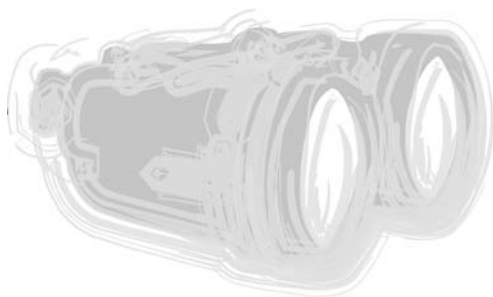


WESTERN BALKANS SECURITY OBSERVER



SERBIA 2007 - ILIBERAL
TRANSFORMATION
OR PROLONGED TRANSITION

Adapting to Democracy:
Reflections on 'transition' in Serbia
and the Western Balkans

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Editor's word

Human security is impossible to deliver without a consolidated democracy. Serbian progress in establishing democratic standards of governance is challenged by dramatic events domestically, such as the assassination of PM Djindjic in 2003, and external factors, such as international recognition of independence of Kosovo that happened in early 2008. The capability of Serbia to act as a 'spoiler' or a 'leader of reforms and promoter of regional cooperation' in the Western Balkans makes its political transformation also a relevant subject for researchers of regional security.

This is the reason why the Centre for Civil-Military Relations, together with the University of Bristol, launched an academic discussion between Serbian and foreign scholars on the prospects of Serbia's transition. At the conference held in Bristol in June 2007, we attempted to answer the question whether the process of democratisation in Serbia is better to be qualified as protracted transition or illiberal transformation. In other words, is it the case that Serbia, for different reasons, is taking a longer time to establish a functioning democracy than, for instance, the CEE states, or, if that is not the question of duration of the democratisation process, is it the issue of quality of change? The proponents of the second option would explain the change that took place on October 5th, 2000 as an elective democracy in which most of the democratic institutions exist formally, while in practise, the newly-elected leaders and accompanying interest groups obstruct the establishment of accountability and rule of law, or curtail political rights in order to remain in power. In this issue of the WBSO, some of the papers from this event are presented with the aim of improving the quality of domestic academic discussions, as well as foreign understanding of the change process that Serbia is going through. The authors in this section challenge the capacity of the following concepts to explain Serbian unconsolidated democracy:

transition theory, weak state, globalisation, political economy, elite and identity-based explanations.

The second section of this issue presents three articles using identity-based explanations to analyse current political divisions in Serbia and the region. First article analyses different processes of securitization in order to map sharp divisions within Serbian elites and society regarding key foreign and security policy priorities, while the second article examines the importance of positive regional identity for enhancing regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. The last article in this section deals with a taboo topic in Serbian polity - the possibility of considering Serbian Orthodox Christianity within the concept of religious fundamentalism.

After this theoretical examination, we present the policy analysis of relevant new legislation. This issue concludes with analysis of three key laws for institutionalization of new security system in Serbia: Law on Defence, Law on Military and Law on the Basic Structuring of the Republic of Serbia Security Agencies. The draft laws were scrutinized from the perspective of democratic-civilian control. Two research fellows from the Belgrade School of Security Studies and a leading legal expert on Serbian security system proposed recommendations on how these laws could be improved to ensure accountable provision of security. During the preparation of this issue all three laws were adopted. The Centre will be monitoring the implementation of these laws together with other civil society organisations gathered in the advocacy network.

Last but not the least, we end this Western Balkans Security Observer issue with a call for paper submissions for the forthcoming issues in 2008 hoping to attract innovative external contributions.

Sonja Stojanovic

Adapting to Democracy: Reflections on ‘transition’ in Serbia and the Western Balkans

Timothy Edmunds

UDK: 321.7 (497); 316.4 (497)

Abstract

This article aims to reflect on how we might best conceptualise political, economic and social change in Serbia and much of the rest of the Western Balkans today. The dominant paradigm through which this process has been understood has been one of democratic transition, albeit a transition that is an inevitably difficult, hesitant and long term process. The argument here is that while these democratisation approaches do offer some important insights about what is happening in Serbia, they also need to be treated with some caution. In particular, there is a danger that by accepting ‘transition’ as the primary framework through which we explain and understand change, we risk making a series of misjudgements about the factors that actually constrain, limit and motivate domestic actors in transforming societies themselves.

Key Words: *democratization, Illiberal resilience, Western Balkans*

Democracy and democratisation

Perhaps the main – though sometimes implicit – assumption of much of the democratisation literature is that when societies overthrow old authoritarian regimes they embark on a process of political change in the direction of liberal democracy. Broadly, this process is envisaged to entail the establishment of free and fair elections, followed by the ‘consolidation’ of democratic practices in range of spheres. These include issues such as a separation of powers between the executive and parliament, the placement of secu-

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rity forces under civilian control, a free and fair press, an active civil society and so on and so on. This ‘transition paradigm’ has been outlined in a variety of different literatures, with varying degrees of sophistication.¹ It also forms the basis of most peace-building and democracy promotion activities by international actors in the Western Balkan region.

Despite its prevalence however, the concept of ‘democratic transition’ has come in for heavy criticism in recent years. It has been attacked for being too simplistic, teleological in nature and for failing to capture – or even to adequately describe – the practice of change in much of the former communist region and elsewhere.²

Even so, this article argues that we need to be careful of abandoning the transition paradigm in its entirety, for two main reasons. First, because it represents an explicitly ideological political programme that local actors themselves often self-consciously opt in to – at least rhetorically. Second, because of the sheer dominance of democratisation pressures in the external environment. This is particularly the case in Europe, where pressure for democratisation is often reinforced by intrusive strategies like EU conditionality. These political, economic and normative pressures make it difficult for any transforming society to completely ‘opt out’ of democratisation, at least not without facing significant international isolation – as of course was the case with Yugoslavia under Milošević or Belarus today.

Neither of these reasons say much about the transition paradigm’s theoretical power as a framework for explaining change. But they do function as descriptors of the context in which transformation takes place. They provide the benchmark against which political change is measured, both domestically and internationally. They also form the arena which both restrains and offers opportunities for particular forms of domestic political practice. In these respects therefore, democratisation – or at least a form of it – really *has* become ‘the only game in town’ for most societies in the Western Balkans, Serbia included. This is demonstrated by the way in which electoral politics and democratic institutions have proliferated throughout the region.

However, this in turn creates a conundrum, because in many ways the concept of ‘democratic transition’ remains a misleading and inaccurate way to conceptualise political change in much of the region. Indeed, all the states of the former Yugoslavia – with the exception perhaps of Slovenia – remain ‘flawed’ democracies

¹ Key contributions include: Samuel P. Huntington (1993) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press); Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter (1986) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press); Dankwart A. Rustow, ‘Transitions to democracy: toward a dynamic model’, *Comparative Politics*, April 1970.

² For critiques of the transition paradigm see: Thomas Carothers, ‘The end of the transition paradigm’, *Journal of Democracy* 13(1), 2002; Guillermo O’Donnell, ‘Illusions of consolidation’, *Journal of Democracy* 7(2), 1996.

³ See for example, Laza Kekic, ‘The Economist Intelligence Unit’s index of democracy’, *EIU Democracy Index 2007*, http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY_INDEX_2007_v3.pdf. Accessed 16 October 2007.

in various ways.³ Numerous forms of illiberal politics persist, old elites and interests often remain in place and corruption remains a problem across the region. In most respects, the goal of fully consolidated liberal democracy in the west European style remains some way off. The puzzle then is why, in an environment in which the expectation of democratisation has become *de rigueur*, and in which forms of democratic politics have proliferated, the quality of liberal democratic practice often remains so deeply compromised.

Illiberal resilience

The argument here is that it is precisely this *interaction* between the apparent inevitability of some form of democratic change and the reality of embedded local political practices and interests that lead to this inconsistency. Specifically, that local political cultures tend to be much slower to change than the transitions literature commonly assumes, but that instead of leading outright resistance, this creates scope for a more *dynamic interaction* between the demands of democratisation and illiberal traditions of governance. What we see therefore are a series of adaptive mechanisms through which illiberal actors and interests in transforming societies can coopt and colonise the language, institutions and in some cases even the practices of democratisation.

In this context, it is important to make a clear distinction between the terms *illiberal* and *non-democratic*. What is at stake here is not democracy itself – in terms of electoral competition, democratic institutions and so on – but the character and nature of democratic politics itself. This is particularly the case with regard to the extent to which the *essentially liberal* ideas of consolidated democracy and the transitions paradigm – incorporating all their notions of accountability, individual rights and the rule of law – are able to embed and sustain themselves in the face of alternative, illiberal – but still democratic – practices.⁴ So what then are the features of this ‘illiberal resilience’? This article identifies four main arenas for contestation.

The first of these is *the state* itself. The assumption of many external democracy promoters like the EU is that democratisation takes place in the context of a functioning, legitimate state structure. Yet the experience in many transforming societies – and cer-

⁴ For more on ‘illiberal democracy’ see Fareed Zakaria, ‘The rise of illiberal democracy’, *Foreign Affairs* 76 (November-December 1997).



tainly in much of the Western Balkans – is that the state itself is often fundamentally contested, with no clear agreement on its constitutional structure, its collective identity or even its future. This does not necessarily stop it functioning as a recognised actor on the international stage or even domestically. The experience of contested entities such as Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) or the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (SCG) demonstrate that reforms can take place, and that new – apparently democratic – institutions may be established and strengthened.

However, in an environment of weak state legitimacy, there is a risk that these institutions – whether they be parliaments or government ministries – are not actually used to strengthen and consolidate the state itself. Instead, as was the case with the Serbian and Montenegrin dispute for much of 2004-5, they become vehicles for actually undermining the capacity of that state to function, in the name of other narrower or even contradictory goals (in this case Montenegrin independence). The response from external democracy promoters in the Western Balkans at least has been to use conditionality, political pressure and technical and financial assistance to try and strengthen and support democratic state structures. But the danger here is that this strategy risk simply sustaining a kind of political chimera; one that provides the appearance of functionality on the surface, but which in practice is penetrated and coopted by particularist interest groups.

A second and related arena of contestation is *the political sphere*. The expectation of the transitions paradigm is that once free and fair elections have taken place, politics will consolidate along liberal democratic lines. Accordingly, competition between political parties and personalities will lend stability and legitimacy to the political system and democratic politics functioning as a peaceful mechanism for resolving conflicts within society. However, this assumption can under-estimate the capacity of illiberal structures to adapt to and even thrive in the new democratic environment, or indeed for democratic politics to actually exacerbate existing divisions in societies, as has arguably been the case in BiH over the past 10 years.⁵ Political parties can become vehicles for particularist interests or personality politics, with the practice or democratic politics itself being characterised by fragmentation and bitter division, leading in turn to inertia and stagnation in the institutions of the state itself.

This again raises a dichotomy between the surface appearance of weak, though apparently functional, state institutions such as

⁵ See for example Roberto Belloni, "Civil Society and Peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina", *Journal of Peace Research*, 38: 2 (2001).

government ministries for example; and the reality of practice in which these can be subverted by – or function in parallel with – other, more resilient informal institutions such as patronage networks or clientalist relationships. One example of this practice from Serbia relates to the question of control over the security services since the fall of Milošević. Here, the democratic model to which the reform process is meant to be working is the civilian control over these agencies through informal institutions and organisational professionalisation. But this is belied by the actual practice of civilian control which takes place – at least in part – through politicisation and clientalism.⁶

This dichotomy between the formal and informal can also be played out in the *economic arena*. In the European context, political democratisation has gone hand in hand with free market reforms and privatisation programmes. But as elsewhere, these economic reforms can be vulnerable to cooption by illiberal actors and networks. This is both because established elites and elite groups are often best placed to take account of the economic opportunities offered by privatisation, as we see throughout the former communist region.⁷ But also – at least in the former Yugoslavia – because of the persistence and adaptability of the kinds of informal economic practices that thrived during the war years such as corruption and profiteering, as well as other more explicitly criminal activities such as trafficking.⁸

So again, there might be the appearance of economic ‘transition’ on the surface – even to the extent to which, as in the Baltic states for example, it satisfies EU conditionality. But in practice this need not necessarily indicate a genuine transformation of economic activity as much as the retrenchment of the dominance of old structures and practices in the new free market environment.

Finally, we can also see the vulnerability of liberal democratic ‘transition’ at the *societal level*. These tensions can be especially visible when it comes to questions of voting preferences, and particularly the prospect that the electorate itself may behave in an illiberal manner. People may vote for consciously ‘non-democratic’ actors such as radical nationalists. They may support what external observers consider to be divisive and obstructionist policies such as the sheltering of those indicted for war crimes. Or they may simply react negatively against what is perceived to be unwelcome or unfair pressure from international actors. The bottom line

⁶ Timothy Edmunds, “Intelligence agencies and democratisation: continuity and change in Serbia after Milošević”, *Europe-Asia Studies*, January 2008.

⁷ See for example, Iván Szelényi and Szonja Szelényi, “Circulation or reproduction of elites during the postcommunist transformation of Eastern Europe”, *Theory and Society* 24, 1995.

⁸ Jens Stihoff Sørensen, “War as social transformation: Wealth, class, power and an illiberal economy in Serbia”, *Civil Wars* 6(4), Winter 2003.



here is that there nothing inherently liberal about democratic choice. Indeed, there is a strong argument that the more external democracy promoters try and force the issue, the more they risk undermining the very liberal principles against which the transition paradigm is premised.⁹

Conclusion

In summary then, it is time to take a fresh look at the nature and practice of democratisation in the Western Balkan region, and particularly at the interaction between external pressures for democratic change and local responses. Democratisation is not an irrelevant concept in this process, but it does not really describe a ‘process’ either. Instead, it provides the arena for change and dictates the room for manoeuvre that local political actors have. But there is nothing inherently liberal about it either. Indeed, in this context, we need to see *liberal democracy* – which is what much of the transitions literature is really referring to – for what it really is: a competing political ideology within this wider framework of change.

In this respect, (particularly international) democracy promoters and democratisation scholars need to take local circumstances – and indeed the practice and resilience of local political habits, structures and traditions – seriously, even if those politics appear illiberal or obstructive in nature. It is no good to simply dismiss them as wreckers or spoilers in a wider process of democratic transition. This in turn would move beyond a simple binary understanding of democrats and non-democrats in transforming societies. Doing so would help to engender a proper understanding of the complexity of change on the ground, and in particular an appreciation of the often very real political and societal constraints that the local environment places on domestic political actors – democrats and non-democrats alike.

⁹ Beate Jahn, “The tragedy of liberal diplomacy: democratization, intervention and statebuilding” (part II), *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 1(2), 2007, pp. 222-3.

State Weakness in the Western Balkans as a Security Threat: The European Union Approach and a Global Perspective

Denisa Kostovicova

UDK: 327.39(497:4-672EU)

Abstract

This paper first provides a critique of transition theory by focusing on state weakness and transnational networks, goes on to discuss the EU policies in the Western Balkans and their limitations, and concludes by focusing on the global perspective of transition and Europeanisation.

Key Words: European Union, Western Balkan, transition, weak state, globalization

* * *

After this year's accession of Romania and Bulgaria into the European Union, the Western Balkans became the enclave in the European Union. Admittedly, the political distance between Zagreb and Prishtina and Brussels is not the same. Croatia has begun the accession negotiations, while the status of Kosovo still hangs in the balance. Since 1999, when the EU turned to the region with a renewed commitment, it has become evident that the pull of the European integration has not been as irresistible as one would expect, learning from the first round of enlargement into the post-Communist space. There are many examples of this stop-and-go process of European integration in the Western Balkans: the inability of parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina to agree a police reform as a precondition for the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) is just one.

How are we to account for the Western Balkans' hesitant Europeanisation? This question ought to be answered from a glob-

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al perspective. Arguably, the EU policies in the Western Balkans have inadequately addressed a transnational dimension of the region's transition from Communism and war. As a result, transnational networks as global actors have been able to benefit from the permissive environment of weak states in the Balkans, ultimately slowing down the region's transformation. The so-called 'troubled' or 'permanant' transition has itself become a security threat. This argument addresses the gap in literatures on transition and Europeanisation by introducing globalisation into the analysis of democratisation in the Western Balkans. This gap is striking given the efforts to theorise globalisation in the context of the so-called new or post-modern wars and their aftermath.

This paper first provides a critique of transition theory by focusing on state weakness and transnational networks, goes on to discuss the EU policies in the Western Balkans and their limitations, and concludes by focusing on the global perspective of transition and Europeanisation.

Critique of transition theory: State weakness and transnational networks in a Global Era

Scholars applying post-Communist democratisation literature to the Western Balkans have been taxed to explain 'troubled' transition in the region, unfolding against a double legacy of Communism and conflict. Nonetheless, a consensus has emerged that the issues of state- as opposed to nation- building and the international dimension need further study.¹ Specifically, Bunce, who has spearheaded an attempt at universal transition theory building, has pinpointed the problem of flawed but sustainable democracy, with a weak state at its core.² In other words, sustainable state weakness is critical for understanding a 'troubled' transition. This shifts a research agenda to the dynamics of weakening the state, which is currently grossly understudied.

State weakness in Western Balkans should be understood in a global context; not international context. Unlike the global, the international maintains the distinction between the internal and the external; globalisation removes it, as is demonstrated by the impact of transnational networks. Globalisation represents denser and deeper interconnectedness caused by cross-border flows and patterns of social integration.³ Importantly, globalisation also has what Giddens calls 'a dark side'.⁴ Globalisation can be an integra-

¹ P. Kopecký and C. Mudde, "What has Eastern Europe taught us about the democratisation literature (and vice versa)?", *European Journal of Political Research* 37, 2000, pp. 517-539; T. Kuzio "Transitions in post-Communist states: triple or quadruple?", *Politics* 21(3), 2001, pp. 168-177.

² Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking recent democratisation: Lessons from the Postcommunist experience", *World Politics* 55, January 2003, pp. 167-192.

³ David Held and Anthony McGrew (2000) "The Great Globalization Debate: an introduction" in David Held and Anthony McGrew (eds) *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate* (Cambridge: Polity Press), pp. 1-53.

⁴ Anthony Giddens (2002) *Runaway World: How Globalisation is Reshaping Our Lives* (London: Profile Books).

tive force, but it is also used as a vehicle for a pursuit of exclusive and particular interests.

What is a state weakness and how is it sustained? It is much easier to answer this question by saying what it is not rather than what a weak state is. Generally speaking, state weakness is defined as state's inability to deliver national cohesion and public goods.⁵ However, a Western Balkan state lacks cohesion in two ways. It is typically an ethnified state, for which the notion of national cohesion is elusive. It is also a state in which the privilege of majority nations is a fact of life, even though it may not be a fact of law. An equally important line of division runs along the position towards the responsibility for the crimes committed by members of one's nation, denialists vs. liberals calling for reckoning and ethnic reconciliation. At the same time, the state in the Balkans is an inadequate provider of public goods that struggles to deliver a basic sense of security – whether it be economic, judicial, legal, personal, etc.⁶ Yet, the key characteristic of state weakness in the Balkans is its functionality.⁷ It does not necessarily lead to state failure. It is self-perpetuating, or, as Bunce, pointed out, it is sustainable.

Borrowing from Robert Wade's writing on the topic, it is important to point out, the elites in Western Balkans are 'ruminants', since they graze the resource base while fertilising it at the other end. Hence, they are to be distinguished from 'vampire'-type elites, more common to the African context, that extract so much from the state as to debilitate.⁸ To pursue their interest they need a state, albeit one that is weak. So, how is this state weakness sustained?

As I elaborated elsewhere in co-authored work with Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic, state weakness is perpetuated through the impact of transnational networks.⁹ These networks are a product of what Mary Kaldor has termed 'new wars', that themselves are inextricably linked to globalisation.¹⁰ Networks link political, economic, military and security establishment with illicit groups and transcend ethnic and national boundaries. Their relation with a multi-ethnic nature of the region is ambivalent. Inter-ethnic collaboration is necessary to sustain their activity, but stirring ethnic tensions creates an environment in which they project themselves as a guarantor of their own ethnic group's security.

Transnational networks are best understood through their impact. They provide a mechanism through which formal rules are subverted and ignored, but they are not independent of the state, or in direct opposition to the state. They create a form of

⁵ R. I. Rotberg (2003) "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators" in R. I. Rotberg (ed.) *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (Washington D.C.:Brookings Institution Press), p. 3.

⁶ I. Krastev, "The Balkans: democracy without choices", *Journal of Democracy* 13(3), 2002, pp. 49-51.

⁷ Cf. Denisa Kostovicova (2006) "EU and the Challenges of the Weak State in the Balkans" in Denisa Kostovicova and Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic (eds) *Austrian Presidency of the EU: Regional Approaches to the Balkans* (Vienna: Centre for the Study of Global Governance and The Center for European Integration Strategies in cooperation with the Renner Institute), pp. 140-148.

⁸ Robert Wade (2004) *Governing the Market: Economic Theory and The Role of Government in East Asian Industrialization* (Princeton, N.J.:Princeton University Press), p. 358, fn. 3.

⁹ Denisa Kostovicova and Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic, "Europeanizing the Balkans: Rethinking the Post-communist and Post-conflict Transition", *Ethnopolitics* 5(3), Sept. 2006, pp. 223-241.

¹⁰ Mary Kaldor, (2001) *New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Global Era* (Oxford: Polity).



political authority where the informal structures that are built around (and through) the formal institutions of the state. This type of political authority has no interest in strengthening state institutions and forging regional co-operation, both of which are instrumental for the success of the EU strategy towards the Balkans.¹¹

One such network was exposed by the assassination of the Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. The convicted Milorad Ulemek, a.k.a Legija, belongs to the informal grouping Hague brotherhood, though a reference the International Criminal Tribunal in the Former Yugoslavia, this appellation is used as token of patriotism. These criminals were not outcasts lingering on the margins of the state and society. By contrast, Legija was a head of the special Serbian police unit. The appointment was made possible by a conflict over the democratic transition. The choice between a more or less radical break with the past and war heritage, and the victory of a latter option, resulted in the penetration of the state of the networks created in the war. The group's transnational element is reflected in cooperation with the like-networks in other former Yugoslav republics.¹² This cooperation is critical for their survival in a globalised world.

Through transnational networks globalisation becomes internal to democratic transition. Consequently, transformation of weak post-Communist and post-conflict state into a strong state is affected. Ultimately, the legitimacy of the state, the very actor on which the EU has focused its policy, is undermined.

EU in the Western Balkans: The challenge of transition and stabilisation

With its legacy of Communism and conflict, the European integration of the Western Balkans has posed a unique policy challenge to the EU. Consequently, the EU has developed a strategic enlargement as well as a security concept for the Balkans.¹³ The cornerstone of its policy has been the Stabilisation and Association process (SAP); practically, the ante-chamber of Accession process, and the eventual membership. At the same time, the EU's involvement in the Balkans has been at the forefront of its intensified operationalisation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and within it of the evolving European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). EU's first military and police missions were set up in the Balkans. While some scholar assessed the simultaneity of the

¹¹ Denisa Kostovicova and Vesna Bojicic-Dzellilovic, "Europeanizing the Balkans: Rethinking the Post-communist and Post-conflict Transition", *Ethnopolitics* 5(3), Sept. 2006, pp. 223-241. For an elaboration of transnational links in the Balkans see the entire special issue, *Ethnopolitics* 5(3), Sept. 2006.

¹² Cf. Milos Vasic (2005) *Atentat na Zorana* (Beograd: Politika, Vreme, B92, Narodna knjiga).

¹³ S. Lehne (2004) "Has the 'Hour of Europe' come at last? The EU's strategy for the Balkans", in: J. Batt (ed.), *The Western Balkans: Moving on, Chailot Paper* 70, pp. 111-124.

Enlargement and CFSP approach as the EU's strength, it will be argued here that it has been the EU's weakness.

The SAP has been built on the accession approach applied to Central and Eastern Europe with a policy of enhanced conditionality and regional cooperation. Both of these instruments have proved wanting. The policy of conditionality, which includes political, economic and 'acquis'-related requirements of membership, as well as conditions emanating from peace agreements and political deals,¹⁴ such as the cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, has favoured states that have made the greatest progress in reform. This, in turn, has created a new line of division in the region between Balkan candidates and 'potential candidates'. No policy follow-up was designed to fill the vacuum created by the success of the individual aspirants.

Nor as many scholars pointed out could tensions and asymmetries thus caused be compensated by regionality, the policy of regional co-operation often subcontracted to the Stability Pact.¹⁵ In sum, the European integration of the Western Balkans has been characterised by the 'stability dilemma', i.e., of those countries that suffer from the greatest stability deficits not qualifying for EU's initiatives.¹⁶

Lastly, given my overview of state weakness as key to 'troubled' transition and insecurity in the Western Balkans, it may sound odd that the EU's state-centred approach should be singled out for criticism. Nonetheless, the EU has approached state-building in a rather narrow and isolated sense – state as institutions; Arguably, without a strategic involvement of the civil society in this process, the EU has failed to recruit an ally in this time consuming and pain staking effort.

The simultaneity of the Enlargement and the CFSP policies in the Western Balkans has created its own set of problems, of which I would single out their incompatibility and interference. The separation of these instruments has created challenges by means of the spill-over and unintended impact of policy issues from one area to another. The latest example concerns the Kosovo status. It rather unclear whether the EU is treating Serbia's cooperation on the status resolution as a part of EU conditionality, i.e. has it become a part of the Enlargement process, or, is exclusively, within the CSFP. This confusion has already prompted politicians in Serbia to declare that Kosovo cannot be given up in exchange for the EU membership.

¹⁴ O. Anastasakis and D. Bechev (2003) "EU Conditionality in South East Europe: Bringing commitment to the process", South East European Studies Programme (SEESP), St Antony's College, University of Oxford.

¹⁵ Wim van Meurs, "The Balkans and New European Responsibilities", Strategy paper for The club of three and the Balkans, June 29-30, 2000, Brussels, CAP, 22.10.00, p. 22.

¹⁶ A. Wittkowski, "South-eastern Europe and the European Union – promoting stability through integration?", *South-East Europe Review* 1, 2000, pp. 79-96.



To sum up, the EU's approach to the Western Balkans has exposed policy gaps, which have directly undermined the effectiveness of the European integration as a motor of democratic transformation and Europeanisation. In turn, the stalled transition shaped by the weak state has continued to pose a security threat, albeit of a non-traditional kind.

Conclusion: Transition and Europeanisation from a global perspective

Introducing globalisation into the analysis of transition and Europeanisation reveals that the EU has not managed to tackle the source of strength of the region's shady transnational networks. The creation of insiders and outsiders in the 'EU club' of member states has led to the creation of new borders in the Balkans. These borders delineate areas of a weak rule of law that are swiftly exploited by transnational networks, thus perpetuating state weakness. Globalisation is critical to understanding a dynamics of state weakening, and a sense of threat a weak state poses not just for the citizens of the state but beyond it as well. Furthermore, transnational networks operating as global actors effectively demonstrate the 'internalisation' of globalisation. It is this dimension of transition that has been neglected in the transition literature, and in policy prescriptions. The outcome has been a pervasive sense of human insecurity, despite, or perhaps, precisely because of an apparent functionality of a weak state.

The political scene in Serbia: stability and challenges

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Abstract

This work presents a short outline of the Serbian political scene after the formation of government in 2007. The first part looks at the general aspects of the Serbian political scene, the basic one being the asymmetry between the size of the problem left by the Milošević's heritage and the political capacity to solve them. The term low political capacity defines the narrow manoeuvring room for political activity through institutions and the insufficient political resources. The latter part outlines the challenges the new government is facing. This paper concludes that the burden of the Kosovo problem taken on by the government as the main priority will not only jeopardise political stability, but also present a set back for the reforms underway raise the issue of Serbia's European integration.

Key words: political scene, Serbia, political parties

The basic attributes of the Serbian political scene

Serbia is not a consolidated democracy. The stabilization of the Serbian political scene is inhibited by many social and political problems. The big part of them originates from the political and social heritage of the 90's Milošević's regime. Some of these problems have a long history, they are not all the products of his regime and so they have not all come to exist during his rule. However, his approach to these problems has led to unnecessary radicalisation and creation of new problems that did not formerly exist. Not a single problem, from the end of 80's and beginning of 90's Milošević's political agenda, was solved in the way that the protag-

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onist predicted, but Serbia was left with the heritage of unjustifiable wars and the destruction that it has endured.¹ As a result of this Serbia enters the 21st century:

- as a post-conflict, defeated and impoverished society,
- as a society with destroyed institutions and strong centres of power outside the institutions,
- as a society which is deeply divided according to ideological, political and economic lines,
- having not solved the problems with its neighbouring countries, especially the problems resulting from the war heritage and war crimes,
- with the long lasting heritage of the international isolation and with the image of oneself as the outcast of the civilisation
- with the state issue still unresolved, regarding the disputed border issues,
- with newly formed democratic government with the agenda to reform the state in line with European standards and to bring Serbia closer to European Union as the main objective.

Serbia has recently got a third democratic government since the 5th of October 2002, but carrying out the proclaimed objectives still seems to be in the distant future, and even uncertain. This paper suggests that the causes of the slow progress towards stable democracy are of a structural nature. There are many factors that significantly affect the Serbian political scene reducing the political capacity of the actors to work to their optimum. Although, these factors are not static or irremovable actualities, they cannot be completely controlled in a predictable way. This can best be seen when looking at working complexities in practice, in regards to the passing and conducting of certain decisions and factors that affect them. It seems that the Serbian political scene leaves the reform actors with a) little political room and b) insufficient amount of resources for solving the problems that burden Serbia.

a) Narrow political room means there are significant limitations, which means little manoeuvring room for achieving important political decisions within the institutions, while working within existing procedures and legislation. In short, the political framework, required for post-Milošević Serbia, was not adequate for larger reforms for a number of reasons.

Firstly, Serbia is politically divided between the parties that support and continue the Milošević-style politics, and the ones that more or less support radical breakaway from it. The latter one is

¹ The creation of the Republic of Srpska as the separate entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina is often presented as an example of the partial success of this politics in solving the Serbian national issue. This additional interpretation attempts to justify and tone down the defeat of this politics.

usually called the democratic block and holds the majority of the electorate and has the majority in parliament². However, the problem is that the parties that constitute the other block also have steady and significant electoral support and are capable to obstruct the reforms.³ The fundamental difference between the two political blocks is not ideological, but it is the willingness, in the political struggle, to use non-political instruments. Democratic block is made of fragile party coalition that is unified by the consensus on the rejection of the manner and style of governing that Milošević practiced and the agreement that politics has to be conducted within the institutions. However, the radicalisation of the important issues can jeopardise this consensus and lead to the regrouping of political parties.

Secondly, the heterogeneous group of parties that constitute the democratic block and share the same objectives, differ in their working programs, priorities and style. Very soon, within the Democratic Party block, two rival strategies were established for carrying out reforms. One of these was represented by the assassinated PM Zoran Djindjić, who advocated faster reforms with higher social and political risks. The other one was adapted with then President of the FRY Vojislav Koštunica, who supported slower reforms while maintaining social and political stability. Different strategies implied different agendas and different priorities, which lead to even further alienation of the parties guided by these leaders (DS and DSS). In short, there is no consensus among the democratic parties in the post – Milošević Serbia over the political priorities and steps to be undertaken after the October the 5th changes.

Thirdly, the electorate of the democratic block is unstable and has potentially a high number of abstainers. Their loyalty to democratic values and its consolidation in Serbia the voters associate less with the individual parties. Therefore, aspiring for political advantage and redistribution of the electoral support, very often the parties of the democratic block distance themselves from each other, rather than trying to coax the electoral support from other block. The divisions within the democratic block sometimes seem deeper than the distance towards the opposite block. The preoccupation with the electoral body often hinders the parties to bring optimal decisions that lead to further stabilisation of democratic institutions.

Fourthly, room for political manoeuvring is limited also by the inconsistent politics of the international community towards Serbia, from which the non-democratic parties reap the advantages. The pressure politics and the politics of conditionality, com-

² The largest parties in this block are Democratic Party (DS), Serbian Democratic Party (DSS), G17 plus and Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). The majority of minor parties belong to this block, as well as the parties with local support.

³ This block consists of two large parties and number of local leaders that have the support in local communities, but not on the national level. The largest party in this block is the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), that took over the nationalist heritage of the Milošević politics, but rejects the shared responsibility for his defeats. The other one is the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), the former Milošević party and the heir of the Serbian Communist party. These parties have the support of the 40% of the electorate, while the SRS is the strongest individual party with 82 and 81 parliamentary seats at the 2003 and 2007 elections respectively.



bined with gradual integration of Serbia into the international institutions and European Union often leaves the impression of unfavourable (and hostile) treatment of Serbia by the West. Anti-West, especially anti-American, sentiment in Serbia became very strong after the bombing of Serbia in 1999. Consequently, the acceptance of the democratic values was often perceived as accepting the politics of the West. In turn this resulted in liberal democracy being perceived as the losing game for Serbia.

b) Considered as low political capacity is the lack of institutional power to speed up the democratic process. Holding the positions and the services of the institutions did not mean the possession of real power. Criminalised and corrupted institutions have worked more as the service for outer institutional centres of power, than according to their own regulations. Furthermore, the parts of these institutions have become the independent centres of power that were using the institutional status for actualisation of the private and group objectives. This is especially important for the parts of the security structures whose working has become intertwined with the working of the criminal groups. The assassination of the PM Djindjić and later the trial has completely revealed this connection. Intertwining and reciprocal dependence of the criminal groups, security structures, judicial system and politics used lots of energy and created mass of problems for the post-Milošević government.

The new economic elite is other important outer institutional centre of power, that thanks to their closeness and loyalty to the government gained their wealth in the condition of war economy, international sanctions and criminalisation of society. These groups strive to acquire political influence and retain their privileged status also during this phase of privatisation and opening of the market. In addition to this there is insufficient regulation of party financing, as well as non-existence or inefficiency of independent regulation bodies. The dependence of the parties on financial and media support makes their policies susceptible to different influences by the economic centres of power.

Serbia after the 2007 parliamentary elections

The Serbian political scene is still burdened with these limitations and maybe even more dramatically than at the time of the previous two governments. This is so due to political agenda being troubled with Kosovo's status, which could jeopardise the thin

consensus among parties and lead to reconfiguration of the Serbian political scene. This was already noticeable during the government forming negotiations and the outlining of their future agenda. The forming of the coalition government after the elections on the 21st of January 2007 depended on the agreement of the two largest parties of this block – DS with 65 mandates and DSS which together with the coalition partner had 47 mandates. With the expected support of the G17 Plus, this would make up the stable majority with 131 out of 250 parliamentary seats. The parties didn't come to an agreement until the 15th of May, literally five minutes before the passing of the constitutionally announced deadline to form the government. If this deadline was missed the new presidential elections would have to be called. The selection of the SRS deputy President, Tomislav Nikolić, as the President of the National Assembly five days before the forming of the government additionally traumatised the voters of the democratic block. This could have meant the possible reconfiguration of the political scene, with DSS and SRS creating a partnership, although not a (non)formal coalition.

More important than the political games of the negotiating process was the allocation of crucial posts; foremost the one of the chief of unreformed Security Informative agency, colloquially known as – secret police. It could be concluded that this is the bedrock of power in Serbia, stronger than the economic portfolio, and even more important than the position of the Prime Minister, which was given up relatively easily by the DS. Still, more important than these posts are the gaps in the political agenda of the new government. The political agenda has a number of priorities: preserving the territorial sovereignty of Serbia and preventing the secession of Kosovo and Metohija, continuation of European integration, and the conclusion of the cooperation with the Hague Tribunal. The priorities set by the government are not themselves problematic if we don't take into account the fact that the government was formed at the time when the negotiation report of the UN Special Envoy, Martti Ahtisaari, was expected. Also, it may be the responsibility of the new government to resolve the Kosovo status. This means they will be the government that lost 12% of Serbia's territory during their term in office.

The sensitivity of this issue could jeopardize the political stability, cause long-term delay of further democratic reforms and accession to European Union⁴, even more so than the incomplete cooperation with the Hague Tribunal and extraditing of Ratko Mladić. There are many reasons for this, but we will only concen-

⁴ It is interesting that this issue has more of a political significance than it is seen as a problem by the population. In several public opinion polls during the period before the formation of the government, the Kosovo issue was placed on the third or fourth place of the citizens priority list. The economic standard was placed as the top priority. To this end it would be too quick to assume that Kosovo issue is of less importance and that the citizens would easily accept the secession of Kosovo if Serbia got certain material compensation and political concession. Due to the ongoing negotiations and anticipations of the results, that question wasn't in public focus.



trate here on the possible political consequences. It is opinion here that this is the only issue that could lead to instability, and even to the fall of the government in the coming period. Two leading parties of the government coalition differently perceive these priorities and the price that should be paid in the scenario of Kosovo secession. For both parties this is an issue of national interest which requires commitment. However, for DS negative solution of the Kosovo problem should not jeopardise Euro-Atlantic integration and reaction of the Serbian public in this case should not estrange Serbia from Europe. According to them, these two issues are not connected and the non-realisation of one does not set a precedent for the realisation of the other. For DSS this issue has more political weighing and acting in this manner would mean accepting the will of the stronger and ill intended partner, where Serbia would always be a loser. It is difficult to imagine a unanimous reaction of the government, especially as another priority of the government (particularly insisted on by the DS), is the continuation of the European integration.

Worse than the political instability that may occur due to a negative outcome of the Kosovo issue, is opening of the issue of future Euro-Atlantic integration of Serbia and moving closer to the West. In the past seven years Serbia has been moving closer to the West, and the independence of Kosovo could mean revising, and maybe giving up on this pursuit. This question was raised numerous times starting from the XIX century; therefore, Serbia might find itself neither on the East, nor on the West, or worse between the East and West. In this political constellation this would be a disastrous solution, taking into account the actors that decide on this issue as well as the political scene that they are set on.

At the end of this outline, we can conclude that the configuration of the Serbian political scene is instable at the moment. Future stability will depend on the ability of the new government to modulate and respond to different challenges that it may face in case of negative development of events on Kosovo. These challenges include sustaining inner political stability, continuation of democratic reforms underway and keeping the path to European Union open. The Kosovo issue could at this moment jeopardize the position of Serbia with regards to the three aforementioned issues and therefore return Serbia to a time that was though to be long gone - the time of reconsidering Serbia's political identity that lead to unimaginable consequences.

Translated from Serbian to English by Vidak Andjelić

Measuring the Extent of Security Sector Reform in Serbia - Framing the problem -

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Abstract

Assessment of the security sector reform in Serbia will become possible only after the resolution of a number of theoretical and methodological problems. In terms of methodology, the first problem is constituted in the lack of conducts and instruments for a reliable measuring of the accomplishment of the security sector reform. Also problematic is to detect the exact moment in time from which our measuring should begin. Finally, there is the need to choose a point of reference. In terms of theory, the questions that need to be answered are: has the accomplishment of security sector reform in countries observed below been pre-determined by the effects of wars in former Yugoslavia? If the answer is “yes”, in what manner and to what extent is this pre-determination present? In addition to this, we have to initiate a revision of the set of reasons (excuses) being used for explanation and/or justification of the weak results of SSR in Serbia. Finally, before we start the process of measuring, one difficult task remains. We have to determine the meanings and contents of the qualification “lack of political will”, as it has been used as a common excuse for the slow pace of SSR in Serbia.

Key words: conducts and instruments, measuring and evaluating security sector reform, lack of political will, Serbia, consequences of military defeat.

* * *

In order to measure and evaluate the achievements made thus far in the reform of Serbia’s security sector it is necessary to first resolve a number of theoretical and methodological problems.¹

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¹ Wilfried Bredow and Wilhelm N.German (2003), Assessing success and failure: Practical needs and theoretical answers, in: *Towards Security Sector Reform in Post Cold War Europe – A Framework for Assessment*, German Wilhelm N, Edmunds Timothy (eds.), Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden



This group of problems includes those that might arise during the process of collection and collation of the available material. At this time we have at our disposal detailed findings from the application of the concept of security sector reform to the transition of states with undemocratic systems, namely Croatia and Serbia.² The key changes in some of Serbia's armed forces structures in the last few years have also been documented.³ However, development and application of a methodological approach and the required instruments for reliable measurement of the extent of security sector reform in Serbia, and elsewhere, still needs to be carried out.⁴ In order to have a complete overview it is necessary to place the aforementioned reforms into the context of the political process and the changes witnessed in Serbia since the removal of the Milošević regime.⁵ In other words, it is necessary first to analyse how and why some of these changes occurred in Serbia. Also, it is no less important to discover why some of the expected and/or announced, i.e. necessary, changes have not occurred. As a result, this text will briefly forecast and clarify only a few of the difficulties that may arise during the measurement and evaluation of the extent of security sector reform in Serbia.

The first problem arises immediately with the calculation of the point in time from which an evaluation of the extent of security sector reform should begin. This is because the calendar of transition which measures 'new' time, since the fall of the Berlin wall (in 1989), does not apply to Serbia and the other states that emerged from former-Yugoslavia; the exception being Slovenia. As a result, the removal from the power of Slobodan Milošević (October 2000) is most often used as a starting point for pro-democratic changes in Serbia.⁶ It would also be possible, however, to use the moment of Serbia's *de facto* independence, achieved when Montenegro left the state union (May 2006). This date could be used in order to take into consideration the definite influence that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992-2003) and the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (2003-2006) had on the tempo and extent of reforms in Serbia. If for no reason other than the fact that the military and defence establishments were, during this period, at least nominally, under federal jurisdiction. In this case, it can be said that only after gaining independence and adopting a new constitution (in 2006) did Serbia acquire all of

² Timothy Edmunds (2007) *Security sector reform in transforming societies – Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).

³ Miroslav Hadžić (2004) "Potraga za bezbednošću – Slučaj Srbija" [The Pursuit for Security], *Dangraf*, (Beograd:CCVO).

⁴ It is expected that this will be the main product of the "Mapping and Monitoring of Security Sector Reform in Serbia" project that is being realised by associates of the Centre for Civilian-Military Relations and researchers from the Belgrade School for Security Studies.

⁵ Dušan Pavlović, Slobodan Antonić (2007) "Konsolidacija demokratskih ustanova u Srbiji posle 2000. godine" [Consolidation of institutions of democracy in Serbia since 2000], (Beograd: Službeni Glasnik).

⁶ Ivana Spasić, Milan Subotić (ed.) (2001) *Revolucija i poredak* [Revolution and Order], (Beograd: Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju).

the necessary preconditions to create her own security sector and to manage its reform. If looked at in this way, the post-Milošević period that Serbia spent in union with Montenegro could be seen as a time of reform incubation and accumulation, during which the armed forces were simply reorganised, not reformed. The question of whether the decisive point in security sector reform has been reached is, therefore, a justifiable one. Even more so because the democratic system in Serbia is not fully developed; leaving open the possibility of an internal political reversal.

In the next step we are faced with the selection (definition) of the scale against which we can measure Serbia's progress in security sector reform. At first glance it seems clear that Serbia's progress should be measured against the reform processes in Central European states, and also against other Western Balkan states. However, both of these choices are inadequate and for very important reasons. In the case of Central European states, fundamental similarities between these former real-socialist states and Serbia have ceased to be significant, or comparable, from the very beginning of the violent break-up of the second Yugoslavia. This is because the conflict prevented the long-delayed abandonment of socialism by Yugoslavia's constituent parts (the newly independent states). Furthermore, not only did the authoritarian framework in Serbia adopt new (ethno-religious) legitimacy at this time, it also began to take on totalitarian (Caesarean) characteristics. In this sense it is possible to draw similarities between Serbia and other former-Yugoslav states. This is especially true of Croatia during the regime of Franjo Tuđman (1991 – 2000). In line with this logic it is only reasonable to comparatively measure the extent of security sector reform in former-Yugoslav states, principally Croatia and Serbia. However, this approach opens a new array of difficult problems.

The immediate question is, therefore, how and to what extent is (was) the security sector reform in the subject countries affected by the wars leading to the break-up of Yugoslavia. In spite of the quarrels amongst local actors over the cause of the wars, as well as the fact that they were halted by outside intervention, there can be no doubt that some states emerged from the wars as victors whilst others as losers. It is reasonable to expect (**assume**) that security sector reform



would be easier in a nation emerging as a victor from war than in one that had suffered defeat. Assuming, of course, that the democratic transformation of society and state had been begun in each of the countries emerging from conflict. There is, however, evidence of the opposite. It ought to be remembered that the military (as well as other armed forces) gain renown through victory in war, and that this renown comes with political clout that is difficult to restrain even once the fighting is over.⁷ If they also gain the status of ‘creator of the state’ as they did in Croatia⁸, it should be expected that they will be resistant to any changes, especially those that might endanger their new-found power and influence in politics and society. In the example of Serbia, however, that military defeat, particularly if it is not recognised, does not necessarily lead to the reduction of the power the army, police and secret services gained during war. What is more, their resistance to reform might even increase.⁹

It is indisputable, for example, that Croatia emerged from the war as a victor. Thanks to this victory she not only became an internationally recognised independent state, with well-defined borders, but she also lastingly solved the Croatian national question. This state of affairs is not disrupted by the fact that it was achieved by the mass-deportation of Serbs during the operations “Flash” and “Storm”, or by Croatia’s direct involvement in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croatia’s victory in war did not, however, remove the temptations and difficulties of transformation of the state and society from a wartime one to a peacetime one. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that reform of the security sector could only be continued at pace after the death of Tuđman and the democratic removal of his regime. The conviction remains, however, that the military victory eased the agreement of local populations and elites on the tempo and aims of reform in Croatia. This victory also served as key additional proof for the rejection of Croatia’s complicity in the outbreak of war. With firm support for membership of NATO and the EU, the local elites (unawares?) gave security sector reform a different significance. By placing the emphasis on the fulfilment of membership requirements and the achievement of Euro-Atlantic standards, they freed the reform process of its inherent political charge, usually a necessary element of the reduction and/or restriction of the power that armed forces gain in war.

⁷ Semjuel P. Huntington (2004) *Vojnik i država* [Samuel P. Huntington, *Soldier and the State*], (Beograd: CSES, Diplomatska akademija).

⁸ Ozren Žunec (1998) *Rat i društvo: Ogledi iz sociologije vojske i rata* [War and Society: Essays in Sociology of Armed Forces and War], (Zagreb: Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Hrvatsko sociološko društvo).

⁹ Miroslav Hadžić (2002) *The Yugoslav People’s Agony*, (Hampshire: Ashgate).

It is much more difficult to find a worthy answer to the abovementioned question in Serbia's case. This is all the more true as the claims, that Serbia (the FRY) did not participate in the wars of the break-up, make such a question senseless. Furthermore, these claims seek to avoid any serious discussion on Serbia's role in the break-up of Yugoslavia. That Serbia did not declare war on any other state during the 1990s does not change the fact that she suffered, during that decade, an historical defeat of her political elite. Without a doubt the ruinous consequences of this defeat were exported to all members of the Serbian nation and to the citizens of the Republic of Serbia. As a result, political life and life in general in Serbia, were based on a paradox. The power-seeking elites and their associated public (their voters) at once reject any mention of Serbia's defeat but at the same time cannot escape its consequences. It seems, therefore, that this defeat, whether recognised or not, forms the firmest knot in the tangle that is Serbia's transition. As it is unrecognised, its place is taken by nightmare scenarios of a global anti-Serbian conspiracy from which is drawn an ideological and emotional resistance to Serbia's modernisation and democratisation. These outpourings hide the completely quantifiable economic and political (party) interests of the main proponents of this way of thinking. It is, therefore, necessary to find an indirect path to a new supplementary theory in order to quantify the extent to which the unrecognised (or hidden) defeat has affected Serbia's transition, as well as the reform of her security sector. In other words, it is necessary to study the various forms of political and public evasion of facing up to the defeat, as well as the methods behind its insistent concealment.

Through this process of revision it may be possible to access the set of dominant reasons that are given for the explanation and/or justification of the slow pace or poor results of Serbian security sector reform. The majority of these reasons would immediately lose the charm of being simple, or rather self-evident, and universally applicable. A typical example from this **arsenal** is the explanation that the main causes for the delay and/or blocking of reform are a result of the lack of political will of those in power in Serbia since October 2000. This notion can be supplemented by a wealth of evidence; the best example of which is the way in which the current government

¹⁰ Bogoljub Milosavljević (2007) "Ustavno pravni status policije i drugih snaga bezbednosti u Srbiji posle donošenja Ustava 2006. godine" [Constitutional and Legal Status of Police in Serbia after the 2006 Constitution], in: *Zbornik predavanja sa IX Škole reforme sektora bezbednosti* [Collection of Papers presented at the 9th School of Security Sector Reform], Pavle Janković (ed.), (Beograd: ISAC Fond).



used the Constitution of Serbia to regulate the security services.¹⁰ They did, in fact, miss an opportunity to use this document to formulate and regulate a unique sector and security system. Furthermore, the writers of the constitution, missed (or avoided?) the opportunity to establish a national security strategy or a National Security Council. Also, they placed only the Army under democratic, civilian control, leaving out the police, the secret services and other armed formations. On top of everything else, the booming private security sector has received no attention whatsoever not only from the writers of the constitution, but also from legislators.

It is not, however, at all easy to determine the meaning and content of the qualification “lack of political will”. It should be added that there is also a difficulty in determining the incidence of this concept, in other words, its scope and potency. Only if this is achieved is it possible to search for the source, triggers and causes for rejuvenation of this “lack of will”. It seems, however, that this should be preceded by a serious discussion about what is desirable, possible and thus far achieved in terms of a democratic transformation of Serbia. Without this discussion we would expose ourselves to the danger of randomly, and in spite of personal preference, circumnavigating some of the manifestations of the current lack of political will amongst Serbia’s decision-makers. This danger can, initially, be avoided through an analysis of the status the security sector reform has in the current visions of the main political parties regarding Serbia’s demographic transformation. A cursory glance at the dominant discourse highlights the political division of these two processes.¹¹ There is no evidence, therefore, that the current decision-makers in Serbia understand the fundamental connection and inter-dependence between these two processes. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the pro-democratic reform of Serbian society and the Serbian security sector are proceeding practically independent of one another. This can be partially explained by the fact that a state-centric view of security is still dominant in Serbia. This is additionally propped up by internal and international controversy surrounding the status of Kosovo and Metohija. For the relevance of this discussion, however, it is significant that both the government and the opposition have securitised this issue and have, in this way, erected barriers to further reform of the security sector, and society as a whole, that will be difficult to overcome.

¹¹ Miroslav Hadžić, “Reforma sektora bezbednosti Srbije” [Security Sector Reform in Serbia], *Obrana* 11 (29), (2006).

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Translated from Serbian to English by Ivan Kovanović



Economic Transition in Serbia since 2000: Trends and Prospects

Research Workshop on ‘Serbia 2006: Illiberal Transformation or Protracted Transition?’, Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Bristol, 19 June 2007

Will Bartlett

UDK: 338.34.021.8(497.11)”2000/...”

Abstract

This paper presents recent developments in the Serbian economy and economic policy since 2000. The analysis is mainly descriptive, outlining recent trends, but also draws on the political economy of transition to assess the prospects for the continuation of liberalising economic reforms in the future. The dominant anti-reform coalition which blocked reforms under the Milošević regime was replaced in 2000 by a reformist coalition backed by the international financial institutions which pushed through significant structural reforms to the economy. Since then, a new anti-reform coalition has gained strength supported by interest groups who have benefited from partial reforms, and which seeks to stall further reforms. Economic change in Serbia can best be described as a protracted, rather than an illiberal, transition. But its continuation depends upon the political success of the pro-reform forces in the country.

Key words: political economy, stabilisation, privatisation, small business, FDI, growth, trade, international competitiveness and debt, labour market, poverty and social expenditure.

1. Stabilisation policy 2000

Stabilization policy, initiated in 2001, was based on a tight fiscal policy supported by concessional financing from the international financial institutions, debt rescheduling by international

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banks, and a borrowing arrangement with the IMF. Macroeconomic policy has been based on a restrictive fiscal policy aimed at a balanced government budget which has involved cuts in public expenditure. Monetary policy has been relatively weak as a macroeconomic policy instrument, and has been used to target both inflation and the exchange rate, succeeding in neither aim [Slide 2]. Stabilisation policy has failed to eliminate inflation, which has remained above 10 per cent.

2. Privatisation

Structural reforms have been more successful, as privatisation and enterprise restructuring have led to a significant increase in the share of employment in private enterprises [Slide 3]. However, the most profitable enterprises were privatised first, and their workers have enjoyed rapidly increasing real wages. The remaining socially-owned and state-owned enterprises are making large losses, and are supported by subsidies which reduce the resources available for needed social expenditure.

3. Small business entry and growth

Serbia has been in the forefront of reforms to liberalise the environment for starting up new businesses. In the past, small businesses faced discrimination, but now Serbia is ahead of most other Balkan countries in the ease of doing business. Despite an increase in the entry rate of new businesses, the density of SMEs in the economy remains relatively low, and there is scope for far more entry to reduce the degree of monopoly of the economy by the new business tycoons [Slide 4]

4. FDI

FDI has increased dramatically since 2000, but the stock is still low, and well below Croatia and even Macedonia on a per capita basis [Slide 5, 6]. Overall, due to privatisation, new firm entry and increased FDI, the private sector share of GDP has increased substantially, although it is still below other post-communist countries of the region [Slide 7].



5. Growth

Serbia has still not recovered its 1989 level of GDP per capita, although when viewed in terms of purchasing power parity, Serbia has a GDP per capita below Albania [Slide 8]. Economic growth has averaged 5.3 per cent p.a. since 2000, and has averaged over 6 per cent since 2004 [Slide 9]. Overall, output has increased by 40 per cent. However, fixed investment has stagnated, and growth of manufacturing has been far lower than the growth of GDP, even falling in some years, as Serbia moves in the direction of a service economy [Slide 10].

6. Trade, international competitiveness and debt

Due to low export competitiveness and a surging import bill, the trade deficit and the current account deficits have both worsened [Slide 11]. International debt increased to 65 per cent of GDP in 2006 and measures to prevent its further increase will eventually put a constraint on growth. Foreign capital has flowed into the country on the back of increased FDI related to the privatisation programme, and through foreign banks which have increased the supply of consumer credit. Confidence in the banking system has gradually been restored and individuals have increased their cash deposits in the banks, further increasing the money supply. Credit growth may fuel inflationary pressures, and force the government to cut back on its expenditure plans.

7. Labour market

Privatisation has led to intensive enterprise restructuring, and to a shake-out of surplus labour. Consequently, unemployment in Serbia has increased dramatically since 2000 when it was 13 per cent, and is now is at a relatively high level of over 20 per cent [Slide 12]. The informal sector remains a significant force, despite cuts in direct taxes, including corporation tax, to a flat 14 per cent. Long-term unemployment is a huge problem, leading to obsolescence of skills and reduced labour force participation. Improved and expanded retraining programmes are needed to deal with this problem.

8. Poverty and social expenditure

Poverty is not as high as in some other neighbouring countries, but is nevertheless increasing and is a potentially destabilising factor [Slide 13]. Social security expenditure is below that in Croatia and EU, and could be increased to compensate the losers from the transition [Slide 14].

9. Illiberal transition or protracted transformation?

The changes that have taken place in the Serbian economy since 2000 look more like a protracted transition than an illiberal transformation. Significant liberalising economic reforms have taken place. Privatisation, increased FDI, and easier entry for new private firms, have led to a substantial increase in the share of the private sector in the economy.

Yet, rising unemployment, surging credit, and growing international indebtedness, have all put strains on the economic management and threaten economic stability. In many ways the problems are similar to those faced by Croatia ten years ago. The key to future prosperity and continued growth will be the elimination of subsidies to loss-making enterprises, increased social expenditure to support the losers from the transition, and greater expenditure on the currently under-funded education system to create a more skilled labour force. Continued liberalisation of the economy is needed to boost competitiveness, together with the appropriate supportive policies in the fields of innovation, knowledge transfer, adult education, and active labour market policies.

The greatest risk is that the reforms may become stalled ‘half-way’, and that the gainers from partial reforms may seek to block further progress. In place of managers of socially-owned enterprises influencing the political power centres, the new owners of private companies which have powerful monopoly positions may ‘capture the state’. These groups, in alliance with the potential losers from further reforms – pensioners, employees in remaining state and socially owned enterprises, and farmers whose subsidies may be withdrawn - provide strong support for reactionary political forces. The carrot of future EU membership needs to be sufficiently persuasive to ensure that this coalition does not become even stronger and block further progress towards a more liberal variety of capitalism in Serbia.



Will Bartlett, School for Policy Studies

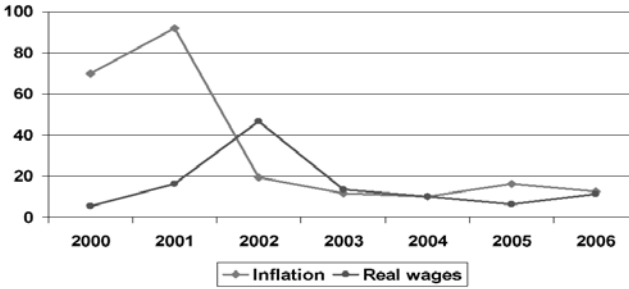
Economic Transition in Serbia since 2000: trends and prospects



Slide 1

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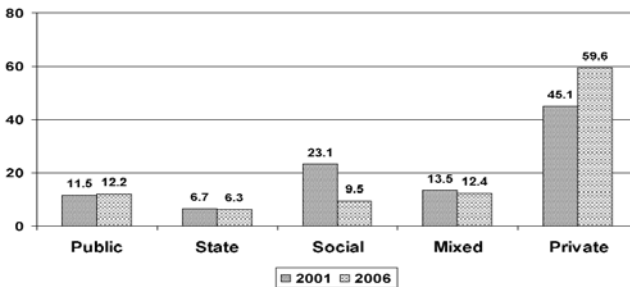
Inflation and real wages in Serbia, 2000-6 (% p.a.)



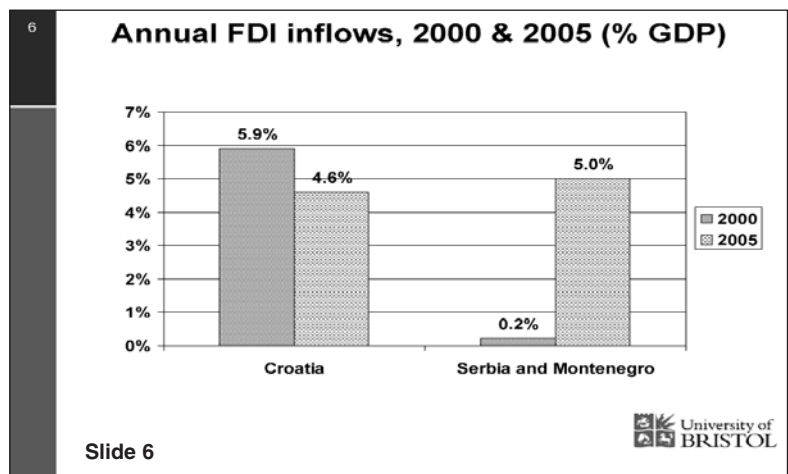
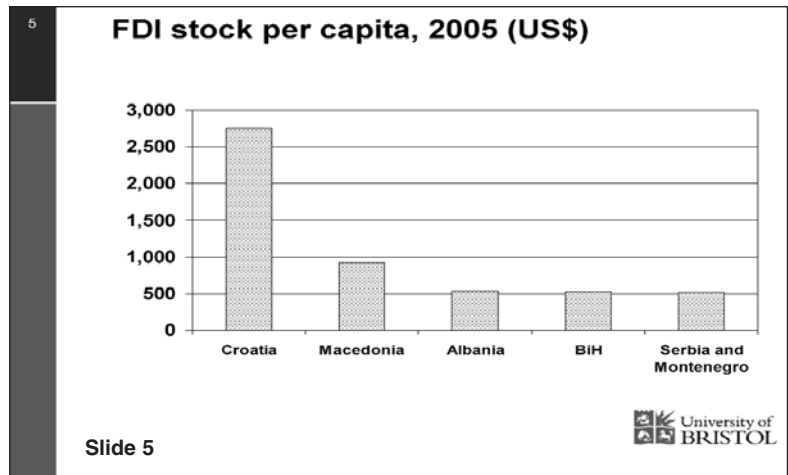
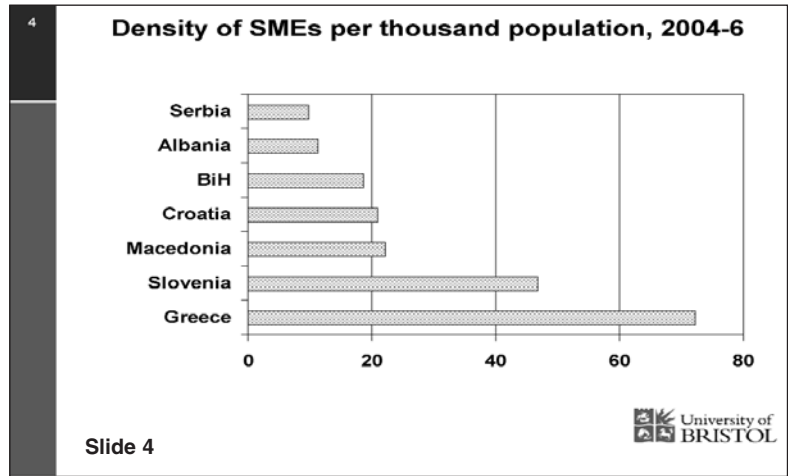
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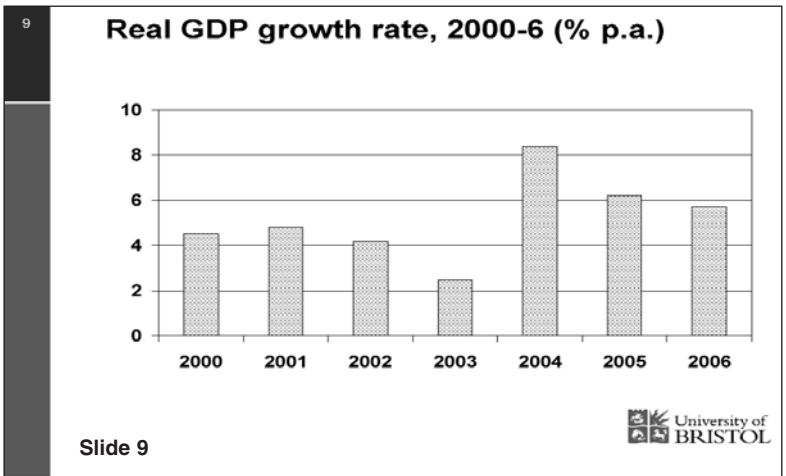
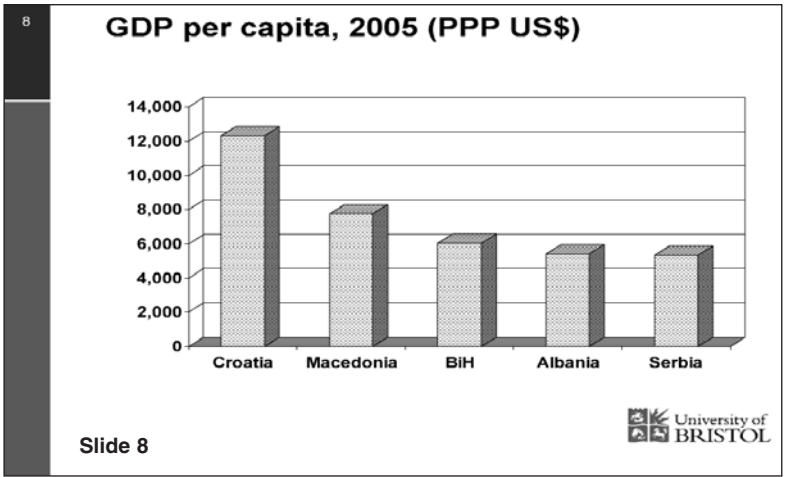
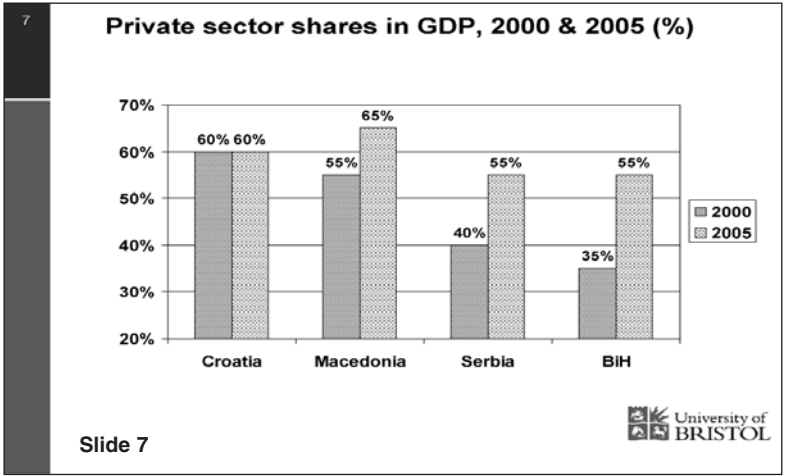
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Employment by type of ownership (%)



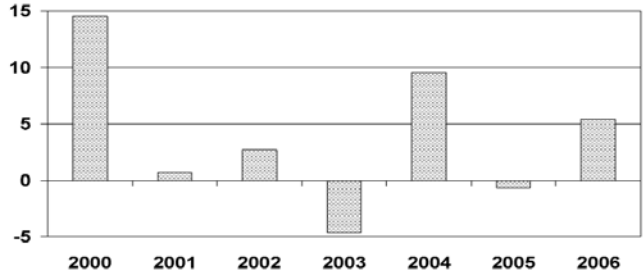
Slide 3





10

Manufacturing growth rate (% p.a.)

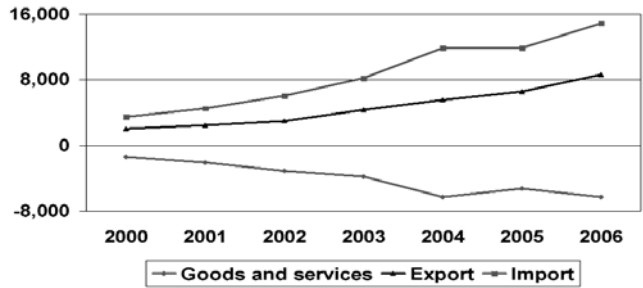


Slide 10



11

Balance of trade (goods and services US\$ million)

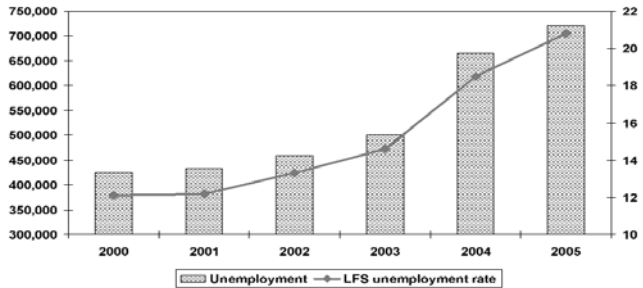


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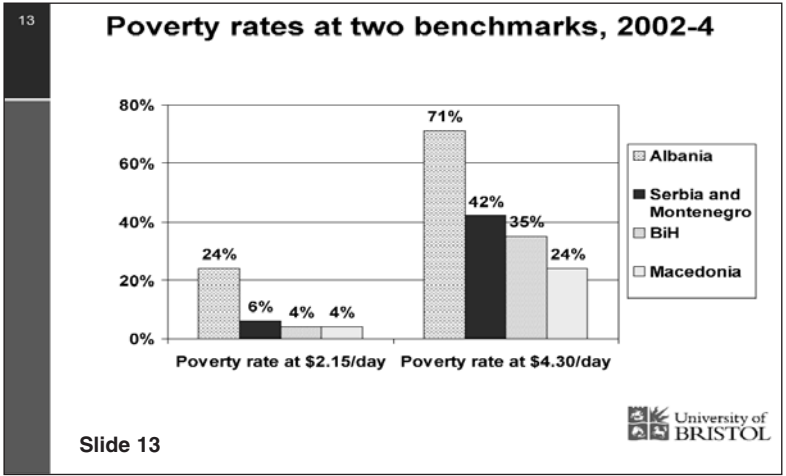
12

LHS: Unemployment absolute number RHS: Unemployment rate (%)

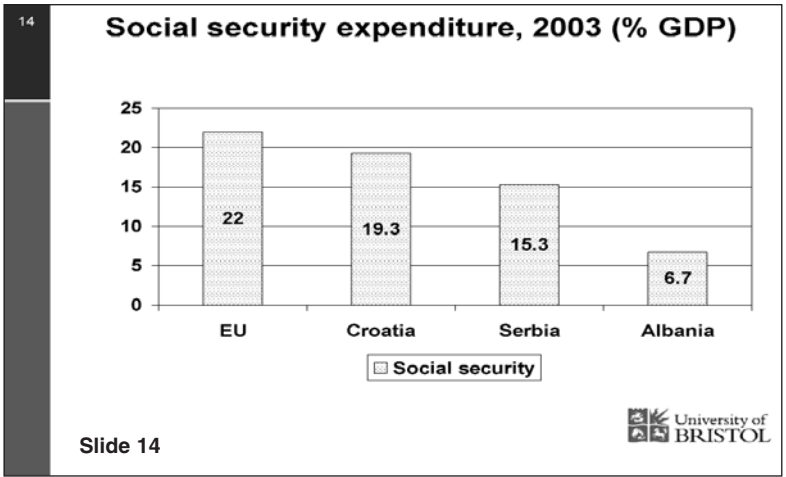


Slide 12





Slide 13



Slide 14

Security, Culture and Identity in Serbia¹

Filip Ejdus

UDK: 316.334.3(497.11)

Abstract

This article assesses the impact of ideational factors, such as culture and identity on foreign, security and defence policy of Serbia. This is done through poststructuralist theoretical framework and concept of strategic culture. The main argument presented in the article is that Serbian strategic culture can be conceptualized as a tension between two divergent discourses, national-liberational and civic-democratic. The competition and the stalemate between the two discourses creates a strategic schizophrenia, reactive foreign policy and complete political paralysis of the use of Serbian military forces.

Key words: Serbia, security, strategy, culture, identity, discourse

Introduction

How does political culture and sense of national identity in Serbia affect its foreign, security and defence policy? This question is important for both practical and theoretical reasons. Firstly, from the policy perspective, the question of national identity often resonates in security discourse of decision makers. Think for instance of a sentence made by Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica that „in order to survive, a nation needs to know its interest, and has to have a strong sense of national identity“.² In other words, securing something requires it firstly to be differentiated and identified. Secondly, although a good number of books and articles have been written on Serbia's foreign, defence and security policy, none of them approached the subject from the social-constructivist point of view that takes into account not only material interests and capabilities but also ideational factors such as culture and identity.

In order to answer the question asked above, this paper relied on poststructural security studies, especially the securitization theo-

¹ This paper is based on the research done within the project *The Image of the Democratic Soldier: Tensions Between the Organisation of Armed Forces and the Principles of Democracy in European Comparison* organized by PRIF Frankfurt and funded by Volkswagen Foundation 2006-2009. It was partially published as Research Paper No. I/8-2007 and is available at: http://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/downloads/Serbien_8.pdf

² Kosta Čavoški, "Treći put Vojislava Koštunice", *Ogledalo*, 31.08.2007. Available at: http://www.nspm.org.yu/komentari2005/2005_cavoski_kostunica1.htm

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ry developed within the Copenhagen School of Security Studies and literature on political and strategic culture.³ The methods that will be used are ideal-type descriptions and discourse analysis. Although this study focuses on the period following the democratic changes in October 2000, it will also cast light on more distant past given that culture and identity are foundationally linked with history.

The essay constructed two ideal type descriptions of culture and identity in Serbia: *national-liberational* and *civic-democratic* model. Although these two models are socially constructed through public discourse, they nevertheless simultaneously act as 'sedimented structures' and ideational constraints on foreign, security and defence policy and decision making. Arguably, these two models have existed in Serbia, in one form or the other, at least since the outset of Serbian modern state in 1878. Sometimes the civic-democratic narratives shaped the agenda; much more often the national-liberational ones did so. Currently, the two discourses are equally powerful and radicalized, which creates a situation of stalemate. The central argument of this paper is that this situation negatively affects foreign, security and defence policy: foreign policy is reactive; security policy and strategic orientation are schizophrenic, while defence policy is completely paralysed.

The argument will unfold in the following fashion. Firstly, we will lay out a poststructural theoretical framework and define the main concepts of identity, security and culture with a special emphasis on the concept of strategic culture. Then, we will broadly discuss identity and political and strategic culture in Serbia. Finally, we will analyse how culture and identity affect foreign, security and defence policies of contemporary Serbia.

1. Theoretical and methodological framework

The theoretical approach that will be used in this paper is post-structuralist conceptualization of identity and security, and especially the securitization theory developed within the Copenhagen School of Security Studies. This approach is adopted because, in contrast to other approaches in security studies, it emphasizes the importance of identity for the understanding of security issues.⁴ Poststructuralism (often labelled postmodernism) argues that security policy is always constitutive to identity. As David Campbell puts it, "for just as foreign policy works to constitute identity in whose name it operates, security functions to instantiate the subjectivity it purports to serve" (Campbell 1992). In the following chap-

³ On poststructuralism in security studies see Campbell, David (1992) Hansen, Lene (2006). On the Copenhagen school in security studies see: Buzan, Barry et al. (1998). On the impact of culture and identity on foreign policy see: Hudson, Valerie (1997). On the concept of strategic culture see: Johnston (1995).

⁴ Realism (power); Neo-realism (survival); Liberal-institutionalism (international cooperation); Marxism (class struggle); Democratic peace theory (democratic governance)

ter, we will outline poststructuralist conceptualization of identity, security and strategic culture.

According to this approach, identity can be defined as discursive construction of Other through articulating a difference (Diez 2004). In such a process of rendering identity is always constructed against the difference of an Other. David Campbell calls this ‘radical interdependence’ of political identities. (Campbell 1992, Diez 2004) According to this author, it is through discourses on foreign and security policy that the process of identity construction and reproduction is taking place. It should be added that poststructuralism aims at deessentializing the notion of identity by arguing that it is always contested by alternative identities against which it has to be defended.

Poststructuralist security studies distinguish three forms of identity construction: *spatial*, *temporal* and *ethical* (Hansen 2006: 46). Spatial identity articulates difference across geographical borders thus reiterating the delineation of space into the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’. The best example of this is a national identity in the context of a modern nation state. This form of Othering is the most antagonistic one because it is based on a principle of territorial exclusion. By clustering together geography, power and identity, spatial identification organizes international political space along the lines of ‘friends’ and ‘enemies’ (Schmitt 1996). The second conception is temporal identity. It is constructed through articulation of difference across time. Temporal Othering is a self-reflective discursive practice that locates the danger not *outside* of the Self but *within* it.⁵ The third conception of identity is Ethical. It is discursively constructed sense of Self’s responsibility toward the Other. When foreign policy discourse invokes an explicit international responsibility, for instance to stop genocide, a discursive move is undertaken to move foreign policy out of the realm of national interest to the realm of higher grounds (Hansen 2006).

Security is broadly defined as a pursuit of freedom from threat. Following Derridian assumption that reality cannot be known outside discourse which matters for what it does more than for what it says, the Copenhagen School posit that security discourse should be studied as “a subject in its own right and not as an indicator of something else” (Buzan et al 1998:176; Derrida 1998:158; Wæver 2001: 26-27). According to the Copenhagen School, security can be seen as a speech act about existential threats and emergency measures. The ‘speech act’ or the ‘securitizing move’ is done by ‘securitizing actor’ (e.g. President) who claims that a certain object (e.g. terrorism) is an ‘existential threat’ (e.g. threat to national survival)

⁵ The most common example for such a construction of „Other“ is European identity that was defined, after the end of the WW2, not in contrast to some geographical „Others“(e.g. Turkey, Russia etc.), as it had been the case earlier in history, but in contrast to its own European past, characterised by balance of power, interstate wars and finally the Holocaust (see Wöver 1998, Buzan and Weaver 2003). Some common themes of such a temporal Othering are development, transformation, change and civilizing process. One of the examples often present in European history is an imperial construction of inferior Other who in time, through military conquest, modernization, development and enlargement process may become a part of the civilized Self. For further explanation see: Hansen 2006.



to a certain 'referent object' (e.g. state) and proposes taking 'extraordinary measures' (e.g. pre-emptive strike) to counter that threat. If, by means of such an argument, the securitizing actor manages to legitimize the measures, which would not be possible had the discourse not taken the form of existential threats, priorities and extraordinary measures, then we are witnessing a case of 'securitization'. In short, security threats are not analyzed as something objective but as something that is perceived as such and acted against with extraordinary (security) measures. As Wæver puts it, "it is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one" (Wæver, Ole 2004: p.13). Particularly useful for this analysis will be the concept of *societal security* developed also within the Copenhagen School (Buzan, Barry et al, 1998: 119-140). Societal security has identity as its central referent object. As Buzan puts it, "societal insecurity exists when communities of whatever kind define a development or potentiality as a threat to their survival as a community" (Buzan 1998: 119).⁶

In short, poststructuralists assume that the question of identity lies at the heart of security. Given that nations are 'imagined communities', national identity depends on the existence of stable and threatening Others.⁷ Security discourse serves to designate those threatening Others, reproduce the imagined borders and stabilize the sense of Self (Campbell 1992). Thus, the perpetuation of security discourse is an existential necessity for the survival of collective identities.

Now that we have delineated concepts of security and identity, it is still left to see what we mean under the concepts of culture, political culture and strategic culture. Culture can very generally be defined as a collective construction of social reality (Sackmann 1991). In other definition, culture is a shared system of meaning that shapes the values and preferences of a collective of individuals (Hudson 1997). Political culture consists of assumptions about the political world (Elkins and Simeon 1979). It is a *product* of and, at the same time, an *interpretation* of history which provides us with axiomatic beliefs of who we are, where we come from and what we value (Hudson 1997). These axiomatic beliefs, which are usually implicit and taken for granted, shape the political and historical understanding of a political community. They are so fundamental that they cannot be further reduced but instead constitute the basic premises that organize all other knowledge about a given political community. The elements which are the most relevant in construction of axiomatic beliefs are: the existence of heroic history, the founding of a state, colonizing or colonized experience and other

⁶ Quoted from Buzan 1998: 119. According to authors, societal security issues are migration, horizontal competition such as for example overriding linguistic and cultural influence and vertical competition, integration or secession political projects. *ibid*: 121.

⁷ For nations as imagined communities see Anderson, Benedict (1983)

turning points and formative events in the history of a political community.

Strategic culture is a part of political culture consisting of axiomatic beliefs about the usefulness and appropriateness of the use of military force in international relations. According to Alastair Iain Johnston, strategic culture is an integrated system of symbols which act to establish pervasive and long lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by cloaking these conceptions in such an aura of factuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious (Johnston 1995). From a post-structuralist perspective, strategic culture is a product of discursive construction about one's country's geopolitical position, military history, international relations, strategic identity, military technology and the aspects of its civil-military relations. It comprises of two core assumptions: first, the assumption about the orderliness of the strategic environment, that is, about the nature of the adversary and the threat it poses, and, second, the assumption about the efficacy of the use of force, about the ability to control outcomes and to eliminate threats, and the conditions under which applied force is useful. Political and strategic culture shape national security interests in a twofold manner (Katzenstein, 1996). They regulate interests through defining the rules of the game and by dictating which moves are allowed and which are not. Also, political and strategic cultures create and reproduce collective identities thus constituting interests.

Before we proceed to the case study of Serbia, several methodological caveats should be made. Firstly, we disagree that any nation has some sort of essential identity and culture. It is important to stress that both culture and identity are social constructs. In other words, although they can be analyzed as 'sedimented structures', they constantly evolve under the impact of important new events and through discursive constructions and transformations conducted by political elites. The opposing identities and cultures do not exist out there in the 'objective world' and we should not attempt to reify them. Instead of that, in this paper, they will be considered as layers of narratives and images, interpretations of different historical experiences and particular societal 'software' that is utilized by different actors in the political arena as a discursive tool of self-legitimization. Secondly, culture (as well as identity) is never a uniform and stable set of beliefs shared by the whole population of a given community or its politico-military elites in one given point in time. Although the dominant narratives shape the 'logic of



appropriateness' in political and strategic matters, they also represent the discursive and symbolic context and arena for political competition between alternative meanings and interpretations. In other words, at any point of time, beside a dominant political and strategic culture there can be several alternative discourses against which the dominant one is to be defended. Finally, of what use are the concepts of identity and culture for social sciences, whether it is Foreign Policy Analysis, International Relations, Security Studies or any other academic discipline? As already shown by Max Weber (2001) on the example of Protestantism and capitalism, the study of culture can be a very useful tool for explanation of institutional development. In addition to that, the concepts of culture and identity can also be used to explain particular decisions and policies of political agents and outcomes they produce. In this latter case, these concepts can be a very slippery ground and should be always used with the utmost care. More concretely, if used for analysis of particular decisions, policies and outcomes, cultural explanation should always be a second-order explanation and a supplementary account, after rationalist explanations had been ruled out (Hudson 1997). For example, if we try to explain a particular foreign policy decision, such as Serbian government's decision not to fully comply with Austro-Hungarian ultimatum from July 1914, a rationalist analysis should first be employed to find out explanations based on material interests and 'logic of consequences'. Only if the rationalist and materialist explanation does not suffice, the constructivist explanations based on the 'logic of appropriateness' using concepts of culture and identity should be brought into the equation. Arguably, the decision of the Serbian government to defy demands of much mightier Austria-Hungary can hardly be explained by rational choice and national interest. In order to understand such decision which led to death of 20 % of population, occupation and disappearance of the independent Serbian state from the political map for 90 years⁸ and its, culture, identity and ideology prevalent in Serbia at the time have to be also taken into account.⁹

2. Overview of literature about political culture in Serbia

The aim of this chapter is to present and critically assess a part of the existing literature in this field. It is important to stress that while the academic literature on political culture in Serbia is very modest (Jovanović 1964; Golubović 1995; Matić 1993, 1998, 2000; Podunavac 1998), to the best knowledge of the author of this paper, there has not been any work done on the strategic culture of

⁸ In 1918, Serbia was succeeded by the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929), Democratic Federal Yugoslavia (1943), Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (1946), Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1963), Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992), State Union Serbia and Montenegro (2003) and finally again Republic of Serbia (2006).

⁹ Push factors that led to war at the international (system) level explain why the war happened. Yet, they cannot explain why a small state went to total war with Great Powers against all odds.

Serbia. Regarding political culture, despite all of its shortcomings, the work of Milan Matić represents the most comprehensive analysis written by any Serbian political scientist. As such, it will occupy the most important place in this chapter and will inspire our explanation on how culture impacts foreign, security and defence policy of the Republic of Serbia.

Matić depicts Yugoslav and Serbian political culture as a tension between two groups of principles, one deriving from tradition and the other deriving from modern age. He argued that profound political divisions of Yugoslav (1993) and Serbian society (1998, 2000) at the time of the writing had deep cultural roots. He analyzes this deep political and cultural split within the Serbian society with the following words:

Apart from the old antinomies of traditonalism and modernization, liberalism, East and West, today we can discern in political parties, among the leadership and within inteligentsia, rifts between Serbness and Yugoslavness, collectivism and citizenship, national and globalist, patriotism and populism (1998:328).

What's more, according to him, "Serbs are crucified between different, even not joinable patterns of national and state identification" (1998: 327). The first pattern is what he labels differently as: *national-libertarian culture* (1993: 838), *mythic-libertarian culture* (1993: 839) or *radical popular and ethno-nationalist culture* (1998: 332), while on the other side is *civilizing-social culture* (1993: 839), *democratic political culture* (1993: 839), *liberal, progressive, modernizing* (1998: 332) and *civilizational-participatory culture* (1998: 306). The terminological inconsistency reflects the lack of conceptual clarity in his work. To add to the confusion, Matić often values differently these two opposing political cultures. For example, in his earlier works (1993), he criticized the national-libertarian culture as an impediment to the development of civil-society and he glorifies the civic-democratic culture. In his work from 1998, Matić sits in the middle of the fence and is more careful to take sides or give normative evaluations on these conflicting models in terms of which one is desirable and which one is not. Although national unity and resistance are based on the national-libertarian cultural model, Matić holds that, by the "logics of general civilizational changes and progress, this model is doomed to disappear as an element of social integration"(1998: 308). Finally, in the text from 2000, Matić tried to overcome the gap between the two cultures by arguing that, in Serbia, there is only one *democratic-assamblitory*



culture which combines elements of the two previously divided and opposed two models (2000: 105). This culture is unique but ambivalent at the same time because it contains so many contradictory features such as collectivism and individualism, libertarianism and submissiveness, heroism and inertia, unison and division, hospitality and distrust. In short, although Matic's argument often suffers from essentialism, incoherence, and terminological imprecision, he remains to be, to our knowledge, the only political scientist in Serbia who has extensively dealt with the issue of political culture in Serbia.

Apart from a political science approach, a wide array of authors has tried to grasp the cultural model in Serbia from an anthropological and psychological perspective (to name just a few: Jovanović 1964, Cvijić 1987, Jerotić 2004). They often point out the aforementioned cultural rift between globalists and nationalists, modernity and tradition, between the West and the East, between individualism and collectivism and many other dyadic pairs. For example, Serbian psychiatrist Vladeta Jerotić argues that "it seems that Serbian Byzantinian remains confused in front of the ever important question: to which Kingdom should I adhere, heavenly or earthly, Eastern or Western?" (Jerotić 2004).

To sum up, there is a silent consensus about the dividing rift in the Serbian Society. However, as we have seen, there is no consensus on how to define the major dividing line.¹⁰ In spite of the increasing interest in this issue, the literature on political culture in Serbia has been quite modest both in terms of quality and quantity. In addition to that, the strategic culture of Serbia has not been touched upon at all. This essay aims to bridge this gap. For this purpose, we will construct two discursive ideal types of Serbian strategic culture. The first type we labelled *civic-democratic* strategic culture and the other we called *national-liberational* strategic model.

3. Civic-democratic strategic culture

Civic-democratic strategic culture can be seen as a product of a relatively short period in Serbian history, during which its society was either predominantly oriented towards emancipation from internal (rather than external) political dominance and/or had democratic governance.¹¹ The number of years in which Serbian society was oriented towards the internal rather than external emancipation is very difficult to calculate in an exact fashion. However, it could be argued that social and internal emancipation significantly commenced with the liberation of Serbia from the Ottoman impe-

¹⁰ Some recent views: Trianon vs Euroatlantic identity (Marković 2006), Sea vs Ground principles (Vukašinović 2006), Innovators vs Traditionalists (Dimitrijević 2007) etc.

¹¹ Internal emancipation in this context encompasses struggle for individual and social rights, or liberal-democratic values.

rial rule and acquisition of what Jackson calls *external sovereignty* (Jackson 1993) or the recognition of Serbia as an independent state at the Congress in Berlin held in 1878. The task of counting how many years Serbia was ruled as a democracy is easier to calculate, although it does not lack methodological challenges.¹²

According to a Serbian historian Slobodan Marković, in the course of the last 200 years, Serbia spent as a democracy only about 30 years, or 15% of the time (Marković 2004).¹³ Regarding the formative historical moments for the development of civic-democratic strategic culture we can single out very few events as following: the adoption of liberal Candlemas Constitution¹⁴ (1835), the adoption of Regents Constitution (1869)¹⁵, student protest 1968, anti Milošević demonstrations on March 9th 1990, demonstrations against election fraud in 1996-1997, and October 5th 2000, the popular uprising against fraud of presidential elections held on September 27th 2000, which put an end to the decade long authoritarian rule of Slobodan Milošević. We could possibly include, as a formative moment for the construction of civic-democratic strategic culture, the assassination of the first democratic Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić in March 2003.¹⁶ The main axiomatic belief of this strategic culture is that Europe and the West in general represent unequivocally cultural, political and civilizational homeland (or destination) of Serbia. Therefore, European political heritage of individualism, democracy, liberalism, rule of law, human rights, reluctance to the use of force, etc. is a 'package' of values and norms that should be adopted and respected. The national identity projected by this strategic culture is a civic and temporal. The fashion in which the civic national identity is being created, reproduced and redefined through contemporary security policies will be discussed in latter chapters when we discuss political elites. Accordingly, through the civic-democratic lens, regarding its post-Cold War national interests, Serbia is no different than other Western Balkan countries. Given its turbulent history, small size and impossibility to stand alone in a difficult geopolitical position, this cultural model pushes Serbia towards internal social emancipation and international economic, political and security integration, together with its Balkan neighbours, onto the path of European, Euro-Atlantic and global integration.

Finally, it is important to stress the conditions under which civic-democratic discourse resonates well in Serbian society. Given that it rests on the modern process of internal and social emancipation, rather than the external one, this discourse positively correlates with the existence of internal pressures and negatively correlates with the existence of external ones. In other words, the

¹² The main difficulty concerns the definition of democracy.

¹³ Parliamentary Monarchy lasted 26 years and 18 months (January 1889 - April 1893; June 1903 - October 1915; December 1918 - January 1929). Parliamentary democratic republic lasts since October 2000. All together, Serbia had 33 years of democracy in 2007.

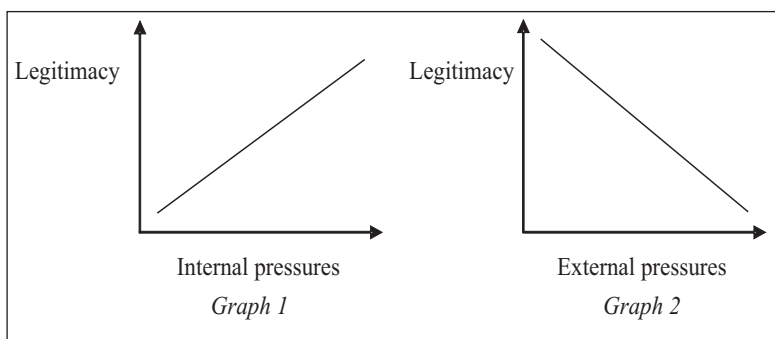
¹⁴ In Serbian 'Sretenjski Ustav'. This Constitution was very liberal and due to Austro-Russian pressure lasted for only several weeks.

¹⁵ In Serbian 'Namesnički Ustav'. This Constitution introduced National Assembly and universal suffrage for males of full age. It never took effect due to resistance of great powers (Marković 2004).

¹⁶ Although it is still too early to tell whether this event can seriously impact the civic-democratic political and strategic culture, there are some indications that its effects are already observable. For example, in the aftermath of the assassination the Democratic Bloc softened its human rights agenda in favor of internal security issues. Whether such a preference will become long term or even permanent one remains to be seen. For more on this issue see: Ejđus (2007).



stronger is the pressure of state and political elites over civil-society (e.g. election fraud) the stronger will be the resonance and legitimacy of civic-democratic discourse. Conversely, the bigger pressures from the external environment become (e.g. NATO military intervention against FRY in 1999) the weaker will be the strength of civic-democratic arguments (graphs 1 and 2).



Graphs 1 and 2 Correlation between legitimacy of civic-democratic discourse and the existence of internal and external pressures.

4. National-liberational strategic culture

National-liberational strategic culture has deeper historical, symbolical and even psychological roots in Serbia. It is a product of a half a millennium long struggle of the Serbian people for emancipation from the foreign conquerors and empires that encroached upon the territory of South East Europe. Those powers are the Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire, German Third Reich and finally EU and US hegemony. The formative moments in the creation and reproduction of the national-liberational cultural model are the rise of the Serbian state during Emperor Dušan and the Serbian Church during St. Sava; defeat in the Kosovo Battle against the Ottomans in 1389; demise of the medieval Serbian despotate in 1459; the first Serbian uprising in 1804; wars for national liberation (two Balkan wars and the First World War) 1912-1918; people's rejection of the Tripartite pact in 1941; resistance and conflict with Stalin in 1948; and, finally, the defiance of and military conflict with NATO in 1999. The main driver and motivation of the national-liberational strategic culture is the external emancipation. Matić argues that instead of internal controversies, as it was the case in England, peoples of the Balkans have throughout history faced a wave after wave of foreign conquerors and enemies that endangered their survival.

The first motive of this political culture was to tolerate internal enemies and poor leaders in order to gain unity in the face of the external threat. In its system of values, national identity and heroic deeds always come before peaceful, civilizational and democratic compromises in the interest of progress (Translated from Serbian by author from Matić 1993: 839).

The conception of national identity that is projected through this cultural lens is ethnic and spatial rather than civic and temporal. How such an identity is reproduced through contemporary security policies will be discussed in latter chapters. In constructing Serbian national identity, the so called Patriotic Bloc and its discourse draw heavily on the medieval mythology designed and preserved throughout the centuries mainly by the Serbian Orthodox Church.¹⁷ As Vladimir Tismaneanu argues, those myths revolve around several major motifs: the Golden Age, the ideal of the Warrior and the notions of victim hood, martyrdom, treason, conspiracy, salvation and charismatic saviours (1998: 9). The psychological features of national-liberational strategic culture are defiance as opposed to cooperation and mythical reasoning as opposed to rational cost-benefit reasoning.¹⁸

A prominent interwar intellectual, Slobodan Jovanović, summed up psychological features of the dominant Dinarian mentality with the following words:

Dinarian ideology, its disobedience, its spite for the world and its disdain of death was good for the heroic age of dangers. The age of troubles demands more realism and self-criticism. [...] The Dinarian type has bravery but also has over-estimation and over-emphasizing of the Self which makes him inflexible and inadaptable. Therefore, he has a tendency to interpret all of his failures as a sign of a greater injustice, even for the deeds he is solely responsible. (Translated from Serbian by author from Jovanović 1964: 39).¹⁹

Regarding its assumptions about the orderliness of the strategic environment, national liberational strategic culture is highly sceptical towards external powers and the international arena in general.

The national-liberational strategic culture is built on three axiomatic beliefs. The first one, which we will for the purpose of this paper call *independence and defiance*, is that great powers seek to choke the national independence of Serbia, which stands in the way of their interests. Therefore the national independence from

¹⁷ In the 1990s, during the early years of political quasi-pluralism in Serbia, the split was between the Milosevic's regime on the one side and the democratic opposition on the other. After the regime change and events of 5th of October 2000, the opposition got the name the Democratic Bloc while the parties from Milošević Regime (SPS and SRS mainly) started calling themselves the Patriotic Bloc.

¹⁸ Think of recent Serbian Radical Party slogan *Defiance, Freedom, Sešelj!*

¹⁹ The Dinarian mountain range stretches from Slovenia over Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia. The famous geographer and anthropologist Jovan Cvijić, while examining the Balkan peninsula developed a psychological type of Dinarian people, Cvijić (1987).



the great powers is priceless and should be pursued at any cost regardless of the consequences.²⁰ From this is derived a specific national-liberational understanding of death. Given that national freedom and independence has no price, human sacrifice is relativized if made in defence of independence. The first modern military commander and leader of the first Serbian uprising against the Ottoman Empire (1804), Karađorđe, shared the belief that it is better to die and even sacrifice one's own children, if needed in the defence of liberty. That is why he sees defensive war as an 'honourable evil' (Đorđević 2000: 44). Such beliefs resonated in a letter he wrote.

When justice is ostracized from the world, we would rather die than live and we prefer death over life. It's better to die than to be enslaved, in chains, hopeless that freedom will ever arrive. Our life is a burden to us and if we and our descendants are doomed to eternal slavery, we prefer to sacrifice our own children than to leave them to the mercy of our enemies (Translated from Serbian by author from Đorđević 2000: 38).

A good example of independence and defiance discourse can be found as well in writing of the Saint Vladika Nikolaj Velimirović.²¹ Thus, he argued that the “our struggle against the nations who follow the watchword that might is right fills the whole of our history” (Velimirović 1916: 36). Because of its suspicion towards anything that comes from the international environment, national-liberational culture is a fertile ground for conspiracy theories. In addition to the above described axiomatic belief of independence and defiance, the added value of these theories is that enemies of Serbia don't act always through overt military political and economic pressures but often through secret organizations and covert actions as well. Conspiracy theories often name the Trilateral commission, Bilderberg group, Council for Foreign Relations, Committee 300, free masonry etc (for an excellent overview see: Byford 2006). These theories were evoked both by communist, socialists and by rightwing and clerical elites throughout the 20th century. However, they were especially intensified during the 1990s and culminated during the NATO campaign against the SRJ in 1999.

The second axiomatic belief can be labelled as the idea of *self-importance*.²² According to Matić, the idea of *self-importance* is a quintessence of Serbian political culture and can be formulated as “To be and to stay yourself where you are” (Matić 1998, 2000: 27-30). Even though it may sound like a common ground for all col-

²⁰ Turkish word *inat* (*defiance*), which expresses this behavior, is widespread in Serbian language and culture.

²¹ During the 1990s, Vladika Nikolaj was not only amnestied for anti-semitic ideas and sympathies for Adolf Hitler but beatificated by the Serbian Orthodox Church in 2003. Today he is glorified as the second biggest personality of the Serbian Orthodox Church after St. Sava. For an excellent study on the process of rehabilitation of this controversial person see: Byford Jovan (2005).

²² In Serbian: *samobitnost*.

lective identities, due to the constant threats to their collective distinctiveness, the dynamic of societal securitization in Serbia and in the Western Balkans is particularly strong (Buzan et al. 1998, Buzan and Wćver , 2003: 377-395). Such self-understanding was created as a result of the historical fact that since the beginnings of their existence in the Balkans, detached and far away from their Slav motherland in the North East of the European continent, Serbs had to defend themselves from the encroachments of neighbouring great powers 'all unacceptable as their masters'. Given that they built a 'house at the middle of the road', that is to say at the crossroads of different and alien religions, civilizations and empires, as Maticć argues, Serbs developed a distinct, peculiar and powerfully enrooted collective identity under constant siege of great powers and their smaller Balkan proxies (Maticć 2000: 28).

The third axiomatic belief, for the purpose of this paper labelled *civilizational-ambivalence*, assumes that the East and the West represent two fundamentally different worlds in a permanent collision and that Serbia should remain neutral. This idea insists on the “ultimacy of an alleged civilizational and spiritual gap between the East and the West” (Gaćeša 2006:75). In the same vein, one of the biggest Serbian statesmen of all time, Nikola Pašić, wrote that “West and East represent two enemies, two antinomies, two cultures” (Byford 2006: 63). The Serbian Orthodox Church played a particularly important role here, not because it sees Serbia as the East or the West but because the Serbia’s and Church’s alleged special position between the two worlds depends on the actual distinction between them. The *civilizational-ambivalence* dates from a letter that St. Sava, a founding father of Serbian church, wrote to Irinej back in 1221. In this letter Sava says:

The East thought that we are the West, and the West thought that we are the East. Some of us incorrectly understood our position in this clash of streams and shouted either that we don't belong to any of the sides or that we are exclusively part of one or the other! I say to you Irinej, we are the Serbs, destined to be the East in the West and the West in the East, and to recognize above us nothing on the earth, but the Heavenly Jerusalem (Translated from Serbian by author from Jerotić 2004: 55).²³

The graphic expression of *civilizational ambivalence* can be found on Serbia’s coat of arms with a two-headed eagle on it.²⁴ While one eagle looks to the East, its spiritual and historical homeland, its other head looks to the West, its geo-political reality. Since its foundation and especially under Nemanjić dynasty, Serbia embraced spirituality from the East (the Byzantine Empire) but

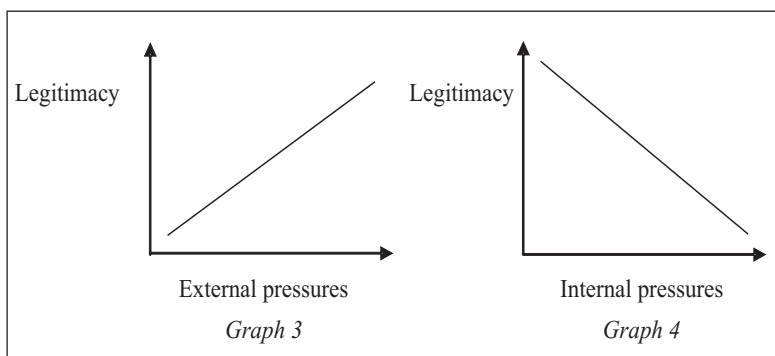
²³ Apart from Maticć, Milan Podunavac (1998) also argues that this narrative is central to Serbian political culture.

²⁴ The double-headed eagle is adopted by several Eastern European countries from the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire). In the Byzantine heraldry, the heads represented the dual sovereignty of the Emperor (secular/religious) and dominance of the Roman Emperors over both East and West.



materially, technically and economically it looked to the West. Dvorniković argues that “in matters of religion and art Serbia relies on Byzantine Empire while the armament, technical means, miners, financial experts and other things, it supplies from the West” (Dvorniković 1995: 32). Particularly strong anti-western attitudes were spread among the influential orthodox clergy at the turn of 20th century. The two most important persons, whose influence continues today, are Vladika Nikolaj Velimirović and father Justin Popović. Both of them condemned European liberalism, nihilism and socialism and shared apocalyptic visions of the European civilizations.²⁵ This has remained to be a part of the collective political psyche in Serbia even today. The West is cherished because of its technological achievements but scorned for the “moral and spiritual poverty”. This is especially amplified by the support Serbia gets from Russia in order to preserve its spiritual cradle, the Kosovo province, while the EU waves with a ‘materialistic carrots of aid, assistance, structural funds and membership’.

Finally, it is worth noting that, since the national-liberational discourse rests on the long tradition of resistance towards the external enemy, the legitimacy and effectiveness of its usage is positively correlated with the existence of external pressures. In other words, the stronger the pressures from the outside of the country are (e.g. for cooperation with ICTY) the stronger will be effect of national-liberational arguments in the public. Conversely, the resonance of national-liberational discourse negatively correlates with the existence of internal pressures (e.g. suppression of civil rights and freedoms) on society. Put differently the appeal of national-liberational discourse will be higher if the external demands are stronger and internal pressures weaker (graphs 3 and 4).



Graphs 3 and 4. Correlation between legitimacy of national-liberational discourse and the existence of external and internal pressures.

²⁵ From such ideas sprang a Godpraying movement, aimed at saving Serbia from European nihilism, during the interwar period. In Serbian: Bogomoljački pokret.

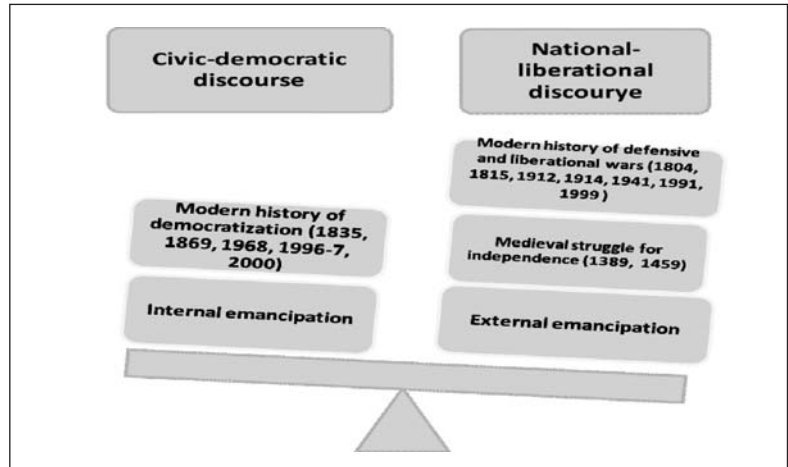
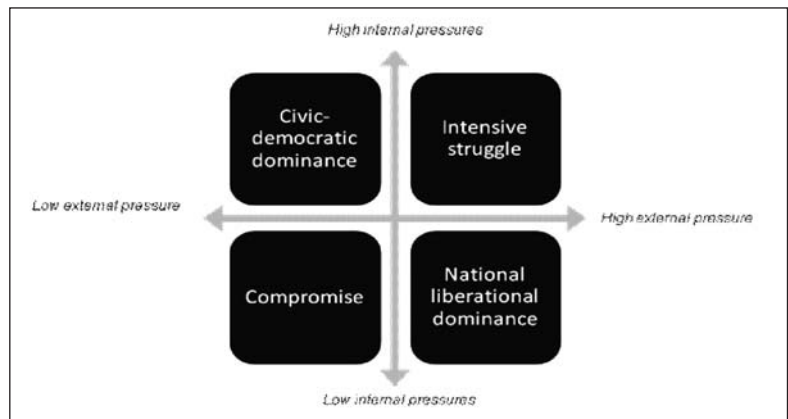


Image 1 The formative moments of the two cultural models



Matrix 1 Outcomes of discursive struggle between civic-democratic and national-liberal culture depending on the level of internal and external pressures

5. Contemporary political parties and cultural rift

Since the collapse of one-party system in the 1990, the political scene in Serbia has been bipolarised into two clustered blocs. This bipolarisation has consolidated following the October 5th 2000 into two political camps between which the political coalition has so far been almost unimaginable. On the one side is the Patriotic Bloc with currently the strongest party in Serbia SRS²⁶ and much smaller SPS.²⁷ On the other side stands the so-called Democratic Bloc composed of DS²⁸, DSS²⁹ G17 Plus, SPO,³⁰ LDP³¹, NS³² and some other smaller parties.³³ Arguably, those two

²⁶ Srpska radikalna stranka: SRS

²⁷ Socijalistička partija Srbije: SPS

²⁸ Demokratska stranka: DS

²⁹ Demokratska stranka Srbije: DSS

³⁰ Srpski pokret obnove: SPO

³¹ Liberalno Demokratska Partija: LDP

³² Nova Srbija: NS

³³ In the second half of the 2007. and especially in the first few months of 2008, DSS crossed Rubicon and approached to such an extent the national-liberal discursive pole that it is almost impossible to conceive their come back to the old national-democratic position in the foreseeable future without a serious backlash on their legitimacy. According to the latest parliamentary elections held in January 2007, the election results were as following: SRS 28,7 %, SPS 5,9 %, DSS-NS 16,7 %, DS 22%, G17 plus 6,8%, LDP 5,3%. Source <http://www.cesid.org/>

UN peacekeeping missions is problematic as well. For instance, in a recent parliamentary debate about participation of SAF in UN peace support missions, an MP from SRS stated that the “UN is nothing but a Trojan horse serving NATO, US and powerful Western circles to implement their ideas, their further conquest” (Barać 2006). Another exemplary discourse was made in the Parliament by the leader of the Radicals, Tomislav Nikolić, who spoke along the well-known lines of *self-importance* belief:

There are no Serbian children for peacekeeping operations outside of Serbian borders. There aren't! And if we do have children, and indeed we made our sons so they can defend the country, we didn't give them birth to defend foreign armies, but he who starts a war, anywhere in the world, he should bring it to an end by himself (Nikolić 2004).

What is surprising is how even the leaders from the Democratic Bloc sometimes adopt the national-liberational discourse when the issue touches upon security and defence. For example, DSS recently adopted a declaration on armed neutrality of Serbia. It was built on the motives of independence and defiance discussed above. For instance, the declaration says:

Armed neutrality represents expression of honest determination of Serbia against politics of force, threatening peace in the world, aggression and war. [...] Abandonment of armed neutrality would oblige Serbia to participate in wars that are not in its interest, limit its independence and freedom of decision making, threaten the lives of its citizens and encumber internal transformation and prosperity of the country.³⁷

It is not difficult to see the similarity in the worldview of DSS and SRS about the hostility of external environment and malevolent nature of great powers and military alliance they form.³⁸ This rapprochement takes place mainly as a result of unsuccessful negotiations on the final status of Kosovo and the following unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo, which in a sense “kosovized” most other political debates including most of the discussions preceding May 11 election campaigns. Therefore, currently the national-liberational discourse is spilling over to the Democratic Bloc as well because the Kosovo issue, which is a symbolic carrier for the National-

³⁷ Source: www.dss.org.yu
Soon after, similar resolution was adopted by the Serbian Parliament declaring military neutrality until citizens decide definitely on a popular referendum upon this issue

³⁸ Prime minister and leader of DSS Vojislav Koštunica shifted in his discourse even further towards the *national-liberational* pole following the unilateral proclamation of independence of Kosovo on 17 February 2008 and successive international recognitions by major Western states.



liberational national identity in Serbia, is an issue that wins hearts and minds of the Serbian people. To those actors that can adequately use national-liberational axiomatic beliefs and narratives, the Kosovo debate brings political points and legitimacy.

6. Contemporary strategic identities in Serbia

Another very important issue is what kind of strategic identity these two discourses construct and reproduce. The Patriotic Bloc largely remains in the spatial discursive construction of Other. In other words, the main threats to the national security of Serbia, as seen by this bloc, are geographically distinct political communities. Since the beginning of 1990s, the Patriotic Bloc securitized a wide array of issues. The most prominent ones were the neighbouring states and ethnic groups such as the Croats, Bosnian Muslims and Albanians. Relations with Croatia and Bosnia have been to a large degree desecuritized firstly following the Dayton peace agreement in 1995 but even more significantly after the fall of Milošević regime in October 2000. However, two securitized issues continued their resonance after the 2000: the first one is a Bosnian minority in Sandžak, especially the Wahabi groups, while the second one is Albania and its population in Kosovo and South Serbia. Secession of Kosovo and its international recognition is the biggest security problem of contemporary Serbia. The fear of further dividing Serbia (Voivodina, Southern Serbia and Sandžak region) is often and skilfully used by the Patriotic bloc.

Apart from the neighbouring states, the Patriotic Bloc heavily securitized the relationship with the West. Partly due to the St. Sava tradition of suspicions towards the intention of Europe and the West, but more importantly due to the Western interventions against the Milosevic's nationalist regime during the 1990s, the leaders, members and voters of these parties regard the West, and especially the US, as a dangerous enemy of Serbia. Apart from concrete nations that were securitized, the political elites from this bloc securitized more abstract political configurations such as the so-called Green Transversal (Muslims in the Balkans), Neo-liberal globalization, and less visible centres of power, such as Vatican Opus Dei, Free Masonry, Trilateral commission, Bilderberg group, Council for Foreign Relations, Committee 300, etc (for excellent overview see: Byford 2006). In sum, the Patriotic Bloc has modern and to a large extent antagonistic vision of national identity besieged by wide array of threats and enemies generated mainly

outside of the territory of Serbia. It is modern because it is territorially defined, and it is antagonist because of its relation with the Other which is much more based on exclusion and cooperation than on integration and amalgamation.

In contrast, during the rule of the Patriotic Bloc in the 1990s, the Democratic opposition constantly attempted to shift the attention from the external threats to Serbia to the internal arena, to the Milošević's regime and security sector as the most dangerous source of threat. However, as it always the case, it is very difficult for the opposition to be effective securitizing actor, especially if its designed threat is the state itself (Buzan et. al. 1998: 33). The main political program after the fall of Milošević and the deconstruction of his nationalist regime was to desecuritize the relationship with the region and with the Western oriented international community. The loss of external enemies had to be substituted with a new Other in order for the collective identity of political community to be preserved and its imagined borders reinforced. Arguably, this new Other was not anymore a spatial but a temporal one. In other words, the new democratic political elite presented Serbia and the Balkans from the 1990s as its most radical other.³⁹ The discourse on how Serbia should never go back to the times of ethnic cleansing, nationalism and war resembled on the post war discourse that has been driving forward European integration since the 1950s (Wéver 1998).

However, an important transformation in identity construction occurred following the assassination of a democratic Prime Minister, Zoran Đinđić, on 12 March 2003. Namely, the Self in the past as the threatening Other was complemented with a new threat, spatially located within the territorial space of Serbia, conspiracy of coalition of organized crime, paramilitary forces, secret service and nationalistic bloc against the democratic *acquis*. Thus the Self from the 1990s materialized into the internal enemy, partly visible (nationalistic political parties) and partly invincible (criminal groups and renegade parts of security sector, the so called 'deep state'). The tipping point of such a securitization occurred during the state of exception proclaimed in the immediate aftermath of the assassination in March 2003.

Also, the Democratic Bloc has engaged into the post-modern discursive construction of Other through the temporal articulation of a different Self from the past as its main threat. However, after the new democratic pro-western regime was shaken by the Đinđić assassination, the discourse shifted to a more spatial realm designing the threats within the territory of Serbia. The only common

³⁹ However, although such a discursive move was attempted it is difficult to say that it fully succeeded. The clear-cut discursive distancing from the 1990s was never comprehensively undertaken by the Democratic Bloc partly due to a constant activity of the Patriotic Bloc which represented each such a move as a heresy, treason or at best cowardice.



ground between the two blocs, when it comes to security/identity puzzle, is the issue of Kosovo. The unity between the two blocs regarding this issue mend the dividing lines in interpretation of national identity. However, such a position creates an atmosphere of collective cognitive dissonance regarding the reality in Kosovo province and nationalistic euphoria that delays the process of democratization. The issue of Kosovo seems to have capacity to permanently pump new blood into the national *liberational discourse* thus burdening Euro-Atlantic ambitions of Serbia and its Democratic Bloc.

To sum up, the civic-democratic construction of Other and of societal threats can be regarded as a postmodern one due to its temporal rather than spatial basis. Also, it is less antagonistic because, given that it's most radical Other is itself from the past, it creates the conditions for cooperation, integration and possibly amalgamation with territorially distinct Others, especially those created at the pan-European level.

7. Foreign, security and defence policy

Today, it is difficult to argue that Serbia has a clearly defined foreign, security and defence policy. Deep cultural and societal divisions discussed above prevent the state and society to reach national consensus on strategic orientation and foreign, security and defence priorities. So far, however, the least common denominator of all three post-October 2000 democratic governments has been the full integration of Serbia into the EU and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Regarding the former, a discord, however, exists concerning whether the EU membership will still be pursued if the EU members send their civilian mission to the province or even recognize the independence of Kosovo and Metohija.⁴⁰ Apart from that, in June 2003 Serbia submitted a formal request to join the PfP program and in November 2006, during the NATO summit in Riga, Serbia was invited to join PfP. Regarding accession to the NATO, until recently, the official foreign policy goal of all three democratic governments was, ambiguously defined, Euro-Atlantic integration. However, since autumn 2007, the government rejected the term Euro-Atlantic integration and clarified its intention only towards European integration, i.e. EU. This happened because of the shift of DSS towards the opposition of accession to NATO because of the Kosovo status negotiations.⁴¹ This moved DSS towards the national-liberational pole of spectrum.

⁴⁰ Within the Democratic Bloc, DS, LDP and G17 plus insist that Serbia will seek membership regardless of resolution of Kosovo issue. DSS decided to halt European integration process if the EU doesn't explicitly recognize territorial integrity and sovereignty of Serbia, including its sovereignty over Kosovo province. In the so called Patriotic Bloc, both SRS and SPS declare themselves as eurosceptics and oppose Serbian membership in the EU.

⁴¹ Their newly adopted party program from October 2007 state that Serbia should permanently remain neutral regarding international military alliances.

Serbia still lacks national consensus on the concept of national security (Stojanović 2007). Serbia lacks Foreign Policy Strategy, National Security Strategy, Strategy of Defence and laws on security and defence have only recently been adopted. There are currently two drafts of National Security Strategy that were separately prepared by teams of advisers of the Prime Minister and the President. One of them should probably be adopted in autumn 2007.⁴² After the National Security Strategy, the next paper down the hierarchy of strategic documents is Strategy of Defence, which Serbia also doesn't have. A draft of Strategy of Defence, written in line with the PM's draft of National Security Strategy, was proposed by the MoD in May 2007. According to the draft, the global security environment is characterized as increasingly uncertain and unstable (p.4). Substantially changed approach of Serbia to the international community and Euro-Atlantic integration is said to positively affect Serbia's security (p.5). The document identifies that the biggest security threat to Serbia is the resolution of final status of Kosovo which would not be in line with the international law, UN charter, Helsinki Final Act and the Constitution of Serbia - that is to say, independence. This threat is followed by terrorism, armed uprising or aggression, separatist tendencies, national and religious extremism, organized crime, uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, natural and man caused accidents and high tech cyber crime (p.7).

Strategic Defence Review (SDR), which was adopted by the MoD in June 2006, assessed biggest threats to the security of Serbia and the region in the following order: terrorism; uprising of illegal armed groups; national and religious extremism; organized crime and environmental and industrial catastrophes. The same document stipulated three missions of the SAF: defence of Serbia from military challenges, risks and threats; participation in development and maintenance of peace in the region and in the world, and assistance to civilian authorities in countering non-military threats to the security.

However, the parliamentary procedure for sending Serbian troops abroad is much longer than average time needed for force generation in any international military operation. Hence, SAF participate in only a modest number of peacekeeping missions under the UN mandate around the world. For that purpose, the Centre for Peacekeeping Operations has been recently established within the MoD. Serbia so far participated, with its military observers or medical teams, in the Ivory Coast, East

⁴² Although the two documents come from the Democratic Bloc, they substantially differ in wide array of issues. In short, although both strategies project the *civic-democratic* identity of armed forces and society, PM's proposal has certain above mentioned *national-liberal* elements as well. This reflects so far unsuccessful, policy of Kostunica's Democratic Party of Serbia, to overcome division of Serbia into two blocs. (Stojanović, 2007)



Timor, Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi.⁴³ Approximately 100 people have participated in these activities in the course of the last few years. In the near future, field officers in a medical team will be deployed into Afghanistan and Lebanon. Also, Serbia participates in a number of regional security initiatives such as, for example, the Conference of Defence Ministers of Countries from South East Europe.

In sum, additionally to the weakening of political consensus on the accession to the EU among the Democratic Bloc, Serbia cannot reach political and societal consensus on the most of other foreign, security and defence matters. This is a consequence of the deeper division within Serbian society in relation to the interpretation of collective identity, the recent (Stojanović 2007) but also more distant past (Matić 1993, 1998, 2000) and the future steps to be taken regarding internal and external policies.

Another important issue is the impact of culture and identity on the organization of armed force. Historically, given the prominent place of the armed forces in the liberation wars, it is not surprising to see that *national-liberational* model shaped the organization of armed forces and security and defence policies much more than the civic-democratic *one*. Moreover, it can be argued that the three abovementioned axiomatic beliefs of national-liberational strategic culture are the foundation on which the normative model of the Serbian Armed Force has been built. According to the popular proverb, armed force is 'people's dependence'⁴⁴ and a guarantee of its freedom and independence. Its role is the defence of the country and making of liberation wars. Such an army is highly appreciated by the people. The Serbian language has another proverb "A Serb goes to the Army with joy".⁴⁵ If war as a means of self-defence and national liberation has a praised role in national-liberational culture, it is not the case with the expeditionary function of the military. Be it a power projection or international peacekeeping missions, sending troops abroad has no moral justification and as such is seen and perceived as illegitimate.

In a contemporary Serbian debate, each cultural model generates its own ideal image of foreign, security and defence policy and Serbian armed forces. Quite expectedly, the national-liberational discourse emphasises the territorial defensive function of the army. For example, it is often heard that Serbia should not participate in the peacekeeping operations as long as it cannot use its forces to regain Kosovo. For that purpose, the armed

⁴³ Serbian soldiers have never participated in any NATO or EU missions.

⁴⁴ In Serbian: narodna uzdanica.

⁴⁵ In Serbian: "Rado Srbin ide u vojnike".

forces should be massive and composed mainly by conscripts. Finally, since the people' dependence, its autonomy should be favoured over democratic control. On the other side, civic-democratic discourse favours the democratically controlled light and professional forces designed for peacekeeping and missions abroad.

	Civic-democratic ideal type of armed forces	National-liberational ideal type of armed forces
Size:	Small and light	Large and massive
Functions:	Peacekeeping missions, fighting non military security threats (e.g. terrorism, ecological and industrial disasters etc)	National defence, national liberation
Mode of recruitment:	Professional	Conscript
Loyalty:	Civic community	Ethnic community
Strategic orientation:	Europe and the West (EU and NATO)	Neutrality
Democratic control:	Positive	Negative
Conscientious objection:	Positive	Negative

Table 1 Two ideal types of Serbian armed forces

Conclusion

In this paper we argued that culture and identity make significant impact to the foreign, security and defence policy of Serbia and the organization of its armed forces. The political and strategic culture in Serbia was described as a tension between two opposing discourses: national-liberational and civic-democratic. While the former proscribes the values of independence, defiance and civilizational ambiguity, the latter favours integration, compromise and alliance with the West. In addition, the two cultures construct two different visions of national identity. While the national-liberational discourse shapes national identity mostly in geopolitical terms (spatial identity) the civic-democratic discourses to a large extent use temporal identity definitions. What is more, the two opposing models of identity in Serbia often see each other as the most radical threats. Such a cultural bipolarization creates a strategic culture of *paralysis*. While the Patriotic Bloc sees the utility of military force in a more territorial defensive fashion, the Democratic Bloc perceives the military as an asset for international integration and, under such a light, in a more peacekeeping and far from territory projecting way. This disables the creation of national consensus on the ques-



tion of what is the purpose of the armed force and how it should look like (conscript or professional). Furthermore such a bipolarization creates a strategic schizophrenia. In other words, Serbia's foreign policy looks with one eye to Brussels and with the other to Moscow. Such a strategic schizophrenia concerns not only divergent foreign, security and defence orientations of the country, but more importantly, two divergent ways forward in its internal political transformation - liberal transformation on the one side and illiberal, *à la Putin* transformation, on the other. The apparent contradiction between Serbia's two foreign policy priorities, EU accession and territorial integrity (Kosovo), perpetuates the culture of *ambivalence* vis-à-vis the past, the spiritual, and the East on the one side and the future, the material and the West on the other. Finally, such a bipolarization fuels a completely reactive foreign policy and turns Serbia rather into an object than into a subject of international relations.

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Fundamentalist Tendencies of Serbian Orthodox Christianity

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Abstract

This paper will analyze the possibility of considering Serbian Orthodox Christianity within the concept of religious fundamentalism. At the turn of the 20th century, the Serbian Orthodox Church has been mostly passive either in attempts to seriously contribute to the development of the human and religious rights in Serbia, or in willingness to accept any kind of responsibility for the local and global social conditions. Although that situation has recently started to change on the level of the Church's rhetoric, awareness of the principles and imperatives of modern times does not on its own mean that they can be easily put in practice. This study attempts to provide a possible analytical framework for the comprehension of complex interrelatedness of religious, political and cultural dimensions of contemporary Serbian society.

Key words: Serbian Orthodox Christianity/Church, religious fundamentalism, national identity, mythohistorical narratives, ethnoclericalism

* * *

The perspective of considering Serbian Orthodox Christianity within the discourse of religious fundamentalism appears to be rather unusual: Orthodox Christianity is generally considered as a peaceful, ecumenically oriented tradition deeply rooted in its spiritual and cultural background. Bearing that in mind, Serbian Orthodox Christianity can be undoubtedly described as a traditionalist and even conservative religion, but can we say it is *fundamentalist*? This paper does not intend to provide an in-depth analysis of this controversial problematique; however, it will

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demonstrate that certain fundamentalist tendencies were and still are obviously present within the everyday practice of Serbian Orthodoxy.

This brief case-study will start with defining the appropriate theoretical-methodological framework: it will suggest an operative definition of religious fundamentalism and what can be taken to make one religious movement/group fundamentalist. Second, a brief overview of cultural and political history of Serbian Orthodoxy (hereafter “SO”) needs to be presented, as well as the position of SO within the contemporary socio-political context of Serbian society. Finally, in the last part of the essay, an attempt will be made to interpret features of modern Serbian Orthodoxy in the light of religious fundamentalism theory; in other words, it will be proposed which of its elements are applicable to SO. This paper will conclude by suggesting that in the case of Serbian Orthodoxy the concept of religious fundamentalism cannot be clearly separated from the political and cultural dimensions of Serbian society.

Theoretic Framework for Investigating Religious Fundamentalism

In order to thoroughly consider and analyze this problematic, the importance of both internal aspects (i.e., the self-perspective of participants) and the external aspects (i.e., socio-historical aspect) needs to be addressed. For that reason, the analytic type of definition that “stresses the significance [of fundamentalism] in the context of modernization, but engages in reinterpretation of subjectively understood terms and symbols” will be used in this paper.¹

A number of studies have been conducted so far in attempt to clarify the major features of fundamentalism. In general, it can be noted that fundamentalist religious movements appear as a part of the general countermodernization movement that emerged from a nostalgic desire to restore structures of premodern world of order, meaning and solidarity.² More specifically, as Martin Marty (1992) elaborates, certain elements of fundamentalism can be defined. According to Marty, fundamentalist movements are deeply rooted in traditional culture. Tradition appears in the form of idealized, pure and prescriptive past that is taken to be the imperative for the present, as well as a guideline for the future. Tradition is understood in literal and anti-hermeneutical way but

¹ “Fundamentalism” In: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*. William H. Swatos (Ed), AltaMira Press (1998).

² Peter Berger (1979) *Heretical Imperative: Contemporary Possibilities of Religious Affirmation* (New York: Anchor Press).



is interpreted through the prism of a rather fearful and paranoid worldview. The general “sense of threat” appears when traditionalist cultures are no longer “left alone”. There are two levels of danger or two types of challenges that appear to the fundamentalist group: internal and external. The external “others” (members of other religious/ cultural/ national groups as well as Modernity itself) interrupt the closed traditional system of values, causing the diffusion of group identity. The reaction of fundamentalist movements is, according to Marty, characterized by a Manichean, uncompromising attitude usually followed by scandalous behaviour and/or rhetoric. Marty emphasizes that fundamentalists seek authority and base their organization on patriarchal and hierarchical structures. These practical expressions are usually followed by some metaphysical-type divisions which can include concepts such as tribalism or cultural thickness.

To demonstrate whether and to what extent Serbian Orthodox Christianity shows some fundamentalist tendencies, we will present theological, cultural-historical and political contexts from which it emerges.

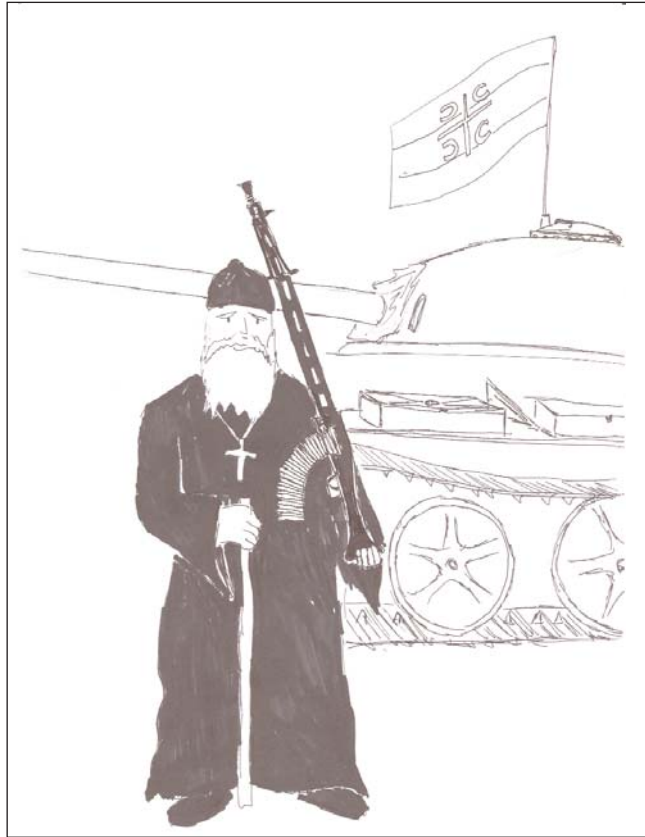
“Storehouse of Truth and of Right Belief”³: Eastern Orthodoxy in Theological Perspective

“The Holy Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Eastern Church” is the proper, and less known title of the “world of Orthodoxy” (Clendenin 1994:30). The name comes from the Greek adjective *orthos* which indicates that someone or something is *correct, right or true*, while *doxa*, from the verb *doxazo*, means *to believe, to glorify and to hold an opinion* (Mylonas 2003:37). A *true doctrine* and a *right belief* are entrenched in “the absolute fidelity to the Tradition, piety and principles of the early undivided Church” (37). As two independent but complement sources of Revelation, Scripture and Tradition are considered as the defining essence of all thirteen autocephalous Eastern Orthodox churches. What this basically means is that by implementing the principle “tradition as a supplement to the Bible” Eastern Orthodoxy becomes the integrator of traditional values with theological ones (Clendenin 1994:19).

The relationships of Eastern Orthodoxy with the rest of the Christian world can be interpreted through the occasional description of Eastern Orthodoxy as a “forgotten member of the

³ Mylonas's description of Serbian Orthodox Christianity as it sees itself (2003: 60)

Christian family”. During the decades spent behind the Iron Curtain of communism, Eastern Orthodoxy was, on one side, methodically oppressed by communist regimes and, on the other side, it was usually ignored by the rest of the world. After political changes took place in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, Eastern Orthodoxy became aware of the “outer world” and the world became aware of it. However, Eastern Orthodoxy didn’t show a



lot of enthusiasm about Western missionary efforts to bring the Eastern sister-tradition into the light of modernity. As one Orthodox priest states, “For the West to send missionaries to Russia to teach Christianity is like Russia’s sending economists to the West to teach capitalism” (Clendenin 1994:20).

Skepticism and rejection of the majority of non-Orthodox values have resulted in Eastern Orthodoxy taking the position of a counterpoint to Western, especially Catholic Christianity, and



Western civilization in general. It is easy to recognize that a sort of “theological and cultural xenophobia towards the West”, as Clendenin named it (1994:20), is deeply rooted in the historical background of Eastern Orthodoxy. Since the great schism in the 11th century, Orthodox Christianity has enthusiastically strived to clearly distinguish itself from the Western Christian world. By contrasting itself to Western Christianity and modern West, Eastern Orthodoxy developed the concept of endangered but sacred *enclave* and defined its mission on two levels: first, on the level of geographic and symbolic “mapping the Orthodox terrain”, and second, in bringing the world to the “truth of proper way of living” by promoting its doctrinal fidelity. The first ambition, “mapping the Orthodox terrain”, has been traditionally supported by the ruling secular political structures. The high level of church-state cooperation and the significant role of Orthodox churches in the integration of the nation-state have their origins in Byzantine spiritual and political circles: the state and the church were taken to be two aspects of the same phenomenon (Radić 2000:247). The ideal relationship between the Orthodox autocephalous church and the national state is envisioned as a close tie and mutual support: the church recognizes the state as a divine institution and preaches complete subjugation to state authority, while the state protects exclusivity of the national church amongst the other religious competitors (247).⁴

Brief Historical Overview of Serbian Orthodoxy

Serbian Orthodoxy reflects aforementioned philosophy to the great extent. Since gaining autocephaly in the early 13th century, the Serbian Orthodox Church (hereafter “the SOC” or “the Church”) has been in close relationship with official state political and power structures. Collaborative relationships between Church and State inherited from the Byzantine Empire were poetically expressed in the maxim “King on the earth, God in the sky”; working toward the establishment of comprehensive power, Church and State were essentially intertwined in an almost “symphonic” relationship (Johnson and Eastwood 2004:224). The concept of Orthodoxy as “sacralization of Serbian identity”, as Mylonas defines it, was officially introduced through the rule of the Nemanjić royal dynasty that lasted for more than a century: while Stefan Nemanja was celebrated for establishing a strong 13-

⁴ The ultimate legitimation of the state authority has its origins in the Bible. The governing authorities, hierarchies and social structures are established by God and people are to obey them until they maintain God's order in the world. Consequently, rebelling against the state authority means rebelling against God itself (Rom. 13:1-7).

14th Serbian kingdom, the young prince Sava Nemanjić was credited with the formation of the autocephalous Serbian Church, which later on brought him the status of Serbian patron saint (2003:51). Throughout medieval times, the Serbian Orthodox Church assumed the role of guardian of the Serbian national culture and tradition; it also contributed to education and fostered resistance to the Islamic conqueror (Ramet 1998:151). The popular concept of “Svetosavlje” (Saint-Savism) was a basis of the Serbian sacred history. As Mylonas notes, during the five centuries of Ottoman occupation, “Svetosavlje” was a steward of spiritual and national consciousness, “the soul [which] kept its memory alive...when the body succumbed to the Turks” (Mylonas 2003:52).

The 20th history of Serbian Orthodoxy can be analyzed through the concept of the so-called First, Second and Third Yugoslavia, and through the concepts of secularization and religious revival.⁵ During the first Yugoslavia (1919-1941), Church was still closely identified with State and the Patriarch was appointed by the King. This situation, however, significantly changed in the time of post-war Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). The so-called Second Yugoslavia used to be described as “one country with two alphabets, three main religions, four main languages, five major ethnic groups (nations), six republics and seven actually or potentially hostile neighbors” (Miller 1986:64). As the challenge of unification was immense, the State targeted every kind of pluralism (i.e., political, ethnic, religious pluralism), and condemned it to systematic suppression. The biggest threat came from strong nationalist movements that were traditionally supported by powerful religious institutions and grounded in ancient cultural ideologies. Consequently, as Mirko Blagojević posits, in a context of post-war communist Yugoslavia, atheistic ideology appeared to be the only acceptable “religion” that would not threaten with disintegration of the new confederation (in Đorđević and Đurović 1994:212).

In the 50 year-period of Communism (from the Second World War until the 1980s), secularization affected every religious tradition present in the Yugoslavian republics, but it seemed that Islam and Croatian Catholic Christianity did not suffer as severe consequences as Serbian Orthodox Christianity. According to Đorđević and Đurović (1994), there were three facts that played a major part in creating the atmosphere of secularization in Serbian socie-

⁵ For more information on history and politics of the 20th Yugoslavia/Serbia see:

John B. Allcock (2000) *Explaining Yugoslavia* (New York: Columbia University Press).

Robert F. Miller (1986) “Church and State in Yugoslavia: Exorcising the Spectre of ‘Clerico-Nationalism’” In *Religion and Politics in Communist States*. R. F. Miller and T. H. Rigby (Eds.), (Canberra: The Australian National University), pp. 64-92.

Sabrina P. Ramet (1998) *Nilhil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia* (Durham & London: Duke University Press).

Stella Alexander (2005) “Religion in Yugoslavia Today”. *Religion in Eastern Europe* (Miscellaneous Articles). <http://www.georgefox.edu/academics/undergrad/departments/soc-swk/ree/ALEXANDE.html> (March 25 2006)

Srdan Vrcan (1986) *Od krize religije k religiji krize. [From the Crisis of Religion Towards the Religion of Crisis]* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga).



ty. First, the suffering during the Second World War decimated both clergy and believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Second, the newly created communist regime was strongly oppressive towards institutionalized religion. Finally, because of its own weaknesses, the Serbian Orthodox Church responded to the situation with an accommodating and loyal attitude. All these factors enabled the establishment of a firmly rooted atheistic paradigm that manifested itself in both public and private spheres of life (Vrcan 1986).

At the same time, according to Vjekoslav Perica, Serbian Orthodoxy experienced crises on two fronts, both from outside and inside. On the one hand, the SOC found itself in a multi-ethnic state where none of the ethnicities were officially favored. Consequently, it lost “the short-lived advantage it had enjoyed in the Serbian-dominated kingdom” and faced two strong competitors, Roman Catholicism and Islam, rapidly growing in numbers and in material wealth (Perica 2002:42). On the other hand, in the 1950s and 60s, the SOC experienced profound inner schism and disunity: the Macedonian Church and Free Serbian Orthodox Church of America separated from the SOC and proclaimed independence (Perica 46-7). However, in 1970s the old nationalistic dreams revived and became a burning issue in the SFRY politics; consequently, all the anticommunist and nationalist elements started gaining more influence. Thus, according to Perica, it is not surprising that all institutionalized religions (i.e., Serbian Orthodoxy, Croatian Roman Catholicism and Bosnian Ulema) took on the role of chief ethno-nationalistic defenders. The regime immediately noticed these nationalistic tendencies and, in 1972, the Serbian Church was officially accused of intending to undermine the State’s multinational unity.⁶ As time has shown, the local nationalisms that emerged in the 1970s, eventually led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia through a chain of horrific civil wars in the 1990s. During that chaotic period, every Balkan Church played a controversial role as both war-perpetrator and peacemaker.⁷

Wide-reaching political and social changes followed the separation of SFRY, including the growing influence of myth and religion (Perica 2002). In the period of the so-called Third Yugoslavia (1992-2003), Serbian society experienced a great “comeback” of religion into public life, the media and political institutions. As the comeback was followed by an immense increase in the number of declared believers, it seemed that the process of secularization somehow reversed itself into its opposite, the process of revitaliza-

⁶ An excerpt from a Communist Party report presenting the official suspicions toward the SOC states: “Backed by a powerful tradition, the Serbian Church targets the Serbian people’s ethnic pride and most sensitive emotion pertaining to the Kosovo myth. ... The Church is dramatizing and lamenting what it views as the “disintegration of Serbdom”. Now, the Serbian Orthodox Church claims that it has been for centuries not only a religious but also a political organization and is being called upon, one more time in the history of the Serbs, to defend and lead its people. ... The Church actually wants to lead, that is, to assume political leadership based on the Great Serbian nationalistic platform.” (Quoted in Perica 2002:54).

⁷ See more in Velikonja (2003).

tion of religion. However, altogether with apparent resurgence of interest in religion, a significant change occurred in the dominant stream of the Serbian Orthodox Church's politics: as a result of the deep and general crisis of society, the anti-western wing in the SOC started getting stronger, supporting monarchism and anti-Westernism. Priests and part of the episcopate became explicitly nationalistic and patriotic; they treated concepts such as democracy, liberalism, freedom of conscience, and western culture as negative and anti-Orthodox. The church-state relationship once again was overturned: by insisting that Serbian Orthodoxy is "the core of Serbian national identity and the pride of all Serbs", President Slobodan Milošević (d. 2006) strived to reestablish the medieval ethno-religious identity model (Ramet 1998:47).

Towards the New Serbian Identity: The Legend of Kosovo as Poetic Narration of a Primordial Past

Medieval mythonarratives were designed and employed in order to build and sustain a strong collective national or ethnic identity and sense of community. As Vladimir Tismaneanu notes, Serbian political mythologies revolve around several major motifs: the Golden Age, the ideal of the Warrior and the notions of victimhood, martyrdom, treason, conspiracy, salvation and charismatic saviors (1998:9). All these themes are streaming from the meta-myth of Kosovo and the Serbs as "Heavenly people".

The myth of the Serbs as "Heavenly people" was derived from the famous Legend of Kosovo. The foundations of this "poetic narration of a primordial past", as Mylonas categorizes it, lay in the battle of Kosovo Polje [The Field of the Blackbirds] fought against the advancing armies of the Ottoman Turkish Empire in 1389 (2003:154). The tragic Serbian military defeat and the death of Serbian Prince Lazar came to be interpreted as a "crucial self-defining moment for Serbian identity, one of the cornerstones of the collective narrative of the nation" (Ilić 2004:35). According to the legend, prince Lazar was challenged by the divine power to choose between the actual victory over the Turks, which would bring him a glorious but temporarily "earthly kingdom", and the defeat of his army and personal death, which would provide the future generation of the Serbs with "eternal salvation" and a "heavenly kingdom". Lazar's "existential dilemma" resulted in a "sacrificial choice", a willing decision of the Prince to give



up the battle and his own life and to choose the “eternal salvation” and a “kingdom of heaven”.⁸

This mythical narrative contains multiple instructive and enduring dimensions (Mylonas 2003:156). Firstly, it grounds the concept of the hero: after his death prince Lazar was sanctified and included in the highest circle of Serbian ethnic and religious founding fathers.⁹ Secondly, as Dušan Bandić elaborates, the legend reconceptualizes the notion of freedom: Through their sacrifice, the Serbs earned freedom, but not in the usual sense of the word. They earned freedom in the heavenly kingdom, and that kingdom was within them, in the spirit and the consciousness of the people, that is, out of the reach of any conqueror. Although defeated, they were never enslaved.¹⁰ Thirdly, the Kosovo myth transcends the idea of sacrifice by juxtaposing it with the Crucifixion of Christ, an ultimate sacred sacrifice. Simultaneously, it collectivizes the individual act of sacrifice by presenting it as a determiner of national destiny: a heroic sacrifice of Orthodox Serbia itself is taken to symbolize a binary choice between the “profane” and the “eternal” salvation that Serbian nation is historically and culturally predisposed to pursue (Mylonas 2003:147). Finally, the “existential choice of Kosovo” affected the actual historical evolution of the Serbian people and their perception of historical time. In other words, by evaluating the past as higher than the present, this legend imposes both linear and cyclical model of time circulation: linear is the path of progression toward the ultimate fulfillment of the resurrection (following the Biblical example); cyclical is the annual ecclesiastical celebration of the Battle anniversary (152, 163).¹¹

The following chapters will draw upon some actual manifestations of the legend’s influence on the ethos and the consciousness of the modern Serbian community.

National Within Religious:

Being a Serb Means Being an Orthodox, and Vice Versa

The historical heritage presented above reflects the strong bond between Serbian ethnic and religious identity. With the rise of Serbian nationalism in the 1990s, the Serbian Orthodox Church emerges as one of the pillars of national homogenization. The spiritual and national autonomy of the Church, but also its pervasive and communal nature, allowed the SOC to extend beyond the role of a protective association meant to preserve and nurture spiritual

⁸ “O Tsar Lazar, Prince of righteous lineage, / Which of the two kingdoms will you embrace? / Would you rather choose a heavenly kingdom, / Or have instead an earthly kingdom here? / ...Lazar is vexed; he ponders, he ponders, he thinks much: / “O my dear Lord, what shall I ever do? / And of the two, which kingdom should I choose?” (Excerpts from the Kosovo ballad “The fall of the Serbian Empire” as quoted in Mylonas 2003: 156)

⁹ “Lazar, conqueror of invaders, / He, confessor of the Trinity, / ...Lazar, the pillar of the Church, / ... the salvation of the monks, / the enemy of the demons.” (Quoted in Mylonas 2003: 157)

¹⁰ Dusan Bandic (1990) *Carstvo Zemaljsko i Carstvo Nebesko [Heavenly Kingdom, and Earthly Kingdom]* (Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek).

¹¹ “We failed to defend Serbia but we saved Europe”, it was publicly announced at the celebration of the 600-anniversary of the Kosovo battle (*Politika*, 28 June 1989).

and cultural values; the Church appeared as a means of spiritual legitimization of the nationalistic political structures (Mylonas 2003:127). On the one hand, the SOC promoted itself as the single institution that “never in history betrayed the Serbian people” and as the “traditional bastion of national security and the center of national life” (Radić 2000:250). On the other hand, the Serbian political structures sophisticatedly adopted the Orthodox rhetoric by stating that “outside of the nation-state [formerly ‘the Church’] there is no salvation” (Mylonas 2003:133).

Numerous intellectuals, even those close to the Orthodox Christian ideology, started warning the public about the growing danger of phyletism.¹² For example, an Orthodox Christian psychoanalyst Vladeta Jerotić, pointed out that until the beginning of the 20th century the Serbian Orthodox Church was more often called the Orthodox Serbian Church.¹³ Indeed, at the end of the 20th century, ethno-clericalism becomes one of the crucial characteristics of the SOC’s agenda for building the new Serbian identity. Ethno-clericalism, as Vjekoslav Perica defines it, consists of “the idea of an ethnically based nationhood and a ‘national church’ with its clergy entitled to national leadership but never accountable for political blunders as are secular leaders” (Perica, 2002:228). Acting as both an ecclesiastical concept and political ideology, ethnoclericalism produces a mutual dependence of an ethnic church and an ethnic state, and, in the final instance, contributes to the transformation of an ethnic community into a nation. This assumed interconnectedness between Serbian Orthodoxy and the Serbian nation is well expressed through the popular maxim: “Being a Serb means being an Orthodox, and vice versa”.

The Notion of Omnipresent Enemy: All the Devil’s Pumpkins of Our Times

The entire history of Serbian Orthodoxy is shaded with the sense of threat: the notions of a concealed enemy and global conspiracy reflect its constant fear of identity diffusion. The spectrum of enemies is wide and refers to the non-Orthodox world in general: from the Communist ideology to modern Western capitalism and from other Balkans’ faiths to liberal trends within Serbian Orthodoxy itself.

As already mentioned, the SOC presented itself as the greatest victim of communism. Beside of being condemned for

¹² The term “phyletism” (Gr. *phulc*: race, tribe) was coined by the Holy pan-Orthodox Synod of Constantinople in 1872. The Synod condemned the establishment of a separate Bulgarian diocese that was primarily based on ethnic identity instead of the principles of Orthodoxy. The Bulgarians were excommunicated for the newly defined heresy of “phyletism” (see Makarios, Archbishop of Kenya and Irinoupolis. 2004. “Ethnic Identity, National Identity and the Search for Unity “Receive one another as Christ has received you to the glory of God (Romans 15:7).” World Council of Churches, Commission on Faith and Order. <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/faith/kuala-docs13-makarios.pdf> Aug 5, 2006)

¹³ Vladeta Jerotić (1999) *Vera i nacija* (Belgrade: Ars Libri).



direct oppression, the Communist regime was also partly blamed for the internal crises SOC experienced in 1950s and 1960s, the separation of two Orthodox churches from its mother-church. As for the modern West, the internal conviction of Serbian Orthodoxy in its absolute “otherness” is expressed through the idea of SO being situated on the western frontiers of the entire world of Eastern Christianity. This division is verbalized by choosing epithets such as *atheistic*, *nihilistic*, *anti-national*, *foreign*, *modernist*, *prowestern*, *liberal*, *left-wing*, etc, to describe the antithesis of the typical Orthodox Christian.

The SOC also exhibits a historically-established conviction in the existence of eternal “friends and foes”, such as particular ethnoreligious groups and nation-states. Discrimination towards other religions in the modern Serbian state is also built on the basis of religious and national identity and it varies from verbal insults and hate speeches to physical attacks. As Michael Radu notes, the SOC sees itself on the historic mission to protect Orthodoxy from the “double threat of Mecca and the Vatican”. Conceived “Vatican Conspiracy” against Serbs is deeply entrenched in the SOC’s conflict with the Catholic Church and the Croat nationalism (As quoted in Ilic 2005:46). According to Bjelajac’ survey, recent attacks of violence especially against smaller religious communities are also too regular to be ignored.¹⁴ Bjelajac also questions, “how much is the SOC capable of performing the mission of the ‘golden bridge between East and West’, and is it [the SOC] committed to that mission at all if it regards democracy as ‘the devil’s pumpkin of our times’, if it is afraid of Europe and ‘the matrices of other cultures and religions’?” The next section will look more thoroughly into the particular examples of verbal discrimination and rhetoric of exclusivism directed by the camp of SOC towards all above mentioned non-Orthodox social elements.

Rhetoric of Exclusivism: Philosophy of War – Philosophy of Universe

In the Serbian traditional culture war is seen as a “way of life” and the “philosophy of Universe”. As Nebojša Popov asserts, war has a “very important place in the collective memory of the Serbs; it is part of the way of life, not just a myth, a

¹⁴ Branko Bjelajac. “Serbia: Religious Freedom Survey, Attacks on Religious Minorities in 2003.” http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=387 (accessed March 29 2006).

legend and an epic” (2000:81). The concept of the Balkans, a metaphor for continuous divisions, clashes and ceaseless confusions, traditionally include the highly regarded vocation of Warrior (81-2). With references to honour, heroism, freedom, justice and respect, the model of “Serbian warrior” has been carefully carried throughout the entire Serbian history as the eternal guardian of both religious and ethnic values.

In the recent period, the “philosophy of war” has been placed into a new discourse. Political turmoil and the struggle for ethnically clean Balkan collectives provoked the reactionary theological rhetoric of the Serbian Church. The ideological and theoretical basis for such a response emerged from the teachings of two prominent Serbian theologians, Nikolaj Velimirović (d. 1965) and Justin Popović (d. 1979). Their philosophy is based on a critique of Darwinism, nihilism and Communism as the cornerstones of modern European civilization (Radić 2000: 251).¹⁵ On the other hand, they emphasize the exclusive and cohesive relationship between ethnic, national and religious identities. Velimirović’s book *Govori srpskom narodu kroz tamnički prozor* [Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window] is particularly controversial for its anti-Semitism and its views on Adolf Hitler.¹⁶ The central message of the book is that the Second World War was the inevitable consequence of the secularization of “godless Europe”. The Holy Assembly of Bishops of the SOC canonized Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović in 2003, despite the controversy surrounding his life.

Finally, one of the most illustrative examples of hostile rhetoric that originates in the SOC’s circles is the recent publication *Jagnje božije i zvijer iz bezdana: Filozofija rata* [The Lamb of God and the Beast from Abyss: Philosophy of War],¹⁷ the compilation of papers from the Second Theological-Philosophical Symposium held in Cetinje (Montenegro) in 1996. Its contributors are well-known ecclesiastic, academic, and military authorities who present their views on the topic of relationships between war and Orthodoxy. The philosophy of war is embedded in several major ideas: war has divine origins; Serbian wars are righteous; Serbian higher goals have no alternative. As bishop Atanasije Jevtić asserts, “War began in the sky. ... It is better to have war than peace that divides us from the God. We...will fight for our survival and we will achieve it, no matter in what form it has to be” (Mladenović and Čulibrk

¹⁵ Velimirović’s conviction that Darwin, Nietzsche and Marx are the major thinkers responsible for the decay of European civilization is clearly expressed in his words: “European schools of thought strayed from God. Since then, Europe has produced poisons which will bring about the demise of European mankind. Pagan cultures never attempted to disassociate science from faith although their faith was wrong and stupid. Therefore, my brothers, let us not listen to those who cry ‘in the name of culture’, or ‘in the name of science’, or ‘in the name of progress’. They are all assassins in the service of Satan...Let the Orthodox people rise and be heralds to the heretics, so that they may return to truth and righteousness.” (Quoted in Radić 2000: 251)

¹⁶ Here is another example of Velimirović’s controversial rhetoric: “Over the centuries those who had crucified the Messiah, Lord Jesus, Son of God, made from Europe the main battlefield against God and for the devil. ... All modern European slogans were drawn up by Jews who had crucified Christ: and democracy and pacifism, and a universal revolution, and capitalism and communism. All these are the inventions of Jews, that is, their father—the devil” (Quoted in Tomanić 2001: 178).

¹⁷ Radoš Mladenović and Jovan Čulibrk (eds.) (1996) *Jagnje božije i zvijer iz bezdana: Filozofija rata* (Cetinje: Svetigora).



1996:9). Discussing the issue of responsibility he concludes: “We were Europe before ‘Europe’ and civilization before their ‘civilization’, and above all, we were spirituality. Let the God judge them, they are major culprits for the war” (76). These exclusive arguments are backed up with the sharp military discourse coming from the most controversial actors of Balkan wars.

What to Sing and Who to Fight: From Orthodox Rock’n’Roll to Balkan Wars

Simultaneously endeavoring to change the others but resisting to be changed itself, the present-day SOC puts a lot of effort towards staying independent but involved in public affairs at every level of state politics. The Church circles and press, as Perica (2002) notes, frequently lobbied the state authorities on various issues in the local and national politics, education and culture. Accordingly, it was no surprise that Patriarch Pavle has become openly involved in a discussion about Serbian national politics. In 2004, he urged Montenegrins to drop their selection for the new national anthem, and he urged the Kosovo Serbs to boycott the local elections (Ilić 2004:37). In addition, the Church’s traditional concern regarding the national population policy and negative birth rates, recently resulted in a peculiar decision: in order to encourage families to have at least four children, the SOC decided to help these families financially with a gift of 1,000; however, this money was only given to the Orthodox Christian families.¹⁸

In the realm of contemporary Serbian culture and education, the SOC undoubtedly plays a prominent role. The SOC actively propagates the Orthodox spiritual culture and tradition in various ways: it promotes the exclusive use of the Cyrillic alphabet as the official script and the expulsion of the Latin alphabet from state administration, schools, and public use in general (Ilić 2004:35); it organizes series of radical sermons, lectures and public speeches at Belgrade University; it supports Christian youth organizations which propagate a mixture of political conservatism, clerical nationalism, anti-Semitism and homophobia.¹⁹ However, in order to reach some particular target groups, especially the young urban population, the SOC has developed new approach strategies. One of the most original approaches is embodied in the artistic project *Songs above East and West*, a music CD album. However,

¹⁸ Staša Zajović. “Serbia and Montenegro: Religious Fundamentalism - the birth rate and reproductive rights.” Belgrade, May 2004.

¹⁹ For example, the Patriotic Movement “Dignity”, the “St. Justin the Philosopher” Student Association, the Serbian Assembly “Doorway” and the Serbian Orthodox Youth, as well as the non-institutionalized groups of followers of Bishops Velimirović, Popović and Žarko Gavrilović believe that it is the matter of Orthodox spiritual values and national pride to violently prevent the participants of Serbian first Gay Pride to peacefully walk the streets of Belgrade (Milan Vukomanović 2005. “What the Church can(not) be asked about – the SOC, the state and society in Serbia, 2000-2005” Project “Religion and Society”. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia: 34).

although its title indicated an ecumenical ambition of overcoming the traditional divisions between East and West, the album was actually to popularize Serbian Orthodox Christianity through the lyrics based on words and thoughts of St. Nikolaj Velimirović. This project, edited by Orthodox hieromonk Jovan Ćulibrk, had significant media support even before it was released. It was presented as a “symbiosis of rock ’n’ roll and Orthodoxy” or the “Orthodox rock ’n’ roll”.²⁰

Apart from these cultural and local political issues there have been a lot of debates and controversies about the SOC’s role in the Balkan conflicts. It should be noted that the Serbian Church, as well as the all the other Churches, took a specific position regarding the Balkan conflict and all of its participants. The SOC has never had its own military orders or groups, but its authority manifested itself through rhetoric. For example, the highest institution of the Serbian Church, the Holy Synod of the SOC, stated in 1994,

[We] do not consider ourselves identical with governments on either side of the Drina River but we cannot separate ourselves from our, although sinful, nevertheless still a People of God in the ecumenical family of peoples, but stay with them on the cross upon which they are crucified. (Quoted in Johnson and Eastwood 2004:230)

Obviously this declaration cautiously avoids defining the precise nature of support promised by the Church. However, it clearly and poetically points out that the Church’s devotion to her people is ultimate and grounded in divine principles. Moreover, traditional mytho-historical narratives related to the “Kosovo covenant” with their the images “divine mission”, “sacred lands”, “holy warriors” and “holy sacrifice” were backed up by the official ecclesiastic rhetoric and action. As such they largely contributed to a military campaign and war hysteria. Although the SOC has never employed something that can be called overt *hate speech* against the Croats or the Muslims, certain statements and acts of Church individuals have sparked controversies. For instance, in 1991 Orthodox Bishop Lukijan called on the Serbs in Slavonia (Croatia) “to retaliate for past crimes and prevent the new Ustaša assault on the Serbian people”, reminding the Serbs of the ancient biblical *lex talionis*, “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” (Perica 2002: 162). He also baptized the “Tigers”, a paramilitary unit of Željko Ražnatović-Arkan in Dalje (Radić 2000:273). One of the most significant examples of the SOC’s supporting of the conflicts is the video evidence that emerged in Serbia

²⁰ “The Serbian Orthodox Church and the New Serbian Identity.” Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia. Belgrade, 2006, pp.12-13.



in June 2005 showing an Orthodox priest in the province of Vojvodina blessing several Serbian soldiers on their way to Bosnia. The soldiers were members of the Serbian paramilitary unit known as the “Scorpions” which committed the Srebrenica Massacre in July 1995.

However, simplistic explanations of the conflict in former Yugoslavia are often present in the scholarly community worldwide. Although for some analysts it was clearly a religious conflict, in which all religious communities played an active role, more comprehensive opinion is that political and religious dimensions cannot be clearly separated in this case.

It can be concluded that the Serbian orthodox Church at the turn of the 21st century present a unique case of instrumentalization of religion for political purposes (Vukomanović 1999:18). In constant oscillation between its ostensible ecumenical, anti-war position, and its true support of the ethnonationalist political powers, the pendulum of the Serbian Orthodox Church’s official policy apparently inclines towards the radical nationalist pole. While wishing to avoid vague generalizations, it is possible to identify certain fundamentalist tendencies in the policy and behaviour of the contemporary SOC.

First, by reviving the national myths and through the deification of the past, the SOC is conducting a two-level mission: on the level of the spiritual—the *sacrificial salvation* of the nation; on the level of the mundane—an attempt to design *modern Serbian identity*. The Church’s *teleological understanding of history* enables it to view the actions of the nation as part of a sacred mission to fulfill the will of God.

Second, the interpretation of sacred texts and mythological narratives is *literal and anti-hermeneutical*; such a narrow understanding of sacred and historical accounts allows for neither a studious examination of the past nor for the critical interpretation of the present.

Third, the SOC’s responses to the various issues of modern and everyday life are deeply rooted in the philosophy of *universal struggle* and the *omnipresent enemy*. A general fear that the Serbian nation can be “diluted” by the increase of the level of ethnic diversity results in the *sense of threat*; accordingly, the concept

of Serbian Orthodoxy as an *endangered enclave* appears as a consequence of a constant need to defend its imagined borders.

Fourth, on the level of both institutional structure and ideology the modern SOC reflects a great devotion to the principles of *traditionalism and conservatism* which are embedded in *hierarchical and patriarchal model* of the medieval Church.

And finally, in the terms of concrete reaction to concrete situations, the *uncompromising dualistic attitude* of the SOC frequently produces *controversial and scandalous responses*.

It would be difficult to pinpoint to the particular external causes for this unique model of Serbian Orthodox exclusivism. The five-century Ottoman oppression certainly contributed to the lack of some key concepts of modernity, such as the Protestant Reformation, the Age of Enlightenment, or the principle of church and state separation. In addition, as Daniel Payne assumes, the lack of understanding of concepts of individual faith, personal autonomy and individual human rights is the hallmark of the ethos of Eastern Orthodox political culture in general (As quoted in Ilić 2005:55). In any case, new challenges posed to the Serbian Orthodox religious institutions (issues such as democracy, pluralism, tolerance, protection of ethnic and religious minorities), are unavoidable demands of the modern world. Although the countermodern orientation of the SOC is deeply rooted in nostalgic desire to restore the premodern world with its supposed structures of order and true values, the modern imperatives of socially engaged humanism, such as global responsibility, dialogue and reconciliation, cannot be ignored any more.

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Regional Identity: The Missing Element in Western Balkans Security Cooperation

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Abstract

This paper looks at the present state of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, particularly in the field of security, and examines the reasons behind the limited progress of regional initiatives. Despite the present functional needs and external financial and moral support for regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, real progress is lacking. This paper claims that part of the reason behind this lies with the missing regional identity – a required component for transferring the necessary loyalties to any social group. Due to the negative connotation the ‘Balkans’ has in popular and political discourse, as well as the perception of the ‘Balkans’ as the opposite of ‘Europe’, political elites and populations at large are reluctant to identify with the Balkans. This makes security cooperation even less likely, since Balkanist discourse causes securitization of ones neighbours rather than cooperation. Finally, the western institution’s approach to enlargement, based on individual merit, causes regional cooperation to be seen in instrumental terms and a temporary stage before joining EU and NATO, which are regarded as the ultimate goals of the Western Balkans states.

Key Words: Western Balkans, Regional Cooperation, Regional Identity, Security, Orientalist Discourse, Balkanist Discourse.

Intro: Regional Cooperation

Regional cooperation is the latest buzz-word in Balkan politics. From politicians to academics and journalists, both from the region and abroad, everyone quotes regional cooperation whether

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as a key to economic growth, a fast-track road to integration in NATO and EU, or a means to stability and improved security in the region. Such statements are matched with a proliferation of various initiatives promoting greater regional cooperation, adding up to the overall enthusiasm but failing to produce tangible results. Indeed, it is difficult to claim that regional cooperation in the Western Balkans is a complete success. Especially in the area of security. Few of the regional organizations and institutions grew strong enough to drive the process of regional cooperation; those that did are the externally funded and run initiatives, such as the Regional Cooperation Council (the former Stability Pact for SEE), and even those have been but mildly successful.¹

It is not immediately obvious as to why regional cooperation in Western Balkans is sluggish. The Western Balkans states certainly share many of the features listed as necessary for making/creating a region.² They share common history and institutional legacies, have similar languages and culture, and a great volume of cross-border transactions (mostly due to having belonged to a single state and the inherited family, friends, business and other relations). In addition to these 'intrinsic' factors favouring regional cooperation, there is a pronounced external incentive supporting it. The EU, which is the highest foreign policy priority for all WB states, elevated regional cooperation to almost a formal membership criterion. In the new pre-accession financial instrument of the EU, IPA, one of the five components tackles exclusively regional cooperation and one of the 35 negotiating chapters is devoted to regional and international cooperation. EU financial assistance is coupled with strict monitoring and evaluation of the progress made in the area, adding up to a double incentive to proceed and progress with regional cooperation.

Seeking to explain the seeming paradox between the theoretical hypothesis about the potentially high level of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and the empirical situation of very limited progress with regional initiatives, this paper looks at regional identity, as the pivotal element for success of regional cooperation and integration. The main argument of this paper is that despite the functional needs and factors favouring regional solution to common problems, due to the dominant binary, orientalist discourse on the Balkans there is a lack of positive regional identity shared among the states in the region. On the contrary, regional cooperation is perceived in exclusively instrumental terms, as a means to an end, while each state in the region aims to

¹ For a detailed overview and evaluation of regional organizations and cooperation in the Western Balkans see: Milica Delevic, "Regional Cooperation in Western Balkans", *Chalot Paper* 104 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, European Union), July 2007.

² On what makes a region, and external and internal factors, see: Peter J. Katzenstein, "Regionalism in Comparative Perspective" in *Cooperation and Conflict* .32(2), pp.123-159

cast off its Balkan skin and adopt a new European look. Emphasis is placed on security, as a distinct and more sensitive area of cooperation, related more to perceptions, trust and rhetoric than the more functional fields of economic or trade.

Regions, the Balkans, and Balkanisms...

There is little consensus among scholars about what constitutes a region. Recent studies ranging from neo-realist to constructivist standpoints discuss regions and region-ness from various perspectives. This paper holds that there is more to region than geography. Rather, regions are created through the interaction of domestic and external factors, with the interplay of power, politics and rhetoric.³ As such, regions are not static nor are their contents and meaning fixed – their borders can be negotiated, their membership can change, and so can their influence. Moreover, regions can be powerful points for identification of individuals and groups living there, capable of mobilizing sentiments and loyalties.

Looking at regions from an identity view-point, this paper adopts a social psychological definition of regional identity, as one of many instances of social or group identities. Thus, regional identity is similar to other social/group identities individuals assume in society, such as: nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, race etc. One of the main features of group identities is the positive role they play to individual's self-image. A person perceives herself as a member of a group only if belonging to that social group distinguishes her from others, in a positive way, by adopting the features of the group and identifying with them.⁴ Therefore, groups labelled with negative or pejorative features are not attractive for membership, so a person externally classified as a member of such would strive to either leave the group or change the way in which her group is perceived by others.

The above paragraph sheds a different light at Balkan regional cooperation and region-ness in general. It shows how the problem with regional cooperation is not in the lack of institutions or persons promoting it, not even with insufficient financial and political support for it, but rather with the features associated with the Balkan region, or what does it mean to belong to the Balkans, especially the Western Balkans? Indeed, one can barely think of a positive feature of Balkan identity or a positive trait that distinguishes the Balkans from the other (European) regions. How the

³ This paper follows the constructivist trend in defining a region. See for example: William R. Thompson, "The Regional Subsystem: Conceptual Explication and Propositional Inventory" in *International Studies Quarterly* 17(1), pp.89-117, or, Peter J. Katzenstein, "Regionalism in Comparative Perspective" in *Cooperation and Conflict*, 32(2), pp.123-159, or, Anssi Paasi, "Region and place: regional identity in question" in *Progress in Human Geography*, 27(4), pp.475-485.

⁴ For more on Social Identity Theory see: John C. Turner (1987) *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (NY and London: Blackwell) and Henry Tajfel (1981) *Human Groups and Social Categories* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni. Press).



Balkans are seen by others (and lately by the Balkans themselves) is widely discussed and documented. From early modern travellers to media reporting in the 1990s, Westerners saw the Balkans as a primitive, barbarian and underdeveloped region, not quite a part of Europe, yet not fully oriental as well. To paraphrase Maria Todorova's famous claim, the Balkans are Europe's alter-ego, the dark side of Europe's liberal, tolerant, democratic societies.⁵ It is no surprise then that nobody wants to be seen as Balkan and nobody wants to belong there.

This, so called Balkanist, discourse, deployed initially only by the West, recently became domesticated and internalized among the Balkan states. In what is referred to as 'nesting orientalism' or 'nesting Balkanism', each state/society applies Balkanist rhetoric to those states (populations, societies) to its South and East, while excluding itself from the Balkans.⁶ Adopting such binary, orientalist rhetoric to one's neighbours hardly encourages better cooperation on regional level. If anything, it only prompts competition between states on how not to be associated with the Balkans. Moreover, Balkanism, by positioning the Balkans in opposition to Europe, further impedes regionalization and strengthening of regional identity in the Balkans. While elsewhere in Europe, national and, especially regional, and European identities are seen are compatible and even complementary, this is not the case with the Balkans, where being Balkan (unlike being Scandinavian or from the Benelux) implies rather not being European. Striving to become European (and all that being European means and represents), Balkan states would rather be dissociated from the Balkan region.

Securitizing the 'Balkan' Other

The theoretical points presented above have serious empirical ramifications in every aspect of regional cooperation, but especially so in the area of security. Security is still regarded as a very sensitive area and the last stronghold of national sovereignty, where regional cooperation is even more difficult to achieve due to state reluctance to cede or share its authority. An often quoted example of this is the failed attempt to establish European defence cooperation within the European Communities in the late 1950s. While states may have been ready to integrate in areas of trade and market, security proved an entirely different story.

⁵ Maria Todorova (1997) *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press).

⁶ Milica Bakic-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia" in *Slavic Review* 54(4), (Winter 1995), pp.917-931.

In the Balkan context, where security was the reason for broken regional ties, mending those would imply improving security in the region, but it would be very difficult to overcome the security traumas from the recent past. Functional reasons for regional security cooperation undoubtedly exist: each of the states is faced with security threats of trans-national nature, such as organized crime, arms, drugs and human trafficking, illegal migration, that would be better countered through joint regional efforts. In addition, external actors also provide support and incentives for regional security cooperation in the Western Balkans, as regional security organizations have been established with the support of the EU and NATO, such as the South-eastern European Cooperation Initiative (SECI), the Security Working Table of the Stability Pact for SEE, to name a few. Besides, regional solutions to trans-national problems have become increasingly popular all throughout the world. As policy-makers acknowledge the changing nature of security threats, security policies also assume a more regional outlook.⁷ The national security strategies and concepts of the countries in the Western Balkans region are certainly updated to include provisions for regional and integrated approach towards security.

Yet, despite the favourable context, security cooperation in the region is slow to take off. Created to serve functional needs and address tangible problems of the populations, regional organizations lack the legitimacy to perform that role. Populations in each of the countries are unaware of the existence and role of these organizations, therefore, do not perceive them as potential solutions to their (security) problems. Governments are committed only by declaration with few resources, experts and practical measures undertaken between two summits or official meetings – little ownership of the regional cooperation process is shared even among national elites.

Thus, in the field of security, the effects of the absent regional identity are even more apparent. Following the ‘nesting orientalism’ logic, the neighbours in the Western Balkans are perceived as ‘Balkan’, and therefore, less developed, less civilized, backward and ultimately unsafe. This renders regional security cooperation almost impossible. It makes little sense to cooperate on sensitive security issues with states which are seen as virtually the complete opposite of the desired image and group one wishes to belong. Cooperation is easier with members from the same group, with whom one shares values, features, goals etc. This explains well the

⁷ Even in SEE, government adopt National Security Concepts that reflect new trends in security, such as regional cooperation etc. See for example the Macedonian National Security and Defence Concept at: www.vlada.mk



insistence of Western Balkan states to become NATO members (and thus members of the most distinguished Western club) rather than to work on creating regional security structures. Moreover, the EU's very insistence on stabilizing and 'Europeanizing' before admitting the Western Balkans, reaffirms the above conclusion that one can discuss (regional) integration only when/if shared values and group identity exist. Only if Western Balkan states become European, and therefore stop being 'Balkan', they can be allowed to join.

Taking the argument one step further, by labelling countries and societies as 'Balkan', they are ultimately deemed as a threat. By labelling someone 'Balkan', and therefore, underdeveloped and unsafe, one performs a 'securitization' act – rhetorically rendering a political issue an existential threat to security.⁸ Seeing the other as radically different from oneself, and as personifying all the features opposite to one's own values, as the 'Balkans' are often seen from 'Europe', can easily be presented as a potential source of threat. A threat to one's identity and way of life, at least. Adding to that the recent conflict history and unresolved political disputes among the states and (ethno-national) groups in the Balkans, even military threats can appear credible. Despite the shared transnational security problems, which require joint action and regional efforts to be solved, states in the Western Balkans still perceive each other as sources of threat, another fact that deeply undermines the basis for cooperation.

Admittedly, issues such as the unresolved status of Kosovo, and the entire 'changing borders' discourse around Kosovo, could indeed destabilize the region and pose serious threats to regional security, such as raising issues of state sovereignty, self-determination, partition in a region with relatively young and unstable states and borders. Yet, even in areas with greater cooperation potential, such as visa regimes, there is an apparent lack of cooperation. That some Western Balkan states still maintain a visa regime for their neighbours shows that neighbouring states are still seen as a source of threats. This is even more obvious in the context of visa liberalization with the EU. In yet another variation of Balkanist discourse, each of the Western Balkans states believes it is 'safe enough' to join the Schengen area and seeks liberalization of the visa regime of the EU, but some still impose visa regimes as a protection from other states of the Western Balkans. Before a meaningful security cooperation in the Western Balkans is achieved, states and groups need to 'de-securitize' each other. Trust and

⁸ B. Buzan, O. Waever and J. de Wilde (1998) *Security: A New Framework For Analysis* (London/Boulder: Lynne Rienner).

expectation of peaceful resolution of disputes or relegating problems to the political realm is central to security cooperation.⁹ Otherwise, belonging to the region will be regarded rather as a security problem than as a solution to security threats.

The Double Role of Europe

External actors, while nominally supporting greater cooperation, seem to reinforce the situation described above. On the one hand, the EU and NATO promote and encourage regional cooperation in the Western Balkans by providing financial and political support for it. On the other hand, by evaluating and eventually admitting each state on its individual merit, they render regional cooperation and integration a transitory stage before the final goal of becoming an EU/NATO member is achieved.¹⁰ This shows how and why regional cooperation in the Western Balkans is seen in instrumental terms, as a means to an end, however without an inherent value in itself. Political elites in the Western Balkans embrace regional initiatives and joint efforts for Euro-Atlantic integration as long and as much as it brings their states closer to the ultimate destination: NATO and EU. Furthermore, some even argue strongly against closer regional cooperation because it is sometimes seen as a substitute for full EU membership for the states of the region. Thus, states in the Western Balkans lack true motivation to commit efforts and resources to regional cooperation, without which firm commitment no real progress with regional initiatives would be achieved and no regional identity constructed.

To summarize, this paper looks at the present state of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, particularly in the field of security, and examines the reasons behind the limited progress of regional initiatives. Despite the present functional needs and external financial and moral support for regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, real progress is lacking. This paper claims that part of the reason behind this lies with the missing regional identity – a required component for transferring the necessary loyalties to any social group. Due to the negative connotation the ‘Balkans’ has in popular and political discourse, as well as the perception of the ‘Balkans’ as the opposite of ‘Europe’, political elites and populations at large are reluctant to identify with the Balkans. This makes security cooperation even less likely, since Balkanist dis-

⁹ For ‘de-securitization’ see: Buzan, Waever and de Wilde (1998) *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*; see also E. Adler and M. Barnett (Eds), *Security Communities*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) for more on necessary pre-conditions for security cooperation.

¹⁰ For EU Enlargement approach see: “COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL: Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2006 – 2007 Including annexed special report on the EU’s capacity to integrate new members”. European Commission, Brussels, November 8, 2006.



course causes securitization of ones neighbours rather than cooperation. Finally, the western institution's approach to enlargement, based on individual merit, causes regional cooperation to be seen in instrumental terms and a temporary stage before joining EU and NATO, which are regarded as the ultimate goals of the Western Balkans states.

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Commentary of the Draft Law on Defence and the Draft Law on Army¹

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Abstract

This article represents the comments on the draft Law on the Serbian military and the Law on defence, presented in summer 2007. The findings of this work were presented at the public debate organised by the Centre for Civil and Military Relations on the 24th of September 2007. The intention of the author is to show the circumstances under which these laws developed, to point out the most important changes that these laws bring to the security system, and to point out the basic shortcomings of the suggested legal regulations

Key words: civilian democratic control of the military, the value system, chain of command, strategic documents, legislature.

The need to adopt new laws

Passing of the new laws on Defence and on the Military has been anticipated for a long time among the local and expert community, and those in the wider circles. Although the current laws that date from 1993 have been changed and supplemented on number of occasions, they have shown to be inadequate for the further reform of the Serbian Military. Military administration should be complimented on doing everything possible within the existing legal norms, to reform this important segment of Serbian society, sometimes even taking charge of certain measures on its own responsibility. The best example is accession to the Partnership for Peace Programme. The existing legal regulations do not foresee the possibility of security integration, particularly into the NATO programme. However, within the

¹ This text represents the opinion of the author and it does not have to correspond to the standpoint of the Centre for Civil-Military relations.

²

See:

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existing legislature further reform of the military is not feasible in Serbia today. This situation urgently requires new legal regulations.

Reasons to adopt new laws

The one year time frame is set by the Law on the Implementation of the Constitution, from its coming to force, for the Law on Defence and the Law on the Military to be adopted, which is also the precondition for holding the presidential elections. The Draft Law on the Defence and the Draft Law on Military were put on the web site by the Ministry of Defence during the summer break of most state institutions. This method of presenting the drafts of legal regulations is a novelty and as it has drawn a lot of attention it will hopefully set an example for other state institutions in the security sector. More precisely, the Draft Law on Defence was viewed 11.638 times while the Draft Law on the Military drew more interest as it was viewed 53.838 times². This amount of interest shows more than clearly the importance of the new legal regulations, as well as the necessity. After the agreement within the ruling coalition these laws entered the parliamentary procedure in December and will have to be adopted by the end of the year so the presidential elections can be held by constitutionally scheduled date.

The Law on Defence regulates the defence system of the Republic of Serbia; the authority, the rights and the responsibilities of state institutions, Serbian military and citizens in defence matters. The other law, the Law on the Military regulates the placement and the competence of the military as well as its organization, structure and operation. Other matters of this law deal with the specific features of the military service, commanding and administering of the military, rank and vocation, symbols and insignias, and military holidays. The law also regulates innovations like the religious services, civilian democratic control and other areas of importance for the military.

Whether the proposed drafts of these laws are a strong step towards modern European legislature, or a simple change and supplement of the existing laws in line with the current situation in the Serbian Military, it's difficult to say.

² See: <http://www.mod.gov.yu/index.php?action=full-news&id=590>, downloaded on the 21.09.2007.

Maybe the creators of these legislative documents were closer to adaptation of legal regulations than to some significant innovation. The pressure of the time limit set upon on them has clearly left the mark that is visible in the text.

The main themes in these two laws that we are going to focus on are democratic civilian control of the military, change of values and clear chain of command. These matters are of special significance for more active involvement of the civil society and the wider political community into the security politics

Civilian democratic control of the military

One of the most important aspects of the reform of security sector is the democratic civilian control of armed forces, and with it also the military as the largest part. This form of control, introduced by the Constitutional charter of Serbia and Montenegro, is also foreseen by the abovementioned laws. The Serbian Constitution from 2006 stipulates democratic and civilian control of the Serbian military, however it doesn't contain instruments, or have the permission to conduct it.

The 29th clause of the Draft law on the Military deals with the democratic and civilian control of the Serbian military. Apart from containing the information on what it entails, this clause contains regulation that defines that National Assembly, Ombudsman and other state apparatuses according to their competency, citizens and public. This clause was introduced on the recommendation of the Centre for Civil Military Relations after the public debate during which the representatives of the Centre expressed their comments on the content of the legislation.³ The legislator replaced the clause from the first version of the draft according to which only the state apparatuses held the control over the military. Apart from Parliament, which is the holder of the civilian democratic control and other state institutions like the auditing bodies, this control is practiced by the institutions of the civil society, media, academic community, but also the wider public. In this precisely lies the significance of the democratic civilian control over the military. Civilians as the holders of the sovereignty in every country, and maybe even more importantly, as the financiers of the security sector, have the right to know how their money is being spent

³More on this you can find on the site www.bezbednost.com.



and what is being done with it. Also we have to highlight that this form of control falls under civil-military relations domain therefore it shouldn't be regulated with the Law on the Military but with the separate Law on Democratic Civilian Control of the Army. This law should name the actors and instruments, establish the procedure for civilian democratic control of the military. With this law the constitutional clause about the democratic civilian control of the army would finally be realized.

The first objection towards the Draft Law on Defence is found in the 9th clause which outlines the competency of the National Assembly in the area of defence. Particularly, this clause, among other things, proscribes that the National Assembly realises the democratic civilian control of the Serbian Military. This statement is absolutely correct and it is good that it is included. However, National Assembly shouldn't be the only actor of this control that could be anticipated from the text. Civilian democratic control in the democratic societies requires engagement of a much wider number of actors, and the National Assembly is only one of them. Therefore this article of the 9th clause should be reformulated.

Among other responsibilities in this area that the National Assembly has, one that is eminent is that it adopts the National security strategy of Republic of Serbia. This is a very important clause as our Constitution omitted to regulate the passing of this most important strategic document. Constitution mentions only the Strategy of defence, but this represents only the document that is subordinate and it should emanate from the National security strategy. This omission we pointed out during the process of its adopting and it is good that it is at least removed by the law.

The discrepancy of the Draft Law on the Military from the Draft Law on Defence, to which it is "subordinate", is particularly noticeable while regulating the responsibilities of the Serbian Military. The Draft Law on the Military (art.12) stipulates for the military, among other things, to perform competencies in line with Strategy of defence, Doctrine of the Serbian Military and the principles of international law that regulate the use of force. National security strategy, the highest strategic document is not being mentioned. This is the repeated mistake of the Constitution that we have already mentioned which results to document being unmentioned in the Constitution and the Law on the Military, while the Law on Defence has

included it. This kind of inconsistency would have to be eliminated in the shortest period possible, and the existence of the strategic documents would have to be regulated evenly in legal acts.

Change of values

The Draft Law on Defence in its 4th article offers the list of basic concepts that are being used in it, as well as their explanation. This is the innovation that we can welcome as it brings closer the content of the legal regulations to ordinary citizens who don't have to always possess the knowledge of technical terminology that is mainly being used in the legal acts that regulate the subject matter from defence and security domain.

If we compare the existing and recommend Draft Law on the Defence we can see some important changes. They are first of all the changes of the values that are protected by these laws and establishing a clear chain of command. The second article of this Law states that "defence of the Republic of Serbia is realized by the engaging of available human and material resources, and secured by use of Serbian Military and other defence forces in protecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security." What is not being mentioned anymore is the protection of constitutional order – regulation that was very often used as an excuse for misuse of the military in our recent past.

Also, the same article deals with the defence in case of war and emergency situations. In the hitherto law existed also the notion of the immediate risk of war that was abolished. This is a good solution as the concept of the immediate risk of war, which is very unclear, could have been understood very broadly. The innovation is also the regulation according to which the defence can be carried out in cooperation with other countries within the scope of institutions of national, regional and global security systems. This regulation is the effect of the changes in the security surroundings, the change of priorities by the political elites and the aspiration of the Serbian Military to restore its reputation and become again active member in ensuring not only national, but also regional and global security.

Draft law on the Military (art.15) contains also the statement of oath that is being sworn to during acceding into the military service, and it involves the following: I (name and sur-



name), swear on my honour and conscience that I will protect and defend independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia. Apart from not mentioning anymore in the oath constitutional order, the innovation is that the future soldiers won't be swearing on their life in addition to their honour, but instead on their conscience. Whether favouring of the conscience of every individual is the result of the desire to change in the army the value system that was valid till now and that was discouraging any form of individuality in its ranks, its left to be seen.

The Law on the Military (art.12) has also secured neutrality of the army in the party, ideological and interest sphere, which is one of the assumptions of democratic civilian control. The 13th article formalises that the member of the Serbian Military are responsible to restrain themselves from wearing and emphasising party or any other political symbols and expressing and supporting of their political believes. Finally, the 14th article of this law foresees that the military personnel is forbidden from being part of the meetings of the political organisations in their uniform and all other political activity apart from using their active voting right. Also the professional members of the Serbian Military don't have the right to syndical organising. The first version of the Draft has forbidden the right of strike among military members. It would be good if the law forbidden the influence of the army and its members on the work and the decisions of the civilian powers. In our recent past there were cases that the army leadership was involved in making decisions that should only be under the authority of democratically selected governing institutions. The most drastic usage of this behaviour were existing during the time of the break up of the former Yugoslavia, as well as in the period approximately before the democratic change when the military leadership openly stood on the side of the ruling party and took part in the pre-election campaign.

The religious service is being brought in for the first time after the Second World War with the Draft Law on the Military (art. 25-27). What should be mentioned is that if the religious service is being introduced, then all traditional religions and religious communities should be considered under the same conditions. However, apart from securing all the other basic human rights of freedom of religious creed, it is necessary to secure all the other pre-conditions for fulfilling of this right. First of all,

there are problems in the diet of the soldiers which are required to eat the food which is prohibited by their faith. Particularly sensitive is the question of the display of religious symbols, which this law fails to regulate. It is not clear whether the members of the military will be allowed to display their religious symbols within the framework of this right. Also it is not known whether the religious matters will be incorporated into the training programme of the members of the Serbian Military which could potentially lead to segregation in the military on the basis of the religious belonging.

If the recommended laws are introduced, they will have a significant effect on the organisational change of the Serbian Military. The dissolution of the State Union can maybe best be seen in the regulation of the 4th article of the Law on the Military. This article foresees the particular branches being grouped into units, and that the units of the Serbian Military are Land Force, Air Force and Air Defence Force. The Navy is not mentioned as the unit of the Serbian Military.

The Draft Law on the Military (art.22) however foresees the ranks for Riverine which correspond to Navy ranks. The justification of this solution is the subject of many dilemmas. To be precise, Riverine of the Serbian Military possesses several ships and it falls under the command of the Land Force. It is logical that the ranks foreseen for officers and non-commissioned officers of the Land Force are used also for this unit, due to the fact that it is hard to imagine that Serbia will have in the near future, for example, admiral of the Riverine. More so, as in the Draft Law there is case of rank equalizing of the Land Force, Air Force and Air Defence Force and the ranks of Riverine.

Clear chain of command

Within the context of democratic civilian control of the military, it is necessary to precisely designate the civilian as well as the military chain of command. In this 11th article, which stipulates the competency of the President of the Republic, the Draft Law on Defence formalises the President's role as the commander of the Serbian Military. On the contrary, the Draft Law on the Military formalizes for the President to command the military in war and peace. This inaccuracy that could be the



subject of speculations could be most efficiently neutralized by coordinating of decrees from both drafts so they correspond to the Draft Law on the Military.

From the aforementioned we can see that the President is the only commander of the military. This is a regulation that is taken over from the new Constitution and the clearer chain of command was also established. There is no more collective body – Supreme Defence Council that was responsible to no one for its actions. The problem is that the Constitution and the Draft Laws don't foresee any responsibility of the President of the Republic to command the military. Wider interpretation can show that the President could be held responsible if there was violation of the Constitution. Misuse of the military would definitely imply that, but this interpretation is still very wide spread. Perhaps in this case the control function of the newly formed National Security Council could be introduced, which brings together the most important decision makers in the security sector.

Already mentioned broad responsibilities of the President of the Republic are enumerated in the 17th article of the Draft Law on the Military. The obscurity surrounding the political responsibility for the operation of the military was removed in the second version of the Draft and apart from the officers the President of the Republic assigns and pardons the Chief of General Staff based on the opinions of the Minister of defence. This change was adopted on the recommendation of the Centre for civil-military relations. However, it is still not mentioned that the President, based on the decision of the National Assembly, decides whether the member of the military will be sent on multinational operations, which is also stated in the Law on Defence. This regulation should also be incorporated into this law. Even another step towards civilian democratic control of the military could be achieved if during the allocation and pardoning of the Chief of General Staff and the executives of the Military Secret Services, the National Assemblies Committee for Defence and Security was consulted. This committee could deliver their opinion about the candidates to the President based on the public hearings. These forms of hearing are regular occurrence in many developed democratic countries.

Also, the possible problem arises while interpreting the 19th article of this Law which stipulates that the Chief of General Staff and the senior officers command and administer the military in accordance with the law and the acts of superior com-

manding. It is not mentioned who are those supposed subjects. We could suppose that this refers to President, but apart from the regulations on allocation and reliving from duty there are no other regulations which regulate the relationship between the President and the Chief of General Staff. Seeing that they were given the same competency – commanding and administering with the military, it is important to more precisely regulate their relationship and competencies. .

The position of the Minister of defence in the command chain is also not clear. The President as the supreme commander is in charge of Ministry of defence. However, Minister answers for his action to government, hence to the National Parliament, and not to the President. Minister of Defence would also have to answer to the chief commander – President as the immediate superior body.

Recruitment

The question that is of special interest to citizens is the question of military recruitment. The Draft Law (art.32) says that the citizens of the Republic of Serbia come into the military on the basis of military duty or on the basis of the act of the acceptance into the military service. Legislator found here ‘Solomon’s’ solution if we take into account that the Strategic Defence Review foresees for the military service to be abolished by 2010. Therefore this regulation can only be seen as the filling in of the eventual vacuum that will disappear if the planned solution from the Strategic Defence Review was incorporated into the Law.

On the conditions of admission into the professional military stipulates article 30.. One of the preconditions, which existed in the first version of the Draft Law that was removed, stated those who wish to be accepted into the professional military service can’t have a dual citizenship. Taking into account the special nature of the military call, this provision could be understood. Problems emerged when considerable amount of military personnel that fled from the former Yugoslav republics who have the citizenship of those, newly formed countries. This regulation stopped them from doing a job that they have been educated for and that they have been doing up till now.

Article 80 of this Law regulates the obligation to the military service in the Serbian military upon the completion of edu-



cation or specialisation, as long as that education or specialisation is on the burden of the budget or based on international treaty. It is foreseen that a person that has been educated or specialised in this way stays in the service twice the time it has taken to complete the education and the specialisation, and if the education and specialisation was done abroad then three times longer. Suggested solution is significantly stricter than the previous one which planned that the time spent in the service should be the same length as the time of the education or specialisation. In the cases where education and specialisation has taken place abroad then twice the length of time would be spent in the service. It is not clear why the military that has the shortage of the educated personnel doesn't improve and stimulate their education instead of making the conditions for scholarship stricter. Whether behind this decision stands the research on the worthiness of this investment it is left to be wondered. It is clear that this policy of conditionality can't inspire young people to become educated and to specialise; instead they need to be offered positions worthy of their education where they would be able to progress on the hierarchical ladder and take over the leading functions in the military. Someone who is sent to be educated in a military academy, whether in the country or abroad, most often chose the military call and there is no need to add additional requirements. Instead they should give them the opportunity to apply their knowledge better.

Indicated examples show only some of the innovations that Draft Laws on Defence and on the Military foresee. Careful comparing of these drafts with the hitherto legal regulations shows that the legislator mainly accommodated old clauses of the laws to the current situation in the military. Everything that could have been used from the old laws was copied into the drafts of the new ones. Taking into account the necessity of their urgent passing that justification carries with it, we can conclude that the suggested Drafts should rather be called the changes and supplements of the existing Laws than completely new legal regulations. Maybe the objective of the legislator with these Drafts tends to continue reform process, while for some bigger innovations, like the complete professionalisation, solving of the problem of civil protection and classification of the secret information, the conditions still have to be created. It is important to stress out that the inhibitions for creating of these conditions don't lie in the military, but are only of political nature.

Recommendations:

1. Introduce a separate Law on the Civilian Democratic Control of the Serbian Military or unique law that would cover all state and private apparatuses of power.
2. Harmonise the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, Law on Defence and the Law on the Serbian Military, so all three legal acts foresee the existence of the National Security Strategy as the highest strategic document.
3. The Law on the Military should additionally to party, ideological and interest neutrality forbid the possibility of influence of the military and its members on the activities and decisions of the civilian authorities.
4. The Law on the Serbian Military should forbid the members of the military the display of religious symbols and introducing the religious content into the program of their training.
5. Harmonise the Law on Defence and the Law on the Military and proscribe so the President of the Republic commands the military in war and peace.
6. Proscribe the responsibility of the President of the Republic for the commanding the military.
7. Proscribe so during the selection of the Chief of General Staff and the executives of the Military Secret Services consult responsible committee of the National Assembly.
8. Proscribe so the Minister of defence is accountable for his work to President of the Republic that is the Chief Commander in command chain.

Antrfile 1

Minister of Defence is turning into a God

One of the main objections of the opposition on the Draft Law on Defence and Law on the Serbian Military is that by subordinating the Chief of General Staff to the Minister of defence “the General Staff is turned into the sector of Ministry of Defence.”⁴ This statement shows that the concept of civilian democratic control of the military is still unknown. The essence of this concept implies that the military is under command of democratically elected civilian. In this case that is the Minister of defence, which in turn implies that it is necessary that the Chief of General Staff is subordinated to the Minister.

⁴ *Soldiers can refuse the orders.* Politika on the 4th decembra 2007.



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A Review of the Proposed Law on the Security Services in the Republic of Serbia¹

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Abstract

This short analysis will give a retrospective of the basic concept and structure of the proposed Law, and some of its individual articles. The content of the proposed Law will be comparatively analysed with (1) the relevant articles of the constitution, (2) existing security service legislation (this being the Law on the Security Intelligence Agency and the Law on the Security Services of the FRY, both from July 2002)² and (3) the laws of a few selected democracies as well as the policies of the international organisations working in this field.

Key words: draft law, security services, oversight

1. The Basic Concept and Structure of the Proposed Law

According to article 1, and the corresponding sub-sections, the proposed Law aims to establish the legal foundations for regulation of the security services, including the confirmation of a number of the principles defining their activities. It will also determine their official names and legal status. The aim is also to cover two issues that form the core of the Law in a more detailed manner: (1) giving direction to and coordination of security service activities, and (2), oversight of their operations. Furthermore, in its transitive and concluding clauses, the proposed Law refers to future Laws that will regulate the activities of the security services and confirms the fact that, until these Laws are passed, existing relevant Laws will apply as long as they do not contradict this proposed Law. It is also worth mentioning that the proposed

¹ This review was written on the 7th of December 2007, at the time of the Parliamentary debate on the proposed Law.

² The Law on the Security Information Agency was published in the "Official Journal of the Republic of Serbia", no. 42/2002, and the Law on the Security Services of the FRY in the "Official Journal of the FRY", no. 37/2002, and the "Official Journal of Serbia and Montenegro", no. 17/2004

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Law is composed of only 23 articles.

It is possible to call into question this kind of concept and structure for a proposed Law, using (1) constitutional and (2) rational arguments.

(1) Inherent in the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006) is the need to harmonise existing laws and regulations in this field with the relevant elements of the constitution, to which end the Law on Implementation of the Constitution demands a rapid pace for this process. The need for this process of harmonisation is heightened due to the responsibilities and activities of the security services, which by their very nature might impact on the constitutionally guaranteed rights and freedoms of the public. The proposed Law does not, however, complete this harmonisation in full – this is due to the incomplete “shaping of the role of the president of the Republic”. In other words, due to the need to fulfil conditions framed in article 3, section 2, of the Constitutional Law, which regulate the required preconditions for the calling of presidential elections. The delay in the comprehensive regulation of the activities and responsibilities of the security services, for which no deadline has been set, leaves in force a completely inadequate legal framework, especially relating to the activities of the military security agencies.

(2) It seems illogical to pass several laws in order to regulate this area as it is neither particularly copious nor capricious and does not warrant regulation by more than one principle law and at least two more, concrete laws. The Constitutional Law mentions a law that “will regulate... the security services”, which, if taken literally, suggests the need for one comprehensive law rather than several partial ones. Quite apart from this, a law that regulates only the “basis for regulation” represents a novelty that opens the way for potential disharmony between this law and others regulating the security services.

2. A Review of Specific Articles of the Proposed Law

I. Basic Provisions (articles 1 - 3) – The principles of legality and political neutrality are outlined within the framework of the principles guiding the security services as covered by article 2. The responsibility of all security services to act in accordance with strategic documents relating to defence and security and

with security/intelligence policies is also emphasised here. Members of the security services are also rightly prohibited from becoming members of any political party – a point that article 55, section 5, of the Constitution omits. Also missing amongst the principles outlined in these articles is one prohibiting the security services from performing the role of a police force, unless specifically authorised to do this in exceptional circumstances, by amendment of the law. Such a principle exists in article 3 of the 2002 Security Service Law of the FRY and its reaffirmation would seem reasonable.

Article 3, section 1, confirms that the security services are a part of the unique security and intelligence system of the Republic of Serbia, whilst section 4 confirms the National Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Government and the National Security Council as bodies that have the right of oversight. This list of monitoring institutions does not include the judiciary, in spite of the fact that they currently (according to the existing criminal laws and laws governing the security services) do have such a role in terms of preliminary and supplementary monitoring.

II. Security Services (article 4) – This article names three security services: The Security Information Agency, as a distinctive organisation and The Military Security Agency and Military Intelligence Agency, as organisations within the Ministry of Defence. It had been mentioned in the media that these two military agencies might be merged into one but this article of the proposed Law appears to forsake such an option. It also follows that the two services within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the Security Service and the Research and Documentation Service) lose the security service status they had under the previous Law on the Security Services of the FRY. What is more, this article contains not even an elementary definition of the role of the security services. Section 2 is clearly not an attempt to deal with this issue as it states that the security services “complete operations and tasks within the boundaries of their authority, in accordance with the law”, which says practically nothing about their role and simply repeats what is already assumed as read in the principles of legality.

III. Giving Direction to and Coordination of the Security Services (article 5 – 14) – This chapter regulates the composition and role of the National Security Council and the Security Service Coordination Bureau. Article 5 is a detailed confirmation



of the role of the Council that recognises three areas of responsibility: (1) concern for national security, (2) giving direction to and coordinating the security services and (3) concern for the application of regulations and standards for the protection of individual data and other regulations for the protection of human rights. The first two areas of responsibility are defined in great detail; this is not the case with the third.

From the composition of the National Security Council, as asserted in article 6, we can see that this body is intended to perform as a part of the executive branch of government (it is to be comprised of the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the ministers of Defence, Internal Affairs and Justice, as well as the Chief of the High Command of the Army of Serbia and the directors of the security agencies). In comparative solutions there are cases where a body of this kind will also include the speaker of the parliament, and thereby include at least a part of the legislative branch of government in the coordination of the security services and also the national security decision-making process.

The president's chief of staff is the Secretary of the Council and takes part in its functioning but without having decision-making rights (article 7). The government selects the Office of the Council who then perform the expert and administrative work necessary for the Council's functioning (article 8).

In terms of defining the Council's role, there lacks a provision that determines how the National Assembly is to be informed about the Council's decisions. More specifically, it is clear that the Office of the Council (article 8) is intended to compile reports on the functioning of the Council but it is not made clear to whom these reports should be submitted.

This chapter also contains the provisions on the calling of Council sessions, confirmation of the agenda of these sessions and the signing of conclusions brought by the Council. The other arrangements for the day-to-day running of the Council are left to the Council handbook (articles 9 and 10). The funds required for the running of the Council are determined by the Budget of the Republic of Serbia (article 14). Special provision confirms the duty of all relevant organs of state to cooperate with the Council and, above all, to act on its conclusions (article 13).

The Security Service Coordination Bureau (articles 11 and 12) is intended to harmonise the operations of the services and is comprised of the Secretary of the National Security Council and

the directors of the security agencies. The participation of the heads of other selected organs of state is also provided for.

IV. Oversight of the Security Services' Activities (articles 15 – 21) – This chapter (article 15) confirms the principles that regulate oversight of the security services (sub-ordinance and accountability to the democratically elected branches of government, responsibility for informing the public of the activities of the services in accordance with relevant laws, as well as political, ideological and interest neutrality, etc.). These principles are in line with the standard principles regulating democratic and civilian control.

Parliamentary oversight of the security services is stipulated in article 99, section 1, point 6, of the Constitution. According to the proposed Law on the Security Services this oversight is comprised of direct oversight and oversight by the “relevant National Assembly Committee”. Assuming that “relevant committee” refers to the existing Defence and Security Committee, a comparative approach suggests solutions that give more weight to smaller sub-committees and bodies formed especially for this purpose³. As for the programme for the Committee, which is largely correctly ordered, it is worth mentioning that a few key elements are missing: (1) the authority of the Committee to take statements from security service personnel in the event of irregularities and (2) the authority to deliberate on the statements of security service personnel that highlight irregularities. Also, connected to the latter, is the lack of a provision for immunity from prosecution of security service personnel who give statements to the Committee. The abovementioned elements are usually standard practice and contribute to the efficiency of security service oversight.

In order to perform direct oversight, members of the Committee have right of entry into the offices of security services, access to documentation and information regarding the service's activities as well as the right to question the director on the activities of the service he is responsible for. They do not, however, have the right to request information on the identity of the service's collaborators, servicemen with hidden identities, third parties, or about intelligence-gathering methods, the application of said methods, ongoing operations, intelligence obtained from foreign services or top secret intelligence from other agencies that might be in the possession of the service in question (article 19).

³ See: Born, H., and Leigh, I. (2005) *Making Intelligence Accountable: Legal Standards and Best Practice for Oversight of Intelligence Agencies*, Oslo, pp. 85-87.



Articles 17 and 18 outline the responsibility of a security service director to report to the Committee, at least once during the regular meeting of the National Assembly, or upon request by the Committee. They also provide for the possibility that these reports may be closed to the public. On the other hand, members of the Committee are duty-bound to keep secret any sensitive information that they come into contact with during their work with the Committee, failure to do this is punishable by expulsion from the Committee (article 20).

Public oversight is, according to article 21, comprised of informing the public about the security services, and this responsibility lies with the bodies to which the services report. It is also stipulated that this information must not infringe upon the rights of members of the public nor upon the national security or other interests of the Republic of Serbia. On the other hand, provision is made for the security services to directly inform the public about particular security phenomena or events.

Translated from Serbian to English by Ivan Kovanović

Incomplete step towards reform of the security intelligence system in Serbia Critical retrospective view at the Draft Law on the basic structuring of the Republic of Serbia security agencies¹

Predrag Petrović

UDK: 340.134:351.862/.86 3(497.11); 340.134:351.759.4/.5 (497.11)

Abstract

The draft Law on of the security services regulates the oversight and coordination of the security agencies. The issues important for the functioning of the security agencies, such as the operation, the role and the sphere of activity, will additionally be regulated by separate laws on civil and military agencies. The ability to holistically, purposefully and precisely systemise the entire Serbian security intelligent system can not be fulfilled by this approach. However, the draft law, aside from the mentioned shortcomings of general nature, contains few specific solutions to which this observation was directed.

Key words: Security agencies, oversight and coordination of security agencies, security intelligence system, reform of the security agencies.

* * *

On the 14th of November the Serbian Government adopted the proposed Law on the basic structuring of the Republic of Serbia security agencies,² and forwarded it to the National Assembly to be considered through urgent proceeding. The rationale behind the use of urgent proceedings is to be able to “call and hold the presidential elections.”³ According to the implementation Law of the Serbian Constitution,⁴ the presiden-

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¹ This text was written on the 2nd of December 2007, before the draft Law was passed

² Draft Law on the basic structuring of the Republic of Serbia security agencies, The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, <http://www.parlament.sr.gov.yu/content/cir/akta/aktadetalji.asp?id=583&t=P#>

³ The chapter V statement of the Draft Law on the basic structuring of the Republic of Serbia security agencies, http://www.parlament.sr.gov.yu/content/lat/akta/akta_detalji.asp?id=583&t=P#

⁴ Constitutional Law for implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, („Službeni glasnik RS“, no. 98/06), http://www.parlament.sr.gov.yu/content/lat/akta/akta_detalji.asp?id=387&t=Z#



tial elections have to be called by the 31st of December. In other words, 60 days from time of the last legislation coming to force which regulates the competency and the elections of the president of the republic, defence and the Serbian Army, foreign affairs and the security agencies.⁵ However, contrary to the previous obligation set by the Constitutional Law the legal proposal doesn't regulate the security agencies, but only their coordination and oversight. Separate laws on civil and military agencies will in addition regulate the questions important for the functioning of the security agencies, such as the operation, the role and the scope of authority. According to the proponents of the legislation, "the peculiarities of the civil and military security operations are being taken into account."⁶ In the opinion of this work there are two reasons for the key shortcomings of this legal proposal.

Firstly, the opportunity was missed to systemize the whole security intelligence system through one legislative act, which would have comprised the coordination and control of the security services, as well as the operation, authority, and responsibility of the civilian and military agencies. Secondly, as some of the legal regulations on the Security Information Agency⁷ and the legal regulations on the Security Services of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia⁸ are not in contradiction to the draft Law,⁹ they still remain active. These two Laws were passed during the existence of federal state; therefore they are not adequate for the present institutional setting. Apart from this the Law on the Security Information Agency was heavily criticized by the expert community. Therefore, it can be said that these documents (the provisions that stay in force) are outdated, with regards to their inadequate standardising of the work and structures of security services. Also, the immense problem will be the interpretation to see which 'old' Law provisions are not in contradiction with the ones from the draft Law. Apart from these observation of general nature, there are number of concrete objections that can be directed towards the draft Law.

Main security services in Serbia

According to the draft Law on the security agencies while the Security Information Agency is the separate organization, the Military Security Agency (VBA) and the Military

⁵ Section 2, Clause 3. of Constitutional Law for implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia („Službeni glasnik RS“, no. 98/06), http://www.parlament.sr.gov.yu/content/lat/akta/akta_detalji.asp?Id=387&t=Z#

⁶ Chapter III statement of the Draft Law on the basic structuring of the Republic of Serbia security agencies, http://www.parlament.sr.gov.yu/content/lat/akta/akta_detalji.asp?Id=583&t=P#

⁷ The Law on the Security Information Agency (“Službeni glasnik RS”, no. 42/02), <http://www.bia.sr.gov.yu/zakonski-okviri.htm>

⁸ The Law on the Security Services of the FYR (“Službeni list SRJ”, no. 37/02 i “Službeni list SCG”, no. 17/04), [http://projuris.org/DOC/zakoni/uvpravno_pravo/policija_i_bezbednost/02.ZAKON_O_SLUZBAMA_BEZBEDNO_STI_\(2002\).pdf](http://projuris.org/DOC/zakoni/uvpravno_pravo/policija_i_bezbednost/02.ZAKON_O_SLUZBAMA_BEZBEDNO_STI_(2002).pdf)

⁹ The draft Law on the Foreign Affairs, http://www.mfa.gov.yu/Srpski/Aktuelno/nacrt_zakon_o_spoljinim_poslovi_ma2.pdf

Intelligence Agency (VOA) are both organised in the Ministry of Defence (MoD) (article 4). However, the draft Law does not mention the security services organised within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Service for Research and Documentation (SID) and the Security Service (SB). Also, they are neither mentioned in the draft Law on the foreign affairs.¹⁰ Although, the concluding legal provisions on the basic configuration of the security services (article 22), state that the provisions from Law on the federal services from 2002 (predisposes the existence of these services) will be used after this Law comes into force. Therefore, as the draft Law doesn't mention the SID and SB, but they are mentioned in the 'federal' Law, it isn't entirely clear whether these two agencies will still exist. If they are abolished, it remains unclear what will happen to employees, and archives. Conventionally the law regulates what will happen with the employed, interior organizational units (in the case of merging), equipment, documents and archives that were the possession of the bodies that are being abolished or maybe, merged into one agency.

Coordination

According to the draft Law the National Security Council is the main body for directing and harmonizing the work of the security services. As the head of this body the President of the Republic of Serbia is responsible for signing all acts introduced by this body. Apart from the president, the members of the Council are the President of the Government, Minister of Defence, Foreign Minister, Minister of Justice, Chief Commander of the Serbian Military, and the executives of the security services. The President's Chief of Staff is also the Secretary of the Council without decision-making power. Considering, the importance of foreign relations on the countries security, we believe that the membership of this body should also belong to the minister of foreign affairs. Also, one of the solutions that should have been considered was placing the security consultants of the president and the prime minister as the permanent members of the Council. So for example, in Croatia the permanent members of the Council responsible for coordination of the security services are the security consultants

¹⁰ Section 2, Clause 3, of the Law on the security intelligence structure of the Republic of Croatia, Narodne novine, 79/2006, <http://www.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeno/2006/1912.htm>



of the president and the member of the government responsible for national security.¹¹

Furthermore, the Council passes the conclusions, for the purpose of directing and harmonizing the work of the security services, hence setting their priorities (article 5). The drafter of the law could have obligated the Council to adopt the document under the notion of yearly guideline, and in this way to set the foundation, together with the strategy of national security and the strategy of national defence, for the directing and setting the priorities of the security services. Also, the draft Law foresees the existence of two bodies with certain roles in the coordination of the security services. The first body is the Council Office for National Security that will conduct technical and administrative tasks for the needs of the Council. The Office is the service of the Government created through ordinance (article 8). So this draft Law foresees the existence of this body and it outlines its responsibilities, but it has been left for the government to introduce it into the legal act, while not specifying any dates for them to be formed.¹² It is the opinion here that the existence of the Office should not depend on one sublegal act, but entirely on the legislation. Therefore, the government could have been only left to ever more organize this body through regulation, its interior units, activities, operation and the number of employed. Finally, we can raise the question why these functions are performed by the service of the Government and not the service of the Council, whose activities it is already performing.

The other body is the Bureau for coordination responsible for operational harmonization of the security services, and consisting of executives of the security intelligence services and the Secretary of the Council, that is also the Chief of Cabinet for the President of Serbia. Also, the representatives of the foreign affairs can take part in the activities of the Bureau, in addition to the police executives and the police sections superintendents, public prosecutor of the Republic, custom section executive, as well as other executives of state bodies, organizations and institutions (article 12). Insight into the content of this body doesn't clarify the reasons why only the President's Chief of Cabinet has the right to membership, and not also, let's say, the representative of the prime minister. In the same way the majority of other members that can take part in the activities of the Bureau are the experts in their field. Because of this we think it is better that

¹¹ Section 22, Clause 3: „The competent authorities are obliged to pass necessary sub-legal acts for carrying out these laws“ So the deadlines are not mentioned.

¹² The members of the Council won't have access to the information that can jeopardize the on-going operation. So the data on the identities of the officials and the informants of the security services, as well as the data on the methods of gathering intelligence and security information won't be available.

the executive power of this body is ‘represented’ through its own security advisers.

Considering the aforementioned, it is clear the drafter of the law focused more attention on the redistribution of power over the security services between the president and the prime minister, than on the need to establish the institutions that will outlive the current power relation between the key political subjects in Serbia.

Oversight and control of security services

According to draft law the oversight and control of the security services is conducted by the National Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Government, the Council for national security and the public (article 7). Bearing in mind the numerous recently formed state bodies with very important role of controlling the entire security sector (State Auditors Institution, the Ombudsman and The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance), the drafter of the law shouldn’t have left out these institutions from the list of controlling bodies. Also, the courts should be among the mentioned control holders.

Like in all democratic states, the main oversight and control body is the Committee of the National Assemblies responsible for defence and security. One of the important authorities of this body is that it “oversees the legality of the use of special proceedings and measures for secret gathering of information (article 16, section 2, clause 4).” However, in practice it is not completely clear in what way the committee is going to perform its responsibility. Preferably the committee should have the right to ask security services for reports on the use of the measures for secret gathering of information and also the judicial organs responsible for authorising these measures. Also the important responsibility of the committee is the right to carry out the random control of the security services. During these controls the executives of the agencies are obliged to provide the members of the committee with access and insight into the services premises, as well as provide access to documentation, data and information on the operation of the service and give answers to their questions.¹³

However, particular technical knowledge is necessary in order to efficiently perform this type of control. The introduction of technical oversight over the security services, which can be per-



formed by the Council's Office for National Security, is one way to overcome this problem. For instance, in Croatia this form of oversight is conducted by the body which at the same time performs technical and administrative work for National Security Council. Together with the members of the security committee that body can carry out the control of the security services. We also have to mention that some countries, like Canada and Croatia, aside from the technical bodies that oversee the security services, also have the bodies for civilian oversight, that are responsible to act on the basis of citizens appeals regarding the work of these services.

The laws that are still missing

Apart from the legislation that would holistically, purposefully and precisely systemise the entire Serbian security intelligent system, there are a number of other documents that are of immense importance for the functioning of the security intelligence system. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt the law on the protection of the secret information, which will clearly and precisely set the level of the documents secrecy, the procedure of their classification and declassification, the certificates issuing for accessing the classified data, as well as the penalty for revealing the secret. Also, having in mind that the UN Declaration and the EU Charter defines the privacy as one of the main human rights, it is important to pass the legislation on the protection of privacy. This would define the manner of gathering, using and storing of the personal information, which would in turn protect the integrity of the individual. In a same way, only the passing of this law will allow the use of regulation from the draft Law according to which the Council "is responsible for the harmonious functioning of the regulations and standards for protection of personal data" (article 5, section 2).

Finally, Serbia as well as FYR, or the Federation of Serbia and Montenegro, hasn't passed the 'umbrella security document' – The Strategy of National Security. This would identify the main challenges, risks and threats to the Republic of Serbia, as well as the ways to respond to them. This makes it the only country in the South East Europe without this document. The peculiarity of Serbian case is also that it has first passed the Strategy of Defence and the Strategic overview of Defence, the documents that are hierarchically lower than the Strategy on National Defence on which they must be based. The importance and the emergency to

pass this legislation is also indicated by the fact that the Committee “oversees the harmonious functioning between the security services and the strategy of national security, strategy of defence and security intelligence politics of Republic of Serbia” (article 16, section 2, clause 2).

Serbian political elite has already many times missed a chance to shape the security intelligence system in the thorough way and in accordance with societal and state needs, in other words according to challenges, risks and threats that exist in Serbia today. It is only left for us to hope that the legislations on the security services, whose passing was advised in the draft Law, will fulfil the previously mentioned conditions, so by passing of other missing laws the Serbia can finally bring an end to the first generation of security sector reforms.

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Translated from Serbian to English by Vidak Anđelić



The www.bezbednost.org Webpage as an Expression of „Security Tailored to the Needs of the Public“

Marko Savković

By choosing security as „tailored to the needs of the public“ the Belgrade Centre for Civilian-Military Relations is acting in harmony with an increasingly applied paradigm of human security, which asserts that individuals are important, being that they represent both the *raison d'être* and the means of providing security.

The www.bezbednost.org webpage, as part of the „Communicating Security – Increasing Citizens' Participation in Security Politics“ project, is an expression of the awareness of this human security concept as applied to the situation in Serbia. At a time when the Draft Security Strategy of Serbia is being compiled, in other words, at the moment three key security sector laws are being passed (the Law on the Military, the Law on Defence and the Law on the Security Services); this webpage seeks to create an open space for public participation in key local and national security debates.

The Centre for Civilian-Military Relations has been working on the „Increasing Citizens' Participation in Security Politics“ project since July 27th 2007. The aim of this project is to increase citizen's participation in the security sector's decision-making process on a local and national level. The intention is to encourage communication and partnership between civil society, on the one hand, and the decision-makers, experts and professionals from state institutions, on the other.

To date (December 7th 2007), the following activities have been realised. In cooperation with local partners, *ten municipal forums*, at which members of the public and local experts have

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debated the priorities of security policy in their community, have been organised in ten Serbian towns (Bujanovac, Leskovac, Niš, Subotica, Novi Sad, Kraljevo, Novi Pazar, Zaječar, Valjevo, Kruševac). Also, a *public hearing with relevant political decision-makers* has been organised and at which the proposals of the Law on the Military and the Law on Defence were discussed. Also organised was a meeting of the *Network of national and local organisations and individual experts specialised in security issues*.

Finally, the www.bezbednost.org web page was designed and made available to the public. The creation of the web page – as the project in general – was made possible by the support of the American people through the USAID, implemented by the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) within its *Civil Society Advocacy Initiative*.

The “Network” section, the first of many, offers basic information about the members of the Network of national and local organisations and individual experts specialised in security issues. These are listed in a separate *Directory*. It also includes information on how to apply to become a member of the Network. As well as the fruits of the research arm of the project the “Activities” section will contain reports of events such as the ten municipal forums and the first public hearings with relevant political decision-makers. It will also contain reports of events organised by the other members of the Network.

The “Resources & Useful Links” section will be dominated by the “*Backgrounders*” sub-section. This will be a series of short texts explaining the main concepts behind the need to involve civil society in security sector reform. This section will also be home to publications, products of research on security sector problems, by the other Network members. An overview of relevant legal regulations and links will also appear here in the hope that www.bezbednost.org comes to support further research on security sector problems.

One of the ideas that we bore in mind during the creation of this webpage was interactivity. The result of this is the “Get Involved” section, which offers three ways for the public to get involved. Thanks to the donations of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway we have created a space called “My Question – My Security” which will allow members of the public to send in their questions for security and defence policy makers. We will also mark the one year anniversary of Serbia joining the Partnership for Peace programme by allowing people to post video questions. We



also plan to create a special TV programme and DVD of the best questions posed by the public and to highlight, in this way, the main security issues as perceived by the public. Interested members of the public will have the opportunity to influence the creation of security policy both by writing to their representatives and through the signing of a petition.

During the preparation of the “Security tailored to the needs of the public” webpage we also considered the creation of a space in which members of the public will be able to meet, exchange experiences and offer support to those initiatives and projects that have emanated from civil society. The intention being to address key security questions on a national or local level. The first step is complete; the webpage has been created and is online. Now it is crucial that interested actors recognise the potential of this form of communication with the public and combine their efforts to make this webpage a success.

Translated from Serbian to English by Ivan Kovanović

Topics of interest for the journal *Western Balkans' Security Observer* for 2008

We invite the authors from the field of security studies and other related disciplines to submit their papers to the Editorial Board of the *Western Balkans' Security Observer* at the email address office@ccmr-bg.org. Please find below the suggested but not exclusive topics of interest for 2008:

1. Security Sector Reform (SSR) in the Western Balkans

Key issue: Is it possible to measure the successfulness of the SSR in the region?

Topics: Analytical value of the SSR concept. Scopes and challenges for the reform in the region. Post-conflict and post-authoritarian context of SSR. SSR in weak societies. (Dis)Similarities between the SSR concepts in the South-Eastern European countries. The influences of the politics of conditionality (e.g., EU) on the SSR in the Western Balkans. How to measure the contribution of non-governmental agents (e.g., private security companies, civil society and para-military groups) to SSR. Security sector reform as an element of the EU politics of conditionality. How holistic is security sector. Impact of regional cooperation to SSR.
2. Military neutrality in the post-coldwar period

Key issue: Can Serbia be military-neutral?

Topics: The concept of military neutrality. Military neutrality during the Cold war. Military neutrality after the Cold war (with an emphasis to integrations and international organizations). Military neutrality, EU and Common security and defence policy. Neutrality, security culture and strategic identity. Economy of defence and neutrality.
3. Processes of securitization in the Western Balkans

Key issue: What are the current securitization processes in the Western Balkans?

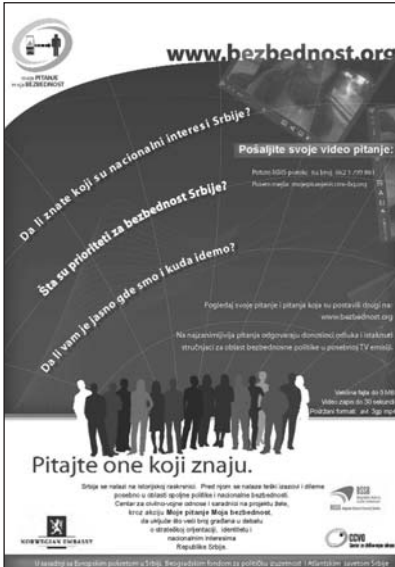
Topics: Securitization theory and its critique. Philosophical foundations and controversies of the securitization theory. Ethics and securitization. Securitization of the Balkans and Serbia in Europe and America. Securitization of the West in Serbia. Securitization processes in the Balkans in the last decade of the 20th century. Key securitization processes since the year 2000-democratic changes in the Western Balkans. Friends and foes in the Western Balkans. Special measures and the politics of exception. Social construction of challenges, risks and threats. State of emergency, sovereignty and security.
4. European construction of the Western Balkans

Key issues: Do the Western Balkans exist? What are the outcomes of the Western Balkans related debate?

Topics: Speech act. European discourse on the Balkans. The Balkans and the Western Balkans. Balkanization and intervention. Sovereignty and European integrations. Empire, identity and security. Balkan self-discourse. Outcomes of the European discourse in the Western Balkans. EU enlargement and Balkanophobia. The Balkans as the European subconscious. Simulation, EU and democratic reforms.



New Publications and project of the Centre for Civil-Military Relations



CITIZENS' VIDEO QUESTIONS: LAUNCHING THE NATIONAL DEBATE ON STRATEGIC IDEN- TITY OF SERBIA

The primary aim of this project was to mark the anniversary of Serbia's membership in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) by launching a public debate about strategic identity and orientation of Serbia. However, with the presidential elections underway we have decided to change our focus a little bit and follow the example of the Presidential campaign and CNN-Youtube in the US. We are hoping to motivate the citizens to ask the politicians questions about the strategic orientation of Serbia by sending their video questions.

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN SERBIA – ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS

Collection of papers, Miroslav Hadžić
(ed.), Centre for Civil-Military
Relations, Belgrade 2007.



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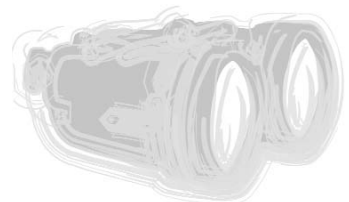
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