

**POLITICAL UNDERCURRENTS
OF THE UKRAINE CONFLICT**

The Reshaping of Power Relationships in Europe

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**Pro gradu-tutkielma
Valtio-oppi
Yhteiskuntatieteiden
ja filosofian laitos
Jyväskylän yliopisto
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Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tarkastella miten valta näyttäytyy vuoden 2013 lopussa alkaneen Ukrainan konfliktissa ja miten se vaikuttaa Euroopan Unionin toimimiseen ja sen identiteettiin. Tutkin Euroopan Unionin (EU) ja Venäjän muuttuvia valtasuhteita, joka mahdollistaa myös vallan käsitteellisen analyysin. En keskity niinkään policy-tason analyysiin tai Ukrainan tilanteeseen, muuten kuin miten se vaikuttaa EU:hun ja Venäjään. Koska tutkimuksen tarkoitus on esittää erilaisia pinnan alla tapahtuvia poliittisia muutoksia, tutkimuksessa ei ole yhtä ainutta analyysi-menetelmää. Raamitan valtasuhteiden muutosta kolmen eri näkökulman kautta. Ensimmäiseksi tutkin EU:ta pehmeän vallan käsitteen kautta, toiseksi tuon esille temporaalisen muutoksen geopolitiikan ja geo-ekonomian vaihtelulla ja kolmanneksi tutkin valtasuhteiden muutosta kansainvälisen yhteisön kautta. Aineistona käytän muun muassa EU komissaarien, Euroopan unionin ulkoasioiden ja turvallisuuspolitiikan korkean edustajan ja Venäjän presidentin puheita.

Osoitan, että Ukrainan konfliktin kautta valtasuhteet muokkautuivat kolmella eri tavalla. EU:n tutun pehmeän vallan käyttö osoittautui haasteelliseksi Venäjän käyttämän kovan vallan vuoksi. Tämä haastoi EU:n vallankäytön käytännön tasolla. EU joutui miettimään miten vastata tilanteeseen, jossa toiseen toimijaan ei pysty vaikuttamaan arvojen ja yhteisten intressien kautta. Myös EU:n käsitys ympärillä olevasta poliittisesta ilmapiiristä muuttui. Tämän voi havainnoida geopolitiikan ja geo-ekonomian kilpailevien toimintatapojen kautta. Muutosta geopolitiikan suuntaan on huomattavissa, mutta EU puheillaan painottaa unioninsa yhtenäisyyttä ja yhteistyön merkitystä. Lopulta, valtasuhteiden muutos ilmenee myös kansainvälisen yhteisöjen muokkautumisen kautta. Kyseessä on identiteetin muodostuminen, joka erottelee toimijat niihin, jotka kuuluvat samaan ryhmään ja muihin. EU:n on pohdittava uudelleen minkälainen toimijuuttaan, jotta se voisi vastata ulkoa tuleviin haasteisiin samalla ollessaan uskollinen omille arvoilleen ja toimintatavoilleen.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että Ukrainan konflikti on vaikuttanut oleellisella tavalla Euroopan valtasuhteisiin ja EU:n toimintaan. On oikeutettua sanoa, että konflikti on haastanut EU:n toimijuutta perustavan laatusella tavalla. Valta on muokkautunut niin käyttäytymisen, ympäristön kuin identiteetinkin tasoilla. Ukrainan konflikti on osoittanut erityisen haastavaksi EU:lle juuri sen takia, että Euroopassa käytetyn vallan perusteet ovat muuttaneet muotoaan monella tapaa.

Avainsanat: vallan analyysi, valtasuhteet, EU, Venäjä, Ukrainan konflikti

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INTRODUCTION

The Ukraine conflict started at the end of the year in 2013 by a wide demonstration, which started a process that later escalated into a war between Ukraine and Russia. The protests were targeted against the President (2010–2014) Viktor Yanukovich's actions of not moving forward with plans to increase cooperation with the EU. These series of events had a profound effect in Europe and for the European Union (EU). A sense of security and peace that was felt in Europe was violated and different actors began to wake up to the fact that something essential had changed. The goal of the thesis is to find out what has truly changed and why it was felt with such intensity in the EU. The research question can be summarized in the following way:

What kinds of complexities of power are presenting themselves in the Ukraine conflict especially in relation to the EU?

In this thesis, power is looked at several levels to capture fully the deep effect the Ukraine conflict has on the EU. I am less interested in event history; my main interest is in understanding theoretically and conceptually what is taking place in Europe at the moment. Ukraine itself will be focused on only to the extent it influences the EU or Russia. As the thesis centers on transformations occurring at different levels, it is only natural to use a mixture of different methods and primary sources to capture the permeable change in power structures. Each chapter will look at the phenomenon from an individual point of view. However, the points of views discuss fundamentally the same phenomenon, power. The varied use of theoretical frameworks allows capturing the changes in power relations and power use in a more revealing way.

This thesis does not attempt to look at the conflict from a policy level. The focus is not on the best course of strategy in foreign relations for each actor; instead, the actions that were carried out are analyzed in order to comprehend how Russia and the EU interact and what changed in these interactions. This level of analysis is important, because the more situational decisions rest on how the actors view themselves and the other. The relationship is composed of several

aspects. They use different tools, perceive their environments differently and their sense of identity is different.

The first chapter opens up the phenomenon more from a practical, action oriented way by discussing the concept of soft power. Discussion on soft power allows us to draw links to the traditional debate on the nature of power, especially that of hard power, which has been used during the conflict. At the same time, the crisis challenges the use of soft power, which had been hailed by many to reach wondrous results in the post-Cold War simply by influencing. The overt use of hard power challenges the effectiveness of soft power in a visceral way, as hard power is rather difficult to manage in soft ways.

The second chapter approaches the Ukraine conflict from a temporal view; looking at the historical and conceptual framework and how it is influencing our perception of the Ukraine conflict. There exists not only a view about postmodern development, which divides countries into different categories, but more importantly, the perceived nature of the international system shapes the ways countries interact with one another. Namely, the reversion to geopolitics is a stark change from geo-economics. The norms of the regional political arena were radically reshaped, leaving many, especially the EU, in a state of confusion and incapacity.

The third chapter takes into consideration the larger, more fundamental question of reforming national identities through the concept of international societies. This perspective will delve more deeply into how the actors should be understood. This level of analysis permits us to dive into what is fundamentally considered as different. The sense of an actor's collective identity in relation to another is essentially the determining factor on how the two will get along politically. A connection may be seen to be deep enough so that the actors may consider the other as similar, or at the other extreme, the actors may define themselves to be polar opposites of each other. The conclusion is that the conflict changed how the EU and Russia relate and see one another, at least for the time being.

Power is a complex, wide reaching phenomenon, which is why there needs to be varied tools to understand its effect on our lives. This thesis gives insight both to the reasons why the Ukraine conflict had such a dramatic effect on Europe, as well as analyses the ways power keeps on evolving. Power, after all, is a type of a relationship between actors and as long as people keep on changing, so will the manifestations of power. The Ukraine conflict can be used as an instrument to analyze power itself and how some of the fundamental aspects of power take shape. Power should not be seen simply as exerting influence in a certain manner, which would fit the most commonly understood determinants of power. Instead, the way power is exercised is highly dependent on the elements of the relationship. The fundamental aspects, such as the tools used, the conception of the behavior of others as well as one's identity, can be relatively stable for long periods. The seemingly permanent conditions may make it appear as if power was something that existed outside of these building blocks. This is a faulty notion, as we now see. In the wake of a power structure, it becomes all too clear how the structures upholding the familiar use of power are not absolute, but transformable, even by the simple provocation of one actor. As the structures of power are reshaping, the EU finds itself in an identity crisis. This affects directly also us, EU citizens. This is why I have done this study.

Despite the ever-changing nature of power, some fundamentals of power remain the same. In a situation where power is exercised there are the two or more actors, an environment and the tools through which power is exercised. Only when the arrangement of these fundamentals drastically change, do they become illuminated and intriguing. Essentially, the thesis follows the structure of the change of the fundamentals of power. The first chapter examines the tools, the second the conceptual constructions of the environment, and the third looks into the intellectual understanding of the actors as political beings.

1. SOFT POWER CONSTRAINED BY A HARD CONFLICT

The Ukraine conflict has presented a significant challenge to the EU's use of soft power. Increasingly over the years, since the development of the EU and its predecessors, the EU has had success with its soft power approach. Europe has remained relatively peaceful and the countries have only increased cooperation among themselves over the years. In addition, the EU has steadily expanded, with more countries wishing to join the Union. Yet, despite the success of this novel project, soft power as a dominant form of power is still a relatively new thing. While the EU is successful in what it has achieved, it does not have many successful examples from where it can take lessons. EU's success as a union of countries, which relies on soft power, is limited in its temporal and circumstantial reality. The Ukraine conflict proved to be a difficult situation to adapt to, because the EU could not apply its previously successful soft power tools effectively. The situation was only further exacerbated by the intensity of the use of coercive power as well as the conflict happening in the near vicinity of the EU.

The Ukraine conflict is analyzed in this chapter from the point of view of soft power. First, soft power will be put in the context of other power theories. Then, the changes in use of soft power of the EU will be observed, as well as the variant of soft power that Russia uses. Finally, the concept soft power will be reviewed in its entirety.

1.1 Soft Power and other theories on power

Joseph S. Nye's theory on soft power was well received and got wide attention also outside of the academic circles. The extent of the theory's success surprised even its creator himself. By now, soft power and its application have interested some of the world's most powerful leaders: the previous General Secretary of China, Hu Jintao and the current President of Russia, Vladimir Putin have both discussed of using more soft power. (Nye 2013) Initially, the concept mostly described the USA, but recognizing that also Europe holds a considerable amount of soft power (Nye 2004). A decade after the initial publishing of Nye's book, which brought soft power to the awareness of the general public, Jean-Claude Juncker, the President

of the European Commission, has stated: “Europe is chiefly a ‘soft power’” (European Commission 2015c). This statement was made after the Ukraine conflict started.

Nye coined the now widely used term “soft power” in 1990 in a book titled *Bound to Lead*, arguing the United States was the strongest power, not only economically and military-wise but also in terms of soft power. In exact terms, soft power is “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments”. Because others are not being forced to do anything, it could be argued that this type of power is more ethical than the traditional types of power. Despite the more appealing nature of it, according to Nye, soft power is moreover more effective. “Seduction is always more effective than coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights and individual opportunities are deeply seductive”. (Nye 2004, X–XI.)

To better understand what is so new and transformative about soft power, it is useful to understand the history of discourse on power theory. One thing that political scientists seem to agree about is that power is elusive and it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what it is (Bachrach&Baratz 1970, 947; Nye 1990, 177). Other than Nye, also Steven Lukes with “radical power” *Power: A Radical View* 2005 and Peter Digeser *The Fourth Face of Power* 1992 with “the fourth face of power”, among others, have added his views to the previous notions of power. They have positioned themselves to add to the two previous dimensions or faces of power.

The first face of power is defined by Robert Dahl as “*A* has power over *B* to the extent that he can get *B* to do something that *B* would not otherwise do” (Dahl 1957, 202–203). The second face of power is established by Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz by pointing out that power is also the ability to prevent *B* from doing something *B* wishes to do (Lukes 1974, 2005, 20; Digeser 1992, 978). Furthermore, the second face of power is sometimes understood as an indirect way of getting what you want (Nye 2004, 5). Lukes, Digeser and Nye all agree that the first two faces of power do not reveal the full nature of power. However, they all emphasize different aspects of power, even though their approaches have some similarities.

Lukes critique is focused on the behavioral aspect of power on the first two faces of power. He sees that solely focusing on behavior in the assessment of power is too limited, as power exists in situations where power may be overt, covert or even latent, where one actor may not be even aware of its real interests. Lukes affirms that power is at its most effective while it is the least observable. (Lukes 1974, 2005, 1, 27–29) Lukes does not discuss radical power directly, at least using such a term, but discusses the radical conception of interests. The third dimension of power understands interests to be what the actor wants and prefers, but in some cases, the wants are the product of a system, which works against its interests. In essence, the radical understanding of interests combines the first two ways of understanding of interests and places importance on the role of the system, which can be interpreted to be society or political climate for example. (Lukes 2005, 37–38).

Nye does not discuss interests in the same length as Lukes. This could be for the reason that Nye’s book takes a more pragmatic approach of getting what one wants, where interests are often already established. Lukes on the other hand immerses into the academic debate on the nature of power, where interests, as everything else, can be questioned and analyzed. The difference in academic and pragmatic approaches is just one of the divergences in the discussion of power.

However, as one compares how soft power functions in contrast to the other two types of power that Nye identifies, which are military and economic, it is clear that soft power is more inclusive and accepting of the other actor. This can be seen in the graph below.

	Behaviors	Primary Currencies	Government policies
Military power	Coercion Deterrence Protection	Threats Force	Coercive diplomacy War Alliance
Economic power	Inducement Coercion	Payments Sanctions	Aid Bribes Sanctions
Soft power	Attraction Agenda setting	Values Culture Policies Institutions	Public diplomacy Bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

Table 1: Primary currencies and government policies of different types of power (Nye 2004, 31)

The more typical forms of power are defined to be military power in Nye's division of types of power. Military power, which appears as coercion, force and war, is often described to be "hard power". The interaction with the other in hard power is completely different in nature from soft power. In soft power the other can decide to what extent it wants to engage with the one exercising power, while in hard power the other is not given the same option. A hard power situation is inherently oppositional: if one needs to be threatened to do something, both actors have very different hopes of what will happen. Despite the neat categorization of behaviors by Nye, the groupings are not always that clear. Agenda setting, for example cannot always be said to be a form of soft power. Instead agenda setting may turn into a form of threatening, and simultaneously is an expression of the structure of power in the situation.

Nye does not discuss explicitly why values function so well in attracting others. The effective application of soft power has a completely different array of behaviors, primary currencies and government policies than military and economic power. Soft power utilizes attraction, values and diplomacy instead of coercion, threats and war (Nye 2004, 31). These two different ways of acting, soft and military, are notably different and can be better understood through Max Weber's distinction of rationalities. Weber noted there are two types of rationality: the first is instrumental rationality, which is means-end kind of rationality, which is based on expectations on the behavior of objects or humans in an environment. The second type of rationality is based on values, where one adheres to a given value whatever its cost. The value in itself is considered to be useful, not only for the value of the outcome. (Weber 1978, 24-25)

Although the use of military power does not exclude value rationality, it is more likely and perhaps easier to end up using "hard power" when actions are not based on value rationality. Thus, the mindset, which exists behind the use of soft power, which is based on values, is dramatically different from the prevalent way of thinking, which considers interests and how to achieve them. With soft power, the interests are redefined and, in a quite revolutionary fashion, the other actor and its wants and needs are dealt with in much more detail. Hard power can be characterized relying on instrumental rationality: the means of getting what one wants is not as important as the ends. While for soft power, the means is a crucial part of the process. Weber's definition of rationalities opens up the vast difference in approaching reality.

Power can be seen to be different from its manifestations of behaviors, currencies and policies, yet power begins before any actions are taken. It is the mindset one has to any given situation, which determines how power will be exercised, to what extent the other will be taken into consideration. Russia's and the EU's differences in behavior is seen particularly in the different types rationalities they have adopted. As the approaches are so vastly different, it is difficult for them to engage in successful dialogue and coordinate their actions. The different approaches are reflected in the types of power, hard or soft, are used and with what ratios as well as to the tools they are prone to use. Because of these reasons, the differences of the EU and Russia are not easy to solve.

Bachrach and Baratz as well as Lukes brought into consideration the environment where power is exercised and how it may affect negatively some of the actors. Bachrach and Baratz discuss a concept, which can also be interpreted in the context of soft power. If Nye presents the phenomena of power through attraction of same values mainly from the point of view of *A* in positive terms, Bachrach and Baratz present the ill effects of the same situation from the point of view of *B*, or even someone more removed of the situation, who is affected as well. The term discussed is the mobilization of bias. It means:

...a set of values, beliefs, rituals, and institutional procedures ("the rules of the game") that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain persons and groups at the expense of others. (Bachrach & Baratz 1970, 43)

The principal way of upholding mobilization of bias in place is through nondecision-making. By a nondecision it is meant that the decision-makers' values or interests are not effectively challenged, because the values and interests have been thwarted even before they have been voiced. (Bachrach & Baratz 1970, 44) In essence, there is a party or parties, *B*, which object to *A*'s use of power and of the values, which are upheld.

Michel Foucault and by extension Digeser have gone more into depth in addressing the overpowering effects of the society on the individual. Michel Foucault has created a different understanding of reality by focusing on modes of objectification, which transform human

beings into subjects. In addition, there has been a focus on how humans turn themselves into subjects. According to him, the focus of his work has not been on the analysis of power, (Foucault 1982, 777–778), although this connection has been made by some, such as Digeser, who adds on to the three dimension of power, or what he calls the four faces of power (1992).

Unlike the other three faces of power, the fourth face of power, also written as power₄, states there are no essential interests, any “true” desires and wants (Digeser 1992, 983). The way Digeser, and Foucault, approach power situations is to look for resistance: where it is the greatest, there power₄ is most clearly exercised (Digeser 1992, 985). For Digeser oppression is central, which at heart is to focus on the other actor’s, *B*’s, reactions. It is in fact quite an opposite way of looking at a power situation: traditionally the focus has been on the one in control, *A*, and what the *A* wants and how it acts. The inner motivations or interests of *A* have been problematized, but not the ones of *B*. In a situation where power is exercised *A* is as much part of the phenomenon as *B*.

New insights into power can be gained when some presumptions can be cast away at least for the time being. Power has multiple dimensions to explore and the interest of the actors is just one of them. For example, socialization through power can be better understood when it is not assumed that true interests of actors exist and that there is an everlasting possibility for them to change. The fourth face addresses the modern, disciplinary character of power₄, which other theories have failed to explain well. The disciplinary power in the modern era is heavily critiqued, stating it to be totalizing and individualizing. Disciplinary power is totalizing when it is everywhere, looking and commenting on the thoughts, beliefs, actions, morals and desires of people to see if they are acceptable; fitting the norm. This kind of a society wants to force people to be “docile” and “normal”. The individualization of disciplinary power is to focus and define in a clearer manner what is normal and allowed. (Digeser 1992, 991–993)

Digeser reveals a form and a use of power, which is incredibly permeable and interconnected. The situation depicted is completely different from the first face of power. The analysis of power through the fourth face of power allows studying the individual in the context of multitude of relationships. Digeser states that:

...power₄ is a kind of unintended consequence of intentional action. It is possible, then, to interpret Foucault's claim that power is both "intentional and nonsubjective" to mean that there is an indirect connection between intentions and power₄. (Digeser 1992, 983–984)

This outlook on power has a strong focus on the intangible nature of power, which cannot be fully controlled. Unlike the other three faces of power, or Nye's soft power, the fourth face of power simply exists and represses, although it may not be the intention of anyone to do so because of the power's non-subjective nature. This new approach to power portrays it as omnipresent and unavoidable. This presents a stark contrast to some of the other forms of power, such as the one discussed by Dahl. The essence of the situations where power is exercised is invariably different. It becomes evident that power can be understood in many different ways. The reason for the wide variety of interpretations rests on what is being emphasized. A situation where power is being exercised is fundamentally about the one who has the power, *A*, the one who *A* wishes to act according to its will, *B*, and the behavior that occurs between them as well as the resources the actors possess. Essentially, Lukes' critique was against seeing power simply as an act, a behavior. Instead of emphasizing behavior to this extent, he saw that the environment where the power is exercised holds great importance. Bachrach and Baratz brought into consideration the negative aspect of power, especially the concept of mobilization of bias. It considers the power situation from the perspective of someone who is being influenced, *B*, instead of mainly focusing on the capabilities of *A*, as Dahl did. Digeser on the other hand engages more with the concept of how power affects its subjects in society and how its effects are permeable. Thus, Digeser's focus is more on *B* and the relationship *B* has with *A*.

Nye emphasizes the power phenomenon from the point of view of *A*, of getting what one wants. This practical outlook is surely a contributing factor why soft power reached wide popularity outside of the academic circles. Not only is there a focus on *A*, but additionally on *B* and the interests of the two. Although the soft power resources are *A*'s, such as culture and values, they are not exclusively *A*'s. Instead the culture, such as the widely spread American

popular culture, is a medium through which people around the world can recognize with and this helps people to structure and reorganize their identities, whether they are individual or collective (Nye 2004, 41).

Soft power leaves space for the actors to get closer to one another and for *B* to realize that it can join on *A*'s interests. Nye defines soft power as an attractive form of power: getting others to want the outcomes you want. He denies that soft power is the same as influence, although persuasion and the ability to move people are components that create soft power. While there is a gap between soft power resources and the outcomes of using them, this is natural for all forms of power. While waging a war one actor may have superior hard power resources than the other and still lose. To use soft power is to “appeal to a sense of attraction, love, or duty” and to “appeal to our shared values about the justness of contributing to those values and purposes”. (Nye 2004, 5–6) It is still clear that *A* has a will to do something; to exert power, but it is done in a way, which is taking *B* more closely into consideration. If *A* wishes to be successful in its use of power, it must assess how viable it is for *B* to want the same things. For *B* to want the same things as *A*, *A* must be perceived to be truthful and consistent in promoting the values. This applies to the EU as well.

At first sight it can appear that *A*'s actions are purely strategic and this is an effective way to reach it. This may very well be the case. Yet, with closer inspection there becomes the possibility of creating a strong partnership if both *A* and *B* are willing to commit to the values chosen. Values show which things take priority and with this, the other actor becomes more predictable and therefore trusted. The juxtaposition of the Self and the Other is questioned and the actors begin to see one another more in similar terms, such as having something in common at a quite a fundamental level.

A relationship comes to existence and it deepens through socialization. The process of socialization is intriguing, because it addresses how people have come to form societies when there was none before. Socialization is clearly a strong transformational force, which creates the pretext for different political situations. Barry Buzan has gathered different ideas from different thinkers on how actors have become to comply with international law. Alexander

Wendt counts that there are three possibilities of internalization: coercion, calculation and belief (1992, 396–399). Friedrich Kratochwill structures compliance to international law into institutional sanctions, rule utilitarianism and emotional attachment (Buzan 2004, 102–103). Ian Hurd makes the distinction into coercion, self-interest and legitimacy (1999). The unifying factor in these three schemas is that one of them is more strict or ‘harder’ tool of socialization (coercion, institutional sanctions, coercion), one of them is more strategic (calculation, rule utilitarianism, self-interest), while the last one is based on softer methods (belief, emotional attachment, legitimacy).

There is some similarity on the theories of the methods of socialization and on different forms of power discussed by Nye. Military power is a harder tool of getting what one wants often through the method of coercion. Economic power is often strategic, as it can aid in directly with matters that are not purely economic. And soft power employs and utilizes belief, emotional attachment and legitimacy, which are all methods of socialization according to Wendt, Kratochwill and Hurd.

In essence, socialization is a type of a power situation: it is the interaction of at least two actors with interests. Therefore, it seems logical that similar methods occur in internalizing a social setting, as it is with persuading someone to do something one might not want to do. While soft power has not been widely discussed or acknowledged previously, a softer way of interacting has its merit. People choose to live in communities, interacting with one another on a day-to-day basis and finding commonalities with others. As interconnectivity is increasing, it is predictable that these soft forms of socialization as well as soft power play an important role in creating stronger connections between people. The different approaches are two sides of the same coin. One is described through power relationships, where one can exercise its will with an individual interest at mind at the expense of the Other. On the other side of the coin, there is the understanding between the actors of similar or identical interests, where goals can be reached through collaboration. Fundamentally, power and socialization, with its different variations, are all about human interaction. The main difference is how the actors choose to interact with one another. As all actors, also the EU and Russia are faced with the question of how to interact with others.

Power is a complex phenomenon, which can be understood from many different angles; therefore, its understanding should not be limited to the point of view of the actor *A*, with only hard tools to use. A situation where power is used includes at least two actors *A* and *B* and the relationship they have, how close they are to one another is essential for the progression of interactions. Oftentimes, for a more comprehensive view on power, it is useful to understand what type of a relationship the actors involved have with one another. Moreover, it should be realized that the closeness of actors exists on a spectrum and the degree of closeness greatly affects how power is used.

An emphasis on the closeness of the actors brings many new insights to our conceptualization of power. It allows us to better understand the profound popularity of soft power and how it functions. Furthermore, this outlook clarifies why discourse around power has had such different approaches that at first do not seem to be compatible. For example, soft power is much easier to put into perspective with Dahl's description of power when one understands that in the first case the relationship between the actors is closer than it is on the latter one. In addition, soft power's success is dependent on two actors becoming closer to another as they come to realize they share the same values.

Viewing power through the point of view of the actors' relationship with one another creates a more coherent intellectual supporting structure in which different theories of power can be placed, but it is not its only merit. The practical benefits are notable when the connection between different types of power is properly understood. Notably, it can encourage actors to change their hard power outlooks and move into a place where collaboration is possible. By understanding that interaction is dependent on the type of a relationship may allow some distance to assess the case more objectively. Actors may then place more importance on the process itself and know that once the relationship of *A* and *B* will change, so will the methods of influence. What is essential here is how time and are considered more thoroughly. Even if one does not have soft power, it is possible to develop it to achieve personal and collective gains. While traditional power theories focused on what one can have at the expense of others, a focus on the closeness of the actors can redirect focus on an entirely new way, encouraging

well-being for a larger collective that may not yet exist. The EU has been moving towards a more inclusive, belief-centered way of interacting with others, which has been a stark contrast to a hard power approach. The EU's approach is not only giving other countries new opportunities for interaction, but it is also challenging the previous status quo.

1.2 The EU as an actor

The EU is a unique actor, who excels in the use of soft power. Particularly, because the EU is a novel type of a political power, it has been able to approach political situations in new ways. However, the EU's novel approach is not simply limited to its behavior, i.e. use of power, but it stems from its sense of identity. Therefore, to understand the EU as an actor, it is critical to look into its sense of identity as well as its behavior. Comprehending the EU, as an actor will allow seeing the challenges it has faced with the Ukraine conflict. This in turn, reveals aspects of the complexities of power present in that conflict.

1.2.1 EU's identity

Ever since the formation of the European Economic Community (EEC), there has been a great variety of views on what the EU (or its predecessor) is and what it should be. The EEC was described to be a civilian power as it was thought in the Western world that traditional military/economic power was becoming less and less important. When approaching the 1970s, the economic perspective became more influential. (Bull, 1982, 149) Ian Manners, on the other hand, considered that the EU is in fact primarily a normative power, instead of being a civilian or a military power. While Bull had a point that the EC needed military power in the 1980s, the analysis is no longer apt to describe the EU and its needs today. International relations have developed greatly in the 1990s, which has, as Manners describes well: "the European Union to transcend both notions of military power and civilian power to become a normative power in international and world society". (Manners, 2002, 2)

Manners is not the first one to discuss normative power, or more precisely any aspects of it. E.H Carr and Bertrand Russell have divided power into three categories: economic power, military power and power over opinion. Johan Galtung on the other hand brings up the concept of “ideological power”, which is the power of ideas. It is “powerful because the power-sender’s ideas penetrate and shape the will of the power-recipient”, which comes through culture. (Manners 2002, 6) It is clear that these categorizations have common ground with soft power. The common factor is that influence is not based on necessity, or hard power, but instead on persuasion. Manners himself describes normative power to be the “ability to shape conceptions of ‘normal’”. (Manners 2002, 7–8) This new dimension of power brings depth and a new perspective about the EU. EU’s power is not limited within it, but by shaping the understanding of what is normal, the EU has a significant amount of power on other countries.

In order to shape others by one’s behavior, one’s actions need to be consistent enough for there to be an effect. What is needed, ultimately, is a sense of identity. The actor must have an understanding of what is important for it and what is guiding its actions. After all, if the EU would be driven by opportunistic needs, it cannot be expected that others will follow and act accordingly. The European Union has five core norms, which are peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. In addition, there are four minor norms: social progress, combatting discrimination, sustainable development and the principle of good governance. (Manners 2002, 10–11) These values and policies point towards a strong soft power core. Through this, there is a stronger sense of identity as the actor has self-set guidelines to follow. Importantly, when the core norms and values are explicitly stated, it places accountability on the actor, not only for itself to observe, but it allows this possibility equally for others as well.

Discovering and stating of values is an important part of becoming a normative, or a soft power, but putting it into practice requires more than just a verbal announcement. The values must be integrated into the structures of the organization and this can happen in a multitude of ways. Values are ways of acting, which are detached from the real world; they do not give advice on how to act in each specific situation. A value is a general principle, which does not

take into consideration the complexity and the different lines of rationality people are often forced to follow in their physical existence.

William Walters and Jens Henrik Haahr demonstrate in their book *Governing Europe – Discourse, Governmentality and European Integration* (2005) that the EU is constructed and based on different kinds of rationalities. Freedom, or liberalism, is one central element in the construction of a union that we now know as the European Union. Liberalism is a value in itself, but as Walters and Haahr show us, it is also part of the mentality of the government, which has instrumental value. Europe's liberalism is commonly thought to be based on the ideas of liberty and equality. However, liberalism does not extend solely on the affirmation of freedom, importance of rights, respect for private property and the need to limit the power of the state, but, in addition, it is contextualized. The contextualization of a value enables it to be linked to different practical aspects of the union. The contextualization of a value can also be called to be instrumental. Instrumental freedom can be observed in common practices of the EU, such as the freedom of movement and workers' rights. In these instances, the right or freedom is in the context of another activity, which benefits the economy. Ultimately choices have been made on how freedom and liberalism are understood, both in the act of governing and in the economic sector. For example, over time, there have been many different liberal views on the market and how to get the best results from the market, but the fact that the EU has chosen to have a common single market is a choice. (Walters & Haahr 2005, 62–63) As the pillars of the EU are deconstructed to see what they are made up of, one can get more insight to all of the other possible options that could have been made.

While it is true that freedom runs through the EU as an organization, the EU can also be understood from the storyline of safety. In the same as way as freedom is governmentalized, safety is being economized. Both of these values have been given more definition and legitimization through another system. The economization of safety can be seen when EU's common market aims to prevent nations from being aggressive towards one another. Safety is achieved through the promotion of economic cooperation. The idea of a more united Europe was built on the idea of domesticating the relations of belligerent European nations. (Walters & Haahr 2005, 144) Values and beliefs in their instrumentalized form are in part creating

transparency as well as attraction. Contextualization and instrumentalization of values are crucial, without it soft power wouldn't materialize.

From a contrasting point of view, it can be argued that the EU did not come into existence purely, or even mostly, because of its love of peace and cooperation. It was the defining role of the US, which allowed the EU to transition into what it is now. The US helped to protect Europe from external threats by keeping NATO troops in Europe. (Kagan 2002, 23–24) This created a unique situation, where the continent could just focus on itself and discovering a peaceful way to live with one another. The worldview where each is fighting for their own needs with little consideration for the other was overtaken by a world, where peace could be created and sustained. The US in essence solved the Kantian paradox for the EU by protecting it from the Hobbesian world. The Kantian paradox refers to the difficulty of reaching a world with which one would be satisfied. The Hobbesian world is filled with immoral horrors, which one wants to avoid, but on the other hand, it is impossible to reach a peaceful world either. The establishment of a world government would be possibly worse for individual freedom than a Hobbesian world. However, now with the help of the US, the EU can strive for peace. Kagan in addition points out that The EU's situation is deeply ironic in several ways: the EU abhors power, yet its existence would have not been possible without it. The EU rejects hard power tools, yet has a strong US presence in Europe; and finally, the EU does not notice this paradox. (Kagan 2002, 23–24)

The EU's situation is notably different from the US, despite the fact that both are large global powers. The US is more reactive to dangers and prone to use hard power because it is a stronger military power and often the targets of attacks, therefore the stakes are higher for the US. Additionally, the US technology and force to interfere with world issues are better, which leads to calculations in favor of interventions. (Kagan 2002, 13–14)

The scenarios presented about the EU's condition are that either the EU is doing something completely novel – moving beyond traditional form of power, or possibly that it is all based on delusions. While the US's does hold a strong supportive role for the EU, the EU has managed to build a successful rapport with its neighbors, of which many used to be enemies. Thus, the

success is not fully owned to the US, but it must be admitted that the relatively peaceful conditions in and around Europe have contributed a great deal to the peace promoting of the EU.

1.2.2 EU's behavior

Behavior is the most visible part of interaction between the actors and for this reason political scientists have heavily focused on this aspect of power. Lukes' critique on the two first dimensions of power is exactly on the excess or sole focus on behavior. What a behaviorist focus does not necessarily do, is give an understanding on the inner dynamics of one choosing such behavior, or additionally, how to use a type of power successfully. However, behavior does reveal a lot about power. Power is elusive, especially when considering soft power, which is even less visible and difficult to assess. After all, power is highly dependent on its audience, the desired outcomes may be produced years after initial efforts of exercising power and finally, soft power resources are very diffuse. (Nye 2004, 44, 99–100) Observation of the behavior of both, the EU's and the others' will make it easier to assess the successfulness of power. In addition, analyzing EU's behavior in contrast to its self-proclaimed values enables to evaluate soft power in itself.

One of the most visible forms of interaction the EU has is its expansion, which is also something unique for political actors. Any European country is free to apply for EU membership, but it must meet the criteria of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for minorities, a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and the ability to take on the obligations of membership. (European Union: Lisbon Treaty art. 49). The EU expansion policy promotes openness to share common economy and policies, but it is also open to other cultures in Europe.

In addition to accepting new member states to the EU, the EU also has several forms of cooperation with countries that are not necessarily looking for EU membership. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is created "to achieve the closest possible political association

and the greatest possible degree of economic integration”. It is founded on common interests and values – democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and social cohesion. For Eastern European countries, there is another more specific type of partnership: The Eastern Partnership (EaP). (EEASc) It is also founded on the same values and principles as the ENP (EEASb). An Association Agreement (AA) is a solidified type of partnership, where strong bilateral relationships are being built. In some cases, it may prepare the partnering country into an EU membership. (EEASa) From these several projects, which are supposed to bring the countries closer economically, as well as through values and good governance, it is clear that the EU remains attractive to its surrounding countries. The EU also views the deepening of collaboration of the countries to be successful. In fact, the EU views that its policies have been a very successful form of foreign policy. The ENP is stated to be a “key part of the European Union’s foreign policy” (EEASc) and that “the enlargement has unarguably been the Union’s most successful policy instrument.” (Commission of the European Communities 2003, 5)

Olli Rehn, while he was the European Commissioner for Enlargement (2004-2010), stated that: “The EU’s enlargement policy is an integral part of the Union's foreign policy – in fact, it is its most effective single instrument.” In addition, “This is what the EU’s enlargement policy is largely about – European values and political geography that stretches their scope.” (Rehn 2008, 2–3) The emphasis on the importance of enlargement as form of foreign relations shows that the EU is actively spreading its values and practices to a great host of countries. The fact that the other countries are listening to these messages willingly and even eagerly is a demonstration of soft power influence. Even if the EU is expanding through its promotion of core values, which others find attractive, much more is at play than other actors joining on the promotion of peace are. The EU has immense strategic benefit in being the leader in its neighborhood and others following suit to its actions. It would be reductionist to say that the EU would be motivated only by one thing over the other. Both, promotion of values and increasing one’s individual power, are significant components in EU’s behavior.

The EU’s willingness to cooperate and deepen ties, political and economic, to other nearby countries is evident from its actions. The harmonization of institutions, policies and values significantly bring the EU and the others actor closer to one another. When different actors say

that they are driven by the same goals with similar institutions, they are becoming more like one another and there is a less juxtaposition occurring. In these cases, power situations tend not to be as acute. Once the actors have reached an understanding of their identities and what their ordering principles are their behavior can easily become more structured. Once the actor reaches this level, it will not be jumping from one moment to another, but it has a general goal or values, which gives them guidance. Additionally, when an actor discusses its values and goals with others, this actor also become more predictable to others and thus it becomes easier to cooperate. While it is true that one should not trust other countries simply by face value, the case of the EU is different to some degree, because economic gains are highly linked with its desire for peace and stability. Because of the instrumentalization of values and economization of security, the values are grounded to actual behavior and through this, they are believable.

While the EU has been expanding many years with actual member states, other, less intensive forms of cooperation are also extremely significant. The EU cooperates with neighboring countries through different frameworks that do not require a membership, but leads to a closer relationship. In essence, this non-EU membership partnership is to include everything but the institutions of the EU; the partners must share the values of the EU and have their political and economic systems in order. Lavenex states EU's neighborhood policy is external governance, while not opening up the possibility of full membership. Through the Wider Europe partnerships, the EU is able to tackle 'soft security' issues such as justice and home affairs, environmental and energy policy. (Lavenex 2004, 687–688, 694)

1.3 The EU's point of view to the conflict

The EU experiences the conflict on a deeply personal level, because it puts into question its model of behavior, which has been so successful for quite some time. In addition, the EU's close connection with Ukraine plays a role. As the conflict progressed, the EU notices how its soft power approach was not as effective as it had once been. First, it can be seen that the EU attempted to use diplomacy as it has been accustomed to, but it did not lead to desired

outcomes. After this, the EU experienced an identity crisis at some level. While the EU is attempting to influence Russia, it is also calling for deeper unity within the union.

1.3.1 Diplomacy as usual with unsuccessful results

The EU has tried with significant efforts to resolve the crisis in Ukraine that were sparked by the Cabinet of Minister's announced decision to suspend preparations to sign the already prepared Association Agreement (AA) on the 21st of November 2013. (EEAS 2015) The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Catherine Ashton and several others, such as the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, visited Kyiv multiple times since the outbreak of the protests. Representatives of the EU met with different parties and tried to facilitate dialogue and help to stabilize the situation. (EEAS 2015, 2–3) Because of the deteriorating situation, the EU announced 20th of March 2014 that it will enforce targeted sanctions including asset freeze and visa ban against those who violated human rights (Council of the European Union 2014, 2). After the situation got worse, the EU did not rely solely on soft power governing policies, notably diplomacy, but increased its influence through sanctions, which is based on economic power (Nye 2004, 31).

The EU enforced new sanctions several times after in March 2014 as a response for misappropriated Ukrainian state funds and against individuals responsible for undermining sovereignty of Ukraine. The targeted sanctions were broadened in April. Throughout this time, the EU condemned illegal actions taking place in Ukraine, such as the illegal annexation of Crimea and asking Russia pull back its troops from Ukraine. (EEAS 2015, 3–4) In 17th of April the EU, US, Ukraine and Russia gave a joint statement where it was agreed on “initial concrete steps to de-escalate tensions and restore security for all citizens”. (EEAS 2014) As Russia continued the escalations of tensions in Eastern Ukraine, the EU expanded the targeted sanctions to more people in April and in July several times. In addition, the EU adopted further trade and investment restriction for Crimea and Sevastopol as a way of not recognizing the illegal annexation of Crimea. A peace plan was agreed in Minsk on 5th of September 2014,

but the ceasefire was not respected and shooting and shelling were taking place still in January 2015. (EEAS 2015, 4–7) As the situation escalates in Ukraine, and Russia continues to ignore the wishes of Ukraine and the EU, it becomes evident that the EU's soft power resources are not providing the wanted outcomes. After all, how much can comments stating the importance of finding peace and warning of the eventual deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia have weight when Russia does not cooperate, but instead decides to engage in war (EEAS 2015)?

The U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Samantha Power recaps the situation well:

...the pattern is clear. Where Russia has made commitments, it has failed to meet them. Russia has negotiated a peace plan, and then systematically undermined it at every step. It talks of peace, but it keeps fueling war. (Power 2014)

Saying one thing and doing another creates instability to the situation and making the actor unpredictable in the eyes of others. Effective soft power use through diplomacy requires the actors to be clear of their own motives and objectives and their clear articulation to others. Perceived hypocrisy of promoting values, but not acting accordingly is particularly harmful for actors who are based on values (Nye 2004, 55). Although Russia is not gaining legitimacy for its actions in the eyes of the EU and others, it is possible that the EU has more to lose if it does not act according to its values, even when Russia responds by engaging in military action.

The pertinent question in this situation is – does soft power disappear when hard power is used? The challenge the EU faces is to preserve its identity of following its five core norms of peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights (Manners 2002, 10–11) in a situation that completely undermines them. While soft power has its strengths, it also has its vulnerabilities.

1.3.2 The vulnerability and the strength of soft power

Nye does not discuss the limitations of soft power in different situations at length, or how to overcome them, but he does state that soft power is more dependent on context than hard power is. This is because of dependence of the receivers' interpretations and the diffuse nature of soft power. Additionally, a tool to exert soft power, public diplomacy, is according to Nye "a two-way street that involves listening as well as talking". (Nye 2004, 16, 111) Soft power engages more with the other by giving them space to make their own judgments and listening what the other party has to say. For this reason, it is quite understandable that if the other actor is not willing to participate in a constructive dialogue, soft power loses its effectiveness. Samantha Power affirms that there is no military solution to the crisis, only a political one, but the problem remains that "you cannot reach a political solution if only one side is committed to forging it" (Power 2014).

The EU's actions grow more legitimate, even when the methods exceed the use of soft power when Russia's actions are based on illegality and belligerent behavior. The global information age that we live in today gives global politics a new foundation on what to act. The ability to share information, which others will believe to be truthful, becomes instrumental in the ability to attract others and have power. (Nye 2004, 31–32)

Nye states:

The countries that are likely to be more attractive and gain soft power in the information age are those with multiple channels of communication that help to **frame issues**; whose dominant culture and ideas are **closer to prevailing global norms**; credibility enhanced by domestic and international **values and policies**. (Nye 2004, 31–32, emphasis added)

The outcome of the Ukraine conflict in global politics is not solely dependent on the countries' actions and who overpowers whom, but on the perceptions of regular people. Will the Ukraine conflict be understood more from the point of view of EU/US, which views Russia to be

constantly undermining efforts for peace? Or, perhaps, the conflict will be understood from the point of view of Russia, which talks of common identity and the West aggravating the situation? In essence, which framing of the conflict will be most prevalent and credible from the point of view of the values and policies that are aligned with or close to the prevailing global culture and norms? The actions and perceptions of them are not only relevant while the events are taking place, but later on as well. The events are understood in the context of ongoing relationships with other countries and consistencies of actions have a major influence on the credibility of the actor on the long term.

It proves to be difficult to be consistent in the inconsistency of doing one thing and stating the other. The 2015 Minsk ceasefire agreement, likely accidentally, gave proof of Russia's direct military involvement in the conflict. The agreement states that heavy weapons must be withdrawn from the situation, including the explicitly mentioned Tornado-S, which is exclusively owned by the Russian Federation. Thus, there is no other possibility than the Tornado-S originating from Russia. (Rácz & Saari 2015, 1)

The Ukraine conflict has shown not only the difficulty or perhaps inefficiency of responding to hard power with soft power, but it has also shown the strength of values. Throughout the conflict, a great part of Ukrainians has shown that their dedication to deepen their relationship with the EU as well as to sharing values with the EU. In fact, Guy Verhofstadt a member of European Parliament stated that in Kiev there has been the biggest ever pro-European demonstration in the history of the European Union (EuroparITV 2013). Even when Ukraine is at war and has a significant amount of casualties and hardship, it is still willing to fight for what the EU stands for and for the opportunities it provides. The severity of the situation presents in clear light the depth of many Ukrainians' commitment to deepen and expand the EU-Ukrainian relationship. The extremity of the situation has made the protest more potent than any other pro-European demonstration.

While there are some differing opinions among Ukrainians about Russia, most hold the same views. The majority of Ukrainians wish to have a friendly relationship with Russia while being independent. After the Euromaidan revolution, 12% of Ukrainians would like to

integrate with Russia into a single state. (KIIS & Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2014) This is a small, yet notable minority.

The resolve of the Euromaidan movement and importance of values becomes clear through the postings of its Facebook page. A Ukrainian, who is described to be heroic, Oleg Sentsov, talks of the strength of his values when they are tested to their limits:

When they put a bag on your head, beat you up a bit, and half an hour later, you're ready to go back on all your beliefs, implicate yourself in whatever they ask, implicate others, just to stop them beating you. I don't know what your beliefs can possibly be worth if you are not ready to suffer or die for them. (Euromaidan Facebook group)

His example shows that although values are often times hidden, they can at extreme situations present themselves very strongly as the guiding principle of one's actions. Strong adhering to one's values may often demonstrate itself to the likeness of individual laws, which are guided by a general approach rather than single individual commandments. Hereby, the strength of values should not be dismissed, nor soft power, which places values at its core.

1.3.3 Identity crisis and the path to reaffirming importance of unity

When some time had passed from the most intense moments of the Ukraine conflict, European leaders could reflect on the gravity of the effect it had on Europe and the European Union. The High Representative/Vice-President Frederica Mogherini (in office since 2014) in her speech at the 2015 EUISS Annual Conference stated that the European Union has gotten into an identity crisis and wished for help to move beyond it. (Mogherini 2015a) It is more than likely that the identity crisis was the result at least in part of being unable to respond successfully enough to the Ukraine conflict. The EU noticed that the soft power tools that it had relied on were no longer efficient. However, this storyline of inability to act or vulnerability is not what the EU views to be the predominant one. Instead, the EU, with the lead of Mogherini, calls for

strengthened action through a common European vision and a global strategy. (Mogherini 2015a)

Mogherini's response to the crisis is to the large part reaffirming the importance of the same values, which the EU views to be important, but now on a more profound level. As in an identity crisis, the actor must be reminded of its own sense of identity and to discover which aspects need to be reshaped. The call for unity and embracing diversity are center beliefs for the EU, which were simply reaffirmed. Mogherini's point of view comes across succinctly when she says:

The diversity of our backgrounds and of our instruments is our natural resource. It is the European natural resource – provided that we put it in the service of our common purpose, of our common strategy. Let us not forget what we are good at as Europeans. (Mogherini 2015a)

The EU has been successful with the project European leaders have created, and therefore one solution for the challenge, is to remain firmly within this vision. Mogherini sees this approach as the solution. Even at times when the EU is faced with hostile actors, such as Russia and terrorists, who cannot be persuaded by values, she still adheres strictly to them:

I believe that our interests and our values can only go hand in hand. We have an interest in promoting our values around the globe. And the way we articulate our interests has to embed our fundamental values. (Mogherini 2015a)

The placement of values in such a central role in interacting with others, shows that values are not just the surface, but the foundation for EU's actions. It is also telling that Mogherini would address the question of the importance of values right in the beginning of her speech, knowing, or stating that she would know that this would be something that would be asked. Therefore, it can be assumed that the values of the EU and their role in EU's actions were questioned. Yet, the way Mogherini addressed the issue, demonstrates the deep integration of values to all of the actions of the EU. It becomes clear that the vision for the EU is to keep on

evolving and firmly staying true to the type of actor it has become and not succumb to the scares of external threats.

Throughout her speech there is the element of defining the EU as an actor, instead of just focusing on its needs and desires. This can be seen in the following excerpt:

...a strategy that is not only about foreign policy, it is not only about our role in the World, but it can be and must be very much about us, about Europe, about who we are, how we work together, what as Europeans we share in terms on common foreign and security policy. (Mogherini 2015a)

The focus is not only turned to the outside world, but strongly to the inside. In Mogherini's view the strategy defines both how the EU functions with other political actors as well as among themselves. This double perspective puts an even greater emphasis on the strategy itself. The EU, as it is composed of independent and interdependent political actors, is especially dependent on cooperation to build common policies. In fact, what Mogherini is asking is a European public opinion on foreign policy and security policy (Mogherini 2015a). Once again, the approach is typical for the EU, which places emphasis on finding ways to cooperate, instead of focusing on differences.

A common strategy is necessary for very practical and strategic reasons. Mogherini points out:

Unless we cast our response in a clear framework, unless we make plans to stay engaged even after the eyes of the international media have turned away, we will forever be chasing one crisis after the next. And the list is very long. We cannot let sensationalism dictate our agenda. We need a sense of direction, and a common one; we need conflict prevention and post-crisis management, we need a strong narrative to underpin our day-to-day work. (Mogherini 2015a)

In essence, the EU has to be certain of itself as an actor to overcome the problems, which are coming from the outside. The firm statement of needs is an indication that the EU has learned

something from the crises it has faced and that there needs to be prioritization in one's actions and responses to others' actions. By making it clear for oneself of who one is as an actor, such as the values one stands for, and ultimately one's identity, the EU is establishing itself as an actor that goes beyond by being motivated by its next immediate needs or wants in the global arena. In this way, the EU can have more long lasting partnerships, because the EU is committed to a perspective, which is wider than the current situation. In essence, by defining itself as an actor and the way it will engage with the world is the premise for soft power. However, this predictability is not just for show for others, but also it allows the EU to become better equipped for a future of unknown problems (Mogherini 2015a).

1.4 Russia's point of view to the conflict

Russia's approach to the conflict is notably different from the EU's. Russia has a very different way of approaching power and its long-term goals are likewise contrasting. Unlike the EU, Russia's government is not as frank about its actions. A close reading of intentions as well as complaints is required to sense of Russia's true point of view to the Ukraine conflict. For Russia as well, the conflict is not just about Ukraine, but also about Russia sense of self and its place in the world.

1.4.1 Russia and its approach to power

Russia does not lack in soft power, nor does it strive to wield it in the same way as the EU does. According to Jeffrey Gedmin, Russia's President Vladimir Putin (2000–2008 and 2012–currently in office) has mastered the dark side of soft power. Russia holds relatively close connections with other nations, but utilizes them differently. The way soft power has been exercised is through the dependency on energy. It has been a key element through trade and it is clearly used as a weapon. Russia is ready to halt economic cooperation at any moment, especially when the countries' policies are not in line with Russia's views. Economic tools are not the only ones at Russia's disposal. Estonia experienced a cyber-attack after there was a

dispute over a Russian statue. Gedmin does not believe this was a coincidence. In addition, Russia funds pro-Russia parties outside of its country, so better relations with countries can be maintained. (Gedmin 2014, 10–12) Needless to say, Gedmin is highly skeptical of Russia's actions. However, the way Gedmin qualifies soft power, although he discusses its more questionable side, is not compatible with Nye's understanding of it. Nye emphasizes attraction in soft power and the seductive nature of values (Nye 2004, X–XI).

What Gedmin discusses is rather a type of dependency of ties, which are then used to further one's goals. When the other is dependent on the relationship, it is far easier to get them to behave in a certain way when threatened. The similarity between soft power and the type of power Russia uses, is the interconnectedness, or the established relationship of the actors. In essence, what Russia is doing is extorting others by already existing ties, while soft power is building on new ties voluntarily. The commonality between these two types of power is the closeness of the actors without being a single entity. The first actor, *A*, is wishing to use exert power over the other, *B*, while *B* is influenced, among other reasons, by the similarity with *A*. The benefits of acting in consortium are the same, even if the methods of getting there would be somewhat different. A larger group of actors often have more say in the global political arena. Or, alternatively, greater unity will make internal policies seem more legitimate: Russia's success abroad will strengthen its authoritarian hold at home (Gedmin 2014, 12). It is certain that this type of power limits and controls the other actor, instead of attracting them and making the connection voluntary.

If Russia would use soft power, as Nye understands it, multilateral diplomacy would be one of the tools it would use, as it is one of soft power governance policies (Nye 2004, 31). With Russia this is not the case. Edward Lucas affirms Russia finds bilateral differences and weaknesses of countries and then exploits them. This is the reason why ex-Soviet border conflicts remain unsolved. (Lucas 2008, 179) Lucas' observations are based on previous events, and he is not commenting on the Ukraine conflict, which happened years after. However, it seems as if Russia used this strategy with Ukraine as well. In 2014 Ukraine suffered from numerous structural and institutional weaknesses and deep macroeconomic imbalances (Dabrowski 2015, 2), which existed before the start of the conflict. In addition, the

people of Ukraine have regional differences of opinion on what their relationship with Russia should be. In 2014 in February, when the conflict had already started, it was found that over a fourth of Eastern Ukrainians wanted to unite with Russia into a single state. While less than a percent wanted this in Western Ukraine. (KIIS & Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2014) Because of the more favorable position towards the Russians in Eastern Ukraine, Russia had some support for its actions.

In short, the soft power the EU uses can be described as using connectivity for the advantage of everyone. While the power that Russia exercises plays on the connection aspect as such to the detriment of the other and often Russia itself. This alternative side of soft power becomes exceedingly clear and visible when Putin justifies the annexation of Crimea.

1.4.2 Putin legitimizing actions in Crimea

Putin held a speech in the Kremlin, in Moscow March 18 2014 to announce that Crimea and Sevastopol are part of Russia for the Federation Council members and State Duma deputies (Putin 2014a). The annexation is considered to be unlawful by many other political actors; both the EU and the UN. The UN's stance was determined through a vote in the General Assembly and it is explicitly stated that the countries oppose Russia's actions in this issue (European Council 2015; UN General Assembly 2014).

Putin justifies Russia's actions in multiple ways, but mostly the arguments are appealing to emotion or a common sense of identity. First the referendum was shortly mentioned, where the result was said to be overwhelmingly supporting the unification with Russia. The actual speech is framed in a way, which gives an understanding of the Crimeans' strong connection to Russia. (Putin 2014a) Rhetorically this was a clever choice, as if the speech would be about the Crimeans and not about the greatness of Russia, which is in fact the motivation behind the conflict.

The first and the strongest arguments Putin makes are on the strong connection of Russians and Crimeans that is based on the likeness of culture and history of both. Russia's President Vladimir Putin in his speech where he discusses the annexation of Crimea states this connection resolutely:

...we are one people. Kiev is the mother of Russian cities. Ancient Rus is our common source and we cannot live without each other. (Putin 2014a)

It is not only seen that there is a strong connection with Crimeans, but also with Ukrainians in general and it is a connection that cannot be undermined. The connection that different actors may feel for one another, i.e. a sense of similarity, is a central feature of soft power. However, in this case, a leader of a superpower is announcing an undying connection to a smaller, more vulnerable actor, not the other way around. This is not soft power, but it is demanding of loyalty from others. This can potentially lead to a threatening situation for the other actor, because Russia is not afraid to use hard power. The strength of soft power is on the willingness of different actors to come together and work for common goals, out of their own desires. The reverse of soft power, as Russia's actions might be called, is not as convincing because one larger actor wishes to engineer other's behavior through the pretense of connection.

Putin argues that this solidarity and connection from the part of the Crimeans exist, but they were simply repressed after the power change that resulted from the change of power in Kiev (Putin 2014a). Putin affirms:

Naturally, we could not leave this plea unheeded; we could not abandon Crimea and its residents in distress. This would have been betrayal on our part. (Putin 2014a)

The way Putin frames the situation, is that Russia has a moral duty to help the citizens. In a way, it appears Russia has perverted soft power into something quite different, while seemingly adhering to the basic tenants of soft power. The connection is claimed to be strong, but of course, it exists in a way that benefits Russia. Putin addresses reasons to why Crimea

was no longer a part of Russia and sees it as a great injustice: not only for the Crimeans themselves, but also for Russia as well, and not only through the disconnection of its fellow compatriots:

It was only when Crimea ended up as part of a different country that Russia realized that it was not simply robbed, it was plundered. (Putin 2014a)

It is clear that Crimea being part of Russia holds more importance than simply sharing a cultural and historical connection with Russia. When an actor has a lot more to gain than the sentimental connection and moral duty of conquering someone else's country, it is likely that there is more to the choice of actions. To gain a more accurate understanding of what has happened, it is important to see what is gained by the actors involved and exactly who was in charge of the change that occurred.

The rest of the arguments and explanations reorganize themselves to be idle talk, once it is seen what the principle motivation was. Putin discusses the pain that was felt from past events as well as the current incompetence of Ukraine to justify further Russia's actions, so they would not only seem acceptable, but encouraged. By themselves these arguments are not sufficient to justify infringing on national sovereignty in the global political arena. Putin ties together the suffering of Russians with the repression of Ukraine, which can be seen in the following excerpt:

Time and time again attempts were made to deprive Russians of their historical memory, even of their language and to subject them to forced assimilation. Moreover, Russians, just as other citizens of Ukraine are suffering from the constant political and state crisis that has been rocking the country for over 20 years. (Putin 2014a)

In this statement Ukraine is portrayed to be the one who is using power in questionable ways by forcing others to comply, while the ethnic minority of Russians in Ukraine are presented as the victims. Shifting negative focus on someone else can be a successful rhetorical move,

because all of the negative attention is not on the speaker itself. Putin amplifies his criticism further by stating:

They resorted to terror, murder and riots. Nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes and anti-Semites executed this coup. They continue to set the tone in Ukraine to this day. (Putin 2014a)

Putin presents his own colored view of the motivations of the protestors. It has been discovered that the protestors were in fact for the large part well-educated Ukrainians who support European values and disagree with state-led violence, which is aimed to subjugate democratic rights. To endure the three cold winter months of protest with nothing other than the national anthem and prayer as weapons require a lot of determination and belief of one's convictions. (Saryusz-Wolski 2014) Even if Putin's assessment of the participants of the demonstrations was correct, it would be questionable that such a diverse group of people would be able to keep protesting in a peaceful manner as they were.

Putin does not leave the blame to the protests alone, but continues to place blame to the current power holders of Ukraine:

It is also obvious that there is no legitimate executive authority in Ukraine now, nobody to talk to. Many government agencies have been taken over by the impostors, but they do not have any control in the country, while they themselves – and I would like to stress this – are often controlled by radicals. (Putin 2014a)

The refusal to even acknowledge the legitimacy of the current political system in Ukraine, and stating that the Russian leaders cannot be communicate with them, Putin is further creating a rift between the two countries. Even though the speech started by stating that it is necessary to understand the deep felt connection between the Crimeans and the Russians, the speech has strayed to other avenues. Most notably Putin points out how Russia and other ethnic Russians have faced terrible injustice and Ukraine is all to blame.

It is interesting that while Putin believes that the Russians cannot live without Ukraine, he willfully disparages and ignores the will of the Ukrainians. The massive protests reflect the strongly held beliefs of many Ukrainians and the parliament is elected by a general vote, which is a clear demonstration of the will of Ukrainian's as whole. Therefore, the connection and a mutual existence Putin is hoping for, is solely based on Putin's vision instead on a true collaboration.

1.4.3 Russia's global desires

While an analysis of the specific reasons to why Russia's leaders felt it was justified to annex Crimea, it is also necessary to view in a larger perspective how Russia intended to challenge the global community. In an event where President Putin was asked questions about the situation in Ukraine 4.3.2014, Putin discussed the Ukraine conflict from two different approaches, which neither addressed the strategic benefit of Russia. Firstly, Putin places the Ukraine conflict in the context of a malfunctioning Ukraine. The problems of corruption and political and economic weakness are severe in Ukraine according to Putin. (Putin 2014c) Ukraine's political and economic situation has only gotten worse since the annexation of Crimea. Poor economic management has been a long lasting problem in Ukraine. (Dabrowski 2015, 2) In addition, he places burden on the international political system, where the US plays a dominant role and clearly follows its geopolitical goals. Putin states, however, that Russia's actions are always legitimate. (Putin 2014c)

The roots of discontent of the global political system and attempts to shape the global political arena have taken place long before the Ukraine conflict. Russia has aspired to increase its power and influence through the Eurasian Union. The Eurasian Union, which is planned to be expanded from the three original members of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, is in many ways inspired by the EU. For many Russians the Eurasian Union is not simply an economic project, but a stepping-stone to a greater geopolitical Eurasia. Nicu Popescu claims that reintegrating the former Soviet republics has been a priority since the dissolution of the USSR

and Putin has taken this project as his own by forming the Eurasian Union. (Popescu 2014, 9, 13, 18)

Before the Ukraine conflict escalated from the Euromaidan protests, Putin used the Eurasian Union to create a conflict with Ukraine. Russia complained that there was a zero-sum economic game with Ukraine. The claim was that if Ukraine took part in the EU's Association Agreement with a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, it would limit Ukraine's option to join the Eurasian Union, hereby affecting Russia in a negative way. These claims were fabricated, the EU did not place such limitations, but it is often that Customs Unions, such as the Eurasian Union, place these limitations on collaborating countries. (Popescu 2014, 37)

Nicu Popescu views that the conflict arose from the fulfillment of Russia's and the EU's respective Neighborhood policy interim goals. In part, this was unintentional and the actors should come into the realization what dynamic brought them there so the EU-Russia relations could evolve. (Popescu 2014, 43-44). Already before the current conflict developed, Lucas looked at the phenomena more in political terms than economic and saw that the unbalanced rivalry between Europe (with rest of the West) and Russia began when the West won the Cold War. The victory was achieved mostly through soft power when the differences in the way of living in the capitalist and socialist camps grew to the extent that the Soviet empire could no longer sustain itself. (Lucas 2008, 170)

It appears that soft power affects Russia in more ways than one. For one, soft power can be seen to have destroyed the Soviet Empire from within. Secondly, this dynamic of West's (or EU's) soft power is still very much alive and expanding too near to Russia, in Russia's opinion. Thirdly, however, Russia also employs soft power or 'people power' itself by trying to make itself look more attractive by emphasizing the unifying nature of the Russian culture and questioning the benefits former Soviet Republics could get from accepting foreign set of values. (Lucas 2008, 195)

What Russia seems to want on a more global view, is not only to be stronger, but also to create a counterbalance to the West, which has created economic success and success in terms of soft power. It can be seen from the rhetoric of Putin that Russia is not described with superfluous terms, but more modestly placing themselves along with other great powers. Russia is described to be “one of the best”, instead of “the best”. Nationally, Russia has been described more as “a great nation” or “great culture”, but in general, there is more of an emphasis of the future greatness of the country. Mark Urnov speculates that one reason of referring Russia less often as great could be because of the Ukraine conflict. By avoiding such rhetoric before the conflict, it would be harder for the Western elite to view Russia acting from the premises of wanting to be great again. (Urnov 2014, 311, 309)

Soft power is shaping the world political climate in a very real way, but the difficulty is that the way soft power works is so difficult to see and to understand. Shaping of values and credibility are very much intangible but can guide people’s behavior from within, which makes it extremely powerful. The times when the other could be simply forced to do something without an extensive look into its effects and repercussions are beginning to be over.

1.5 Soft power as a new form of power?

Soft power is not an entirely new phenomenon, the same means of power have been used before and this type of power is no means exclusive to certain actors. It is only a new concept. The opportunities that soft power presents are at times great and its influence reaches far beyond hard power. If power is fundamentally perceived to being able to get what one wants, soft power is going back to the roots of gaining capacity. Dominion is only one type of power, where the actors are clearly opposed to one another.

Erich Fromm views power to be best characterized through capacity. There is a clear distinction between “power of” and “power over”. “Power of” describes the term most accurately and effectively as capacity; “the ability of man to make productive use of his

powers in his potency”. (Fromm 1947, 64) Hard power or “power over” is in his view a perversion of true power of capacity. The potency of the individual extends beyond using the commonly known tools and following previous practices. Potency is used to its fullest when the actor is able to use other tools than force. Imagination of visualizing things that do not yet exist can help to create new realities and love will help to break the barrier of different actors. (Fromm 1947, 64) Thus, Fromm’s understanding of power deviates largely from the traditional understanding of power, especially that of hard power.

The use of potency to describe power is more open to a variety of tools and considering the aspect of love and imagination, where there are no clear guidelines on how an actor may reach its potency. Fromm does present a refreshing alternative to power that may help to realize new potentials in reaching goals and shaping the world around us. There are similarities with soft power and Fromm’s perception of power, as there is with the building of the EU. The EU has broken barriers between countries and it was only by the imagination of something different, another kind of political actor that made this possible.

The divide between traditional hard power and the new emerging “power to” or soft power is at times sharp. Even if one would lean more towards soft power, it still does not protect from bullets in warfare. Robert Kagan notes that Europeans believe they can convert the world by transcending power. In stronger words: “Its [Europe’s] mission is to oppose power.” (2002, 17) The EU is not as interested in exercising the most commonly known form of power, which Kagan views to be the EU’s weakness.

Yet, Russia, who has acted in the recent Ukraine conflict using hard power in a military response, does not solely rely on this kind of power. Stefan Auer claims it is actually Russia, who uses both hard and soft power in a skillful manner. This was already visible in 2004 when Putin engineered a “velvet counter-revolution” to counter the effect of Ukraine’s revolutions in Russia. The hard power methods used were well known. They included suppressing the opposition and controlling the media in a larger extent. In addition, Putin tried something newer; he created with the help of his political technologists a movement to support the power

of the current political leaders in Kremlin. (Auer 2015, 965) This way the dissidents were silenced and the general population was geared towards supporting the existing political order.

Soft power is not an entirely a new tool, but it has been extracted strongly enough from the totality of the phenomenon of power that it appears to be a novel approach. The increasing popularity of this approach plays a large role as well. If the goal were to reach a comprehensive view of power, soft power would exist on a spectrum along with hard power. However, if the goal is more pragmatic, such as to find new outlooks to existing power situations, soft power may offer some new suggestions. As soft power has gained popularity, it has shaped the context of the actors, affecting the toolset that actors are prone to use.

2. SHIFT OF CONTEXTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL REALM

Political actors of any scale are not conducting their actions based on an unquestionable knowledge of what needs to be done and what needs to be avoided. Basic needs are easy enough to discover, but anything beyond that is based on a construction of reality. The actors construct an understanding of others and their behavior. Essentially, a context allows the actors to create stability in their interaction with others. The context needs to be predictable enough to be effective. However, there is no one specific way of acting, but behavior is malleable to the conditions around us. The shock, which is experienced when a context is changed, is a testimony to the pervasive nature of the existing set of rules.

The Ukraine conflict juxtaposes the different perceptions of the world in a very powerful way. One way of understanding the change of context is to look at it from the rivalry of the logics of geopolitics and geo-economics. Another perspective that looks at the phenomena from a more a more detached, global way is Francis Fukuyama's analysis on the evolution of global society towards liberal democracy.

Examination of the Ukraine conflict through the lens of a changing context will further reveal of the deep divide of the participants of the actors and give insight to the difficulty of the situation. It is the change of context, which shocked the West so profoundly.

2.1 Competing contexts of geopolitics and geo-economics

The EU's attempts of resolving the Ukraine conflict proved to be unsuccessful, despite the use of EU's frequently and often auspicious tool of diplomacy and cooperation. In the end, economic sanctions were put in place, which did not end the conflict itself. The futility of proved ways of dealing with international crises has left European leaders to reassess the situation in which Europe has found itself. Finland's president Sauli Niinistö (2012–present)

has concluded in May 2015 that “geopolitics has come back”. (my translation from “geopolitiikka on tehnyt paluun”, Taloussanommat 2015) He states that geopolitics was believed to be left behind for the benefit of globalization and mutual economy. However, now geopolitics is back, and it is geopolitics, which is influencing geo-economics and not the other way around. Russia is a source of instability and the situation could not be controlled through economic means. According to Niinistö, the situation in Ukraine is not seemingly getting any better and it cannot be assumed that there would not be another armed conflict later. (Taloussanommat 2015) At this point, the Ukraine conflict has lasted for over a year, which is an indication of a more long lasting problem, instead of a small disagreement.

President Niinistö is referring to the competing logics of geopolitics and geo-economics that was thoroughly discussed by academics. Geopolitics as a field of study in the academia grew in importance after Henry Kissinger revived it (Flint, Mamadouh 2015, 1). It was later in 1990 that Edward N. Luttwak with his article *From Geopolitics to Geo-Economics: Logic of Conflict, Grammar of Commerce* claimed that the logic of geopolitics is being sided by the force of geo-economics, but only to some degree. This change is better characterized as a shift, not a full transformation of geo-economics taking over. It is worth noting that geo-economics has always been a meaningful part of international interactions, but it was on the background at the expense of geopolitics. Strategic priorities would be put in front of economic interests and it was the geopolitical realities, which would dictate the final course of action of political actors. (Luttwak 1990, 19–23).

Essentially, the two logics of geo-economics and geo-politics are co-existing, yet competing with one another. Geo-economics should not to be confused with mercantilism. Mercantilism is a subordinated modality, while geo-economics has no superior modality. The difference is that “in a new “geo-economic” era not only the *causes* but also the *instruments* of conflict must be economic”. (Luttwak 1990, 21) Clashes between countries are fought in economic terms, such as restricting imports or subsidizing exports (Luttwak 1990, 21). This evolution from mercantilism to geopolitics and then to geo-economics is placing geopolitics in a certain place in time, instead of presenting it as a tool. Geopolitics, which is one type of logic, is now evaluated in the context of time and human evolution. This kind of thinking inevitably gives

out a judgement against those who will use geopolitics instead of geo-economics. In other times, the reading of a situation with a geopolitical lens will help to uncover the motivations and behaviors of others, which may allow to understand their future aspirations as well. Nicu Popescu analyses the Eurasian Union through geopolitical aspirations, which sheds light into other actions of Russia, especially regarding its approach to Ukraine. Russia longs for a Eurasian empire through the formation of the Eurasian Union. There is no empire yet and according to Popescu, it is likely there never will be. Kremlin with the lead of Putin have imagined a great future for Russia, which they are striving towards, and the actions in line towards this image can be well explained through geopolitical logic. (Popescu 2014, 7–8)

2.1.1 Geopolitics in search for a commonly agreed upon identity

Understanding geopolitics in the scientific framework presents its own challenges. The current discussion on geopolitics reveals how there is no common agreed upon ideology or a lens that the world is looked through, while this does exist in separate schools. Even the center question of what is the nature of geopolitics is disputed. Quite simply, there is more that is disagreed on than agreed on. Yet, conversations keep on revolving around geopolitics as a way to understand what is going on in the world in general, in specific events and giving guidance on how to act to get what one wants, or being critical of exactly this type of thinking.

The concept of geopolitics has great variety in terms of perceived content and the emphasis, which is given to different approaches. A broad definition of geopolitics according to Eduard G. Solovyev is:

...a system of ideas describing interrelationships between politics (world politics, above all) and the geographical environment which translate into various forms of control over the space. (2004, 86)

In critical geopolitics, it is viewed that geopolitics exist on a number of different discursive levels, such as those who formulate policies, experts and journalists, which often legitimize

antagonistic foreign policies. Geopolitics, thus, has real effects and it influences deeply the identities of individuals and larger groups of people. (Klinke 2012, 931)

Due to geopolitics' emphasis of control over space, there is a connection between realism and geopolitics. The rise and fall of state power is at the center of the study of geopolitics and the main emphasis is on power. Some view geopolitics to be a branch of realism and if traditional study of geopolitics is compared to realism, it is even more reductionist of the relevant attributes of a state actor. However, Solovyev also views that it is a problem how geopolitics is persistently state-centric and unable to take into consideration other non-state actors. (Solovyev 2004, 88, 94)

Geopolitics has been criticized of the fact that it is simply used to further one's own ideologies and perfecting one's statecraft, instead that the discipline would be analytical and critical of global politics (Flint, Mamadouh 2015, 1–2). Eduard G. Solovyev agrees with this critique by saying that in the field of geopolitics is far too much of an art than it is a science. Opinions and personal experiences have too much importance. Similarly, there is the danger of adding too many elements to it, such as political science, international relations or other fields of study, which would make geopolitics lose its potency in explaining different phenomena. If this approach would be taken, geopolitics would face new problems, such as the tendency to give excessively broad generalizations. (Solovyev 2004, 86, 94)

Despite of the contradictions and disagreement on what does the term of geopolitics actually entails, it has remained persistently relevant, which is a demonstration of its success in guiding and explaining political events. It is certain that geopolitics is not suitable for explaining all political life, yet for the ones it is suitable, it can be quite effective. Thus, one should be able to use the theories of geopolitics in an adaptive, flexible way. It is a multi-tool, but there is a skill in how to use it. As with anything, geopolitical theoretical approach is not perfect, but represents an aspect of reality, that another may not find true at all. This becomes apparent in how the current geopolitical situation in world politics is interpreted.

2.1.2 The current geopolitical situation in world politics

The geopolitical struggle is very much alive in 2014 according to Russel Walter Mead. There is a false sense of security, because Russia and other actors are not accepting the current world order and this will create more tensions and conflict. The recent conflict, which took place in Ukraine in Crimea was semi-success for Russia, because Russia were able to draw a wedge between Germany and the US. (Mead 2014)

Yet, others argue the opposite: the situation is not as grim as it seems to be and Russia is not successful, but it is Russia who is facing a difficult situation. Russia, and another large non-liberal democratic actor, China are fenced in by democratic powers and this is why they are not strong geopolitically. The world's largest power is the United States, who is at the most favorable position, because it has a good geopolitical location and no rivals. Additionally, the US is gaining importance in other regions as well. With the events taking place in Ukraine, it can be seen that Russia is on the defensive and it is terrified of westward movement in its near vicinity. Russia is not acting in a truly revisionist manner, but the moves in Ukraine have been revealing Russia's geopolitical vulnerability. (Ikenberry 2014)

The assessments of the strength of different actors vary greatly. The opposite readings of the situation by Mead and Ikenberry show how significantly different views can be drawn from the same situation. In this type of a situation, where status questions are closely linked, it is understandably more difficult to assess the case in a neutral or an objective way. If one decides to focus on the actual assets and geopolitical reality in a global scale, one does reach the same conclusion as Ikenberry. However, if one is to take more into consideration the emotional side of Russia in the international political scene, as Mead has, then one is more likely to join his view of the political situation. After all, people are not fully rational, but there is a lot more at play.

2.2 Fukuyama's context of liberal democracy as the final development of societies

Francis Fukuyama's book of *End of History and the Last Man* (1992) extends on his article *End of History* (1989), where he argued that liberal democracy is almost unanimously known to be the most legitimate way of governing. This conclusion has been reached by the tests and trials of history. (Fukuyama 1992, XI) Considering that Fukuyama's view is encompassing all of history and human progress, this claim can be understood to devalue all of the other types of societies to be inferior and still developing. By itself, this can be a flammable topic of discussion, especially among those who do not live in a functional liberal democracy. Indeed, Fukuyama's original article sparked a lot of discussion, and according to him, plenty of people misunderstood his claims in one way or the other. Fukuyama uses the word "history" to signify the collective developmental process of humankind. (Fukuyama 1992, XI–XII)

Even though Fukuyama did not write the book with any specific world political events in mind (Fukuyama 1992, XII), least the Ukraine conflict, which occurred far after the writing of the book, the theory can be used as a backdrop in analyzing what forces are at play in the conflict. The EU, as a liberal democracy, is categorized as an actor that has reached the end of its history; a fully developed actor. Russia, on the other hand, has not reached this point. However, Fukuyama does not focus on the interaction of these two different types of actors, but instead investigates the plausibility of a common history of development (Fukuyama 1992, XII). Yet, Fukuyama is able to provide some answers through his analysis on the factors contributing to reach full development.

The build of liberal democracy has some roadblocks. The sense of equality and governing together can be reached only if nationalism and religion are not too strong and contradicting with the principle of equality also for its minorities. Likewise, too large differences in social structure and the inability to create a healthy, functioning civil society inhibit the progression into a liberal democracy. (Fukuyama 1992, 216–219) Fukuyama goes further in his analysis, extrapolating further reasons, which lead to successful or unsuccessful governance. He delves into human nature so human action and the possibility to reach liberal democracy could be

understood. The central term in Fukuyama's argument is "thymos", which was coined by Plato. Plato argued that the human soul is composed of three parts: the rational, desire and "thymos", which is "spiritedness". It is because of this spiritedness that people want to be acknowledged of their value, or for the people, objects or principles that they value. This desire for acknowledgement is now better understood to be self-regard. Likewise, G.W.F Hegel and Alexandre Kojève understood the great significance of the desire to be acknowledged in the course of history. The need to be acknowledged is the motor of history and it has some irrational sides to it. (Fukuyama 1992, XVI–XXII)

It is important to note, that the way thymos manifests itself has vast qualitative differences, one form being more destructive for people around them than the other one. One can get a sense of acknowledgement by feeling superior to others, known as megalothymia, or, alternatively, to be acknowledged equal with others, known as isothymia. Megalothymia is the dark side of thymia and is problematic in political life. However, even if one strives and succeeds in its megalothymic desires, the outcome fails to be satisfying, as it can be seen from the example of lordship and bondage. The lordship sees a lot of effort for his worth to be acknowledged by someone. The risk the master takes is a large one, because he is risking his life by forcing someone else to be his slave. However, the master can never be fulfilled in his desire to be acknowledged by these efforts, because the slave will never in the eyes of the master will be worthy of giving this recognition. This is exactly because the slave makes a choice to be subdued by another human. The whole exercise of gaining recognition by taking all of the freedom of another individual, even into its completion, is futile. (Fukuyama 1992, 192–193) This logic in itself shows that megalothymia is not a solid, nor a sustainable way of being acknowledged, but rather isothymia becomes more compelling. Liberal democracy requires isothymia; a more sustainable version of thymia.

In addition to understanding the force thymos plays on an individual level, it is necessary to look at it from a collective level to gain insight to international relations and how world politics evolve. Notably, it is essential to distinguish the role thymos plays in nationalism and in the politics of nations. The problem of mastery and slavery is very much alive with a group of many actors, such as states. Machiavelli's solution to circumvent the issues of dominion is

to balance a thymos with another thymos. Essentially, it was a promotion of a type of balance of power. (Fukuyama 1992, 183–184)

An alternative way of dealing with this issue is through liberalism, which, Hobbes and Locke believed, would eliminate thymos from public life. This was achieved by going against the motives of the aristocrats, who eventually realized that war should not be waged to establish supremacy over another actor, but they should focus on economic endeavors. The victory of the bourgeois way of life won over that of the aristocratic; this development took place in many parts of the world as a form of modernization. (Fukuyama 1992, 184–186) This progress to a less damaging form of thymia is a clear indication that it can take different shapes in ways, which proves to be better for collective human life. The tradeoffs to this other kind of life, such as security and better material wellbeing, are strong incentives that can successfully change behavior.

It is also possible that thymos would be contained, or rather harnessed, in another, more sustainable, way. The option that the harnessing of thymos can be further developed should not be ignored. After all, individuals have well understood that some ways of manifesting thymos are more productive for them than others. If there is the premise that people need to be distracted by something else, that they must continuously be shaping and transforming the environment, then this image of the economic system taming us down may be a correct depiction of humanity.

The struggle Ukraine has faced in shifting towards the EU and at the same time a more liberal capitalistic democracy, while feeling pressure from Russia can be efficiently explained with Fukuyama's worldview. The EU is a project to move away from megalothymic competing logics into a more sustainable, no doubt economically profitable, and increasingly isothymic forms of cooperation. Over time, more and more countries have been convinced by the mixture of economic profits and by the message of peace and equality. The need for acknowledgement can be harnessed through soft power. The EU became a project for countries, which were completely defeated by the Second World War. It allowed the countries to build a sense of importance and find it being reflected from one another. It is thymos that

can break or make societies, depending on how well thymos can be harnessed and appreciated (Fukuyama 1992, 183).

Thymos plays a significant role in the exercise of power. If its role can be identified, and those energies can be redirected, then the result may be just as notably different, even in a systemic scale. In fact, some of the power situations that use the crudest form of power are not necessary at all from the point of view of utility. The concept of thymos can also be useful in efforts of grasping the geopolitical mindset.

2.3 Russia's contrasting point of view

Both parties, the EU and Russia, acknowledge that the world around them is not stable and secure. The president of the European Commission (2004-2014) José Manuel Barroso in his speech in May 2014 compares the current situation to the fall of the Iron Curtain. Putin on the other hand, in his speech later of the same year, blames it on the legacy of the end of the Cold War. (Barroso 2014d, 1; Putin 2014b). The eras, even if they were tumultuous, are not similar in nature. The fall of the Iron Curtain signified a time when Eastern European people started to adapt a Western way of life in their governance, economics and freedom of choice; ultimately distancing from the rule of Russia. Even if there is a threat to Europe's peace, stability and security, it is clear that the situation eventually was redeemed and Europe was able to find its strength. Russia's comparison highlights a different aspect of historical events, a geopolitical rivalry. Especially, Russia questions the actions of the geopolitical victor, the US and the practices it has put forth. In rhetorical terms, the EU is focused on the instability of its own quarters, while Russia's sights are directed much further than the actual conflict at hand; to its own greatness and to the challenge of the US.

While the first chapter looked more deeply into the kind of an actor the EU is, here it will be looked more closely Russia's motivations and its context for its behavior. This is achieved by looking into Russia's geopolitical inclinations, its geopolitical circumstances and efforts, and finally, Russia's critique of the international system.

2.3.1 Russia's geopolitical inclination

In international relations self-perception in one's identity and behavior matters, but also how actors perceive others to perceive themselves. It should be no surprise that international politics have just as many or more layers as human-to-human interaction does. In other words, what Russia thinks of itself is not the only aspect that matters, but also what others think of the country. The EU or West in general does not always perceive Russia to be governed by the same way of thinking or on the same level of development.

The post-modern argument, which is well known in Europe-Asia Studies (Klinke 2012, 929), follows in part the same line of thinking as Fukuyama's view of dividing countries that have reached the end of history and those that have not. It is argued that Russia is still acting in accordance to the modern era, by acting in a mindset of fixed territory, national identity and traditional geopolitics. The EU, on the other hand has a postmodern mindset. The postmodern spatialist view is driving for the dissolution of the building blocks of the modernist era of sovereign territory, of fixed identity with multilayered ones and of traditional geopolitics. In this light, Russia and the EU are at their core viewing their environment and perceiving themselves in very different ways. (Klinke 2012, 929) The fact that many in the West, such as the EU, view that they are at another "higher level" than others, is a potentially enraging and pushes the other actors to want to show their greatness even more.

Both modernism and post-modernism can be seen as a reaction to what used to be, and discarding some aspects of it. In essence, the West urges the East to modernize itself. (Klinke 2012, 930) The former Commissioner for enlargement, Olli Rehn, stated in 2005 that the difficulties in the communication between the EU and Russia was because of their different phases of development; the EU has attained a post-modern phase of development, while Russia is leaning towards authoritarian capitalism that could be characterized in Hobbesian terms. (Rehn 2005) The difference of the two actors, the EU and Russia, is profound not just by identity, but their value systems and by the choices they make as actors. It is the post-modern divide that is the root of the problem, the fact that the other's development and values

have evolved further than the other's and is therefore more superior. Russia's geopolitical aspirations are seen to be stemming from a lower level of development.

Klinke suggests that the way forward in improving the relationship would be to acknowledge that there are two competing modernities and ideas of geopolitics. (Klinke 2012, 936-937, 943) After all, as argued by Fukuyama, humans are not only driven by reason, but one must also consider thymos and the pride that an individual holds for itself (Fukuyama 1992, xvi-xvii). For this reason, stating perceived facts may not help the cause as much as one might think. Tuomas Forsberg states that the underlying reasons for status conflict, perceptions and emotional biases play a large role. In fact, perceptions and emotions play such a large role that status conflicts cannot be understood without them. (Forsberg 2014, 323)

The reason why countries pursue a high status is not purely logical; it enables to use soft power, but more than that, it gives self-esteem and thus helps the actor create a positive self-image of itself. Considering that there are no tangible goods that are being fought over, one may think that status conflicts would be easy to resolve, but this is not the case. In addition, often these kinds of conflicts often arise through other conflicts when it is noticed that there is a discrepancy of self-perception and how others value their status. Especially, when an actor is not confident with its own status and someone has a different assessment on its perceived status, this actor is much more likely to enter into a conflict driven by status reasons. While another actor, who is confident about its status would not react so strongly. (Forsberg 2014, 323, 325-326)

Forsberg views that Russia felt the West was undermining its status. While the West was not looking for a conflict with Russia, there has still been a prolonged status conflict in the post-Cold War era. These unintended consequences of interaction are tied to perceptions and emotional biases, therefore, these conflicts are exceedingly difficult to solve. (Forsberg 2014, 326) A layer of geopolitical reality can be unveiled on the way the actor is perceived by others, however, in addition, is useful to know how this actor approaches the theory of geopolitics. The perception of the theory by influential actors, such as Russia, is especially

important, because the application of geopolitics has notable effects. This was seen especially in the Ukraine conflict, where geopolitical way of thinking is apparent.

Russia did not always have a keen interest towards geopolitical logic; instead, in the soviet times Russians viewed it with a negative Nazi connection. (Solovyev 2004, 87) Currently, geopolitics has been embraced to the extent that some claim that there are three types of geopolitics: scientific geopolitics, practical geopolitics and geopolitical ideas/ideologies. Science in this context is viewed to be an abstract logic, which is neutral and apolitical in nature. Geopolitics in practice is understood not to be a perfect representation of theory and it is not held to such a strict standard. However, it is believed that through the objectivity of science and governing of the laws, future can be predicted on those grounds. This view is quite similar to the teaching in the West. (Mäkinen 2014, 96)

Sirke Mäkinen, through her study of how geopolitics is taught in some Russian universities, discovered that teachers give a lot of emphasis to different schools of thought. These include the French and the German schools. There is not an exclusive focus on the Russian view on geopolitics. Actually, the professors' views on Aleksandr Dugin, who is considered to be the best-know 'geopolitician' in Russia, were reserved, if not even negative. In addition, some teachers explicitly express their criticism to the soviet agenda, and some furthered it to the current political system in Russia. (Mäkinen 2014, 95, 104) Mäkinen's account helps to clarify how geopolitics is viewed in Russia. Still, it does not give a direct answer to the most pertinent issues. Such as, how do the leaders of Russia understand geopolitics, how do they employ it in their foreign policies and to what extent? Thus, Mäkinen's analysis is useful in gaining insight on general views, but not those executing Russia's foreign policies.

The reason for the popularity of geopolitics in Russia is twofold. For one, it offers explanations and solutions to global politics in a deterministic, yet mystical way. Secondly, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, geopolitics was able to fulfil an ideological demand. Considering it has attracted large audiences and had a scientific base, makes it very similar in nature with Marxism-Leninism as an influencer of policies. The wide reaching popularity of

geopolitics becomes apparent when also the members of the opposition apply it and not only state officials. (Solovyev 2004, 88)

Geopolitics as field of academic study brings some certainty to the unknown world through its methodology and limited set of parameters. As a “science” the application should also be fairly consistent with its abstract logic, which in turn allows viewing geopolitics as a kind of “ideology”. Considering Russia’s history, both the strong hard power used in the imperial times and the strong application of ideology in the Soviet times, geopolitics coheres well with both of these aspects. After all, geopolitics may offer concrete advice on how to act in an international political scene all the while it is adhering to a realist worldview that embraces a strong centralized government Russia is used to having.

2.3.2 Russia’s geopolitical circumstances and efforts

While there is no unified opinion over the future success of Russia’s actions, there seems to be agreement over the fact that Russia is indeed using geopolitics as a tool. Russia’s accomplishments with its geopolitical strategy will depend on its own geopolitical strengths. In 1997, Brzezinski viewed that Russia continues to be very important geopolitically to world politics. Eurasia is so influential in geopolitical terms that American foreign policy needs to pay close attention to Eurasia’s developments. (Brzezinski 1997, XIII-XIV) Solovyev on the other hand states that the strategic axis of Eurasia is a myth, while some even go further in stating that it is a “geopolitical dead-end” (Solovyev 2004, 95). The right course of action is to return to studying geopolitics as an academic discipline. Within the study of geopolitics there are several different approaches, one branch brings out more a philosophical side, another portrays geopolitics as a branch of political geography and a third discusses dualities of political societies. Only through an open discussion of the different branches in the academic discipline, can Russian geopolitics evolve and eventually be defined as a scientific discipline. (Solovyev 2004, 95) Moreover, Stefan Auer states that in order to effectively respond to Russia’s effective use of power, soft and hard, the West needs its implement its

own geopolitics. If EU does not change its behavior, it cannot overcome “the challenge of Putinism”. (Auer 2015, 965, 968)

Considering that international relations is a very complex field where successes are found out only after a plan or an action is implemented and mostly after a significant time period. It is not so surprising that there would be varied opinions about the possibilities of Russia’s actions. As the differences of views are more carefully examined, it becomes clear that the ways the issues are approached are quite diverse.

Solovyev examines Russia’s geopolitics primarily from the way that geopolitics is understood and then applied. He criticizes that Russia is far too Russia-centric and it leads to a biased way of thinking and then acting. It is suggested that Russia would benefit from taking influences from outside. (Solovyev 2015, 95) Thus, geopolitics is understood to be constructed in one’s mind and then put into practice. Brzezinski, by contrast, states that Eurasia retains its geopolitical importance (1997, XIII) and Russia is the major actor in it. The point of entry for Brzezinski is geography and the political nature that it stems from. Finally, Auer could be described to have a more realistic outlook that relies more on Russia’s ability to challenge Europe with its actions. Europe was too focused on its own issues, notably the Eurozone crisis, Germany as a reluctant hegemon and problems in Greece. Because of these reasons, there was a power vacuum in Eastern Europe, of which Russia took advantage. (Auer 2015, 960) Geopolitical actions, as any political event, are highly dependent on the perceptions of the actors, the actual circumstances and the outcomes of those actions. It would be impossible to judge which one of these approaches would be the most relevant one, because in a situation where power is exercised, they are all present and playing their own role.

The collapse of the Soviet Union caused widespread geopolitical confusion, as the transcontinental superpower ceased to exist. The new country of Russia was significantly smaller than the previously existing Soviet Union. (Brzezinski 1997, 88-89) This lost “big space” was not just land and people, but the loss was felt in a spiritual, moral, economic and technological ways as well. Russia had the choice of restoring what it had, or, accept its new fate as a third world country. Quite obviously, Russia chose the first option of uniting the

Eurasian space, which also means to challenge the existing unipolar world order. (Solovyev 2015, 91)

The Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), started off as Eurasian Union, which was a Customs Union, initiated in 2006 and launched in 2010. The EEU, a new institution, was launched in 2015 and it consists of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Armenia. The EEU is driven by Russia and Putin views that a successful EEU would yield many benefits, financial, but also geopolitical as well as national. In addition, Russia is keen on reintegrating the post-Soviet space and wishes rest of the countries to join the union. Russia has enticed the countries to join by offering subsidies on gas prices. (Popescu 2014, 9, 13)

The Eurasian project is seen by many in Russia to allow for something bigger and greater in the future in geopolitical terms. However, there is a rush with the project, because Russia is losing its relative economic might to the EU and China. Many countries are not as eager about the project, which is why too fast progress may derail the planned Union altogether. Neither Belarus, nor Kazakhstan, wants to be part of a geopolitical entity that becomes too powerful and assertive at one, even if they desire an economic union. Russia's efforts in reviving post-Soviet cohesion have faced obstacles, because the other countries have not been as eager about Russia's plans. (Popescu 2014, 18-21)

Both Russia and the EU have been working on their respective unifying strategies, Russia by attempting to reunite the post-Soviet space and the EU by unifying European countries. This led to a confrontation and the Ukraine crisis has become the ground on which this dispute was and is settled on. It should be noted that the EU did not force Ukraine to choose one over the other. Russia on the other hand portrayed a zero-sum game mindset of post-soviet states to join the EEU. (Popescu 2014, 37, 43) As the approaches to the situation are as vastly different as the actors themselves are, it seems that finding a solution for the conflict is demanding. A geopolitical approach is not naturally in tune with the needs of others and fertile ground for cooperation based on equality. The EU, in fact, is quite the opposite of Russia in geopolitical terms – an anti-geopolitical unit (Auer 2015, 963). Ole Wæver's view of "Europe's other is Europe's past" (Wæver 1996, 122) shows exactly how opposite the EU is from Russia.

2.3.3 Russia's critique of the international system

Not only the West is critical of Russia, but also Russia is equally critical of the West and the international system embracing it. In Russia's mind, its desire for greatness is not to blame for the Ukraine conflict; instead, it is indicative of something else. Putin states that:

The crisis in Ukraine is itself a result of a misbalance in international relations. (Putin 2014b)

Putin wants to correct the causality of the Ukraine conflict and the deterioration of international relations. Putin understood that Dominique de Villepin, the former Prime Minister of France (2005–2007) blames the Ukraine conflict for worsened international relations, but he does not agree with this view. It is an important distinction to make, because if the participants of the conflict cannot even agree on the primary causes of the conflict, it is far more difficult to find an agreeable solution. It is clear that Russia and the West have very different opinions about the conflict, even at a root level.

Putin explains his point of view in depth at the Valdai International Discussion Club meeting on 24th of October 2014, where the theme discussed is *The World Order: New Rules or a Game without Rules*. At this point, the Ukraine conflict had been going on for over half a year. According to Putin the problem is a weak, fragmented and a deformed international system, where there is no global and regional security. Putin's critique is strong:

International law has been forced to retreat over and over by the onslaught of legal nihilism. Objectivity and justice have been sacrificed on the altar of political expediency. Arbitrary interpretations and biased assessments have replaced legal norms. At the same time, total control of the global mass media has made it possible when desired to portray white as black and black as white. (Putin 2014b)

By criticizing the lack of justice, objectivity and following of legal norms with the abuse of mass media, it appears Putin is claiming Russia's actions to be different, even though he does not explicitly state this. Quite effortlessly, Russia could be accused for all of these same violations. The divide of perceptions is too wide. It is unlikely the EU, after the onset of the Ukraine conflict would accept Putin's message as truthful. He continues to state that it is necessary to regulate competition between countries (Putin 2014b). With the dispute going on in Ukraine, where Russia is an active participant, it appears that it is Putin, who tries to turn black into white.

Putin's vision for the international society rests on an international law. The reason, why this has not been achieved is, according to Putin, the diktat USA established at the end of the cold war. The consequence was an unbalanced, unipolar world, where USA could act without any ramifications. (Putin 2014b) Recent events have been even more concerning:

Today, we are seeing new efforts to fragment the world, draw new dividing lines, put together coalitions not built for something but directed against someone, anyone, create the image of an enemy as was the case during the Cold War years, and obtain the right to this leadership, or diktat if you wish. (Putin 2014b)

Putin presents his claim in passive tense. However, as the end of the paragraph as Putin refers to the Cold War years and a diktat, it is clear that Putin is accusing the West of drawing new dividing lines. Putin does not admit that Russia takes part in these activities. He insists that Russia is not looking for a "special, exclusive place in the world" (Putin 2014b).

A concrete demonstration of the dividing lines is the actions the EU and the US have taken to influence the progression of the Ukraine conflict. Putin states firmly the harmfulness of the sanctions:

I think that our American friends are quite simply cutting the branch they are sitting on. You cannot mix politics and the economy, but this is what is happening now. I have always thought and still think today that politically motivated sanctions were

a mistake that will harm everyone... But let me stress that Russia is not going to get all worked up, get offended or come begging at anyone's door. Russia is a self-sufficient country. (Putin 2014b)

Putin reprimands the US for the imposed sanctions, but does not mention the EU's imposed sanctions in any way. In concert with the complaint of there being a US held diktat, Putin places heavy blame on the US as an actor in the international system. Despite of the perceived injustice, Putin declares Russia is not dependent on the US and survives on its own. Putin admits the heavy toll the sanctions take on Russia's economy (Putin 2014b). Yet, Russia remains proud. More than anything, the desire to be acknowledged in this passage is strong. Russia's actions seem to be driven at this instance more on the need to be acknowledged, or thymos, rather than reason or passion. The nature of thymos help to explain the steadfastness of Russia's choice in staying prideful and suffering rather than giving into the will of another actor.

Putin's critique is valid at times; it is true that after the collapse of the Soviet Union there was no formal agreement on the type of international system that would be put in place. Still, overall Putin is not credible with his arguments. The claim that politics and economy should not be mixed work in his favor in this instance, but not at another, when selling gas and oil to other countries is involved. The reasoning is not solid and it makes all of Putin's arguments seem questionable. When Putin discusses the possibility of not fixing the international system to be fairer, he states that there might be the risk of being left without "no instruments other than brute force" (Putin 2014b). This claim is grotesque, considering the very recent events, which took place in Ukraine.

Putin stance on the international system becomes very clear, however, the fundamental reason does not. Russia can be criticized in equal terms of the accusations Putin puts forth for the West. Fundamentally, the conclusion to be drawn here is that Russia wishes for more power in the international system and to be acknowledged for its greatness. The actions of the US is a problem only to the extent that it limits the power of Russia.

2.4 The case of energy

The return of geopolitics is especially visible in the field of energy. Barroso states in an Energy Security Conference held in 21st of May in 2014 that the EU has been heavily influenced by the recent events:

The 'Great Game' of geopolitics has made an unwelcome return and this is being particularly felt in the area of energy. Unfortunately the actions of some actors are based on a logic we cannot share. Because the European idea stems from a different perspective. For us the rule of law prevails over the rule of force. Sovereignty is shared and not limited. The logic of cooperation replaces the logic of confrontation. (Barroso 2014d 1)

Energy is being used as a political tool instead of treating it primarily as merchandise, which is sold and bought. Barroso's statement makes it clear that the EU is not happy with this development. The use of "some actors" is a clear reference to Russia. After all, Russia and the EU have had demonstrably different views on the Ukraine conflict, in addition of Russia being a large energy importer for Europe. Because of the different logics of the actors, it is only natural for Europe to be paying more attention to its own energy security. Developments with Ukraine and the dependence on Russia's energy resources are discussed overtly later on in the speech. Energy is being politicized by Russia, but also by Barroso when he discusses what is appropriate on a political level. Because of the political nature of energy, also in this context fundamental differences are expressed. A clear dichotomy has been built between the actions of "some actors" and Europe, where the reconciliation of these approaches appears very unlikely. This discrepancy of views, which is described in the very beginning of the speech, sets the scene for rest of the evaluation and the measures in energy security that the EU is about make.

Barroso addresses Russia and its actions further by pointing out the damaging effects of applying logic of rivalry in energy for both parties. The EU is not the sole dependent of the

situation; also, Russia needs its buyers, as the EU needs its suppliers. Russia's oil and gas markets are substantial and the revenues are essential for the Russian budget. (Barroso 2014d, 2) Barroso reveals part of the dialogue the EU has had with Russia on the topic:

...we have stressed very firmly over the last months that energy must not be abused as a political weapon. Doing so would only backfire on those who try it. (Barroso 2014d, 2)

In other words, the EU has appealed to Russia's sense of own financial benefit. The fact that Russia has used energy as a political weapon for example in 2006 and 2009 (Barroso 2014d, 2) shows that Russia does not operate purely by the logic of improving its economic gains. It is increasingly obvious Russia does not want to let go of this tool of influence, since still in April 2014 Putin declared it might cut Ukraine's gas supply if it fails to pay in advance. (Umbach 2014)

The situation is not as clear-cut as Barroso makes it seem for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the suppliers and buyers of the gas and oil are interdependent of one another, but not to the same degree. Dr. Frank Umbach in a NATO Review article points out that in 2014 the industries and transportation in the EU's could not last without Russia's gas even for a month, while Russia could be able to survive without exporting its goods for at least a year. Secondly, Russia has a destabilization strategy, which it implements through energy. Ukraine pays the highest gas price in Europe. The European Commission views that Russia's energy policy is an attempt to control through creating disunity among the European countries. (Umbach 2014)

EU's dependency on Russian energy is well acknowledged since the previous shortages in Ukraine in 2009 as well as the Ukraine conflict. These events prompted the EU to take energy security seriously and create an Energy Security Strategy. The EU has set out short- and long-term measures to prepare itself for energy shortages, which might be caused by infrastructure failures or political or commercial disputes with its energy providers. On the long run, the EU strives to increase its energy efficiency, increase energy efficiency in the EU, completing the internal market in the EU, unifying in EU's external energy policy and preparing for

emergencies as well as protecting critical infrastructure. (Barroso 2014d, 5; European commission).

Even though the EU does not agree with Russia's actions and has had to take measures to protect itself, Barroso views that the challenge presents an opportunity:

If we...maintain the momentum that resulted from the Ukrainian wake-up call, Europe will come out of this crisis stronger, more united and more secure than we were before. In fact Energy, besides the geopolitical aspects, can be/must be a very important driver for European integration. (Barroso 2014d, 5)

Cooperation in the field of energy is going back to the EU's roots. As Barroso reminds, EU itself started its cooperation in the field of energy; coal and steel (Barroso 2014d, 5). It can be seen that after the World Wars, when European countries began to collaborate more, that the age of geopolitics transitioned to the age of geo-economics. Energy thus holds a very important role in the crux of geopolitics and of geo-economics. From a strategic point of view energy can be used easily as a tool of power and manipulate the results one wants, just as long as one has good enough energy resources. Energy policies are always political, even if the choice itself is not to utilize it in a political way. Even if the EU cannot control external events, the EU can decide on the course of action for itself. Barroso is calling for more unity in the EU, which has strongly contributed to the EU's success so far.

Barroso extends this unity and solidarity to Ukraine:

Energy security in the European Union cannot be separated from the energy security of its neighbours and partners within the Energy Community, notably Ukraine. (Barroso 2014d 4)

By including other countries than the member states, the EU shows in concrete action how it is willing to stand by its principles of inclusion. The EU has taken on a leader role by brokering an energy flow agreement between the Slovak Republic and Ukraine. Georgia is also

interested in joining the European Energy charter. (Barroso 2014d, 4–5) These requests demonstrate a desire for a sub-global actor, such as the EU to de-politicize energy and create a neutralizing force for Russia’s actions. Since the EU has previous experience on depoliticizing energy within its member states, it has a relatively good predisposition of countering the geopolitical aspects of energy.

In February 2015, the European Commission issued a press release about Energy Union, for “secure, sustainable, competitive, affordable energy for every European” (European Commission 2015b). In order to establish more unity in the field of energy, the EU has taken decisive steps to achieve this. The Energy Union package specifies the EU’s goals and its vision to reach them. The vision is broad and includes plenty of aspects, including sustainable, low-carbon and climate-friendly energy and to meet long-term needs and policy objectives (European Commission 2015a, 2). However, the first aspect of the vision builds the image of a collective and unified actor:

Our vision is of an Energy Union where Member States see that **they depend on each other** to deliver secure energy to their citizens, based on **true solidarity and trust**, and of an Energy Union that speaks with **one voice in global affairs**; (European Commission 2015a, 2, my emphasis added)

The search for a stronger unity in the energy sector becomes apparent in this paragraph. The EU’s ability to focus on the member states’ mutual connection at the sight of external threats is noteworthy. Instead of reciprocating in a geopolitical manner, the EU has decided to bolster its collective stance and find ways to become less dependent on Russia. Through unity, the EU can speak with one voice in energy related matters, and therefore can become an even stronger actor in the global arena.

According to the most recent data in 2015, the EU imports 53% of its energy. This means the EU is the largest energy importer in the world and thus dependent on a constant flow of energy into its market (European Commission 2015a, 2–3). The shared vulnerability can also act as a unifying factor, which may make the actors depend more on one another at the face of

a bigger challenge. The importance of energy security, solidarity and trust are further emphasized in the Energy Union strategy's first of the five dimensions. The first dimension is supported by the second dimension, which is to establish a fully integrated European energy market. Additionally, the EU hopes to increase energy efficiency, decarbonize the economy as well as to research, innovate and improve competitiveness. (European Commission 2015a, 4) If everything goes according to plan, the EU should be able to increase its wellbeing, in addition of reducing its dependency from Russia. However, there is a lot of work to be done. The 2014 energy security stress tests revealed that a prolonged supply distribution would have consequential effects (European Commission 2015b).

From the point of view of the geo-politics and geo-economics, the EU clearly is set on an economy based approach. It is stated that it wishes to establish an "energy system...based on competition and the best possible use of resources" (European Commission 2015a, 2). The EU has chosen to continue the path that it has set out for itself, instead of starting to mirror Russia's actions. Despite of the EU's convictions, precautions for geopolitical use of power is absolutely necessary.

2.5 Context: structuring reality

In a way, the context is powerful in itself, because it affects the power situation in such a profound way. Unlike soft power, which can be used as a tool, context acts as borders on our behavior. The change from geopolitics to geo-economics required actors to see one another in a more favorable light, even if one's actions may be mainly directed by strategic benefits. For this to occur in a reliable way all several countries must be willing to change their perceptions from an enemy to an ally.

While it takes collective effort to move away from a geopolitical way of acting, it appears as if a single actor, who is significant enough in the global arena, can shift the outlook back to geopolitics. An actor acts in a geopolitical way is more likely to use hard power, while geo-economics gives more opportunities for the use of soft power. In this sense, it is the weakness

of soft power; the uncontrollability of other's use of hard power, which challenges the system of geo-economics. An actor cannot be convinced to play by the common rules if it has already decided that it does not want to do that.

Fukuyama states that despite the role of thymos as the engine of history, it also is the engine of creating constant conflicts among different actors. Actors are driven to be acknowledged of their own worth, but some do not believe that they are equal with others, but they must feel more powerful and important than the rest. (Fukuyama 1992, 232) Fukuyama does not present any solutions and acknowledges that this is a problem. The driving force of thymos in people approaches the issue of identity, which plays an immensely large role in human interaction, but similarly to thymos, it is not tangible in nature and its forms may shift.

Both Fukuyama and Hannah Arendt note that excessive power is detrimental. Fukuyama's master-slave analogy depicts how total power is never fulfilling for the one exercising the power, because the master does not get the recognition that it is seeking (Fukuyama 1992, 243–244). Arendt agrees to the futility of exercising power to this extent. However, her approach is somewhat different. Power means to her to “act in concert” and if someone is in power it means other have given them the power to do so. (Arendt 1970, 44) Her understanding of power is not as hard and absolute as some definitions of power are. Acting in concert can be understood to be a type of a soft power, because soft power emphasizes acting towards mutual goals voluntarily. Similarly to Fukuyama, Arendt argues that the power of violence, which in itself is a form of hard power, is destructive, yet fleeting in nature:

Violence can always destroy power; out of the barrel of a gun grows the most instant and perfect obedience. What can never grow out of it is power. (Arendt 1970, 53)

While an actor may get the full attention of others when it is exercising a form of hard power, this influence will not last for long. The shift of context back to geopolitics can be understood to have happened in these terms, and the result may be potent in its destructivity, but not likely long lasting. The EU has to take precautionary measures, for example for its energy security, but Russia's challenge did not change the EU at any fundamental level at least thus far.

The Ukraine conflict made it evident how differently Russia and the EU view the larger context of their environment. Russia places focus on challenging the unipolar world dominated by the US, while the EU has created a context for itself through unifying Europe. As the perceptions and general focus of wants is radically different, it is difficult for Russia and the EU to communicate effectively. This mismatch is a root of a complexity of power present in the Ukraine conflict. An understanding of a context steers towards the use of different types of tools of power, which results in a variety of different behaviors. At the core of the creation of a context, there is identity and relating to other actors. This is why the shift of context touches closely on international societies and in the understandings and redefinitions of identity.

3. THE UKRAINE CONFLICT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

The transformative nature of the Ukraine conflict becomes clear from the reshaping of the fundamentals in power, in the shape of the tools used and of the environment we are operating in. The third and final fundamental of power is examined here; the transformation of identity looked through the lens of international society. The English School theory gives an analysis on international relations, focusing on the larger picture, instead of giving specific responses to specific events. This distance that comes from a self-sufficient paradigm is helpful, because it allows reflecting a specific event, the Ukraine conflict, in light of greater theories. This analysis goes deeper into the topic of identity and how it is being shaped either qualitatively or by expansion.

3.1 The concept of international society and the English School of international relations

Many theories and different academic schools try to capture what reality is essentially about. The English School of International Relations attempts to reach this exact goal and the concept of “international society” is at the heart of model. The English School dates back to the late 1950s and it has consisted of theoretical and empirical work. Robert Jackson (1992, 217) maintains that the English School is:

a variety of theoretical inquires which conceive of international relations as a world not merely of power or prudence or wealth or capability or domination but one of recognition, association, membership, equality, equity, legitimate interests, rights, reciprocity, customs and conventions, agreements and disagreements, disputes, offenses, injuries, damages, reparations, and the rest: the normative vocabulary of human conduct.

This description nicely captures how international relations are a multitude of things at the same time; something that can hold, without contradiction, the worst and the best of human or state relations. Jackson (1992, 278) believes that if not all aspects, such as realism and Grotianism, cannot be taken sufficiently into account, the theory will become unrealistic, naïve and ultimately useless. The English school successfully combines different points of views and it is one of the theory's merits. However, the three key concepts remain the same: international system, international society and world society.

The concepts can also be classified by parallel systems. The international system corresponds to a great extent to realism as well as to Hobbesianism or Machiavellianism, while international society equals to rationalism and to Grotianism. The third concept, which is world society, could also be understood to be as revolutionism or Kantianism. (Buzan 2004, 9)

International society has been by far the most discussed concept of the three. This is for the reason that it is more fruitful than the others are. The international system already is in existence: states are primary political actors in international politics and they do recognize each other as such. World society on the other hand is too far out of reach at the moment. A world society would mean that there are common interests and values, which are the foundation of social activity; they would be the basis for common rules and institutions. The degree of integration would be much deeper than in an international society. (Buzan 2004, 37 and originally on Bull 1977a:279). International society, however, sits comfortably in the middle trending towards the promotion of interconnectivity.

Hedley Bull (1977, 13) defines international society, or a society of states, when:

...a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by common set of rules in their relations with one another and share in the working of common institutions. (Bull 1977, 13)

As one can see, this characterization is quite vague and can be understood to describe a host of different situations. Barry Buzan presents a more tangible description of the international society, which allows to understand different shades of it. This view is disclosed in the next subchapter.

3.2 EU as an international society challenged

The first international society that applied globally international norms is the European society of states in the 19th century. Entry to the society required following the norms of those who are part of the society, often it was understood to live up to the standard of “civilization”. Requirements of following the norms of those part of the group are still required if a country wants to enter the society, even if it is not anymore called with the same term of “civilization”. Some in the countries that were encouraged to be “civilized” have found this process to be insulting and threatening to their own culture. The EU as a European organization reflects this international society and has shaped it further through its own demands and standards on membership. In many ways these new requirements go deeper than the previous promotion of “civilization” and leaves more profound effect on the society through common laws and monitoring of the countries who want to gain membership. (Stivachtis 2008, 71–72, 76)

The EU is viewed by some as a regional homogenous international society inside a more heterogeneous European international system (Stivachtis 2008, 87; Aalto 2007, 467). The EU, being an advanced case of an international society at the moment, makes an interesting case to study what are the possibilities and difficulties of further advancing an international society.

The concept of international society combines effectively realism and rationalism (Buzan 2004, 9), giving it space to exist without hard-set limits, which makes it possible for the phenomenon to progress further. The EU is a good example of an international society, but it is not the only one. The concept is clearly fluid, which may make it difficult to grasp the point of it all. It is key to understand that the concept represents a process of change: from pluralism to solidarity or from international system to world society. The scale represents “thin and thick

sets of shared norms, rules and institutions”. (Buzan 2004, 139–140) In this case “thin” means that there are fewer norms, rules and institutions, while “thick” means the opposite. It is therefore possible to have the afore mentioned in varying degrees. In a pluralist society, the international society is thin and in a solidarist society it is thick. (Buzan 2004, 49)

Pluralism rests on the state system, composing of different actors, which act according to their own benefit. The differences between states is not only recognized, but also consciously maintained. The system remains stable through mutual recognition of sovereignty, as well as the non-intervention principle and diplomatic conduct. The system for pluralists is procedural and non-developmental. (Buzan 2004, 46, originally Mayall 2000) Solidarism on the other hand emphasizes values and interconnectedness. Diplomacy is not used simply to facilitate relations of countries to be smooth, but it is rather used as a means to translate solidarity into reality. Solidarists view that the international society can reach new depths with more solidarity, while the purely pluralist view is excessively limiting. (Buzan 2004, 47, originally Mayall)

If one accepts the premise of the “thick” and “thin” set of shared norms of solidarism and pluralism respectively, the next logical question is to ask how does the change occur – what makes the set of shared norms, rules and institutions thicker? How did EU arrive to the situation it is in now? According to Buzan, solidarism is built on the foundations of pluralism. For example, the Westphalian institutions were created in a pluralist society, although they can easily function in, and even be the founding blocks of, a solidarist society. There are two ways how the change may occur. The first option is that states consciously strive to become more alike and are willing to abandon the goal of difference and exclusivity as the norm. The second possibility is to realize common values that are not based purely on survival or coexistence, which leads the states to coordinating their actions and creating common norms, rules and organizations. The connection in the latter is deeper, which transcends co-existence, instead there is a deeper “we-feeling”. (Buzan 2004, 146–147)

The main difference between the two types of integration, or transforming to a more solidarist society, is the motivation; is the change beneficial just for itself, seeing oneself and others

differently than before, or is it the fact that integration can bring real life benefits? There is no reason why both could not be contributing factors in the creation of an international society. In fact, these two reasons together combined make the process of change, as well as the willingness to happen, even stronger and more likely on the long run. While the first one offers more of an inner reward, the second appeals more to planning of one's future and strategy.

The Ukraine conflict has created new challenges to the international society of EU, which in turn forces the EU to react and reaffirm its own stance and what the union stands for. The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy since 1.11.2014, Frederica Mogherini states in plenary debates that it is important to stay unified. She says that “unity is our strength” (Mogherini 2015b) and even that it is the EU's main strength, so the EU must stay unified (Mogherini 2015c). The speeches were targeted towards the members of the European parliament and the message coupled with repetition gives indication that the unity of the European Union is threatened. However, this threat can also have an empowering effect if EU decides to stay unified, since unity is the main strength of the EU. The unity that is being referred to is likely to mean adhering to the same values and beliefs as before, instead of referring to the political or economic union. The institutions are relatively permanent structures, but beliefs, are the foundation for political and economic union.

Mogherini brings into discussion the notion of global order and that is “what is really at stake”. And that there should be a broader discussion on what “our kind of a world” there should be (Mogherini 2015c). This enhances the idea that the issue is very serious as well as the responsibility EU holds in this situation. The European Commissioner of Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy (2010–2014) Stefan Füle points out what the EU and the common beliefs have given Europe and what they mean to Ukrainians:

...the benefits of the freedoms that we enjoy are not self-evident for everybody on our continent – peace with our neighbours, absence of threats to our sovereignty, open borders, democracy, rule of law, and prosperity. These achievements, which we tend to take for granted, are the long-standing aspirations of the people of Ukraine. For many,

they correspond with a future based on European values which, as Europeans themselves, they share. (Füle 2014a)

This characterization shows that the EU has worked hard to achieve many desirable goals, even though Europeans do not always acknowledge this. The first benefits of freedoms that Füle mentions, peaceful coexistence and respect for sovereignty, are the foundation of the other benefits mentioned after. What Füle is trying to get across, is that the union that European countries have made and the beliefs that they stand for are the bedrock of the reality we have today. These beliefs are shared also by Ukrainians and they should have the right to enjoy the benefits as well. The system of beliefs that the EU is founded on is the basis of the international society that it forms and since Ukraine feels the same beliefs and has the same aspirations, it should be allowed to join the international society formed by the EU. In fact, it can be seen that Ukrainians are already partly part of the international society, but not fully participatory: the Ukrainians are already Europeans and they see the same future with the EU.

The president of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso (2004–2014) joins the idea of the great challenge that the Ukrainian conflict presents and it can be seen in several ways:

The developments, which started with the people of Ukraine expressing a clear wish to take their future into their own hands, call for a robust and united European response. The current situation directly challenges us in many ways and forms. It challenges our conscience as individuals; it challenges our unity as Europeans; it challenges our policies as decision makers; and it challenges some of the values that we hold dear, such as peace and democracy. This is, in a way, a test of our Union. The outcome of the current situation will have a great impact on the geopolitical configuration of our continent in the years to come. (Barroso 2014a).

Through this statement the EU wants to show how the events in Ukraine are deeply important for EU on a humanitarian level, for the future and stability of the organization from a practical level as well as on a fundamental level of values. It also presents Ukraine as an actor

who has made its own decision about its future and desire to be part of the European Union, but who was diverted from its original goal.

With the challenges the EU has faced, which several EU commissioners openly admit, it is beneficial to ask: how serious is this challenge? As said before, an international society rests on common interests and values, as well as sets of common rules and institutions (Bull 1977, 13). However, common interests and values precede the formation of common sets of rules and institutions (Buzan 2004, 146–147). It seems logical that if one wants to attack something, let it be an institution or a political entity, it would be most effective to challenge the core idea, the premises the entity is built on. In the case of challenging the international society of EU it would be most detrimental to make into question its core: common interests and values, such as peace, democracy, respect for sovereignty, open borders, rule of law and prosperity.

Now that it has been established on what the international society of the EU is founded on, the best way to challenge it and that the EU is feeling this threat, the question that remains unanswered is – how does the EU perceive the Ukraine conflict as a threat to its existence in terms of its beliefs? It is hard to give an exact and correct answer to this question, but if one considers what common values are based on, it does give insight to the matter. Values have to be created into existence and for them to be real on a common level and adhered to; they have to be appreciated by everyone. Although Russia is not part of the international society of EU, she has been able to question the strength of it by acting in near opposite of what the EU values highly: peace, democracy, respect for sovereignty and cooperation.

Ukraine can be seen as partly inside and partly outside of the international society of EU, this is why aggression on Ukraine is putting the EU to the test. If the EU would not react, Europeans would in essence turn their backs on something that they believe in and know that the Ukrainians share these beliefs as well. On the other hand, if the EU would engage in the conflict fully, by military means, in the same manner as Russia is, the EU would not be adhering to its values, at least in the same clarity as before. There is an inherent need to be consistent with one's values. The values of peace and democracy are something that certainly can be encouraged, but they cannot be effectively fought for by military means or hard power.

If the EU would decide to act militarily in order to resolve the conflict it would be hard to predict certainly if it would lose its credibility. The way the events are presented, as well as Russia as an actor, determine if such actions would be appreciated or criticized.

In essence, Russian actions in Ukraine challenge the status quo of peace, stability and prosperity that have lasted in Europe for over a few decades, which shakes the foundation of EU's values. Barroso notes the challenge is presented in many fronts: our conscience as individuals, unity as Europeans, policies as decision makers, some values Europeans hold dear, such as peace and democracy. It is "a test to our union". (Barroso 2014a) In this context, "union" can be interpreted in several ways, or conversely, union can be understood in a profound way encompassing connection of member states on many levels.

The challenge is presented to the union, but it is up to EU to see how it will respond. EU is forced to move in some direction of the thin and thick scale of shared beliefs and institutions, that is, to move closer either to pluralism or to solidarity. The commissioners of the EU have noted this challenge and opt for stronger solidarity. Barroso goes as far as to state that the situation in Ukraine is "the greatest challenge to Europe's security since the fall of the Iron Curtain and the fall of the Berlin Wall". (Barroso 2014b)

3.3 Russia – at the border of the international society of Europe

The sense of urgency of threat that was experienced with the Ukraine conflict and Russia's military actions does not come from an isolated place, but it is created by Russia. This increases the gap between the international society of EU and Russia. Stefan Füle states:

...we are facing at the moment the most serious crisis in Europe since the end of the World War II. We are witnessing economic coercion, threats and a covert action to instigate protests and instability, which are meant to dissuade the Ukrainian people from taking up new opportunities, but also meant to dissuade us from defending their

freedom of choice, to convince us to drop our policies, values and principles, and accept the logic of the spheres of influence. (Füle 2014c)

The harsh actions taken by Russia against Ukraine are not only meant towards Ukrainians, but also against “us”, which is presumably the EU, to give up its beliefs. Füle’s statement can clearly be seen in a way that Russia is testing the limits of the EU as an international society, the foundations of the organization. The quote also shows the alternative model that Russia seems to promote in the eyes of Füle: spheres of influence. It brings back to mind a past way of influencing, namely the time of the Cold War, where each superpower had its group of allies that they could quite easily control.

Füle continues to state how Russian propaganda is more aggressive and dangerous than it was at the time of the cold war (Füle 2014c). This claim continues to present Russia in a dangerous light, as well as creating a distance from what the EU themselves say to represent in terms of values but also building on past wars and animosities.

Füle does not directly speculate the reasons to Russia’s aggressions, but he does say that on numerous occasions the EU has tried to “dispel the ‘zero-sum’ logic” and that Russia’s economic interests will not be harmed through the Association Agreements (AA) with Eastern European Partners, but instead, Russia only have to gain from the situation. In addition he says that the “people of Ukraine, its independence and sovereignty should not become victims of geopolitical zero-sum games”. (Füle 2014c) Economic harm and political games are essentially the perceived reasons of Russia’s actions from Füle’s point of view. It is interesting to note that in this speech, which is more direct in its words against Russia, Füle creates a balance by emphasizing the importance of EU’s values and how essential it is to stick to them. (Füle 2014c). In essence, there is a threat, but this is how we will overcome it.

Overall, the EU addresses Russian non-cooperation in its statements by pointing out the fallacies in Russia’s beliefs as well as reprimanding Russia’s actions that are not in line with EU’s values and policies. EU has explained how cooperation would be better for the economy, how there is no zero-sum game, since peaceful relations with all involved is only positive and

how EU wishes to further cooperation with Russia, but asks Russia to respect international law and the sovereignty of Ukraine. The European Commissioner for trade (2010–2014) Karel De Gucht notes how a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) with Ukraine will give an advantage in respect to tariffs, but the EU is willing to do exactly the same with Russia and have been insisting for this for years. He maintains that the outcome is dependent on Russia. (De Gucht 2014b).

Füle dispels the zero-sum game by pointing out that EU does not wish cooperation to end to Ukraine's and EU's AA, but instead the EU views it to be a stepping stone towards a more deep and wide cooperation. There have been talks about creating an economic union between the EU and Russia, which would mean a European economic free zone from Lisbon to Vladivostok. This Union would include not only the EU and Russia, but also Belarus, Kazakhstan and Armenia. The claims of creating or maintaining dividing lines are false in Füle's opinion, but instead, if the EU would ignore the economic union that has been discussed, then EU would be truly creating the dividing lines in Europe. He then states how Ukraine shares the same core values as EU and that "Europe stands with countries willing to engage on this path". (Füle 2014a) The message conveyed is that it is very much possible for the EU and Russia to deepen their cooperation in the long run and that the EU stays strong on its position with Ukraine.

While economic collaboration with Russia is likely to bring economic benefits to both parties involved, EU's desire to collaborate more with Russia can potentially be seen as a wish to be part of a larger and deeper mutual international society. Of course Russia is still quite far away from the core values, institutions and common sets of rules that EU holds central, but it may be that there is an attempt to "thicken" a set of shared norms, thus moving slowly towards the end of solidarity. There is no denying that this process would be long and would not necessarily bring a certain outcome. However, economic cooperation can give an insight to what somewhat deeper cooperation with EU would be like, as well as solidify some common practices and even the value of free trade.

EU commissioners state that Russia is not an opponent, but instead the EU and Russia should rather partner in respect to Ukraine (De Gucht 2014b). And in fact, although Russia is part of the problem, it is “also for sure part of the solution” (Mogherini 2014). In the end, Russia must decide if it wants to be “a strategic partner or a strategic rival” (Barroso 2014e). These statements emphasize that it is up to Russia to define what the EU’s and Russia’s future relationship will be like.

Pami Aalto argues in 2007 that the European international society is important to Russia; it is how it orients itself in terms of political identity and its self-image. Although Russia’s membership in this society is complex, it is an indispensable point of reference for Russia. Part of the complexity rises from the desire to be a great power in the region. Russia did not accept to be categorized with the smaller countries in Europe, which lead Russia to decline a more permanent position in the EU international society. In addition there are some cultural differences and Russia does not see all issues on equality of people, human rights and nationalism in the same way as the EU, but takes a more pluralist approach. However, the cultural differences are not too profound for Russia to disassociate itself from the EU international society. (Aalto 2007, 468–469, 471–472) The distance between Russia and the EU may be wider nowadays than when Aalto wrote his analysis, but the constant interactions between the two point out that Russia has not at all been willing to cut ties with the EU. The fundamental historical and cultural basis has not changed.

The approach Russia takes will have short term effects in how and if the Ukraine conflict will be solved, but also medium and long term effects in respect to the future of EU-Russia relations. In the short term commitments for international law, territorial integrity and sovereignty of its neighbors must be respected. The Ukraine crisis is seen as “the litmus test for launching a dialogue on the development of a huge untapped potential of the European Union’s future relations with Russia” (Füle 2014a). EU views that there is the need to further build relations on shared interests of trade and investment, energy, science and cooperation in solving international crises and responding to international challenges. In the future, it is seen that the Eurasian Union will become an important form of cooperation. (Füle 2014a)

In a way, the EU is presenting Russia its expectations and showing an image of the future that it wishes to have. The use of the term “litmus test” makes it clear that the actions Russia decides to take will have long-lasting consequences and will be seen as an understanding of what direction Russia wants to take. It is also noteworthy that Füle says EU would be willing to cooperate in international crises and responding to international challenges. These sorts of tasks are responsible ones, where one is in a position of power. It gives an indication that Russia as a great power would be respected, encouraging it to take actions that is considering others in a positive way.

The Commission appeals to Russia’s felt sense of attachment to the EU international society, even if she is not fully a member and paints a picture how Russia may fit into a common international society. The fact that EU is not the sole international society in Europe, but one of the many overlapping ones (Aalto 2007, 474), gives a greater possibility of Russia finding its own place in a larger European community.

Putin’s claim that the EU is drawing lines is far from the truth. The actions of EU are inviting to thicken the set of shared values and norms, inviting Russia to become more aligned to EU’s core values, but also, very importantly, economic cooperation. Even if Russia would not agree with EU’s core values, it would be likely that it would be interested in gaining more economic benefit. Strategically this would make sense, unless Russia wants to directly oppose the international society of EU. As it has been noted before, the EU has certainly felt that there has been such an attack.

Why then would Russia want to attack the international society of EU? There are no definitive answers, but it could be a question of losing power. The formation of an international society creates a stronger, more unified political actor, which can possibly grow to be a big threat, especially when there are no exact limits to how big it may get. International societies are based on common values, beliefs, rules and institutions, which are not by de facto exclusive, unlike states, which have clear limits. Also, if Russia would join the international society of EU by any degree, it would begin to lose the power it has had. Russia would have to adapt to EU’s conditions, instead of the other way around. Whatever the reasons may be that Russia

does not want to go by the suggestions of EU, it is sure that Russia does not value a possibility of joining, or thickening common values and institutions with the EU as highly as EU would like it to value.

3.4 Including Ukraine to the international society of EU

In the previous section it could be seen that although Russia was acting against some of the core values of the EU, the EU was still willing, or saying that it is willing, to deepen cooperation with Russia and possibly to invite to be part of a more common international society. How much does the situation change when one is already much closer to the EU, willing to accept or already holding the same values? Ukraine has shown a willingness to thicken common values and institutions with the EU and the EU has been encouraging this course of action.

One of the aspects that have been emphasized in the speeches made by EU representatives is to follow the will of the Ukrainian people. It is underlined that the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's parliament, is a legitimate political institution (Füle 2014d) and the expectations and aspirations of Ukrainians has been expressed clearly in the last two elections (Mogherini 2015b). Füle expresses EU's sentiments clearly:

The European Union has been firm in insisting that any solution on Ukraine must be peaceful, must involve Ukraine and must be based on full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including the right of Ukraine to decide on its own constitution and political future. (Füle 2014c)

This kind of statement is not surprising; respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and self-determination of peoples are all principles of the Helsinki accords, which most European countries and the Soviet bloc has signed. The Helsinki accords reaffirmed the participating states commitment to peace, security and justice as well as declare their determination to respect and put into practice the signed principles. (OSCE, Helsinki Final Act, 3–7). Füle

states that the invasion of Ukraine by Russia is “the most serious challenge to the Helsinki Process we have seen so far” (Füle 2014b).

Not only is the EU respecting Ukraine’s country’s basic rights, but the EU also wants to solidify Ukraine’s stance in the European community. One way of doing this is by stating that these basic rights that a country has is something that is characteristic for Europe, or it should be. In the words of José Manuel Barroso:

I believe in a European continent where the rule of law prevails over the rule of force, sovereignty is shared and not limited, and the logic of cooperation replaces the logic of confrontation. (Barroso 2014c)

The use of “I believe” gives the impression that the situation that is talked about is not always true, but it should be geared that way. The situation in Ukraine is a demonstration that these principles are not always followed and the reason to this is seen to be Russia.

Before the quoted excerpt of the speech, Barroso says quite directly that “Russia needs to accept fully the right of these countries [EU’s eastern partners] to decide their own future and the nature of the relations they choose to have with Russia.” (Barroso 2014c). Once again, the legitimacy of Ukraine’s, but also the legitimacy of other Eastern European countries’, actions is fortified. The message is that Ukraine’s government has the right to do as they see fit and that they have their own place in Europe. “Ukraine should not be seen as a problem for Europe but as an asset for a more united European continent” (Barroso 2014c).

When discussing the reasons why the EU might help Ukrainian people, it is stated they are in alignment with EU’s main values and thus they are not specific on why exactly to help *Ukraine* as country. Füle declares that:

...we must help and support Ukraine, not only in its measured reaction so far but also in assisting that country to become a democratic country with an accountable government free of corruption, with justice for all and the active involvement of civil

society – a state which guarantees the rights of all citizens and all minorities. (Füle 2014b)

In fact, it is not clearly stated why, other than “we must”, but the fact that it is straight away followed by the positive end result that the EU hopes for, implies that the outcome itself is considered to be valuable.

In one of the plenary debates about the situation in Ukraine, there was a lot of talk about solidarity from the members of the European parliament. Füle found the most important meaning of the word to be thinking of others who are in need of help and assistance, than just thinking about ourselves. (Füle 2014e). Füle states that “we respect and defend the rights and freedoms of each individual, and we must defend the right of every nation to make its own choices”. (Füle 2014c). Once again it has not been stated explicitly why “we must” do anything, it is only said that it is a must. If one considers the situation from the point of view of an international society, where there are strongly held beliefs and values that is the basis of that community, then perhaps it does feel like there is no alternative. If the values are considered to be deeply true and applicable in all situations it gives an easy guideline in how to position oneself in different political conflicts.

It is interesting to note that if the need to act and to take a side is mostly based on values and them being violated, it makes it quite easy to be on the same side and possibly even to ally with that political actor. This has been the strength of the EU, who has decided to grow from the early years of forming the European Community.

The EU has supported Ukraine also by giving Ukraine a support package of 11 billion euro. The fact that the process of deciding on giving the aid so quickly is “proof that we can react quickly; that we can show solidarity; that we can rise to the challenge” (Barroso 2014c). This was a feat to the EU, but it is just the beginning for creating a long lasting change in Ukraine. Barroso underlines that aid is not a quick fix, but it must be complemented by reforms to fix the financial system and to rebuild the economic foundations of the country. (Barroso 2014c) De Gucht, as the commissioner for trade, also emphasizes the need for economic growth and

development, since “[t]hat is what you really need” in order to achieve long lasting peace. (De Gucht 2014a). The solution has its limitations, with a country with more than 40 million inhabitants the support package is not as supportive as it would need to be. Mogherini on the other hand, while discussing needed changes in Ukraine, does state the importance of economic changes, but first explains how important it is to make political reforms, such as electoral reforms, constitutional reforms, decentralization and reform of the judiciary. (Mogherini 2015c).

Whether the reforms are more on the economic sector or on the political side, the EU has its own way of solving it, which the EU is promoting with Ukraine. The reforms that are promoted have already been agreed on the Association Agreement, which means Ukraine has made the commitment of making such changes. (Mogherini 2015c). This could be seen as a thickening of values and institutions between the EU and Ukraine, which possibly leads to a common international society.

3.5 International society in perspective

International societies are an interesting concept in international relations for the reason that they are never ready or fully developed, but instead, despite their dividing nature, they possibly evolve and change in shape. While an international society may be seen as something that unifies or as something that creates dividing lines: international societies are in fact both and cannot be characterized effectively without the other outlook. International societies and the identities it creates come deeply to the center of power. Power is a type of interaction of two or more different types of actor. Before one or the other starts to exercise power, they must conclude what is it that they are, so they will know what they need and what they desire. Similarly, there must be an assessment for the other actor to determine if the other will be a threat or an opportunity for something better through cooperation. Thus, shortly, the actors must conclude whether they are similar enough or not, which will create its own dividing lines in its surroundings.

The Ukraine conflict has brought forward the clashing nature of one international society with another. However, Commissioner Füle claims that the EU is not drawing dividing lines between the EU and Russia (Füle 2014a), and while this may be true that there is no intentional effort for this happen, it seems that the dividing line is already there. The EU, although expanding and accepting of new members and partners, does have clear borders through its member states. The EU member states have political and economic unity that they do not share with Russia.

On first sight, the EU seems to be very open; because of its core values are accessible to anyone. The EU certainly promotes these values and encourages others to take the same route as well. However, values are not the only main component of the international society. Bull notes that international societies throughout history have been based on a common culture or civilization. This is founded on a common language, a common religion, a common ethical code, a common aesthetic tradition. (Bull 1977, 116) While it is true that the EU member states do not share for example a common language and have significant variations in many other respects as well, Russia may still be too different to join the international society of EU. Even so, Russia does share many aspects with the EU and European countries in general, which is why Russia can be considered to be a part of a larger European international society.

Even though Russia played an important role in the later phases of the development of the European society of states and in general supported a multipolar system (Aalto 2007, 461-463), it is possible that the expanding EU international society has gotten too big for Russia's liking. It is not only the expansion of EU, but also the penetrating nature of its norms, standards and practices within the countries that make EU's actions appear more threatening.

The conflict has itself widened the gap, when Russia has directly discriminated against some of the values and practices the EU holds important. The Ukraine conflict has been a battlefield for the expansion of different international societies. The clash of these spheres of influence reveals the true strength and permeability of these societies. In the end, this conflict has brought the identities of Russia, Ukraine and the EU to be all examined and put to a test.

CONCLUSION

This Master's thesis has looked at the phenomena of power and the Ukraine conflict from several points of view. The research question in its exact form was:

“What kinds of complexities of power are presenting themselves in the Ukraine conflict especially in relation to the EU?”

It has been shown that power has taken different shapes in the conflict and ultimately it has transformed the actors along the conflict. Power was not exercised in a mechanistic fashion, where behavior was applied through the same, relatively constant variables. Instead, the variables changed in the process. These profound transformations make the Ukraine conflict an interesting source of study, which allows insight into the reasons of its influence, especially its challenge to the EU. Additionally, through the analysis of the Ukraine conflict, the phenomenon of power can be better understood. Some of the conditions where power is exercised often stay the same. However, in this particular case, many of the fundamental aspects of power as exercised during the immediate post-Cold War phase have been transformed.

The inefficiency of soft power tools is a shock for the EU on a practical level as well as on a fundamental level. The EU has over the years successfully gained more power and influence by exercising exactly this type of power. This challenge is an underlying one for the EU, because it puts into question the type of an actor the EU is. The Ukraine conflict is not simply about Ukraine, although the country is severely affected, it is also about the EU itself and whether it can remain faithful to its own principles. This is not a challenge, which is asked outright. It is rather a change of the environment delivered by the anti-soft power approach of Russia. Previously, an actor may have challenged another in more direct terms, where the capabilities of armies and navy troops would be measured up against another. This is a more predictable form of challenging one's power, but most of Europe with the exception of the Balkans, has not experienced a real war for 70 years. It was exactly the unpredicted nature of the Ukraine conflict and underlying challenge of the EU's power, which made this situation of

power novel and shocking for the receiver. The EU landed in an identity crisis, from which it is trying to recover.

While the EU finds that it does not know in which ways it can respond to the crisis, the EU also discovers definitively the great divide between the perceptions that Russia and the EU have of their environments. In essence, Russia and the EU engage in a dialogue, but each one is giving it a different meaning. The different perceptions make it even harder for the actors to find consensus and reach a situation that would please both. The Ukraine conflict is a dividing moment, because the differences in approaches have become so apparent. Russia is not pliantly conforming to the EU's vision for enlargement, but has its own geopolitical goals in mind.

On a deeper level, it can be seen that the conflict has affected international societies and their senses of identity. Each actor, the EU, Russia and Ukraine had to reaffirm what they are as actors and act according to these beliefs. The EU reinstates its unity and values. Russia declares unity with Ukraine and especially with Crimea. Ukraine had to make a clear choice between which of the two international societies it would rather belong. Ukraine is decisively important for the identities of both actors. In the conflict, each party is faced with the situation of assessing who they are as actors and to what extent the other does or does not relate to them.

The question of identity goes to the very core of any situation where power is involved. Power is about the relationship of two or more actors; often it manifests itself in subduing the other for the personal benefit of the stronger actor. Soft power on the other hand emphasizes the goals the actors can reach together. At the core of both, is how the other relates to one's needs and desires. The question that is asked is, can we be friends or will we be enemies? The challenge of EU's soft power takes the discussion of power to another level. It brings forth the importance of cooperation, as well as its challenge. The EU has demonstrated by its own values, policies and actions the successfulness of wielding soft power, which is to turn the other into an ally instead of an enemy. However, this type of power relies on the cooperation of others and this is why the Ukraine conflict, with Russia use of hard power, is challenging

the EU at a fundamental level. The conflict makes the EU's uniqueness more apparent, its weaknesses and its strengths.

It must be noted that these aspects of power are not separate ones, but they very much interact with one another. For example, soft power besides giving tools to reach one's goals touches deeply on the issues of identity through acting together, and the collective use of soft power has noticeable effect on the environment of these actors. Identity, the environment where power is exercised and the tools one decides to use are all dependent on one another. Russia's opposition to the EU is expressed in its totality, which makes Russia's challenge so pervasive for the EU. The greatest hurdle for the EU to overcome was not a simple exercise of power, but it was the way Russia was able to question and transform the fundamental aspects power rests on. Power exists in a culture, where there is an understanding and predictability of what tools can be used and who are the actors involved. Russia's actions erased that sense of security, at least momentarily. The fundamental aspects of power were transformed, causing profound effects on the functioning and interactions in the global political system. Yet this challenge may present itself as an opportunity if EU can rise to the challenge.

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