POWERS

DOKUZ EYLUL UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF BUSINESS

**Jean Monnet Network
"Peace, War and the World in European Security
Challenges- POWERS"
Project Number:
599962-EPP-1-RU-EPPJMO-NETWORK**

Proceedings of International Workshop

Decoding the (Un)conventional Security Issues Between EU and its Neighbors

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**Izmir
October 15, 2020**

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The proceedings were divided by the editors into four parts in line with the format of the Workshop, titled "Decoding the (Un)conventional Security Issues Between EU and its Neighbors" held at Dokuz Eylul University, Faculty of Business, Department of International Relations, Izmir, Turkey on October 15, 2020.

The articles reveal the research and views of Turkish, Russian, German, Italian and French academicians on the unconventional security problems that challenge the EU and its neighbors. The workshop concentrated on health (e.g. coronavirus), food security, immigration and cyberspace security as unconventional security problems. The proceeding book aims to serve the undergraduate and graduate students and scholars who specialize on international security.

Welcome Speeches (10.00-10.30)	
10.00-10.30	**Dr. Çağnur Balsarı**, *Professor*, *Acting Dean*, Faculty of Business, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey
	Dr. Gül M. Kurtoğlu Eskişar, *Professor*, Coordinator, POWERS Network, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey

Session 1: Migration, Identity and Security in Europe (10.30-12.30)	
Moderator: Dr. Müge Aknur *Associate Professor*, Co-Coordinator, POWERS Network, Department of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey	
10.30-10.45	**Violence in the class-room. How the Increasing Violence in the Shadow of Migration is Seen in Literature in Germany? Some Examples** **Dr. Martin Tamcke**, *Professor*, Faculty of Theology, Georg-August-University, Göttingen, Germany
10.50-11.05	**Westlessness – New paradigm or untimely diagnosis?** **Dr. Lars Klein,** *Senior Lecturer*, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany
11.10-11.25	**Memory wars in EU and neighboring states as the (un)conventional security issue** **Dr. Maksym W. Kyrchanoff**, *Associate Professor*, Chair of Regional Studies and Foreign Countries Economy, Voronezh State University, Voronezh, Russian Federation.
11.30-11.45	**Analysis of the impact of immigration on national security in the case of France** **Tatiana Telkova**, *Student,* Department of Regional Studies and Economy of Foreign Countries, Faculty of International Relations, Voronezh State University, Voronezh, Russian Federation.
11.50-12.10	**Discussion and Questions**
12.10-12.30	**Lunch Break**

	Session 2: Legal and Political Perspectives on Security (12.30-14.00)
	Moderator: Dr. Zühal Ünalp Çepel *Assistant Professor,* Researcher, POWERS Network, Department of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey
12.30-12.45	**Cyber Space and International Law** **Dr. Paolo Bargiacchi,** *Professor,* Faculty of Law and Economics, Kore University of Enna, Italy
12.50-13.05	**New World Order and Non-Conventional Threats to State Security** **Dr. Anna Lucia Valvo,** *Professor,* Law Faculty, Kore University of Enna, Italy
13.10-13.25	**Mapping the Political Science and International Relations Literature on COVID-19** **Dr. Müge Aknur,** *Associate Professor* & **Dr. Gül M. Kurtoğlu Eskişar,** *Professor* Department of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey
13.30-13.50	**Discussion and Questions**
13.50-14.00	**Coffee Break**

	Session 3: Political, Sociological and Economic Reflections of COVID-19 Pandemic in Europe and Beyond (14.00-15.20)
	Moderator: Dr. Gül M. Kurtoğlu Eskişar *Professor*, Coordinator, POWERS Network, Department of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey
14.00-14.15	**Food Security in the Post-COVID Era: Towards New Trade Policies? The Case of the Russian Grain Sector** **Dr. Svetlana Barsukova** *Professor*, Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russian Federation & **Dr. Caroline Dufy,** *Professor*, Centre Emile Durkheim, Sciences Po Bordeaux, France
	COVID-19 and its Reflections over the European Identity

14.20-14.35	**Dr. Zühal Ünalp Çepel,** *Assistant Professor,*
	Department of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey
14.40-14.55	**The Pandemic and Populist Radical Right in Europe: Brexit Party**
	Dr. Sevgi Çilingir, *Research Assistant,*
	Department of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey
15.00-15.20	**Discussion and Questions**

Closing Remarks **(15.20-15.40)**	
15.20-15.40	**Dr. Müge Aknur**, *Associate Professor,*
	Co-coordinator, POWERS Network, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey

Session 1:
Migration, Identity and Security in Europe

Violence in the class-room. How the Increasing Violence in the Shadow of Migration is Seen in Literature in Germany: Some Examples

Dr. Martin Tamcke, *Professor*, Faculty of Theology, Georg-August-University, Göttingen, Germany

Westlessness – New paradigm or untimely diagnosis?

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VIOLENCE IN THE CLASSROOM:
HOW THE INCREASING VIOLENCE IN THE SHADOW OF
MIGRATION IS SEEN IN LITERATURE IN GERMANY
SOME EXAMPLES

Martin Tamcke[*]

Literature that used to be called "Gastarbeiterliteratur" (meaning literature by guest workers) has been renamed "Migrantenliteratur" i.e. migrant literature in recent decades. Today, such labels are hardly used anymore and literature by authors with a family history of migration have become an integral part of Germany's cultural and intellectual landscape. They have not only found "their" audience as authors, but took leading positions in the literary, cultural, and political world. There is an interesting academic discourse, particularly in literary studies, on what is fictional and whether fiction is not in fact more real than what is defined as material reality itself, or not. This discourse suggests that literature by authors from migrant families should be read with the author's mental state in mind. Their work often reveals political tendencies that are not visible to the general public.

Here, I will look at two examples that give insight into issues of violence in the context of learning from the perspective of people with a migratory background. The first is a text from Güner Yasemin Balci, an author whose family immigrated to Germany from Turkey. Her book is called *Arabboy* (2008).

Arabboy. Eine Jugend in Deutschland oder das kurze Leben des Rashid A (Growing Up in Germany or the Short Life of Rashid A) is the debut novel of the successful journalist *(Die Zeit, Spiegel Online).* Balci was also a TV presenter until 2008 for the ZDF television magazine Frontal 21.[1] Her Parents are Alevis and Kurds whose native language is Zaza. Balci was born in 1975, Berlin-Neukölln. Her parents emigrated to Germany from an Eastern Anatolian village in the 1960s. After finishing her A-Levels and receiving her university degree in educational

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[*] Professor at the Faculty of Theology, Georg-August-University, Göttingen, Germany.
[1] Guner Yasemin Balci, *Arabboy. Eine Jugend in Deutschland oder das kurze Leben des Rashid* A., 2. Ed. Frankfurt am Main: S Fisher Verlag, 2008 (paperback version Frankfurt 2010). Subsequent citations will be given from the paperback version of 2010.

and literary studies, she worked with the Turkish and Arabic-speaking adolescents in a model project that aimed to prevent violence and crime in the Berlin district of Neukölln.

Balci feels uncomfortable when she is identified as Turkish. Her native language is German.[2] Her father worked as a taxi driver, her mother as a cleaner. They planned on returning to Turkey, but ultimately, they remained in Germany and her father was buried in German soil. According to Balci, the arrival of Arabic immigrants as a result of the Lebanon War also affected the life of Turkish immigrants. The lack of work permits caused tensions to rise among Arabic-speaking adolescents. *Arabboy* describes the disorientation of a Turkish Lebanese Arabic-speaking boy whose grandparents live in Turkey. The author distinguishes between Turks and Arabs. She admits that Turkish social codes often also apply to Arabs and that Turkish and Arabic adolescents occupy the same spaces within deprived neighbourhoods, yet she differentiates to the detriment of the latter.

The "hero" of her story expresses himself through violence, becomes a criminal, is considered attractive, and becomes addicted to drugs. Following his arrest, he is deported to Turkey, where he does not manage to integrate yet again.

In a crucial scene in the novel, the main protagonist encounters a Syrian Orthodox 'antagonist' who is in the same class at school. In the fitting scenery – the parking lot of a supermarket with several possible escape routes – Rashid's gang members are assigned individual jobs. Then the opponent is called to appear at the scene. The Syrian Orthodox boy is called Jakub. Rashid had continuously humiliated him at school and called him a Jew or a homosexual. Since that time Jakub has been afraid of being attacked (Balci, 2010, p, 51).

Jakub appears to be the perfect victim, because of his religious inferiority. As a member of a vilified minority in the Islamic world he is an ideal target. Jakub attempts to distinguish himself from the Jews and hopes to elevate his position by siding with the Christian majority in Germany, but to no avail. It makes no difference to Rashid whether he belongs to one victimised group here or there, to the Jews or the Christians. People of Jewish and the Syriac Orthodox faith have been equated like this during the events in Turkey in 1915 (Balci, 2010, p, 52).

Meanwhile, German eyewitnesses stand by and observe instead, enjoying for the "sensation". "Nobody interfered" (Balci, 2010, p, 51). Balci (2010) lets her readers participate in the psycho

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[2] The following information about people and their background are based on: Guner Yasemin Balci, Arabboys. A Preface, in: Arabboy, 9-20, here: 10.

drama of violence from the perspective of the perpetrators, but also take part in the experience of the victim (Balci, 2010, p, 52). Jakub is brought to the ground by a kick to the lower back by the only German member of Rashid's gang. He grabs Jakub's bomber jacket (Balci, 2010, p, 53). The boys flee, but Rashid stays and helps Jakub off the ground (Balci, 2010, p, 53). A symbolic act of condescension towards his victim: "'I will punish you, if you don't do as I ask. But I am fair – you better let your mother buy you a new jacket,' he says to Jakub with a superior grin" (Balci, 2010, p. 53).

It is not a religious conflict. Rashid thinks himself above Islam as well, but drug addiction is 'haram', pork is to be avoided, God's omnipotence is a possibility, and a visit to the mosque is rare, but a matter of discussion. Religion is merely an element of social behaviour that is used as a pretext for aimless destructiveness.

The controversial aspect of this novel is that the author claims it is by no means a work of fiction, but based on her experience as a social worker in the same district. According to her, the main protagonist is actually a boy from her neighbourhood whom she met when he was only ten years old. The text is therefore not a novel, but rather drawn parallel to one: "I decided to tell the story of Rashid and his friends like a novel. I have changed people's names." This was necessary to protect herself and the people involved (Balci, 2010, pp. 19-20).

Balci made public what was already known for specific milieus, but could not be generalised as a characteristic of respective migrant in their entirety. It is possible that her own Kurdish Alevi background might have covertly influenced her descriptions of the ethno-religious conflict and resulted in some inconsistencies in assessing different ethnicities.

The absence of functional acting morals or ethics in Balci's novel highlight their necessity, but with her focus on this cycle of violence without any antidote in sight, the reader is left with the impression that German values and civil behaviour cannot effectively prevent such biographies of violence. The novel might have been written for just such a purpose, a wake-up call, in its unusual form. Not a novel in the usual sense, it moves between reality and fiction, and under the guise of a novel, the fictional need not be declared as such and hides within the portrayal of reality.

Sherko Fatah's novel *Das dunkle Schiff* (The Dark Ship)[3] can be called a novel in the traditional sense. It is full of literary devices and points to the philosophical, religious, and existential

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[3] Sherko Fatah, *Das dunkle Schiff* (The Dark Ship), Salzburg, Jung und Jung Verlag, 2008.

background of violent biographies. Fatah himself is an Iraqi Kurd, who grew up in Germany and has not experienced the war in Iraq first hand.

He describes Kerim's childhood. He is the son of Alevi parents who run a restaurant in northern Iraq. His childhood ends abruptly when his father is killed by the secret service. Kerim has to take responsibility for his family and the restaurant. He is abducted by the "religious warriors" and taken to the Kurdish mountains. He falls under the spell of a charismatic teacher and seems to accept his fate until he flees shortly before he is recruited for an attack. He returns home emaciated to a family who believed him to be dead. Confronted with the danger of being persecuted by religious warriors, Kerim decides to leave the country. The third part of the novel relates his illegal crossing on a ship to Europe as a stowaway in a dark and claustrophobic cargo hold. Kerim manages to get to Berlin, where he meets his uncle Tarik and applies for asylum. He soon learns what that entails: it meant telling a good story, or how it is described in the novel: "It was important to construct palpable danger to life and limb" (Fatah, 2008, p. 64). Kerim patiently complies and follows the system. He learns to speak German, moves out of the accommodation for asylum seekers and into the home of his uncle. He meets a woman, and his memories catch up with him. These memories are about dealing with traumatic experiences of violence.

When Kerim returns from the camp where he was held by the religious warriors, his family understands his need to stay silent. (Fatah, 2008, p. 153) When his memories start to assault him in Berlin, he, conversely, becomes more and more detached from his family at home (Fatah, 2008, 318). His new acquaintances in Berlin hang onto his every word when he tells them about the war and his escape. They sit "with their mouths half-open" (Fatah, 2008, p. 319). Kerim is puzzled by Amir, who seeks him out and is particularly captivated by his story. (Fatah, 2008, p. 346) This mystery is solved. Kerim is keen to "start fresh," when he receives a positive response from the German authorities and becomes a recognised refugee: "I want nothing to connect me to the past aside from the people I truly love." (Fatah, 2008, p. 350) The reader knows, of course, that Kerim does indeed have a past that haunts him. "I have not brought anything with me," says Kerim, only to be reminded at once of a suicide squad that he was a part of. (Fatah, 2008, p. 361) A dialogue with his uncle shows his main strategy. "Do you remember the picnic we had in the mountains, when the helicopters came and took the women? What did I tell you back then? Kerim thinks: "If I never talk about it, it will become something like a dream." "And was it like that?" Kerim gives an affirmative answer. (Fatah, 2008, p. 79)

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You will not forget your memories by never talking about them. On the contrary, it makes these memories to grow to reach monstrous dimensions. The escape to Germany is less of a solution than part of the problem, because although the new surroundings might help to create distance from the past, they do not help to process the past. In fact, the experience of migration can be traumatic in itself. The foreign environment calls for the creation of an inner home.

In a struggle of self-preservation, the immigrant has to hold on to the different elements that connect him to his homeland (familiar objects, regional music, memories and dreams that express various aspects of his native country), in order to still experience the "feeling of self" (Grinberg 1990: 147).

Therefore, Kerim finds solace and relief in joint prayers "in a bare room lit by neon lights" at the university. He answers the "call of faith." Memories of the traumatic massacre still haunt him. It seems, he cannot escape them. It is Amir of all people, the one who had followed his story so tentatively, is Kerim's undoing in the end and leads him to join the ISIS in Iraq.

In his books Sherko Fatah is not interested in depicting the violent acts of "others" as a form of irrational barbarity. He rather sees the self within the other and vice versa, but without supporting a form of relativism. "In the unruly outskirts of civilisation," as he once said, "we can observe what is truly at its core: barbarism" (Wirtschaftswoche, 25 Sept. 2008).

German migrant literature addresses both Neudeutsche (i.e. "new Germans" or people with a family history of migration) and Altdeutsche ("old Germans"; terminology coined by Sezen Tatlici). It supplements observations made of radicalised Muslims in Germany. Ahmed Mansour was a radical Islamist himself. Today, he studies and teaches as a psychologist, sociologist, and philosopher in Berlin. He was alarmed by the radicalisation among young Muslims. They remind him of his own past. He thinks that the focus on violence and violent language in Germany is insufficient. Structural violence should instead be addressed at an earlier stage. A debate about values, also inside Islamic circles, is imperative in order to arrive at an interpretation of Islam that is ready for democracy. "I am a Muslim, but the extremists are no longer my brothers and I am not part of an imaginary Muslim community that is oppressed around the world," he counters the phenomenon. "Fanatics do neither represent me as an individual nor as a human." Literature can help to recognise and understand the phenomenon, which still poses a challenge for democracies, individuality, and social humanity.

References

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Wirtschaftswoche, 25 Sept. 2008

WESTLESSNESS – NEW PARADIGM OR UNTIMELY DIAGNOSIS?

Lars Klein[*]

Ironically, the end of the Soviet Union and the alleged triumph of capitalism coincided not with a strengthening of transatlantic relations, but with its decline and a debate over the role and necessity of NATO. Charles Kupchan (2008, p. 111) concluded in his chapter in *The End of the West* that "Mutual trust has eroded, institutionalized cooperation can no longer be taken for granted, and a shared Western identity has attenuated". Since then there has been no shortage of moments and quotes with which to underpin this "transatlantic discord" (Kupchan, 2008, p. 111). German Chancellor Angela Merkel emphasized similar issues in her Commencement Speech at Harvard University in 2019, when she argued against positions pursued by the US President Trump: "[O]ur way of thinking and our actions have to be multilateral rather than unilateral, global rather than national, outward-looking rather than isolationist. In short: we have to work together rather than alone" (Merkel, 2019). It came it no surprise that the 2020 Munich Security Conference did not concede yet another end of the West,[1] but looked beyond at how a world without the West would look like – "Westlessness".

The question that this article starts with is simple and straightforward: How did the organizers and speakers of the Munich Security Conference 2020 deal with this alleged "Westlessness"? In order to find out, the report of the MSC as well as the twelve speeches available via the website of the MSC were analyzed.

The MSC Report starts with a reference to Oswald Spengler's "Decline of the West" and then jumps into the current debates to ask whether the time of the actual decay was now, or not (Bunde et al,. 2020, p. 6). It is neither the purpose, nor is it manageable for the article at hand to map the ideas of the West much further either. But in order to set the stage and contextualize the debate on "Westlessness", it needs to be asked what the West is according to the scholarly debate, so that the approaches taken in the report and by the politicians can be evaluated.

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[1] For the sake of readability, "the West" is not set in dashes. It is, however, understood that the article analyses "the West" as an idea.

The idea of "the West"

In order to distil some core features of the West and arrive at a working definition, two recent publications will be analyzed in particular. The main reading will be "What was and what is 'the West'"?: A dense lecture by the global historian Jürgen Osterhammel, which was published in 2017 (Osterhammel, p. 2017). The other reference will be Heinrich August Winkler, who has written a four-volume "History of the West" over the years (2009 to 2015); its concise edition entitled *Werte und Mächte* (Values and Powers) (Winkler, p. 2019) and some accompanying articles, such as *Zerfällt der Westen?* (Does the West fall apart? (Winkler, 2017).[2]

Osterhammel undertakes different tours through the concept of the West. The first, explorative tour, results in three findings:

Firstly, that the West becomes relevant once the concept of Europe no longer suffices. For Osterhammel, this means to reach beyond the concept of Europe and to include, as he calls it, the "neo-European community" of USA (Osterhammel, 2017, p. 104)

Secondly, Osterhammel emphasizes that the West demands an opposite. He refers to common binary identity constructions and asks whether it was not all too trivial to apply such an approach to the West, or not. His examples show that it is not. He refers to the cultural construction of the West via the construction of "the Orient", by politically setting the West off against Russia, as well as from other hostile counter alliances (Osterhammel, 2017, p. 104f.).

Conceptually as well as institutionally, Europe and the United States find themselves included in the West. NATO as an institution exists to safeguard this West against its enemies in the East. Geographically, we learn again from Osterhammel, that the West is smaller than Europe, for it excludes Eastern Europe by way of an "internal differentiation" (Osterhammel, 2017, p. 105).

So thirdly, Osterhammel understands Europe and the West as related, but not synonymous. Both historians understand the West to have gained political relevance only in 1942. Winkler emphasizes the Atlantic Charta and subsequent founding of the United Nations, but his "History of the West" does not start here. He even reaches back before Christ, although he

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[2] The texts by Osterhammel and Winkler that are quoted here were published in German. All titles and quotes are translated by the author.

understands the "basic constellations" and "basic structure" of the West in the "separation of the royal and corporative power" to have been established with the Magna Charta of 1215. It was, he continues, the precondition for all further separations of power, for pluralism, individualism, civil society and the "specific occidental rationality" as analyzed by Max Weber (Winkler, 2015, p. 582f.). It was, however, not until the developments of late 18th century that Winkler would see the "normative project of the West" to be established, after the Declarations of Human Rights and Civil Liberties in France and the United States and the subsequent revolutions of 1776 and 1789. Winkler now adds the elements human and civil rights, rule of law, representative democracy and sovereignty of the people to the elements of the normative project, in which separation of powers now means a separation between the three branches of government, including an independent judiciary (Winkler, 2015, p. 585). Winkler considers the West as a "normative project", because it functions as a corrective to political practices. Before 1942, however, the "transatlantic West" had never constituted a "political union" and was never an "acting subject" (Winkler, 2015, p. 599).

It is the normative dimension that leads to the notion of the West as "being civilized" and defines relations between "the West and the Rest" (Osterhammel, 2017, p. 104) Osterhammel is implicitly referencing the postcolonial discourse, including Stuart Hall's famous essay "The West and the Rest", in which Hall unfolded discourses of "othering", such as "Orientalism" (Hall, in Hall 2019). Osterhammel describes this imbalance as an "asymmetric antonym"; a concept he borrows from Reinhart Koselleck. Koselleck understands "asymmetric antonyms" to be coined in order to prevent mutual recognition, to constitute a form of heteronomy, which constitutes a deprivation (Koselleck, 2017, p. 22f) The non-West, writes Osterhammel, was always considered inferior. The West thus always was an expression of arrogance. This asymmetry alone can explain why Osterhammel assumed that the West was something valuable, something that needed to be defended (Osterhammel, 2017, p. 104f.)

The implications of the concept of "the West" puts those who are considered to be a part of it into a special position. Therefore, the Europeans have used this concept to substantiate their position. In the "Declaration on European Identity", which was published in 1973, the West as entity was to comprise Europe, North America and Japan (European Community, 1973). The Declaration was written as a reaction to the demands from the United States to take a stronger position in the transatlantic alliance. In his speech on the "Year of Europe", the US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, had put forward demands for more burden sharing. He also called on the European countries to stand with the United States (Kissinger, 1973). This call came in

as a reaction to the decline of the project of the West that was already mentioned above, and as a reaction to the attempts by Germany, for example, to decouple the German question from the Cold War context and to pursue its own "Ostpolitik". The "Declaration on European Identity" was the first time that the European Community tried to formulate an identity for itself. Historian Bo Strath has emphasized that this was not only to be seen in the context of transatlantic relations, but also in the context of economic crises and the end of the Bretton Woods System, wars in Vietnam and the Middle East and a turn to foreign policy in the face of domestic legitimacy crises. The EC used the concept of the West in order to define and contextualize its own position (Strath, 2002), and indeed as an entity that was smaller than the West.

Despite the crises of 1970s, Charles Kupchan has identified the period from 1941 to 2001 as one of cooperative security in a security alliance, based on common interests and a shared identity (Kupchan, 2008, p. 111). This period ended with the war in Iraq in 2003, when for the first time there was an open dissent between the countries of the West, with Germany and France voting against the USA in the UN Security Council, together with Russia. It was the last blow to what Nolan has called "America's mid-century hegemony", which had crumbled with the American war in Vietnam and the social movements throughout 1960s and 1970s. This hegemony, she writes, had rested on five pillars: (1) economic prowess; (2) military might; (3) Cold War domestic consensus on both sides of the Atlantic; (4) the widespread Western European sympathy and admiration for America's political values, global presence, and popular culture and finally (5) Western Europe's willingness to be the junior partner in an American empire built largely by invitation in Western Europe, but supplemented by the American pressure, threats, and covert intervention when necessary (Nolan, 2012, p. 3).

Despite these developments, however, Winkler emphasized in 2009 that the "normative project" was still working and necessary as a corrective (Winkler 2015, p. 587) It is obvious why Winkler has been more worried by the state of transatlantic relations in recent years. The West can hardly be understood as a political subject anymore. More importantly, the norms he had emphasized throughout as constitutive are abandoned not only by President Trump, but also by the European populists.

To conclude the background part of the chapter, it can now be held that (a) the West is not merely a geographical concept, but (b) has a normative dimension that (c) is under attack. What is lost if the concept of the West is abandoned? Can it really be helpful if it is a dividing,

asymmetric concept anyway? Or does a swan song for the West mean to abandon not only a concept, but a political project that is still needed in international relations?

What does the Report say?

The report of the Munich Security Conference 2020 is 102 pages long altogether. The first 23 pages are devoted to the overall topic of the conference and the remaining parts deal with the main actors, regions and issues of relevance in this context. Next to a short history of ideas of the term, the report analyses the political discourse. It centers on the problems in the transatlantic cooperation and contrasts with Angela Merkel's and Mike Pence's positions as expressed at the conference in 2019. It was as if "the small and crowded ballroom of the Bayerischer Hof was home to two different worlds" (Bunde et al., 2020., p. 6).

The report is very skilfully crafted, pays tribute to the main protagonists of the West, contrasts the opponents on both sides of the Atlantic as well as the different understandings of liberalism and its relevance for the West. In his preface, Chairman Wolfgang Ischinger highlights the "relative rise of the non-Western world and a mounting number of global challenges and crises that would require a concerted Western response", and concedes that their absence was due to "us" having "lost a common understanding of what it means to be part of the West". His aim for the conference was thus not only to discuss international affairs, but also to revisit "the Western project in particular" (Bunde et al,. 2020., p. 5).

The MSC used to be the "family reunion" of the West, now it is considered the "requiem for the West", the report continues (Bunde et al. 2020., p. 6). A real definition of this West, however, is only included in a footnote.[3] It is conceded that there never was a commonly shared definition of the West, although the report includes elements of the "normative project" that Winkler has listed, namely "human rights, democracy, and the rule of law" (Bunde et al. 2020, p. 8). Any further definition, for example, an understanding of the West as "a commitment to liberal democracy and human rights, to a market-based economy, and to international

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[3] It is taken from the political scientist Günter Hellmann: "In everyday political language 'the West' is usually understood to refer to a grouping of states and societies in Europe and North America, which share a few characteristics, are tightly connected among each other, and have amassed the overwhelming bulk of military capabilities, economic power, and cultural attraction. Defying geographical common sense, however, Australia, New Zealand, and possibly even Japan are widely considered to be 'Western' outliers in the Pacific. While the idea of 'the West' as well as the array of images, practices, and institutions associated with it did originate in Western Europe, today the imaginary dimension of 'the West' has taken on a life of its own." Bunde et al. (2020), p. 78.

cooperation in international institutions", is said to be contested again (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 6). The authors of the report reference Angela Merkel's talk of a "rivalry of systems" (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 7) between liberal and illiberal democracy. Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán is accredited for coming up with a definition of "illiberal", which not illegitimate or authoritarian, but simply a competing model, which suggests that the representatives of the "illiberal" camp are the true heirs and defenders of important values, such as family values, Christianity, and national sovereignty (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 10). The authors of the report take a clear position against such a position and even accuse Orbán of using "racist tropes" (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 8).

If the West has marked an "internal differentiation" between the Eastern and Western parts of Europe, as we learned from Osterhammel, this "internal differentiation" now also marks the West itself. The report speaks of an "open", but normative definition of the West with a globalist outlook. Against that stands the "closed", nationalistic definition of the West.

When it comes to international security, the report strives for a balance between the different positions. The picture they are drawing is the following: The United States are withdrawing from conflicts that they cannot win militarily. While Trump's rhetoric ("Great nations do not fight endless wars" (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 12) indeed claims to resurrect the national pride and seemingly aims for employing the American forces where they can make a concrete and visible contribution, Trump's policy in reality constitutes an inward-turn and withdrawal from international affairs. "Westlessness" thus means the absence of the West from international conflicts, we read in the report. These conflicts, however, will not disappear: "they may become bloodier – and also more consequential for the West itself" (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 13). It is implied that the West's absence leaves a void.

Do we have to conclude that it indeed needs a strong (military) power in world order politics? In International Relations theories, such an idea of world politics has been replaced by much more nuanced and innovative ideas of international security. In practice, however, we can read further on in the report that great power politics has made a comeback. Competing in it was "disproportionately more complex" for the European Union, "in part because it was created to overcome great-power competition" (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 22).

In the report as well as in actual politics, it is left to the French president Emmanuel Macron to concede that the West is weak (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 13). Criticism of the US may be cheap,

we can read, but suggestions of a no-fly-zone would be more valuable for internal debates as they would be for resolving the conflict itself (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 14).[4]

With the US withdrawing, it could be the moment for the European Union to assume an important role in world politics. Macron has pointed out at such a direction, but eventually he was left to concede that Europe lacked "political inspiration", and famously called NATO as "braindead"; a formulation that the report quotes (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 14).

The report is not ending on that note, but with a prep-talk. It calls for an end of debates like the one about the 2% benchmark of financial contributions to NATO, which were risking the very existence of the organization, but not by contributing to any substantial discussion of a future strategy. If NATO or the EU would dissolve, these kinds of debates would "be seen as petty and short-sighted" (Bunde et al., 2020, p. 17).

The authors foresee a co-existence of competing models and suggest a "'dual-track strategy' for the new era of great-power competition", calling for "cooperating with autocratic states where it is in its best interests but at the same time strengthening Western cohesion for an even more competitive environment" (Bunde et al. 2020, p. 22). With regard to the concept of the West, we can read that it is meant to be revitalized, so that the "West may then continue to 'decline' successfully, allowing the next generation of Spenglerians to reexamine the future of the West in the 22nd century" (Bunde et al. 2020, p. 23).

What do the Speeches say?

Most politicians are not provoked by the report. This might be due to the speechwriters not having read the report, but at least having taken a note of the overall topic. Many take a defensive position by either defending the West (Kramp-Karrenbauer) or simply reminding the audience that the West has won (Pompeo). Pompeo mentions the overall topic in passing; Italian Foreign Minister Di Maio acknowledges the report in very general terms. Stoltenberg confirms that neither has the West lost its way, nor have "our values [...] lost their value" (Stoltenberg, 2020).

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[4] The report does not mention her explicitly here, but implicitly refers to a suggestion made by the German Minister of Defense, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer in October 2019 (Stöber, 2019).

Criticism: No direction

German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, (2020) largely echoes tone and general direction of the report. He opens the conference by sharply criticizing the United States, "our closest ally". He understands the current US-American politics as a rejection of the "very concept of an international community", as if "let everyone tend his own garden" constituted the global policy already. Steinmeier (2020) confirms this position by utilizing a proverb that is often used as rather childish joke, namely "as if everyone thinking of himself meant that everyone was being considered". He understands this policy of self-interest as coming at the cost of neighbors and partners, and stresses that international law is only an option for the big countries, but that it is meant to safeguard the small. Steinmeier (2020) refers back to Thucydides to explain current politics and understands this applicability of a concept that is two thousand years old not only as problematic because it is outdated, but because it very fundamentally forestalls the search for common solutions to contemporary problems.

This view is also confirmed by the German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas in his speech. The emerging world order could hardly be understood as "liberal" or "rules based". And that, he continues, was neither due to the continuing rise of China, nor to the shrinking importance of Europe after the Cold War. The real "game changer" for him was the end of "the era of the omnipresent American world policeman" – a position, however, that the EU Security Strategy 2016 had already deemed "unnecessary" (Council of the European Union, 2019). Maas refers to the void the US leaves, which "countries like Russia, Turkey or Iran" are now trying to fill, while pursuing "distinctly different values, interests and understandings of international order". Europeans had long turned a blind eye on these developments, Maas concedes, "but even with eyes wide open one would hardly have been able to foresee how sudden the tide would be turning on American diplomacy and politics" (Maas, 2020).

Steinmeier (2020) argues that the European Union would not be able to guarantee the security of its member states on its own for the foreseeable future. The EU will need the United States, but it will also need cooperation among the member states themselves. Here, Steinmeier sees clear deficits within the EU, and he explicitly addresses the Germany. The raison d' état according to the German Basic Law, Steinmeier reiterates, is to serve peace "as an equal partner of a united Europe". It is here that he connects actual politics to its underpinnings and the very idea of the West. The unified Europe had to be understood as the "most concrete repository" of German responsibility after the two world wars it caused. If the European project fails,

Steinmeier (2020) concludes, the lessons learned of German, maybe even European history would be at stake. He thus considers the competing narratives of Germany, according to which the country can do without a common Europe, as the biggest of all dangers.

The idea of the West strengthened by all, but in different understandings

The then relatively new Slovakian president Zuzana Čaputová comes closest to the definition of the West as a "normative project". She picks up on the idea of "Westlessness" and asks how the West can be defined. She portrays it as a community of values, and mentions the "rule of law, which in its turn, requires strong institutions and active citizens" and calls on the political leaders to "abide by the rule of law themselves and protect it". She thus includes both the rule of law and the "*spirit of the law*" that need to be followed by politicians in order for the idea of the West to remain credible (Čaputová 2020). Čaputová's was an activist and a lawyer before being elected as president following the murder of journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová. We can therefore understand Čaputová's contribution as a symbolic tribute to the Visegrad countries, whose most vocal representative, Victor Orbán, has been criticized heavily in the MSC report and was not among the participants.

The speaker that goes furthest in his rejection of the conference's theme is US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo. He starts his speech by remembering his military service as a soldier at the borders of West Germany and recalls the year 1989, "when freedom won". He reassures his audience that the "death of the transatlantic alliance is grossly over-exaggerated. The West is winning. We are collectively winning. We're doing it together" (Pompeo 2020). Pompeo not only confirms Donald Trump's talk of American, and that is Western "greatness", but also picks up on his superlatives. "Free nations are simply more successful than any other model that's been tried in the history of civilization", he states. As a consequence, Pompeo calls for safeguarding the borders of the countries of the West in order to allow for safety, the practice of religion and work (Pompeo 2020). These markers of the West are neither the values that Winkler understands to be the "normative project", nor the ones that Steinmeier and Stoltenberg confirm in their speeches. His perspective on the joint project is more delimited and influenced by current events.

Pompeo delivers a definition of the West that is not meant to be based on geography, a space or state. Instead, he locates it in "any nation that adopts a model of respect for individual

freedom, free enterprise, national sovereignty" and thus subscribes to the idea of the West (Pompeo 2020). The German Minister of Defense, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer (2020), similarly frames the West as more than a compass direction, but an idea that comprised countries on all continents. If any nation can represent the West, we might conclude, this idea of "Western-ness" can be followed by each nation individually and does not require cooperation in a unity of fate or other community.

The US Secretary of Defense, Mark Esper, who does not mention the words "West", "values" or even "NATO" in his speech, turns out to be very much devoted to the ideas of the West. His reference to the West goes back to the end of World War II, which is in line with what we heard in the earlier section. Esper understands global politics as an ideological battle:

> "In the meantime, though, we ARE asking our friends to clearly choose a global system that supports democracy, protects human rights, and safeguards our greatest asymmetric advantages: our values, our shared interests, and our unmatched network of alliances and partnerships." (Esper, 2020)

"Freedom, democracy and the rule of law", Stoltenberg emphasizes as well, "remain a beacon of hope for people around the world". He calls NATO as being "the ultimate expression of the 'West'" and mentions Hong Kong and Teheran as places where people stand up for their right to live in freedom following this example" (Stoltenberg, 2020). Stoltenberg argues in the tradition of a missionary West, in which the West has already achieved what others still long for, and NATO can help others in achieving. Such a teleological model can also be found in the speech by Kramp-Karrenbauer. She says that the "idea of the West enforces itself", and she finishes with the recommendation to give the "idea" the room it needs to "unfold itself" (Kramp-Karrenbauer, 2020) – as if she not only wants to pay tribute to the overall topic of the conference, but also to Hegel in the year of his 250th birthday.

The speaker that goes farthest in his rejection of this model is Steinmeier. Foreign policy has to be built on the assumption that neither Germany, nor the West can model the world after their own visions. He sees two main conclusions: (1) Only a European foreign- and security policy that is able to act can make a credible contribution to international order and stability, while military means are neither the first nor the most promising means. (2) He clearly rejects, at different points of his speech, any idea of a missionary, teleological project of the West understood as "westernization". And still, he confirms the normative project of the world – not

the West – to make human dignity the corner stone of state action and recalls the Charta of the United Nations as a guiding principle (Steinmeier, 2020).

Common enemy

The idea of the West, however, together with its underlying values, were being challenged by enemies that are "brutal and reckless", Kramp-Karrenbauer says. She mentions the annexation of the Crimea, international terrorism, the Indo-Pacific and Syria as conflict areas, as well as the conflict between the US and China (Kramp-Karrenbauer, 2020). Similar to her colleague, Heiko Maas, she does not go into further detail and is cautious not to take sides explicitly, in particular not against Russia. The American speakers are less cautious here. It is China that Esper sees as the main opponent in a conflict of values, which appears in the form of an ideological battle (Esper, 2020).

Alternate system – or reconstruction of the old system?

A Different West

We find two different approaches in the speeches: One is to confirm the established order, while suggesting the employment of new means. The other is to say that the old system does not fit new challenges. The United Nations do not seem to play a special role in either of the two approaches. That does not say, however, that multilateralism does not play a role.

A representative of the first approach is the Italian Foreign Minister Di Maio. His speech is very straight-forward. While he starts praising moderator Natalie Tocchi for her contributions to the EU's Global Strategy "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe" of 2016, he outlines a simplified idea of that common policy. He calls for a threefold approach of "**building our capacity to act** strategically", "**enhancing our will** to do so, by thinking of Europe as a key international player and speaking with a single voice" and "**increasing the effectiveness of the Institutions** of the European Union" (Di Maio, 2020).[5]

This effectiveness, according to a more cautious Heiko Maas, cannot be measured by military spending. Europe will have to make use of its strengths, and these are not military means to start with, but "regulatory models". He calls for a joint work on a security architecture for

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[5] Emphasis in original.

Europe that rests on international law. Multilateral organizations need to be adapted to the "new reality of global politics". He mentions NATO as well as the European Union and a strategy that builds on de-escalation instead of maximum pressure – a strategy that aims to foster new transatlantic dynamics (Maas, 2020).

Stoltenberg and Maas disagree about the means to reach that aim. Stoltenberg stresses how strong cooperation actually is, albeit all the talk about the 2% aim in security expenditure, which he does not mention explicitly in his speech. He also confirms the success of the joint efforts, for example in Syria or Afghanistan (Stoltenberg, 2020). Maas calls for a larger share of Europeans in order to make the US live up to its responsibility (Maas, 2020). Instead of discussing the 2%-aim, he suggests to discuss those regions in which "Westlessness" was most visible: Iraq, Syria, Libya, Ukraine and the Sahel-region.

Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau is the one who calls for a new approach most explicitly. It was "not enough to apply old solutions to new problems", like climate change. He acknowledges that Canada is influential, but too small to deal with issues like that alone. Countries would "have to look beyond existing frameworks to deliver real results for citizens". Just as the report suggests, Trudeau aims to include "old friends, new partners", but he also goes beyond the state sector and includes "the private sector, and civil society" (Trudeau, 2020).

Beyond the East-West Divide – Towards Eurasia

Since the West demands its opposite, as Osterhammel has explained, it is interesting to see what speakers say of the East. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang is the only speaker who refers to the East explicitly, stressed by the very title of his speech alone: "Bringing the East and West together in shared commitment to Multilateralism". He sees China as a country that gets more powerful and does so without copying "the Western model". He speaks of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and a path of "peaceful development of our own country and mutually beneficial cooperation with the world". In that regard, multilateralism is the concept that Wang Yi focusses on. His speech is outlining four principles that need to be fostered to "uphold multilateralism": pursuit of "shared development"; the "good example" set by "major countries"; upholding of international norms; seeing "the world as one community". The aim of multilateralism as outlined by Chinese President Xi Jinping was "to safeguard peace and

development for all", to "uphold fairness, justice and mutual benefit", and, for that matter, he understands multilateralism to be "grounded on international law and widely recognized norms of international relations" (Wang Yi, 2020).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is also formally confirming the current system. He presents Russia as a savior of the international order and stability in Syria and Libya, where NATO is understood as having destroyed the "country's statehood". When in the next instance, China is praised for its "open and responsible approach to international cooperation in combating the spread of the coronavirus" (Lavrov, 2020), it can be assumed that this praise does go beyond the fight against the virus. China and Russia are safeguarding the principles of non-interference in domestic issues as well as the need to take decisions unanimously to give (their) countries the leverage they need to pursue their foreign policy aims. These are safeguarded by the UN system as it is now.

The threats Lavrov sees for stability are below the state level, such as "international terrorism, illegal migration, human trafficking and other cross-border challenges", which then "create a favorable environment for the peoples of the countries of that region to resolve their problems through inclusive national dialogue without any outside interference" (Lavrov, 2020).

Lavrov renounced the talk about the "Russian threat" as "phantom" and in turn accuses NATO of escalating tensions, and thus providing for a return to the Cold War mentality. We can understand his call for the "principle of equal and indivisible security" as the "starting point of such a dialogue" (Lavrov, 2020). For that matter, Lavrov evokes the concepts of a "Euro-Atlantic stability" (Lavrov, 2020) and "Eurasia", which was once applied to global politics by Zbigniev Breszinski (Brzezinski, 2016), who was one of the most important foreign policy strategists of the US Democratic Party for a long time. Lavrov confirms principles not only of the post-war order. In the light of the anniversaries of the end of World War II, he recalls the "ability of the states to unite and fight the common threat regardless of ideological differences", an ability he understands to be lacking today. Lavrov condemns the destruction of the non-proliferation treaty system and violation of international law "through military interference in affairs of sovereign states, illegal sanctions and harsh protectionist measures that undermine global markets and the system of trade" (Lavrov, 2020). It is clear that the main target of these statements are the United States.

The Chinese Foreign Minister goes farthest in sketching an alternative international system. He stresses that China has no intention to change the established international order, but merely

to pursue its aims under the umbrella of the United Nations. It has long been criticized that not only China, but all veto powers in the United Nations Security Council block a revision of its statutes, to model it in a way that allows for the inclusion of important powers of today's world, and thus to be organized in a multilateral manner. It is thus very handy to confirm an international order of which one's own country profits.

What can we conclude?

The crisis of transatlantic relations correlates to a crisis in the United States, historian Jill Lepore has diagnosed. In her much-acclaimed book "These Truths" she concludes that the United States has "lost its way in a cloud of smoke" between 9/11 and the election of Donald Trump (Lepore, 2019, p. 727). Trump certainly is not a president that wants to get America back on track again, but a president that builds on these divisions, on insecurity in combination with what seems to be the 2.0-version of a Madman Theory.

There are overlaps between Lepore's diagnosis the crisis of contemporary America and Winkler's. He argues that although the crisis of liberalism and the rise of populism started in USA earlier than they did in Europe, it is now relevant for both (Winkler 2017, p. 404). The famous Böckenförde dilemma reminded us that "the liberal secularized state lives by prerequisites which it cannot guarantee itself". Winkler concludes that the crisis of Western democracies has to do with the fact that many of their representatives are no longer aware of these prerequisites and are thus not in the position to defend them domestically and in foreign affairs (Winkler, 2017, p. 407).

Neither the isolationist turn of the United States, nor their reliance on military means and a simultaneous turn away from diplomacy and peaceful conflict settlement is new. Ronan Farrow reminds us that Clinton's turn towards domestic issues came with a cut of 30% for foreign policy (Farrow, 2018). This climate in which NATO's intervention in Kosovo happened, is compellingly accounted for by Dana Priest in her book "The Mission" (Priest, 2004). For those who witnessed the end of the transatlantic century with the Iraq War of 2003, it might be surprising to read Farrow's praise for George W. Bush as a rational president who understood at the end of his term that his reliance on the military had failed, which led him to strengthen resources in diplomacy and development aid (Farrow, 2018). The reliance on retired generals as advisors during the Obama Presidency (Farrow, 2018, p. xxvii) was further fostered under

Trump. Farrow diagnoses a destruction of "old institutions of traditional diplomacy" (Farrow 2018, p. xxxii). So we can see a major reason of lacking interest in the West and conceptual approach also here.

The MSC report unfolds the crisis of the West in a compelling way. It shows that the divisions are not only among Europeans and USA-Americans, but among different understandings of politics and different ideas of global order. They center around ideology, values, nationalism and sovereignty as well as different understandings of democracy. The speeches confirm these findings. Pleas for a constructive, engaged role of the United States in world politics are met by confirmations of the nationalistic, isolationistic positions outlined by President Trump. While the German Minister of Defense aims to bridge between Europe and the US, she supports teleological, triumphal ideas of the West, which can be defined as "asymmetric". On the side of those who look for new approaches, the Italian Foreign Minister concludes that Europeans need to leave their struggles behind and strengthen their own position. The German Foreign Minister instead reaches beyond discussions of the 2%-aim and other transatlantic debates and aims for strategies to solve eminent crises.

A new approach, however, which the Canadian Prime Minister has called for, is not offered. The approaches laid out by the Chinese or the Russian Foreign Minister confirm the existing order that deepens the existing problems and benefit their own countries. The divisions, as Steinmeier has rightly held, come at the cost of small countries, not the Veto-Powers of the Security Council or the Europeans, whose only way to safeguard their own position and security is seen in mutual cooperation as part of a multilateral world order. A deepening conflict between USA and China, which is addressed in almost all speeches, would only harm the EU's position and add to the tensions among its member states.

We do not have to worry about an eventual end of the West conceptually. As much as the idea of the West as "normative project" can be criticized, it provides for a corrective also in foreign policy, and it does not look like there will be a substitute any time soon. Whether it is being applied or not, however, is another matter.

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"MEMORY WARS" IN THE EU AND NEIGHBOURING STATES AS THE (UN)CONVENTIONAL SECURITY ISSUE

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This study analyses the wars of memory as a new threat to international security and stability. It is assumed that nationalism and various versions of perception, imagination and invention of the past inspire memory wars as a new form of international conflict in situations when war in its traditional forms became unacceptable to political elites. The paper presumes that wars of memory can inspire or legitimize military conflicts. Memory wars define the relations between several European states. Balkanization, the actualization of nationalist myths and stereotypes in the perception of foreign policy partners, stimulate the wars of memory in modern Europe. The study argues that the Europeanisation of memory spaces can lead to a compromise between the EU and neighboring states, but neither the EU countries nor the Russian Federation are ready to abandon the nationalist models of inventing history. In general, the author of the article presumes that wars of memory stimulate political elites to stay within the confrontational model of international relations.

The relevance of the "wars of memories" as new (un)conventional security threat analysis

Despite different European and Russian understandings of the past, which became the reason for the increasing number of bilateral relations during the 2000s and 2010s between, for example, the Russian Federation and Poland (Balin, 2016; Kovaljov, 2009; Narinskij, Torkunov, 2009; Novikov, 2020; Panfilova, 2009) history was not regularly counted among the significant threats to international stability and security until 2020 – a year when the number of challenges and threats to international security and stability expanded significantly. On the one hand, the pandemic undermined and weakened the stability of the world economy. On the other hand, the history of 2020 provides historians of nationalism with numerous examples of how wars of memory has become a new threat to international stability and security, which is comparable to international terrorism. Wars of memory range from different perceptions of the same events to debates between national historiographies and attempts of politically motivated

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use of history as a weapon in ideological wars. The 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, mythologized in Russia, where it became a part of the national memory, the official historiographical canon and a state myth as the Great Patriotic War, became the most significant occasion for the memorial clashes and confrontations between Russia and the Eastern European and Western European states. The decision of the Turkish authorities to turn the Ayasofya Museum into a mosque again caused misunderstandings and discontent among several Orthodox countries. Attempts of some European states to question Ankara's right led to a deterioration in international relations, and posed a new threat to international stability. Economic and resource contradictions did not inspire wars of memory, but the phantom collective pains of the Orthodox countries about the lost great historical past stimulated the emergence of new (un)conventional security issues.

The final days of September 2020 became a period of exacerbation of the bilateral conflict between the two post-Soviet republics – Armenia and Azerbaijan – which almost immediately after the collapse of the USSR were involved in a protracted political conflict in *Dağlıq Qarabağ* (Nagorno-Karabakh or *Lerrnayin Gharabagh*), burdened by mutual historical, confessional and linguistic claims to the exclusive right of ownership and control of this territory. The Azerbaijani and Armenian media offer opposed explanations of the events, and intellectuals are active in their attempts to prove the right of Azerbaijan or Armenia to use violence to return territories or maintain control over them. The explanations offered and circulated by the mass-media reduce the conflict to political contradictions, but these interstate disputes would be less acute without mutual claims inspired by different versions and perceptions of the past and histories imagined as national narratives by Azerbaijani and Armenian nationalist intellectuals. On the one hand, the aggravation of this conflict confirms that nationalism remains significant among the factors influencing international relations. On the other hand, relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which periodically balance between war and peace, also actualize the factor of historical memories, which not only consolidate the identities of nations, but also force them to become participants in military international and regional conflicts. The political experience of post-Soviet and post-socialist countries confirms that the "wars of memories" have become a threat to national and international security in that it is no less important than international terrorism or the competition for the right to control resources.

The Purpose of the Article and its Methodology:

The main goal of this article is to analyze the "wars of memory" as an (un)conventional security issue or a new threat to the international system based on the relative stability and compromise between the elites, rooted in the actual recognition of the existing situation and the absence of a real desire and determination of elites in both developed and developing countries to change the system radically.

Realizing that the modern theory of international relations is a polyparadigmatic science, the acceptance and rejection of one or another paradigm is actually just a "question of faith". The author presumes that intellectual history and interdisciplinary studies of nationalism as two particular consequences of the grandiose constructivist turn in the Western humanities can provide the researcher with methodological tools to analyze the "wars of memory" as an (un)conventional security issue.

"Wars of memories" as a new threat to international stability:

Modern nation-states face numerous threats that range from internal to external, terrorism or separatism. They are also provoked and inspired by regional contradictions and imbalances in development levels, national oppression, discrimination or potential military conflicts with other states. This list further includes non-institutionalized actors of international relations, represented by the international terrorist or criminal groups, which are also ambitious enough to question the state's monopoly to be a universal actor in international relations. These threats and challenges to security and stability were analyzed well in historiography and theoretical studies that focus on international relations both at the national and international levels, especially those that belong to true-believing realists, who naively insist that states are still the main actors and mutual threats simultaneously.

The political dynamics of the second half of the 20th century, the processes of social and economic modernization in developing countries, globalization, the erosion of traditional cultural forms and the growth of mass culture significantly changed the main contours and vectors of the system of international relations, and expanded the number of actors and the potential threats. By the 21st century, realism and other classical paradigms of theories of

international relations can no longer offer a universal language or theoretical and methodological tools for analyzing modern threats that states face with the globalizing world. The constructivist analysis, which began in the first half of the 1980s, when English and American intellectuals proposed new models of interpretations and explanations that claim to be universal, significantly expanded the possibilities of understanding of the threats faced by the modern international system in general and its actors in particular. If during the 19th and 20th centuries states as actors of international relations faced threats or ambitions of other states, then at the beginning of the 21st century new threats emerged. These threats included the doubts about the legitimacy of the identity of other actors in international relations. Furthermore, the desire to rewrite, revise and offer new interpretations of historical facts mythologized and recognized by some actors, which, at the same time denied by others, added to the traditional dangers.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia provoked political and socio-economic crises simultaneously. It also marked the beginning of a new stage in the history of international relations, when not only conflicts of economic and political interests but also competing versions of the history and the past became important factors in the growth of instability. The history of post-Soviet Russia, its relations with the neighboring states, as well as the current history of the Balkans provide historians with numerous examples when different interpretations of history cause and inspire political conflicts. The integration of the Baltic states, as well as Slovenia, Croatia and Bulgaria into the EU contributed to the inclusion of their local forms of historical memories, which were nationalistic, into the greater European canon of historical and cultural memory that was based on compromise, consensus and reconciliation achieved by the European states after the end of the Second World War. The integration of new countries into the EU did not mean the automatic integration of their national memories, because the values and principles of nationalism and nation, language and ethnicity, faith and blood for the political and intellectual elites in this region were more important and understandable than the ideas of tolerance and multiculturalism of the Western European elites.

If nationalisms and nations in Western countries, which they imagined and invented in the 19th century, risk demise as a result of cultural assimilation and population replacement by migrants, nationalism in the countries neighboring Germany and Austria in the east and south is not going to yield to other political ideologies. There is also an academic consensus that nationalism in general and the nationalist imagination in particular became significant factors that influenced the main vectors and trajectories of the development of historical memories in

post-socialist states. Therefore, international conflicts provoked by different understandings and interpretations of history has been among factors that create new threats to stability, by offering an anarchic plurality of memories that are inspired by various nationalisms. It also contradicts the European compromise canon, which is based on overcoming the trauma of the First and Second World Wars and promote tolerance and multiculturalism. In this political and cultural situation, the potential for the conflict of nationalisms and nationalist imaginations becomes a significant and influential factor in modern international relations and in this situation it has much in common with the political and economic contradictions between nation-states.

Memory wars as the (un)conventional security issue:

"Wars of memory" are virtually invisible in the context of real military conflicts, and historians of international relations, whose theoretical and methodological preferences range from realism to liberalism and from neorealism to neoliberalism. In contrast to constructivists, they prefer to ignore the role of cultural factors, including nationalism and various forms of nationalist imagination, whose influence on the genesis and the actualization of threats to international and regional security is comparable to traditional threats that range from war to international terrorism. Therefore, the author presumes that the assumption of "memory wars" as a meaningful new threat to the stability of the international system needs several examples presented by some cases when the nationalist preferences of elites and intellectuals who imagined history as a form of political mobilization inspired the destabilization of the international environment.

The author in this article has already suggested that the memory wars as a meaningful new threat to international stability and security emanated from the regions of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans. However, this idea would also be an optimistic liberal assumption, only because it ignores the experience of the memory wars, which included the 20th-century countries in Western Europe (Assman, 2014; Assman, 2016). The situation in Western Europe differs from similar processes in its Eastern and Balkan counterparts only in its degree of intensity and the visual presence of the memory wars in the national identities and cultures. The Second World War in Western Europe significantly marginalized the factors of nationalism and violence, and undermined their authority as universal forms of political mobilization and solutions to the problems of the elites. However, this marginalization did not

mean the complete and final disappearance and exhaustion of the nationalist potential, including the symbolically significant mobilization resources of memory and the nationalistic manipulation of history and historical memory.

The marginalization of nationalism significantly changed the structures of intellectual communities and groups, fragmenting them. It turned the wars of memory and nationalism in the West into invisible or almost invisible factors of the political process, which was interesting for intellectuals who tried to question its compromise and the formal European canon of the collective memory, which is based on the recognition of the German responsibility for the beginning of the Second World War. The differences and the regional features of the wars of memory in Western and Eastern Europe in this situation become especially important. If the Western model of historical memory uses a compromise, which emerged as a result of joint condemnation of fascism and Nazism, then some Eastern European intellectuals, including Russian authors and journalists, justify the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and, as a result, the alliance of Stalin with Hitler. They imagine it as a forced necessity by using an authoritarian past actively for solving contemporary political problems, including the opposition to the liberal West (Šimov, 2019). In this situation, it has become normal for Russia to support the European extreme right intellectuals, who offer revisionist versions of historical memory based on the legitimation of extreme nationalism. Russian activists of historical politics in this situation are not embarrassed by the fact that the political and ideological predecessors of the contemporary European rightists, whom they openly sympathize, fought in World War II as Germany's allies.

History in this cultural situation has become a victim of political circumstances and ideological conjuncture, which led to the wars of memory between the European East and the West. It also politically motivated the use of history, as a form of a new security threat. While intellectuals, who are recognized by the majority as marginalized, raise politically incorrect and ideologically unpleasant topics in the West, in Eastern Europe and the Balkans (Kirčanaŭ, 2019; Kirčanov, 2019; Kyrčaniv, 2019) nationalism has not been significantly weakened or completely supplanted by liberal values. Moreover, Western intellectuals with a reputation for being revisionist are successfully finding new readers, admirers and supporters in Eastern Europe. In Russia, for example, the few right-wing radical publishing houses do not have a reputation of being extremist and revisionist, but are rather known as centers of alternative intellectual thought and right-wing political tradition, unlike in Germany.

If the European right-wing intellectuals challenged the rights of Jews and leftists during the first half of the 20th century, their modern ideological heirs are now involved in the processes of revision, history rewriting and the formation of new myths. Here, the wars of memory became a "mild" form of international conflict. German right-wing intellectuals (Katzer, 2003; Meiser, 2004; Meiser, 2008; Meiser, 2011; Post, 2003) can write as long as they want about the betrayal and aggression of Poles and Czechs against Germany in 1939, blaming them for the outbreak of World War II and form a positive image of Germany as a victim country. These revisionist views of history do not change anything because of the membership of Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic in the European Union, which has forced the German, Polish and Czech elites to adopt the decision-making mechanisms that exclude violence and war in principle. Although memorial conflicts continue to worry the European elites, they are incomparable in importance than, for example, to the migrants, melting glaciers or environmental problems.

If the European culture of memory, which emerged as an attempt to overcome the relapses of politics that provoked two world wars in its modern version, perceives such texts as marginal, then in Russia, which is supposed to form a stable moral and cultural immunity against the threats of the extreme right doctrine, some publishers are active in their efforts to popularize and promote alternative historical narratives (Codreanu, 2017; Degrel, 2018; Degrel, 2019; Ofen, 2020; Quisling, 2019; Serrano, 2020; Verhagen, 2020). The formal marginalisation of extreme right-wing ideas in Europe and their actual Renaissance in some segments of the Russian political culture simultaneously actualize various vectors of the development of historical memories, visualizing new threats to security and stability that are inspired by various forms of historical imagination. The policy of the European memorial consensus requires the EU member-states not to promote negative images of their neighbors in historical memory, which provides intellectuals with the freedom to form a negative image of Russia, although some Russian authors also do not differ from their Central and Eastern European colleagues in their attempts to participate in the "wars of memory".

If the activity of right-wing publishers in Europe became the subject of interest of special services that are fighting against extremism, then in Russia the same publishers try to form a cultural and intellectual fashion by positioning their books on the market not as radical literature, but as collectable numbered editions. In this situation, the forms of political and historical memory that fell victim of marginalization and became undesirable as a result of the Second World War in Europe. However, they became fashionable political and ideological

trends in some Eastern European states by forming an alternative canon of memory, and by revising the European memorial compromise and consensus (Luk'janov, 2020). They also actualized the role "wars of memories" as a threat to international stability and security simultaneously. If access to alternative versions of memory that deny the main provisions of the European memorial consensus and do not fit into the general European culture of memory is much easier in Central and Eastern European countries than the Western European states, then the role of local intellectuals in promoting and revitalizing nationalist myths that stimulate the wars of memory and real political and interstate conflicts in the existing security architecture is obvious—they are recognized as the founding fathers of public opinion.

History systematized as the national historiography or imagined as historical and cultural memory in Eastern Europe and the Balkans becomes the cause of confrontations between sovereign states regularly: They are unable to share a common past but prefer to nationalize it. Some periods of the past, mainly the presence / absence of state historical experience and war, are mythologized in the national memory of Russia more than in the historical imaginations of other post-Soviet countries. Therefore, attempts by the new historical memories to separate the historical experience of the post-Soviet countries from the historical experience of Russia face rejection and opposition regularly from Russian intellectuals involved in the formation of the official post-Soviet canon of memory. As a result, relations between Russia and Ukraine can be defined as a "war of memory" (Kasjanov, 2019; Kohut, 2004; Portnov, 2011). 2014 marked the beginning of a hot phase in the Russian-Ukrainian memorial conflict and the clash of different versions of historical memories. Modern bilateral contradictions between Russia and Ukraine are burdened by mutual historical claims that aggravated sharply after 2014. Balkan models of historical memory exist and function within the framework of a predominantly confrontational model. This model, which is employed by all intellectuals in the Balkans includes exclusion, deconstruction, marginalization as universal tools, and national historiographers use it to write national histories, which revise the rights of the neighboring communities automatically.

Indeed, memory wars have probably become a universal form of the functioning of historical memories in the Balkans (Luleva, 2013). As for Bulgaria and Macedonia, the relationship between the intellectual communities of these countries involved in the history writing processes (Kajčev, 2006; Dimitrov, 2011) is close to the memorial wars of Russia and Ukraine, because Macedonian narratives became part of the Bulgarian historical memory, when the Macedonian version of national history actualizes the negative images of Bulgaria actively,

imagining its neighbors in contexts of Otherness (Ivanova, 2009). Various versions of the imagination of the Soviet legacy (Znepolski, 2010; Bojardžieva, 2010; Metodiev, 2008) are also a pretext for the memorial wars. Whereas in modern Russian historical memory the ruling elites are active in their attempts to stimulate the cult of the Soviet past by mythologizing and idealizing it, the post-Soviet countries tend to deconstruct the Soviet legacy in contrast (Muižnieks, Zelče, 2011). Different perceptions of war in the cultures of the historical memory of Russia and the post-Soviet states became the reasons for numerous contradictions between the Russian Federation and its neighbors.

The restoration of state sovereignty of the Baltic countries in the early 1990s institutionalized the crisis in the relations between Russia and Latvia and Estonia just after the local elites declared their independence. Political elites of Latvia and Estonia "invented" the institution of non-citizenship to restrict the access to power for Russian minorities. As a result, veterans of the Great Patriotic War not only did not receive any rights, but also became the victims of political discrimination, and joined the ranks of those non-citizens deprived of political and civil rights. However, Latvia and Estonia were not the first European states that began to apply discriminatory restrictions against the veterans. Ireland became the first country in Europe to deprive World War II veterans who fought in the British Army, of civil rights, by sending them to prison almost immediately after the war ended (Spain, 2012; O'Brien, 2013). It was done, despite that Russia has no claims on Ireland, and the fact that although the Irish political elites during the war did not support the anti-Hitler coalition, some of their representatives sympathized with Germany. Although Ireland and Russia have different memories of the Second World War, unlike Latvia and Estonia, Ireland never comes under fire from the Russian Foreign Ministry, and the sanctions did not close the access of Irish beer to the Russian market, unlike the Latvian sprats. It is possible that the Russian activists of wars of memories may not be aware of the Irish experience of discrimination against the veterans in general or they may prefer not to worsen relations with an EU member state in particular, even though the Baltic states are also involved in European integration.

May 9 has become a collective day of remembrance in Russian historical memory (Gabovič, 2005) and the reason for the historiographical discussions that force Russia and Europe to communicate in a style reminiscent of the "wars of memories". Russian political elites insist and believe that other post-Soviet states should have ideologically similar perceptions and understandings of victory (Koposov, 2011; Miller, Lipman, 2012). Some Russian historians and intellectuals presume that the elites of the post-Soviet Russia could not overcome the neo-

Soviet inertia and, as a result, they preferred to become participants in the wars of memories (Miller, 2020). They did this with alternative versions of history proposed in other post-Soviet states where the historians preferred to distance themselves from the neo-Soviet and Russian ethnocentric canon of the historical imagination and memory of modern Russia. Interestingly, official Russian intellectuals themselves deny these features of the memory model they propose for Russia and its post-Soviet neighbors. Attempts by the national historiographies to form new canons of memories, and their refusal to recognize this war as the Great Patriotic War, its re-invention as the Second World War or the Soviet-German war stimulate the growth of nationalist sentiments in Russia, directed by the political elites. Historiographical contradictions and various modes of functioning of historical memories in post-socialist countries are varied, ranging from the use of new mechanisms of historical imagination to attempts to establishing new canons of memory, ranging from mutual claims and accusations to threats to using sanctions.

History has become a pretext for the aggravation and deterioration of Russian relations with its European partners. The inconsistency of the Russian elites in using history to legitimize their actions stimulated growing contradictions and differences in the politically motivated use of history in international relations. Aleksei Miller, a Russian historian, commenting on the situation, emphasizes that Russia used informational reasons which are too convenient for the European and Western states (Miller, 2019). European elites disagree with the statements of the Russian officials who insisted that the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was a great "victory for Soviet diplomacy". Indeed, in 2009 Vladimir Putin, speaking at Westerplatte, insisted that Russia could not be proud of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, but then in 2014 the Russian president also stated that the pact was a correct strategic decision. These statements of the Russian president actualized various versions of the perception of history, turning memory wars into a threat to international security and stability and an (un)conventional security issue.

Analyzing the problems of historical memories as factors in the genesis of new security threats, the author, on the one hand, considers the following questions: "How decisively are the Russian elites ready to promote post-Soviet and neo-Soviet versions of historical memory?" and "Are the elites of the new states ready to defend their national versions of histories and historical memories when the threat of the neo-Sovietization proposed by the official Russian historiography becomes real?" On the other hand, it is impossible to ignore the fact that wars of memory in post-Soviet countries can periodically escalate into real military conflicts because nationalist revivals and successful attempts of rewriting, imagining and inventing history in the

ethnically centric coordinate systems preceded them. The modern post-Soviet wars of memory in the "soft phase" led to the involvement of third countries that have never been a part of the Soviet political space, but nonetheless had ideologically motivated relations with the USSR. For example, the intellectuals of the post-Soviet Central Asian republics were active and successful in their attempts to form a nationalist canon of historical imagination. In particular, Uzbek intellectuals after Uzbekistan became sovereign remembered their ethnic and linguistic relatives in China.

The policy of the assimilation of the Uyghurs, the colonization of Xinjiang by Chinese migrants stimulate the growth of ethnic and religious solidarity in post-Soviet Central Asia with ethnically and linguistically similar groups. If Uzbek and partly Kyrgyz intellectuals seek to integrate the histories of their groups into the wider contexts of the Islamic and Turkic world, imagining the Uyghurs as their "oppressed" relatives, then the Chinese elites in this "war of memories" prefer to responding to the threats of Uyghur separatism by intensifying the anti-Turkic policy of assimilation and colonization. The huge image of Alixan Töre, the first president of East Turkestan, appeared on the streets of Tashkent in autumn 2020, provoking a negative reaction from the Chinese authorities, which deny the very possibility of a separate Uyghur historical memory consistently. European elites were also engaged into this memorial conflict because of their adherence to human rights values. Their principles of multiculturalism also force them to criticize the internal politics of China, which tends to perceive alternative versions of history that do not fit into the ideologically verified and ethnically formatted canon as an external challenge.

Memory wars as a threat to stability: An Integral Characteristic of the future International System?

Analyzing memory wars as a new threat to the architecture of international security and stability, the author presumes that it is necessary to analyze two more aspects of this problem, including "Is it possible or impossible to reach a compromise between various competing forms of historical memories in international relations?" and "How will international relations be transformed if memory and identity issues become a part of the agenda for political elites?".

The author presumes that a compromise between different forms of national memories in relations between the EU and its neighbors is unattainable in the coming years. The

heterogeneity of historical memories is a factor that aggravates international relations and destroys the stability and security, which emerged as a consequence of the processes of the Balkanization of historical, cultural and political memories of nations as imagined communities that constitute Europe. Balkanisation in the greater Europe expressed itself in the simultaneous mythologizations, ethnizations and ideologizations of memories in particular, and the radicalization of memorial cultures in general. The compromise between different memories that will lead to the end of the wars of memories can only be the result of their Europeanization. On the one hand, the Europeanisation of the memories of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans also seems unlikely in the coming years, because the political elites from Poland to Russia, Estonia to Albania prefer to remain in a political situation based on mutual distrusts rooted in historical and political bilateral or multilateral claims and grievances inherited from the socialist period or the imperial experience of their historical predecessors in the continental empires. On the other hand, some historical memories actualize the potential for compromise, inspired precisely by the Europeanisation of tactics and strategies of imagining the past and inventing history. The experience of Bulgaria and Turkey (Kirčanov, 2019b; Vezenkov, 2013a; Vezenkov, 2013b; Vezenkov, 2013c) in these intellectual contexts seems to be an exception to the wars of memory that divide Europe and its neighbors. The attempts of the Bulgarian and Turkish intellectuals to reach a memorial consensus seem marginal, and revisionist historiographical concepts by actualizing the potential of multicultural and polylinguistic coexistence of the Balkan communities can be localized among postmodern attempts to modernize history and deliberately transplant the modern European experience into the Balkan historical contexts.

As for the compromise between various national and state historical memories, including those between the Russian and Ukrainian, Georgian and Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijan, Armenian and Turkish, Serbian and Croatian, Serbian and Albanian, Bulgarian and Macedonian, Polish and Russian historical memories in particular and memorial cultures in general seem impossible. The author presumes that various forms, tactics and strategies of imagining history will separate these states, forcing political elites to ideologize and mythologize the past, turning it into an instrument of international competition. The historical memories of Russia and Europe will diverge, becoming more different and mutually exclusive, and this process will actualize the potential for conflicts in relations between the Russian Federation and the EU, turning memory wars into an analogue of the traditional military

conflicts of the Middle Ages and modern era in a post-modern society where consumerism and mass culture will become the main factors of its development.

The modern film industry is too effective and successful in its attempts to destroy the architecture of international security and stability because many films by directors of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, including Aigars Grauba's "Terrible Summer" ("Baiga vasara", 2000) and "Guardians of Riga" ("Rīgas sargi", 2007), Andrzej Wajda's "Katyn" ("Katyń", 2007), Jerzy Hoffman's "Warsaw Battle of 1920" ("1920 Bitwa warszawska", 2011), Myxajlo Illenko's "Toloka" (2020), Maksym Kuročkin and Oksana Savčenko's "Guardians of Time" ("Časova varta", 2021/2022) became the fronts in the wars of memories, visualizing and actualizing mutual claims, forming and promoting negative images of the neighbors as historical opponents and eternal enemies, symbolizing all possible negative dimensions of Otherness. In the first two decades of the 21st century, nationalisms were among the factors that influenced internal political processes, and the internationalization of memorial wars turns nationalisms with their traumas and mutual historical claims into actors of international relations. They actualize the role of wars of memories as another political mechanism and resource, which the elites will use to express their doubts about the legitimacy of the existing system of international relations.

Conclusions

Summing up the article, it is necessary to take several factors into account that affect memory wars as a significant and meaningful new threat to the international security. Firstly, memory wars are genetically connected to the inability of Eastern European and Balkan countries to overcome the temptations of the universality of nationalism. The nations of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, like the nations of the West, emerged as the imagined communities endowed with invented political, social and cultural traditions. Intellectuals played a leading role in this process, and political elites became hostages of the universality of the principles of nationalism. The values of ethnicity rooted in language are more visual in this region than in Western European states, where the elites during the second half of the 20th century were consistent and decisive in their attempts to replace nationalism with other values.

Secondly, the wars of memory became the result of the refusal to recognize the primacy of nationalism and its universality in Western Europe. The disappointment of the Western elites

in nationalism led to several negative consequences, including the activation of alternative regional nationalisms, the growth of the radical leftist threats, and the migration risks of the permanently growing migration from the Arab Orient and Black Africa. In this situation, the compromise canons of national and historical memories became the target for permanent attacks of the left and right wing intellectuals in 1960s and 1980s. In 1990s and 2000s, the Western models of historical memory based on post-war compromise and disillusionment with the universality of violence turned out to be powerless in the contexts of the new threats presented by various migrant communities, mainly from Muslim countries. Migrants, these conditionally new Europeans, who in fact could not become Europeans because they refused to assimilate and integrate into the European societies, did not bring their models of national identity and historical memory with them because they did not know what they (memory and identity) were, preferring religious forms of legitimation for consolidation instead of political and civic ones.

Thirdly, the wars of memory significantly affect the relationships between the EU and its Eastern European and Balkan partners because the EU and the states of Eastern Europe and the Balkans have clashing models of historical memory. If the ideas and principles of tolerance and multiculturalism became the fundamental concepts of the Western model of historical memory, then the trauma of history, the legacy and heritage of ethnic and religious conflicts, nationalism, ethnic myths and ideological stereotypes determine the main vectors and trajectories of the development of culture and politics of memory of the Eastern European and Balkan states. In this situation, memorial wars and strategies of commemoration, imagination, and the invention of history and the past complicate the relationship between the European Union and its formally identical European partners, which are, in fact, more nationalistic.

History as a form of memory became another reason for the fragmentation of the international community and the actualization of new contradictions and threats, including international terrorism, extremism, environmental crises that can destroy modern security architecture. Is there an alternative to this model of memory development as a new actor in international relations? We can probably assume that nationalism will lose its attractive and universal status for the Eastern European and Balkan elites, and history will cease to be a cause for international controversies after democratization and a successful transition to a market economy, but even economically successful and efficient post-authoritarian societies are not free from the threats of nationalism, which adjusts the vectors and trajectories of development of historical memories significantly, and inspires some states to confront others. For realists, the situation

is absurd because different understandings of history stimulate international conflicts, but for constructivists, wars of memory are the same conflicts as other ones, inspired and stimulated not by contradictions over resources, but by different strategies of imagination and invention of history.

Realists, on the one hand, can hardly imagine that disputes over the historical name of a country or different perceptions of the same eras in the national memories of two or more independent states could become reasons and causes for international conflicts, inspiring the elites to use hate speech, popularize the images of the Other, or introduce mutual political and economic sanctions. Constructivists and modernists, on the other hand, are active and successful in their attempts to explain new security threats by imagining them as social and cultural constructs that political elites and nationalist-minded intellectuals use to achieve their goals. Adherents of the orthodox approaches in modern theories of international relations prefer to cultivate and maintain archaic and ineffective models of explanation with a striking persistence, which adequately described the international realities of 50 years ago. Similar to the methodological claims of liberalism, realism or neo-Marxism, an attempt to turn the concept of "wars of memory" into a universal new paradigm for international analysis will be based on the same assumption.

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THE IMPACT ANALYSIS OF IMMIGRATION ON NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE CASE OF FRANCE

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This article aims at analyzing the impact of immigration on France's national security in the context of the current migration crisis in Europe. It first examines the main reasons of the necessity of regulating migration processes to counter the threat to the national security.   It then analyzes the main demographic and migration data for 2018-2020. Then it takes the influence of migration processes on French society, problems of integration and illegal immigration into consideration. It pays special attention to the search for solutions of these problems, guided not only by international framework for regulating migration flows, but also by historical principles and moral values of French Republic.

Migration has always played a crucial role in the mankind's history. Due to this process not only the resettlement of people around the world took place, but also new peoples, languages and cultures emerged. This is a natural result of economic development and the sociocultural diversity of the modern world. Nowadays all countries of the world are involved in the process of migration i.e. some are accepting immigrants in an effort to narrow the gap between the working-age population and the ageing population; others are trying to solve the problem of overcrowding and are supplying human resources. Moreover, for many citizens of the third world countries emigration to the developed countries of Europe presents not only an opportunity to obtain stable and satisfactory wealth and improve the financial situation as well, but also to save living conditions i.e. a rescue from wars, upheavals, and inter-ethnic conflicts. In this context, migration is increasingly seen as a threat to the national security of the State, as it becomes global and has serious consequences for receiving countries.

The relevance of the subject of this article is that France, like many other European States, has confronted with problems such as the excessive growth of the foreign population and the natural decline of the indigenous population, unemployment, the negative effects of

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acculturation, the loss of national identity, illegal immigration and the need to grant State asylum to forced migrants. Whereas in the past, the economic needs of the country were at the center of immigration issues, now in the time of migration crises the Government has to take security of the country into primary consideration, because the main negative effect of migration policies until recently is precisely the growing threat to the security of citizens. All these problems directly jeopardy France's national security and require immediate actions and solutions.

The purpose of this article is to identify and describe, using a volatile migration situation in France as an example, the reasons why the problem of regulating migration processes may constitute a threat to national security through the use of general scientific research methods, such as theoretical analysis of statistical data, legal framework on migration issues, periodicals and regular publications, comparisons of individual migration indicators and event analyses of the migration situation in the country and analogies with other European States.

In today's world, migration problems are increasingly seen as a threat to the national security of the State, because of serious consequences for receiving countries. Obviously, each country has an interest in national security, in the satisfaction and observance of its national interests, while uncontrolled migratory flows can lead to significant changes in social, cultural, economic life of the country and changes in indigenous lifestyles as well. The problem of regulating migration processes, as a possible threat to the national security of a country, is becoming very urgent for a number of reasons. Let's consider France example.

The First Reason: The Scale of Migratory Flows

France has always been one of the most attractive countries in the world for immigration because of its high standard of living and developed economy. Over the past twenty-five years, immigrants have accounted for more than 9.7 per cent of the population (in 2018, there were 6.5 million immigrants) (Ladepeche.fr, 2019). However, the number of immigrants in the country has increased. According to the United Nations Annual Report on Migration in 2018, The annual influx of immigrants into France is 200,000 persons per year. 5.8 million immigrants reside in France legally, 40% have French nationality and another 10% are their descendants. (Migration, 2019)

With regard to the age structure of immigrants, it should be noted that the predominant age group is 25-54 (55% of all immigrants), older than 55 years old age group (31%), 15-24 age group (9%), and younger than 15 years old age group (5%) (Population immigrée et étrangère par sexe et âge, Insee, 2015).
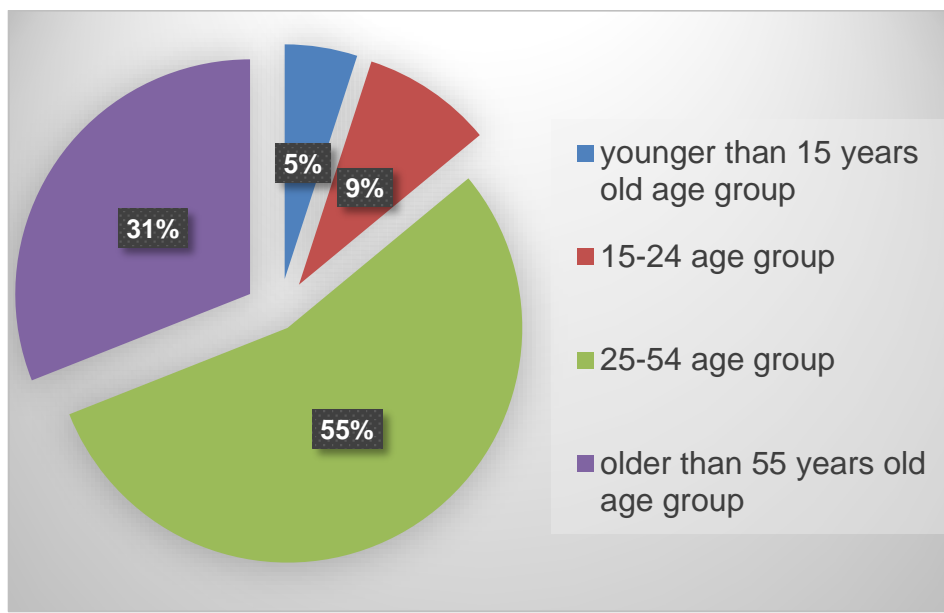

Figure 1. Age structure of immigrants

45% of immigrants come to France from such European countries as Portugal, Italy, Spain, 39% come from Africa (including 30% from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia), 13% from Asia, and 3% from America and Oceania (Population immigrée et étrangère, Insee, 2019).
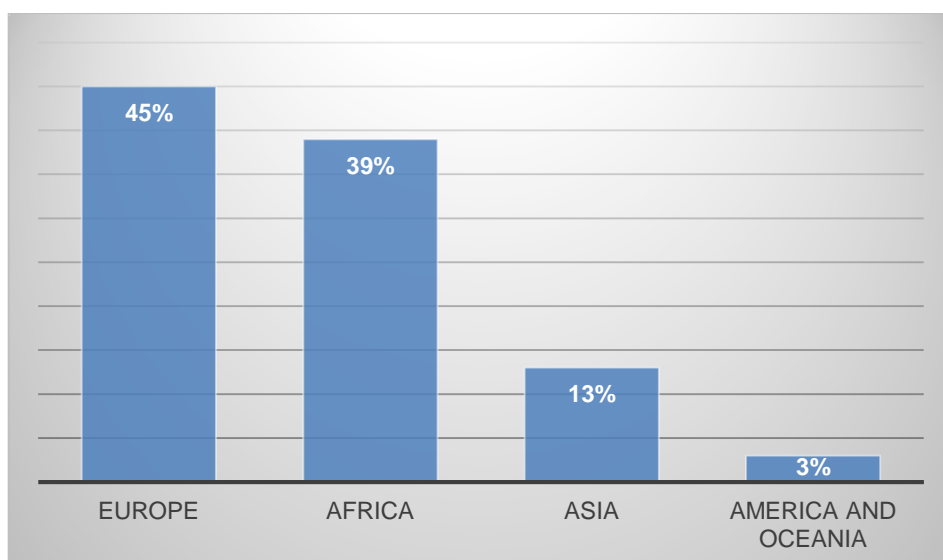
Figure 2. Regions of immigrants' origin

As the statistics shows, the largest number of immigrants come from other European and Maghreb countries. Due to the freedom of movement of European Union citizens the influx of Europeans is higher. The reasons for this have primarily educational and occupational basis. Immigration from Africa is connected with the country's colonial past, since 1530 France had succeeded in conquering 40% of all land on the African mainland, primarily at the expense of the Maghreb countries (Morozov, 2009).

The main reason for choosing France as a country of destination is the standard of living, recognized as one of the highest in 2018-2019. The average salary is 2,500 euros per month. The average salary of low-paid workers, mostly immigrants, is between 1,000 and 1,200 euros per month. Prices in France are relatively small. The French spend about 20% of their income on food. And the average price for utilities is about 500 euros. Moreover, immigrants are attracted by the fact that they can obtain French citizenship in the nearest future, which includes a visa-free pass to the vast majority of European countries (under the Schengen Agreement) (Средняя зарплата во Франции в 2019 году, 2019).

The Second Reason: Inter-ethnic Conflicts and Social Tensions in the Host Society

The situation in France is complicated by the fact that immigration processes in France link directly to inter-ethnic conflicts, which confirmed the persistent resentment of migrants by the indigenous population. The majority of immigrants represent a fundamentally different kind of

culture, religious, ethical values that hinder their social integration, because their previous social and political life in North African is rather distinct from the European one. In this particular case the process of assimilation is much slower than the French Government would like to see.

According to the French Institute of Public Opinion, almost three-quarters of the French population think that immigration is prohibitively expensive for the country, and 64% of the respondents suppose that the admission of immigrants has a negative impact on public accounts. The vast majority of French people (60%) believe that it is no longer permissible for the state to accept immigrants. Almost as many assume that this process has a negative impact on French identity and social cohesion. Finally, the majority support the alleged link between insecurity and immigration that was established by the National Front since the 1980s. Two-thirds of the French consider that this process has a negative impact on national security, and 53% think that it even maximizes the risk of terrorism. (Immigration: le regard des Français - IFOP, 2018).

The Third Reason: Slow Integration of Migrants into the Host Community;

In France, as in many other European States, the integration and adaptation of immigrants to the host community is a key issue of migration policy that requires solutions and measures to address. Nowadays France has a number of public organizations and services that monitor the migration situation in the country such as The Ministry of the Interior (Ministère de l'Intérieur, de la sécurité intérieure et des libertés locales), including the Directorate of Civil Liberties and the Central Directorate of Border Police to control migratory flows and combat illegal migration; The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Solidarity, which includes the following organizations and services concerned with the problems of migrants such as the Agency for the Promotion of International Cultural Relations (ADRI), the Promotion and Support Fund, Integration of immigrants and the fight against discrimination (FASILD), the Family Migrant Welfare Association (ASSFAM), the Population and Migration Office (DPM), the International Migration Division (OMI).

Moreover, there are three institutions which work directly with immigrants and refugees:

The Social Action Fund, whose aim is to integrate immigrants and provide subsidies to private sector organizations, to help immigrants learn the language and entry into the labor market;

The National Bureau of Immigration, an institution which deals with newly arrived migrants, their guidance and initial medical examinations;

Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons is responsible for the recognition of foreign refugees. If the status is not approved, the agency shall propose and carry out the decision about immigrants' deportation.

Every year huge budgetary resources are spent on programs of newcomers' integration into the social life of the country. There are governmental courses where immigrants can learn about French traditions, customs, and social norms. They can also learn French, law and national history as well. The Government regularly reports to the citizens that more than 90% of the hard and law-payed work is done by migrants: male immigrants are employed mainly in the tertiary sector (construction and ancillary work in various enterprises). Women are more likely to find domestic work in private households, because in most cases they are not qualified. However, their unemployment rate is about twice as high as that of the French, since most people preferred not to work but to live on the benefits they receive from the country. Thus, the unemployment rate among immigrants is almost double that of French (18% versus 9%) (Кто и зачем приезжает во Францию: миграционная статистика за 2017 год, 2017). This is partly connected with discrimination, particularly against North Africans. It is also connected with the wage inequality between French and immigrant workers.

However, unemployed immigrants receive a monthly allowance of 281 euros per an adult and 184 euros per a child (Купцов, 2017). That's enough to support themselves without working. They are also provided with preferential health insurance, immigrants' children who are born in France automatically receive French citizenship and their parents get the same rights as any French parents. Due to the fact that the problem of unemployment cannot be resolved quickly and easily today, the demand for foreign labor is likely to remain low. This means that the migration policy of the French authorities cannot be mitigated. The main challenge now is to improve the living conditions of the Maghrebian people who have already settled legally in France, and to create favorable conditions for their better integration into French society.

On the other hand, the majority of immigrants do not try to integrate into society and to understand indigenous culture and traditions. They want to live in France in the same way as they had lived in their own countries, so immigrants and the indigenous population face cultural difficulties related to religion, moral values, male domination, etc.

Unlike other European countries, France is a multicultural country that has its own national identity. There are a lot of religious and ethnical groups there. Nowadays it is home to the largest group of Muslims, 30 per cent of whom were born in France and are French citizens. The number of Muslims who have been granted French citizenship is steadily increasing.

There are currently some 3,000 mosques and houses of worship, more than 2,000 Islamic associations, religious and cultural centers, and a wide network of halal meat shops and Muslim bookstores. The number of such centers is very high. Moreover, France has established Muslim schools where, in addition to general education, the Koran and the Arabic language are taught. And about 76% of France's Muslims would like to educate their children in such schools (Социальные пособия во Франции: виды - Abroadz, 2020).

The Fourth Reason: The increase in Crime and the Worsening of the Criminogenic Situation in the Country;

Problem of national identity is not the only problem which facing French society. Immigrants generate a fairly high crime rate. According to the French National Centre for Scientific Research, immigrant children are three to four times more likely to be involved in criminal gangs than French ones. In Paris metropolitan area, a third of the defendants are migrants. Gypsies are the leading group, but the next are Afro-descendants, most of whom are from the Maghreb countries (Gurfinkiel, 2007).

Moreover, France also faces the problem of the illegal immigration, which in turn has an impact on the economy and stimulate the development of the shadow economy, the impact on the cultural sphere and public security, as a result of this the increase in crime and conflicts in the society can be observed. Furthermore, because of its geographical position, France, which is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea, is not only a destination country for immigrants, but also a transit country between Spain and Italy, from which the flows of immigrants to the interior Europe arrive.

According to official estimates, there are more than 300,000 undocumented migrants in France. However, the number of undocumented migrants in France is very high. 2,000 of them, according to French human rights activists, «live on the streets of Paris» (Kapralov, 2008).

According to humanitarian principles the French authorities retain the right to grant residence permits in exceptional cases. Occasionally they grant amnesty to migrants who wish to legalize their residence in France. This may be one of the reasons why the situation in the country is worsening.

Thus, in March 2019, the movement of «black vests» was formed. Now it is gradually gaining popularity. Its representatives are mostly illegal immigrants who advocate «justice and the right to a normal life in France» (DW, 2019). Their protest was directed against the position of an illegal immigrant in the society. This is a disturbing factor in French society. In May 2019 «black vests» occupied one of the terminals at Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris, opposing Air France's involvement in deporting illegal migrants. In July of the same year, the action reached its highest point when the Pantheon was occupied, where prominent French people were buried. Illegal migrants demanded residence permits, housing and a private meeting with the French Prime Minister, Edward Philippe, who in turn responded to this demand by emphasizing that France is "A country based on a legal system, which means respect the rules relating to the right to stay in the country, respect public monuments and the memory in whose name they are constructed". On 6 November 2019, he announced that France imposed restrictions on the admission of migrants and reduced social support for those who are already in the country: We want to regain control of our migration policy in order to protect sovereignty, the Prime Minister stressed. - And we will fight against abuse of the right of asylum and illegal migration» (DW, 2019).

But the main thing is that drastically decreasing level of security is causing an acute concern, primarily because of the threat of terrorist attacks, not so much from the extremists of the Middle East, but from those who live in these very European countries and enjoy these very social benefits.

The main challenge facing the country's leaders is how to ensure the security and social cohesion of their citizens while respecting human rights and republican values. Almost all solutions to the problem are based on one call that is a more stringent policy towards immigrants (to pursue a tougher policy towards immigrants). However, it is difficult, practically impossible, to implement such an idea in the prevailing moral and legal norms.

First of all, it is a question of limiting the influx of immigrants, accepting only those who are economically necessary and eliminating socially insecure elements and people living on social

benefits. Nicolas Sarkozy once stated: "All in all, France should decide who has the right to reside on its territory and who does not, these are the minimum requirements."

In order to ensure security throughout the country, it is necessary to eliminate the so-called equality between migrants and the French, by not providing the same social package. This measure can help to eliminate the discontent among the indigenous population. However, it would also mean abandoning the two basic principles of equality and fraternity.

Moreover, the migration policy of the French Republic is often based on the international framework for regulating migration flows. This is confirmed by the accession of the French Republic to the 1952 Geneva Convention, the 1967 New York Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, and the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 4 November, 1950. In 2005 France signed with the European Union an agreement on three main actions such as promoting mobility and legal migration, preventing and combating irregular migration and optimizing the link between migration and development.

Since the State cannot afford to oppose the international principles governing migratory flows and the centuries-old foundations of society, the best way to preserve national security is to solve the problem qualitatively, rather than quantitatively, i.e., by forcing immigrants to integrate rather than reducing their numbers. France is also taking an active part in the establishment of a system of common European legal regulation, which is one of the most developed in the world today.

Thus, the impact of immigration on France's national security remains an open and almost unresolved issue, since the process of shaping a migration policy is inextricably linked to the demographic, political and economic situation not only in France, as the country of destination, but also in the countries of origin of immigrants. As long as there has been a difference in the living standard between the populations of European countries and other countries in the world, for example, third countries, migration problems would persist, and they could be prevented by reducing the motives that contributed to this process.

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Session 2

Legal and Political Perspectives on Security

Cyber Space and International Law

Dr. Paolo Bargiacchi, *Professor,* Faculty of Law and Economics, Kore University of Enna, Italy

New World Order and Non-Conventional Threats to State Security

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Mapping the Political Science and International Relations Literature on COVID-19

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CYBERSPACE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW[♦]

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Malicious or hostile cyber operations in interstate relations are increasingly common and are widely recognized as (un)conventional security threats. Many states undertake or sponsor cyber operations against other states. Some remain below the threshold of use of force while some may qualify as an unlawful use of force and trigger the application of the UN Charter. In both cases we need a common understanding on which rules and principles of international law apply to states' cyber conducts. In international fora, such as the latest UN-mandated Group of Governmental Experts on Advancing Responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security, states are trying to define a common legal framework to apply international law in cyberspace.

This paper will briefly outline the main issues concerning the interpretation and application of international law in cyberspace. It will also focus on the latest expansive theories claiming the right to anticipatory defense from imminent kinetic or cyber threats of armed attack in order to assess the impact for international law and interstate relations in the geophysical world and in the cyberspace should this modern law of self-defense became a general practice accepted as law by the international community of states. In this case, an in-depth revision of the current rules of the UN Charter on the use of force might occur in the next decades.

1. Cyberspace is currently understood as the fifth domain together with land, sea, air, and space. There are important similarities between states and non-state actors' operations and conducts in, through and from cyberspace and in, through and from the other domains. Yet, there are at least two "fundamental differences between cyberspace and the other domains". On one hand, "the hierarchy of other domains is geophysical in nature" (e.g. each of them is surrounded by another) while "cyberspace is embedded in all domains and operations in all domains is dependent on operation in cyberspace". On the other hand, "cyberspace is constructed by man and constantly under construction. It changes from moment to moment" (Welch, 2011, p. 3).

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It should also be stressed that the cyberspace, as well as the information society, is a relatively new phenomenon in international relations and, accordingly, in international law. International rules have been created and developed to regulate conducts in geophysical domains and the application of existing international law to the new cyber-domain is not always easy or obvious notwithstanding many similarities between the cyberspace and the real world. The same is true when states try to set entirely new rules for the cyberspace. Little wonder then that the international law is still not enough developed to regulate the complex architecture of cyberspace and that this is the main challenge for the international community of the states in the near future.

It should also be highlighted that almost any activity or conduct that is possible in the real world is also possible in the cyberspace. International and non-international armed conflicts, serious and/or organized crimes, internationally wrongful acts, threats to national and international security may also exist in, through and from cyberspace because relevant actors (states, non-state actors, private individuals, corporate entities, organized crime groups, terrorists, etc.) increasingly operate and take advantage of the fifth domain to pursue their strategies and objectives (whether lawful or not).

The aim of this paper is to briefly discuss the application of some of the fundamental principles of international law (e.g. the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention) to states' cyber operations taking place in another state. The paper will also analyze whether the existing rules of the UN Charter governing the use of kinetic force among states may also apply to the interactions within the cyberspace with particular emphasis on the right to self-defense and the latest expansive theories advocating a right to anticipatory self-defense from armed attacks that are not imminent in temporal terms.

2. Cyberspace, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and the related state conducts and activities are relatively new phenomena in international relations. As a result, until a few years ago the international legal system had no specific rules and principles for regulating the interstate relations within cyberspace. Today there is a wide consensus among states that, as far as possible, the existing rules of international law apply to the cyber interactions and that new rules and principles have also to be established and developed to address cyber conducts and situations that are not covered by the existing international law.

As noted by Moynihan (2019, p. 4), "[s]tates have agreed that international law, including the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention, does apply to states' activities in cyberspace".

In fact, the Report of the Group of Governmental Experts (2013, §§ 19-20) repeatedly recommended that "international law, and in particular the Charter of the United Nations, is applicable and is essential to maintaining peace and stability and promoting an open, secure, peaceful and accessible ICT environment" and that "[s]tate sovereignty and international norms and principles that flow from sovereignty apply to State conduct of ICT-related activities, and to their jurisdiction over ICT infrastructure within their territory".

To this end the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 5 December 2018 (UNGA RES/73/27) has been a landmark in the long and complex process of building a set of hard and soft international rules. In fact, the UNGA RES 73/27 lists a set of rules, norms and principles aimed at defining the scope and content of the responsible behaviour of state in the use of ICTs that had been enshrined in the previous reports of the UN-mandated Group of Governmental Experts. A comprehensive duty to cooperate among states – consistent with the purposes of the UN to maintain international peace and security and for increasing "stability and security in the use of ICTs" and preventing "ICT practices that are acknowledged to be harmful or that may pose threats to international peace and security" – is clearly affirmed by the UNGA RES/73/27 at § 1.1. The link between the ICT practices and international peace and security is equally clearly established and, accordingly, the use of ICTs may constitute a threat or a breach of the peace pursuant to the Article 39 of the UN Charter and therefore trigger either the Security Council Chapter VII powers and/or the right to individual or collective self-defense.

In terms of state responsibility, the general principle according to which states should not knowingly allow their territory to be used for internationally wrongful acts is also extended to the acts or omissions using ICTs. The same is true for the main corollaries of the principle, such as, for instance, the prohibition to use proxies to commit internationally wrongful acts using ICTs and to duty to ensure that the territory is not used by non-state actors to commit such acts (UNGA RES/73/27, § 1.3). The sovereign right to protect the territory from external threats or attacks is obviously reaffirmed and applied to the main target of malicious ICT acts, i.e. the use and operation of critical infrastructure providing services to the public. Several sections of the UNGA RES 73/27 refer to critical infrastructure and recommend *inter alia* states "to take appropriate measures to protect their critical infrastructure from ICT threats" (§ 1.7), "to respond to appropriate requests for assistance by another State" (§ 1.8) and "take reasonable steps to ensure the integrity of the supply chain so that end users can have confidence in the security of ICT products" (§ 1.8). The duty to not allow or impair malicious ICT activity against

another state's critical infrastructure emanating from its own territory is therefore affirmed as *lex specialis* (§ 1.8) in relation to the general rule on the state responsibility already established in § 1.3.

3. Looking at state practice, also affirmed and developed within the UN and other international organizations, the principle that international law applies to the digital space seems now established and accepted by the overwhelming majority of states. The United Nations should be credited with this major achievement being the privileged interstate forum to discuss the developments of international law related to ICT activities. To this end several working groups in the field of information security has been established in recent years to advance the studies and promote consultations among states on regulating the cyberspace and its related activities.

Latest developments include the establishment by the UNGA RES 73/27 of another UN-mandated group (the Open-Ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of ICTs in the Context of International Security, OEWG) that involves all interested UN Member States. Chaired by Switzerland and mandated for 2019-2020, the OEWG, *inter alia*, should further develop or change rules and principles of international law, define how international law applies to cyberspace and promote and suggest confidence building measures and capacity building of states in the field. The OEWG meets with interested stakeholders such as industry, civil society, and academia. The OEWG is working in parallel with the other major UN-mandated group, namely the GGE, Group of Governmental Experts on Advancing Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security (it is the former GGE on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security) that is chaired by Brazil and composed by 25 selected Member States (the Permanent Members of the Security Council plus Australia, Brazil, Estonia, Germania, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, and Uruguay). The GGE is mandated for 2019-2021 and essentially addresses the same issues dealt with by the OEWG.

4. The principles of sovereignty and non-intervention are among the most important principles of contemporary international legal system. As anticipated, both apply to the cyberspace and related States' activities. Yet, as underlined by Moynihan (2019, p. 4), how these principles apply "is the subject of ongoing debate. Not only is the law in this area unclear; states are also often ambiguous in invoking the law or in how they characterize it". Apart from cyber activities

conducted by using the force that may trigger the application of the UN Charter Chapter VII and/or the international humanitarian law, any other state-sponsored cyber activity that takes place against another state (i.e., its territory, citizens and critical infrastructure) might also be in breach of one or more international legal rules to begin with the fundamental principles of sovereignty and non-intervention.

The scope and content of the principle of sovereignty is wide and 'all-inclusive' because the notion of sovereignty encompasses the whole and deepest essence of being a state as a matter of law and politics in international relations. As a matter of international law, to be sovereign and to have its own sovereignty respected entitles the state to claim its rights to territorial integrity and political independence against all other states. Accordingly, in principle any unauthorized conduct or inaction of one state might interfere, if not violate, the sovereignty of another state, even more in the dematerialized dimension of the cyberspace. Moreover, cyber activities may range from the simplest, briefest, and harmless low-level intrusions with a view of only annoying another state to the most pervasive, organized and damaging operations for the purpose of causing damages, distress, and fear to and within the injured state. As a result, the question whether any cyber activity might infringe upon the state sovereignty is not easy to answer and state practice is not yet clearly oriented on the applicability of the principle of sovereignty in this context.

The Preamble of the UNGA RES 73/27 confirms that "[s]tate sovereignty and international norms and principles that flow from sovereignty apply to State conduct of ICT-related activities". It seems that the "state sovereignty" is considered as the political premises and those "international norms and principles that *flow from* sovereignty" (emphasis added) instead of the applicable legal framework. The Tallinn Manual 2.0 (2017), representing the view of twenty renowned international law experts in their personal capacity who have however benefitted from the suggestions and input of some NATO States (insofar as possible, then, the Tallinn Manual may provide some useful insights on some NATO States' approach to these issues), seems to hold that any unauthorized cyber activity against a state is unlawful as a breach of its sovereignty. Yet, some states seem to hold a more restrictive approach according to which only the principle of non-intervention can be breached by cyber activities that are attributable to foreign states and not even the more general principle of sovereignty. In this latter case, foreign state's activity would be unfriendly but not unlawful. On this issue, the US statements and documents are not uniform (if not ambiguous) while the UK seems to consistently hold onto this restrictive approach (Moynihan, 2019, pp. 9-10). In fact, in setting

out the UK's position on applying international law to cyberspace the Attorney General Jeremy Wright did not mention the principle of sovereignty among the most specific and relevant rules of the UN Charter to be applied to interstate relations within the cyberspace (UK Statement, 2018, p. 4).

At first glance, the restrictive approach to the state sovereignty would seem at odds with the states' fundamental purpose of protecting their territory, citizens, and critical infrastructure from other states' malicious ICT conducts. Yet, one should consider, on one hand, that unauthorized cyber intrusions which fall below the threshold of the prohibition of non-intervention in domestic affairs are not usually harmful (or at least not very harmful) for the target state. On the other hand, the lack of a binding legal framework (or, at least, some ambiguity on scope and content of its rules) may guarantee a certain degree of freedom of action in conducting cyber activities in 'someone else's house' to the states, including collecting data from other states' databases and systems. In other words, it seems that certain states might prefer (at least for the time being) leaving a 'grey zone' in applying the principle of sovereignty to certain cyber activities and might therefore prefer not considering "all exercises of authority carried out without consent" as amounting to a violation of sovereignty (Moynihan, 2019, p. 17).

5. Consensus among the states has been instead achieved on applying other principles of international law to cyberspace, including the rules on responsibility for internationally wrongful acts. This is confirmed by the states' different and uniform approach towards those cyber activities clashing with the principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs. The scope and content of this principle are more clearly defined and settled in the article 2(7) of the UN Charter and in state practice because the consequences of its violation are more serious and worrying for injured states.

The definition of the principle is also found in the Friendly Relations Declaration (1970) whose third principle solemnly proclaims "the duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter" and further specifies *inter alia* that "No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State [and that all] forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements, are in violation of international law". To this end, the use of "any type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of

its sovereign rights and to secure from its advantages of any kind" is strictly forbidden by international law.

As underlined by the International Court of Justice in the *Nicaragua* case (1986, § 205), coercion is the hallmark of this principle because "coercion [...] defines, and indeed forms the very essence of, prohibited intervention". The purpose of interfering with the target state's freedom to freely decide and exercise its sovereign rights and functions is also a constitutive element of the principle of non-intervention. As rightly underlined by Moynihan (2019, p. 28), "coercion involves an element of pressure or compulsion on the part of the coercing state" and in the absence of any pressure there is no unlawful coercion, but rather a possibly unfriendly attempt to influence the actions and policies of the target state.

In the context of the cyberspace, prohibited intervention has been defined by the Australian government (2019, p. 3) as the behavior "that interferes by coercive means (in the sense that they effectively deprive another State of the ability to control, decide upon or govern matters of an inherently sovereign nature), either directly or indirectly, in matters that a State is permitted by the principle of State sovereignty to decide freely" such as, for instance, "the use by a hostile State of cyber operations to manipulate the electoral system to alter the results of an election in another State, intervention in the fundamental operation of Parliament, or in the stability of States' financial systems".

To date, states' statements seem to distinguish state-sponsored cyber operations launched against individuals or private companies from those disrupting, altering, or otherwise interfering with the exercise of the victim state's sovereign functions. In fact, only the latter cyber operations may engage state responsibility for breach of the non-intervention principle.

6. As regards the law on the use of force, there is a widespread consensus among states that the UN Charter and customary international law apply to cyber activities. For the purpose of applying these rules, therefore, cyberspace is basically equated to the other geophysical domains. One problem is interpreting and applying the concept of "armed attack" under Article 51 of the UN Charter in the cyberspace. An attack is "armed" (and, accordingly, triggers the right to individual and collective self-defense) because of its scale, gravity, and effects. Based on this, the International Court of Justice in the *Nicaragua* case (1986, §§ 191 and 195) distinguished "the gravest forms of the use of force (those constituting an armed attack) from other less grave forms" such as, for instance, a mere frontier incident. States support the view that cyber operations should be assessed by the standards applied to traditional (e.g., physical)

armed attacks and this seems to be the best choice. In this field, in fact, equating physical and cyber domains raises no major problems and allows to extend a well-established body of international rules and case law to the new cyber domain.

Yet, defining scope and application of the principle of self-defense – namely, the cornerstone of the UN Charter-based legal framework on the use of force in international relations – from cyber operations is not as simple and trouble-free. As rightly pointed by the Australian government (2019, p. 2), in fact, "the rapidity of cyberattacks, as well as their potentially concealed and/or indiscriminate character, raises new challenges for the application of established principles" on self-defense.

In particular, the traditional interpretation of *imminent* attack assumes that only when the armed attack is really about to be launched the right to self-defense is engaged because "a State need not wait to suffer the actual blow before defending itself, so long as it is certain the blow is coming" (O'Connell, 2002, p. 8). As a result of technological advances, however, this traditional concept of imminence does not seem appropriate in the cyberspace because a cyber-armed attack that could cause large-scale loss of lives and heavy damage to critical infrastructure "might be launched in a split-second" leaving no opportunity for the target state to effectively defend. Accordingly, states wonder if it is "seriously to be suggested that a State has no right to take action before that split-second" and claim the right to "act in *anticipatory* self-defense against an armed attack when the attacker is clearly committed to launching an armed attack, in circumstances where the victim will lose its last opportunity to effectively defend itself unless it acts" (Australian government, 2019, p. 2) (emphasis added).

In principle, the argument is sound and takes into account the difficulties of reconciling a concept of self-defense from an imminent attack conceived and developed in State practice for real-life situations with a new domain where interactions and hostile conducts are instead instantaneous, non-physical and, in a certain sense, invisible. As a matter of law, however, a concept of cyber-imminence specifically developed for tackling the rapidity and the concealed character of cyber armed attacks would dramatically upset the very idea of self-defense. The legal notion of self-defense, in fact, recognizes states' inherent right to a *defensive* use of force within a comprehensive customary and treaty framework in which any *offensive* use of force (e.g. any earlier response to threats by force not amounting to an armed attack or to attacks not yet or not really underway) is strictly prohibited. In terms of time and logic, self-defense from cyber imminent armed attacks would necessarily imply an offensive use of force precisely

because cyber armed attacks "might be launched in a split-second" and are therefore unpredictable by the target state. In other words, the state which fears or think to be the next target of a cyber-armed attack would use the force before any attack could effectively occur and even if uncertainty remains as to its time and place. It is therefore hard to keep thinking in terms of self-defense and strictly defensive use of force because this sort of use of force would actually have a deterrent or punitive effect for the would-be attacking state rather than a protective effect for the would-be target state.

7. Of course, anticipatory or preventive theories of self-defense are nothing new in international law when applied to real-life situations happening in the traditional geophysical domains. For a long time, in fact, states have claimed the right to widen the scope and content of the exercise of the right of self-defense to protect themselves (in particular, to protect from non-state actors' threats) even though there is no "specific evidence of where an attack will take place or of the precise nature of an attack" and there is only "a reasonable and objective basis for concluding that an armed attack is imminent" according to the unilateral assessment of the state that feels threatened (Egan, 2016, p. 239). While the traditional concept of imminence requires that the armed attack is really about to occur in temporal terms, the expansive conceptions of imminence – initially developed in the aftermath of 9/11 and particularly suitable for the contemporary cyber world – focus "less on questions of time and more on those of necessity and causality" (Milanovic, 2020, p. 2). Once that imminence is no longer seen in strictly temporal terms, then "an armed attack will be regarded as imminent if *responding* to the attack is *necessary now* regardless of when and how exactly the attack will take place". In other words, it is no longer imminent the attack that is about to occur but the attack "which necessitates immediate defensive action to successfully repel it" (Milanovic, 2020, p. 3).

Preventive doctrines grounded upon expansive concepts of imminence and self-defense had been consistently affirmed almost only by the US in the aftermath of 9/11. Yet, in the latest years, more and more states have begun to support and share such revised approach to self-defense and the once widespread and uniform state practice in favor of the traditional concept of self-defense is presently less clearly identifiable and oriented. In fact, the emerging need for a different, "modern law of self-defense" has been already advocated, for instance, both by the Australian Attorney-General (Australian government, 2017) and by the UK's Attorney General (UK Statement, 2017).

Contemporary unconventional security threats are notably fueling the progressive development of a new theory about preventive self-defense inspired by proactive (e.g. offensive) actions for prevention and deterrence rather than by defensive actions against the ongoing, or about to occur, armed attacks. To this end, malicious state conducts and activities in the cyberspace may be the quintessence of what may be termed as an 'unconventional security threat'. Some features of the cyberspace – such as that is not geophysical in nature and that interactions (including hostile, damaging or otherwise malicious activities) may happen in a split-second – make it a particularly fertile ground for testing and applying expansive theories on self-defense already claimed and developed for hostile interactions within the real world.

8. The combined impact of claiming the validity and the applicability of preventive doctrines in the real world and of applying them also to the relatively unregulated cyberspace would dramatically change the overall legal landscape in which we have lived in and state behaved from the post-war period onwards and which is firmly codified by the legal framework of the UN Charter on the use of force in international relations. The use of force for self-defense under Article 51 of the Charter is the only exception – together with the use of force authorized by the Security Council under Chapter VII – to the general prohibition on the threat or use of force in international relations established by Article 2(4). Once applied to the geophysical world and cyberspace, the expansive approach to self-defense – namely, the anticipatory self-defense – would end a legal era in which the use of force was regarded as an absolute exception. The broad discretion that states would inevitably enjoy in unilaterally assessing what is an unconventional threat, when it is imminent and when and how there is the need (and the right) to defense and fight back would make that once absolute exception the new general rule. In our opinion, right or wrong, this will be the way forward for applying international law to real world and cyberspace in the next decades. The intention of many, if not most, states is to obtain more legal leeway than in the past to struggle against the new unconventional security threats.

A more flexible legal framework is what they need to get room for lawfully maneuvering in pursuing their goals. This need is even more pressing and strategic for states considering that cyberspace might be the new best ground for hostile and malicious inter-state relations because it provides a great opportunity to fight each other in a more silent way and at lower costs. The lack of evidence in state practice, ambiguous attitudes on how cyberspace should be regulated as a matter of international law, the complex issue of attributing cyber conducts to states and an increasing use by all states of cyber operations against other states and non-state actors are perhaps the best evidence of a future in which there will be a little less legal certainty on the

limits to the use of force and a little more legal flexibility in assessing how and when the force should be used in international relations. The risk is that more freedom of action for states, at least in the cyberspace, will increase hostile, if not armed, confrontations among them.

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NEW WORLD ORDER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL THREATS TO STATE SECURITY

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The New World Order, which has been shaping up in recent years (and is still being defined), highlights the emergence of unconventional threats to the state security, and the Covid-19 pandemic, which hit the world globally, is the clearest proof of it. Political transformations, as well as the deterioration of old alliances and the establishment of new and once unthinkable ones, are increasingly influenced by climate change, food, economic, energy crises and, finally, by health crises (Chomsky, 2020).

In the context outlined, above all a fact comes into account: the concept of human fragility and what follows on the economic, political, social and health levels as well as in terms of uncertainty of international relations made increasingly fluid by the instability and the constant crises of democratic institutions.

On the basis of current evidence, the contribution is aimed at identifying the possible developments and the potential direction of the so-called New World Order and the position that should be taken by the European Union in the new geopolitical context being defined.

The starting point is that the European Union could have the credentials to dictate the international political agenda and not to suffer it as it has been to date.

In this perspective, the EU must identify the necessary tools to combat unconventional threats (including bacteriological or viral threats) which, globally, determine an increasingly evident fracture in terms of the quality of life and in terms of any inequalities related to education, technology, climate change, health and quality of life in general (Ciliuffo-Cardash-Lederman, 2001).

1. Here, the "new world order" means the project, which is already partially realized, of a new system of relations between states and between individuals of the same state or of several states. A project developed not as a result of democratic procedures to detect the popular will, but

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elaborated with an elitist approach by people and circles usually indicated as points of reference and managers of international finance and monetary speculation (Sassen, 2002).

The implementation of this new system necessarily entails, in itself, the elimination of state sovereignties and therefore of the state itself as well as the elimination of any manifestation of the popular will and national identity. Consequently, the implementation of the project involves the elimination of any distinctive characteristic of peoples in terms of traditions, language, culture, history, religion and economy. In terms of preserving the state and the national sovereignty of peoples, the project of a new world order constitutes a very serious threat to the security of every state through methods that are, for sure, unconventional since they do not involve the use of force as traditionally understood, but appear even more insidious.

2. Beyond the causes and preordained political or geopolitical intentions, there is no doubt that the epidemic known as Covid-19 occurred as objectively functional to the project of a new world order not only for the claimed and necessary unification of lifestyles and individual behaviours for declaredly prophylactic or preventive purposes, but perhaps even more so because of the climate of understandable fear that it has caused. And it seems appropriate to mention how fear, fear for one's health on an individual and collective level, act as an instrument of government by transferring its functions to international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (whose activity is the subject of strong critiques, assumptions and accusations today), but also to the industrial centres of the pharmaceutical sector that declares, without pretence, their political aims to be the achievement of various objectives, including that of reducing the world population (Kissinger, 2020).

This situation, which already partially corresponds to the reality, involves the onset and worsening of much more serious structural economic crises, of energy crises in which climate change takes on a secondary impact. The latter, in fact, largely depend on the climatic events which, even if predictable, are certainly not avoidable if not for the little result that policies to combat pollution of air, land and sea can assure. Meanwhile, the causes of the aforementioned effects are attributable to specific wishes aimed at establishing a new system of economic relations, rather than political ones.

It should be noted that the new system indicated by the acronym NWO ("new world order") overlooks, indeed tends to eliminate, the political and economic relations that have always characterized the relations between states on the basis of the principle of legal equality that characterize the "international community of states". Far from doing an exercise in fictional

law or political fiction, the current order of things shows how the goal is that of a "world government" totally split and independent of any democratic rule attributable to the popular will of every people that, constituting a "nation", becomes a "state". It claims its legitimate claim to govern itself on the level of political representation as well as on the level of economic production, social relations and monetary sovereignty (Sassen, 2008).

3. The overall situation, as briefly described within the limits imposed by a contribution to the common research, shows clearly and beyond any doubt how it threatens, with totalitarian will, the security of states which certainly cannot be preserved due to the effect of even radical changes in the relations between states on the political and economic level. Furthermore, these changes are not the cause but the consequence of the preordained project of a new world order which, having among its postulates the overcoming of the states, threatens their own safety in terms of their very existence (Mugavero, 2015).

With regard to the subject of this study, it should be noted that the authors and proponents of the new world order have changed the tools of their action or have added to those already used a new tool that is certainly more pervasive and more conducive to the desired result.

The new world order no longer uses the monetary instrument or, more generally, the traditional instruments of economic policy. Regardless of its natural or artificial causes, now it uses a new tool that has come to attention. We refer to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic virus which, as mentioned earlier, seems to favour better than any other tool the completion of the design aimed at the affirmation of a new world order (Maglie, 2020).

With regard to the first instrument, the monetary one, we have seen how this has become functional to the globalist political project, through the induced or forced renunciation of the monetary sovereignty of the states; i.e. through the renunciation by an overwhelming number of states of their own autonomous monetary policy with the consequent deprivation of the traditional purposes of the central banks as tools to support the economic policy choices of states.

From the national currency, it has moved on to the borrowing currency. The question is of extraordinary importance and incidence: The national currency is the "property" of the people and is assisted by the economic and productive capacity of the state (this function was once ensured by its convertibility into gold) (Tooze, 2020).

4. An autonomous monetary policy allows the state every decision about the printing of new money to be introduced into the economic system or alternatively the choice of resorting to the public loan which, if subscribed by the citizens, means that, in the uniqueness of the economic system, the state pays interests to itself; almost an accounting "game of turn".

However, the case and the effects of the use of foreign public credit is different: Namely the so-called foreign investors who are the presentable representation of monetary speculation and the conditioning of the state towards politically are democratically not responsible entities, while for the first hypothesis the state is indebted to itself (Wolff, 2020).

This indicates the action of international finance whether institutionalized or not (we refer to the International Monetary Fund) or the monetary policy bodies of the strongest states. Specifically, this is what represents the current way of being of the European Union, which acts through a monetary instrument not referable to the persons or entities in terms of "ownership", and through an organism - the European Central Bank – "built" in the forms and functions of any private law company, which is authorized to print paper money (what the states could and should well do) which it then lends to the states themselves.

The foregoing is incomprehensible and inexplicable in logical terms and must be traced back to those aims pursued by the managers of the new world order.

All of these points can be confirmed by the fact that the few existing states that still carry out an autonomous monetary policy or are particularly strong states (just think, among the few others, of the USA, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China), or they are those states where revolts suddenly arise in the name of democracy and fundamental human rights with subsequent and timely intervention by foreign powers that have self-assumed the duty of "exporting democracy" to where coloured revolutions or, with regard to a specific geographical region, "Arab Spring" (a name already coined in the twilight of the US security services more than twenty years ago) were born.

The cases that have occurred in reality are faced by everyone and it is enough to mention the case of Iraq, Libya, Syria, Ukraine and, in the most up to date, Belarus.

As mentioned, the new "tool" in the hands of the "new world order" is now the health tool that in the name of an emergency - existing or non-existent, is a different but connected problem - is based on a political action aimed at creating and increasing situations of fear if not of panic.

This new tool certainly appears more pervasive and more directly functional to the results to be achieved. Intentions and results are more easily pursued as it is easier to justify, in the name of a health emergency and for the declared care of people's health, any limitation to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual are predisposed not only to guarantee him, also as the foundation of the democratic state (Poggi, 2020).

Thus, once again it is confirmed that the goal of the authors and proponents of the new world order, in the name of a captivating idea of globalism, egalitarianism and well-being, is to overcome the organization of the overall world community of peoples, as it is now and as it should be, in politically independent states, possibly "constructed" on the basis of a criterion of nationality (and, when necessary, respecting national minorities, guaranteeing them equal treatment and participation in political life in economic and social terms), which maintains, in mutual respect, the historical, linguistic, cultural, religious and traditional differences of each single people (Dahrendorf, 2005).

There was someone who said that fear generates consent, even if it is needed; that is easier to govern through fear rather than through arms in terms of oppression to the detriment of the freedom of peoples and states.

It is evident that the situation briefly described directly compromises the security of the states, and with it, the security of international relations and peace.

5. In the general framework as described, the European Union should and could play a role that is quite different from the one it actually plays, which is to support the interests of international finance, of speculative monetarism, of aiding a "globalist" idea which, regardless of the good or bad faith of those who support it, is in fact impossible to achieve with the peaceful means of persuasion, sharing or co-participation (Fabbrini, 2020).

The European Union, renewing the original ideas that were at its base, should carry out very specific policies in view of the greatest possible social cohesion among the peoples of its member states; it should "rebuild" its way of being through a full recovery of democracy that gives the European Parliament not only the functions of ratifying decisions taken elsewhere and by others, or functions of only co-decision, but above all powers and functions of the legislative initiative (Verola, 2020).

The European Union should also carry out a more marked social policy that brings to life that principle as indispensable as it is disregarded, according to which it is the law and, with it, the finance and money, that is made for man; not vice versa.

A process of different evolution of the European Union which, even if it could not lead to its political sovereignty in terms of the autonomous assumption of decision-making capacities, should in any case ensure a very different participation of the states in its competences, functions and purposes even if in a different prospect of the European Union itself as a community of independent Nations.

In the different perspective now proposed, the European Union should identify the necessary tools to combat any unconventional threats (including bacteriological or viral ones) which, on a global level, determine an increasingly evident rift in terms of democracy, quality of life and in terms of inequalities related to the education, technology, climate change, health and quality of life in general. A European Union specifically aimed at guaranteeing and preserving the security of States (Beck, 2013).

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MAPPING THE POLITICAL SCIENCE &
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS LITERATURE ON COVID-19

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The Covid-19 outbreak has exposed the world to an unprecedented and dangerous crisis that is still far from getting resolved. Aside from its obvious health implications, this multifaceted crisis has also left its mark on world politics. Although there is little divergence regarding the overall importance of the pandemic, which remains, first and foremost a biological phenomenon, how it is actually highlighted and discussed has widely varied in the field of political science. Although some studies have approached the issue as a primarily health hazard to be eradicated, others have sought to highlight its impact on global economy, or international politics (Davies and Wenham, 2020). Meanwhile, how these effects are perceived, mapped and addressed in the political science and international relations literature will be relevant to both scholars and policymakers in the foreseeable future.

Therefore, we seek to answer the following question in this study: To what extent is Covid-19 perceived or treated as a security issue in the political science and international relations literature? Our goal is to explore the extent and intensity of securitization in the contemporary works in these fields that are directly related to Covid-19 through some of the leading themes that appear in discussions. Although the number of studies on this topic remain small at the time of our research (October 2020), this is a fast growing literature that deserves attention. In fact, we expect studies on topics like pandemics to expand rapidly in the upcoming years, akin to other contemporary topics, such as immigration, or global warming. On a more general level, overviewing the general trends in this literature can contribute to the discussions concerning the ontology of political science and international relations, and their overall epistemological contribution as a 'scientific' field. (Reus-Smit and Snidal 2008; Schmidt, 2002) Often criticized for lacking explanatory or predictive power to explain events in the way natural sciences can, the political science and international relations that has emerged in response to the pandemic

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can help chronicle how a social science field responds to a contemporary global crisis, which is also targeted by fields outside of social sciences at the same time. (e.g. medical and natural)

While mapping the political science and international literature on Covid-19, we divide it into the following themes for practical purposes: 1. International Relations 2. Governance (e.g. Diverse regime responses to systemic stress) 3. State Capacity 4. Transparency 5. Rise of Populism-Far Right.

1. International Relations (IR)

Responses to the Covid related world politics in international relations literature have been diverse, where existing analyses often combined different levels of analysis. Upon a closer look, this methodological eclecticism seems to rise out of necessity, rather than by choice: As IR scholars have conceded, it remains a challenging task to isolate effects or variables to a single level during the pandemic. For instance, an exclusive focus on the second-level analysis requires distinguishing between variables those that are caused by the structural mechanisms of states vs. contemporary elements (e.g. government or leader in charge). (Busby, 2020, pp. 6-7) Yet, as it becomes clear later on in this study, a wide variety of emergency measures adopted to combat the pandemic make it very difficult to make such distinctions. Man-level of analysis is similarly likely to draw inconclusive results: Although it is possible to gather data about the behavior of leaders of democracies during the pandemic, in authoritarian regimes they are likely to be incomplete or misleading due to their secretive nature.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the IR literature has presented a significant number of discussions regarding the pandemic. Among several approaches that stand out, the first perspective focuses on the capabilities or role of international organizations. It argues that public health discussions and politics and/or security discussions are segregate fields that need to be examined separately. Since international organizations do not keep up with the social science research, it posits that international organizations that target health issues (e.g. public, global) often remain unaware of the ongoing debates and advancements in the field. (Davies and Wenham, 2020, p. 1228).

A counter viewpoint, however, underlines the rising sensitivity of International Organizations to the political expectations and requests of international donors in recent years due to their funding concerns. Indeed, in recent years, leading international health organizations like WHO

have depended overwhelmingly (up to 80 percent) on voluntary donations that are provided by states (Busby, 2020, p. 3). Among other things, these donations may keep them from expressing their concerns on issues with potential global consequences, like the Covid pandemic (Reuters, 2020). As a result, this viewpoint concludes that international organizations have made limited, if at all, contributions to international cooperation during the pandemic. Put differently, although such organizations may not directly interfere with the internal decision making mechanisms of donor countries, they are also likely to refrain from making direct remarks or taking actions that would hurt their interests (Busby, 2020, p. 4).

Most mainstream IR theories assume anarchy to prevail over international relations. Although structural realists argue that anarchy decreases the likelihood of international cooperation for public goods, neoliberals insist that it is still possible to achieve. As an extension of these debates, another prominent approach in IR studies has involved treating the pandemic as a form of global public good, similar to other issues like global warming, refugee crisis or financial crises. (e.g. Brown and Susskind 2020: 65; Busby, 2020) Starting out with the Waltzian levels of analysis (man-state-system) and basic tenets of game theory, dealing with a global health crisis like Covid would normally resemble "if not a harmony game, at least an assurance or stag hunt game, where actors will cooperate if they trust that others will do so." (Busby, 2020, p. 2) During the Cold War, the cooperation of USA and the USSR to fight smallpox presents a good example in this respect (ibid). However, the puzzle here seems to be that the global international reactions to the crisis have not followed such patterns at all. (ibid.) Instead of acting as an independent voice, such organizations are frequently influenced by donor countries (Busby, 2020, pp. 3-4) As a result, the key issue here, it seems, is to decide whether global health is regarded by states and other key actors to be a public good or not.

There are also studies that approach the pandemic from the perspective of international hegemony. In international relations theories, "hegemonic stability" refers to a condition where a benevolent hegemon would carry the burden of providing public goods, in return for global leadership. In recent years, a significant number of studies on hegemonic stability have focused on the increasing rivalry between USA, the current hegemon, and China as its foremost competitor. (Rudd, 2020) As an extension of these ongoing discussions that precede the pandemic, some scholars have posited that the pandemic is unlikely to introduce any radical changes to the existing discussions in IR. (Drezner, 2020) China's actions during the pandemic are used to further substantiate these claims: As a contender for global hegemony, during the height of the crisis, China has repeatedly sought "to burnish its image as a supplier of key

global public goods." (Drezner 2020: 9; Kliem and Chong 2020) Interestingly, these arguments also claim that the exact benefits of such gestures remain speculated. (ibid, p.10-11; Busby 2020: 2)

Meanwhile, as the current hegemon, USA has also been brought up in these debates alongside China as an actor unwilling or unable to provide such goods during the same time period (Drezner, 2020, p. 9) The increasingly contested status of US hegemony as well as that country's own unwillingness to lead in this latest crisis bears some reflection, as, according to the hegemonic stability theory, the hegemon is normally expected to be willing to provide public goods in return for acquiring followers. A classic example of this approach is the US policy and extensive funding toward HIV/AIDS worldwide in the past (Busby, 2020, p. 2).

2. State Capacity

State capacity includes the legal, fiscal and social capacity of the state. Legal capacity contains the ability of the state enforce law and order throughout the whole country. It also comprises the consolidation of its democracy that covers free fair elections, political rights and civil liberties, horizontal accountability and effective power to govern (Merkel, 2004, p. 37). Fiscal capacity of the state is "the *ability* of a state to develop and regulate its economy to gather enough tax revenues from the economy to implement its policies" (Caplan, 2018). Most importantly, the social capacity of the state takes the provision of the public goods into consideration. These public goods include food, medical and healthcare, proper housing, school and education and communication. According to Rotberg (2003, p.1), the hierarchy of political goods that are served by the state starts with security that includes human security, cross-border invasions and domestic threats. In this hierarchy, while the enforceable rule of law comes the third, free participation to political process and other issues such as schools and education are considered as the last issues. The majority of scholars who adopt this framework contextualized Covid-19 as a threat to human security— that is considered as a top ranking issue in the hierarchy of political goods in the aforementioned list (Rotberg 2003, p.1).

During the first three months of the outbreak of Covid-19, the world has witnessed the collapse of healthcare systems. During this time, the divergent state responses to this state of emergency is explained by different factors. For instance, Balzan et al., (2020, p.1) argue that increased government effectiveness is significantly associated with decreased Covid-19 fatality rates

during the pandemic. More specifically, by examining state capacity from the perspective of providing public goods, they point out that the "higher health system capacity represented by higher numbers of hospital beds and doctors is more likely to lower a country's case fatality rate." As a result, those states with a higher health system capacity were able to better mobilize their full capacity in health services particularly by providing doctors, nurses, beds and ventilators as well as basic health equipment such as masks, aprons, disinfectants to health staff and the public.

Some studies focused on specific countries to compare how much each state was able to provide these items to their public. For example, Jingwei He et al. (2020, pp. 12-13) argued that Chinese government due to its governance style embedded in the country's authoritarian system was successful in dealing with the pandemic by organizing the command structure, steering the bureaucracy, mobilizing resources, and carrying out community enforcement in response to the outbreak.

Meanwhile, some studies have focused on the impact of regime type on state responses and/or efficiency. For instance, Balzan et. al., (2020, p.1) argue that authoritarian countries are more likely to have lower death levels than free countries in the testing for Covid-19, implementing restrictions such as wearing mask and staying at home. Meanwhile, democratically more advanced countries were not better off than their less democratic counterparts. Furthermore, during the first ten months of the outbreak while authoritarian countries including China and Singapore have succeeded to reduce the outbreak, many European democracies such as UK, Spain, Italy, France, and Germany as well as the US have struggled to contain Covid-19. In fact, state capacity by some scholars have been measured as quality of civil services and public services and its ability to make and enforce rules regardless of its administrative system whether democratic or authoritarian (Fukuyama, 2013).

3. Regime Type

In an attempt to analyze the regime endurance to systemic stress, another group of literature concentrates on the regime type. As Bjornskov and Voigt (2020) underline, Covid-19 pandemic has urged more governments to declare a state of emergency which caused the extension of executive powers in the expense of other branches of government. All this in turn, led to the violation of civil liberties of individuals endangering the rule of law and democracy. As a result,

a rising number of scholars try to explore the impact of regime types on crisis management. In this context, Alon et al. (2020, p. 152) compare democracies vis-à-vis authoritarian regimes in their responses to COVID-19, and referred to some scholars and commentaries, which argued that Chinese government's military-style measures of closing cities had stopped the spread. As a result, they claimed that the Chinese model of containment was superior to the democratic ones. They substantiated their claims by arguing that while governments in democratic countries are expected to obey the laws and cannot rely on unrestricted powers as in undemocratic countries, authoritarian governments can easily infringe upon individual rights and civil liberties without significant social costs. They also point out that the institutional constraint of democracies has inconvenienced them in rapidly responding to disasters (Alon et al., 2020, p. 157).

Kleinfield (2020) similarly argues that there is no strong correlation between efficacy and regime type: While some autocracies, such as Singapore performed well, other autocracies like Iran failed in its fight with the pandemic. She also posits that in their struggle with Covid-19, while some democracies such as Italy, Unites States faltered, others such as South Korea and Taiwan performed quite well. Following a parallel line of argument, Hamid (2020) underlines that the largest Western democracies suffered the most in terms of the number of casualties, and rhetorically questions how some of the world's oldest and most advanced democracies could end up with so many deaths, while China presented itself as an actor capably of aggressively mobilizing state resources to fight the pandemic. Meanwhile, Petersen (2020) refers to a group of political economy studies which argue that the democratic governments are likely to be more effective than authoritarian governments in managing emergencies due to their accountability to the public. To check these claims, Petersen (2020) examine the tests of 85 governments and concludes that democracies did not necessarily run more tests than authoritarian regimes during this time period. He further argues that those countries with more GDP per capita and government effectiveness have a higher chance to do more testing than those without.

Another issue regarding authoritarianism is the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the rise of authoritarianism. Hamid (2020) argues that with the spread of the virus it is very likely that the authoritarian governments would take advantage of the situation to pursue their repressive policies. Democratic countries or hybrid regimes with competitive elections will have problems of holding elections on time and the opposition will not have the chance to hold protests against the incumbent. In this context, the lack of freedom of movement and access to public space

can increase the advantages of the incumbent. Suppressing information and controlling the media can similarly contribute to the durability of authoritarian regimes. The interesting point here is, while democratic regimes may try to suppress information and downplay crises, they rarely get away with it (Hamid, 2020).

Likewise, Cheibub et al. (2020, p. 1) highlight that all countries face a trade-off between protecting lives and protecting livelihoods. However, compared to autocracies, democracies also face another trade-off, which is between health and basic liberal and democratic rights. Here, the prevailing idea has been that the survival of people takes the front seat compared to their basic freedoms. As a result, many democracies have been forced to resort to adopt similar measures as autocracies. In a similar vein, Cameron (2020) argues that Covid-19 has given rise to the increased assertion of authority by political executives. This change, in turn, resulted in the weakening of democratic norms and practices in some states and contributed to the overall rise of authoritarianism worldwide. Scholars who reflect on different regions in the world further emphasize these statements: Researchers from Latin America point out the backsliding of democracy particularly in Mexico and Brazil as a result of the spread of the pandemic. Other scholars from Middle East similarly emphasize how the pandemic has had a destructive impact on social movements by stripping their ability to gather in public spaces. Scholars from Eastern Europe similarly focused on Hungarian Fidesz government's passage of legislation allowing Prime Minister Viktor Orban to rule by decree for an indefinite period of time as well as his populist actions to strengthen his image as a paternalistic and authoritative figure (Yale Macmillan Center, 2020).

Parallel to these observations, Chaigne (2020) states that coronavirus has reinforced authoritarian tendencies worldwide. To reinforce this argument, she draws out examples of excessive authoritarianism, such as soldiers entering homes to track down infected people and journalists being jailed without trial with the accusation of "undermining national solidarity". Chaigne (2020) highlights alarming examples from all over the world. Among these examples are –by taking advantage of the Covid-19 crisis— Hungarian Prime Minister Orban's efforts to gain more power in terms of security, economy and politics; the attempts of President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines to reinstate martial rule and his bold statements which claim to ask the army to shoot down people if they hesitate to comply with his rules during the pandemic. Other examples involve the leaders of several African and Latin American countries, who passed laws that forbid any contradictions to the government during its fight with Covid-19; legitimizing the arrest of opponents in many African countries with the pretext

of the pandemic; new national security law being imposed by Beijing in Hong Kong; intervention into the personal life of people in Bahrain, Kuwait and Norway through the applications that are used for identifying the infected people; Mobilization of the army and imposition of state of emergency in many European centuries including Switzerland, France and Italy.

4. Transparency

As emphasized throughout this study, the Covid-19 outbreak has forced states to adopt extraordinary measures to deal with its unforeseen effects. While addressing these unprecedented issues in the short term, the drastic steps that are hitherto adopted also raised discussions related to their overall transparency and impact on the rising levels of corruption worldwide. Put differently, the extraordinary nature of the pandemic and the need for developing quick responses to fight it is seen as a particularly fertile ground to promote corrupt actions and decrease transparency worldwide. (World Bank Group 2020; Vittori 2020; Steingrüber et al 2020) Ineffective state responses to Covid have also been explained by the rising authoritarian tendencies that further reduce transparency and promote corruption in some countries. (Mietzner, 2020)

Discussions that revolve around corruption during the pandemic have approached it both as a cause as well as an end result. In addition to its adverse effects on the health front, those studies that treat corruption as an independent variable in various settings also emphasize its deleterious effects on the administrative bureaucracy, economy, politics and society. Under extreme circumstances, corruption is seen to pose a risk against regime longevity, and can lead struggling states to collaborate with authoritarian regimes in hopes of fighting off the disease. (Bellows, 2020) Indeed, works that focus on the Covid-related extraordinary measures adopted by countries often highlight the risks that they pose to the rule of law and the increase of authoritarian tendencies by the executives (Transparency International, 29 May 2020) and their inefficiency in delivering the intended outcomes. (World Bank Group, 2020) In support of these arguments, extensive anecdotal evidence are offered, which range from Latin America to Eastern Europe to Africa and the Middle East: All of these examples converge into a similar pattern, where under the pretext of using extraordinary measures to fight off the pandemic, many authoritarian leaders have sought to carve out more flexibility for their questionable

political actions at the expense of weakening the rule of law without facing any legal repercussions or further scrutiny. (Transparency International, 2020)

In an effort to provide a guideline to reinforce transparency and reduce any tendencies for corruption, the World Bank (2020) has identified three core fields, which are "health emergency, food and livelihood insecurity and emergency powers," where corruption is most likely to occur, and offered a guideline consisting of six principles to all administrations that govern during the pandemic. Furthermore, in addition to the works that focus on states actions worldwide, some studies explore the extent to which international organizations have sought to maintain transparency and reduce corruption while responding to the pandemic. (Kohler and Bowra 2020) A number of international organizations ranging from World Health Organization and the World Bank Group to the United Nations Development Program have joined their efforts to promote transparency and fight corruption in global health in recent years. (Kohler and Bowra 2020, 2) Aside from exploring their overall responses to the pandemic, such studies can help to assess the level to which international organizations have been able to fulfill their goals regarding corruption. Preliminary findings suggest that although these organizations have significantly increased their efforts for transparency, their effectiveness or level of success remains unclear. In fact, the need for fast response for crisis management purposes during the pandemic may have further complicated the already inherent difficulties in measuring the success of anti-corruption guidelines and principles adopted earlier. (Kohler and Bowra 2020, p. 7)

Studies that focus on the spread of corruption during the pandemic argue that not only it risks overall organizational efficiency, but it can also adversely influence the extraordinary measures adopted by the states to fight the pandemic. For instance, a study conducted in Nigeria has found that political corruption due to the lack of state accountability negatively affected public compliance with the anti-Covid measures and exacerbated its spread. (Ezeibe et al, 2020) Foreign aid that is offered to the struggling states to combat the disease is also prone to misuse and embezzlement, which puts the donor countries at a disadvantage. (Bellows 2020) Amundsen (2020) argues that while transferring funds to help poorly coping countries during the pandemic, corruption is most likely to occur during one of the following four phases: "[W]hen funds are allocated to and managed by recipient governments; when decisions are made on who will be the recipients; when funds are handled by the distributing agencies; and when the funds are given to the end users."

5. Rise of Populist Radical Right

The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the rise of populist radical right parties in Europe has been another issue of interest among the scholars of comparative politics. The rise of populist radical right parties can be observed in the relative electoral successes of Freedom Party of Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ), Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland*-AfD) The Freedom Party (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*) in the Netherlands, National Front or with its new name National Rally (*Rassemblement national-RN*) in France, The League in Italy, Danish Peoples Party (*Danske Folkeparti*-DF), Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*, SD) and True Finns *Perussuomalaiset*, PS). These parties mainly follow anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim and Euro-sceptic policies. They argue that the mainstream parties that have been ruling the majority of the European countries for decades are no longer able to represent the native people of their country. When people lose their confidence in the performance of mainstream parties, they look for alternatives and start supporting the populist radical right parties. The two outstanding factors that have contributed to the rise of these populist radical parties in Europe were the 2008 Financial Crisis and 2015 Refugee Crisis.

The main focus of the literature that study the far right has been whether these parties were able to increase their power as a result of Covid-19, or not. Wondreys and Mudde (2020, p. 1) argue that the pandemic has exposed the political incompetence of far-right parties that are in government. They also reflect that the far-right parties in opposition have themselves become the victims of the pandemic. In fact, American President Trump and Brazilian President Bolsonaro as populist leaders denied or minimalized the danger and threat of the Covid-19. Wondreys and Mudde (2020, pp. 3-5, 12) point out that the populist radical right parties of Western Europe first warned the people about the danger and then started to downplay the threat coming from the virus. While leaders of many radical right parties emphasized the "Chinese" character of the virus, claiming it to be a foreign influence, others went so far as to identify it with "immigration". These leaders further converge in criticizing their governments about "doing too little and too late" and accusing the mainstream parties for pursuing anti-democratic policies, such as restricting meetings and protests, criticizing lockdowns, compulsory wearing of face masks, social distancing and using corona applications. During this period, most of the populist radical right parties in Europe resorted to their Eurosceptic discourse that combined nativism and populism and accused the EU of misusing the pandemic to undermine national sovereignty. Some populist radical right parties even accused of their governments for exaggerating the danger of the pandemic (Crawford, 2020).

Bevins (2020) state that insurgent conservative rightist parties have themselves suffered a few setbacks during this time period, which allowed mainstream parties some breathing space. He points out that the number of scandals, infighting and domestic problems increased among the radical right parties during the pandemic. Moreover, he states that the pandemic has deflected the public attention away from issues that are often manipulated by such parties, such as immigration and refugees. Bevins (2020) concludes that during the time of a health emergencies, people do not think of immigrants, refugees, crime or terror. Instead, all they care about is to remain healthy for which they rely on their governments to deliver any relevant health services. Notwithstanding all academic and public speculations over the political impact of the pandemic, Wondreys and Mudde (2020, p. 12) point out that its electoral consequences have so far remained minimal. Similarly, other scholars including (Betz, 2020; Bruni, 2020; Bruno and Downes, 2020) argue that populist radical right parties would benefit from the Covid-19 disaster and that they would emerge as the true winners of the post-crisis due to its grave economic effects.

Conclusion:

A preliminary overview of Covid related academic debates signal the decline in the classic high politics/low politics distinction from the field of international relations, which shaped much of the fourth debate in that field. Interestingly, what the field theoreticians were unable to resolve seems to be de facto defined by the populist world leaders, or far right political party leaders like the U.S president Donald Trump, or Viktor Orban who increasingly securitize this issue to suit their political agenda. Their approach, among other things, seem to accelerate the disappearance of this theoretical divide further. However, interestingly, preliminary research also suggests that the attempts to securitize Covid have brought mixed results to these actors so far, and may fall out of favor in the future.

Similarly, although there seems to be some agreement on the effectiveness of authoritarian regimes in the short-run, the emerging literature on regime types is yet to produce definitive results on the impact of regime types on state responses to the pandemic, or their efficiency. Studies on transparency during the pandemic also reveal mixed results: While some of the international organizations that actively fight corruption have sought to establish or maintain some rules regarding the transparency of emergency issues during the pandemic, their overall effectiveness remains debated. Although it is difficult to reach firm conclusions based on all of

these preliminary findings in (sometimes overlapping) topics of social sciences, the overall enthusiasm of scholars to discuss these issues and their willingness to collect, analyze and interpret relevant data give hope to making significant contributions to social sciences and promise new breakthroughs in the future.

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Session 3:

Political, Sociological and Economic Reflections of Covid-19 Pandemic in Europe and Beyond

Food Security in the Post-COVID Era: Towards New Trade Policies? The Case of the Russian Grain Sector   **Dr. Svetlana Barsukova** *Professor*,   Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russian Federation   **Dr. Caroline Dufy,** *Professor*,   Centre Emile Durkheim, Sciences Po Bordeaux, France
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Food Security and National Identity: Towards New Trade Policies?
The Case of the Russian Grain Sector 1990-2010•

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The Russian Federation has restricted wheat exports (Gazeta, 2020) due to rising prices on world grain markets. In the pandemic context, numerous governments have adopted similar restrictions on food trade, including European countries, such as Romania for instance. However, the sanitary risks might enhance food insecurity, due to supply chain disruptions and rising protectionism, warns the World Bank (Espitia, Rocha & Ruta, 2020a).

The present article develops further research on the link between food security and trade policies. The research is currently being conducted on the grain sector in Russia. It intends to investigate in what ways has food security become a global concern over the last 20 years and a political norm in a neoliberal period where trade has been associated with efficiency and global welfare (Martin & Glauber, 2020). Hence, it deconstructs the political narratives legitimizing food security.

Our approach is based on an analysis of actors' discourse and rhetoric. We aim to uncover the political construction of discursive registers and the way in which they are mobilized, reformulated and discussed by experts and professionals of agricultural policies. The sociology of the construction of public problems and the rhetoric of justification are used here in accordance with conventionalist approaches (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991). This constructivist perspective reveals the plurality of representations, the varied conceptions of priorities to be established and the actors to be privileged. It is difficult to define a corpus of reference, given the vast and diverse fields that food security covers, from health and agronomy to law and the economy. A quantitative method could have been used to carry out the analysis, based solely on a corpus of legal, economic and political texts. The studies carried out under the auspices of the FAO, for example, are prolific. Instead, this study focused on identifying the narrative

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registers developed by our respondents during interviews with actors in the field in order to understand how these concepts are mobilized and justified.

This analysis is a major and original contribution to the debate on food security, combining three different areas: a concept of food security, an area of public policy and political action, and finally a social space of power relations between social groups. The concept of food security covers multiple definitions, activated in different ways according to specific historical contexts.[1] Drawing a direct causality between historical contexts and the dominant conceptions of food security, as well as between the order of discourse and the effects of public policies on productive structures, is an exaggeration. Rather, what is highlighted here is a congruence, a coherence between these three areas at different times. Discourses on food security provide legitimacy to public action. By their very nature, the public policies which are adopted target certain social groups rather than others and discriminate against particular populations, economic sectors or regions. It is important to identify the power relations at work in the construction of the food security framework. The challenge of this demonstration is to bring to light the different conjunctions between economic policies, public debates, and the commitments and mobilization of actors.

However, while public policies, by their very nature, set priorities, they also simultaneously formulate discourses about a common good. We will show here that public discourses on food security are also narratives of national identity. The latter is considered in the manner conceptualized by Benedict Anderson, as an imagined political community, bound together by a certain vision of the nation (1983). This chapter highlights how the political construction of food security by the elites is a prism through which narratives about national identity and the country's relationship to globalization can be grasped.

Three different registers of the notion of food security are thus identified: a liberal register built on the articulation between mass production and the open circulation of cereals, a protectionist register separating a domestic production and circulation space from an external one, and

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[1] Initially adopted in 1974 at the International Conference on Food organized by the World Food Organization (FAO), the concept has gained legitimacy as the poor countries have struggled against hunger (Wittman, Desmarais, Wiebe, 2010). In 1996, a stable definition was adopted: food safety is ensured when at an individual, household, national, regional and global level; "It refers to situations where people have, at all times, economic and physical access to food resources in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their daily needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (Food Conferences of 1996 and 2002.).

finally a 'bottom-up' register, massively mobilized at the international level, but totally absent in Russia and in which local production is closely connected to local consumption.

The first part of this article shows that the collapse of the agricultural production system following the collapse of the USSR triggered a decade of famine and food rationing. The notion of food security, nevertheless, remained on the fringes of the public debate because it was only mobilized by some minority political parties. It did not become an object of public discourse until the end of the 2000s, at the very time when the agricultural production system was being rebuilt (Sedik, Sotnikov & Wiesmann, 2003). The second part unravels this paradox, highlighting the mobilization of the liberal register as the country was negotiating its membership in the WTO and Russia once again became a major international grain-producing power. Finally, the third part shows that from 2014 onwards, the notion of food security has been considerably reactivated in public discourse since the adoption of the waves of sanctions and counter-sanctions[2]; a period during which the protectionist register of food security is shaped and solidified.

The notion of food security is polymorphic and kaleidoscopic: it conveys different forms of national identity, common good and relationship with others at different times. These findings provide a contribution to a sociology of economic policies, particularly trade policies, which have so far received little attention in economic sociology.

The Fight against Malnutrition: The Missed Opportunity of the 1990s

The 1990s were marked by an unprecedented food and agricultural crisis. This could have paved the way for adopting a concept of food security and giving it political legitimacy. And yet food insecurity remained on the margins of public debate.

At the time, the agricultural world was undergoing major changes: privatization programs, the dismantling of collectivist, kolkhoz and sovkhoz production structures, and an end to agricultural subsidies. These changes led to the sudden collapse of agricultural production, a massive rural exodus and a sharp drop in the income of rural populations, forcing them into

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poverty and survival strategies. The decline in agricultural production was a long-term trend in Russia's rural economy: many products just returned to their production levels of the early 1990s in the early 2010 (Nefedova, 2015). At the same time, urban populations faced shortages of basic foodstuffs, galloping inflation, and a major decrease in nutritional content (Wegren, 2010). Feeding the population is then mainly guaranteed through food aid, primarily from the United States, rationing, and massive imports. According to public data, some 70 to 80 per cent of the meat consumption of Russian citizens in the cities is supplied by imports that are virtually free of customs duties (Wegren, 2010, p. 193). During this period, Russia became the United States' largest customer for meat exports.

In this context, the term food security (prodovol 'svennaâ bezopasnost') was introduced by Communist Party leaders in the early 1990s and integrated into the food security doctrine published at the time by the Ministry of Agriculture. This term's origin, which is difficult to pinpoint with accuracy, is probably due more to a Soviet legacy, stemming from the great famine of the 1930s (Kuzin, 2013), than to the international dissemination of a concept developed within the FAO in 1974 to assist poor countries in their fight against hunger.

The intention behind the formulation of this doctrine was to draw attention to the rapidly deteriorating situation in the agricultural sector. In the 1990s, the Communist Party, a remnant of the Soviet State party, was the main opposition party to President Yeltsin's liberal policies. It had strong support in the rural areas and among the agricultural community. The discussion resulted in several drafts that could have been elevated to the status of a federal law passed by the State Duma. However, the draft law was not debated in that assembly, although the Communist Party was strongly represented there at the time. The discussion around the preparatory text shows how vaguely the concept of food security is defined in it. Indeed, there are two competing meanings of the concept. The first calls for supporting domestic production, advocates independence from imports and self-sufficiency, and considers that the country is surrounded by hostile neighbors. Food security is then the opposite of a high degree of dependency on Western importers, who are carving out large market shares in the country. This vision is consistent with the interests of the agricultural sector calling on the state to support it with subsidies or to protect it by increasing tariffs, which are very low on imported products at the time.

The second definition evoked in the discussions focuses more on the interests of consumers, emphasizing the accessibility and low cost of food products, thus insuring social stability in

the country. This is referred to in Russian as 'piševaâ besopasnost'[3]. By reducing the cost of imported products, this approach benefits consumers and ensures social peace, but ruins local producers. Food safety is then considered from the perspective of product accessibility and not from that of product quality. This is in line with the preferences of importers and local officials, who are worried about the prospect of social discontent and rising food prices. The communist MPs were unable to make their case for promoting food self-sufficiency. The threat of rising food prices prevented the discussion from reaching a successful conclusion. The federal Duma rejected the bill; the threat of a veto by President Yeltsin resulted in it being dropped.

During the 1990s, the conflict between a rights-based and a trade-based vision of food security undermined the development of a political consensus around a specific concept (Patel, 2006). Moreover, its monopolization by radical fringes of the political spectrum permanently precludes any such adoption. The rights-based approach to food security is mobilized but fails to generate public debate despite the favorable context. This historical episode is no exception in the discursive register on agricultural and food policies in Russia, where the rights-based approach to food security (the right to make a living from production, the right to consume) remains under-mobilized. This is what this economist, a specialist on agrarian issues, points out:

> « Who supports this view in Russia? No one. We try to emphasize its importance. It mostly works in Latin American countries, then in the United States, Canada, and some Western European countries. But in Eastern Europe and in the post-Soviet countries, we don't even know what it's about. » (Interview 6, 2015).

As a result, the social foundation of this conception, the farmer, is overlooked in the discourse of the representatives of the agricultural world. As explained by this agricultural trade unionist, a representative of small farmers, whom we met in Moscow in November 2015:

> « The farmer is thought of as a very good person who lives on his land and produces organic products. "We support the farmers!". That's a nice slogan for the Russian citizen? In reality, of course, the Ministry of Agriculture is involved

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[3] Linguistically the closest concept would be food safety. However, it implies a qualitative dimension, mainly in terms of consumer health protection.

in the import substitution policy, which is aimed at large and medium sized *businesses*. » (Interview 12, 2015).

Indeed, adopting a conception of food safety that favors large farms leaves some questions unanswered. As the economist quoted above puts it: "How efficient are these large farms and how healthy is their production? No one thinks about that. ». The alternative view, which at the international level has led to taking into account the conditions of production rather than just its volume of production, which has highlighted the social effects of agriculture, and which has brought about the emergence of a new player, the small farmer (Thivet, 2012), is paradoxically not used in Russia. And yet, it could have drawn on the rich tradition of pre-revolutionary thought forged around peasant communities in tsarist Russia, and conveyed in particular by the work of the agrarian economist Alexander V. Tchayanov (Stanziani, 1998; Yefimov, 2003).

Support for small farmers is thus relegated to the area of rural life and not to that of agricultural production. The trade union representative added: "In reality, we are counting more on support for rural territories than on production and food safety support programs".»[4]

The promotion of an alternative approach to agriculture could have led to the development of distribution channels that would have made it possible to deliver local products to local consumer basins and the use of short supply chains. However, in the 2000s, the massive development of mass distribution and its low costs was the main priority.

This highlights the specific nature of the development of agricultural policies in Russia: instead of transnationalization, coupled with a global peasant movement, the conception of food sovereignty in Russia is marked by national issues. Beyond this, putting agricultural policies on the agenda illustrates a specific modality of state governance: that in which the Via Campesina carries little weight compared to the Via Kremlina (Spoor et al., 2013).

Food Safety and International trade: The Liberal Moment

Russia's accession to the WTO is the longest process in the history of the organization: started in 1993 under the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and then the WTO, it was

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[4] The interlocutor adds: "Our association has the following position; export is necessary, large farms produce for export, and local, ecologically clean production is the niche of small farms" (ibidem supra).

finalized in 2012. This period saw both the mobilization of the agricultural sectors against accession (Barsukova, 2011) and the resurgence of agricultural production potential. The concept of food safety as it was articulated in the 1990s seems inconsistent with integration into international trade. Yet the doctrine on food security was adopted precisely at the end of the 2000s, at the very time when the debate on WTO accession was most prominent in the media (Barsukova, 2011). This is only an apparent paradox. Indeed, in this section we show how, in the Russian context, a conception of food safety is constructed, articulated with international trade and production growth. The latter is based on a very different social consensus and power relations than those that guided the use of this concept based on the rights of local populations.

Over the past thirty years or so, the increasing opening of borders to the flow of goods has been based on the idea that the development of trade contributes to general wealth. This perspective has been articulated very explicitly in many forums of international organizations, for example in the following terms: "Trade liberalization in agriculture is probably the most important contribution that the multilateral trading system can make to help developing countries, including the poorest, to lift themselves out of poverty", quoted by Ève Fouilleux (2009).

This causality has given rise to a specific conception of food safety, which is thus ensured by supply through international trade and the international division of labor. This relationship has provided the basis for many programs to combat global poverty (Fouilleux, 2009; Bricas, Daviron, 2008) and promote overall growth in agricultural production (Rivera Ferre, 2012; Maxwell, 1996).

Simultaneously, the issue of food safety gained visibility in the Russian public debate when the country acceded to the WTO. However, it took on a special significance. The purpose of this development is to show how this conception, which we would describe as liberal, is embodied in the Russian agricultural policy of the 2000s: it is related to the notion of national power.

In 2008, the Doctrine for Food Security (doktrina prodovol'vennoj bezopasnnosti) in the Russian Federation was drafted as a major block of the National Security Doctrine for 2020, in a political context totally different from that of the 1990s. The birth of this term, forged by the representatives of the Duma, prevented a favorable political prospect for the draft law drawn up in the summer of 2008 entitled Draft Law on State Policy in the Food Security Sector of the Russian Federation (2008). The bill had already been rejected several times in a Duma

dominated by the United Russia presidential majority party (Edinnaâ Rossiâ), which was opposed to the patriotic views of the Communist Party. However, the subject had gained in prominence and visibility during the 2004 election campaigns when the communist elected officials had organized a scientific conference entitled Food Safety in Russia and launched a Buy Russian! campaign. However, the issue was seized upon by the deputies of the presidential majority who prevailed over the communist candidates at the end of the 2000s.

In this context, a landmark text makes food safety a central element of the country's national security. The decree of 30 January 2010 supplements Decree 537 of 12 May 2009 on the national security of the Russian Federation up to 2020. Food safety becomes both a national strategic priority and an essential dimension of Russian foreign policy, which is a distinctive feature of Russia (Wegren, Trotsuk, 2013). This orientation is further emphasized in the new 2013-2020 agriculture plan (Ministry of Agriculture, 2015).

Several other factors also contribute to the political legitimization of this renewed understanding of food safety. There had been major changes in the agricultural sector in the 1990s and 2000s: production had begun to increase. The most significant growth was in pork and chicken production, which was barely slowed down by the financial crisis of 2009. Moreover, while the vagueness of the notion of food safety may have hindered the adoption of the concept in the 1990s, it became an asset in the 2000s. Indeed, the scope of the concept has been broadened and the focus has shifted to domestic issues: food quality and accessibility, defined in both economic and geographical terms. Moreover, the text simultaneously highlights both understandings of national security: the liberal conception and the developmental conception. It also attempts to reconcile the interests of farmers and consumers (Čašin, Pustuev, 2004). The Russian expression 'food security' (prodovol 'stevenaâ bezopasnnost') then covers both security (food security) and the ability to produce enough to meet citizens' needs and food safety for consumers. Farming is integrated into an overall program of 'preservation of national security and sovereignty'. The decree states that "the improvement of the living standards of Russian citizens is a national priority" (§ 2) (Minister of Agriculture, 2016).

Finally, the text of the doctrine provides indicators, bringing food safety into the realm of governance, of the administrative and political control of the countryside through numbers. The latter provide a technical characterization of the situation of food insecurity, ensure its monitoring and, finally, its political implementation. National production ratios for some staple foodstuffs are defined according to national consumption. Specific thresholds to be reached are

set and monitored, including: cereals: 95%, sugar: 80%, vegetable oil: 80%, meat: 85%, dairy products: 90%.

The regional breakdown of these numbers allows several interpretations: these indicators are in line with a protective approach, if considered at a national level, whereas in their local and regional implementation, they only aim at increasing production, with a liberal view. The doctrine thus fixes an objective for Russia, that of becoming a major player on the international markets and a leading exporter of cereals, a cereal-producing power.

This liberal conception of food safety entails a change in the production system. It implies a connection between agriculture and finance, trade, and logistics. Consequently, at the international level, it creates a new identity for the country by integrating Russia into a globalized economic space whose players are client countries and foreign competitors. In terms of production, this new conception of food safety requires a change in the organization of production and distribution: it supposes the construction of long, specialized food chains, articulating capitalized and concentrated production units. This market-oriented conception is original because it combines sovereignty and market reliance, intensive production and food safety. It makes the market and trade, both an end and a means in the service of sovereignty.

In this discursive register, the market is a universal and positive value that ensures efficiency and profit.

As one of the leaders of a federal grain producers' union attests:

> « The market is the market everywhere, in France as well as in Russia. In itself, the farmer doesn't need to produce cereals. He needs to produce in order to earn a living. At this stage, the authorities held a position, cereal production is not business, it's a mission. To feed the people. That was in the 1990s, now and then it comes back. But here we try as much as we can to fight against this silly idea » (Interview 8, 2015).

Food safety then becomes one of the elements of national security and foreign policy. It permits the use of the diplomatic tool for the development of international cooperation, for example.[5] This aspect has already been discussed in the literature (Wegren, 2010; Wegren, Nikulin, Trotsuk, 2016). Our approach's most original contribution brings to light the articulation of this discourse with Russia's positioning in relation to markets and international integration. National security understood from the liberal point of view implies an articulation of national production with external markets. It is also consistent with the development of exports and the promotion of cereal production as a priority in the modernization of the national economy. This is explained by the head of the cereal producers' union quoted below:

> « Export is a mechanism that allows the removal of surplus cereals and the maintenance of farmers' incomes. The state can talk about his role as a provider of food, but the farmer doesn't care who he sells to, whether for export or on the national market » (Interview 8).

The integration into liberal globalization is promoted in a discourse that articulates and differentiates between internal and external markets. Liberalization, as in other similar processes, in Europe for example, does not result in a disengagement of the state, but makes it a key actor capable of promoting policies which may have different effects on the country's integration into globalization (Jabko, 2009). More specifically, this example illustrates the central role of the state as an essential operator in this articulation. The actors targeted by this policy are foreign investors and customers, possibly foreign economic partners. Thus, food safety, understood in a liberal sense, is directed at the actors in the production chain, up to the market interface, whether they are national or not. This conception of agriculture guides the agricultural development of the 2000s, whether it is financed by private or public actors. It promotes the development of intensive agriculture, especially in the South of Russia, in the traditionally agricultural black lands. It also promotes vertical and horizontal concentration and the development of new controversial agricultural actors: agroholdings, a hybrid between the reestablishment of Soviet sovkhozes and capitalist exploitation (Grouiez, 2012). These

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[5] Food safety and international cooperation: <http://agromedia.ru/news.aspx?type=1&id=25376>. « *K 2020 godu my možem uveličit' naši èksportnye vozmožnosti do 35-40 mln tonn zerna", zaâvil rossijskij prem'er Dmitrij Medvedev na vstreče s učastnikami Delovogo sammita ATÈS v Manile. Glava pravitel'stva RF podčerknul, čto "prodovol'stvennaâ bezopasnost' – èto sfera, kotoraâ imeet važnost' dlâ mnogih stran regiona, i gde est' otličnye perspektivy dlâ sotrudničestva »* [« By 2020, we can increase our export capacity to 35-40 million tonnes of grain," Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said at a meeting with APEC summit members in Manila. The Prime Minister stressed that "food safety is a field that is important for many countries in the region, and where there are excellent prospects for cooperation. »].

structures, which are among the largest in the Western world in terms of surface area, farm hundreds of thousands of hectares and are sometimes listed on the stock exchange (Spoor et al., 2013). This agricultural production is the subject of increased investments in the 2010s, following the fall in the prices of oil products. Simultaneously, it draws the attention of the public authorities to a sector which provides foreign currency when hydrocarbon prices collapse.

This liberal conception has been criticized by producers for the lack of incentive to improve Russia's higher range specialization and for the resulting support for foreign product consumption. As explained by this specialist in international economics met in November 2015 in Moscow:

> « Some officials do not fully understand what Russian cereal exports are all about. They have a very primitive relationship to this grain export and consider it to be a useless activity for the country, because it involves exporting unprocessed products. They believe that the population's milk and meat consumption should first be met and the surpluses exported afterwards. As the former Minister of Agriculture used to say, " At least export macaroni ". This relationship with exports was very strong for a time, but today the pendulum is swinging in the other direction » (Interview 6, 2015).

Nevertheless, this appropriation of an international concept is evolving and reveals the lability of economic priorities and potential social consensus. It underlines the changing articulation of "them" and "us", of the national and international space. It highlights the diversity of ways in which local production can be integrated into globalization and how people are fed. More broadly, the stake in this debate is to analyze the potential emergence of other forms of capitalism, and to determine whether it is possible to identify the formation of an emerging capitalism that challenges the Washington Consensus and promotes alternative modes of agricultural production.

« Via Kremlina » versus Via Campesina: **Food Safety and Governance**

The failure of the Doha Round negotiations exemplifies the challenge to the international consensus on the connection between trade and economic prosperity. As the 2003 FAO paper puts it:

> « For many developing countries, especially the poorest, the relationship between trade reform and food security is likely to provide the foundation of one of the most critical debates of the Doha Round of international trade negotiations» (FAO, 2003, p. 19).

The annexation of Crimea and its political repercussions strengthen this challenge in Russia. The adoption of economic and trade sanctions against Russia by the United States and the European Union in 2014 radically changed the discourse on the country's international integration. As a matter of fact, the adoption of counter-sanctions by the Medvedev government in August 2014 gives official legitimacy to the shift towards a different understanding of food safety, one that is integrated into a framework of governmental organization of agricultural change, the so-called 'Via Kremlina' (Spoor et al., 2013). The counter-sanctions adopted in retaliation to the European Union's measures affect the import of European food products. They provide legitimacy for the implementation of an agricultural policy known as import substitution, instead of the export promotion typical of the previous phase. At the same time, the rouble undergoes a significant currency depreciation which acts as an additional protective barrier against imports.

In this context, the food safety slogan takes on a completely different meaning from the one it had in the previous decade. This outlook is specific to the context of sanctions. It seemed difficult to anticipate before 2014, even if it is rooted in economic nationalism and the decline of liberalism witnessed from the end of the 2000s (Dufy, 2015; Barsukova, 2011). Is it an alternative to the liberal discourse developed until the 2000s and described by researchers (Spoor et al., 2013)? Is this orientation really new or is it a new packaging of the economic orientations already underway? Does this make the Russian use of food safety a very specific one? One can observe a similar mobilization in relation to the Transatlantic Treaty debate and the negotiations on the liberalization of hormone-treated beef or chlorine-treated chicken in transatlantic trade. As an economist who is an expert on international issues from an institute of the Academy of Sciences, interviewed in Moscow in the autumn of 2015, notes: " As a

matter of fact, this notion is popular today, in Russia and throughout the world. It is linked to the rise of nationalism » (Interview 6).

As the small-scale farmers' trade unionist already mentioned above explains, priorities have been shifted:

> « Of course it was the sanctions that gave a boost to food safety, when people started to understand that oil exports could no longer meet the budget, then they started to look at grain exports in a different way. That too had an impact on the government » (Interview 12, 2015).

This conception of food safety engages a national economic identity that is different from the liberal variant. It reveals new political priorities, relies on new coalitions, mobilizes new actors, and changes the position of the consumer in relation to the producer.

In this conception, the horizontality of the articulation to international flows is broken, as well as the indistinction between domestic and external space. The impersonal character of the economic relationship is replaced by the political order which reinstates priorities. The state is the central actor. As the head of the district administration in a rural community in the region of Smolensk testifies: 'We don't close ourselves off, we reorganize priorities. And our priority is to feed the people. It is to guarantee food for them regardless of the sanctions. » (Interview 10, 2015).

This national priority is backed by the local officials we met, both at the local and regional levels. Our field surveys did not yield any findings on aspirations for some form of autonomy from the Centre. The federal discourse relayed in this way expresses mistrust in the face of trade movements, fears of their interruption and structures the break between the national and international space. It also involves representing the people as a homogenous entity, and a beneficiary of this policy. It is also regularly reintegrated into a historical legacy and a long revolutionary and even pre-revolutionary period in which famines and food shortages led to revolutionary social unrest and great political instability in tsarist Russia and the USSR.

While these representations mobilize varying economic identities and political alliances, they also have tangible and structural political effects, on production chains for example, as well as on economic and trade relations. The adoption of a ban on wheat exports after the summer 2010 drought in Russia was intended to prevent a price hike within the country. The ban was opposed by exporters who managed to impose a more flexible market regulation mechanism, a floating tax on export prices, which was adopted in the summer of 2015 and was seen as a

more market-friendly mechanism. The distinction between domestic producers and foreign exporters is therefore clearly established by this expert and analyst, from a company specialized in the agricultural sector, interviewed in Moscow in November 2015.

> « It is not so much the Ministry of Agriculture as the government that decides. But we managed to convince them that it was bad for the agrarians. No one cares about exporters, they are agents of global capitalism, if they have problems, they should just leave. But agrarians are not the same thing. It's dangerous to make fun of them, they too can make. That's how we managed to convince. » (Interview 7, 2015).

At the same time, the country's people and population are mobilized in favor of local production and food safety, in other words, in favor of local organic products. Some local leaders promote this discourse, such as the one met in the Smolensk *oblast* in November 2015.

> « Yes, food safety provides work for people. And because of a lack of resources, our production is "cleaner". In the West, it's true that they produce more, but their standards of fertilizer use are also much higher... people prefer local products. The price of their health is changing, people are starting to prefer good products» (Interview 10, 2015).

The discourse on food security strongly mobilizes the state and leaves little room for an alternative discourse, either because its opponents are in the minority or because it does not mobilize much. Nevertheless, two types of critical discourse are emerging, both from a liberal perspective and from a bottom-up food safety perspective.

The national vision of food safety is criticized for its contradictory use of the consumer: critics argue that, in reality, state discourse tends to favor the consumer, while consumption is more expensive. The food counter-sanctions adopted by the Russian authorities have led to an increase in the price of foodstuffs, which are now imported from more distant countries. Product quality and prices are considered to be sacrificed on the altar of national production. An economist from the Institute of World Economy and International Relations met in Moscow points this out:

> « The agro-food sector is one of the only sectors of the economy where import substitution seems possible, at least at the level of the lobbyists' rhetoric, they have something to offer. But when they say they're going to increase production, they don't say what they are doing about quality. In the past few months, in the

country, there have been quality controls everywhere, in meat, in milk, and nothing meets the standards » (Interview 6, 2015).

The Russian people is then a homogeneous, coherent and single entity, whose interests are implicitly threatened and must be defended. This economist continues:

> « This leads us to picture Russia as a bonny woman with braids who feeds her pigs and the more pigs she has the better. And if not, who is threatened? The producers? No, the consumers? No, not the consumers either. Nobody is threatened, in fact, except Russia. It's a kind of holism that makes us believe that there are objective national interests » (Interview 6, 2015).

The other critical view of the discourse on food safety comes from the proponents of food safety such as it emerged from the Via Campesina movement, which is conspicuously absent in Russia. It concurs with the critical writings on the use made of the concept to control consumers and peasants by the government and monopolies in the production and distribution sectors.

This perspective combines the theme of control mechanisms and the central role of agrarian lobbies in Russian agricultural policy, as this agricultural sociologist explains: 'I would say that this is the bread and butter of the agrarian bureaucracy. There are whole herds of bureaucrats and researchers who ingest huge amounts of money to write frightening and endless reports on food safety » (Interview 13, 2015).

These discourses have very real effects: they support specific political measures, build a different balance of power from the liberal consensus and call on other social and economic structures. In fact, in retaliation to Western sanctions, the program of food import substitution was initiated with the ultimate aim of achieving food autonomy (Wegren, Elvestad, 2018). The financing and support of national production chains concerns certain priority areas. In the agricultural development plan for 2013-2020, the milk and meat sectors benefit from specific funding.

Local producers are targeted by this program, especially those in sectors where food dependency indicators are higher, meat and milk in particular. Less fertile production regions, with lower agricultural yields and a more unfavorable climate, such as Central Russia and Siberia, are also included[6]. In these areas, the domestic market is the privileged outlet for

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[6] However, these findings are evolving with climate change, which is reshaping the patterns of agricultural production.

agricultural producers. In the strategic cereals sector, the food security fund set up by the state identifies regional storage volumes with the aim of building up sufficient reserves to feed the country. This differs significantly from the stockpiles organised by the state and managed by the United Cereals Corporation (Ob "edennënnaâ zernavaâ kompaniâ), which are intended to regulate prices and coordinate domestic and international markets. In this case, the distribution channels involved are national.

To conclude, the concept of food safety has become popular around the world and has been widely extended beyond the circle of countries for which it was originally conceived. In post-Soviet Russia, its use remains fairly traditional, marked by the predominance of agriculture and the state, and largely ignoring health, nutrition and civil society. Russian political discourse on this subject takes three major forms: a liberal conception, a protectionist conception, based on national economic development, whilst ignoring the concept of autonomous food safety. The three dimensions overlap to varying degrees in the conduct of cereal policies, but the ontological distinction between these ideal types is particularly useful in understanding the motives behind agricultural policy.

This article has shown, moreover, that beyond its programmatic status, food safety is also about identity. It is understood here as a discourse on the attitude towards globalization. Its embodiment in different contexts illustrates the flexibility of this concept, which carries a variety of meanings depending on the actors who use it and the realities in which it is embedded. Political mobilization work is essential to legitimize these fluctuating meanings, which negate rigid and unilateral definitions. Moreover, its inclusion on the public agenda creates specific productive structures, distinct economic articulations as supply chains and modifies the social forms that support them. Depending on the facets of the national narrative on the common good, "wheat" shifts meaning: from an export good that provides foreign currency and the symbol of a global agricultural power, to a cereal that feeds the people, and a tool for national economic development that links production and national consumption, animal feed and human food within national borders.

Its different aspects show the evolution of political power relations and social compromises. This conception provides the basis for a policy which, depending on circumstances, adapts different ways in which the country is connected to the market. Sometimes the internal and external markets are disconnected, allowing priority to be given to national production, while

at other times the state promotes their realignment, thereby favoring actors oriented towards international trade. Thus, the concept of food safety mobilizes variable and differentiated identity drivers, more than it actually closes the country to the flow of goods. In so doing, its political and identity-based use accentuates the diversity and segmentation of Russia's agricultural production system. Far from being specific to Russia, this multi-faceted international integration is characteristic of the major agricultural powers, facing food challenges and engaged in a period of modernization and rapid economic and social change.

List of Relevant Interviews
October 2015: France and Switzerland, grain trading differences (4 interviews with 2 interviewees, South-West, France, and Lausanne).

Interview 1: October 15, grain trader, Switzerland, 2h

Interview 2: October 16, grain trader, Switzerland, 2h

Interview 3: October 19, grain trader, South-West, France, 1h30

Interview 4: October 19, grain trader Black Sea region, South-West, France, 1h

November 2015: Moscow and Smolensk *oblast'* (12 interviews Grain Union leaders, public official in agricultural regions and grain experts) field visit to a grain farm

Interview 5: November 2, investor and partner in a grain holding, Moscow, 1h

Interview 6: November 2, economist in trade and agriculture, Institute of International Problems and World Economy, Academy of Science, Moscow, 1h

Interview 7: November 3, Economist and head of an analytics firm on grain and agriculture, Moscow, 1h

Interview 8: November 3, Grain Union leader, Moscow, 1h

Interview 9: November 6, grain company manager, and visit on the field, Gagarin region, Smolensk Oblast', 120 km West of Moscow, 4h

Interview 10: November 6, local public office, Gagarin region, 1h30

Interview 11: November 9, Agriculture Expert, Moscow, 1h

Interview 12: November 9, Agriculture Union leader for small farms, Moscow, 1h

Interview 13: November 10, economist on agriculture, Public Sector Academy under the aegis of the President of the Russian Federation, Moscow, 1h

Interview 14: November 10, economist, *Center of the Agrarian Sector for the Eurasian Economic Commission*, Moscow, 1h30

Interview 15: November 12, economist, analytics company on grain and agriculture, Moscow, 1h

Interview 16: November 12, Department of Interventions, *Agroholding*, Moscou, 1h

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COVID-19 AND ITS REFLECTIONS OVER
THE EUROPEAN IDENTITY

Zühal Ünalp Çepel[*]

European identity has a constructive structure born out of the various historical, cultural and socio-political practices. In the last two decades, it experienced numerous tests, such as September 11 attacks, Eurozone crisis, populism, migration crisis and Brexit. Currently the European Union (EU) faces a very unexpected and unconventional security threat: Covid-19. Even though the Union has been ready to contain any nuclear attack in and around the EU, the environmental threats have been ignored. The European Union has not easily overcome the earlier crises threatening its security and solidarity, and one more threat is added to the list.

This paper aims to clarify the security threat perceptions of the European Union member states after Covid-19 and its reflections over the European identity. The paper argues that in the early days of Covid-19, member states have preferred national solutions to the regional problems; and they initially have had conventional reactions to an unconventional threat. However, the national solutions, national sentiments and conventional reactions threaten the European identity. Thus the current security perceptions damage the achievements of the member states, such as "unity in diversity", which has been identified as the motto of the Union. Methodologically the paper is based on qualitative data gathered from the mainstream global media, public opinion polls and the European Union official documents that have been released since March 2020 in order to elaborate the perceptions. The paper emphasizes that European identity needs inclusionary policies by the governmental elites of the member states; otherwise the next security threat for the Union will be itself.

The EU has the tendency to securitize the crises. The crises such as Eurozone crisis, migration crisis, Brexit etc. are taken into account within the framework of the EU economy and European security policies. Nevertheless, Covid-19 has been a crisis that the EU has not been prepared for.

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As declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, compared to the rest of the world, Covid-19 has spread fastest in European countries. Thus crisis management, which has had significant social and economic results had become an insurmountable task for the European states. The international society is familiar with the solidarity crisis in the EU at the beginning of the pandemic because of the past experiences in other crises. It is argued in the literature that the EU has not been following common policies regarding the Eurozone crisis, the European security and defense policy, populism, the rise of far right parties and the migration crisis. The late measures of the EU to overcome the pandemic are criticized in different environments. Taking into account those criticisms, the EU has an attempt to shape its policies within the framework of Covid-19 reality since May 2020.

Policies on the social health have not existed in the list of the EU's agenda until the Covid-19 pandemic. The EU has always declared the security and economic policies as the areas of high politics.[1] Since the other areas are ignored, according to the data provided by World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2021, Italy and Spain have been among the deeply influenced EU member states with 106,339 Covid-19 deaths in Italy and 74,064 Covid-19 deaths in Spain (World Health Organization Coronavirus Dashboard, 26 March 2021). These states have been too disadvantaged against Covid-19 with their fragile economy and elderly population. Even though Italy and Spain were alarmingly influenced by the pandemic, their European partners did not hear their voices in the early days of the crisis and the European solidarity as a principle of the EU has failed retrospectively. Therefore, in addition to deep social and economic crises, Covid-19 has also resulted in a European identity crisis. This paper aims to evaluate the identity crisis as a non-military security threat and a possible existential risk with the reflections of Covid-19. In order to shed light on the crisis, cultural, historical and sociological identity background of the EU will be firstly explained. After the explanation of the background information, Covid-19 as an existential threat on European identity and future prospects are discussed.

The European Identity

Identity is defined as "a set of values that provide symbolic meaning to people's life by enhancing their individuation (or self-definition) and their feeling of belonging". A person can

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[1] For detailed information, please check Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen, *Evolution of International Security Studies*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

feel different kinds of belongings, such as to a nationality, a religion or an ideology; and the identity that the person is identified can change over time. European identity is a reflection of "a common European cultural life and institutional structure" for the European citizens (Castells, 2000, p. 3). Cultural and institutional structures have been the main components of belongings for the citizens. And these belongings can be at various levels for the people. In the first level, people have local identities in their local areas. In the second level, the region that people live in determines their identity definitions. And in the third level, as citizens, people feel themselves as components of their country; and this indicates the national identity of the people (Bruter, 2005, pp. 15-19).

In order to speak about the European identity, one must not ignore the European identity construction process. Identity construction needs a time span as can be seen in the case of the European identity. The European integration which turned into a political union in 1993 with the Maastricht Treaty has been accumulating common European identity elements for almost 30 years. Even though the European identity debates have had retrospective experiences since ancient Greece, today's EU has needed more different and cosmopolitan identifications.

Culture is an identifying phenomenon in the definition of identities. It is "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time" (Cambridge Dictionary). It is composed of both "thick" and "thin" cultural elements. In thick culture, religion, ethnicity, race and language have been regarded as determining factors. These innate and homogeneous factors are always with us as "locked into a locally-established symbolic system" (Walzer, 1994, p. ix). They do not change, or their change is difficult over time. However thin culture is heterogeneous, constructed, shaped, reconstructed and reshaped. Accordingly, we need to understand the definition of culture and specifically European culture. Therefore, thick elements to construct the European identity have included the Greek mythology, Christianity, Renaissance, Reformation and the French Revolution (Erdenir, 2006, pp. 80-86). Meanwhile, thin culture is composed of universal values, post-nationalist approach and 'constitutionalist patriotism' (Müller, 2009, 21). Thus the thin elements of European identity are based upon universal values, such as the protection of human rights, the rule of law and civil liberties. Habermas argues that if the EU member countries shape the European identity of European citizens on multiculturalism and if they follow the EU policies on the basis of universal values, the European identity is acculturized and consolidated in the civil society (Habermas, 2001, p.15).

The European identity literature invokes the identity construction process with ancient Greece and its myths. The Greek mythology explains the myth of 'Europa' with the love of Zeus to a girl named "Europa", who had been living in today's Eastern Mediterranean and kidnapped her while disguised as a bull. This myth suggests that the origins of European identity came up not in the Western Europe, but in the East. Christianity has also been a determining factor in the European identity, especially after the expansion of Islam, which had been constructed as 'the other' for Christianity. The next important phases of the construction of the European identity such as Renaissance, Reformation, French Revolution and Industrial Revolution contributed to the promotion of European values, such as liberty, workers' rights, democracy and the rule of law Revolution (Erdenir, 2006, pp. 57, 58, 66). The European integration and identity have also been the products of the Second World War and fascism. European countries have aimed to construct a Europeanness that is free from any kind of racial superiority in order to leave the racist experiences of the continent behind.

Six founding members of the European Economic Community that was established with the Treaty of Rome in 1957 put the conditionality of being a "European state" in order to be granted as a member of the Community. Article 237 of the Treaty states:

> "Any European State may apply to become a member of the Community. It shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after obtaining the opinion of the Commission" (Article 237 of Treaty of Rome).

The Treaty of Rome has no clear-cut European identity definition and seems to be based on the geographical limitations in addressing the terms "Europe" and "European". The first concrete effort of the European Community (EC) to construct the European identity had been the "Declaration on European Identity" in Copenhagen Summit in 1973. In the Declaration, the characteristics of European identity were stressed by foreign ministers of nine member states as follows:

> "The diversity of cultures within the framework of a common European civilization, the attachment to common values and principles, the increasing convergence of attitudes to life, the awareness of having specific interests in common and the determination to take part in the construction of a United Europe, all give the European Identity its originality and its own dynamism" (Declaration of European Identity, 14 Dec. 1973).

This declaration has been the first official document within the Union to construct a European identity on the basis on the convergence of differences. The ongoing European identity construction process has been empowered with the first direct European Parliament elections in 1979, especially through increasing the feelings of belonging of the EU citizens. For the first time in the integration history, European citizens directly voted for the European parliamentarians. In the first direct elections, the voter turnout was 65,9 per cent in the EC with 9 member states. Since then voter turnout percentage in EU level has been lower than the national level (DeBardeleben & LeDuc, 2009, p. 106)). However, in 2019 elections, overall turnout was 50,6 per cent. This has been the highest rate since 1994 elections. According to the Eurobarometer survey, the percentages of young Europeans under 25 years and 25-39 year-olds have increased by more than 10 percent. The European Parliament interpreted this change with "an increased sense of civic duty, a rising sentiment that voting can make things change". The survey also revealed the rising interest of the young generations on economy and growth (44 per cent) and climate change (37 per cent) to influence the EU policies (www.europarl.europa.eu, 2019).

The awareness of the European citizens to influence the EU policies has grown especially after the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The treaty established the EU and has been the starting point to construct the thin culture and common understandings for the European identity. Beyond that the turning point has been the 1993 Copenhagen Summit, which produced the Copenhagen Criteria agreed by the member states: democracy, the protection of human rights, the rule of law and the protection of minorities as elements of political criteria. These are the main principles of the European identity and the essence of the EU conditionality. It is also necessary to underline the contribution of the deepening and widening processes to the configuration of the European identity. Article 6 of the Amsterdam Treaty[2] in 1999 and the EU Charter of the Fundamental Rights[3] in 2000 have promoted the multicultural basis of the European identity formation. They dignify the European identity with universal rights, such as human dignity,

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[2] Amsterdam Treaty, Article 6 1. The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States. 2. The Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, as general principles of Community law. 3. The Union shall respect the national identities of its Member States. 4. The Union shall provide itself with the means necessary to attain its objectives and carry through its policies. Please see the Amsterdam Treaty, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11997M/TXT&from=EL

[3] The values of the EU written in the Preamble of EU Charter of Fundamental Rights are "dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights and justice". Please see the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT&from=EN

liberty, equality and solidarity as the components of the European identity. The Treaty of Lisbon in 2009 has also confirmed this multicultural background with Article 2 and Article 49. While Article 2 confirms the common values of member states, such as "non-discrimination, tolerance, solidarity and equality between men and women; Article 49 regulates the EU membership conditionality on the basis of the values referring to Article 2 (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content).

The transformation of the conditionality mechanism of the European integration is a reflection of the transformation of the European identity from a geographical phenomenon to a cosmopolitan one through the universal values and norms. In the following part, Covid-19 as an existential threat over the European identity and the reflections of the pandemic are discussed.

Covid-19 as a European Identity Crisis

The EU has had numerous identity crises from the early years of the integration until recently. The most influential identity crises have been bombings in Europe after the September 11 attacks, Eurozone crisis, Brexit, migration crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic.

In general, identity crises in the EU have been the results of security perceptions of the European states. Throughout the years, the member countries have faced various security threats to the European integration. Those threats have been conventional security threats, such as bombings, terror attacks, the proliferation of nuclear and conventional weapons. Cyber-attacks, migration and environmental disasters have been the new security threats of the EU, which are regarded also as unconventional threats. One more unconventional threat, Covid-19, has been added to this list on which the EU states have no prior experience or predetermined policies.

The fast spread of Covid-19 from China to Europe has caused tremendous results for the continent, such as economic, political, social, security and exponentially health areas. After Italy, the Covid-19 disease has spread to Spain, the United Kingdom and France and the other European states. Insufficiencies in the health sector of Italy led it to demand masks and other medical equipment from the other EU member states. However rather than the EU countries, China and Russia sent masks and health personnel to Italy. Therefore, Italian citizens were frustrated with the policies of the EU countries (https://www.eurofound.europa.eu). France

also prevented the export of masks which had been produced by a Swedish company to Italy. The French government returned the equipment to the company after its protectionist policy had been criticized by various groups and states (Yetim, April 7, 2020). Such developments made the EU's solidarity principle dysfunctional during the first days of pandemic.

After the spread of the Covid-19 to the whole European continent, the center of the pandemic has transited to Europe. Regarding this development, the president of European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen proposed to ban Schengen visits for 30 days. The proposal was approved on 17 March 2020. Unexpectedly, some of the member states, such as Chechya, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta and Hungary closed their borders even to the Schengen states. Additionally, France suggested increasing measures within the Schengen Area. Taking a step further, Le Pen, the leader of the far right political party, the National Front Party, called upon the French government to close the French borders to Italy (Hatip, March 15, 2020).

Passports and identity cards are important signals of the European identity construction efforts of the EU. At those documents, European identity can be seen as the upper identity of the European citizens. Within this scope, European citizenship is both a legal status and a reflection of the European identity (Pogonyi, 2019, 977). However national decisions on Schengen rules have eroded the vision of the European identity in the eyes of the European citizens. Since the EU has no supranational authority on the health sector, the member states sought to solve problems related to Covid-19 with their national problem-solving mechanisms. Von der Leyen admitted this issue and stated that the EU remained in a vacuum since the member states had followed unilateral policies to tackle the pandemic (Schmitt-Roschmann, March 28, 2020).

Concerning the unilateral policies, job losses, discrimination over minorities and migrants and dramatic position of the old population, the pandemic has created an existential crisis within the EU. Even though the European integration has experienced several crises since 1960s, none of them have been as influential for the European society. The EU had not noticed this potential existential threat. While terrorism, migrants and radical Islamic organizations have been amongst the main security threats of the EU, the environment, viruses and health policies have not been on the agenda of EU elites and the European Council for a long time. Under the presidency of Barrack Obama, the main existential risks of the USA and the world had been announced as environmental problems and potential pandemics, but not ISIS or terror acts. However this security understanding has not been reciprocated with the other states and states have focused on the traditional interest-maximizing policies (Wright, 2016, 11).

With the Covid-19 pandemic, experts analyzing this existential crisis over the human health have argued that while the doctors have been within an existential anxiety, the anxiety of the patients is unpredictable (Farr, 2020, p.2). Accordingly, the European leaders have noticed the deadly results of Covid-19 at the last minute and have efforts to overcome the crisis through national policies and later European policies. The EU budget for the term 2021-2027 which encompasses digitalization, Cohesion Fund, the Green Deal and the fight for Covid-19 has shown that the EU puts a great effort to protect and promote the European integration.[4] The Commission president Ursula von der Leyen states that this budget has been "the strong signal of trust for Europe". The President of European Council, Charles Michel, also states that the new budget has been "a success for member states, but especially for the people".[5]

While the EU bureaucrats have been stressing on the new efforts to combat with Covid-19 and the impact of those efforts over the European society, the public opinion polls have been drawing attention to the various threats over Europe and European citizens for years. Eurobarometer surveys in 2015 and 2017 indicate the challenges to European security in the eyes of Europeans. While Europeans' concerns regarding the natural disasters were 80 per cent and man-made disasters were 79 per cent in 2015; their concerns on both types of disasters increased to 89 per cent in 2017. That increase has shown the shared points of European citizens over European security and how those concerns have been continuously ignored by the EU leaders.

In respect to those developments, the words of Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez summarize the solidarity and identity crisis of the EU well: "Millions of Europeans believe in the European Union. We must not abandon them. We must give them reasons to keep believing. We must act now or never, because right at this moment, Europe itself is at stake" (Sanchez, Aprıl 5, 2020).

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[4] Opening Remarks by President von der Leyen at the joint press conference with President Michel following the Special European Council Meeting of 17-21 July 2020, July 21, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_20_1388

[5] Charles Michel, Remarks by President Charles Michel after the Special European Council, 17-21 July 2020, July 21, 2020, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/07/21/remarks-by-president-charles-michel-after-the-special-european-council-17-21-july-2020/

Conclusion

The European identity with its thick elements in history and thin elements shaped until today is a significant signal of the success of the European integration policy. However, numerous crises during the last two decades have been influential on the future of the EU and also the identity politics. Since the early days of 2020, the European identity construction process has been witnessing a new turning point with the Covid-19 pandemic. The increased level of vulnerability of many groups and states in Europe has resulted with the rise of nationalist sentiments and policies. However, it cannot be denied that the member states have been in a learning process from the Covid-19 experiences just as the Eurozone crisis and Brexit process. The Union is based upon firstly economic and later political priorities of the member states to produce a collective identity. Because this identity formation has economic and market-oriented roots, social policies, health policies and the environment have not been on the agenda of the EU for a long time. From this perspective, Covid-19 has to be seen as the leading power to strengthen the feeling of belonging of the European citizens to the European identity. The new budget and measures taken by the EU institutions have also signaled this effort. It is the time for European elites to take care of the needs of European citizens and promote capacity building for preparedness to unconventional threats in the future.

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THE PANDEMIC AND POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT IN EUROPE: BREXIT PARTY

Sevgi Çilingir[*]

The popular support for populist radical right parties (PRRPs) increased continuously in Europe in the past decade. This was observed at both national and European levels. In 2019 European Parliament (EP) elections, numerous PRRPs became the first parties in their countries (Italy, France and Britain). In some European Union (EU) member states, they even took part in governments (Italy, Austria).

PRRPs are regarded as challenger parties that benefit from loss of political trust in the mainstream. (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) The literature explains their rise in Europe by various approaches. Supply side explanations focus on the opportunities inherent in the political system and institutions as well as the mobilization capabilities of these parties, such as leadership, organization and the party program. Demand side explanations focus on the demographic and attitudinal characteristics of their electoral bases. (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017, pp. 17-28) Notwithstanding the particular reasons for the rise of specific PRRPs, which may differ from country to country, it is held that crises provide a fertile ground for PRRP success. In the case of Europe, they ascended especially after the financial crisis and the migration crisis. As the electorate lost confidence in the mainstream parties in government, they sought alternatives. PRRPs successfully argued that they provided the alternative, resulting in the rise of their electoral performances. (Kriesi and Pappas, 2015; Poli, 2016)

The discourse of PRRPs are formed in a binary opposition to the establishment. The political system, mainstream ideologies and policies as well as parties are presented as inadequate or wrong for the true manifestation of the popular will. PRRPs argue that they are the true representatives of the people. (van Kessel, 2015) They define the people in an ultra-nationalistic manner, excluding minorities and immigrants. They are strongly opposed to immigration and immigrants' rights, whom they believe are foreigners that have no place among the people. They advocate that the nation's resources should be exclusively reserved for the nationals. (Guibernau, 2010) Similarly, they oppose EU membership or its conditions,

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which they see as an intervention on national/popular sovereignty that takes from, but does not contribute to, national wealth. They advocate economic protectionism in an increasingly globalized world. (van Kessel 2015, pp. 25-26)

With the Covid-19 pandemic, it is important to revisit these observations. The pandemic began as a public health crisis of an unprecedented magnitude since the beginning of European integration. Moreover, measures taken against the spread of the virus have caused an economic crisis in all EU member states, which will continue for the years to come. This study asks whether the PRRPs continued their old discourse or altered it. In other words, are they still challenger parties, with this unexpected health emergency? The other important question is, how they have fared in terms of popular support. Will they benefit from the crisis in the coming elections, as they have before?

In order to answer these questions, Brexit Party (BP) in the U.K. is inquired as a case study. The study covers the first seven months of the pandemic, beginning with 11 March 2020, when World Health Organization (WHO) announced Covid-19 as a pandemic, ending with 1 October, when effects of the second wave began to be felt in the U.K. (Triggle, 2020) Since BP is a leadership party, the changes in the party position is observed through the actions and speeches of its leader, Nigel Farage. Since no elections were held in Britain during this period, the changes in popular support are inquired by way of opinion polls.

BP before the Pandemic

BP was founded in 2019 by the former leader of United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), Nigel Farage. UKIP was founded in 1993 as a single issue party that aimed at Britain to leave the EU and had become the leading PRRP by adopting an anti-immigration attitude. UKIP had many leaders and changes in the policies it pursued. (Tournier-Sol,2020) However, Farage had led UKIP the longest (2006-2009, 2010-2016) and elevated the party to success in his second leadership period. From 2010 onwards, UKIP gained considerable votes in local and national elections. Although its votes didn't translate to Parliament seats due to the majoritarian electoral system, it surpassed the Liberal Democratic Party, becoming third in 2015 general elections. (UK Parliament, 2020) UKIP also became the first party in Britain in 2014 EP elections, leaving its place to BP in 2019. (Clark, 2019) Farage was among the leaders of the leave campaign before the 2016 Brexit referendum which resulted in the decision to leave the

EU. Following the referendum, he resigned from leadership (2016), left UKIP (2018) and founded BP (2019).

Since its main goal was attained with the Brexit decision, UKIP lost its members and support. It became more radicalized after the referendum, recruiting members to its organization from radical right groups. (Klein and Pirro, 2020) BP kept the former discourse of UKIP that was closer to the political mainstream. The party manifested its distance from the racist and discriminatory features of the far right. (Brexit Party, 2019a) The party's discourse on immigration is geared towards welfare chauvinism rather than xenophobia, portraying asylum seekers as illegal immigrants who siphon off the state's funds. (Brexit Party, 2019b, p. 6)

Following the referendum, the political debate in the U.K focused on the manner in which they would leave the EU. The ruling Conservatives were divided over the extent of future relations with the EU. As negotiations prolonged, hardliners won the control of the party under Boris Johnson and entered 2019 general elections with a "hard Brexit" approach. With the change of leadership, Conservatives reclaimed the government with a strong majority in Parliament, in contrast to the hung Parliament the party had faced in the previous elections (2017). In its 2019 election manifesto, BP advocated "Clean-Break Brexit", which required complete sovereignty in key policy areas. (Brexit Party, 2019a) In order to help accelerate the actualization of the Brexit deal, BP did not compete with the Conservatives in the 2019 elections, withdrawing from areas previously won by their candidates. (Tournier-Sol,2020) This resulted in a lower performance than Farage's last leadership term in UKIP, yet BP surpassed UKIP in both national (14th-6th) and EP elections (8th-1st). (Clark, 2019; UK Parliament, 2020)

BP during the Pandemic

As Farage had promised during the foundation of BP in 2019, when the withdrawal agreement entered into force,[1] the party left the name Brexit behind. Since January 2021, it continues its political life as Reform UK, which will focus on reforming domestic institutions in Britain. (PA Media, 2021) At first, the change of name did not indicate any organizational changes. In addition to an official website for the new party - https://reformparty.uk/, the party still used its former website https://www.thebrexitparty.org/, with a message from its leading cadre about

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[1] The agreement was signed on 24 January 2020, with one year transition period whereby the former rules would remain in place. The transition period ended on 31 December 2020.

the change (Brexit Party, 2021). On 6 March, Farage announced that although he completely agrees with its goals, he is stepping down from his executive position in Reform UK and leave behind his active political career. (Farage, 2021) Since the period of the study ends before the change of name and leadership, only BP will be covered here.

In addition to party programs, election manifestos and public speeches, PRRPs use the social media in order to publicize themselves more directly and frequently. For this reason, the discourse of BP during the pandemic will be examined through Youtube and Twitter. BP/Reform UK was a leadership party based on the personal charisma of its leader. Social media allows PRRP leaders to connect with the people continuously and in a candid manner. In addition to the official Youtube channel[2] and Twitter account[3] of BP/Reform UK, Nigel Farage has a personal channel and account featured by the party. Farage's personal Youtube channel[4] and Twitter account[5] have many more followers than the party organization. Accordingly, these personal accounts were examined in order to discern the party position on the pandemic.

Farage's Youtube channel contains a list of videos categorized under the name "Health Crisis". It consists of eight videos broadcast between 23 March and 26 April 2020[6] and one in January 2021. The number of views range between 50 and 650 thousand. The first eight was examined for the study. On Twitter, Tweets using Covid, crisis and related words were searched for.[7]

During the period under study, the British government began taking measures shortly after the announcement of Covid-19 as a pandemic by WHO, in mid-March. First, some limitations were placed on public events and public gatherings and a financial support package was put in place for job protection. Between 23 March and 10 May, the country entered the first lockdown, where people could leave their homes only for limited periods and essential reasons. By mid-July, preventive limitations were eased step by step while the government warned the public to keep taking precautions. In July, the easing of measures was coupled with mandatory mask

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[2] 34.4 thousand followers. Brexit Party MEPs, *Youtube,* [online] Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/user/europarl/featured (Accessed: 7 March 2021)
[3] The number of followers before the name change could not be determined. The new account opened in February 2021 has 220 thousand followers. Reform UK (@reformparty_uk), *Twitter* [online] Available at: https://twitter.com/reformparty_uk (Accessed: 7 March 2021)
[4] 247 thousand followers. Nigel Farage, *Youtube* [online] Available at:
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[5] 1.6 million followers. Nigel Farage (@Nigel_Farage), *Twitter* [online] Available at:
https://twitter.com/nigel_farage(Accessed: 7 March 2021)
[6] End of the first month of lockdown.
[7] Covid-19, Covid, coronavirus, corona, virus, health, pandemic, crisis.

wearing in public spaces and quarantine requirements for people showing symptoms. The increase of transmission rates, evaluated by the government as a second wave, led the government to re-impose some restrictions in regions with a high number of cases in mid-September. By the end of September and beginning of October, national curfews were imposed and a regional threat level system was developed in order to respond according to the progression of the pandemic. (Express and Star, 2021)

An active user with 16.5 thousand Tweets since 2009, Farage posted only 14 Covid-19 related Tweets during the period under study. He used the words Covid-19 and health rather than pandemic or crisis. The word crisis appeared in his tweets four times in the context of the pandemic, in terms of economic crisis management[8] and the necessity of border control for the prevention of the spread. (24 April) However, rather than the pandemic, he utilized the word crisis for criticizing the government for taking in immigrants who came across the English Channel (16, 10 August, 1, 3, 16 September). However, he did not combine the issue of immigration with the pandemic.

Most of Farage's broadcasts and posts on the pandemic took place in March and April 2020, during the first lockdown the country went through. At the beginning, he criticized the government for not taking enough precautions. On Twitter, he referred to Johnson's initial "herd immunity" argument as fatal for "hundreds of thousands of people" (13 March). He implicated that the government hid its inability to increase the testing capacity (2 April, 6 May). He also pointed at the lack of health checks at the borders (17, 24 April). He also blamed China, which he characterized as a surveillance state and a threat to the national economy, for the virus on Youtube (30 March, 20 April) and Twitter (20 April, 16 July).

On Youtube, he criticized the government for being indecisive and late in taking preventive measures (23 March). He initially supported the national lockdown, but he found the government unprepared to deal with related issues such as how social distancing could be maintained in public transport and in sectors which would continue production (24 March).Like on Twitter, he stressed the insufficiencies of the healthcare system for testing and treatment, criticizing the government for not doing enough sooner, as well as misrepresenting the actual capabilities in his Youtube videos (26 March, 4 April, 30 April). For Farage, this

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[8]About the USA example for fiscal policy on 3 March, EU's inadequacy on 21 March and unnecessary government spending on 15 April.

emergency situation required strict measures such as mobile tracing and quarantines (26 March).

On economic measures, he criticized on Youtube the conditions of small business loans which he believed would pressure businesses to shut down rather than make use of these (23, 26 March). Instead of case specific support for SMEs, the self-employed and the unemployed, he suggested a direct income support for the general population, which he argued would also help maintain public order, preventing riots and looting (26 March). On Twitter, he criticized the government for dedicating the budget to non-essential projects instead of the NHS (15 April).

Farage's approach to preventive measures changed by April. Just a week after declaring his support for the lockdown, he admitted to breaking the rules for leaving the house. Claiming that he did take the virus seriously and was careful about social distancing, he criticized the closure of parks and beaches, and the police surveillance of lockdown orders. He argued that the government misused its power, trying to control people's lives more than necessary (30 March). He characterized the lockdown as "house arrest" (30 March, 4 April) and blamed the government for inciting fear among the people (20 April). According to Farage, the government also disregarded the problems that may occur due to the lockdown such as childcare, domestic violence and lack of exercise (4, 20 April). For Farage, testing (26 March, 4, 26, 30 April) and border controls, including quarantine orders after landing (26 April) were necessary. Instead, the government focused on keeping people indoors which he found to be disproportionate, as he repeated in his Tweet before the second lockdown (22 September).

Farage also publicized his breach of lockdown (Farage, 2020a) and quarantine orders (Mason, 2020) with various excuses. Between May and October, he did not post any videos on Youtube about the pandemic. On Twitter, he only made two comments, one about Italy-China relations during the pandemic (16 July) and one against the second lockdown plan (22 September). Together with his resistance to preventive measures demonstrated above, this shows that Farage did not consider the pandemic as a priority compared to other issues, such as immigration, on which he commented frequently.

Popular Support

For the examination of the change in popular support in the period between 11 March and 1 October 2020, public opinion poll results were used, which Politico combines into an average.

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(Politico, 2021) The table below shows the last general election results and next general election voting intention in percentages for the first three major political parties and BP.

Table 1: Election Results and Voting Intention for Selected Political Parties

Party	Election	11.03.2020	01.05.2020	01.07.2020
Conservatives	43.6	50	50	40
Labour	32.2	30	32	39
Liberal Democrats	11.4	8	7	7
BP	2	1	2	2

Source: Politico, 2021

Britain entered the pandemic with a higher approval rate than the 2019 elections for the Conservatives under the leadership of Boris Johnson, while the voting intention rate had dropped for the second and third parties. After the first two months, Labour, with its new leadership, had returned to the election level, as well as BP, which had lost popular support at the beginning of the pandemic. While popular support for the third party, Liberal Democrats, and BP remained the same at the beginning of October 2020, Conservatives lost one fifth of its support. On the other hand, the popular support for Labour increased considerably, bringing the first two parties very close to each other. During the pandemic, the change in popular support for BP remained very low, despite a slight increase by May 2020.

When considered together with changes in the popular support for major political parties, the change in the voting intention for BP shows that the attitude of the party leader towards the pandemic and its governance had little impact in its popular support. The increase from 1 to 2 percent after the first two months, when Farage had started criticizing the lockdown as excessive and the government as ill equipped to manage the situation, is minimal and may be due to other factors not included in this study. The disregard of the pandemic as a major issue since May 2020, manifest by the lack of specification in BP leader's discourse, has certainly

not benefited BP, as may be seen from lack of change in the voting intention in the following months.

In the meantime, the popular support for the government increased and remained much higher than the main opposition, Labour, until June 2020. The opposition gained support at the expense of the government only after this date, and this did not affect the support for the remaining parties that had scored below Labour in the last elections. This observation includes UKIP as well, which BP had replaced after the Brexit referendum. (Politico, 2021)

Discussion and Conclusion

As challenger parties, PRRPs in opposition are expected to criticize mainstream governments at every opportunity, since they identify themselves against the establishment. This was the case for BP during the initial months of the pandemic, when the party leader accused the government for incapability, tardiness and misrepresentation of truths. In criticizing lockdown orders, Farage accused the government of mistrusting citizens' common sense. However, according to the literature on PRRPs, they are also oriented towards public order (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 34), which was partially absent in the British case. Although Farage demanded stricter border controls in order to prevent the spread of the disease, he protested the safety measures inside the borders: the lockdown and strict controls of its observance. Moreover, instead of capitalizing on the crisis, he downplayed the role of the pandemic as a major issue in British politics, since May 2020.

The literature on the populist radical right explains that PRRPs benefit from economic and political crises, because people lose confidence in the ability of the established parties to deal with these issues. (Kriesi and Pappas, 2015; Poli, 2016) Accordingly, one would expect an increase in PRRP support during the pandemic at the expense of the political mainstream and major political parties. Yet, this did not happen. Since the Covid-19 pandemic is a major crisis, including an economic dimension, how can the increase in government support and lack of increase of popular support for PRRPs be explained?

An alternative explanation may be offered from the academic literature on crises. Coined in order to explain finding over many decades, that popular support increases for presidents of the USA at times of crisis, "rallying around the flag effect" posits that major crises may indeed strengthen governments. During international crises, especially those that involve wars, there

is a resurge of patriotism that overcomes political divisions during international crises. (Murray, 2017) In other words, people look up to their current government to provide security and stability. Indeed, this seems to be the case in Britain, which was observed in other European countries during the first wave of the pandemic as well. (Iniguez et.al., 2020)

However, this effect did not last very long. As the pandemic progressed, while the main opposition party gained more potential voters, the government lost its support. This shows that although popular support for the government party decreased, this did not rely upon a loss of confidence in the political mainstream as during the crises of the past decade Europe went through.

Before concluding, it is important to underline the limitations of this study. Intended to reveal the changes in the discourse and popular support of PRRPs in Europe during the pandemic, only one case was examined. As Covid-19 has become the nodal point of many policy areas, the study focused on the discourse of BP specifically about the pandemic. The lack of its use as a reference point by the party since May 2020 further reduced the amount of material to be reviewed. Further studies would benefit from the examination of the party discourse on various policy areas, or a comparative approach involving multiple countries in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis.

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