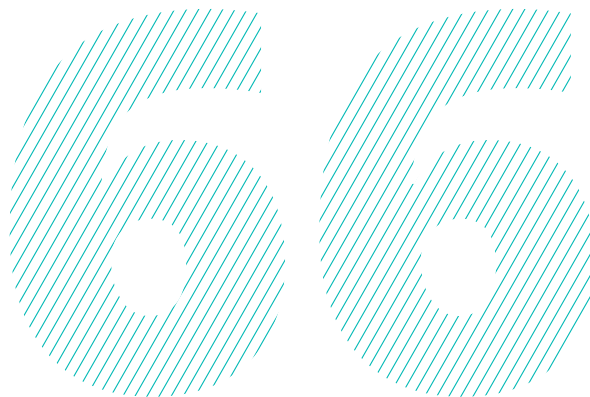


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Johann Fuhrmann

WILL A MAULING BY THE BEAR TEACH US HOW TO TAME THE DRAGON?

**Implications of the Russian War of Aggression
for Germany's New China Strategy**

POLITICAL THOUGHT

66

Communist China is increasingly perceived in Germany and the rest of Europe as a systemic rival while, at the same time, German investments in the People's Republic are rising. For years, China has been the most important bilateral trading partner of both Germany and the EU. How can the China strategy announced by the German Federal Government address these challenges and dependencies – also against the background of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine?

Since Vladimir Putin began his war of aggression in Ukraine, Germany has been faced with the ruins of a disastrous Russia policy: the result of naivety and failure to contain Russia through close economic relations. At the same time, China's ambivalent position towards the European war, and threats of military annexation of Taiwan have sparked a new debate in media and political circles about Germany's approach to the People's Republic. Under the auspices of the Federal Foreign Office, the German Federal Government is creating the country's first China strategy. What lessons can be learnt from the Russian war of aggression and its repercussions? To answer this question, we will focus on the growing partnership between Beijing and Moscow and on China's international role and ambitions. Finally, we will consider what conclusions can be drawn for future dealings with China. But first, let us examine the context in which the China paper announced by the German Federal Government is being drafted.

NEW CHINA STRATEGY: IT'S A TRAP!

"The experience of the past few months has taught Germany how dangerous it is to be dependent on individual trading partners. And even though current concerns are focused on how to acquire as much energy as possible to replace Russian gas within the shortest time possible, worries that Germany could be much more vulnerable at another point remain. China is the country from which Germany imports by far the most goods,"¹ reads a recent analysis by economic correspondent Julia Löhr, who works for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. And thus, two strategy papers announced by the German Foreign Office and which are currently in the making, are marked by growing

¹ Löhr, Julia 2022: Ein neues Geschäftsmodell für die Deutschland AG, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 27 Jul 2022, in: <https://faz.net/-gqe-au1sg> [8 Sep 2022].

international tensions and economic dependencies. A "comprehensive national security strategy" will be published in the spring of 2023, followed by the above-mentioned China strategy. Meanwhile, there are growing indications that the two papers are part of the German Federal Government's preparations for an era of heightened systemic rivalry. "'Just in time' has had its day. Our guiding principle should be 'just in case,'"² said Franziska Brantner, Parliamentary State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. In other words, Germany does not want to enter a conflict with China unprepared, like it did with Russia.

The German Federal Government's decision to adopt a China strategy was taken with the coalition agreement in December 2021. The suppression of the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong; reports of human rights violations, torture, and forced internment in Xinjiang; and open threats of military annexation of Taiwan are all factors that reinforce fears of growing rivalry between Beijing and the West. China's unwillingness to condemn Russia's war against Ukraine as the violation of international law that it is, and the unfiltered dissemination of Russian propaganda by Chinese diplomats and state media, have recently further heightened tensions.

CHINA AND RUSSIA – UNITED AGAINST THE WEST?

For several years, Russia and China have been staging – and celebrating – a rapprochement in bilateral relations. There have, for instance, already been almost 40 meetings between Chinese President Xi and Vladimir Putin. In early February 2022, Russia's president travelled to Beijing for the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games. Discussions with Xi led to a comprehensive declaration of more than 5,000 words. In the text, both sides said that they "oppose further enlargement of NATO". In return, Moscow said that it considers Taiwan to be "an inalienable part of China". Both parties also sharply criticised AUKUS, the US-UK-Australia partnership in the Indo-Pacific concluded in mid-September 2021.³ It is unclear whether Moscow discussed its plans for war in Ukraine with Beijing before it attacked. What is certain is that experts have long worried about an ever-closer alliance between China, the most populous country in the world, and Russia, the world's largest territorial state.

This is emerging in military matters, for instance. In 2016 and 2017, Russia and China held joint missile defence exercises in the form of computer simulations, and in 2019,

² Haerder, Max 2022: Wie Deutschland seine fatale Abhängigkeit von China reduzieren will, Wirtschaftswoche, 25 Jul 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3BxjYlv> [8 Sep 2022].

³ President of Russia 2022: Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development, Presidential Executive Office, 4 Feb 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3XVHXNM> [30 Nov 2022].

Moscow revealed that Russia was supporting the People's Republic in building a missile early warning system.⁴ Both countries have been conducting joint military exercises since 2005. Their joint air power exercises attracted attention at the end of May 2022. The provocative action involved Chinese and Russian jet aircraft violating South Korea's air defence zone, and approaching Japanese airspace.⁵ Security experts like Brian G. Carlson currently see evidence of increasing Chinese-Russian cooperation on nuclear deterrence.⁶

The rapprochement was facilitated by common interests, especially rejection of the Western order and of a unipolar claim to leadership by the US. Thus, the two countries jointly founded two multinational development banks to serve as a counterweight to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. To the consternation of Washington, 103 countries, including Germany, joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank initiated by Beijing. The creation of such parallel structures is a source of irritation for the US. China uses these means to push for a role that seemed reserved for the US at least since the end of the Cold War, reinforcing its claim to global leadership. Such institutions constitute a significant vehicle for China and Russia. They allow the autocracies to present themselves as serious alternatives to the West in the area of development cooperation and infrastructure development.

Despite all the policymakers' warnings, German investments in China have continued to rise sharply

However, no formal alliance exists between the two autocracies – at least, not yet. For instance, Beijing emphasises that its relations with Moscow constitute a partnership, not an alliance. Beijing will doubtless attempt to gain the greatest advantage from the current situation. For instance, in June 2022, China overtook Germany to become the largest importer of Russian energy sources.⁷ But at almost the same time, official sources in the US announced that there was so far no indication that China was providing Russia with direct military support for the war in Ukraine or helping it to circumvent sanctions.⁸ China appears to be at pains to keep all options open. From a Chinese perspective, this policy is also attractive because a partnership between Beijing and Moscow is by no means a partnership between equals. China, the world's second largest economic

power, does not feel it necessary to adopt an unequivocal position. It is far from clear that this power is illusory: despite all the policymakers' warnings, German investments in China have continued to rise sharply. In the first half of 2022 alone, they rose by 26 per cent compared to the same period last year.⁹ And numerous German companies are developing new major projects. For instance, BASF is currently investing ten billion euros in the new integrated chemical complex in the South Chinese province of Guangdong. Hella, an automotive parts supplier, plans to expand its manufacturing capacity with a new lighting plant in Changzhou. And Aldi, a discounter, has announced its intention to open hundreds of new locations in China.

XI'S AMBITIONS

The images travelled around the world: former President Hu Jintao was escorted, evidently against his will, from the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in Beijing in mid-October. His successor, Xi Jinping, remained motionless in his seat. Was this a demonstration of power for the global public? The Tagesschau, a German news programme, used the term "Xina", and Spiegel, a German news weekly, referred to Xi as "the almighty".¹⁰ With the end of the Congress, Xi has cemented his autocratic rule within the Communist Party of China and driven intraparty opposition from its centres of power, the Politburo and its Standing Committee. But where is Xi steering his country, and to what extent does this give rise to potential conflict with Western states and their value partners in the Indo-Pacific?

There is no question that under Xi, China has become more prosperous, authoritarian, self-confident, and aggressive over the past decade. The suppression of the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang province and the elimination of the last democratic freedoms in Hong Kong have become symbols of Beijing's growing aggression. Beijing's backing for Putin's war of aggression against Ukraine has done great damage to China's reputation in Europe and beyond. Threats to Taiwan have exacerbated worries of open systemic conflict. Beijing has made further territorial claims in its immediate neighbourhood. For example, China does not recognise a 2016 ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague by continuing to claim virtually the entire South China Sea, where it is creating artificial islands and setting up military infrastructure.

4 Carlson, Brian 2022: Die chinesisch-russische Kooperation im Bereich der nuklearen Abschreckung, SIRIUS – Zeitschrift für Strategische Analysen 6: 2, in: <https://bit.ly/3xkfAwP> [8 Sep 2022].

5 Tagesschau 2022: Kampfjet-Manöver empört Japan und Südkorea, 24 May 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3U4mFeG> [8 Sep 2022].

6 Carlson 2022, n. 4.

7 Handelsblatt 2022: China überholt Deutschland als größter Importeur russischer Energie, 13 Jun 2022, in: <https://handelsblatt.com/28421598.html> [8 Sep 2022].

8 Der Tagesspiegel 2022: Erleichterung in Washington: USA sehen keine Hinweise auf chinesische Hilfe für Russlands Krieg, 4 May 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3U7pf3O> [8 Sep 2022].

9 Lau, Jörg et al. 2022: An der goldenen Kette, Zeit Online, 14 Aug 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3eLGoZ0> [8 Sep 2022].

10 Fahrion, Georg / Giesen, Christoph 2022: Der Allmächtige, in: Der Spiegel 42/2022, 14 Oct 2022, pp. 10–16; Anthony, Tamara 2022: Wie aus China Xina wird, Tagesschau, 16 Oct 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3AfypTh> [16 Nov 2022].

It is Beijing's declared goal to undermine the world order of which the US is guarantor

Xi announced his intentions early on: only a few months after Xi took power, Chinese journalist Gao Yu leaked "Document Number Nine", in which party leaders warned its cadres against "anti-Chinese forces" in the West, belief in "universal values", "civil society", and "Western ideas of journalism".¹¹ China experts consider the document to be Xi's political roadmap. It makes clear that China considers its rivals to be in the West, with Washington the guarantor of a world order which it is Beijing's declared goal to overpower and undermine. With the help of multilateral organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the BRICS association of emerging economies, the People's Republic strives to make its voice heard in the world and to hollow out established Western institutions. And it is succeeding: the BRICS countries, which also include Brazil, India, and South Africa, did not condemn Putin's war of aggression at their 14th summit. Under Point 22 of their concluding declaration issued in July, the heads of state merely called for "negotiations between Russia and Ukraine"¹². This egregious step would scarcely have been conceivable without political and economic pressure from Beijing.

China is already the second largest economic power in the world. As early as 2017, China was the main trading partner for 120 countries. The People's Republic is the most important bilateral donor for developing countries and holds around 21 per cent of the debt of all African countries. Since 2013, China has used its Belt and Road Initiative to systematically pursue its goal of developing trade routes to Europe, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America. More than 100 countries have signed cooperation treaties with the People's Republic for the construction of rail lines, roads, seaports, and airports. Beijing has planned to spend around one trillion US dollars on this comprehensive programme by 2025, most of which has already been invested.

Ongoing US sanctions have also prompted China to seek more economic independence from the West. The "dual circulation" strategy announced by the Central Committee in late October 2020, aims in particular at promoting the domestic market and pursuing a technological decoupling. Xi has repeatedly shown that China is prepared to instrumentalise its economic power for political ends. For instance, China has been blocking almost all imports from Lithuania for almost a year. The point of contention was the establishment of a "Taiwan office" in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius. Beijing's reaction was prompt.

¹¹ Fahrion / Giesen 2022, n. 10.

¹² Sieren, Frank 2022: Brics suchen den Konsens, G7 zeigen sich bissig, China.Table, 7 Jul 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3stbPTa> [25 Oct 2022].

Observers now agree that the greatest potential for military conflict between China and the West is China's desired "reunification" with Taiwan. For instance, former Australian prime minister and sinologist Kevin Rudd believes that the US will likely intervene militarily if there is a conflict: "If the United States were to fail to defend Taiwan militarily, it would, according to its own calculations, see cracks in its credibility as a good ally to Japan, South Korea, and other Asian countries."¹³ Xi's ambitions thus pose immense challenges to the West, which Germany and the EU also have a responsibility to address.

A NEW VIEW OF CHINA

"How can we set ourselves free from China?" was the mid-August headline of Die Zeit, a German weekly newspaper. And, in the face of the war in Ukraine, there is scarcely any question that attracts more attention from China strategists in the German Foreign Office and Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs. Statistics show how important China is as a trading partner for Germany: the total volume of foreign trade with China in 2021 was just under 246 billion euros – compared to less than 60 billion with Russia.¹⁴ But that is not all: Germany's dependence on China is much more complex than its dependence on Russia. "It involves important raw materials (like rare earths and the basic materials needed to make batteries), new technologies (like artificial intelligence and 5G wireless technology), and ultimately, the huge Chinese market, on which large German companies depend."¹⁵

The greatest challenge is reducing individual major German corporations' dependence on China

As early as May, Germany's Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Annalena Baerbock, held talks in the Foreign Office with Siemens CEO Roland Busch and BASF CEO Martin Brudermüller to determine whether the companies would be in a position to become independent of Chinese business within a few years if necessary. Media reports indicated that the reaction was cautious. The Chinese market, with its potential 1.4 billion customers, is simply too important to many companies. For instance, Volkswagen sold 3.3 million vehicles in China in 2021 alone for a profit of twelve billion euros. Puma gets

¹³ Rudd, Kevin 2022: "Xi sieht sich wie Putin als einen großen Mann der Geschichte", interview, in: Der Spiegel 42/2022, 14 Oct 2022, pp. 17–19.

¹⁴ Rudnicka, J. 2022: Wichtigste Handelspartner Deutschlands nach dem Gesamtvolumen des Außenhandels (Exporte + Importe) im Jahr 2021, Statista, 24 Aug 2022, in: <https://bit.ly/3B8A4Kh> [8 Sep 2022].

¹⁵ Lau et al. 2022, n. 9.

28 per cent of its turnover from China, Infineon 27 per cent, and Airbus 19 per cent.¹⁶ But the problem goes much deeper: a survey by the ifo Institute showed that almost half of all manufacturing companies in Germany are reliant on pre-products from China and “the dependence on Chinese raw materials is in many cases even greater than for industrial products”¹⁷. For instance, some 65 per cent of raw materials for electric motors are imported from China; for rare earths, that number rises to 93 per cent.¹⁸

The Russian attack on Ukraine showed that Germany and Europe must fundamentally rethink the rules governing their dealings with authoritarian states. It is important to systematically review supply chains and dependencies. In a position paper, the ifo Institute advocates in particular that Germany and the EU should work harder on free trade agreements to provide effective political support for diversification efforts by German companies.¹⁹ The EU free trade agreement with New Zealand concluded at the end of June cannot be more than a first step. The aim of German and European efforts should be to conclude strategic partnerships and free trade agreements with like-minded nations such as the US. It is also important to strengthen alliances with partners who share Germany’s values, such as the democratic members of the BRICS group – Brazil, India, and South Africa. The West should also focus more on its partners and potential allies across the world. The surprise security treaty between China and the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific in April 2022 should demonstrate to the West that the competition for strategic alliances is well under way.

Yet, the greatest challenge is reducing individual major German corporations’ dependence on China. The consequences of a total stoppage – if something like a military confrontation over Taiwan were to happen – would be devastating. That is why the strong focus on the Chinese market by large individual corporations is not just a business risk. Policymakers have clearly recognised the problem, but their means are limited. For instance, in June, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs denied Volkswagen credit guarantees for the partial renewal of its plants in Xinjiang. “Limiting investment guarantees, as discussed by the Ministry for Economic Affairs, is an initial signal, but is unlikely to prevent large corporations from investing further,”²⁰ said Dana Heide, a former China correspondent for the Handelsblatt. The question of economic dependencies on the People’s Republic will therefore probably continue to be mostly decided in these corporations’ boardrooms.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Baur, Andreas / Flach, Lisandra 2022: Deutsch-chinesische Handelsbeziehungen: Wie abhängig ist Deutschland vom Reich der Mitte?, ifo Schnelldienst 75: 4, 13 Apr 2022, p. 60, in: <https://bit.ly/3Du3sgp> [25 Oct 2022].

¹⁸ Jesberg, Lena 2022: Neue China-Strategie: Wie Deutschland sich aus der Abhängigkeit vom wichtigsten Handelspartner lösen will, Handelsblatt, 2 Sep 2022, in: <https://handelsblatt.com/28652854.html> [8 Sep 2022].

¹⁹ Baur / Flach 2022, n. 17.

²⁰ Heide, Dana 2022: Drei Kriterien für eine neue China-Strategie, Handelsblatt, 1 Sep 2022, in: <https://handelsblatt.com/28649872.html> [30 Nov 2022].

Beijing’s threats concerning Taiwan must be taken seriously

ASSESSMENT AND OUTLOOK

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov’s Africa trip at the end of July once again demonstrated that Moscow and Beijing’s systemic conflict with the West is also a competition for partners and narratives. For instance, Chinese diplomats and state media are propagating the Russian narrative that the war in Ukraine was caused primarily by NATO’s eastward expansion. A global media monitor for the war in Ukraine produced over several months by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung makes it impressively clear that the Russian-Chinese war narrative is having the desired effect in large swathes of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In many places, Western sanctions are blamed for the worsening food crisis and rising prices. The German Federal Government’s China paper should therefore develop a strategy that integrates German and European media in order to lend a stronger voice to the Western discussion and a European perspective on global events. An obvious partner for developing such a strategy is the Deutsche Welle. But here, too, it is important to think and proceed at European level.

There is no question that reducing economic dependencies and cluster risks relating to China is an important step towards reducing German and European vulnerabilities. However, Germany’s new China strategy should dare to do more. German and European interests must be clearly defined so that China realises the immense costs of a conflict. The China strategy should also determine the areas in which China is a rival or even enemy of the West and where there is competition – which might be beneficial to both sides. And the areas in which China is needed as a partner, as in the global fight against climate change, should also be explored.²¹

There is no doubt that China and Russia are trying to undermine the Western order. Beijing’s threats concerning Taiwan must be taken seriously. Nonetheless, the relationship between Beijing and Moscow is not a formal alliance. And the goal of German and European efforts should be to continue to sound out all the opportunities inherent in this ambiguity. The fact that the German Chancellor Olaf Scholz’s first Asia trip was to Japan, was a clear signal – both to China and the value partners in the region. It is therefore clear that it is primarily up to China to avoid a systemic conflict with the US and the West.

²¹ See also: Priess, Frank/Fischer-Bollin, Peter 2022: Sicherheit zum Nulltarif wird Deutschland nicht mehr kriegen, t-online, 19 Aug 2022, in: https://t-online.de/id_100040016.html [8 Sep 2022].

Nevertheless, the so-called compromise on the Chinese state company Cosco's investment into the Hamburg seaport, imposed by Scholz against the will of six federal ministries sceptical of such a move, sends a completely wrong message in this context – virtually dismissing the *Zeitenwende* that he himself proclaimed in February. In allowing this transaction, the chancellor also undermines what was meant to become a core principle of the Foreign Office's future China paper: reducing dependencies. Only a firm stance would have made it clear, also to Beijing, that business as usual is no longer an option in Germany's policies towards China. Instead of learning its lessons, the Federal Government again lacks a clear strategy, which is all the more regrettable in a time where our values must be asserted with even more dialogue, less naivety, and a good dose of firmness.

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PROSPERITY IN THE BALKANS THROUGH THE OSCE LENSES

POLITICAL THOUGHT

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The first reflection over OSCE would systematically call upon security reflexes. It goes well beyond the simple meaning of the abbreviation: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. This certainly reflects the beginnings in the 1970s which were focused on achieving some common ground between leading superpowers and avoid “warm wars” during Cold War in Europe. Those efforts ended up as a series of great successes. The signature of the Helsinki final act in 1975 is one of those milestones. Efforts from this period could be perceived as stepping blocks for the first of the three current OSCE dimensions, namely the “Politico-military” one. The process resulted in bringing considerably closer the thirty-five participant states and established very practical mechanisms for securing the peace and prosperity of the European Nations. Critics would notice that it included a number of compromises from the very beginning. Including the one of de-facto recognition of the Soviet domination over Eastern Europe.

With the collapse of the Eastern bloc, a decade and a half later, the Security dimension shortly appeared to have lost its meaning. Balkan wars in the 1990s however left a reminder never to take peace in Europe for granted. OSCE missions have grown in the region as a consequence. But then they have gradually decreased in size and scope or at least shifted the focus away from core security issues. This happened as the Euro-Atlantic integration progressed all over the region during the last couple of decades. As Balkan nations were gradually getting closer to NATO and EU memberships, the need for a local security-centered OSCE mission logically faded away. The existence, as well as the size in staff and funding, of local OSCE missions was sometimes interpreted as a good proxy for evaluating the distance in time from full membership in both organizations. This partly explained local governments’ eagerness in post-conflict countries to see the OSCE field presence decreased, although they certainly enjoyed benefits from numerous projects. A mental shortcut was created that the longer and more numerous an OSCE mission grows in a Balkan nation, the further away it is from achieving its ultimate security and prosperity objectives. But, this could have been valid only once the region has turned its back to eminent armed conflicts. And OSCE mechanisms have definitely played a role in overcoming post-war traumas in many of the nations.

Correlation however does not mean causation. More realistic reason for a feeling of increased security and stability in the Balkans over time was not necessarily coming from OSCE missions. Rather overwhelmingly it was a direct consequence of countries formally coming under the American security umbrella. This was the key factor for a dramatically improved external perception about threat reduction over any given nation in South-Eastern Europe. Once the US security ticket was packet in the pocket, countries benefited from a bettered investment profile too. NATO membership for instance made the difference not only in matters of defense, but even more in increasing the potential for economic development. Thus, the second OSCE dimension could have become much more attractive for member states in this phase. In sum, economic, environmental and good governance elements through OSCE led activities are welcomed by all, but again

as in the case with security, the bulk of the improvement is a direct consequence of extending the US cover over the Balkans. The logic is not much different from post-World War Two American guarantees in Western Europe, which quickly became the main pillar for economic recovery of devastated nations.

Once the security has being guaranteed and the economic risk profile improved, it is around the third OSCE dimension, the human one, to present the highest potential for progress in the future. Few points deserve to be emphasized before. First, the OSCE’s basic rationale has been dramatically affected by the war in Ukraine and the difficulties to make decisions in a consensus based international organization. Especially one where sovereign equality, inviolability of the borders and territorial integrity of states are leading chapters. After this latest tragic chapter in Europe’s history almost nothing in the OSCE could be seen the same way as before. Second, it has become perhaps clearer than ever that good intentions about “peaceful settlements” or “non-intervention in internal affairs” could not make it up for rock-solid great power commitments to individual nations’ security and directly related economic prosperity. Third, no alternative could be presented as a better option to “equal rights” and “self-determination of peoples” without threatening the overall security of the wider region. Consequently, invading neighbors or imposing rules by sole brutal force is certainly far from the leading vision for most of the citizens of Europe who wish to see it whole, free and in peace. The latter is clearly the vision which has motivated everybody in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to sketch our initial application for the current chairmanship in office some ten years ago.

It is around the concepts of democracy, rule of law, human rights, protection of the most vulnerable and free expression that the current chairmanship could tangibly make a contribution to the later vision for Europe. The Macedonian citizens have clearly chosen this path. This is also the path which provides the most authentic contribution to the wider European story, where OSCE has being filling a piece of the puzzle for nearly five decades. Most authentically perhaps, the elections monitoring arm (ODIHR) experienced some remarkable success stories on how an originally security oriented international initiative could excel in assisting democratization processes. A long road separates a genuine effort to avoid war between nuclear superpowers in the 1970s from improving electoral record in young democracies today. It appears however that the same methodology brought results then and now. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has benefited from constructive criticism targeting even many of the longest functioning democracies in the West. This has in turn encouraged freshly transitioning societies in the Balkans to aim for the best practices in preparation and conduct of elections. Progress in a generation has been remarkable. Those experiences could be further beneficial to at least some of the participating nations from the former communist Blok. If it is to maintain its soft power and continuously help improving democratic performance, ODIHR missions would have to keep critical reporting even from elections in most mature democracies around the OSCE area. The modern setting

and use (or sometimes abuse) of social media throughout electoral processes shifts the posts of the goal ever further.

Finally, the Human rights chapter has to excel along this priority line. And when it comes to minority rights, some of the best and worst practices within the area which used to be called “from Vancouver to Vladivostok” are likely to be confronted in a tiny sub-region of the Balkans. Countries from this region have notably taken the chairmanship of the OSCE in higher portion compared both to other regions and overall population. Slovenia, Greece, Serbia, Albania and North Macedonia have all delegated chairmanships in a span of some 17 years. It is both a recognition for the security importance of the region, but even more perhaps a responsibility for its nations to maintain the positive track record in the strategically important human dimension of the OSCE.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY



Ambassador Goce Karajanov

belongs to the new generation of Macedonian career diplomats who have acquired higher education at reputable diplomatic schools around the world. In 2004, he graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), and joined the Macedonian diplomatic service the same year.

He has worked in the system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in several sectors, covering bilateral relations with European and non-European countries, and was involved in analytical research and public diplomacy.

He served in the Embassy of the Republic of North Macedonia in Prague from 2008 to 2009 as a temporary Charge d'Affairs.

In 2013, he was appointed the fourth Consul General of the Republic of North Macedonia in New York in the United States, a post he held until March 2015.

For four years, from April 2015 until 2019, he was the sixth Ambassador of the Republic of North Macedonia to the Russian Federation.

Ambassador Karajanov is married, fluent in English, Russian, Serbian, and also speaks Bulgarian.

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NAVIGATING THROUGH THE GEOSTRATEGIC CHALLENGES AND THE DYNAMICS OF MACEDONIAN FOREIGN POLICY

POLITICAL THOUGHT

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The world and Europe are living the second year of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, and a lot has been written about its causes and consequences. There is no analysis or paper dedicated to international relations in the last year and a half that does not deal with the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the consequences it has caused on security, world trade and economy, energy, ecology, migrations, etc.

Hence, without repeating the already known theses and findings, it is worth noting that there is no doubt that the Russian military aggression against Ukraine represents, until now, the flagrant violation of the international order and the system of democratic values, intended to foster enduring peace, stability and prosperity in Europe after the end of the Cold War. The architecture of relations, carefully built between the West and Russia in the past thirty years, has already been destroyed, and its main pillars, i.e. the large number of legally binding documents that regulated the relations between the states in areas such as security, armaments, economy, finance, protection of human rights, climate change, etc., are not implemented, or are completely annulled.

In fact, in this context, the largest number of international organizations, created as proactive actors in global affairs after the Second World War, instead of dealing with today's problems and offering durable solutions for them, are increasingly turning to themselves and trying to survive in today's conditions, which, according to a number of eminent experts in the field of international relations and security, resemble, more and more, anarchy rather than order.

The ramifications of the war in Ukraine are already devastating and will undoubtedly leave free space for the construction of the new architecture of relations when the conditions are created for it. What that architecture will be and whether it will enable peace, stability and predictability, both in regional and global frameworks, depends on the decisions that are made today.

Under the prevailing circumstances, it is more than clear that geopolitics and power are perhaps, as never before, the main determinants of relations between states, and the potential for confrontation and antagonisms between key stakeholders are constantly on the rise. At the same time, the ideological confrontation as in the era of the Cold War is, for the time being, not so pronounced, but the war in Ukraine, and the more visible growth of authoritarian models of governance, followed by the decline of democracy in the world¹ can easily be the catalyst that will lead to such a development.

1 <https://freedomhouse.org/article/new-report-authoritarian-rule-challenging-democracy-dominant-global-model>

On the example of the war in Ukraine, we observe how the majority of countries upholding the rule-based international order have no doubts about what the Russian military aggression actually constitutes, and at the same time some of the notable countries, including China, India, Pakistan, a large number of countries from the African continent, and partly also a larger number of Latin American countries, not only refrain joining the various restrictive measures against the regime in Moscow², but also show restraint when the UN or other international forums vote against Russian aggression against Ukraine³.

All of this seriously highlights the deepening divide between states and the organizations they form, further reinforcing the notion that the world has entered the era of multi-polarity, in which the old rules of the game are no longer applicable, and the new ones are in formative stage.

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos in May 2022 about the reconfiguration and new groupings of countries, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger points out that the world today is facing a situation in which Russia can be completely alienated and isolated from Europe, and with that seeking to forge alliances on other continents. This in turn could lead to Cold War-like diplomatic distancing that would set the world decades back⁴.

In fact, even without Kissinger's statement, it is already clear the countries that remained silent on Russian military aggression have acquired favorable conditions for cooperation with Russia, which, for its part, in the past year and several months, has designated about thirty countries as hostile⁵, in response to the several rounds of political, economic and military measures applied by them against Russia in order to help Ukraine. Moscow applies towards these countries, including North Macedonia since last year, a different regime of bilateral relations as a reciprocal measure to the restrictive measures.

Within this international conjuncture, which undoubtedly has a serious potential to generate further instability, rivalry, unpredictability and growing regional and global challenges, it is a unique challenge to write about the positioning of small states, to which, most certainly, North Macedonia also belongs.

2 <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/UKRAINE-CRISIS/SANCTIONS/byrjenzmve/>

3 <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/02/1133847>

4 <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/05/kissinger-these-are-the-main-geopolitical-challenges-facing-the-world-right-now/>

5 <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/02/11/2022/62e3b3f59a79472ed9cf9ee>

On the other hand, to write about the Macedonian foreign policy from the position of an active participant in the processes, undoubtedly always generates interest and subsequent controversy in the public space, all the more so since in everyday political discussions in our country, foreign policy occupies an increasing place and often serves as a tool in the constant internal political struggle between key political entities in Macedonian society.

Having this statement as a starting point, my intention with these few pages is not to be part of the polemics, but as a career diplomat in service for almost 20 years in various positions in and outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, give my own view regarding the current situation and challenges faced by the Macedonian foreign policy, but also by the Macedonian diplomatic service, and to try to sublimate a few points in that context in order to go through the unpredictable time in which we live with as few negative consequences as possible.

Of course, I would also like to reserve the right on this occasion to emphasize that the findings, views and assessments presented are my personal and do not pretend to reflect the positions of the institution in which I am employed.

I would start by stating that North Macedonia finds itself confronted with the realities of the war in Ukraine and the current stage of global international relations, fully integrated into the political and military structures of the NATO Alliance and commencing the screening process in preparation for the upcoming negotiations with the European Union.

In fact, with the entry into NATO in 2020, after many years one of the two key foreign policy goals of the country was completed, for which a broad national consensus was reached in the early stages of our independence. The fact that all previous governments, to a lesser or greater extent, worked to achieve this goal should relativize the further debate whether membership in NATO, achieved as a result of the signing of the Prespa Agreement with Greece, is justified or not and whether the price for the realization which we paid is too high or not. Of course, in the domestic debate, opinions in this context will continue to be divided in the future, but one fact remains undeniable in light of the war in Ukraine, that security in today's world is a resource that has no price and that without that resource, any further planning of the development of the state would be much more unpredictable.

Logically, membership in the most powerful military alliance on the planet has instigated a process of qualitative changes in the way the foreign policy was conducted and of course, in the way the security challenges that our country is

facing are perceived. In such a constellation, our foreign, defense and security policy have become fully aligned with NATO, and more recently with the EU, so the space for greater maneuvers and deviations in terms of positioning in relation to global challenges is already extremely limited. On one hand, it facilitates the work, above all, in the process of making foreign policy decisions, but on the other hand, it opens a process of redefining the methods, the approach and the model according to which the Macedonian foreign policy will be conducted in the future, in order to not turn into just a policy that has as primary goal to join the decisions that will be made in Brussels.

In my view, this entails a renewed focus on areas such as economic and cultural diplomacy, the enhancement of bilateral relations with individual countries, and an active approach and contribution within multilateral forums. These domains offer opportunities to depart from outdated practices and capitalize on the possibilities presented by the contemporary world.

At the same time, the current reality in international relations, the dynamics of the processes taking place in the region of the Western Balkans, but also the renewed emphasis on the EU enlargement, in response to the continent's geopolitical circumstances, coupled with the positive outcomes derived from NATO membership, create an opportune moment for fostering a broader political and social consensus around the question of what we as a country actually want from the foreign policy we lead, and more importantly, what the country gets through that process.

After all, foreign policy cannot exist by itself, nor should it change often, because of political changes in the country. Consistency and continuity in this sense are an expression of state maturity, while the alignment of political factors in terms of the perception of the specifics in the world and the need for continuity in addressing challenges, regardless of which political option governs the state, is proof that the state takes a serious approach to its international obligations.

Simply put, given the internal political specifics and dynamics of North Macedonia, changing directions in foreign policy will have reflections on the political processes in the country, and does not exclude possible generation of political instability. In support of this claim, it is enough to look at the public opinion surveys conducted in the last few years and see how the citizens, depending on their ethnicity, look at the Macedonian foreign policy.

On the other hand, the monopolization of foreign policy and putting it in the function of internal political agendas, which is a phenomenon that has, unfortunately, been present in our country since our independence, greatly weakens the state's positions

in international relations. In this sense, considering our negative experiences over the past three decades, the numerous missed opportunities to make breakthroughs on key foreign policy goals much earlier, today, true leadership in foreign policy would be to abandon party agendas and put forward the interests of society as a whole.

At the same time, it is more than clear that this is not an easy process given decades of political polarization and the inability to reach fundamental consensus even on crucial matters vital to our nation. The process is difficult, but the country must go through that path, because almost all countries from Central and Eastern Europe, which have been members of the EU for almost 20 years, have gone through similar transformations.

Given the aforementioned, it becomes very important to address the question of where to commence and what steps should be taken in the forthcoming period. From a professional standpoint, I believe it is essential to initiate this process by fostering consensus regarding the fundamental goals and priorities of the foreign policy of the country in the medium and long term. This can be achieved through the development and adoption of a comprehensive concept for the country's foreign policy, wherein all relevant stakeholders in society participate in the drafting process. Failure to accomplish this would leave the state susceptible to pursuing ad-hoc policies.

Consensus over adopting a comprehensive foreign policy concept is essential for several reasons and it must include the various political options, but also reflect the multi-ethnic character of the state.

First, a unified and well-defined foreign policy concept will undoubtedly provide greater clarity and direction for the country's diplomatic activities, that is, it will enable a consistent approach in relations with other states and organizations. At the same time, through the drafting of the concept, all relevant stakeholders, including government and opposition officials, diplomats, experts and civil society, could be involved in shaping and implementing the country's foreign policy, thereby largely liberalizing it. This inclusive approach could undoubtedly help to use a variety of expertise and knowledge, which will certainly lead to qualitative changes in the process of making foreign policy decisions.

In addition, the harmonized foreign policy concept will enable effective allocation of financial, human and other resources, and this will be reflected in the prioritization of the objectives and the identification of key partnerships. This, in turn, could provide a framework for long-term planning and adaptation to geopolitical dynamics, allowing the country to anticipate and effectively respond to new challenges.

Finally, there is no doubt that a harmonized foreign policy will significantly improve the country's credibility and reputation in the eyes of our key partners. When different actors in the country speak with a unified voice and implement common goals, it undoubtedly strengthens the country's international position.

At the same time, what priorities and goals will be our foreign policy in the coming period is a task that should be solved by politics, not by diplomacy, whose primary task is the implementation of established policies, but also their evaluation and improvement. When key political forces engage in comprehensive and joint discussions and reach consensus, it creates a conducive environment for professional diplomats to carry out their work more effectively. By putting aside differences and focusing on the welfare of the nation, political forces can give diplomats the support, guidance and unified approach they need, which will ultimately strengthen the country's diplomatic efforts.

In this sense, it is important to note that drafting must be based on the real possibilities and capacities of our country, which, in a world in which, as previously stated, power and geopolitics determine relations between countries, has limited resources to implement its goals.

However, when it comes to priorities, one thing remains crucial for the country even in the short term, that being the further steps regarding the opening of negotiations between North Macedonia and the European Union. In this sense, if we want to achieve a breakthrough, the European integration of the state must be separated from the daily political agendas of the political parties and put on a different track, where a broad consensus around the processes that will be directly related to the integration becomes an imperative.

This consensus should encompass processes directly related to the EU integration, regardless of whether it pertains to fulfilling negotiation benchmarks or honoring already taken obligations regarding the constitutional amendments. In this sense North Macedonia should without further delay prioritize aligning its policies, legislation, and institutions with EU standards and requirements. Strengthening the rule of law, advancing judicial reforms, fighting high corruption, and promoting good governance will not only accelerate the integration but also improve the overall domestic environment, attract foreign investments, and enhance the country's competitiveness on the global stage.

However, the reality says that, unfortunately, until this moment, agreement on how to reach a consensus that will ensure the continuation of the European path does not

exist, primarily due to the impossibility of securing the necessary majority to change the Constitution of the country. However it appears that the condition to amend the Macedonian constitution, which was introduced into the EU negotiations framework through the French proposal last year, is a real fact that will unlikely change in the future without substantial changes in the decision-making process within the Union, or a complete shift in Bulgaria's policy towards North Macedonia. Therefore, the risks that the country will remain outside the integration process in the coming period are real and, unfortunately, great.

On the other hand, without going into the current political discourse, and the claims that there is an opportunity to provide better conditions for negotiations with the EU, that is, that a better agreement for good neighborly relations with Bulgaria is also a real option, as a professional in diplomacy I want to emphasize that I would agree with these findings, only if the further progress of the state and its inter-ethnic cohesion, which is in direct correlation with the progress of integration, would be connected with some other process, that would exclude EU membership. The messages that have been coming from the capitals of Europe to the key stakeholders in our country for the last few months are based on the firm assertion that such a development is not possible.

Simultaneously, it is important to acknowledge the legitimate fears and concerns prevailing within the public domain, stemming from the behavior of Bulgaria as an EU member state.

In the last three years, Bulgaria has undoubtedly used its position as a member state, for exerting unnecessary pressure and trying to impose unacceptable conditions related to our identity parameters, as European positions in the negotiations. There is no guarantee that Bulgaria will not continue to behave in a similar style in the future, nor, as discouraging as it may sound, it can be ensured in today's circumstances. What can be done at the given moment, and that depends primarily on diplomacy, is to try to cooperate even more closely with our key partners and to continue diplomatic efforts by conveying our views that talks about identity parameters cannot, nor will be a topic in the future in any format of negotiations.

Namely, the excessive focus on this issue, caused, above all, by Bulgaria's actions, is the key factor for the decline of Macedonian support for the country's integration into the European Union. According to certain measurements of public opinion, it has decreased by 20-25% in the last two years. There is no doubt that this situation has a negative impact on the credibility of the European Union at a time when many member states want to see its geopolitical weight increase in the world. In other words, if the

Union is not able to make progress where it is a real possibility, then, in facing the major international actors, its relevance could be questioned.

In this sense, diplomacy and diplomatic action is more than necessary, so in the forthcoming period North Macedonia must earnestly undertake several crucial initiatives pertaining to the functioning of the diplomatic service itself. Primarily, this entails a comprehensive reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and changing the models of conduct.

Namely, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a pivotal institution in the country's foreign policy, needs to be thematically restructured and adapted to the new reality. Despite numerous improvements in the past ten years, the thematic approach in treating the challenges faced by the state and the horizontal connection, in that sense, with other concerned institutions and actors in the state is still not applied. For instance, global phenomena that occupy the international agendas of countries, such as migrations, climate change and the environment, energy security, hybrid threats, etc., which primarily belong to the domain of multilateralism, but are also part of bilateral agendas, are not treated through special task force groups in the ministry. The archaic model of geographical coverage of the states is still the dominant model by which Macedonian diplomacy operates. In this sense, when I talk about the reform of the Macedonian ministry, I am talking about increasing its capacities to deal with the challenges more fundamentally and more importantly, to offer exit solutions, while promoting the specifics of our country. This will undoubtedly ensure greater visibility and relevance of North Macedonia in the world.

In this sense, this year's chairmanship of the OSCE, in addition to being significant for the country itself and its positioning, also represents a kind of demonstrative exercise for the Macedonian diplomatic service, in terms of how it should act, what personnel to rely on, what process of making decisions to implement etc.

Therefore, the experience gained during the presidency should be carefully analyzed and appropriate conclusions drawn. By conducting a thorough evaluation, lessons learned can be translated into active steps to improve the capabilities and effectiveness of the diplomatic service. In addition, the expertise and knowledge gained during the presidency should be spread throughout the diplomatic service. This will enable the diplomatic service to learn from the insights gained, fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development, as well as improving its performance.

In essence, I firmly believe that this approach will significantly contribute to the transition from the so-called "advocacy model" of foreign policy, characterized by

conformism and strict adherence to instructions, to a much more creative and proactive model, which I would call “smart diplomacy”. The experience of a large number of developed countries suggests that a proactive approach can encourage the establishment of long-term and mutually beneficial relations and connections with state and non-state actors that, for their part, can significantly contribute to the advancement of our foreign policy.

In today’s world, international connections and relationships are not won, but painstakingly built, at times when they are least needed, so that they can be used when they are really needed. Therefore, in international contacts with various stakeholders, such as governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, think tanks and influential individuals, emphasis must be placed on establishing partnerships and cooperation that go beyond the so-called “advocacy model” of action.

In other words, the focus of building such relations should not always be the problems that we as a country face, but the opportunities and spheres of cooperation that are available to us. In this context, the excessive burden with problems such as relations with Bulgaria and our real need to represent our own positions in relations with the above-mentioned actors, significantly limits the possibilities for developing other types of cooperation. The burning point is that not every country would like to hear about the problems of others, because it also faces a sufficient number of its own challenges that require solutions.

Hence, by changing the operating model, which I believe would ensure much more stable and longer-term relations with a whole range of state and non-state actors with whom we share similar visions, we could actually get the opportunity to tap into the expertise, resources and networks of these actors, who on the other hand can serve as instruments for achieving our foreign policy goals. This seems like a process that is abstract and insufficiently elaborated, but it is so, because since the independence of our country to date, foreign policy is expected to solve the most difficult issues in an instant, and at the same time, very often the expectations are that someone from the big actors is obliged to help us in that sense. It is high time to start thinking about what we as a country should provide to our foreign policy, i.e. diplomacy.

At the end of these few pages, I would also like to refer to the positioning of North Macedonia in the domain of international relations, particularly in light of the escalating of the geopolitical situation stemming from the war in Ukraine. In my opinion, it is of crucial importance for us as a small country to continue consolidating our position as a reliable and constructive partner of the West in the coming period as well. This can be achieved by our continued active engagement in initiatives led by our key

Western partners, such as the US, Germany, France, the UK, Italy, in the areas of security, economic development and sustainable growth, energy, combating hybrid threats, respect of human rights, and of course the firm commitment to the values of democracy.

By the same token, I consider it important to further deepen and diversify our bilateral relations with the regional actors. Strengthening ties with neighboring countries from the Western Balkans is of key importance for the stability and security of the region, the encouragement of economic cooperation and advancement of regional integration. In that direction, the signing of the Prespa Agreement with Greece was a step that had far-reaching implications beyond the name issue, because, regardless of the fact that the act itself met with different reactions and opposition from certain segments of both societies, the agreement normalized political relations in general, it opened new avenues for increased economic cooperation between North Macedonia and Greece.

At the same time, North Macedonia should continue its active contribution to regional initiatives and mechanisms aimed at encouraging cooperation, economic development and regional security. Active participation in the Berlin Process, the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the Brdo-Brioni Process and the Open Balkans initiative is essential for promoting stability and prosperity in the wider region. By actively participating in these regional initiatives, our country can play a significant role in addressing common challenges, encouraging dialogue and strengthening regional cooperation. This includes participating in efforts to resolve regional disputes and conflicts, where possible of course, through diplomatic channels and dialogue. By promoting peace, stability and reconciliation in the Western Balkans, North Macedonia not only contributes to the progress of the region, but also strengthens its position as a reliable and influential actor on the international stage.

A recent example of North Macedonia’s commitment to regional cooperation is the organization of the Ohrid talks for the normalization of relations between our neighbors Kosovo and Serbia.

Furthermore, North Macedonia should use its unique cultural heritage, natural resources and strategic location to promote tourism, trade and of course investments. Showcasing our cultural and multi-ethnic diversity and natural treasures will not only attract visitors, but also generate economic opportunities and encourage people-to-people exchanges, thereby deepening international understanding and cooperation.

Last but not least, the multilateral aspect of our foreign policy must continue to be strengthened in the future. In this sense, the chairmanship of the OSCE should be a

kind of turning point that, although a small country, we can face a serious international undertaking and at the same time leave our own mark on international relations at the given moment.

Of course, there are still a large number of aspects that can be worked out depending on the circumstances, but as a conclusion to all of the above, there is no doubt that the strategic, consistent and innovative approach to Macedonian foreign policy, firmly rooted in the values and aspirations of our citizens will encourage the state to continue confidently moving through the complexity of international relations and to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the constantly developing global world, among other things, for its further internal development as a democratic and prosperous society.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY



Veton Latifi, PhD

is a full professor of political sciences and international relations at the South-East European University (SEEU), North Macedonia. He has been served as a Vice President of the SEE University Board in the period 2016-2018, and as a Max van der Stoel Institute Chair between in 2013-2018. In April 2018, Professor Latifi was appointed a Research Associate at the University of Oxford, Center for International Studies, Department of Politics and International Relations (Oxford, UK).

Prof. Dr. Veton Latifi is an author of several books in the field of theories of political sciences and international relations. His latest book "The Balkans in contemporary international relations" (2021) was published by the University of Warsaw. Other books includes: "The new century of the Albanian politics" (2014); "NATO and the EU: New Relations in Crisis Management" (2012); "Concepts of Democracy" (2009); "Political Leadership" (2009); "Politology" (2008); "The negotiations for signing the Ohrid Framework Agreement" (2008); "Negotiation as a primary technique for conflict resolution" (2007); "Theories of Political Sciences" (2007); "Political Institutions" (2007), etc.

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Veton Latifi

LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM VS. ILLIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM: THE LINK BETWEEN IDEOLOGIES AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY EUROPE

POLITICAL THOUGHT

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INTRODUCTION

As various theories of international relations suggest in different ways regarding liberal internationalism in relation to state power, the decline of the twentieth century state was a result of either an illiberal or liberal approach to internationalism, or involved other circumstances. However, in the case of Europe after the Second World War, it was not liberal internationalism that eventually led to the decline of the state, but rather post-war reconciliation and the cooperation of sides, as well as transfer of some parts of state sovereignty to the European Union's supranational mechanisms have led to democratic institutions compatible with the international organizations with shared sovereignties rather than declined states. Additionally, the impact of globalization during the two last decades of the XX century was most perceptible in the European continent with its reduced sovereignty of states.

Internationalism represents two things: an orientation and belief that conglomerates maintenance of national independence, as well as international security in the foreign policy of states. If foreign policy complies with internationalism, and if states work at strengthening international institutions and cross-border cooperation, then it is believed that both international peace and security can benefit and the probability of wars it is supposed to be reduced significantly. Internationalism has oscillated across various historical phases in Europe, depending on the dynamics and ideological influences and orientations of its institutions. Identifying the nature of links between ideologies and democratic institutions helps to decenter specifically *liberal* and *illiberal* ascriptions of internationalisms.

By means of traditional tools, literature review and comparative analysis, the paper explores the reflections of the ideological dilemmas that took place in European countries in terms of their institutional building processes and state reformation models at the end of the twentieth century. The paper aims to answer the following question: how did it happen that, after the fall of communism in Eastern and Central Europe, in some former communist countries, liberal internationalism is adhered to as a logic and tradition in building democratic institutions and completing their transition, while in other cases (South East Europe), the introduced illiberal forms of democracies attempt to be compatible with the international organizations and criteria that are part of the area of influence of liberal internationalism? How, if at all, was Woodrow Wilson's liberal internationalism central to the former as a lesson, or as a failure of particular countries only?

There are several factors that made liberal internationalism prevail in terms of influence in some parts of Europe, mainly in Western Europe, taking into consideration,

firstly, the historical factors of the democratic tradition, and secondly, factors of the normative liberal legacy in democratic institutional and capacity state-building.

THE MODELS OF INTERNATIONALISM

It is an old philosophy belief that international peace and security can benefit if international institutions are strengthened and cooperative connections proliferate across borders. Hence, international organizations and law, trade exchange and other forms of communication would reduce the probability of wars. The notion used to indicate this belief is internationalism. Internationalism is an approach that combines the maintenance of national independence and international security as priorities within the foreign policy of states. In general terms, it symbolizes a set of beliefs to the effect that, if there are more laws, organizations and exchange among states, peace and security will be more sustainable.

Hedley Bull distinguishes between Hobbes' 'realism' of Hobbes, Kant's 'universalism', and Grotius' 'internationalism' of Grotius (Bull 2012:24-25). However, that is not the only way of applying the approach of internationalism, which goes beyond it. Internationalism often refers to the opposite of isolationism. Or, for instance, when one considers the case of Hitler, who had global ambitions, and Lenin, who advocated world revolution, the first theoretical impression would be that both would be classified as internationalists in the global picture. In European history of the twentieth century, their cases have further strengthened the imperative to make distinctions of various models and levels of internationalism, at least in view of two distinctive contradictory concepts: liberal vs. illiberal models of internationalism. Indeed, neither Lenin nor Hitler was an internationalist with regard to institution-building and cooperation for the sake of peace and security, i.e. neither of them was a liberal internationalist.

There are two traditions that form the roots of twentieth-century internationalism: the history of suggestions for international organizations in the nineteenth century, and classical liberalism beliefs about the benefits of free trade from the same century. In essence, two ideas originate from the latter ideology: the idea the world will be more peaceful if people realize the benefits of free trade, and the idea that the search for free trade will imbue every subject with this awareness.

According to Goldman (2003: 23), internationalism can take four major forms: that anarchy-related concerns are the source of some of the incompatibilities of interest leading to war; that even anarchy-related incompatibilities of interest can be significantly reduced without replacing national independence with world authority;

that war results to a large extent from escalation rather than directly from underlying incompatibilities; and that the components of the internationalist program contribute to reducing both the scope of the incompatibilities of interest and the probability of escalation.

Often, the term ‘internationalism’ is not used in a proper way, especially when it comes to the history of the communist misinterpretation approach of exploiting the concept of internationalism, which dates back to democratic socialists who, alongside liberals, were among the foremost supporters of the internationalist program (McKinlay and Little 1986). In fact, the liberal tradition of international ethics can often be invoked interchangeably with internationalism, as the founders of this approach to international relations were liberals (with Kant as the leading founder), while this interchangeability does not apply to democratic socialism, whose founders in international relations were not liberals, but rather Marxists.

CONCEPTUALIZING LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

Liberal internationalism is a theoretical approach in international relations that claims that liberal states in principle intervene in other sovereign states in order to achieve liberal objectives and for the sake of protecting human rights. However, such involvement can take both military and non-military forms (humanitarian assistance), and in practice, it often takes a mixed form, i.e. that of a humanitarian intervention, although theory does not recognize this form. Still, humanitarian interventions are a typical form of liberal internationalism in practicing international relations when it comes to the international conflicts at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century within the concept of liberal internationalism as a doctrine of foreign policy of states. The theory of liberal internationalism, also known as institutional liberalism theory, strongly promotes the idea that international organizations can significantly encourage the cooperation among states via their involvement in the interaction of the international system. In this view, liberal internationalism fortifies the liberal belief that sustained, even permanent, peace is possible, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations and many other moral declarations, as well as other documents. Apart from intergovernmental organizations, liberal internationalism also applies to those numerous distinctive types of *politically* liberal states that are members of the European Union, or classified by Freedom House as free countries.

Although its roots can be traced back to the analysis of domestic liberalism by Hobson (Long and Wilson, 1995: 160) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, liberal internationalism did not reach fame until the First World War. The credits for this absolutely go to the thinking and foreign policy principles promoted by US President Woodrow Wilson, who later inspired many internationalism writers and leaders in Europe during the twentieth century.

The predecessors of the foreign policy doctrine of liberal internationalism in twentieth-century Europe and in the West in general can be traced back to two attempts at shaping a link between ideologies and democratic institutions: *pacifism* (prior to the Second World War) and *universalism* (after the Second World War). Prior to that, the idea traces back to nineteenth-century liberals who are usually considered philosophers of war and peace, like Immanuel Kant, Richard Cobden, John Bright, John Stuart Mill and others.

According to Williams, *pacifism* in essence predestined some form of internationalism with three main strands:

“The first is a mainstream liberal belief in the innate illogicality of war, as war is linked to atavistic nationalism...The second puts the causes of war down to capitalism and imperialism and sees some form of socialism as the only answer. A third strand, which Martin Ceadel sees as being strong just before the war... seeing war as economically irrational while attributing its encouragement to various capitalist influences and in particular the arms manufacturers. (Williams, 2006: 18)

On the other hand, *universalism* predestined the prospects of universal values of societies that could move beyond the differences of cultural values which, in the future, could act as a platform for universal peace and cooperation. According to Gismondi (2008: 9), universalism “also became the basis for moral justifications of liberal imperialism, a fact only made worse by the absence of the voluntarism element of the covenantal tradition”.

The roots of liberal internationalism in the North American continent and those in Europe are characterized by various trajectories. According to Williams, the North American roots “are both ‘progressive’ and ‘conservative’ in that some Americans came to believe that it was either America’s moral duty to spread the liberal gospel to the rest of the world (broadly speaking Wilson’s position), or that it was in America’s interest to do so given its increasing aspiration to world power”. (Williams, 2006: 18)

In Europe, especially since the end of the Cold War, liberal internationalist ideas have been mainly debated in broad terms and by liberals, social democrats, and some churches only. However, as far as East-West relations in Europe were concerned, a change of the internationalist type was promoted by a wide variety of political parties, churches, and peace groups (Goldmann and Robertson, 1988). Internationalist ideals became dominant factors in shaping the foreign policies of several states. At the end of the twentieth century, as Goldman claims, “the basic ideas of internationalism were widely taken for granted in Western politics at both the élite and popular levels, and they could not be identified with a specific ideology or party and even less with specific individuals. Few outside the seminar rooms of academia seemed to doubt that peace and security benefit from international institution-building and cooperation” (Goldmann, 2003: 16). The first benefit from the doctrine was that it notably created a framework of international co-operation and led to a growing level of universal commitment for protecting and promoting human rights and tolerance with regard to several aspects.

CONCEPTUALIZING ILLIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

“Non-internationalism” is the most fitting phrase to describe illiberal internationalism at different times in Europe during the twentieth century. Locke used to say that illiberal states exist and that there is a ‘state of nature’ for all (Doyle, 1997:214). Either determination or stated orientation of the states in accepting and promoting internationalism does not mean by default to adhere to liberal internationalism. During the Cold War in Europe of the twentieth century, the Socialist states systematically abused human rights in the name of democratic centralism or proletarian internationalism, which was an obvious case of illiberal internationalism. The same model is still maintained as a matrix in many post-communist countries and discourses of nation in countries and societies of the former socialist bloc in Eastern, Central and South East Europe.

A completely different case, in terms of the stated orientation towards the attributes of internationalism versus the manifested democratic peace theory altogether, with a commitment to internationalism, was Germany and Japan becoming liberal trading nations after the Second World War, when the countries became both democratic and peaceful. The EU project did not only maintain the internationalism of cooperation, trade exchange and international communication, unlike many post-communist countries in the East, but it also expanded the zone of the democracy for the sake of peaceful civilizations. This, in fact, is the difference between liberal internationalism and the practice of illiberal internationalism of authoritarian and dictatorial concepts

of internationalism in East and South East Europe during communism and in the era of democracy. The link between illiberal ideology and democratic institutions never worked and there are still difficulties to be tackled.

As for the non-EU- countries of the former socialist bloc in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, they only formally signed up to the civil and political aspects of the United Nations human rights legislation, but in practice, they denied the very importance of the individual. After the end of the Cold War, the widespread feeling was that all that had changed. However, not in every former socialist country, some of which still call for the internationalist cause, while they are slowly going through an actual transition from communist to democratic institutions.

When everyone was euphoric about the chance to be recognized with the slogan of democracy on the international plan, the autocratic leaderships found a way to introduce oligarchic and corruptive schemes in the democratic era, while investing in non-democratic institutions and illiberal practices. A large number of new states emerged from the former Soviet Union. Later, some states that had emerged from former socialist Yugoslavia promoted a non-violent transformation of their political systems towards pluralism and became active in the international system as members of international organizations and initiatives, however without any significant domestic modernization or liberalization of their institutions. The EU membership reformation process criteria became a distinction line among these illiberal democracies and the liberal internationalist democracies that were integrated into the EU.

At the beginning, many countries in Europe including several former Yugoslav republics as well as countries around Russia rejected both what Ornauer (1976, quoted in Goldmann, 2003:15) would describe as *radical internationalism* (‘to obtain peace, we should have a world state with disappearance of national borders and with an efficient world government’) and *non-internationalism* (‘to obtain peace, countries should have less to do with each other and become more self-sufficient’). When the Cold War ended, just before Yugoslavia started its long and bloody process of dissolution, there was hope that the UN could be empowered to play a much more effective role in prevention and in restoring security and peace in Europe, but at the same time, Europe was again searching for a sustainable arrangement that would address its long-term apprehension for a lasting peace in the old continent. While in Western Europe and the West in general, since the nineteenth century, various structures (for instance scholar Herz (1968: 73), in his list, mentions the labor movements, churches, elements of industrial elite, and various movements like the peace movement) had much earlier adopted other forms of internationalism rather than the radical internationalism

, the tradition of the East European countries was solely based on the socialist internationalist ideology, which had never worked out and had never been realized, except for its failure, and then was covered by the totalitarian regimes and autocratic rule to stop freedom of speech and thought, and allowing only limited freedom of movement.

DECENTERING LIBERAL AND ILLIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

While liberal internationalism moves away from the hypothesis that war is inexorable as far as relations between societies are muddled and there is no other mode for conflict resolution, illiberal internationalism embraces this hypothesis, often present in the recent history of Europe during and after the Cold War. Liberal internationalism considers protective fighting to be reasonable, but unlike with illiberal internationalism, it is only accepted as an essential value of the acceptance of the state itself, and therefore, according to liberal internationalism, force should not be obliterated, but be part of the toolkit of international law efforts.

In the framework of liberal internationalism, relations between people are much more advanced, support of free trade is strong, and isolationism is challenged, which is not always the case with illiberal. The former opposes not just the sponging interests that take advantage from arms, but also the industrial benefits brought about by isolationism.

The difference between liberal and illiberal internationalism is similar to the difference between cosmopolitan liberalism and communitarian particularism. In this view, Gismondi reminds us with his contrastive approach that cosmopolitans argue that communitarianism is too closely tied to territorial or parochial interests, while communitarians express concerns about the abstractness and paternalism of universal ethical theories. According to him, “the covenant paradigm, in contrast, captures both the universal and particularistic components of the cosmopolitan and communitarian views” (Gismondi, 2008). For instance, while democrats have faith in their fellow democrats that are committed to solving conflicts of interest, on the other hand, they lack faith in those non-democratic structures. Hence, Doyle (1986:1161) is right when he claims that “while liberals benefit from a presumption of amity, non-liberals suffer from a presumption of enmity.”

For what distinguishes liberal from illiberal states is that the former believe in the creation of a better world and that they are prototypes of what that world should look like, which is not necessarily the case with the latter. Liberal states have always sympathized with and occasionally gone to the aid of those vanquished by illiberal regimes, especially in the last hundred years.

Chronologically analyzed, liberal internationalism often seems to find itself in a crisis, because liberal theory itself has experienced many crises during the twentieth century. That creates a vacuum which foreign policies of illiberal internationalism often try to make use of. Therefore, Alasdair MacIntyre might be right when he claims that the incoherence of contemporary liberal discourse is a result of the failure of liberals to develop a genuinely rational ethical theory (MacIntyre, 2007). Liberal international thought is primarily guided by principles of domestic politics. Europe, however, has failed to recognize liberal international values several times, including during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The lesson was not learnt until 1999, when NATO, with its humanitarian intervention during the Kosovo War for the sake of human rights and restoring democracy, joined forces and synchronized the positions of the member states for preventing another ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, only after the member states expressed domestic support for this action.

Theoretically, liberal systems are perfectly capable of relying upon the balance of power and of narrowing high politics conceptions of interest in their foreign policy decision-making process. However, when these states are inclined to ignore international agreements and commitments and to allow humanitarian catastrophes to happen, with very little apprehension for those affected by such developments, the dividing line between illiberal and liberal internationalism becomes very thin. Weak responses from Europe in several crises during the second half of the twentieth century are a typical example. Practically, liberal foreign policy actors have often shown a lack of moral vision and clear strategies for quick reactions in terms of conflict resolution and intervention, which has created enough space for misuse of the concept by illiberal practices in domestic politics, as well as within the internationalism of socialist networks, ethical manipulations of internationalism, international initiatives of dictators and autocrats, etc.

THE VARYING NATURE OF LINKS BETWEEN IDEOLOGIES AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN EUROPE

Internationalism's oscillations in various phases in Europe have been linked to the state of ideological influences and orientations of its institutions. As a result of certain historical events, on the one side, and following the influence of global developments, on the other, internationalism in Europe during the twentieth century has taken various forms following these oscillations. However, the classical concept of internationalism, i.e. liberal internationalism, has maintained its dominance and helped internationalism in general to remain significantly efficient at all times.

A significant trend in Europe since the Paris Conference in 1919 seems to be functionalism with its ideological influences. The main classical liberal internationalism thought of that time, under the then ideological circumstances, was linked to the idea that state and economy should be seen as severed from each other, and the concept of balance of power would move forward with a conferred concern in peace and security. Meanwhile, in the 1930s, David Mitrany (de Wilde, 1991), who followed the prior work by Leonard Hobhouse, as well as Leonard Woolf and G. D. H. Cole, now promoted the theory of peace by allocating the traditional functions of the state to international organizations.

The main ideological assumption of this new dimension of international cooperation here to be promoted was that peace is more than the absence of violence. Following the ideological patterns of Mitrany's peace theory in Western Europe this time, it was obvious that not only peace organizations, but international organization in general would contribute to solving the problem of peace and security in Europe and around the globe.

The failure of the League of Nations put the idea of internationalism into question for a short while only. It was a matter of time for it to accomplish the ideological reflection of the West at that time. So, in the meanwhile, new internationalist attempts were planned to be launched even during World War II, and the old internationalist idea of the League of Nations became a reality when, in October 1945, the United Nations Organization was established.

During the Cold War, characterized by the dominance of realist theoretical debates in international relations and by obvious manifest influences by the main political ideologies in Europe, however, serious attempts and discussions about the main concern of the future, i.e. how to establish lasting peace, were not missing and became

one of the main concerns of NATO at the time. It is because of this situation that NATO had to advance its political component in parallel with the military one.

Maybe it was exactly NATO's role as the only organization that started to spend a lot of energy out of any noisy debate on lasting peace in the future via international cooperation at the peak of realist debates and preoccupation with realist planning by the states. We can take the freedom and describe this phase as advanced internationalism that returned to Western Europe in its liberal form. We can claim that it was of liberal nature, having in mind that, even in the period of East-West *détente*, NATO member countries saw hope for a solution and believed in peace and security according to the functioning of international organizations and law, and adhered to the ideological paradigm that economic cooperation creates links that prevent governments from joining conflicts. NATO's role was obviously the first significant proof of the hope that the liberal nature of links between ideology and democratic institutions in Europe and America that adopt decisions by consensus functions and has an impact on the future.

When the Cold War ended and the countries of Central Europe started to show interest and prepare for accession to NATO and the EU, it was obvious that by transforming the ideologies of their domestic institutions and the belief in new forms of internationalism, i.e. in liberal internationalism, these countries could one day serve the cause of peace and security more effectively as full members and would take up an active role in institutional cooperation via international organizations and therefore be much more capable of establishing lasting peace in Europe and globally in the twenty-first century.

With the fall of communism, the nature of links between ideologies and institutions in Europe changed significantly as well. As the ideological objectives altered, the goals of institutions under such ideological influences and new realities changed as well. This is true for the new strategic priorities of the countries that used to be NATO and EU members before the end of the Cold War, but especially for the former communist countries of Central and East Europe that joined NATO and EU after the end of the Cold War.

The paradigm that scholars Rosenau and Holsti (1983:379) predicted, referring to the changes of internationalism in the USA during the Cold War and how it could be one day when the Cold War will end, apply to this situation. In this view, they were right when they distinguished between 'Cold War Internationalists' and 'Post-Cold War Internationalists'. The difference is that the former pretend to adhere on the course of alliance pledges, continue further with the Soviets in military terms, and react to their efforts to encompass the influence worldwide, while the latter pretend to be engaged

in a variety of political and economic international organizations that keep them out of the rivalries and confrontations and support inter-state cooperation. The recent history of political developments has shown that this applies to Europe before as well as after the Cold War.

THE FACTORS OF PREVALENCE OF LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE

After the end of the Second World War and despite its catastrophic outcomes, liberal internationalism was easily reintroduced and has strongly developed ever since in the Western European countries as a result of several factors. Three of them can be considered as prevailing: *the historical factor of democratic tradition, the factor of normative liberal legacy in democratic institutional and capacity state-building, and the inherited political liberal thought within the national ideological setting. Therefore, it is all about tradition and legacy, quite unlike in Eastern Europe.*

The historical factor had its decisive influence following the historical democratic legacy which only needed to be reactivated. Immanuel Kant in his "Definitive Article" declared early that Europe's nations should be republics, that the constitution should be based on the civil rights of individuals within that state, and that states should be united in a federation of free states. He even predicted that everyone has the right to demand hospitality from the state and can be seen as part of a universal state of mankind (Kant, 2003). Immanuel Kant's ideas are core for liberal internationalism and were recalled much easier as a legacy from the recent past by the Western European countries after the Second World War. Europe did follow Kant's vision, but also the tradition based on the visionary writings of Stuart Mill, Woodrow Wilson, Jeremy Bentham, Jean Monnet and others who envisioned the idea of a peaceful Europe. Some of these authors spoke about the idea that cooperation of liberal economies and protection of human rights are crucial for long-lasting peace in Europe much earlier than the twentieth century.

The factors of the normative liberal legacy in democratic institutional and capacity state-building in Europe should be explained by means of understanding the legacy of liberal theory on what constitutes a liberal state. In this view, theoreticians like Gismondi (2008: 19) suggest that liberal states should guarantee a protected set of rights, which must lead toward liabilities and prerogatives positioned upon them by international and domestic political institutions. Yet, it seems too ambitious when he claims that there is some kind of broad idealistic agreement that such rights are crucial to the dignity and well-being of all people, which does not apply to all European

countries of the twentieth century. Even though the importance of different sets of rights (especially the political, economic and social rights) is not different between political communities in Western Europe in general, it is different when compared to Central and East Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Therefore, there are different normative factors in different countries and different ways to conceptualize the democratic institutions in detail, which one should take into consideration, as well as the particular history of democracy of certain nations and the specifics of political culture that reflect the mechanisms of state-building.

A significant part in the new theoretical debates within the international relations since the fall of the Berlin Wall in the late twentieth century has been played by the asserted ideological triumph of liberalism over all other alternative theories, systems and regimes in politics. As a result of the factor of the inherited political liberal thought within the national ideological setting in Europe, it was much easier to understand Fukuyama's "end of history" and to restore optimism for long-lasting peace and functioning of liberal internationalism in Europe, since the "end of history" concept, in the case of Europe, in fact indicated the final defeat of communism. Historically, political liberal thought in Europe has sought to create conditions for a win-win situation, i.e. a new order in which everybody can benefit from the transformations taking place and in which each individual and organization can be directed by its own benefits and coin their own definition of freedom and support for the others in the world, free of any threat in its national agenda.

THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM OF WOODROW WILSON AND POST-COMMUNIST EUROPE

Former US president Woodrow Wilson was the leading internationalist who influenced as well as shaped internationalism in Europe in the twentieth century. He is considered as the main inspiring and ideological supporter of the independence of several states in Central and South East Europe in the beginning of the twentieth century.

His plan for introducing peace in the world with the well-known idealist fourteen points by establishing intergovernmental international organizations based on the principles of democratic institutions even then indirectly announced the possible upcoming threat of illiberal internationalism to mire this part of Europe, which happened several decades later with the illiberal internationalism of communist regimes. Even today, many plural and multi-party, nevertheless illiberal democratic states in East and South East Europe, which are not integrated into the EU, are still coping with its legacy.

Woodrow Wilson's prophetic approach to Europe even then clearly reminded of the need to respect democratic values and premises in the decisions about creating those states, thus not leaving any space for other kinds of systems. He predicted for the countries of Europe to join their forces and democratic capacities in defense against illiberal democracies and to avoid improvisations of internationalism, as it was the case with the illiberal internationalism so much promoted by socialist ideology, under communism and dictatorial regimes, which was obviously disconnected from the ideology that would have been much more fitting in a natural way, with its democratic institutions.

It took those countries more than a half a century to realize this, and only by the end of the twentieth century, some, and during the first two decades of the twenty-first century, others joined NATO and accepted the liberal internationalism destination as the only path for stability in this neuralgic part of Europe.

For Woodrow Wilson, internationalism and democracy were attached. This was also his vision for Europe, for both East and West. It is in line with the tradition of internationalist thinking to consider law, organization, exchange, and communication to be more likely to lead to peace and security if states are democratic than if they are authoritarian. Fascist regimes in Western Europe and communist dictatorships in East and Central Europe never took this logic seriously.

According to Woodrow Wilson's liberal internationalist logic, the causes for the eruption of the First World War as well as the basis for ending it, as well as, hopefully, any similar following wars, can be found in his Fourteen Points of January 1918 (Conlin, 2010: 626). His historical work can be considered an index that recognized key problems of the time, including the prerequisite of self-determination of some peoples of Europe that were still living under occupation. At the same time, Wilson provided a significant contribution to the theoretical debate in international relations, as he somehow provided an initial general contrast between the practices of liberal and illiberal internationalism soon to follow in Europe (although he never made the direct distinction by using the notions 'liberal' and 'illiberal') when he announced the defects of the international system which soon showed that it was going to undergo some structural transformations. In addition to his prophetic announcement in favor of giving a strategic advantage to liberal internationalism in practice, many of his famous points address his belief in the need for changes in terms of freedom of the seas (Point II), freedom of trade (Point III), and decolonization (Point V). However, according to Wilson, the key to changing international politics is linked to his suggestions on what we qualify today as international agreements on cooperation and on resolving disputes, which

proves that the premises of liberal internationalism and Wilson's idealism were core to determining the links between ideologies and democratic institutions in Western Europe in the twentieth century.

Wilson, both as a politician and as an author, relied on covenant language when he referred to the normative paradigms of international relations. At first sight, this may be considered as a source of many misinterpretations of internationalism and as a reason why Wilson's predictions were not followed to avoid the First and Second World War in Europe. However, the problem is in fact much broader when we come to his interpretation of internationalism, which is liberal at all times and calls on the precondition of a link between idealism and democratic institutions at home as well, rather than a general concept of internationalism or just any kind of internationalism which only uses the phrase and commitment of internationalism. His belief in internationalism did not have anything to do with illiberal internationalism at any time, he would never have believed in illiberal internationalism. Therefore, the question whether internationalism assumes democracy inside states to be a necessary condition for international peace and security is merely rhetorical. Of course, that is what Wilson's internationalism assumes. The internationalists consider internationalist change, and when we follow Wilson's logic, this is related to the moment of introducing international law and organizations that expand peace, as it was the case in Western Europe, but at the same time, these international organizations and laws also grow during peaceful cooperation, communication and exchange in general. This was not the case in Central and East Europe under communism, until most of the states that emerged following their democratization in the last decade of the twentieth century and were integrated into NATO and the EU during the first decade of the twenty-first century and thus obviously became much more capable of following Wilson's liberal internationalist ideal of maintaining peace and security, as far as these countries are really democratic. Therefore, it is not true that the theory of internationalism should be considered as vague on this issue, as Kjell Goldman in his book "The logics of internationalism: Coercion and Accommodation" (2003) attempted to claim, with no significant argument in this view when he refers to the role of democracy in terms of international peace and security. The problem is rather which line is followed when we come to the foreign policies of countries claiming their attachment to the internationalist cause: liberal or illiberal internationalism? Many failures to provide understanding on these issues, and on the legacy of Wilson's internationalism for Europe, are a result of mixing up liberal and illiberal internationalism.

CONCLUSION

Liberalism's periodical failures to articulate paradigms of shared human moral often flag up serious dilemma about the traditional assertions of political leaders to perform according to rule and integrity on the global level.

For ages, the presence of liberal thought in the democratic conceptualization of Western Europe, where the influence of liberal internationalist values has been dominant in the ideological shaping of its democratic institutions, just as in North America in the nineteenth and twentieth century, has led to the conviction that the international community of nations is able to organize European politics, and even world politics, in its own appearance. In Europe, the history of the twentieth century and the first decades of the twenty-first century show that this belief has been followed only when internationalism has functioned as a platform following its original ideas to come to expression in practice, with no misuses of the liberal vacuums on the international stage, and with a clear link between liberal ideology and democratic institutions on a national level. This means that only when it comes with its real face, internationalism can achieve lasting peace, strengthen international institutions and law, maintain cooperative connections across borders, foster trade exchange, and promote other forms of communication that can reduce the probability of wars. These elements of internationalism are very close to its prevailing and ideal form, i.e. liberal internationalism.

Liberal internationalism is most widely accepted and practiced in Europe and North America. However, this does not mean by default that liberal internationalism is the only manifested model in Europe of end of the twentieth and the first two decades of the twenty-first century.

Apart from the obvious cases of communist dictatorial and totalitarian leaderships in East, Central and South East Europe in the past, even after the dramatic developments of the twentieth century, there are still leaders in Europe, , who keep internationalism high in their agenda, and who claim to be committed to the concept of internationalism (in a rhetoric way, however), maintain international relations all around the world (trying to benefit from them politically), have committed their states to the civil and political international obligations of the United Nations and other international organizations regarding human rights legislation (which means that they do not deny the very importance of the individual), but nevertheless, they act as typical examples of illiberal internationalism. Regardless if these cases fail to make a proper connection between internationalist values and democratic institutions and standards at home,

or see it as the only way to keep up their autocratic rule, or use the internationalism rhetoric as an umbrella for keeping their corruption policies alive, in the end it is obvious that, in these countries, the paradigm of internationalism is shaped with Illiberal democracy. The slow and long transition to democracy and obvious obstacles to democratic reformation represent another proof that illiberal internationalism is still popular in many post-communist countries in Europe that are not part of the European Union's internationalist program.

For what distinguishes liberal political systems, democracies and leaders from illiberal ones is that they follow the logic of introducing values that continuously reflect the development of a common world equal for everyone at home and abroad, which serves as a genuine model of democracy and synergy for the rest of the world. Furthermore, the influence of the inherited political liberal thought within the connection between ideologies and democratic institutions in Europe of the late twentieth century indicates the growing force of globalization that has made the world a much smaller place, particularly since the end of the Cold War: a development that obviously further favors the perspectives of liberal internationalism.

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SHORT BIOGRAPHY



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THE INFLUENCE OF WAHHABI TEACHING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEGAL-POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND RADICAL ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS

POLITICAL THOUGHT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of Wahhabism in our countries is rarely analyzed in a coherent and impartial manner. There are almost no analytical texts that establish the basic legal-political and ideological characteristics of radical Islamist movements inspired by Wahhabism, and even when they do exist, they are often unconvincing. Hence, it is important for the scholarly public and practitioners in the region to clarify certain basic questions concerning the true meaning of Wahhabism, its transplantation from a religious teaching into a juridical-political mechanism, and further security implications.

The aim of this paper, therefore, is to help intensify the scientific debate around the meaning of these movements in general, but also for our region, all with the aim of obtaining a complete picture of their effects in everyday life. Although the scope does not allow a detailed analysis of the historical ordeals that portrayed Wahhabism as an ideological substratum of Saudi Arabia's juridical-political systems and some radical movements, this paper is primarily concerned with analyzing the main features of the original conservative theoretical school labeled Wahhabism, using the main points from the works of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. The paper then analyzes the accommodations and distortions in theory and practice of al-Wahhab's teachings in the legal system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as in contemporary fundamentalist movements.

In that sense, according to this paper, the development path of the radical puritan teaching of Wahhabism moves in two directions – one is the accommodative legal-political direction that is reflected in the creation of Saudi Arabia as a state entity and the development of its legal system; and the second is ideological - militaristic, and is reflected in the inspiration for radical Islamist groups. This does not mean that the two directions were not intertwined in their historical development, that is, that one did not influence the other in a material or ideological way. However, one direction resulted in the formation of a state-legal system that is recognized in the world, and the other is an ideological substrate of certain modern forms of terrorism. In essence, the political leaders in Saudi Arabia as well as the ideologues of contemporary Islamist fundamentalist groups have deconstructed some of the basic theoretical claims of the founder of Wahhabi teachings, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, and used them to legitimize and promote their own activities. Hence, it would be an overstatement to make a direct link between the original theory of Wahhabism and the contemporary legal-political basis of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or the Islamist radicalism. However, according to this paper, there are visible links between Wahhabism and the legal system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as with the global jihadist organizations.

Looking at the formation of Saudi Arabia and its legal system, clearly it draws its legal and political foundations in building the state from the teachings of Wahhabism, and adapts them depending on the actual geopolitical contexts. In relation to militant movements, it is evident that Islamist fundamentalists in the wider world, but also in the region, draw a significant part of their inspirations and legitimization for their activities from the distorted version of al-Wahhab's theoretical school.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF "ORIGINAL" WAHABISM

Wahhabism is one of the streams of Muslim theoretical teachings. It is "essentially a puritanical, fundamentalist Islamic reform movement that calls for the restoration of the faith as originally presented in the Qur'an and Sunnah, the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and his early companions." (Long, 2009)

As one of the "ultraconservative" interpretations of Islam, it should immediately be said that Wahhabi Islam is the official form of Islam in Saudi Arabia (Esposito 2002: 50). Wahhabism takes its name from the scholar of theology and law from the province of Najd in Central Arabia, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1791).

Over the years, Wahhabism has become an intriguing topic in academic and political discourse, particularly the one dealing with counter-terrorism and security issues in the Middle East. Some authors treat it as the most intolerant of all interpretations of Islam that inspires fanatical militant movements around the world. (Abou El Fadl 2002, Rashid 2000) Others, like DeLong-Bass, try to explain that there are two types of Wahhabi Islam - the vision of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, as a reformist vision of Islam in the service of public order and welfare, and that of Bin Laden, based on the idea of a global jihad. However, in order to achieve objectivity in the analysis, it is necessary to review the main characteristics of the school of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and compare them with further movements in the territory of and around the Arabian Peninsula from the 19th to the 21st century.

At the same time, it is significant to clarify some terminological ambiguities, which add to the mystique of this movement. Many scholars, practitioners and citizens, especially in the Balkans, use the terms Wahhabism, Salafism and Jihadism interchangeably. (Somun 2010, Arsovska 2013) However, these terms do not denote completely similar movements, but movements that differ in many aspects.

Predictably, these terminological ambiguities reinforce stereotypes and historical labeling, which in turn problematize understanding of the movement's origins and

modus operandi. It is significant to note that the movement has never used the terms “Wahhabi” and “Wahhabism” to describe itself. Some authors analyze that the Ottomans were the first to use the term, while others argue that the British named the fundamentalist followers of Al-Wahhab as “Wahhabis” in order to slander them for their traditionalism, as well as mark them as a sectarian movement. (Al-Fahad 2004)

The original school of Wahhabism was founded as an Islamic revivalist and reformist movement centered on pietism and orthopraxy, which from the beginning used theological influence to aid politics in uniting the Arab tribes into a common state. “

“[A]l-Wahhab referred to his followers as the muwahhidun, ...signifying their alliance to tawhid [absolute monotheism]” (DeLong-Bass 2004) Salafism, on the other hand, according to the same authors, is understood as a term from the beginning of the twentieth century that aims to describe a reformist theological school in Egypt, which grew into an inspiration for the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood, as a militant organization. It derives from the words “al-salaf al-salih” or “righteous predecessors” (the Prophet and his companions and early descendants), as the followers called themselves. Finally, according to these authors, jihadism is considered to refer to an “offshoot” that emerged in the late twentieth century from the established Salafism, and which was inspired by the Egyptian scholar and activist Sayyid Qutb. This movement advocates the establishment of an Islamic state, based on Sharia law, through jihad. Jihadism is then extended to a tendency to fight between good and evil in an endless cosmic struggle, which many authors consider a global jihad (Allen 2006, Phares 2008).

However, both positions take an ideological side in this controversial debate. It is clear that, despite the difference in the details of their teaching, all these terms are in constant use among the general public, as well as among the followers themselves. As the analysis shows, this paper believes that all three movements in one period of development were part of the same reform tendency and influenced each other, while diverging in their methodologies for spreading the faith.

When starting the analysis of the Wahhabi movement's main characteristics, it is very significant to note the context in which it appears - the eighteenth century in the Middle East. The eighteenth century was a period of revival and reform in Islamic movements, in response to the deterioration of the practice of Islam, in terms of the adoption of rituals from other cultures and religions, belief in saints, various practices and the worship of monuments. At the same time, an often-overlooked characteristic

of the Wahhabi movement is that it was created in a society without a formal state structure. The arrangement in those areas during this period is actually in small nomadic environments where the Bedouins rule, as well as villages with local rulers who are constantly at war with each other. It is precisely in the fact that Wahhabism is a purpose-built teaching with the explicit aim of helping form a state that some authors find the explanation for the evolution from a revolutionary to a quieter and more accommodating ideology, especially as it relates to the state-legal system of Saudi Arabia. (Al-Fahad, 2004)

The new rituals among the believers in these circles were in obvious contradiction with al-Wahhab's most important doctrine of Tawhid, understood as a strict adherence to absolute monotheism – respect exclusively for the power of the one God. The basis of al-Wahhab's teaching, therefore, is a strict interpretation of Sunni Islam and a quest for renewal of the faith.

Apart from the restoration aimed at tawheed, some of the important characteristics of al-Wahhab's teachings are: the return of God's will in everyday life and the re-implementation of Islamic law (Sharia) which will serve for the socio-moral renewal of society; returning to the fundamentals of Islam – exclusively adhering to the Qur'an and the hadith (records of Muhammad's sayings and deeds) and rejecting the imitation of the past (bidat); the importance of women in society; missionary work to spread Islam through da'wah (work on education and persuasion); the relationship with non-believers and other religions; and positioning jihad (holy war) as a collective responsibility and last resort, in order to “to defend and aggrandize the Muslim community as a whole” (DeLong-Bas 2004). Each of the above characteristics deserves attention because it is crucial in understanding the differences and points of contact between the teachings of al-Wahhab and the fundamentalists of the 20th and 21st centuries.

First, tawhid, understood as absolute monotheism, was the basis of al-Wahhab's approach and an instrumental part of his famous work Kitab al-Tawhid (Book of the Oneness of Allah). Tawhid essentially means that true believers place their faith in God alone and not in human beings or objects. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab demonstrated the importance of this concept with a destructive approach - cutting down sacred trees, destroying monuments, as well as destroying tombstones of early Muslim leaders, especially that of Zayd ibn al-Khattab (one of Muhammad's companions and brother of the second Sunni caliph, Omar ibn al-Khattab) (DeLong-Bas 2004). These activities were seen as a strong signal that venerating objects and paying homage with superstitious practices would not be tolerated, as according to Wahhabi teaching, venerating or

worshiping anyone or anything other than God has no place in Islam. According to al-Wahhab, denying monotheism was tantamount to unbelief, which resulted in losing God's favor and becoming a mushrikun, a person who is a legitimate fighting target of "true" Muslims.

Second, al-Wahhab emphasized the importance of restoring God's will to daily living and re-implementing Islamic law (Sharia) for the socio-moral renewal of society. He believed in consistency between words and actions, and this correct belief was very significant in guiding Muslims to correct conduct. According to some authors, al-Wahhab's approach was two-phased: he began the reform by vigorously persuading local chiefs to apply these rules within a strict legal framework, but he also provided broader theological principles that legitimized the Shari'a. (Al-Fahad, 2004)

Third, al-Wahhab's view of exceptional adherence to the Qur'an and hadith was intended to overcome the different and often contradictory interpretations by Muslim theologians and jurists in the past. Thus, he insisted on contextualizing both the Qur'an and the hadith in order to be certain of the intent of the commandments behind the actions. It can be concluded that the revival of the original thoughts of Muhammad was not done as an attempt to re-create the original Muslim community, but as an attempt to actualize them in the specific historical moment. However, the dichotomy between 'true' Muslims, who live under Wahhabi precepts, and 'others', who follow the entrenched practices of the past, as we shall note below, has marked much of the conflict between Wahhabis and their local and foreign opponents.

Apart from the intra-Muslim aspect, al-Wahhab also regulated contractual relations with members of the Christian and Jewish communities, in order to achieve peaceful coexistence in social relations. He believed that with the followers of Jesus and Abraham, as two prophets of God, Muslims could coexist in peace and benefit each other.

FOURTH, REGARDING THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN MUSLIM SOCIETY, MANY BELIEVE THAT

"[a]t the core of Wahhabi/Salafi belief is an implacable opposition to women's rights. [They] enforce total segregation of the sexes" (Gerges 2006). Contrary to these claims, according to other authors, "the definitive position of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's writings regarding gender is one of balance." (DeLong-Bas 2004) Rather than promoting an attitude of misogyny or male dominance, it, according to these authors, based the overall

image of women as divinely created human beings expected to play a role in the process of salvation in the afterlife and to play an active role in this life in the establishment of the Islamic order. Devoting a treatise to women's issues (Kitab al-Nikah - Book on Marriage), al-Wahhab gave women the right to be parties to, rather than objects of, marriage contracts (although he considered them inferior to their husbands), and emphasized matters of respect, protection and social justice.

Fifth, analyzing the works of al-Wahhab, a belief in the proselytization of Islam through the process of missionary work - da'wah is also observed. Becoming a Muslim in his view should have been the result of an educational effort rather than a one-time declaration of faith made under threat of death. In order to structure the process of missionary work, al-Wahhab also prepared the treatise "The Clearing of Doubts" (Kitab Kashf al-Shubuhah). There, apart from the question of "how to lead", Al-Wahhab also referred to the possible outcomes of the missionary work and the activities that should follow the process: 1) converting to Islam and joining the movement; 2) paying the tax (jizyah) for obtaining protection status; or 3) war. It is important, according to DeLong-Bas, to note that al-Wahhab did not follow the approach of the medieval Hanbali scholar Ibn Taymiyya of declaring anyone who did not adhere to his teachings to be an infidel (kafir) and has to be dealt with.

The sixth, and most controversial, topic of al-Wahhab's theological school is the jihad factor, discussed in his "Book of Jihad" (Kitab al-Jihad). Jihad, according to Al-Wahhab, was a collective duty, assigned to those who fulfill the requirements established by God, to carry out activities to eliminate the enemy through persuasion to submit to Islam, up to the power of the sword. The purpose of jihad was understood as the protection and upliftment of the Muslim community, but not for the purpose of destroying the enemy, but forcing him to retreat or subdue.

Jihad was intended to be directed against the opponents of Islam, exclusively focusing on adult males who were given the choice of converting to Islam and paying the jizya, or being enslaved - and who chose not to accept these two choices. What is problematic about al-Wahhab's jihad is the distinction between three scenarios when jihad may be called for: when two opposing groups meet face to face and the other side does not back down; when the enemy leaves its own territory, especially enemies who are in close geographical proximity; but also when the imam calls for jihad. The Imam's responsibility, therefore, is to issue a call to jihad and to act as a mentor to the mujahidin (jihadi fighters) in order to strengthen their souls by discussing the reasons for their victories.

The problem in this scenario is that the imam is given a flexible and broad role in determining the unbelievers, and determining the time, manner and reasons for waging jihad. We therefore cannot agree with these authors' thesis that militant Wahhabis or other fundamentalists could not find a basis for their jihad in the works of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. It is a well-known fact that some imams and clerics in radical thought communities play a significant role in organizing, educating, directing and assisting these groups. These priests are a kind of ideological leaders of radical communities. Their understanding of jihad, especially understood as the imam's call to fight for the defense of religion, certainly has an impact on the radical groups that are part of that community. From this, the conclusion can be drawn that al-Wahhab's fluid approach to the responsibilities of the imam allows room for improvisation and alibis for contemporary militants to expand their violent influence through the words of their loyal imams.

Some authors argue that al-Wahhab's teachings are brutal and power-oriented in their essence.

"It was strictly literalist and uncompromising, applied with aggressive intolerance ... schismatic, and a byword for religious intolerance" (Allen 2006: 50). As we have seen with DeBass, some more thorough works dealing with the teachings of al-Wahhab argue that the original movement was limited in its scope to the spread of orthodoxy (adherence to basic norms) and orthopraxy (correct religious behavior), through education and persuasion. There are also those who, using the term "irreplaceable ideology" or the term "religious legitimacy", analyze that the Wahhabist teaching, through the nexus of man-religion-politics, has a key role on the formation and struggle of Saudi Arabia for dominance in the contemporary geopolitical currents of the Arab continent, but also on groups like Al-Qaeda which "made it their mission to spread a purified version of Islam around the world". (Choksy and Choksy 2015, Azzam 2003) Basically, a short definition explains the basis of the development of Wahhabism in the time in which it developed - "Wahhabism developed for the purpose of strengthening the core of Islam." (Payne: 302)

In our view, the original school of theology provided some inspiration for the militarist movements of the 20th and 21st centuries, but the essence of "modern" fundamentalists is based on distortions of al-Wahhab's teachings. These alterations first started from domestic politics in search of power during the development of Saudi Arabia as a state, directly through the politicization of religion, and then were brutalized by the militaristic fundamentalists in the person of Osama bin Laden and his followers

in the Islamic State. Therefore, it is rightly stated that at the dawn of the twenty-first century, it is clear that there is more than one type of Wahhabi Islam.

3. TRANSFORMATION FROM RELIGION TO LAW AND POLITICS

Several significant aspects emerge from this initial thesis. The first is the political and legal implications of Wahhabism, which start from the very beginning, and are reflected in the personal participation of this religious theorist in the formation of the first Saudi state. Second, the legal system of Saudi Arabia even today, after the formation and collapse of several Saudi kingdoms, is based on Sharia law, with a strong emphasis on Wahhabi theories about the family, the state, the role of husband and wife, etc. Thirdly, Saudi Arabia's export of political power through the ideological matrix and through war obviously sought its higher moral purpose and legitimization in the teachings of Wahhabism.

The political implications of Wahhabism were present from the beginning. In the vast region of Najd in 18th-century Saudi Arabia, many political leaders found al-Wahhab's vision attractive as a means of uniting the perpetually warring tribes into a single Muslim community (umma).

In terms of the practical relationship between power and politics, it is significant to consider Saudi Arabia's idea of state building and the struggle for political consolidation. In the mid-eighteenth century, in Darya, al-Wahhab received the support of the local leader of the Aneiza tribe - Muhammad Ibn Saud. They concluded an agreement to establish the Saud-Wahhabi dynasty, which would name but also represent the future, and current, rulers of Saudi Arabia. The swearing-in ceremony establishing the partnership was followed by the marriage of Ibn Saud's eldest son, Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud, to Al-Wahhab's daughter. Ibn Saud thus became a powerful political leader and assumed the title of emir, while al-Wahhab became an imam, soon assuming the greater title of Shaykh al-Islam. In this way, Wahhabism directly became a vehicle for the religious legitimization of Al Saud rule.

This agreement also gave Saud a kind of religious legitimacy, as well as access to the wealth generated by Zakat, the obligatory religious tax that is one of the five pillars of Islam. Jihad, as a struggle to spread the faith, was a religiously based reason for the expansion of the state. On the other hand, al-Wahhab gained considerable power as the chief imam of the religio-political apparatus. The two families formed a bond for

what would grow, certainly after long periods of violence, falling under the Ottoman Empire and the Hijazi defeat of Najdi, the modern Saudi state.

Analyzing the importance of restoring God's will in daily life and the re-implementation of Islamic law, which Wahhabism shapes for the socio-moral renewal of society, as well as the exceptional adherence to the Qur'an and the hadith, we will notice that they are strongly reflected in the functioning of the new legal system in Saudi Arabia. In order to overcome the contradictory interpretations, the Wahhabi avocation to return to the "Rightly Guided" (al-salaf al-saleh) is being strengthened. It represented liberation for many Muslim reformers. It meant the rebirth of ijthihad (the process of making a legal decision by independent interpretation of the legal sources, the Qur'an and the Sunnah), which would remove all previous interpretations. It allowed them a fresh look at the original sources and their direct interpretation.

Looking at Saudi Arabia, however, there is a definite departure from the teachings of al-Wahhab, primarily regarding the treatment of those who do not practice this path or the faith in general. During the second Saudi state, that dichotomy between Wahhabi political and scholarly groups over the conduct of their state's affairs and their relationship with their neighbors widened. In the numerous battles for supremacy, the authorities inevitably cooperated with numerous outside powers. Many jurists categorically forbade the solicitation and use of non-Muslim military aid, while others allowed it subject to some strict conditions, the most important of which were that the non-Muslims providing the aid must not participate in decision-making, and the party providing the aid must not be with such force as to be dangerous to those who receive it. (Al-Fahad 2004)

According to these authors, although they started from a radical approach to the organization of society and its relations with neighboring powers, through difficult experiences during two centuries, the theorists and guardians of the movement slowly realized the high cost of ideological purity and the value of realism in domestic and foreign affairs of the state. It is, according to these authors, "a process that transformed Wahhabism from a puritanical, exclusivist and uncompromising movement into a more docile and accommodating ideology concerned more with practical politics than with ideological rigor" (Al-Fahad 2004).

The beginning of the 20th century marks the strengthening of Saudi Arabia against the weakening of the Ottoman Empire. In the struggle with the external factor, as well as the "domestic" nomadic groups, the main positioning of Wahhabism is in the conflict between the state and the citizen, but especially on the issue of war and peace.

As regards the process of militarization of theoretical teachings, the concept of "convert or die" is particularly significant, which we will note has existed since the establishment of the first Saudi kingdom. Ibn Saud, but especially his son, was largely guided by this principle in gaining new adherents. This is considered one of the most important distortions that occurred to the theoretical postulates of Al-Wahhab's work.

In the beginning, by launching a campaign to unify central Arabia and impose a centralized authority under Wahhabi doctrines, the first Wahhabi followers inevitably had to face the hostility of powerful opponents. According to some authors, "this conflict initially took the form of theological and legal exchanges and polemics between scholars." (Al-Fahad 2004)

Hence, al-Fahad distinguishes two key characteristics of Wahhabism in state building and maintenance: militancy and exclusivity (Al-Fahad 2004). Each of these characteristics gains and loses intensity depending on the wider socio-political and military circumstances during the two-century development of the state. In that direction, the future Saudi rulers selectively used the teachings of al-Wahhab with the sole purpose of acquiring wealth and property through the process of spreading Islam and pursued political goals of consolidating the state. This narrow interpretation of Islam that departs from the broader teachings of the Qur'an and the Hadith propagates the so-called "religion of the sword." (Allen 2006)

In the early nineteenth century, the son of the Emir (Saud ibn Saud) began a process of territorial expansion beyond the tribal area of Saudi Arabia. With the attack on Karbala, in present-day Iraq, in 1802, the Saudi-Wahhabi dynasty attacked the Shia Muslims' holiest shrine, the tomb of their chief saint, Hussein, Muhammad's grandson. This destruction (based on the words and actions of al-Wahhab) and the subsequent occupation of Mecca began a brutal process of inter-Muslim confrontation. This clash will determine the stigma and stereotypes towards the followers of Wahhabism in the Muslim world. The struggle for power through politics has created a permanent phenomenon of differentiation between Muslims and Islamists. Therefore, Gerges aptly argues that "Muslims are believers who may or may not be interested in politics, while Islamists are political activists whose primary goal is to seize power and Islamize the state and society, preferably from the top down." (2006: 12)

Hence, certain authors rightly claim that the Saudi state apparatus is related to Wahhabism in both form and function. (Keppel 2002) An interpretation of Sharia law dictated by the Qur'an and Hadith defines the civil code of conduct. Wahhabism, for its part, allows Saudis in general, and the people of Najd in particular, to see themselves as guardians of Islam. Simply put, "Wahhabism is a Saudi form of puritanical Islam that

creates, through Tawhid, what in other legal systems is called politics.” (Kepel 2002) And hence, it must not and should not be surprising that certain sections of the ruling elite of Saudi Arabia, even today, are engaged in financing and supporting radical Islamist structures in the world, which have proven to be very dangerous for the security of the societies in which they operate.¹

However, the classic militaristic brutalization of Wahhabi teachings occurred in the second half of the twentieth century, mostly through the activities of Osama bin Laden. Gerges notes that “Bin Laden was a Salafi, brought up with the Saudi Salafi educational line that rests on one approach—the Wahhabi approach.” (2006: 107) However, DeLong-Bass finds striking differences between al-Wahhab’s fundamentals and methodology, compared to Bin Laden’s working patterns. She attributes Bin Laden’s actions to the fundamentalist path of reformist movements, largely based on the teachings of Islamic radical Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) and his interpretations of the work of Ibn Tawmiyya (a thirteenth-century theologian from Syria).

Qutb is considered the most influential apologist for modern jihadist terrorism, who considered himself an Egyptian intellectual and member of the militant Muslim Brotherhood. According to certain authors, “Qutb advocated a reformed Muslim society that could be achieved by refocusing on a literalist reading of the Qur’an.” (Keppel 2002) However, Qutb’s preaching of a global holy war against all perceived enemies of Islam, according to DeLong-Bass, has had a far greater influence on today’s jihadist terrorists, including Osama bin Laden, than the writings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab.

It is our view that both the original Wahhabi approach and Islamic radicalism insist on a return to the Qur’an and hadith for their direct interpretation, see the Sharia as the legal basis for correct human conduct, and emphasize the importance of spreading the faith through jihad, especially respecting the role of the imam in leading the Mujahideen in their holy struggle. However, the two approaches differ in their context and some of the key pillars of their thought. While al-Wahhab constructed his teachings in the relatively peaceful tribal area of the reformist 18th century, Qutb and Ibn Tawmiyya wrote in times of colonial struggle with Western powers (Qutb in Egypt) or under siege by the Mongols (Ibn Tawmiyya in Syria). However, according to Gerges, “[b]laming terrorism on passages from the Quran would be like blaming the Crusades on passages from the New Testament.” (2006: 11) This makes DeLong-Bass’s

differentiation of the essence of the Wahhabi movement and Bin Laden’s Islamic radicalism all the more valuable.

“Bin Laden preaches jihad; al-Wahhab preached monotheism; Bin Laden’s jihad proclaims an ideology of the necessity of war in the face of unbelief; al-Wahhab preached the benefits of peaceful coexistence, social order, and business relationships. Bin Laden calls for the killing of all infidels and the destruction of their money and property; al-Wahhab restricted killing and the destruction of property. Bin Laden calls for jihad as a broad universal prescription for Muslims of every time and place; al-Wahhab confined jihad to specific and limited circumstances and contexts. Bin Laden calls for jihad as an *individual* duty; al-Wahhab upheld jihad as a *collective* duty.” (DeLong-Bass 2004).

In short, we can observe some basic tendencies of reformism and fundamentalism both in the teachings of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, and in the Islamist militarism of Osama bin Laden, and in the terrorist networks emanating from al-Qaeda. Bearing in mind that the basis of Wahhabism is the division of believers and non-believers, as well as fighting with the infidels, it remains clear that a certain connection (intentional or unintentional) of these two ideologies still exists. However, there are also significant differences in the methodology of the struggle for the spread of Islam, relations with the “infidels” and some essential matters regarding the purpose and scope of jihad as a sacred instrument of Islam.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to analyze the main features of the original conservative theological school called Wahhabism, using the main points from the works of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. In doing so, we tried to answer some basic questions that clarify and explain the true meaning of the terms Wahhabism, Salafism and Jihadism. Moreover, through the play of power and politics in the formation of the legal-political system of Saudi Arabia and the practice of contemporary extremist movements, we analyzed the alterations of the basic commitments in al-Wahhab’s works.

The evolutionary path of Wahhabism, according to this paper, can be considered in two directions - accommodative legal-political direction and ideologically - militaristic. The first is seen in the creation of Saudi Arabia as a state entity and the development of its legal system, while the second is seen in the inspiration for radical Islamist militant groups. As this paper has shown, these two directions were intertwined in their historical development. However, one direction resulted in the formation of a

¹ Knowledgeable authors claim that Saudi Arabia’s main exportable resource is extremism (<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/24/farah-pandith-saudi-how-we-win-book/>). A more detailed scientific analysis of this phenomenon is given by Carol E. B. Choksy and Jamsheed K. Choksy in THE SAUDI CONNECTION: Wahhabism and Global Jihad (World Affairs, Vol. 178, No. 1 (MAY / JUNE 2015)

state-legal system recognized in the world, and the other represents the ideological substrate of certain modern terrorist organizations. Although we believe that the deep connection between the original theory of Wahhabism and contemporary Islamic radicalism has been overstated, there are visible connections between these teachings and radical Islamist organizations. These links are serious and certainly leave room for concern.

Although outside the scope of this paper, it is extremely important to note that fundamentalist movements also exist in our region, drawing part of their legal-political doctrine from Wahhabi teachings. Their danger lies in the creation of instability, the radial structure, the cellular system of functioning, stealth, but also the lack of knowledge about the phenomenon among the security structures that should prevent or suppress these phenomena. Hence, it is important to talk scientifically in the region about the foundations, characteristics, transposition and distortion of Wahhabism in order to understand it. Here they are perceived as a lurking, brutal group with the misguided goals of destroying mainstream Islam and separating Balkan societies from the "Western way".

This kind of militaristic indoctrination poses a rare but serious danger to any fragile multicultural society. Hence, ignorance of these phenomena by the state apparatus, as well as informal actors in education and the civil sector, only increase the danger. In essence, the lack of credible and sustainable pathways to building strong and integrative state systems and the lack of deeper socio-economic similarity with the West could even lead to further radicalization and expansion of these smaller groups.

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