated in north-eastern industrial region of Narva, whilst in Riga, apart from its eastern region, they form a majority in the (west) port cities of Liepāja and Ventspils, and finally, in Lithuania, the 50% mark is only visible in the eastern region of Visaginas, known for its now de-activated nuclear power plant (Mežs, I. et al. 1994). One of the first divisive question to arise in the new states was the citizenship question. Lithuania`s decision to grant citizenship to virtually all of the population of the state was not followed by its more heterogeneous northern neighbours which set up barriers to those who had migrated to their republic as well as to their descendants, taking a state-centric approach (Muiznieks, N. et al. 2013).

As a de facto lingua franca, Russian was the predominant language used in the Soviet Union, along with the ethnic majority, Russian nationals enjoyed an advantageous and privileged status when compared to other ethnicities outside of their corresponding titular republic. At the same time, other nationalities outside of their titular republics had the necessity to assimilate. Once countries became post-soviet, this same status became reminiscent of the Soviet past and thus detrimental in the public life of most places (Brubaker, 1992).

It is crucial to understand that there is a difference between the Russian Federation and the Russophones in the Baltics and that the actions of Russia divide this subset of society as

well. Taking into consideration they represent a large part society, they are also fragmented: "Different patterns of integration into the Estonian and Latvian societies, as well as varying trajectories of socioeconomic developments, have contributed to the lack of unity within the minority of Russian-speakers and the waning of in-group solidarity, crucial for ethnic claim-making" (K. 2014). K. Silvan asserts that only a small part of the community has voiced support for the Russian interventions in the post-soviet space, whilst the "united majorities" believe that the maintaining of the status quo or increasing control over Russophones as being essential for peace and stability. This sheds light on the effects of Russia`s actions by and on the Baltic societies, in particular, the minority`s minority and the majority`s majority, both over-affecting their constituents, further marginalising the explicitly Russian parties and motivation for new campaigns on unequal treatment. Whilst it would be a stretch to still call the Baltic states "ethnic democracies" (Smith, 1996), considering the mentioned marginality of the explicitly Russian parties, it is possible to see ethnic issues arise, in particular, anything that might affect the control of the majority.

4.5. Inter-Ethnic Differences

Apart from the Baltic state, the other influencing partner in our nexus, has shown to have had better results in terms of legislation. EU`s conditionality and persuasive power along with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) recommendations created some positive changes to the laws affecting minorities, making it politically sustainable and to some degree, moderating the imbalance of "ethnic control" However, once integrated in the EU, this power was lost (Pettai, V. et al 2009) (Galbreath, D. J. et al 2009).

As for the Baltic States and their national minorities, the relation is reflected in the trust afforded to political institutions: The "Russian-speaking minority have less trust in political institutions than titular ethnic groups". Furthermore, trust in the Baltic states of political institutions is the lowest in post-soviet countries according to a study where the author argues that a state which wants to increases "trust in state institutions should promote policies and activities that promote general interpersonal trust in society.", suggesting the promotion of voluntary association (excluding activities related to traditionalism and exclusion of others), along with economic equality (Lühiste, K. 2006).

Economic equality also plays a part. The transition to a liberal economy along with globalisation put Russian workers at a disadvantage. Starting with the exclusion from the privatization due to the exclusion of citizenship to the migrants (in Latvia and Estonia) and their descendants, having become disadvantaged in career prospects, and in the labour market, both due to the effects of the market flexibilization and of globalization in Estonia (Helemäe, J. et al 2011). The development in Latvia (1997-2009) has been considerably more positive, and even though flawed policymaking is mentioned, factors like the massive outflow of the labour force after the EU enlargement and economic growth, have contributed to the integration of minorities. This trend has, however, been reversed with the economic crisis of 2008, which shows that even though the liberal and non-restrictive language policies in employment have contributed in integrating, job security is comparatively lower, considering that already in the third quarter of 2009, the ethnic gap in employment had a difference of 6%. What is worth further noticing, is the persistence of a very big ethnic gap in higher education employment rates, which also coincide with tertiary enrolment and graduation rates differences 7-8% lower in the Baltic states (Hazans, M. et al 2008) (considering the paper was written in 2005, can better illustrate the loss of funding of non-titular language tertiary education and lack of appropriate responses). It is concluded that mixed working spaces contribute to the development of language skills of both groups being studied, whereas the tabulation of profession-based language requirements "create a lock-in" effect in integration and are discriminatory, even if they are not to "be enforced too strictly" (Hazans, M. 2010). To further this case, "only 18%" of native Latvian speakers supported using legal regulation of usage of languages or applying restrictions to those who do not have a command of Latvian as the way to promote a Latvian language environment for non-Latvians" (Hazans, M. 2010 quoting Zepa et al. 2008). It should be noted that the situation in both countries varies from region to region.

A study on interethnic contact and relations in Estonia between the two major groups in Estonia, of people between the age of 18 and 35 show us that although mixed living and friendship would at first be considered a positive thing, respondents by group diverged on their answers, which the author suggested as being an example of hierarchically structured relations. As an example, whereas Russophones observing Estonian speakers communicating would not be perceived in a negative light, the opposite would be irritating and possibly perceived as threatening (Schulze, J. 2011). Since the study happened to be conducted before and after the Bronze Soldier events, Russophones responded more

positively towards Estonians than previously, whilst for Estonians, the same decreased, providing further evidence to the already mentioned post-soviet relation. Although inter-ethnic relations have remained peaceful, the indicators created to study this showed no signs of danger to predict 2007 Bronze Soldier events (Schulze, J. 2011), which along with the weak result of the 2012 language referendum in Latvia despite the observable mobilization (Silvan, K. 2015), reveal the complicated state of inter-ethnic relations, and the particular existing relation with the status quo.

4.6. Cheskin Table

Cheskin, A. (2015) brings forward a table (figure 2) which can help us simplify the perception of these relations on an attraction basis, drawing the conclusion from several different sources so as to approximate the effects of the processes and practices in place. He goes on to hypothesise the conditions that could lead to full separation, full marginalisation, full integration, or full assimilation of the national minority, and ascertains that a possible Russophone interpretation of the table, would have the present state differing from the full integration possibility, being the political stance towards Russia undifferentiated, as well as towards the nationalizing state, even if for the same, the cultural stance is perceived negatively.

Hypothetical conditions for full assimilation, integration, marginalization and separation of Russian speakers

	External homeland (Russia)			Nationalizing state (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania)			International organization (EU)		
Full assimilation	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural
	−	−	−	+	+	+	+	+	+
Full integration	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural
	−	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Full marginalization	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural
	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−
Full separation	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural	Political	Economic	Cultural
	+	+	+	−	−	−	−	−	−

Figure 2: Cheskin table, taken from Cheskin, A. 2015

Whilst merely a hypothesis, it can be used to work under the concept of societal security in relation with the factors and processes that influence identity, as a mean to represent desirable conditions and envisage ways to achieve them or to get closer to.

The nexus identifies the actors which take part in shaping group perception, in the table presented by Cheskin, of the national minority in relation to the other actors on three different dimensions, which although debatable, serve as conclusive elements of the description of the attraction factors conceivable under each. In our case, we are looking at this through a prism of identity, and in particular, the perceived threat to identity as the cause for the need of securitization, since operations from neighbouring countries supported by the attraction processes of portraying identity narratives on society have put into question the security of the state, hereby assumed it as the security actor under which, ultimately the survival of the state itself, is necessarily dependent on the mandated recognition of a heterogeneous state identity in opposition to an ethnic-territorial discourse and its precondition for separatism or civil war, that is, violent confrontation and insecurity for the societies of the Baltics.

Even considering these limitations, the presented definitions, and corresponding influencing factors, serve to present a description of the reality under which it is possible to select desirable outcomes and how to frame societal security within markedly heterogeneous states and pertaining questions of nationhood. Taking the nexus into account, full integration ought to be the desirable outcome and goal, since this would not go against any obvious and declared objectives of the different actors, whilst respecting the heteronomy of the Baltic States and its different communities.

Chapter VI – Conclusion

The great majority of authors dealing with hybrid war note that there are no easy solutions to it, but also that the maturing of the conditions required to undertake a successful operation equally take a long time to prepare and develop.

Taking into account the concept of societal security as a possible answer to the security situation in the Baltics, part of the history and developments of the Russophone community living in the Baltic States has been detailed. Notwithstanding the validity of the narrative of legal-restorationism, the truth fact is that after nearly 50 years of its occupation, the

demographics of these countries has changed. The created path-dependency, whilst perhaps a granter of legitimacy and sovereignty for the titular nation, has led to negligent behaviours towards a sizable part of the population, which in turn, leads to further insecurity considering their possible instrumentalisation.

This difference of treatment has created some socio-economic cleavages and since the overlaying class sentiment has been lost with the change of the political system, further political differences did not allow for the emergence of a cohesive and unified Russian-speaking community. However, even if their problems are not visible, this does not mean that they do not exist, and both the 2007 Bronze Soldier riots in Tallinn as well as the 2012 language referendum in Latvia serve as reminders of the danger that persists when a part of the population is ignored or poorly represented.

Also, the Kremlin does not do any favours when it tries to intercede for the community, that is, once the fear that many kept in mind, became a reality in other Post-Soviet countries, further excluding its diaspora from national debates, with the dissent created being hard to capture in any meaningful way.

Some measures have, however, been taken to counter the Russian media influence. A new Russian language TV channel has been created in Estonia. Whilst there was no agreement previously reached to create a Russophone Baltic TV channel (which would have the Baltic States sharing the costs), it is still something that the two other countries can emulate in order to foster the creation of a national space of debate for its Russian-speaking people. Furthermore, both Latvia and Lithuania have found a way to fight propaganda, by using their media councils to restrict information flows and having established new grounds, imposing fines and temporary bans to those who present false information or fail to respect these laws.

Another aspect that could be worked on would be the long-term planning and support of the cultural and NGO sectors which currently receive Russian support. Whilst it would replicate Russian efforts, the challenge would be the effective replacement of Russian influence. Regarding the economic influence, Russia is unlikely to develop any more attraction in Russian-speaking labour market without any major overhaul restructuring of its economy.

As for the EU, the Baltic migration patterns can be taken as an indicator of the European Union`s attractiveness for Russophones, whereas residing in a place with two monolith

groups in a status of inequality does not. The continuous interest of both Ukraine and Georgia in further integrating with the EU is a positive political sign drive from the experience of other Post-Soviet states as well.

What is then left, is for the Baltic governments to manage to become more inclusive and accepting of its present and future conditions. The models presented in this thesis present both a way to achieve societal security as a deterrent of Russia`s employment of soft power and closing in ideal hybrid war conditions. This can be achieved by further distancing themselves from the concept of ethnic-democracy and by taking a non-ethnocentric approach, now that their institutions and statehood have been consolidated and it is presented new challenges that request its attention. Whilst it would be hard to precise the exact steps in order to achieve this, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (to a lesser degree) need to take such a path so that in the future there isn`t the need for one to differentiate him or herself from their respective state of origin.

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