



**Warsaw
East
European
Review**

Volume IX/2019

INDEPENDENCE

EDITORS: PAWEŁ KOWAL | JOHN S. MICGIEL

Warsaw
East
European
Review

Volume IX/2019

INTERNATIONAL BOARD:

Egidijus Aleksandravičius | *Vytautas Magnus University*

Stefano Bianchini | *University of Bologna*

Miroslav Hroch | *Charles University*

Yaroslav Hrytsak | *Ukrainian Catholic University*

Andreas Kappeler | *University of Vienna*

Zbigniew Kruszewski | *University of Texas, El Paso*

Jan Kubik | *Rutgers University*

Panayot Karagyozov | *Sofia University*

Alexey Miller | *Russian Academy of Sciences*

Mykola Riabchuk | *Kyiv-Mohyla Academy*

Barbara Törnquist-Plewa | *Lund University*

Theodore Weeks | *Southern Illinois University*

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Jan Malicki | chair of the Committee (director, Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)

John S. Micgietl | WEEC Conference Director (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)

Wiktor Ross | secretary of the WEEC Programme Board (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

John S. Micgietl

DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Pawel Kowal

LANGUAGE EDITOR

Christopher Moore

ISBN: 978-83-61325-64-2

ISSN: 2299-2421

Copyright © by Studium Europy Wschodniej UW 2019

TYPOGRAPHIC DESIGN & COVER DESIGN

Jan Jerzy Malicki

LAYOUT

Jan Malik

John S. Micgiel, Pawel Kowal – Wstep.....	5
Boguslaw Winid "The Role and Activities of the Eastern European Group within the United Nations System"	7
Matthew Rhodes "NATO's 2018 Brussels Summit: A View from the United States"	13
Z. Anthony Kruszewski "The U. S. Diplomatic and Humanitarian Impact Supporting 1918 Re-Emerging Poland: House, Lord and Hoover".....	17
Magda Stroinska "National Independence versus Societal Trauma: Can a Nation Enslaved by its Past be Independent?"	27
Alfonsas Eidintas "From a Common to a National State(s) and the Lithuanian-Polish Dispute".....	39
Stefan Kawalec "Introduction to the Round Table on Building a Modern and Robust Banking System: Poland's Experience after 1989"	53
Hubert A. Janiszewski "The Privatisation of the Polish Banking Sector".....	59
Marcin Wakar "The Rebirth of Polishness in the Baltic States as a Result of the Crisis and the Collapse of the USSR: The Case of Lithuania"	67
Aleksandra Gryzlak "The <i>Georgian Herald</i> Samizdat Journal"	75
Francisak Viacorka "The Structure of Government Elites within the Regime of Alaksandar Lukashenka"	87
Gordon N. Bardos "Militant Islamism in Southeastern Europe: Infrastructure, Actions and the Future Threat Horizon".....	111
Gordon N. Bardos "The Balkan Front in the New Cold War"	131
Shahla Kazimova "Independence by Muslim communists: "Narimanovshchina", the downfall of national communists in Azerbaijan	155
Antoni Nevescanin "Creating a Modern City: Gentrification or Revitalization in the City of Łódź"	167

Foreword

At the end of June 2018, the East European Studies Center of Warsaw University held its fifteenth annual Warsaw East European Conference. The topic was Independence and the meeting was part of the celebrations surrounding Poland's one hundred-year anniversary of rebirth following one hundred and twenty-three years under foreign rule. Neighboring states were celebrating the gift of full sovereignty similarly and scholars were looking back at the achievements and missed opportunities of countries in the region.

Our meeting brought some 75 scholars from 13 countries together to share their research and exchange ideas at conference facilities of the Old Library of Warsaw University. Several roundtables organized together with partner institutions provided broad views of the challenges that faced the region following independence.

Maintaining that independence within a regional security organization was the topic of a panel on "NATO's Brussels Summit: U.S., German, and Russian Perspectives", which was co-organized by the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies at Garmisch-Partenkirchen (GCMC), and co-hosted by the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) in Warsaw. Thanks go to Dr. Andrew A. Michta, dean of the Marshall Center's College on International and Security Studies, to Col. Ray Wojcik (U.S. Army ret.) director of CEPA Warsaw, and to our speakers: Dr. Matthew Rhodes (Professor of National Security Studies, GCMC), Dr. Igor Zevelev (Professor of National Security Studies, GCMC), and Dr. Ralf Roloff (Deputy Dean for Resident Programs, College of International and Security Studies).

A session on developing the underpinnings of a new financial system entitled "Building a Modern and Robust Banking System: Poland's Experience after 1989", was organized by Attorney Peter Świącicki of Squire Patton Boggs Świącicki Krześniak sp. k. Michigan USA. We are grateful to Attorney Świącicki and four other pioneers who helped build the system and who presented their views on the accomplishments and pitfalls they faced those thirty-odd years ago: Dr. Stefan Kawalec (President, Capital Strategy; former Deputy Minister and Director General, Polish Ministry of Finance); Dr. Krzysztof Kalicki (President,

INTRODUCTION

Deutsche Bank Polska and former Deputy Minister of Finance); Dr. Sławomir S. Sikora (President, Citibank Poland and former Director, Banking Institutions Department, Ministry of Finance); and Dr. Hubert A. Janiszewski (Deputy Chairperson, Supervisory Board, Deutsche Bank Polska).

A panel with post-Soviet successor states entitled "What's Going on in Central Asia, Ukraine and the Caucasus" was co-organized with Columbia University's Harriman Institute and featured: Dr. Alex Motyl (Rutgers University), Dr. Julie George (Harriman Institute), and Dr. Yana Gorokhovskaia (Harriman Institute). We appreciate their contributions and that of the Harriman Institute's Director, Dr. Alex Cooley.

A series of special lectures opened and closed the conference and were daily features of our meetings. Speakers included: Dr. Gordon N. Bardos (President, Southeast European Research & Consulting); Dr. Jacek Czaputowicz (Foreign Minister of the Republic of Poland); Mr. Ilia Darchiashvili (Ambassador of Georgia to Poland); Dr. Alfonsas Eidintas (Ambassador-At-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania); Dr. Zbigniew Kruszewski (University of Texas, El Paso); Dr. Andrius Kubilius (Former Prime Minister of Lithuania); and Dr. Bogusław Winid (Advisor to the President of Poland).

Twelve panel discussions featured speakers from throughout the region, and an exhibit, daily receptions, and an award ceremony for the journal *Przegląd Wschodni* (Eastern Review) all provided ample time for participants and guests to network.

The director of the conference and co-editor of this volume would like to thank Mr. Jerzy Malicki and his team of assistants for a masterful job in making all the arrangements for such a large and complex undertaking. It was a pleasure to work with them.

The 2018 Warsaw East European Conference would have been a much more modest meeting had it not been for the financial support of Warsaw University and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

The essays herein were deemed by the conference organizers and by an international team of referees to be of special merit and every effort was made to edit and publish them as quickly as possible. We trust that readers will find their scholarship as interesting as we did.

Dr. Paweł Kowal

Dr. John S. Micgjel

BOGUSLAW WINID

AMBASSADOR, ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT OF POLAND

***The Role and Activities of the Eastern European Group
within the United Nations System***

Thank you very much for the invitation and thank you for allowing me to speak to you about the United Nations and its role in Central and Eastern Europe. This is probably the first time in the history of our conference that we are discussing the United Nations. I will argue that there is a lot that we as Eastern Europeans can do together and how our cooperation within the UN can be more fruitful and useful for all. I would like to first discuss how we can cooperate better in the General Assembly, Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat. Where are the opportunities? Where are the challenges? What else should we consider and be aware of?

Let us begin with the historical context: what has been the role of the UN for Central and Eastern European countries? During the communist era, we were denied independence or sovereignty, thus the real interests of our countries were not represented on the global stage. There were of course communist embassies, very close coordination with Soviet diplomats, and weekly or even daily instructions coming from Moscow. This was the case until 1989. Then communism collapsed and our countries regained their independence and sovereignty. Initially, in the early 1990s, the UN was visibly present in Eastern Europe as a result of civil wars and ethnic conflicts. UN peacekeepers were a familiar sight, serving on various missions seeking to reestablish peace and stability. Then, I would argue, the role of the United Nations in our regional diplomacy and politics declined as the 20th century drew to a close and the 21st century began. This was due to the very powerful roles played by the European Union, NATO and the OSCE. These organizations eclipsed in importance the seemingly distant United Nations in New York City.

Now, the situation is changing again, and we are witnessing a resurgence of the UN's impact on Polish and European diplomacy. The UN is gradually reestablishing its role as useful platform through which Poland can play an active and leading role in promoting the political and economic interests of our region. It is particularly noteworthy that the

Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz spent the majority of May 2018 in New York – not enjoying the beautiful Big Apple, but working long hours, leading the various debates within the Security Council – giving Polish foreign policy a critical platform on the world stage.

Eastern Europe in the United Nations

From the perspective of our President, Professor Jan Malicki, I will argue that Eastern Europe is the most important part of the universe. From the point of view of the United Nations, it is not quite so apparent. We are the smallest regional group in the UN. Right now, the Eastern European Group (EEG) numbers 23 countries. My belief is that this is not actually 23 but 22. Russia is a member of the P5 and when you are one of the P5 you are a bit of a different animal – to quote George Orwell's "Animal Farm" – *all animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others*. Thus there are 22 of us.

Then we can compare the EEG within the General Assembly to Africa – 54 countries, to Asia-Pacific – 54 countries. It becomes immediately apparent that our voting power is much more limited. It is less than half of the biggest blocks. Latin America, known as GRULAC in the United Nations – 33 countries, Western Europe (and others) – 28 countries. The Western European Group actually also includes Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Israel, which are not exactly geographically Europe. But from the point of view of the UN, they still constitute "Western Europe".

When we are discussing EU cooperation within the UN system, what complicates things is the fact that EU member states belong to three different regional groups – Western Europe, Eastern Europe while Cyprus is actually in the Asia-Pacific Group, making any attempts at coordination all the more difficult.

Let us discuss the political situation in different UN bodies. The best place to start is the Security Council, which was, is, and will remain the most important elected organ of the United Nations. How has our part of the world been represented in the Security Council? This has been a problem from the very beginning, since 1945, when the founding fathers agreed to create the Security Council. Originally it consisted of 11 countries: five permanent members and six elected. The key question was how we understand "elected". What does it mean? Who can be elected? In 1946, just a year after the establishment of the United Nations, there was a so called "gentleman's agreement" around these issues. But the Americans and the Russians have a fundamentally different understanding of the words *gentlemen's* and *agreement*. According to this first 1946 agreement, the six elected members should be chosen from all continents: two from Latin America, one from the Middle East, one from Eastern Europe, one from Western Europe and one from the British Commonwealth. This was regarded as fair, to some extent, because then the Eastern European group consisted of 13 countries, including three votes for the Soviet Union. Please remember that Ukraine and Belarus were at least theoretically, independent members of the UN. The total membership of the United Nations was 51 countries.

History was progressing, new countries were regaining their independence and very soon the situation started to get complicated – for example the Philippines could never run for the Security Council because they were neither part of the West, nor Eastern

Europe nor the British Commonwealth and they were not part of Latin America. Thus as a result in the election process in the UN, the countries which were not included in the so called *gentlemen's agreement* started to run in slots that were at least nominally reserved for Eastern Europe. I hope that you will agree with me that the Philippines are not part of Eastern Europe. By all counts they are wonderfully friendly and nice people, but they are not Eastern Europeans. It became very apparent that we, as the international community, had to change the UN electoral system.

The first serious attempt to do so and simultaneously increase and safeguard the role of Eastern European countries was in 1955. Poland was then running for the Security Council membership against the Philippines. Lacking strong support we withdrew after four rounds of voting. Yugoslavia took our position to compete against the Philippines but after 36 rounds of non-conclusive voting, there was no winner so the leaders of the organization decided to split the term. This was the beginning of the process to reach a new agreement to reform the Security Council and its electoral system. After long negotiations, the reform actually took place between 1963 and 1965. *General Assembly resolution 1991A* was passed which increased the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council to ten countries: three from Africa, two from Asia Pacific, one from Eastern Europe, two from Western Europe and two from Latin America. At the same time the membership of the UN was growing – when the reform was introduced there were 117 countries, while now there are 193. You can see how complicated the election process is and how costly and difficult it is to get on the Security Council. The numbers speak for themselves. The competition to get to the Security Council is significantly tougher than 50 years ago. This is why Poland is enthusiastically supporting a movement to introduce another set of reforms for the Security Council. This is a critical point where we as Eastern Europeans could and should cooperate. We should try to increase the numbers of the non-permanent members of the Security Council coming from Central and Eastern Europe. This is one of the most important goals for our diplomacy – to protect and to increase the role of Eastern Europe in the future reform of the Security Council.

UN International Secretariat and Secretary General

As Eastern Europeans we have never held the position of Secretary General. Theoretically at least, this important position should be moving from one geographical region to another. There were great Secretaries Generals coming from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Western Europe, and yet none from Eastern Europe. There were high hopes two years ago, in 2016 as there was a general belief that the candidate for the next UN Secretary General will come from Eastern Europe and that it will be a female candidate. There has been no female Secretary General of the UN so far. Poland enthusiastically supported the notion of an Eastern European Secretary General.

The prospects of a new UN Secretary General coming from Eastern Europe were derailed by our lack of unity. We, as the EEG, nominated eight candidates, which led to bitter internal competitions, exposed a lack of coordination, and resulted in negative campaigns against each other. All of this immediately ruined the chances of all candidates coming from the region. As a result, António Guterres was elected. We can argue that he is a very

good and dynamic UN Secretary General but he's neither Eastern European nor a woman. The lesson learned for EEG is that we should better protect the rights of our region. The more we cooperate, the more chances we have to achieve our interests.

Unfortunately, this is not the end of the story, the picture gets darker still. When António Guterres was assuming his position, he did not invite anyone from our regional group to his transition team, nor did he invite anyone into his private office, the so-called 38th floor Secretariat. So, there is no one from our region in the highest echelon of UN decision-making.

For the second most important position in the UN system – Deputy Secretary General, Secretary Guterres nominated Dr. Amina J. Mohammed of Nigeria. She is dealing with environmental issues, sustainable development, climate change, and coordinating all UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Is there anyone prominent from Eastern Europe in her group? None. Another layer, the UN Undersecretaries, none. We do have some Assistant Secretaries which is the fourth layer of UN bureaucracy, and there are some representatives from Russia. But again, the Russian candidates they were not elected as Eastern Europeans, but as P5, on the same basis as candidates from the United States, China, France, or Britain. To paraphrase George Orwell again: *"They have some rights and the rights are to have some representatives."*

There are a lot of areas where we as EEG countries should work better. If we do not support our candidates, then they will never be elected. If we produce too many candidates, if we start negative campaigns against each other, the results will be visible as we had seen two years ago with António Guterres.

As the EEG, we do hold some influential positions within UN system and these positions can and should be used to better promote our region in the Organization. Every five years someone from Eastern Europe fulfills the function of the President of the General Assembly known as PGA. Right now this job is being done very well by the Slovak Foreign Minister – Mr. Miroslav Lajčák. The next PGA coming from Eastern Europe will be elected five years from now while a Polish representative will next hold this position in 2064.

There are important arguments why we should cooperate better. To an extent, competition within a group is good. But my argument is that we should concentrate and limit competition to within the group only, never letting it spill out in the open at the General Assembly level. We should select the candidates internally and after that, unite behind them and promote them in the whole UN system. This is the way how our colleagues from Africa or Latin America do it.

I mentioned the reform process of the United Nations. There are several layers to these reforms and Poland is very much involved in this endeavor, trying to promote Eastern European interests, especially in the fair geographical distribution of various UN positions, and a more visible position of the EEG in the reformed Security Council.

An extremely important issue in the reform process is the question of "veto power." There are many legal and political arguments whether the UN should reform it. Poland's argument is that of course we should. Veto power can paralyze the whole UN Security Council system. The situation in Ukraine is the best example. Nothing could be done because of "veto power". No question this will be a very long process. Some of our colleagues are arguing that the reform will never happen because the P5 will block any attempts to limit their influence. My personal argument is that nevertheless, we should try. When

we look at the election of the UN Secretary General two years ago, we can see that the process was much more open and much more transparent than ever before. There were several open meetings with the regional groups, with the whole General Assembly, there were numerous opportunities to ask questions. This is a very good direction and this was a good example that when there is a political and moral pressure on the P5, we can have some successes. This is the way to go forward within the regional groups and within the whole General Assembly.

To conclude, my main argument is that the stronger the Eastern European Group is in the UN system, the stronger we, as individual countries, are. We can use the power of the group, even the smallest country, to better promote our interests. In some cases, within the EEG, we have very different opinions on some issues. I will argue we should not forget that but at the same time we should look for subjects where we have similar or identical positions. To promote EEG better in the UN we have to cooperate better as individual countries.

Poland is trying to present these arguments and President Andrzej Duda made this point clear on May 17th when he was leading the open debate in the Security Council on the rule of law and the importance of implementing the international legal system. Please refer to the UN website and to the Security Council proceedings, the President's speech is available there.

If we apply the existing international norms, standards, and international law, we would be more able to solve the existing conflicts and moreover prevent future possible conflicts from materializing. This is the mechanism where the United Nations can be very helpful and useful for diplomacy. To protect civilians, to protect borders, to protect development, peace and stability – this is the way to go forward. Will this process bear fruit automatically? Of course not. This is the UN and it takes time, but this is the direction I believe we should go as community of nations.

I also hope that Poland's membership in the UN Security Council, thanks to the support of 190 countries during the election (which constitutes the record for a European country) can actively contribute to the reform process described earlier. Membership in the UN Security Council and the leadership role of President Andrzej Duda and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz during our presidency in the Council is the best proof that Poland is taking these issues extremely seriously. I do believe that we as the EEG regional group can create a useful political and legal mechanism which can serve to better promote our interests within the UN system and to promote the lofty goals which guided its founding as the world recovered from the horrors of yet another world war: universal peace, stability, and development.

|

MATTHEW RHODES

GEORGE C. MARSHALL EUROPEAN CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES,
GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, GERMANY¹

NATO's 2018 Brussels Summit: A View from the United States

|

NATO leaders billed their last full formal summit two years ago in Warsaw as a “break-through summit.” Speaking at a parallel experts forum, Polish President Andrzej Duda named the event the second most important in his country’s post-communist history, behind only NATO accession itself. In addition to the headline decision for Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) in the Baltic region, the Alliance adopted special declarations on strengthening “resilience” and strategic partnership with the European Union.

In contrast, the next leaders’ meeting in two weeks in Brussels is expected to be less about conceptual innovation than practical steps to implement existing commitments. At preceding ministerials and other occasions, the Alliance’s leading member, the United States, has pushed for further focus on mobility, stability, and burden-sharing in particular. Nonetheless, recent tensions in other aspects of transatlantic relations have injected a measure of drama and raised the stakes for the summit’s success.

Mobility

Mobility refers to the ability to move troops and equipment quickly where they’re needed, especially to reinforce the credibility of the Alliance’s central task of collective defense. The deliberately limited scale of the EFP battalions and other NATO units along the eastern flank mean that NATO is relying on a strategy of timely reinforcement in case of external attack or other crisis. This rests in turn not only on capable available forces but also a combination of legal permissions, physical infrastructure, and exercised procedures.

¹ The views expressed here are solely the personal opinions of the author.

To boost these capabilities, the U.S. has backed a number of initiatives in the run-up to the summit. One command structure reform should establish a pair of new headquarters, an Atlantic Command in Norfolk, Virginia in the United States and a logistics Support and Enabling Command in Ulm, Germany. These should coordinate planning for transit from North America to Europe and across the continent, respectively. Another, "4x30," should complement NATO's existing Reaction Force by making an additional 30 mechanized battalions, 30 naval vessels, and 30 aircraft squadrons deployable within 30 days. Allies should achieve this by 2020.

Stability

The next theme, projecting stability, is more closely linked to the Alliance's other core tasks of crisis management and cooperative security. A major part this should include intensified training and capacity building efforts with key Alliance partners including Afghanistan (where the overall size of post-ISAF Operation Resolute Support should grow in line with the United States' own recent commitment of additional troops), Iraq (where a new in-country anti-ISIS training program should be established), and Ukraine. Following the provisional agreement to resolve Macedonia's name dispute with Greece, steps to open long delayed formal accession talks with the prospective future "North Macedonia" could also be taken. This would come within the context of broader concerns with developments in the Balkans highlighted by the American head of NATO's Allied Command Operations, General Curtis Scaparrotti, at a U.S. Senate hearing this spring.

Burden-Sharing

The third theme, burden-sharing, bears an unfortunate name with negative connotations of unwelcome *burdens* to accept. Some NATO officials have proposed speaking instead of "shared responsibilities" (leaving amused skeptics to counter with "shared joy").

However it's called, the issue is anything but new and is not strictly limited to comparative military budgets. Under the "3 Cs" formula frequently invoked by Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, it encompasses not just "cash" but also actual "capabilities" and "commitments" to NATO missions. Still, the Trump administration has placed strongest focus on the first "C" as measured by Allies' respective progress toward the target of 2% of gross domestic product for defense under the 2014 Wales summit's Defense Investment Pledge.

Stoltenberg and others highlight the cumulative progress on spending over the past four years, with a majority of Allies credibly on track to meet the 2% target by 2024. Others, however, remain far from it. The most prominent example, Germany, will spend just 1.24% this year. Its government has pledged to raise the budget by five billion Euros over its parliamentary term, but growth and inflation forecasts still leave this below 1.3% of GDP.

Context

What lends this summit a sense of anticipation beyond these issues themselves is the background of unusually public differences among NATO governments over the past several months. Barbs over not just burden-sharing but other issues from Iran to trade delivered acrimonious deadlock at the just-concluded G-7 summit in Quebec, Canada. If there is a strategy to make NATO interesting again, it seems to be succeeding.

More optimistic views recall that internal disagreements have also been recurrent for the Alliance. Indeed, at least until this year's G-7, the present level of tensions had arguably remained lower than in the period immediately before and after the 2003 U.S.-led intervention in Iraq. Moreover, NATO has survived such periods precisely because Allies have been able to isolate other differences from cooperation on security and defense in Europe. Stoltenberg has personally stressed the latter point in recent speeches and interviews, backed by the Trump administration's steady increase in funding (from \$800 million in 2016 to a proposed \$6.5 billion for 2019) for the European Deterrence Initiative.

Still, the steady success suggested by this corrective perspective cannot be taken for granted. NATO has made considerable strides in adapting to a transformed security environment since 2014, but the hard work of implementing, consolidating, and resourcing new initiatives is in many respects still just beginning. Even if it is short of historical breakthroughs, the Brussels summit presents another important occasion for the Alliance to show it is up to the challenge.

|

Z. ANTHONY KRUSZEWSKI

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

***U. S. Diplomatic and Humanitarian Impact Supporting 1918
Re-Emerging Poland: House, Lord and Hoover***

|

This paper aims to underline a certain dichotomy in the pre-World War II and present perception of the events preceding the history of the re-establishment of Poland on November 11, 1918.

Although the historical facts were duly recorded, described and analyzed by the historians – the subsequent prevailing ideological interpretations did not fully integrate the events described in this paper into the official school programs of the interwar (1918–1939) II Republic of Poland. The major role for the policies responsible for the rebuilding of the Polish national state after 123 years was then allocated, according to the political beliefs of scholars to either Marshal Józef Piłsudski or Roman Dmowski, and their respective political ideological camps.

Hence, the Polish high school students of that period had then only very limited knowledge of the events largely shaped by the Western Allies behind the scene or at the Versailles Conference of 1919 – by the Allied powers, who after all had a decisive role in reshaping the post-World War I map of Europe.

Furthermore, because of the Communist take-over of Poland in 1944 and thereafter the total reshaping of school programs during the existence of the Polish People's Republic until 1989, the presentation of the basic historical facts (rejected by the Communists) were either totally falsified or largely by-passed. Hence, whole generations of Polish high school students educated then – still have huge gaps in the perception of the modern history of their own nation.

The above facts lead me to attempt to research anew and to popularize some circumstances, which largely favorably shaped support for the Polish cause after World War I, especially since they were created by the United States.

This paper's aim is two-fold: 1) to commemorate Poland's return to the sovereign family of nations on November 11, 1918, after 123 years' struggle and a series of brave but failed

uprisings over five generations against the partitioning powers of Russia, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire,¹ and 2) to trace the seldom-discussed but important impact of the United States on the decisions arrived at the Versailles Conference of 1919 by the Allied Powers victorious in World War I.² The latter theme of the paper, although stipulated by official policies and subsequent decisions re-establishing 1918 Poland's sovereignty, will be documented through the research emphasizing the rather successful efforts of the relatively few deeply-engaged American leaders and Polish patriots. They had almost single-handedly created a pro-Polish sovereignty lobby and effectively, very successfully and against tremendous odds, influenced the most important Allied decisions concerning the restoration of sovereignty to post-World War I Poland. The research analyzed in this paper also shows the impact of personalities and personal relations, at the highest levels of decision-making as perhaps much more important in shaping the final decisions than generally publicized policies of the Polish political parties and programs of the independence-oriented movements and groups organized in Poland and abroad in the decades proceeding World War I.

In order to adequately assess and analyze the decisions affecting Poland at the end of World War I, one has to characterize however briefly the tragic and almost hopeless situation of the Polish quest for independence before the outbreak of that conflict. The resulting re-establishment of Poland's sovereignty in 1918, although enthusiastically welcomed by most Poles hitherto living within the three occupying empires, were neither predictable nor at all certain at the time of the outbreak of the war in 1914. The outcome nevertheless had far-reaching consequences for European international relations and the policies of all the major powers. For the Poles, generally dreaming about such an outcome for five generations since 1795, when an independent Poland ceased to exist, the restoration of their country predictably enough did not bring to fruition all their aspirations and patriotic demands and left large Polish population segments still cut-off beyond the newly-established borders of Poland.³

Nevertheless the restoration of the Polish state was at the outset in 1914 a far-fetched dream and projection. Only the incredibly favorable (for Poland) developments resulting from the Allied victory over the German Empire, the collapse and disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian empire in 1918 and the success of the Bolshevik Revolution, which destroyed the Czarist empire, enabled Poland to finally liberate itself from all three occupying and much stronger powers.

At the time (and before during the 19th century) the independence-minded Poles realized that their goal could be only partially achieved through perhaps partial autonomy within either Austria-Hungary or Russia and only through a major European war where the occupying powers would fight each other! Incidentally, Prussia and later Germany never considered any compromise acceptable to the Poles' aspirations. At the beginning of the

¹ "Walki o Utrzymanie Niepodległości w XVIII Wieku", pp. 84-85, "Powstanie Listopadowe..." pp. 96-97; "Wojna Polsko - Rosyjska", pp. 102-103; "Powstanie Listopadowe", pp. 106-107 and "Narodziny Rzeczypospolitej", pp. 112-113 in *Atlas Historii Polski*. Warsaw: Demart, 2006.

² Charles Seymour, *Intimate Portraits of Colonel House*, Vols. I-IV, Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1926.

³ *Polska Niepodległa*. Warsaw: PWN, 2008, and Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland 1795-1918*, Seattle: Washington University Press, 1974.

conflict in 1914, one could have predicted or hoped for Polish autonomy – but never a sovereign Poland! The *de facto* defeat or disappearance through revolutionary change of all three powers was the only reason for the surprising outcome, independence for Poland. But within the realities of the pre-1914 world, the Polish patriots realistically supported and hoped for autonomy for Poland within a victorious Russia (the Polish National Committee founded in Warsaw on November 11, 1914) or the desired transformation of the dualistic Austria-Hungary into a “trilateralism” after a victorious war with Poland being a third political pillar of that empire. The Austrians with German support maximally desired only the absorption of a large part of the Russian-controlled Kingdom of Poland (created in 1815). The pro-Austrian Polish politicians created the NKN (the Chief National Committee), which in turn created the Polish Legions led by Józef Piłsudski, which entered the Kingdom of Poland, at the side of the Austrian Army on August 6, 1914.⁴

Although both Polish orientations were limited by realistic circumstances (autonomy for Poland) they nevertheless achieved considerable influence and made an impact on the policies of both camps in World War I (Russia, England, France and later the U.S.A.) on one side and Austria-Hungary on the other. The impact on two occupying powers (Russia and Austria-Hungary) was initially only limited to the support of their war policies (the Polish Legions under J. Piłsudski and the NKN Political Committee supporting the Austro-Hungarian Empire and a really small Pulaski Legion, and a Polish National Committee supporting Russia). The unexpected military reverses and a growing need for new army recruits compelled both the Russian and Austrian Emperors to issue vague conciliatory messages to the Poles within their realms, promising certain undetermined reforms on November 15, 1916.⁵

The situation changed greatly for the Polish national movement with the Bolshevik revolution in Russia on November 7, 1917, which successfully eliminated Russia however temporarily from her overpowering position in Poland and Eastern Europe generally. Already the March 1917 revolution allowed formation of Polish army units (3 corps) in Russia and the transfer of the Polish National Committee, led by Roman Dmowski, from Moscow to Lausanne, Switzerland in August 1917. That committee was afterwards transferred to Paris and until the formation of the Government of National Unity in Warsaw in January 1919 in reality represented the Polish program of independence to the Western Allies before the end of World War I and in preparation for the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919. After January 1919, it was officially charged with that task by the government of the newly re-constituted Poland. In the last year of the war, it was also instrumental in getting Allied approval for the creation of a volunteer, 70,000-man Polish Army under French Command (the so-called General Haller Army or the “Blue” Army from the color of their uniforms), which served initially in France and later in Poland. Moving beyond the formal political and military structures, one has to turn now to the informal activities of the Polish leaders (essentially non-political but literary, cultural and scholarly), who greatly impacted Western public opinion in Europe, especially France and England but at the crucial juncture also U.S. decision makers.

⁴ Wandycz, pp. 323-330.

⁵ *Kronika Polski*. A. Nowak ed., Cracow: Kluszczyński, 1998, pp. 544-553.

I am referring to the activities of Ignace Paderewski (the world famous musician widely admired in the West in the decades before 1914), Henry Sienkiewicz (the 1905 Nobel Prize writer, who even before the World War I defended Polish children against German persecution in 1901 (for praying in Polish), and Marie Skłodowska-Curie, the only scholar with two Nobel Prizes to her name (in Physics and Chemistry).

Henry Sienkiewicz (who resided in Vevey, Switzerland and could thus act independently) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie, were both active in the Swiss General Committee for Help to the Victims of War in Poland. The committee was established on January 8, 1915, by the former, and united many Poles and Swiss. It became a powerful pressure group that brought the fate of Poland to the attention of the Western Allies and the then-neutral USA. It was instrumental in focusing on Poland in preparation for the Peace Treaty. It was especially important and significant that it operated in neutral Switzerland, hence it immediately established its credibility and gained a warm reception in Western capitals.⁶

The official positions of the Western Allies' (France and Britain) on the re-emergence of Poland changed drastically between 1914 and 1917 after the March and November revolutions in Russia. Initially because of the anti-German alliance with Russia their policies were not and could not be in conflict with the Russian policies regarding Poland. They welcomed the Czarist promise, however vague, of a future post-war autonomy but did not go beyond autonomy. The loss of the Kingdom of Poland to German – Austrian occupation, Austrian promises and the revolutions in Russia all changed the situation completely. They were also influenced by the formal German-Austrian proclamation in November 1916, before the revolutions in Russia, of the planned creation by those countries of a Polish satellite state after their hoped-for victory in World War I.

It was, however, the Treaty of Brest Litovsk of 1918 which took Bolshevik Russia out of the War on the side of the Allies, and enabled the Polish National Committee in Paris both to launch an information campaign based on thorough research, publish books, materials and to present memoranda to the Western Powers concerning the extent of Polish claims and documenting with elaborate statistics (atlases and data) the desired extent of the re-established state.

The activity was centered in Paris, London, and Switzerland, where most of the publications were issued. Permission to create a Polish Army under French command was granted by the French President on February 22, 1917. On January 5, 1918, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George included rebuilding at Poland as one of the goals of the war.⁷

The documentation of the Polish national claims was initially transmitted to both French and British governments (and then to the USA after March 1917) either directly or through the delegates representing the Polish National Committee in each allied capital or more importantly through the Polish leaders, who as individuals established multiple and influential contacts with the Western leaders. This was especially true of both Ignace Paderewski and Henry Sienkiewicz but also directly by the head of the Polish National Committee, Roman Dmowski, who although considered controversial as a nationalist, possessed the unique talent of a perfect knowledge of several languages and a consistent logic shaped by his legal and parliamentary experience.

⁶ *Historia Polski w datach*. Warsaw: PWN, 2007, pp. 399-400.

⁷ *Kronika Polski*, p. 561.

The French/British base of operations included many prominent Poles residing there. They also recruited to the Allied cause the Polish POWs from the German and Austrian Armies. They were grouped initially in France and Italy as they readily joined the Allies after being captured by them. (Unfortunately and tragically, because of the partition of Poland between the three belligerent countries, Poles were forcibly conscripted and had to serve in all those armies – some 400-600,000 of them died between 1914 and 1918 fighting for the occupying powers!)

After the accession of the United States to the Allied cause (March 17, 1917) the attention of the Polish leaders shifted to that country, which had some 3 million Polish immigrants and Americans of Polish heritage. The emerging Polish political pressure group there pre-dated World War I with the First Polish American Congress organized in Washington in 1910. There were many hundreds of Polish American organizations, which actively promoted the cause of Polish independence. They were to be found in all the most important American states and it was a time when Polish Americans actively started to participate in the American political scene; the first Polish American Congressman was elected and re-elected in Wisconsin in 1910-1918.⁸ The United States officially recognized the Polish National Committee in Paris on November 10, 1917, as a Polish representative political body.

The neutral United States (until 1917) was hoping to avoid the direct participation in World War I largely due to strong isolationist feelings, a traditional aversion to European-generated conflicts but also due to its large German and Austrian immigrant communities. Those sentiments started change in the first two years of the war under the impact of the news from the fronts, which increased anti-German feelings and support for Britain and France. It was not, however, until the beginning of the brutal German submarine warfare and the impact of the "Zimmerman Letter" revelations that the entry into World War I became possible. One has to emphasize the early promises of President Woodrow Wilson to keep the USA out of the conflict.

It was therefore difficult for the Polish leaders to influence American public opinion directly. However, they concentrated on the invigorated and very well-organized Polish American community to disseminate their post-war program for Polish independence. Suffice to say, that the whole Polish American community⁹ was united in that goal, although initially like their political counterparts in Poland, they were split between two orientations. By 1917 however, the Polish National Committee was gaining support largely through the very active campaign in that community by Maestro Paderewski who gained almost universal support and represented indirectly the Polish leaders in Paris. This activity was both political and cultural but through his contacts he also facilitated interviews with American government leaders for Roman Dmowski, who presented directly the strictly political program.¹⁰ Ignace Paderewski in most crucial and important cases acted directly, mindful that Dmowski, being a leader of Polish nationalists, was also alienating powerful segments of U.S. public opinion concerned about the future of the Jewish minority in re-established Poland.

⁸ T. Lachowicz, *Dla Ojczyzny Ratowania*. Warsaw: Rytm, 2007, p. 82.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Seymour, op.cit., v. IV pp. 239, 264 and R. Dmowski, *Świat Powoienny i Polska*. 6th ed., Wrocław: Norton, 1999.

It was largely because of Paderewski's impact on the Polish American community through his numerous speeches, emotional patriotic presentations and journalistic contributions to the Polish-language press in America that he enthused some 30,000 American Poles to join the volunteer Polish army units which were being trained in Niagara-on-the-Lake across the border in Canada – to participate in the armed struggle for Polish independence under French command.¹¹

After April 1917, additional thousands of Polish Americans volunteered for the U.S. Expeditionary Forces in France and fought there in the decisive battles on the Western Front in the Summer/Fall of 1918. (It is also of interest, and totally overlooked by many U.S. historians that the U.S. contingent fighting against the Bolshevik Army in Archangel and Murmansk in Northern Russia, was largely composed of U.S. soldiers from the Mid-West. There are many Polish names from Detroit and Chicago on the U.S. graves there¹² and at other U.S. cemeteries all over France.

The volunteers from the Polish-American communities inspired by Paderewski's campaign composed finally a full 1/3 of General Haller's Army formed in France and transferred to Poland in April 1919. That army's role was not only instrumental in advancing Polish national claims at the Versailles Peace Treaty of 1919, but also in the 1919-20 Polish-Bolshevik War which saved Poland's independence in the 1920 "Miracle on the Vistula" victory at the gates of Warsaw.¹³

Hence, apart from the organized Polish pressure groups active during World War I both in Western Europe and the United States, but also and perhaps foremost, the activity behind the scene on behalf of Poland by individual leaders like Ignace Paderewski, should be appraised and emphasized as instrumental in achieving favorable and just support for the restoration of sovereignty to that country after 123 years.

Ignace Paderewski had impressed many American leaders as a great man of music but his deep-seated, burning patriotic feelings about his enslaved Fatherland impacted many leaders with sympathy towards Poland. His extremely large circle of friends, admirers and aficionados also resulted in open access to the top echelons of the American administration and public opinion. He befriended many of those leaders and was also able to sway their sentiments into concrete action on behalf of his political "Dream", which was rebuilding Poland's independence.

His direct impact on the top advisor of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, Col. Edward M. House of Houston, Texas (1858–1939), is fully documented in the latter's memoirs. He was instrumental in coordinating and constructing elements of the U.S. policies towards post-World War I Europe. The famous "Fourteen Points" explaining the U.S. program for Europe announced on January 8, 1918, by President Wilson¹⁴ was prepared and negotiated beforehand by Col. Edward M. House, Paderewski's friend, who singlehandedly included the re-establishment of Poland as the "Thirteenth Point" of the program.

¹¹ Lachowicz, p 83.

¹² As reported to the author by an American political scientist from North Texas University.

¹³ *Czyn Zbroiny Wschodztwa Polskiego w Ameryce*. New York: SWAP, 1957.

¹⁴ Seymour, Vol IV, pp. 192-200.

"An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by undisputedly Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international".¹⁵

The influence of Ignace Paderewski on Col. E. M. House is clearly proven in the latter's memoirs which include the following passage: "to him also came Paderewski with his plans for the resuscitation of Poland, which with the Colonel's assistance developed to such an extent that the great virtuoso – statesman wrote to him: "It has been the dream of my life to find a providential man for my country. I am sure that I have not been dreaming vain dreams."¹⁶

Later, this was officially and publically acknowledged by Ignace Paderewski who said in a speech delivered in Warsaw as a Prime Minister of the new Polish Republic: "The great results obtained in America ought to be attributed to my sincere friend, the friend of all the Poles, Colonel Edward House" (*Independence Polonaise*, February 22, 1919.)¹⁷

Before assessing and analyzing the content and impact of the Thirteenth Point on post- World War I international relations, one has to briefly review similar policy statements made by other powers apart from the United States. Disregarding the 1915 statements of both the German and Austrian emperors, who promised Poland only a vague future as an autonomous satellite state of Germany and Austria-Hungary, it was only the revolutionary government of Soviet Russia which on November 15, 1917, issued an announcement of the annulment of the Partitions of Poland (1772-95) without, however, stipulating its future position on the independence of Poland. Both Great Britain and France made official pronouncements on their policies towards Poland only after their victory in World War I. Hence it was the U.S. President's pronouncement of January 8, 1918, which clearly and explicitly stated that the restoration of Poland to sovereignty would be part of the official U.S. program for the re-shaped Europe after World War I. The inclusion in the "Fourteen Points Program" of the Thirteenth Point concerning Poland was of enormous importance, not only being the first such statement of policy of one of the Allied Powers, but obviously because of the weight and impact of U.S. policy on post-World War I peace making. The elevation of such a statement to be part of the comprehensive American peace compact for Europe was of utmost importance.

The inclusion of the Thirteenth Point in the program, and its origin through the personal intervention of single individual leader, merits our attention and analysis of the assessment of that political activity. It proves beyond question that often the personal contacts on the highest level of political activity amount to much more than the actions of large groups of organized political groups or movements who might be articulating the same demands, but who either have no access or are unable to find proper channels for the delivery of such demands. One person placed "correctly" at that time was able to achieve through personal contacts what otherwise was not possible for equally committed and organized groups with limited or no access. It is, however, obvious that the Paderewski-House contacts used

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 200.

¹⁶ Ibid., Vol. II, p. 340.

¹⁷ Ibid., Vol. III, p. 13.

the documentation, statistics and the presentations prepared by other organized groups, e.g. the Polish National Committee. The proof of this is confirmed by the fact that Ignace Paderewski had facilitated access to Col. House by Mr. R. Dmowski who presented a fully documented memorandum prepared by the Polish National Committee in Paris.¹⁸

In the aftermath of World War I: 1) the achievement of independence for Poland and aligning of the Western border of Poland, largely according to the statement included in the "Thirteenth Point" statement, 2) the true origin of that statement and 3) the preceding personal contacts of an individual Polish statesman (Paderewski), with Col. House, were seldom later emphasized and was not included as part of the Polish historical perception. Future educational programs as well as Polish historical research simply credited these facts as results of the Versailles Peace Treaty of 1919 and not as a political achievement of one Polish patriotic leader. Hence, many college-educated Poles were either unaware or were surprised to find a monument in Warsaw erected by Ignace Paderewski commemorating Col. E.M. House! An overwhelming number of them would not even be able to identify Col. House at all or had never heard of him. However, it is indeed meaningful and symbolic that the Polish Communist government, conscious of the importance of the U.S. impact on the restoration of Poland's sovereignty in 1918, through that man ordered the destruction of the monument that had survived the Nazi occupation, in the 1950's! It was finally rebuilt in 1990 after the "Solidarity" victory at the polls, with funds collected by Polish-American Polonia.

Apart from the role played by Ignace Paderewski in gaining U.S. recognition for the government of new Poland, which he headed (January 16, 1919 – November 29, 1919) the role of the single American scholar, who greatly contributed to the shape of the Western Polish border at the Versailles Peace Treaty of 1919 has to be recalled and emphasized. He was really one of the few Western historians, (the other was Prof. William J. Rose of the University of London), who were experts on the Polish history of the 18th–19th centuries – Professor Robert Howard Lord (1885–1954), a member of the American Versailles Treaty Negotiation Delegation. As an expert on Polish history and professor at Harvard University, he played an important part in delimiting the post-World War I Polish Western border in such a way that it approximated the pre-partition, 1772 border.

The damage done by the 18th century partitions of Poland to the general knowledge of history in the West was obvious because of the claims of the occupying Powers (esp. Germany and Russia) and the disappearance of Poland for over a century. Professor Robert Howard Lord published a seminal work on "Poland's Second Partition"¹⁹ and was thus fully prepared to provide his expertise about the restoration of the Polish Western border to the American delegation to the Versailles Peace Treaty negotiations. It is worth pointing out that there were at that time few equally prepared scholarly experts.

The views of the American delegation as to the shape of the Polish Western borders after World War I were important to stress as they corroborated the nationally-oriented views of the Polish National Committee in Paris whose head Mr. R. Dmowski was an officially designated Polish delegate, along with Ignace Paderewski, to the Versailles Peace process in 1919. In this case, apart from the support of the French delegation, the U.S.

¹⁸ See footnote 10 supra.

¹⁹ R. H. Lord, *Drugi Rozbior Polski*. Warsaw: Pax, 1984.

expertise proved also to be conclusive. The divergence as to the future of Upper Silesia and Danzig (Gdansk), which emerged in the final version of the border proposal, was largely due to British objections. Hence, a plebiscite in the Upper Silesia and the Free City-State status for Danzig – was decided.²⁰

It is here that the role of American expert Professor Robert Howard Lord, again an individual impacting post-World War I Polish sovereignty has to be stressed, as it is too often overlooked totally in discussing the shaping of the U.S. policies toward reborn Poland emerging from that conflict.²¹ As the shape of the borders de-limiting her newly regained sovereignty was of crucial importance for reuniting Western Poland with central and southern Polish territories had not been seriously considered during the war, American expertise on that issue during the Versailles negotiations was of overarching importance. It is especially important to point out that throughout the war Germany never considered such an option in planning for a future satellite Poland within the "Middle Europe" solution.²² Western Poland was at that time and is even now the richest and most developed part of that nation-state. Without establishing the "Versailles" Western border of Poland it would have been permanently and drastically hampered its political, economic and cultural development. Hence, the support of the American delegation, and not only the French delegation was truly a decisive determinant.

The contribution of the third American leader in the humanitarian and economic fields, in reality averting a momentous calamity of hunger and its catastrophic impact on Polish children, is now either totally overlooked or unknown because of the lapse of time since World War I. It was Herbert Hoover (1874–1964), organizer and chairman of the American Commission for Relief, who according to contemporary documentation provided food and possibly saved from starvation hundreds of thousands of Polish children, especially in the war-ravaged eastern territories of Poland during the last year of war (1918) and the following two years, 1919 and 1920, when the agricultural production of those areas were stunted, while the rest of the Polish harvest was unable to feed the people adequately. Although the impact of the American food supplies (some 400,000 tons) was duly noted and thoroughly appreciated at the time, it has now also faded into the past.²³ The only tangible memento of that help is Hoover Square in downtown Warsaw, which before World War II was also adorned with a monument to Hoover's humanitarian work.²⁴

Apart from the above-analyzed activities of the American individual leaders resulting in the political as well as humanitarian impact on Poland during the World War I and shortly thereafter, one has to also mention the military activities which contributed after the war to the Polish victory over the Soviet Union in 1920.

First, and at that time, the only modern and well-equipped part of the reconstituted Polish Armed Forces was the Haller Army (some 70,000 troops in strength) commanded by French and Polish officers and credited with several turning-point victories in the war

²⁰ *Kronika Polski*, p. 583.

²¹ It is significant that the Polish edition of his book was only published in ...1984, some 59 years after the first American edition in 1915!

²² See footnote 5.

²³ George J. Lerski, *Herbert Hoover and Poland*, Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1977 and *An American Friendship: Herbert Hoover and Poland*, Stanford: Hoover Institution, 2004.

²⁴ *Ibid.* It was called the 'Monument of Gratitude to the USA'.

against the Bolsheviks.²⁵ (These positive contributions were, however, partly overshadowed by the controversy over their martial law handling of nationality conflicts in the Polish Eastern Territories, which resulted in the execution of Jews and subsequent negative international publicity).²⁶

Another interesting but now almost totally forgotten episode was the small but very significant, in view of the paucity of Polish air power, American Air Squadron named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko and composed of U.S. veteran volunteer airmen who fought valiantly in the Polish-Soviet War of 1919-20 and distinguished themselves in slowing down the Soviet offensive of 1920. Commanded by Major Cedric E. Fauntleroy, it was named after the American War of Independence Polish-American general and Polish 1794 Insurgency commander.²⁷ It is a source of pride for the author of this paper that two of the American airmen-volunteers were Elliot William Chess, a native of El Paso, Texas, and another, his cousin Earl F. Evans, who graduated from the University of Texas at El Paso.²⁸ Both military contributions favorably impacted and enabled the 1921 Polish – Soviet Treaty of Riga, which for the next 18 years established Poland's Eastern border.

Although generally supportive of re-establishing Poland after World War I and providing both recognition and financial support to the government of Poland, beginning in January 1919, under the premiership of Ignace Paderewski whose popularity in the USA was unabating, – the American administration did not fully approve the multi-national and diversified Poland it had helped to re-establish. That Poland enlarged its Eastern territories and the size of its minorities (1/3) was contrary to the Thirteenth Point of 1918.²⁹

Hence, the United States, swayed by American public opinion and pressure groups composed of Poland's minorities, shared with the other major powers a policy supporting the "Minority Clauses" of the Versailles Treaty, which Poland had been forced to sign, as a guarantee for future preservation of its minorities human rights. Since Germany, a vanquished nation of World War I was not obligated to sign a similar minority clause, this caused a considerable resentment in Poland. Nevertheless, the Polish Parliament ratified the treaty.

Finally, discussing other post-World War I American activities in Poland, one has to mention also the return of a sizeable group of Polish Americans (ca 160,000) to Poland which resulted in the transfer of economic resources (loans and grants), investments (e.g. the financing of the Polish Merchant Marine buildup and an indirect impact on modernization (although the returning Americans settled mostly in the most developed Western Poland (e.g. cities of Bydgoszcz, Poznan, etc.)

The visibility of the United States in Warsaw since those years remains in the existence of Washington and Wilson Squares.³⁰ The rebuilding of the Monument of "Gratitude to the USA" at the Hoover Square in Warsaw ironically enough, has never been accomplished in the three decades after 1989.

²⁵ Czyn...op.cit and Dla... op.cit and Kronika... op.cit. p. 575.

²⁶ Kronika. pp. 583-584.

²⁷ *Kosciuszko Letters in the American Revolution*. Chicago: Polish Museum of America, 1977.

²⁸ R.F. Karlovitz and Ros S. Fenn, *Flight of the Eagles*. Sioux Fall: Brevet Press, 1974, pp. 39, 217.

²⁹ See footnote 15.

³⁰ And similarly named streets in all major Polish cities!

MAGDA STROIŃSKA

McMASTER UNIVERSITY, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

National Independence versus Societal Trauma: Can a Nation Enslaved by its Past be Independent?

Between stimulus and response is our greatest power—the freedom to choose.

Attributed to Victor Frankl; Stephen R. Covey, 1989

Abstract: *Human history is a mixture of positive developments and setbacks, many of them of tragic proportions. Some historical events may have a dramatic and long-lasting impact on large groups of people. Sometimes entire nations have suffered the effects of what is referred to as societal, historical, collective or cultural trauma. While such historical traumas have been acknowledged in literature, little is usually done to assist societies or groups that have been affected in dealing, in practical terms, with various symptoms of post-traumatic psychological issues that affect individual members of the group, who, in turn, determine the behaviour of the group as a whole. This paper suggests that survivors of societal traumas, just like people who go through personal tragedies, need help in order to overcome the effects of their experience or face the risk of repeating the cycle of violence, often becoming the perpetrators themselves. While the focus of this paper is on Polish historical traumas and how they influence the choices made by Polish society today, some observations may be applicable to post-traumatic societal behaviours in general.*

What is trauma

The word trauma comes from Greek where it refers to the result of an injury – a *wound*. Definition of trauma according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5, 2013) includes direct or indirect exposure and response, either as the victim

or witness, to actual or threatened death or serious injury caused by an attack, accident, natural disaster or sexual violence. Immediately after the traumatic event, typical reactions include shock and denial. Longer term effects include unpredictable and changeable emotions, flashbacks stemming from the traumatic experience, difficult relationships with others and physical or psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches. These effects are normal and expected, however, they may be very disturbing and are likely to persist unless the survivor receives counselling or other assistance. Many people who went through an experience of trauma find it very difficult to continue normal lives and "move on." Psychologists can help these individuals find constructive ways of managing their emotions.

Extending the scope of trauma exposure to actual or threatened death, actual or threatened serious injury, or actual or threatened sexual violence, either as a victim or "merely" a witness, is very important as it incorporates into the category of trauma survivors entire generations of those who went through the experience of war or any societal trauma. This definition includes witnessing trauma, directly or indirectly (e.g. through media accounts or through participating in truth and reconciliation rituals), exposure to trauma as part of professional duties, as is the case e.g. for paramedics, first responders, police, fire fighters, members of the jury in particularly gruesome criminal trials – the list of ways that people may become witnesses of trauma is almost endless. Here, we are mostly interested in group reactions to societal traumas but each trauma experience is individual and personal, and each trauma happens within the context of an individual and unique life.

Societal traumas: the case of Poland

There are several different types of traumatogenic events that can affect large groups of people. They may be man-made, such as foreign and civil wars and occupation, terrorist attacks, etc. But they can also be natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, wide-spread fires or famine. While those who survive such traumas are aware of the physical suffering they went through, they do not necessarily realize that they may also be experiencing various psychological effects of trauma. It is also not obvious to those who bring assistance that they need to look after psychological as well as physical injuries.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the world has been the stage for a wide range of political and military conflicts, as well as other forms of societal unrest. Some of these conflicts follow from political problems from the previous century when two world wars brought death and destruction to large parts of the world and destroyed the old world order. Societal and intergenerational traumas have been observed as a result of genocide, wars, slavery or systematic abuse of cultural, ethnic or religious groups. Here, I argue that the exposure of Polish society, already traumatized by World War II and either Nazi or Soviet occupation, to over 40 years of communist rule resulted in societal trauma whose effects did not disappear with the collapse of the system in 1989. The assumption that the removal of the source of trauma – in this case the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, means an automatic end to the trauma experience has no base in evidence. In fact, there have been no prior examples of transition from communism to market economy and so there is no body of knowledge how it should have been done and what social costs it could incur. And yet, most people in Eastern Europe had the expectation that life

would change overnight even though they have had no experience of living and working in any system other than a centrally planned economy with artificial full employment and a safety net of a welfare state. Western countries were unable to offer any assistance as this situation was also new to them.

Anomie or the absence of norms

Over the years, Polish society, like other societies that have been subjected to foreign occupation or authoritarian rule, has become highly dysfunctional. The societal response to trauma translated into behaviours that allowed people to survive political and psychological abuse by adapting to it. While sociologists looking at post-communist societies often focus on the traumatogenic effects of change, especially the human cost of the transformation from a centrally planned to a market economy after 1989 (cf. Sztompka 2004, 2010), I am more interested in the traumatic outcomes of adaptation to the anomie of life in communist times. Anomie is a condition of social instability, usually resulting from a breakdown of standards and values or from a lack of purpose or ideals (Encyclopedia Britannica online at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/anomie>). The term was introduced by the French sociologist Émile Durkheim for situations where the social standards necessary for regulating behaviour were lacking.

According to Durkheim (1893-1960), we can talk about the condition of anomie when common or traditional values and their significance are no longer understood, accepted or followed by members of society while new values have not yet emerged. Cultural norms usually break down because of rapid social change. The situation that Durkheim referred to was the growing individualism in a society where division of labour led to increasing isolation of people and simultaneously their growing dependence on each other. However, authoritarian systems produce another situation that leads to anomie. People are told that traditional values, including religious teachings, can no longer be adhered to but there is no clear guide, likely intentionally, to what laws are to be followed. The omnipresence of law enforcement, random punishment, and general mistrust erode human relationships. The main psychological effect of anomie is uncertainty and lack of grounding. Other effects may include a sense of futility, lack of purpose, emotional emptiness and despair. Since there are no accepted and agreed upon definitions of what is good, desirable or moral and why, many people may feel that there is no sense to strive to achieve anything.

The concept of anomie was further developed by Robert Merton (1938) who focused on situations where there was no fit between what a given culture or society considered to be desirable (e.g. what could be defined as 'success') and that culture's or society's accepted means of achieving such goals. Merton advanced the idea that some societal conditions may push people towards deviant behaviours (he labelled it 'strain theory') if the accepted goals cannot always be achieved by accepted means. It may also be the case that some groups may be in some way prohibited or discouraged from striving after some goals and so they may withdraw and not even attempt to achieve them or may rebel against the social order that limits their choices. Merton developed a typology of such adaptations, from conformity to rebellion. Particularly interesting, from our point of view

is the situation when people use means that have no social approval in order to achieve culturally approved goals. Menton calls it "innovation". In communist Poland (as well as in Nazi Germany, c.f. Klemperer 1946/1993) the verb *to organize* was often used to describe the way of obtaining material goods or desired outcomes by some unconventional means. In a society where material wealth, or even access to basic goods and services was restricted, people would use means such as bribes or connections in order to obtain them. It is important to realize that this pushes (often the majority of) the population, into the territory of possibly illegal or even criminal activity. This is where it becomes important that there are no clear lines dividing what is legal and what is illegal, giving people the frightening feeling of uncertainty. It was one's position in the hierarchy, not what one did, that determined the legality of actions. This would be an example of anomie in the context of a communist country or – possibly – of any country where ideology or party politics dictate the law. Germany in the 1930s and the current situation in Poland show that a society can land in such a place even through democratic processes (i.e. democratic elections).

After trauma

An emphasis on achieving certain desirable ends with rather vague regulations of what means are acceptable for achieving them may create a level of stress that leads people to question or disregard the rules. In situations where socially acceptable means of achieving goals fail, other, often illegitimate means become a natural choice. But if I use illegitimate means, I will be more likely to tolerate and accept other people using them. This is why crime and dishonesty were so often a reaction to the kind of anomie characteristic of communist societies.

Gessen (2017) asks the following question about Russia: "How do societies absorb trauma?" She suggests that Russians took on the habit of suffering, repeating the damage generation after each generation, longing for a strong leader to take responsibility for them and tell them what to do. Poles suffered differently but they too came out of the traumas of the 20th century seriously damaged, a particular version of *homo sovieticus*, with more complexes, more of a victim mentality and with a specific flavour of messianic tendencies added by the influence of the Catholic Church. Like all survivors of trauma, we have been shaped by our experience and cannot shake off its influence even though the Soviet Block crumbled 30 years ago and Poland has been a member of the EU and NATO for over 15 years, something my generation did not believe would happen during our lifetime.

In psychology, societal trauma encompasses various forms of traumatization. As already mentioned, social groups experience trauma as a result of historical events that may cause emotional or physical injuries to many or most members of the community. These injuries persist and are then passed down to the next generation even if the immediate causes of trauma have been removed. In order to heal from trauma, whether individual or societal, certain conditions need to apply.

First and foremost, the survivor of trauma needs to seek safety. The fact that the circumstances that have caused trauma ended does not by itself create safety. The end of communism created a societal vacuum and there were no guidelines – neither in theory nor in practice – for a safe transition to a market economy.

Second, the survivor needs to have time and a safe space to process the experience, and make meaning of it. The post-communist euphoria in Eastern Europe, and worldwide, did not leave much space for societal processing of what had happened. People were busy trying to find themselves in the new reality, often unemployed for the first time. They did not think that processing their trauma was a priority. Also, victims of trauma need professional therapy and counselling. Eastern Europeans usually believe that therapy is for the weak and one needs to be strong or at least pretend to be strong.

Third, survivors of trauma need to actively examine their experience and try to grow from it or move on. It is impossible to move on until the experience of trauma has been processed and integrated into life narrative. This usually requires talking about trauma, understanding the circumstances, assigning blame to its perpetrators and not its victims or survivors. It seems that instead of moving on and possibly growing from their trauma, many post-traumatic societies are stuck in the past and often exploit their past suffering.

Typical long-term effects of trauma include a number of physical, emotional and behavioural symptoms: headaches, a weak immune system and gastro-intestinal issues; overeating or malnutrition; muscle tension and fatigue, insomnia, irritability, depression, poor concentration and a lack of motivation, drug and alcohol issues, fear of being judged and worry about performing everyday tasks, intense anxiety, flashbacks and nightmares, hyper-sensitivity to things that remind the survivor of a past trauma, and engaging in repetitive, often self-destructive behaviors (cf. psychguides.com).

When we read about or see children who have been through tragic or traumatic ordeal, we naturally feel that they need help, protection and lots of care. To adults, on the other hand, we tend to say that they should move on and stop thinking about their past. And yet, when it comes to nations, we assume that the mere cessation of traumatogenic factors makes everything right and that people can immediately start rebuilding their lives.

External versus inner independence

The Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary's definition of independence is "the quality or state of being independent." The adjective "independent" has a more specific definition that describes its meaning under several categories. The meanings that are relevant for this discussion include: not dependent, i.e. not subject to control by others (self-governing) or not affiliated with a larger controlling unit; not requiring or relying on something else (not contingent); not looking to others for one's opinions or for guidance in conduct; not bound by, or committed to, a political party or not requiring or relying on others (as for care or livelihood); having enough means to free one from the necessity of working for a living; showing a desire for freedom (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/independent>). Dictionary.com offers a somewhat wider definition of "independence, adding to "the state or quality of being independent" a second part: "freedom from the control, influence, support, aid, or the like, of others" (<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/independence?s=t>).

Countries may be independent and sovereign or they could be occupied by external forces or politically motivated internal factions. Political or economic independence are complex issues and there are many grey areas: for example, are countries of the European

Union independent entities if – by definition – they are bound by treaties and agreements that limit their political choices? Being part of a larger group always imposes certain limitations in exchange for the group membership that usually offers certain benefits. The question that we would like to focus on here, however, is whether individual people in countries that have experienced societal traumas are free from control of factors from their past.

We know that trauma does not end when traumatogenic factors cease to operate. Survivors of trauma often have problems with anger and may engage in re-enacting events from their past. Especially those who suffered abuse early in their lives tend to engage in unhealthy and often violent relationships as adults. While men may repeat the cycle of abuse by behaving aggressively or worshipping various forms of violence and dangerous activities, women may become re-victimized themselves or may fail to protect their children against aggression and other risks. The hypersensitivity and arousal to experiences that remind survivors of past traumas make it more difficult for them to think in a rational way and attempt to integrate traumatic experiences into the life narrative. These memories may also cause survivors to re-enact the past even if each experience causes pain: they may keep hoping that next time they would not make the same mistakes and would regain control. Thus, they repeat familiar patterns and associate with people who seem familiar regardless of the fact that these behaviours are likely to bring more pain.

The society in post-communist Poland shows several of the symptoms of societal trauma. They include tolerance for dishonesty, worship of past defeats and suffering of the nation, the idea that this suffering was in some way an instrument of salvation of other nations (the famous belief that Poland was the Christ of Nations, *Polska Chrystusem Narodów*). Another symptom is the propensity towards addiction to alcohol and drugs and a very unhealthy lifestyle. Most troubling of all, in my view, is the inclination to repeat the cycle of abuse: e.g. by electing governments that do not expect citizens to take responsibility for their actions and for the country, looking for strong leaders that will take care of them, and abusing those who are perceived as weaker, in particular women and children.

Intergenerational trauma

Trauma also does not stop with the people who were directly affected by the experience. Especially those who were unable to process traumatic experience are prone to passing it on to those around them, and this includes the next generation. The psychological and physical (e.g. health related) consequences of historical societal traumas are the reason why children and grandchildren of trauma survivors often suffer from intergenerational trauma. This makes perfect sense as trauma survivors may engage in repeated re-enactments of trauma or cycles of repeated abuse. Unable to deal with the anger, they may become the perpetrators themselves as they tend to fall into familiar routines. This explains why the effects of the Holocaust can be felt by the second and third generation of the survivors of the Nazi extermination of Jews; survivors or residential schools in First Nations communities in North America have passed some aspects of their traumatic experience onto their children, who then in turn passed it to their children. The long-lasting negative effects of historical oppression of the First Nations have been studied in Canada (e.g. Sotero, 2006) where the last residential school closed in 1996. While federal govern-

ment's apologies and compensation projects are a good starting point, the most important work concerns mental and physical health effects of centuries long victimization of the First Nations (Quinn, 2007).

Intergenerational trauma can be defined as "a collective complex trauma inflicted on a group of people who share a specific group identity or affiliation—ethnicity, nationality, and religious affiliation. It is the legacy of numerous traumatic events a community experiences over generations and encompasses the psychological and social responses to such events" (Evans-Campbell, 2008: 320). While there is a growing amount of research on historical trauma of the Holocaust survivors and the North American First Nations, there is so far no body of psychological research on historical traumas of Eastern Europeans or Poles. Some results, however, may be generalized. For example, survivors of trauma may engage in maladaptive parenting that can cause challenges for children (BraveHeart, 2003), have problems with substance abuse, depression (Menzies, 2010), and often experience the feelings of hopelessness and suicidal thoughts (Strickland et al., 2006).

New biological research adds to our understanding of intergenerational trauma by providing preliminary evidence for epigenetic transmission of behavioural traits. It shows that change may occur because of the individual's interactions with an environment, rather than through a shifting of DNA material in the genes. These changes appear to be permanent and inheritable for several generations. The most important point is that the trauma or prolonged stress experienced by the mother can create an environmental press of an epigenetic nature that can negatively impact on an as yet un-conceived child (Shachar-Dadon, Schulkin & Leshem, 2009). While Polish historical traumas have been very different from the systematic oppression, extermination, and cultural deprivation (language, traditions, religious and spiritual beliefs) of the First Nations in Canada, Poles too suffered the loss of their state and national independence, the loss of language and culture through russification and germanisation, and the traumas of war and ethnic extermination. The effects of these traumas are often overlooked and may sometimes only be realized when one finds oneself in a different cultural sphere where Polish fears and phobias become noticeable.

Can we expect a traumatized person to be independent?

At the end of World War I, after more than a century of partitions, Poland finally regained independence. This time of freedom lasted only some 20 years and ended with the German and Soviet attack in September 1939. World War II brought huge military and civilian casualties, changed the ethnic composition of the society, and forced the entire nation to witness indiscriminate and systematic death and destruction. The end of WWII replaced German occupation with Soviet political domination. There was no time to properly reflect on the trauma that had been the experience of Polish society and, in addition, a big chunk of that experience was censored and could not be discussed. The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact remained an inconvenient and well-guarded secret in post-war Poland, the Soviet attack was not taught in schools and not depicted in literature or film. Parts of history, e.g. the killing of Polish officers by the Soviets in Katyn, were modified to fit the ideology of the time. Thus Germans were blamed for all war-time crimes, even those

committed by individual Poles, often for petty personal gain. Just as it was during partitions when Polish history and literature were not taught in schools, the newest history had to be learned at home. Many young people grew up knowing two versions of history – the official one taught in school and the one told at home. But not all parents knew the history themselves or wanted to risk their children being mixed up in what was allowed to be talked about and what was not. Watching what one could and could not say contributed to some form of cognitive dissonance, Orwellian *doublethink*. However, even listening to Western radio stations and trying to distinguish facts from propaganda was not enough to stay immune to the influences of communist ideology. Those who lived in communist countries unconsciously absorbed attitudes and beliefs of the system they detested: we did not understand the principles of market economy and basic finances, we had no respect for money and believed that education, access to culture and health care were free because we did not realize that they were financed by our taxes. We did not even know we were paying taxes (or that we were paid less than the value of our work) as there were no salary statements with tax deductions. We did not have to file tax returns: the communist state liberated us from that responsibility.

When the communist system collapsed, market economy brought with it the overt payment of taxes and abolished full employment. All of a sudden, people had to become responsible for themselves. They were given a much larger degree of agency over their lives (trauma takes away the feeling of being in control) but not the tools to use that agency in a meaningful way.

External independence, social freedoms and democratic order are not enough for a nation to prosper when people are internally enslaved by the damaging influence of historical trauma. They believe in conspiracy theories that support their victimhood (cf. Piątek, 2018, McIntyre, 2018), they need to find targets for their pent up anger and feelings of inadequacy. They tolerate dishonesty in their leaders but hate those who are different – in skin colour, religion or political views (Sunstein, 2018). They suffer from addiction to alcohol and drugs. They need to feel special and will follow those leaders who tell them that their past sufferings make them special (Snyder, 2017). Orwell summed up the essence of dictatorship in the motto to his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: "He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past." (Orwell 1949). The return to the past in Polish politics could make sense from a social psychology point of view. Unfortunately, for politicians, it only serves as an effective way to make people focus on previously unacknowledged suffering that deepens the victimhood. Thus the glorification of the so-called "cursed soldiers", those members of the Polish underground army from WWII who did not lay down their arms and continued fighting, often killing innocent civilians. The current populist government of Law and Justice liberated the ugly demons of nationalism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia. It supports Polish nationhood based on pure blood and the Catholic religion, forgetting that, for centuries, Poland was ethnically and religiously mixed and that the ethnic homogeneity of Poland today is the result of the deliberate politics of racial extermination by the Nazis and the Soviet-led struggle against the so called *enemies of the people*. But the return to the past is indeed necessary for the process of healing. Until we address traumas of the past, and this includes Polish involvement in both heroic deeds and atrocities, we risk perpetuating the cycle of abuse of others and repeated self-victimization (cf. Stroińska et al 2014). The healing will not happen until we tell ourselves

that it is OK to seek 'therapy', reset our values, apologize to those we hurt, and start seeing ourselves as brave survivors rather than eternal victims. Unfortunately, so far, the Polish language does not even have a fitting equivalent for the word *survivor*.

Healing from intergenerational societal trauma

The 2012 document *Intervention to Address Intergenerational Trauma: Overcoming, Resisting and Preventing Structural Violence*, emphasizes that while "academics have developed sophisticated modes to explain how it works, [...] there has been less of an effort to develop models of healing intergenerational trauma. It is acknowledged that the cumulative effects of trauma are passed down along generations and often are amplified or cause other unpredictable impacts." In Poland too, the focus now has to be on healing.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples of Canada defines healing from historical traumas as "personal and societal recovery from the lasting effects of oppression and systemic racism experienced over generations." Just like the First Nations of Canada, people of Poland "must confront the crippling injuries of the past" (Gathering Strength: Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996). This self-reflection needs to be done honestly and with an open mind so that, as a nation, we can assess both the injuries suffered and injuries caused to others. As long as Poles see themselves only as innocent victims, there can be no feeling of responsibility for our actions. Without taking control over the direction for the future, we are still living in the past of true and imagined victimhood. Until we stop feeding our desire for victimhood and free ourselves from the traumas of the past, we cannot be independent because independence requires agency and responsibility.

Should independence really be our goal?

"No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main," wrote John Donne (*Meditation XVII*, 1624/1923). While he reflected on the human need and necessity to be part of a group, the same sentiment applies to nations and countries. As individuals, we need others in order to create a strong community. As nations, we need good relationships with other countries in order to form alliances. Working together with others is based on mutual respect, tolerance, and the ability to be open-minded about various ways of doing things. Diversity makes us stronger, not weaker. In a group with diverse backgrounds, there are usually more creative solutions.

Trauma of past oppression shapes people to mistrust others and promotes isolation and alienation. In order to enter meaningful relationships, both with other people and with other countries, we first have to be free to do what we want or need to do. We have to overcome the paralyzing effects of trauma of the past because only free people can be both independent and reliable within relationships. But should we really aim for independence as our ultimate goal?

Independence or Interdependence

In a world where it is becoming increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to depend solely on oneself and be self-sufficient, a more practical goal is to enter relationships of fair and stable *interdependence*, i.e. dependence of two or more people or communities on each other.

In an *interdependent* relationship, participants may be emotionally, economically, or morally reliant on, and responsible to, each other. Thus, interdependence is a relationship that can arise between two or more autonomous participants who agree to cooperate. As such, interdependence seems to be a sensible common ground between the aspirations of those who push for independence and those who want to focus on the welfare of smaller communities.

The tale of two wolves

There is a popular story told in Canada and attributed to various Native sources. It is usually called a tale of two wolves. In that story, a grandfather tells his grandson about two wolves that fight in every one of us. One wolf represents all that is evil in mankind: anger, envy, greed, lies, superiority, etc. The other wolf represents peace, love, kindness, compassion, and joy. The little boy asks: Which wolf will win? And the grandfather answers: the one you feed.

It feels that, unless we agree to undergo a deep self-reflection and start healing, we continue to feed the wrong wolf.

References

- Agnew, R. 1992. "Foundation for a General Strain Theory". *Criminology*. 30 (1): 47–87.
- Brave Heart, M. Y. 2003. The historical trauma response among natives and its relationship with substance abuse: A Lakota illustration. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 35(1), 7–13.
- Covey, Stephen R. 1989. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Donne, John 1624/1923. *Donne's Devotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. 2013. 5th Edition. American Psychiatric Association.
- Durkheim, Emile. 1893/1960. *The Division of Labor in Society*. (G. Simpson, trans.) New York: The Free Press.
- Evans-Campbell, Teresa. 2008. "Historical Trauma in American Indian/Native Alaska Communities: A Multilevel Framework for Exploring Impacts on Individuals, Families, and Communities". *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Vol 23 (3). 316–338.
- Gathering Strength. 1996. Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Vol. 3. (e-Book edition 2013 available at: https://archive.org/stream/RoyalCommissionOnAboriginalPeoplesFinalReportVol.3/Royal%20Commission%20on%20Aboriginal%20Peoples%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20Vol.%203_djvu.txt).

- Gessen, M. 2017. *The Future is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia*. Riverhead Books: New York.
- "Intervention to Address Intergenerational Trauma: Overcoming, Resisting and Preventing Structural Violence." 2012. Calgary: University of Calgary. Accessed on August 11, 2018 at: https://www.ucalgary.ca/wethurston/files/wethurston/Report_InterventionToAddressIntergenerationalTrauma.pdf.
- Klemperer, Victor. 1947. *LTI. Notizbuch eines Filologen*. Leipzig: Reklam Verlag.
- Klemperer, Victor. 1992. *LTI: Z notatnika filologa*. (Magda Stroińska, trans.) Toronto: Polski Fundusz Wydawniczy w Kanadzie.
- McIntyre, Lee. 2018. *Post-truth*. The MIT Press: Cambridge MA.
- Menzies, Peter. 2010. "Intergenerational Trauma from a Mental Health Perspective." *Native Social Work Journal*, Vol 7, 68-75.
- Merton, Robert. 1938. "Social Structure and Anomie". *American Sociological Review*, 3 (5): 672-682.
- Orwell, George. 1949. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. London: Secker & Warburg.
- Piątek, Tomasz. 2017. *Macierewicz i jego tajemnice*. Arbitror: Warszawa
- Quinn, A. 2007. Reflections on intergenerational trauma: Healing as a critical intervention. *First Peoples Child & Family Review*, 3, 722.
- Shachar-Dadon, A., Schulkin, J., & Leshem, M. 2009. Adversity before conception will affect adult progeny in rats. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(1), 9-16.
- Snyder, Timothy. 2017. *On Tyranny*. Tim Duggan Books: New York NY.
- Sotero, M. 2006. A conceptual model of historical trauma: Implications for public health practice and research. *Journal of Health Disparities Research and Practice*, 1 (1), 93-108.
- Strickland, C. June, Walsh, Elaine & Michelle Cooper. 2006. "Healing Fractured Families: Parents' and Elders' Perspectives on the Impact of Colonization and Youth Suicide Prevention in a Pacific Northwest American Indian Tribe." *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, Vol. 17 (1), 5-12.
- Stroińska, M., Cecchetto, V. and K. Szymanski (eds). 2014. *The Unspeakable: Narratives of Trauma*. Peter Lang Verlag: Tübingen.
- Sunstein, Cass R. 2018. *Can it happen here: Authoritarianism in America*. Dey St. New York NY.
- Sztompka, Piotr. 2004. The trauma of social change: a case of post-communist societies. In: Jeffrey Alexander, Eyerman, Ron, Giesen, Bernhard, Smelser, Neil J. & Sztompka, Piotr (eds) *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Berkeley: California University Press. 155-195.
- Sztompka P. (2010) The Ambivalence of Social Change in Post-Communist Societies. The Case of Poland. In: Soeffner H.G. (ed) *Unsichere Zeiten*. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden. 265-286.
- "Trauma Symptoms, Causes, and Effects." 2018. Psychguide.com. Accessed on August 7, 2018 at: <https://www.psychguides.com/guides/trauma-symptoms-causes-and-effects/>.
- Yehuda, Rachel, Sarah L. Halligan and Robert Grossman. 2001. "Childhood trauma and risk for PTSD: Relationship to intergenerational effects of trauma, parental PTSD, and cortisol excretion." *Development and Psychopathology*, 13: 733-753.

PROF. HABIL. DR. ALFONSAS EIDINTAS

FOREIGN MINISTRY OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

***From a Common to a National State(s)
and the Lithuanian-Polish Dispute***

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the restoration of the independent states of Poland and Lithuania, we will return to a fundamental question, namely, whether the relationship between our contemporary states, which had already become hostile during the restoration process, is a time of missed opportunities? Or maybe the interests of both sides were simply so different that it was impossible for them to agree on a matter of major importance – state territory (partly also on the issue of national minorities) – and to balance their interests, thus avoiding conflict and a particularly hostile bilateral relationship which lasted until the tragic developments for both Poland and Lithuania in 1939-1940, when our countries fell victim to two tyrants.

It is necessary to adopt new approaches to history. As time passes, new generations lose the memory of how events developed. Moreover, old beliefs, suspicions, and phobias are even revived. I would like to tell you a personal story in order to illustrate this point. At the end of December 1993, an annual convention of Lithuanian ambassadors was held in Vilnius. I had just flown in from Washington, D.C., and so I was reflecting on the attitude of the U.S. Administration and the conclusions that were arrived at after some friendly discussions with the staff of the Polish Embassy in Washington D.C., and I shared my thoughts.

At that time, talks on a treaty between Lithuania and Poland had stalled, and so the Lithuanian side, including members of both the Government and the opposition, was working under a cloud of fear and suspicion. They were slowly looking for miraculous ways to describe past events, while some groups of people were demonstrating on the streets. When I spoke at the convention, I believed and recommended for many historical, geopolitical, and cultural reasons and despite a complicated past that we stop ruining the present and endeavor to reach an agreement with Poland as soon as possible because this nation is an important partner and we share the same values and have common strategic goals with the people of Poland. At first, my words were met with complete silence. Then,

much to my surprise, the speech was loudly applauded. So, the Lithuanian diplomatic corps supported friendly relations with Poland. On 26 April 1994, Poland and Lithuania signed the Treaty of Friendly Relations and Good-Neighborly Cooperation.

I shall survey the position with which I am better acquainted: that of the Lithuanian side on relations with Poland and the Polish people. In the aftermath of World War I, the goals of Lithuania changed substantially: the goal of autonomy (in the Russian sphere) was replaced by the goal of independence. The two wings of Lithuania's political spectrum – the conservatives (the right, mainly Christian Democrats and Nationalists) and the radicals (the left, mainly Social Democrats and liberals) – appealed to the natural, inherent rights of a nation. The conservatives hoped for the gradual renewal of life in a rather ethnic nation according to their understanding. The radicals had a socialist reform plan aimed at modifying or transforming the nation (*populi*) – the entirety of its citizens, who had decided to live in a one state structure. Their programs incorporated a significant link between the natural rights of a people and the historical tradition of the Lithuanian state – a link which allowed both wings to implement the actual idea of national consolidation.

In the process of restoring the Lithuanian state, besides gaining the consensus of Lithuania's political factions, it was also necessary to establish a *modus vivendi*, first, with the Jewish population that lived in the country's towns (shtetls) and cities (and that had an economic interest in a larger Lithuanian state) and, second, with the Polish-speaking landowners, who had also been there for centuries, as well as with the Polish population in the towns and cities, most of whom were oriented toward the Polish state that was being restored and saw Lithuania as an integral part of Poland. Belarusians were less important because of their fragmentation, although contacts with them had not been abandoned, as evidenced by the fact that the first interim governments of Lithuania had also included ministers without portfolio for Belarusian and Jewish affairs from November 1918.

Lithuanian radicals recognized the importance of having the Polish and Jewish minorities as equal citizens loyal to the country. The radicals countered the influence of Lithuanian conservatives and Polish nationalists (Endeks) by expanding the dialogue between the democratic and socialist groups. A unique group since the end of the 19th century was the democratic movement of the noble intelligentsia called the *krajowcy* (Michał Römer, Tadeusz Wróblewski, Ludwik and Witold Abramowicz, and others), which continued the traditions of territorial patriotism and recognized Lithuania and Belarus as a single political and economic entity that deserved its own statehood based on citizenship of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the possibility of restoring the GDL in confederation (or equal federation) with Poland.¹

Consultations between various ethnic groups continued during the war, as Russian influence declined. In the face of the German factor, after the German army had occupied Lithuania, political visions changed quickly. The Lithuanian activist Petras Klimas wrote: "Under the German presence, we can see how we are solidifying politically, how our visions are becoming clearer and more precise. The goal of independence, of orientation to

¹ Rimantas Miknys, „Vilniaus autonomistai ir jų 1904–1905 Lietuvos politinės autonomijos projektai“, *Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos*, t. 3, Vilnius, 1991, p. 195; Rimantas Miknys, „Mykolas Römeris – Lietuvos modernybės aušros mętraštininkas, analitikas ir politikas“, Mykolas Römeris, *Dienoraštis: 1918 m. birželio 30-oji–1919 m. birželio 20-oji*, Vilnius, 2007, pp. XXIII–XXVIII.

the West, is crystallizing as well as relations with the Jews, Poles, and Belarusians. In building Lithuania, Lithuanians should make the decisions, not the minorities..."²

In the run-up to and during the Vilnius Conference in the summer of 1917, groups of the intelligentsia decided first to agree on a vision for the Lithuanian state among themselves and only then to invite national minorities to participate in the process of creating (restoring) this state. However, Lithuanians were required to comply with the demands of the occupying authorities to declare a union with Germany. A union with Poland was not discussed because expansionism was behind Polish ideas of such a union. The national principle, the right to self-determination, regarded by conservatives as the basis for the restoration or creation of the modern Lithuanian state, was also regarded by the government of Imperial Germany as a good reason for Lithuania's union with Germany. It is, therefore, not surprising that Berlin tried in every way to persuade the Ober Ost (the Supreme Commander of All German Forces in the East) to give in to Lithuanian wishes to elect rather than appoint the members of the Council of Lithuania.³

Modernizing its annexation plans for the occupied territories, Germany demanded a declaration of eternal ties from the representations of those lands (Courland and Lithuania) on the eve of the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations with Russia. At the same time, Lithuanians produced a vision of restoring a Lithuanian state that was comprised of Lithuania's ethnographic territories and the capital Vilnius (Polish Wilno, English Vilna), while keeping Polish culture in strict subordination on the condition that Germany abide by the principle of self-determination and lend support to Lithuania. In this case, Lithuania would be provided with an international guarantee of its existence. Thus, Lithuania's working diplomacy was born – by playing Russia and Germany off against each other in order to decisively negate Polish influence in Lithuania.⁴

The Polish question was already on the table in both camps – the Entente and the Central Powers. The Lithuanian question was raised only by the Lithuanians themselves. Lithuanians collected all the statements made regarding Poland's future – those by Roman Dmowski and Józef Piłsudski and their representatives. In the process of restoring their states, Lithuanians and Poles came into sharp conflict regarding the use of language in churches and the indication of nationality in the census, and both sides issued memoranda to the German authorities. The speedy rise of the Polish question made Lithuanians suspicious. On 8 December 1915, Petras Klimas wrote in his diary: "Some colleagues complain that Smetona is an impractical choice for chairman of the Lithuanian Committee to help war victims. He is very concerned only about the East and talks only about the Polish threat – 'Polish danger and Polish danger.'⁵ Although Polish activity was a good example for Lithuanians, each achievement raised an important question for the near future: what would happen to the Suwałki region? To whom would Vilnius belong?

What Lithuanian public figures dreaded was that a union of states would pose a threat to the development of Lithuanian culture and would even lead to its disappearance in

² Petras Klimas, *Dienoraštis 1915.XII.1 – 1919.I.19*, Chicago, 1968, p. 176.

³ Raimundas Lopata, *Lietuvos valstybingumo raida 1914–1918 metais*, serija „Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos“, t. 9, Vilnius, 1996, p. 126.

⁴ Česlovas Laurinavičius, *Politika ir diplomatija. Lietuvių tautinės valstybės tapimo ir raidos fragmentai*, Kaunas, 1997, pp. 8–9.

⁵ Petras Klimas, *Dienoraštis 1915.XII.1 – 1919.I.19*, Chicago, 1968, p. 57.

Poland's melting pot. In addition, they could not agree that their historical capital, Vilnius, should become part of Poland. The idea of restoring the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) or the old Commonwealth of the Two Nations had a fundamental flaw: it did not ensure the independence of Lithuania. The goal of independence, which was set forth for the first time ever in Vilnius, emphasized the importance of language.⁶ As the question arose about whether to invite non-Lithuanians to the Lithuanian conference, Smetona stated on 4 August 1917: "It would be impractical: we would have to speak Russian. We are not going to teach Russian at our conference. This is politics.... Neither the Poles nor the Finns have done this."⁷ In their *politeia* (form of state, legal or otherwise, its character) Lithuanians saw Vilnius as their historic and future capital and the home of their central cultural societies and the Council of Lithuania⁸. They were successful: the Lithuanian Jurgis Matulaitis was appointed bishop of Vilnius (on 9 December 1918), and the Statute of Vilnius University was discussed and approved in early December. In the eyes of Poles, Vilnius was almost entirely a Polish city.

The many documents published by Lithuanian⁹ and Polish historians as well as the memoirs of contemporaries directly lead to a simple conclusion: the states of Poland and Lithuania, which were being restored during 1917-1920, could not resolve the issue of Vilnius and its surrounding territory primarily because their most important leaders never discussed it directly.

This conflict became apparent on 24 May 1917, when 44 prominent Poles from Vilnius issued a memorandum to the German Chancellor asking that Lithuania be part of a union with local self-rule.¹⁰ The Lithuanian leader Antanas Smetona promised national minorities the right to cultural autonomy because Lithuania was traditionally tolerant, but he added: "We must be careful lest we ourselves perish because of our great tolerance."¹¹ The Poles avoided cooperation on the Council of Lithuania because the Lithuanians treated them like a national minority, but not like equal citizens. Polish political parties acted the same way, and so all joint projects were frozen.

Afterwards, the Ober Ost allowed the Vilnius Conference to be held on 18-22 September 1917 and permitted the election of 20 members to the Council of Trust (*Vertrauensrat*) – what Lithuanians called the Council of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Taryba*), which was under-

⁶ Lithuanian political statesmen and the protocols of the Lithuanian Council of 1917-1918 are published in: *Lietuvos Taryba ir nepriklausomos valstybės atkūrimas 1914-1920 metų dokumentuose*. Sudarė A. Eidintas ir R. Lopata, Vilnius, 2017. – 814 p. (hereinafter – *Lietuvos Taryba*...)

⁷ *Lietuvos Taryba*..., p. 203.

⁸ It's a special study about Vilnius as the Capital of Lithuania – a problem in the project of the Nation State (late 19th Century – 1940) see: Dangiras Mačiulis, Darius Staliūnas. Vilnius – Lietuvos sostinė: problema tautinės valstybės projekte (XIX a. pabaiga – 1940 m., Vilnius, 2015. – 318 p.

⁹ *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos santykiai: nuo Pirmojo pasaulinio karo pabaigos iki L. Želigovskio įvykdyto Vilniaus užėmimo (1918 m. lapkričio-1920 m. spalio)*. Dokumentų rinkinys. Sudarė E. Gimžauskas, parengė E. Gimžauskas, Artūras Svarauskas, Vilnius, 2012. – 704 p.; another volume of documents edited by Edmundas Gimžauskas deals with Lithuanian-Polish relations during the German occupation: *Lietuva vokiečių okupacijoje Pirmojo pasaulinio karo metais 1915-1918. Lietuvos nepriklausomos valstybės genezė: dokumentų rinkinys*, sud. Edmundas Gimžauskas, Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, 2006, p. 97-99.

¹⁰ *Lietuva vokiečių okupacijoje Pirmojo pasaulinio karo metais 1915-1918. Lietuvos nepriklausomos valstybės genezė*, pp. 134-137.

¹¹ *Lietuvos Taryba*..., p. 193.

stood *a priori* as the supreme body in Lithuanian affairs for all Lithuanians, including émigré organizations in the USA, Russia, Switzerland, etc. Lithuanians were forced to speak in favor of a close relationship and ties between Lithuania and Germany as well as to enter into the phase of the so-called pro-German orientation. The Lithuanian dilemma was clear: Russia did not promise anything, nor did the Entente, and occupied Lithuania was completely dependent on the Ober Ost authorities, while Poles believed Lithuania was just part of Poland. Only the Germans could raise the Lithuanian question in the international arena, and so it was important to wait for the war to end as well as for a favorable turn of events.

Under the harsh German occupational regime, the Vilnius Conference (with 222 participants) worked hard to achieve that orientation. But everyone realized that there was now a need to take risks – especially because the permission to elect the members of the Council had been obtained through the actions of Germany's own internal forces, which had urged a relaxation of the occupational regime in the territories occupied by German troops, particularly after the United States declared war against Germany (on 6 April 1917). The USA had also actively raised an issue that was gaining popularity – the principle of a people's right to self-determination. It was hoped that the postwar Peace Conference would resolve all issues.¹²

President Smetona's plan for the restoration of the Lithuanian state had never been described in detail, but its outlines now became clearer. He hoped to come to the Peace Conference prepared with help from the Germans and, with the assistance of their army, to keep the borders of their military *Verwaltung*. In the meantime, Lithuanians would build their own army, take over the administration, etc. Thus, when the Germans demanded on 11 December 1917 that the Council of Lithuania adopt a resolution in which it announced the restoration of an independent Lithuanian state with Vilnius as its capital and the dissolution of all its ties with other nations, the Council requested Germany's **protection and assistance** [our emphasis – A.E.] in order to "protect its interests in peace talks"¹³ in the second clause of this document.

This resolution also called "for an eternal steadfast union of the state of Lithuania with the state of Germany; this union should be based on military and communication conventions, a common customs and monetary system." Smetona was not afraid of conventions. According to him: "...they are a necessity. Lithuania needs conventions because it is a small country among giants." During 5-16 September 1918, at the Lithuanian Conference in Lausanne, he explained regardless of the four conventions: if the Germans are leaving Lithuania "the Bolsheviks or Poles will come, and they will behave like our masters..."¹⁴ As the Ober Ost did not entrust the Council with any administrative functions, Lithuania would not be able to stand on its own for much time. Therefore, precisely this way of restoring the state was chosen. Only on the basis of this resolution of 11 December 1917 did Germany recognize Lithuania on 23 March 1918.

The issue of four conventions was also linked to the introduction of a constitutional monarchy into Lithuania and the election of Prince Wilhelm of Urach, Count of Württemberg, 2nd Duke of Urach, on 11 July 1918 as King of Lithuania with the royal name of Mind-

¹² *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 317.

¹³ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, pp. 384-385.

¹⁴ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 544.

augas II. The idea of a constitutional monarchy was already dominant in the Council at the end of 1917; it was being promoted in the Reichstag by Catholic Center deputies (mainly Matthias Erzberger, with whom Lithuanian conservatives had close ties). In the project for a monarchical constitution, the four conventions were also mentioned.¹⁵ Smetona and the conservatives still believed that Germany would not lose, but might even win the war¹⁶.

Not only was a constitutional monarchy supposed to save Lithuania from a personal union with Prussia and Saxony, but it was also hoped that such a monarchy would secure a better relationship between the Council and the majority of landowners, who were Poles. As Smetona said: "...we could clarify our situation and put an end to claims that we do not have a plan [to restore the state]. I have no fear of landowners."¹⁷ Not without reason had he also spoken against the expropriation and distribution of landed estates to peasants. It was expected that the tradition of statehood, which the Latvians and Estonians lacked, would be a great help. "There are enough Lithuanian intellectuals and traditions, but they are so confused. It is almost as if we had no nobility. On the contrary, nobles are our most significant figures," said Smetona, who considered gaining the support of some noblemen. According to him, the pro-Polish landowners would either have to "return to their Lithuanian roots" or "die" to Lithuanian society.¹⁸ But the aristocracy's ethno-political polonophilia was not reconcilable with his own orientation toward ethnic values, and the compromise proposal – to grant public and caste privileges to the noblemen in return for their Lithuanianization – did not resolve the issue, as most of these noblemen did not seek to be re-Lithuanianized. Moreover, the Nationalists (*tautininkai*) and the Christian Democrats could not seek reconciliation with the Polish landowners, as they would lose their influence with the people¹⁹, especially since the Poles were further developing their social base in Lithuania and Polonizing the country, particularly eastern Lithuania.

Even on 29 October 1918, at the Council of Lithuania, Smetona continued to defend the monarchy and noted that "the election of Urach is to be reckoned with – a serious,

¹⁵ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 431.

¹⁶ On 16 February 1918, after a clash between the conservative and radical wings of the Council there was a unanimous vote for an independence resolution. The act of independence was born because the Germans had not invited the Lithuanians to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations and had not recognized Lithuania as an independent state. The postulates of this decision were accepted by the Lithuanians as a proclamation of independence and a most important national day. There was nothing in them about "close ties with Germany" or other states; therefore, Germany ignored this act, and the Lithuanians were forced to assure Berlin that, if recognized, they would agree to base relations on the resolution of 11 December 1917.

¹⁷ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 467.

¹⁸ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, pp. 564-565.

¹⁹ Here we cannot ignore also social questions when talking about language or ethnic relations between Lithuanians and local Polish population in Lithuania. The land reform and promises to distribute the land for a peasants – volunteers of the Lithuanian army became a very important tool also to restrict Polish influence in Lithuania. The tensions between landowners and peasantry was a subject of the concern in the discussions between the Warsaw politicians. It was 8000 estates over 100 hectares in Lithuania and Belarus and it was a ground base for Polishness in those lands, as one said if that country finds itself in the hands of some regional government, "let's say the Sejm in Vilnius where Poles will be a minority, and that the government will strive to minimize large landed estates, everything indicates that Poles will be forced to leave." See Polish Documents on Foreign Policy, 11 November 1918 – 28 June 1919. Editors Slawomir Dębski, Piotr Długolecki, Warszawa, 2017, s. 247-249, 254. Indeed, the land reform in Lithuania was executed by Lithuanian conservatives (Christian Democrats mainly), restricting the size of the estates to about 80 hectares.

deliberate step has been taken," that it was not a mere turn of events, that "this act has much greater significance than is thought."²⁰ But the plan to establish a kingdom collapsed together with the European monarchies.

The Lithuanians had developed a concept of ethnic territory. Petras Klimas had prepared a study of the ethnic boundaries of Lithuania, which was published in German in Stuttgart at the end of 1916.²¹ On the basis of ethnographic criteria, he narrowed the territory of Lithuania down to a "healthy nucleus": the greater part of the Kaunas, Vilnius (except Russian Orthodox dominated areas), and Suwałki guberniyas, part of the Grodno guberniya up to the Niemen (Nemunas) River, also Sejny and Krasnopol. The Lithuanians defended this concept of territory during their peace talks with Bolshevik Russia in 1920. It was, in essence, entered in the Soviet-Lithuanian Peace Treaty of July 1920. The circumstance that secret annexes were added to this treaty is another story.

But the biggest question for Lithuanians was how much territory they could control in the process of building a national state. In October 1918, Smetona was clear: "The Council claims the territory that is now controlled by the German Militärverwaltung."²² That was *Lithuania propria*, or Lithuania proper, with Suwałki, Sejny, Grodno, Białystok, Lida, etc. Because the majority in some of those territories did not speak Lithuanian, the Lithuanians themselves were forced to exclude some areas from their proposed state. Even if the border with Poland had been delineated in a friendly manner, its designation would sometimes have been difficult because Polish islands and strips surrounded Vilnius almost as far as Kaunas, while Lithuanian islands and strips surrounded Sejny, Puńsk, the Grodno guberniya, etc.

Lithuanian assurances that national minorities would be allowed to satisfy their cultural needs were in vain, especially after it was said at the Council: "We will take matters into our own hands. We will make our nation rise.... We will take into consideration all the affairs of national minorities, but we will form our administration without them."²³ Others thought that it was too early for talks with the Poles because the Poles still did not want to believe Lithuania could win. However, there were reassurances about equal rights for all citizens in all of the provisional constitutions of Lithuania during 1918-1920. Also, on 30 June 1918, on behalf of the Council of Lithuania, Augustinas Voldemaras signed an agreement with the Polish representative Count Adam Ronikier (the so-called Ronikier-Voldemaras Treaty), pledging equal rights for Poles in Lithuania and guaranteeing the use of the Polish language as a medium of instruction in schools and future institutions of higher education (following the example set by Helsinki University) as well as the equal use of vernacular languages in churches. Poland committed itself to support Lithuanian statehood and act against hostile agitation.²⁴ Unfortunately, this agreement failed.

However, the turning point in the orientation of the early Lithuanian governments, when they turned away from Germany toward the Entente, did not enhance their relationship with Poles, either. In the context of an impending Bolshevik invasion and the danger

²⁰ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 565.

²¹ Werbelis [Petras Klimas] *Russisch-Litauen. Statistisch-etnographische Betrachtungen*, Stuttgart, 1916.

²² *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 560.

²³ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, pp. 594-595.

²⁴ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 439.

of having Lithuania Bolshevized, also because of domestic policy (the radicals' revenge for the pro-German orientation of the Council), the Cabinet discussed the possibility of becoming a protectorate of England a few times in the first half of 1919, in as much as Prime Minister Mykolas Sleževičius had received approval from the leaders of the parties. The benefits of a protectorate would have included opportunities to obtain weapons from the English and to intensify our foreign policy. Although this point was not mentioned, a British protectorate would have had to defend Lithuania against encroachment by the Polish Army and to prevent moving the demarcation line further into ethnically Lithuanian lands. In August 1919 seven out of eleven Cabinet Ministers voted for a British protectorate.²⁵

All the later meetings and discussions between Lithuanians and Poles ended with Vilnius being recognized as the capital of Lithuania.

- 1) On 16 April 1919, the government of Lithuania sent a delegation led by Jurgis Šaulys to Warsaw to establish diplomatic and economic relations with Poland, to agree on joint military action against the Bolsheviks (on 19 April, the Poles took Vilnius without saying a word to the Lithuanians). The Poles (Ignacy Paderewski) proposed a federation (a joint army, treasury, and foreign policy), while other members of the Polish parties proposed a union. According to them, Vilnius could be the capital of Lithuania if Lithuania were to unite with Poland²⁶. As a result, talks broke off. Šaulys noted to the Lithuanian Government that the Polish political movement National Democracy (*Narodowa Demokracja*) and the federalists agreed among themselves on the issue of Lithuania.
- 2) At the same time, the mission of Józef Piłsudski's envoy – Michał Römer – failed in Kaunas. Ethnic Lithuanians refused to take part in a secret campaign to form a pro-Polish government. The Lithuanians decided that the Polish proposal lacked details and, according to Jonas Vileišis, "did not defend Lithuania against Polish imperialism."
- 3) In May 1919, a delegation from Poland headed by Stanisław Staniszewski arrived in Kaunas. On 29 May, his meeting with Prime Minister Sleževičius discussed the anti-Soviet alliance. The Lithuanians demanded that Lithuania be recognized with Vilnius as its capital within the Ober Ost. The talks broke off.
- 4) In August 1919, a second delegation of the Polish government, headed by Leon Wasilewski, arrived in Kaunas. But it failed to reach an agreement because the Lithuanians maintained their demands. The issue of a union with Poland had already been dropped. The Lithuanians saw that this would not guarantee freedom because the Poles, especially Józef Piłsudski, did not seem to appreciate Lithuania as their union partner and the proposals were not specific. Perhaps he did not believe in the resilience of Lithuanian culture and the prospects of the Lithuanian language (which meant that the Polish language and culture would be dominant in the restored Grand Duchy of Lithuania). He looked at Lithuania but did not see ethnic Lithuanians and, thus, the Lithuanian side at the negotiation table. Maybe Piłsudski looked at Lithuania

²⁵ The minutes of the meetings of the provisional governments of Lithuania; Lietuvos centrinis valstybės archyvas. F. 923. Ap. 1. B. 24, l. 243a, 225-227. The meeting of the Government on 15 August is in: B. 57, l. 73-75a.

²⁶ Polish Documents on Foreign Policy, 11 November 1918 – 28 June 1919. Editors Slawomir Dębski, Piotr Długolecki, Warszawa, 2017, pp. 349-350.

without seeing Lithuanians as a subject for talks?²⁷ Most probably, only Prof. Habil Dr. Włodzimierz Suleja²⁸ could answer that question.

- 5) When the talks failed, Warsaw tried to get things done faster – it planned to organize a coup d'état in Lithuania and form a government that would not resist the renewal of a Polish-Lithuanian union²⁹. A secret Polish Military Organization (*Polska Organizacja Wojskowa*) was to organize the coup. In August 1919, Lithuanian intelligence uncovered these plans, and arrests began: 200 suspects were arrested, including 23 officers, and 117 people were brought to justice.³⁰

On the other hand, there was a friendly gesture: in November 1919 Poland permitted Lithuania to concentrate its army in the north against the Pavel Bermond-Avalov Russian-German troops by giving assurances that Poland would not start any operations against Lithuania.

However, the obvious desire of the Poles living in Poland and Vilnius to dominate the lands of Lithuania and Belarus (including Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania) undermined efforts to restore the state and rallied Lithuanians to protect narrower ethnic cultural interests and needs – a response that boosted nationalism whether they wished it or not. This was a defensive, existential nationalism.³¹

This conflict prevented the sides from agreeing even on a joint anti-Bolshevik front. In 1920, Moscow exploited this situation by adding secret annexes to the Soviet-Lithuanian Peace Treaty of 12 July, which enabled the Red Army to use Lithuanian territory in its war against Poland. But they were no true allies, for 2,000 Soviet Russian agents were sent to Lithuania in July-August. They were setting up secret weapons depots and were agitating for and preparing a coup. This coup was prevented only by the Polish military victory in the Battle of Warsaw.

Poles and Lithuanians also shared some similar attitudes. For example, they similarly identified their areas of interest. The provisions of the Law on the Election to the Constituent Seimas also stipulated dividing eastern Lithuania and the Klaipėda region into precincts for the purpose of voting. On 24 January 1920, the Central Election Commission divided the country into precincts. The total number of mandates was to be 229. The territory of the independent Lithuanian state was to be divided into 6 precincts, in which 112 members were to be elected to the Constituent Seimas, while 108 members were to be elected in the territory already under Polish control (30 members in the Vilnius precinct,

²⁷ Česlovas Laurinavičius, *Politika ir diplomatija: lietuvių tautinės valstybės tapimo ir raidos fragmentai*, pp. 73–74.

²⁸ Włodzimierz Suleja, *Józef Piłsudski* (Wrocław, 1995, 1997, 2004 editions, in Russian 2009).

²⁹ Piotr Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918–1920*, Warszawa, 1996, pp. 60–61, 64.

³⁰ Pranas Janauskas, *Istorinė byla: POW narių teismas Kaune 1920 metais*, Kaunas, 2005, p. 3–25.

³¹ The Lithuanians slowly developed an "allergy" to territorial autonomy. They had nothing against cultural autonomy for the Jews (at the Paris Peace Conference the Lithuanians promised very liberal cultural autonomy, but territorial autonomy had no appeal – neither for Poles nor for Belarusians nor later for Germans in the Klaipėda region. The observer Prof. M. Römer admitted that the Lithuanians were not afraid of the Jews (there was no danger that Lithuanians would become Jews, and the Lithuanians did not plan to assimilate them). But the Poles in Vilnius were very close to the people, psychologically and culturally close; most of them were autochthons and in the past had Polonized the local people; so they could encourage Polonization. Besides, the Lithuanians thought that the Poles and Belarusians in Lithuania, under the right conditions, might easily be re-Lithuanianized, but for that process territorial autonomy was a serious obstacle. See Miknys, op.cit., p. 90.

29 in Lida, 27 in Białystok, and 22 in Grodno).³² Thus, 117 members were to be elected in the territory where the election to the Constituent Seimas of Lithuania could not be held (and this territory was almost the same as Żeligowski's Litwa Środkowa (Central Lithuania).

On 7 December 1920, as Western countries were demanding direct talks, Lithuania sent a delegation headed by the deputy chairman of the Constituent Seimas Justinas Staugaitis to Warsaw. This delegation was authorized to reach an agreement with the Poles and to avoid a plebiscite, also to establish contacts with members of the Sejm and politicians. Lithuania suggested that Poland should recognize it within the borders set out in the provisions of the agreement with the Soviet Union on 12 July, pledging to never fight against Poland, guaranteeing free transit and freedom to national minorities, and promising to grant amnesty to all Polish prisoners and even to decentralize power. The Poles agreed – but again on the condition of a union between both states. Negotiations broke down.

Furthermore, General Lucjan Żeligowski's "Mutiny" – the seizure of Vilnius – aggravated the situation altogether, even though the idea of a possible plebiscite was still being entertained even when Vilnius was already occupied by Polish army units. In February 1921, Lithuania told Western countries that it did not want a plebiscite in the Vilnius region (as one Kaunas newspaper stated – "Find a country that would want this, especially when it concerns its capital").

Poland organized elections to the Vilnius Sejm on 8 January, but only Polish candidates participated; local Lithuanians, Jews, and Belarusians did not. On 20 February 1922, the Vilnius Sejm decided to seek unification with Poland, without rights of autonomy. The Vilnius question became the most important one in Lithuanian foreign policy and propaganda, and besides – it was a good tool to promote national unity.

The dispute between Poland and Lithuania was, in fact, a clash between two integral nationalisms: both parties were, in principle, unable to find a compromise because then they would be not integral. The conflict over Vilnius was so important for Lithuanians that it even became a dramatic question – to be or not to be. Therefore, reaching an agreement and concord between Lithuania and Poland in the critical years of restoration of the two states (1918–1922) was impossible because both of them were being established as nation states. Poland was bigger, better prepared, and more powerful: it had close ties with, and support from, a good friend, France, and always stressed its cultural superiority. The Lithuanians, for their part, were backed into a corner: they had lost some of their ethnic territory, areas torn away from them by the two lines of demarcation with which the nations of the Entente had sought to halt further Polish incursions into their country, and even Paul Hymans' famous plan did not satisfy both sides. Whenever the Lithuanians raised the Vilnius question, the Polish negotiator Szymon Askenazy ran from this issue like a devil from the Cross. The two countries had a hostile non-relationship relationship. They did not even have diplomatic relations. Sharp reciprocal propaganda intensified.³³ In Lithuania, the loss

³² *Lietuvos įstatymai. Sistematinuotas įstatymų, instrukcijų ir įsakymų rinkinys*, surinko A. Merkys, redagavo A. Kriščiukaitis. Pirmas leidinys (ligi 1922 m. sausio 1 d.). Kaunas, 1922, p. 33; See also: Mykolas Römeris, *Lietuvos konstitucinės teisės paskaitos*, d. 1, Kaunas, 1937, p. 102.

³³ See a solid and informative study by: Krzysztof Buchowski. *Litwomani i polonizatorzy. Mity, wzajemne postrzeganie i stereotypy w stosunkach polsko-litewskich w pierwszej połowie XX wieku*. Białystok: Wydawnictwo uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2006; Lithuanian edition: *Litvomanai ir polonizotojai. Mitai, abipusės nuostatos ir stereotipai lenkų ir lietuvių santykiuose pirmoje XX amžiaus pusėje*, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2012.

of Vilnius became an ideology that united Lithuanians around the goal of liberating their capital from the Poles. A third country took advantage of this situation. During this time, Lithuania got dangerously close to the USSR, as this country promised to help resolve the Vilnius question. Luckily for Lithuania, the two countries did not share a common border.

It is quite a complicated matter to identify the reason for the games that were being played by the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Augustinas Voldemaras during 1927-1929 or where they might have led. Perhaps this egocentric person just wanted to become a star in the European press. After a dispute with Józef Piłsudski, Voldemaras said on the radio: "We have entered the global political scene."³⁴ At the end of 1927, in Paris, he missed an opportunity as a result of Aristide Briand's intercession to meet with August Zaleski and re-establish diplomatic relations between our countries.³⁵ It is similarly difficult to justify the actions of another minister, Dovas Zaurius, who persistently shut his eyes to Poland in foreign policy.

On the other hand, in Lithuania there were also people who advocated the normalization of relations. Two Lithuanian diplomats recommended continuing negotiations. An improvement in relations with Poland was advocated by the envoy Jurgis Šaulys, and Foreign Minister Stasys Lozoraitis drew up a special paper on 18 April 1935. Lithuania could not win a two-front diplomatic war against Nazi Germany, which was much more aggressive than Poland, he maintained, and independence was more important than Vilnius. We have Klaipėda but we do not have Vilnius and we are not able and never will fight for Vilnius militarily. So, without forgetting the Vilnius question, Lithuania should defend Klaipėda with all possible means, he continued, it's time to return to our foreign policy "the Polish segment" and to use all political combinations against Nazi Germany (and including a combination with Poland), to curb the aggressive policies of the Third Reich.³⁶ Smetona also realized that there was a need to change the situation. But Józef Beck's unyielding rigidity did not allow him to make even a small conciliatory gesture (according to one British diplomat, the Poles could have initially ceded some swamp to the Lithuanians, as they had a lot of them). Minister Beck wanted everything and now. A blow struck by the voivode of Vilnius, Ludwik Bociński, to destroy Lithuanian organizations and education in the Vilnius area put Lozoraitis on the losing side. Moreover, the establishment of diplomatic relations as a result of the 1938 ultimatum did not add sincerity to bilateral relations. Both sides showed that they could survive without each other, but this attitude was not productive, and national minorities actually became hostages to bad bilateral relations.

In one way or another, Lithuania and Poland have carried part of these old issues into the generally different current bilateral relationship that they have had since 1990. Poland has lent Lithuania support in the process of restoring our state, and this deserves to be remembered with the greatest respect along with the long-term fruitful cooperation

³⁴ Vytautas Žalys. *Lietuvos diplomatijos istorija (1925-1940)*. I tomas, Vilnius, 2007, pp. 340-343.

³⁵ In Paris, Briand tried to arrange a meeting between Voldemaras and the Polish Foreign Minister August Zaleski, hoping to find a formula for establishing diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland, while leaving the Vilnius question unsettled. Zaleski agreed, and Voldemaras promised to send an answer from the provisional capital of Lithuania, Kaunas. Briand agreed to be a witness. There were good prospects for an agreement, but Voldemaras did not respond. See: Petras Klimas, *Lietuvos diplomatinėje tarnyboje*, Vilnius, 1991, p. 101.

³⁶ Vytautas Žalys. „Stasys Lozoraitis – Lietuvos užsienio reikalų ministras“, in *Lietuvos diplomatija XX amžiuje*, Vilnius, 1999, pp. 35-40.

between our countries. Although Vytautas Landsbergis has given friendly speeches, one could detect in statements made by the Deputy Prime Minister Romualdas Ozolas a more cautious attitude, a lack of confidence in Poland, and even an atmosphere of suspicion.

The normalization of bilateral relations between Lithuania and Poland in the agreement of 24 April 1994 did not include anything about former disagreements over Vilnius and other prewar disputes. This was a wise compromise. Both parties recognized each other's sovereignty and renounced interference in each other's internal affairs. Territorial integrity was stressed: both countries declared that they do not have any claims on each other's territory. It is clear that Poland does not and will not demand the Vilnius region, and Lithuania – Suwałki, Puńsk, and other lands with a Lithuanian population. The Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas established good personal relations with the Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski: they established a presidential consultative committee.³⁷ Unfortunately, there were ups and downs. In the context of the region and Europe, the good personal and interstate relations enjoyed by the presidents Valdas Adamkus and Aleksander Kwaśniewski should be seen as exemplary. Lithuanians lost the mutual trust needed to have good relations during the time of the overbearing Minister Radek Sikorski, and it was our Lithuanian mistake that we failed to upgrade our relations during the promising time of President Lech Kaczyński. Despite sharp ongoing disputes on issues raised by national minorities, even if political disagreements have cast a shadow on a history of friendship, the implementation of economic projects important for Lithuania, Poland, the entire region, and the EU has continued, especially in the fields of transport (highways and railway) and energy (gas and oil pipelines, electricity lines), and close military cooperation has continued. It is promising that most recently, during 2017-2018, contacts between the leaders of our states are again on the right track.

The dispute between Poland and Lithuania and 100 years of experience demonstrate (there are more facts than necessary) the need for regular bilateral dialogue on any question by both countries and not only on the bureaucratic level but also on the highest, including parliamentary, levels. The two sides can clarify their viewpoints, create shared visions, and adopt solutions. In case of disagreements, some matters may be postponed until tomorrow, while others can be expedited. We are on the right path. As eternal neighbors, we have always been able to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement whenever there has been enough goodwill. With a win-win attitude, we can grow stronger. Let us learn how to grow together.

Let me finish by telling a didactic story. Sometimes the wish to make jibes at each other looked like a silly joke: in 1916, in Moscow, a Russian State Duma member from Lithuania, Martynas Yčas, and a Polish representative, the lawyer Adam Lednicki, were talking to the mayor of Moscow, Mikhail Chelnokov. They were discussing how to divide the alms for war victims collected in Moscow in order to ensure that not only Poles but also Lithuanians received their share of the money.

The Russian asked Yčas, "How many Lithuanians live in the empire?"

"Three million," answered Yčas.

"Certainly not three million!" the Pole retorted.

³⁷ Saulius Grybkauskas, Mindaugas Tamošaitis, *Epochų virsmo sūkuriuose. Algirdo Brazausko politinė biografija*, Vilnius, 2018, p. 294.

The Russian asked the Pole, "And how many Poles live in the empire?"

"Nineteen million," replied Lednicki.

"Fewer than nineteen million!" contradicted Yčas.³⁸

After these 100 years of experience, it is time we stopped making fools of ourselves. We are both capable of basing our decisions and policy in general on mutually positive and beneficial reasons, and neither of us should allow outsiders to manipulate our bilateral relations.

³⁸ Martynas Yčas, *Atsiminimai. Nepriklausomybės kelias*, t. II, Kaunas, 1935, p. 36.

STEFAN KAWALEC

CAPITAL STRATEGY

Introduction to the Round Table on Building a Modern and Robust Banking System: Poland's Experience after 1989

Poland was the first country of the Soviet bloc in which a non-communist government was created following the period of the cold war. This was the government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki called into being on September 12, 1989. The government announced immediately that the economic system would be changed. The government did not propose a third way. It said that a market economy would be introduced, based on private ownership with a freely exchangeable currency. After this transformation of the socialist economy into a capitalist economy was announced, the government acted very quickly to realize this goal.

The change of the economic system entailed a great undertaking, consisting of the creation of a banking system adapted to the needs of a market economy. In the socialist economy, there was no money in the true sense of the word. Money served only a certain limited purpose related to the distribution of consumer goods, but not for all such goods. A significant portion of consumer goods were distributed through the use of ration cards, special coupons or through informal channels such as sales made under the counter. Enterprises had their inputs and outputs rationed. The simple fact that an enterprise had zlotys on its account did not give the enterprise the right to buy the necessary goods, if the rights to obtain such goods were not included in the appropriate distribution list. Having zlotys was also insufficient for purchasing goods from abroad. For that one needed foreign currency -- which also was rationed in accordance with the distribution lists.

Because there was no real money, there also was no place for banks in the real meaning of this term. In this, the financial sector differed from other sectors of the economy. Production enterprises, for instance cement production, automobile manufacturing or shoe factories functioned in the socialist economy as to their production processes, in a manner similar to that of the west. The engineers in charge of manufacturing were often highly qualified and without difficulty could find common language with their peers in capitalist countries. However, the banking sector was different. Although in the socialist economy there existed institutions that were called banks, they did not fulfill the role played by banks in a market economy. Certain elements of banking were the same — for instance

funds transfers and clearing of accounts, but an elementary issue for banking such as the granting of credit was different. There was no credit risk. No credit risk existed with respect to state enterprises because regardless of what the state enterprise produced, it always found purchasers. Prices were always set at levels that covered costs. Thus the fundamental banking skill that is the assessment of credit risk could not be developed.

The transition from socialism to capitalism required the transition from an economic system in which there was no role for banks in the full meaning of this term, to a system that could not function without effective banks.

This extraordinary and unprecedented undertaking – the transition from a socialist to a market economy – began in Poland in conditions of deep economic crisis which required the government to take quick action. Key elements of the crisis were the then enormous foreign debt that was not being serviced, and galloping inflation. Inflation skyrocketed from the moment the outgoing last communist government freed restrictions on food prices on August 1, 1989. At this moment the enormous budget deficit that had been growing from the beginning of 1989 and was financed through the printing of money, resulted in a flood of price increases. During the three months from August until October 1989 consumer prices rose by 190%. If such levels of price increases had continued for 12 months, it would have resulted in annual inflation at a level of 7,000 percent -- meaning price increases of 70 times their initial value. The economy therefore was on the brink of hyperinflation and the financial system of the state was near breakdown.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Leszek Balcerowicz directed the economic team of the new government. In this team, we analyzed the experience of different countries that had gone through hyperinflation. We determined that there was no example of a country where inflation at an annual level of several thousand percent had been gradually reduced to percentages in the lower double digits or the single digits. The conclusion of these analyses was our belief that hyperinflation could not be stopped gradually and that sooner or later it would be necessary to take decisive action. Consequently, the later such an attempt would be made the more devastation by hyperinflation would be made to the economy and society in the meantime. Therefore, Balcerowicz's team prepared and implemented the stabilization program in an extremely short period – in less than four months from the moment Mazowiecki's government took office.

In December 1989, the parliament enacted a package of several laws that took effect on January 1, 1990 and fundamentally changed Poland's economic system. The program, which was called the Balcerowicz Program, included fundamental liberalizing actions: convertibility of the zloty was introduced, prices could be set freely, foreign trade was freed, and those distribution lists for products were eliminated. At the same time, measures were introduced to achieve macroeconomic stabilization, above all to get the budget deficit under control so that inflation would no longer be spurred by such a deficit. In January 1990 the Polish zloty became, both in the hands of consumers and of enterprises, a currency in the real meaning of such a term, because with it one could buy consumer goods as well as investment goods.

Hundreds of thousands of people set up their own businesses. Foreign investors began to be interested in Poland. But, one could name three infrastructural barriers that made the growth of commercial activity difficult:

First, the lack of good road infrastructure. Getting to many places took too much time.

Second, the inadequate and poorly functioning telephone system. It was difficult to telephone a great many places.

Third, the lack of efficient banks. When a person wanted to establish a firm, it took a long time to find a bank that would agree to open a bank account. Then, when the account was opened, a bank transfer from one company to another lasted many days. So, people often had to transport cash themselves, in briefcases or even suitcases.

Therefore, the creation of true banks became one of the key challenges facing the country in order to enable the functioning of a market economy.

As I previously mentioned, the introduction in the economy of a viable currency was a necessary step for the functioning of a banking system in the real meaning of such a term. The liberalization of prices and the introduction of złoty convertibility led to the disappearance from the economy of shortages and lines. The złoty almost overnight became a currency that had value.

The creation of a banking system which was required for the functioning of a market economy was, however, a long-term process. It was achieved through these several concurrent actions:

- 1) The creation of a two-level structure for the banking system with a central bank and commercial banks

In Poland this change was still carried out by the last communist government. In 1988 the government carved out of the National Bank of Poland the bank branches that engaged in the financing of enterprises, and 9 new commercial banks were established from these branches. In this way the NBP, which had been a monobank during the socialist era, was formally limited to the role of a central bank.

- 2) New banks were permitted to be established by setting very low barriers to entry.
- 3) Renowned foreign banks were encouraged to invest.
- 4) A banking supervisor was created.
- 5) The existing state-owned banks were converted and restructured, followed by their gradual privatization.

Similar actions for the creation of a banking system were undertaken later in other former socialist countries. One of the effects of these actions was the growth in the number of banks. In Poland the number of commercial banks rose from 5 in 1988 to 104 in 1993. In Russia there were initially 10 commercial banks. After liberalization this number increased to 2,500.

Two issues can be deemed as specific traits of building the market-type banking sector in Poland, distinguishing the situation in Poland from the situation in the majority of other post-socialist countries. The first is the question of foreign debt, and the second is the manner in which the bad debt crisis was resolved.

At that time Poland had a very large foreign debt of approximately 40 billion dollars. Today, such an amount might not sound impressive, given that Poland's exports of goods and services total 250 billion dollars. But in 1989 total Polish exports in convertible currencies amounted to 6 billion dollars, which meant that the foreign debt was 6 to 7 times greater than Poland's annual exports. On the basis of a unilateral decision, Poland had stopped payment of principal and interest on such debt and was in default to its creditors, which included leading US and European banks. Thus, it was extremely difficult to encourage western banks to invest in Poland. These banks proposed, that they would gladly open a bank if the Polish state permitted the conversion of Polish debt into equity in such a bank.

In effect, this meant that the Polish government would need to pay this capital in return for forgiveness of the debt. From the beginning our plan, with respect to foreign debt, was to seek its steep reduction. Despite many offers and pressure, we refused to accept any conversion of debt to equity in the financial sector, nor in other sectors. Foreign banks very much wanted to invest in Poland, because they saw that Poland was a potentially interesting banking market where, with the investment of a relatively small amount of capital and know-how, a large and attractive market share could be achieved, but on the other hand these banks had their principles that stood in their way. In some financial institutions long internal discussions raged: could one invest new capital in Poland notwithstanding the unresolved problem of the outstanding debt? In the case of Citibank, which was one of the first major foreign banks that came to Poland, these discussions took more than a year before a decision was taken in 1991 to create Citibank Poland S.A. Looking back, that date of 1991 now appears to be quite an early date, but from our perspective at that time, it was an agonizingly long period for the decision to be taken. Others banks took even more time.

In the majority of countries that moved away from the socialist system in the 1990s, within 2 or 3 years of the transformation, the problem of bad debts arose in the banks. The reasons for which were many. One material cause was the lack of experience in functioning in a market system where credit risk exists, where risk needs to be analyzed and estimated. Further, the analysis of credit risk under the market conditions as they then existed, was extremely difficult, as turbulent changes were affecting price, cost, profitability and other parameters. In effect, during the initial period of transformation state banks financed state enterprises just the same way they had under the previous system, that is, by assessing how much money an enterprise needed rather than determining its ability to repay. In turn, newly created private banks financed very high risk undertakings, in many cases managed by the same people who owned the banks. Banking supervision was in its infancy and was not able to contain bad and sometimes also fraudulent management practices in banks. Added to all this was the falling GDP during the initial period of the transformation. When a nation's economy is contracting, it is natural that a material part of the credit portfolios of banks cannot be repaid.

In particular countries of Central and Eastern Europe in 1991 and 1992 had non-performing loans totaling 25 to 50% of the credit portfolios of banks, according to studies that have been made.

International financial institutions such as the World Bank recommended that the state should increase the capital of banks, while at the same time transferring their bad debts to a specially-created restructuring agency. This solution was implemented in many countries in Central and Eastern Europe, among them in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia.

In Poland, we did not wish to implement this solution for two reasons. First, we feared that we would remove bad debts from the banks and give them new money, and they would proceed to grant more bad loans. Second, we feared that if we were to create a single agency to which the bad debts would be transferred, that agency would be unable to act with sufficient energy and efficiency to restructure this debt. We also doubted whether it would be possible to find appropriate staff, and above all to implement an appropriate incentive system for such staff. We also feared that such an agency would tend to drag out the restructuring of debts in order to maintain its own existence.

Thus there arose the concept which became embodied in the law on the financial restructuring of enterprises and banks passed in 1993. In the very title of the law we emphasized that it was intended not just to solve the problems that banks faced, but also to create a mechanism facilitating the restructuring of enterprises. We feared that if we would go to parliament with a proposal to provide banks with additional capital, it would not be viewed favorably. The view of politicians was that banks were supposed to provide money, not receive it.

Therefore, we prepared and presented the program to emphasize that its consequences would be not only an improvement in the balance sheets of banks, but that enterprises would also benefit from it. The law required banks that received new capital to restructure defaulted credits within a year, utilizing a closed list of methods specified in the law. One such method was to sign a bank conciliatory agreement between a debtor and its creditors including the bank. The bank conciliatory agreement was a new legal solution, introduced into the legal system for only a limited period. The bank conciliatory agreement could provide for a write-off of a portion of the debt of the enterprise or the lengthening of the repayment period for such debt, as well as the conversion of a portion of the debt into equity in the enterprise. The law turned out to be an effective and efficient solution. As a result of the law, the bad debt portions of credit portfolios of banks were restructured within one year. Around 300 bank conciliatory agreements were signed, and thanks to them a large group of enterprises obtained the chance to continue operating. These were enterprises that would have had to declare bankruptcy unless the bank conciliatory agreements were executed. In many cases the debt was converted into equity and the enterprise, under the reduced debt load, was able to function and return to profitability. To prepare restructuring plans for a particular indebted enterprise the banks engaged advisory firms, that were financed from foreign aid funds of the European Union and the British Know-How Fund.

This method of solving the bad debt problem contributed to the rescue of a large number of enterprises. It also fundamentally changed the culture of the banks that had to solve the bad debt problems for the loans that they themselves had given. Credit decisions of banks became more cautious and selective. A quantitative research carried out by economists associated with the World Bank shows that during 1990 and 1991 in Poland a positive correlation did not exist between the profitability of enterprises and the amount of new bank loans such enterprises received. However, from the year 1992, when the Ministry of Finance required banks to separate and restructure their bad debt portfolios, a positive correlation is evident – banks granted new loans to enterprises that were profitable. Thus, the banking sector began to act for the benefit of the economy, directing credit where it could be effectively used.¹

¹ "All in all the econometric analysis of bank lending provides a very definite picture. Banks initially started off playing the role they are usually accused of: uncritical funding of enterprise losses. But the strong governance reform in the Polish banks effected by the Polish finance ministry in the last quarter of 1991 had dramatic results. Come 1992, the econometric evidence strongly supports the view that commercial banks were letting profitability concerns guide their decisions on credit allocation. Since banks are the main source of external funds for enterprises, because of the unwillingness of the Polish government to extend open-ended subsidies, this development had a major impact on enterprise governance".

Brian Pinto, and Sweder van Wijnbergen, "Ownership and Corporate Control in Poland: Why State Firms Defied the Odds", CERP Discussion Paper 1273, London 1995.

This change in Poland's banking culture contributed to the fact that in the 25 years following the events I have described, the banking crisis has not been repeated in Poland. In contrast, in each of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe that were previously named, where the banks received new capital and were painlessly relieved of their non-performing loans, bad debts reappeared and successive rescue operations from public funds were required.

DR HUBERT A. JANISZEWSKI¹

DEUTSCHE BANK POLSKA SA

The Privatisation of the Polish Banking Sector

Introduction

The Polish banking sector, at the outset of the Balcerowicz reform plan, was composed of the central bank (NBP), 9 regional commercial banks (which had spun out from NBP back in 1988): the state savings bank – PKO BP; the state bank handling foreign commerce – Bank Handlowy SA; the state bank handling retail foreign exchange transfers – PeKaO SA; the state bank for financing the agriculture sector – BGZ; and a number of small cooperative banks – BRE SA a bank financing export industries established in 1986; and a single private bank, albeit with equity provided by state enterprises – BIG SA.

The Ministry of Finance faced a formidable task, firstly to restructure the banking sector – primarily commercial banks and at a later stage privatize the whole sector in order to i.a make it market oriented, flexible and serve large chunks of the rapidly privatizing economy as well as to cater to the needs of the population.

It should be stressed – to give the full description of the sector, that the percentage of bad loans in all the above-mentioned banks (except BIG, BRE and probably PKO BP) was between 30 to 50% of their portfolios!

It was therefore decided by Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz and his key staff, that prior to their privatization, restructuring of the banks was the key for their success.

The major problem with restructuring was a lack of funding, which was not available as the Polish state was bankrupt and private resources were by far too small, and politically inaccessible; moreover the parliament would not allow creation of additional debt by way of equity injections to the ailing banking sector.

¹ The author is an economist, a member of the Polish Business Roundtable (PRB); at present serves as Deputy Chairman, Supervisory Board (SB), Deutsche Bank Polska SA, also Chairman of SB of Cognor SA, Mediacap SA and DB Securities SA; in the period 1989-1990 he served as Vice President of the government Foreign Investment Agency; 1991 – a director at a Polish Investment Company based in London; 1992-1998, CEO of HSBC Investment Services in Warsaw, 1998/1999, Managing Director and CEO at Bankers Trust Company in Warsaw; 1999-2003, Managing Director and member of the Management Board at Deutsche Bank Polska SA.

Under those difficult conditions Balcerowicz managed to pass through parliament a set of legislation on restructuring the economy including banks, which allowed for the provision of banks with so-called restructuring bonds (a special law had been enacted called the "Law on financial restructuring of banks and enterprises") to strengthen their balance sheets and force them to individually, over time, repay such new debts.

In order to guide and help the banks with the restructuring, with the assistance of the British Government, the so-called British Know How Fund was created, whose purpose was to provide professional advice and assistance to all commercial banks. This advice was strengthened by a so-called "twinning arrangement", under which each of the nine commercial banks was provided with a "twin partner" in the form of an established western bank.

Among the banks that participated in this scheme were the Allied Irish Bank (twinned to WBK based in Poznan), ING (Bank Śląski in Katowice) and the Midland Bank (Bank Zachodni in Wroclaw).

The whole operation was launched in early 1990 and was completed by early 1993, thus most of the commercial banks were potentially "ready" for privatization with substantially improved balance sheets. Parallel to the above, all the other banks embarked on the restructuring of their balance sheets, if only in order to stay competitive in the market.

Government dilemma

From the outset, discussions centered around the most efficient and most beneficial ways of privatization to the economy, including political and social implications in a country which for almost 50 years lived in the rigors of a command, centralized, and planned economy. On top of this, Solidarity as the largest trade union had implicitly a large role in the direction of economic policies of governments led initially by Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and later Krzysztof Bielecki, Hanna Suchocka, and all the others.

Should we seek strategic investors for our banks? Or should we attempt a different approach, providing also the general public with pieces of the privatized business? And if so, then how? And how to entice and raise interest among international investors, in investing their money into a country that defaulted on its debt to both foreign governments and foreign banks?

As a matter of fact, understanding was faster by foreign governments if only due to the political implications of the "Solidarity revolution" in Poland and its decisive impact on the disintegration of the Soviet empire in East and Central Europe.

Once governments reached an accord on the restructuring of government debt, the path to restructuring of private debt was open, and expectations as to new private investments were more justified.

In this connection in 1991 the government adopted the so-called Privatisation programme in the banking sector with the following principles:

- 30% of stock will be offered to a potential strategic partner;
- 30% will be offered to individual investors;
- 10% will be offered to the employees (at a discount); and
- 30% shall be retained by the Government (for later sale).

Part of the Balcerowicz plan was to reopen the stock exchange, which took place in early May 1991 with the listing of the top 5 manufacturers, the establishment of the Polish security exchange commission under the able leadership of Lestaw Paga, the formation of the Warsaw Stock Exchange under the leadership of Wiesław Roztucki, and the National Depository for Securities led by Elżbieta Pustoła.

Taking therefore all the above into consideration the government decided to initiate privatization with a mixed approach, i.e. privatize by way of listing on the Warsaw Stock Exchange (including also additional new equity), selling part of the stock offered to the employees (usually around 10% of all stock), and reserving part of the offering to potential strategic investors and a tranche for reprivatization claims and for future secondary offerings.

Early attempts

The government wanted to launch privatizations primarily with the nine commercial banks that had spun out of the NBP as those were considered to be best prepared for such a process and could also provide modest returns to state coffers from its disposal.

However, the first attempt, though not widely known, had already happened in the fall of 1989. During my – at the time – official visit to Italy in my capacity as the Vice President of the government's Foreign Investment Agency I met a number of senior Italian business executives and among them the Chairman and CEO of Banco di Napoli, with whom I spent a nice dinner and later at the farewell drinks briefed him on the specific opportunities in investing in Poland. I mentioned BRE SA, a bank that had probably the most forward looking management, and which might be interested in a foreign partner (BRE had three equity partners: the Ministry of Foreign Trade, the National Bank of Poland and the Ministry of Finance).

After returning to Warsaw I briefed BRE CEO K. Szwarc who expressed an interest and subsequently initiated talks with Banco di Napoli. Once the details had been established in principle, Szwarc – as he had to – approached the NBP to agree to the possible transaction; the NBP killed the deal and as I recall told him to forget any foreign partner at this stage. As the history of BRE shows, although the first attempt failed, BRE three years later did find a partner that today is the largest shareholder in this bank.

The role of advisers in the privatization process

In the country at the time there was no experience with professional advisers who would be in a position to assist the government in the disposal of its assets, be it in banking or other sectors of the economy. Thus foreign assistance was sought and a number of international investment banks and consultants were invited to bid for the privatization mandates. Among the early birds on the Polish market were such institutions as Schroeders, Rothschilds, Samuel Montagu (Midland Bank), HSBC, Arthur Andersen, Ernst & Young, Cooper & Lybrand as well as boutique shops either foreign- or domestic-based.

The reopening of the stock exchange with all its regulatory authorities, reform of the central bank (NBP), and formation of an independent banking supervision authority (GINB²) all substantially helped the privatization process and added necessary and educational transparency to the whole process. A number of local brokerage houses, usually associated with banks, also helped in the process, using to the full extent the bull market which had lasted initially for two years from the reopening of the Warsaw Stock Exchange (WSE).

Competitive bidding for the privatization mandates enabled the government to select the best and most innovative modes of privatization of its assets and kept the cost of advisory services at a relatively modest level.

The advisers played an important role especially in the introduction of both government policies to the international investors primarily Qualified Institutional Buyers as well as exposing local management teams to the international scene and professionals from all over the world as Polish stocks had been widely offered not only in Europe but also in Asia and the Americas. Moreover they were a primary factor for generating demand both internationally and domestically, introducing i.a various incentive schemes addressed primarily at the retail investor like discounts, premiums for holding the stock over fixed periods, pro rata payments etc.

Thus the country was also getting introduced to a wider investor audience, and gradually was rebuilding its reputation after years of a command economy. Stock offerings also cleared the way later for debt offerings by the Government, which was necessary to finance the rapidly growing economy of the country and the aspirations of its people.

First privatizations

The first bank to go down the path of privatization was BRE SA, which in October 1992 sold in its IPO 47.4% of its stock and was the first bank listed on the WSE.

WBK SA

The first of the commercial banks "ready" for privatization was WBK SA based in Poznan, whose twinning partner was AIB; the government decided to offer an IPO of around 50% of the stock it owned, divided into a couple of tranches:

- Large investor tranche
- Small investor tranche
- Employees tranche (with discount price)
- Reprivatization tranche.

The IPO was a great success among large, small and employee tranches; moreover the government induced the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to invest in a substantial portion (16.5% for future resale to Allied Irish Bank-AIB) as well as directly sold to AIB. The chosen method of the privatization, i.e strategic, general public and listing at the WSE was sufficiently successful and in all the next privatizations it was the preferred method to be followed by government advisors, primarily western investment banks.

² Generalny Inspektorat Nadzoru Bankowego – GINB.

BRE SA

Ambitious management followed the case of WBK in raising additional equity and already by 1992 the bank had been listed on the WSE; in 1994 Samuel Montague as adviser to the bank led a new stock issue for CommerzBank AG which became a strategic investor after all state entities had sold their stock either during the IPO in 1992 or to CommerzBank.

Bank Śląski SA

The IPO of Bank Śląski (BS) was at the height of the stock exchange frenzy in Poland and over 800.000 individual investors subscribed to the issue, not counting large investors among them ING which had been BS's twinning partner.

At the first listing on the WSE the stock of BS was many times higher than the IPO price, which led to a long political battle among bickering politicians, including the dismissal of the deputy Minister of Finance responsible for the case and the resignation of the Minister of Finance in protest against this dismissal.

The reason for the skyrocketing and short lived price increase was simple and mundane; the brokerage house of the bank, flooded with hundreds thousands of retail investors did not manage to register stock owners sufficiently fast enough as to enable them to trade on the WSE from the first day thus creating an artificial overhang of the demand over supply.

The reason was clear to the market, but of course not to the politicians, who as usual, just like today, accused each other of "selling Polish assets" to foreigners for peanuts. The case of BS, unfortunately, has been imprinted in the minds of many politicians but also among prosecutors, and the view that post ante valuation of assets is the best proof that the state has been selling its assets at huge discounts thus creating "losses" to the economy!

BPH SA

This bank was privatized in two stages: stage one was put into effect in late 1994 by way of an IPO, again divided among large, small and employees tranches. However there was no sale, neither to its twinning bank nor to the strategic investor bank; its IPO had been limited to the domestic market only. Two years later the government sold its remaining 50% to a strategic partner in a bidding process where the bidders were Deutsche Bank AG and Hypovereins Bank- AG; HVB won, offering a slightly higher price per share than Deutsche Bank.

Bank Gdański SA

Bank Gdański (BG) was privatized again without its twinning bank involved in the process and the Ministry of Finance adviser had been HSBC Investment Services (for the local offering) and the HSBC Bank for the international offering. HSBC came with an interesting proposal to offer BG stock in parallel on the local WSE as well as on the London Stock Exchange in the form of Global Depositary Receipts.

That was to be the first ever, international offering of Polish institutions on the foreign exchange. The offering was successful on both markets and all stock was sold with substantial reductions of allotted stock; as the large domestic tranche was not limited by the number of shares subscribed, BIG Bank, the first private bank in Poland, bought directly and via a number of subsidiaries – a substantial amount (26.5%) of BG stock; that led in later years to the merger of both banks under the ambitious leadership of Mr. B. Kott (CEO and founder of BIG).

Polksi Bank Rozwoju SA (PBR)

PBR was a new bank created by the Ministry of Finance with the purpose of supporting financially newly established and privatized companies; in 1994 the bank was in need of additional new funding and as it was clear that the government would not provide the necessary funds, Mr. W. Kostrzewa at the time its CEO, grabbed the opportunity and hired HSBC Investment Services to lead their IPO which was again successful in enabling old shareholders to exit and the bank to become private.

PBK SA

PBK SA was one of the spinoffs of the NBP, which prior to the privatization that took place in 1997, (before the privatization PBK bought and incorporated into its structures Polski Bank Inwestycyjny SA – a small state owned bank) had strengthened its balance sheet.

This privatization took place under the auspices not only of the Ministry of Finance but under the Ministry of Ownership Changes led at the time by a prominent member of the coalition partner Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (Polish Peasant Party).

The HSBC was again advisor to the Ministry, and was given – as it turned out – the impossible task of selling the bank to domestic investors, though in the bidding process we could not openly exclude interested foreign investors.

HSBC ran the tender and as expected (by HSBC) the highest offer was by a foreign investor; due to the fact that this very investor did not have a fully fledged financial and banking history and expertise (as compared to a bank), the Ministry cancelled the tender and requested instead to privatize the bank by way of IPO however with the condition that no single institutional investor could acquire more than 13.5% of PBK stock!

HSBC did what it could, the IPO was successful and three institutions each bought 13.5% i.e. Warta SA (an insurance company controlled by local tycoon J. Kulczyk), Kredyt Bank SA, and Creditanstalt AG from Vienna.

In three months the Polish institutions sold – at gain – all its owned PBK stock – to Creditanstalt AG, which in a year had merged its local subsidiary with PBK thus forming Creditanstalt Polska SA!

Bank Handlowy SA (BH)

About the same time as PBK SA's privatization, the CEO of Bank Handlowy SA, Mr C. Stypulkowski came to the Ministry with the outline of a proposal for BH privatization by way of simultaneous listing on the WSE with participation of three foreign institutions: i.a. JP Morgan and SvedeBank as the main shareholders. The idea of so-called "stable investors" was accepted and the deal went through back in 1997 by way of an IPO under which 30% was offered to the three "stable" investors and 29% to the general public.

Later years

In the period 1997 – 2004 the rest of the Polish banking sector was privatized and at present the share of foreign owned assets in Polish banking is slightly below 50%.

In conclusion, in my view the privatization of the Polish banking sector has been and is a success story thanks to the determination of its governments and the open mindedness

of its society who embraced in full the collapse of the command economy and decided to take its destiny into its own hands; advisers just helped and guided the process suggesting the most efficient, attractive and transparent ways during those difficult and trying times.

Privatization of the banking sector helped Polish banks to rapidly become very modern and innovative institutions offering its clients a full range of services oriented both to their corporate and retail needs.

Moreover the banking sector and regulatory authorities avoided unnecessary risks and thus was not subject to financial crises like those of 1998 and 2007/8.

European Union membership further strengthened the good reputation of the country's banking sector, benefiting both the national economy and its clients.

MARCIN WAKAR

WARSAW UNIVERSITY

***The Rebirth of Polishness in the Baltic States
as a Result of the Crisis and the Collapse of the USSR:
The Case of Lithuania***

Poles started appearing on the territory of each of the Baltic States at different times. For example, they came to today's Estonian territory at the beginning of the 19th century to study at the famous Dorpat University¹. However, mass migration to these lands took place in the interwar period, when Poles were coming to look for work². After the Second World War, Poles from the former Eastern Borderlands of Poland were coming to Estonia for the same purpose. In turn, in Latvia they appeared in the 16th century, when, after the secularization of the Teutonic Order, Livonia went under the protection of the Polish King Zygmunt III³. Today they are living mainly in Riga and the Latgale region. Another situation took place in Lithuania, where the Polish clergy and nobility had already begun to migrate in the Middle Ages. The Lithuanians took over the model of European civilization in the Polish version, along with the Catholic faith and Polish language as literary and social speech. This led to the polonization of the wide masses of the society, mainly throughout its nobility and townspeople⁴. Today, the Polish minority is still the most numerous in this country.

In 1940, all three Baltic States lost their newly attained independence⁵ and were integrated into the Soviet Union. Since then, their populations were successively subjected to the process of sovietization, the aim of which was to create the new, internationalist Soviet man. Therefore, union authorities did not allow for the creation of Polish organizations in the USSR⁶. Such possibilities appeared only after March 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev

¹ A. Koseski, *Polacy w Estonii. Stan i kierunki badań*, [in:] *Polacy w Estonii*, red. E. Walewander, Lublin 1988, p. 39.

² *Ibidem*, p. 45.

³ T. Biernat, *Być Polakiem na Łotwie. Świat życia codziennego*, Toruń 2003, p. 15.

⁴ W. Wakar, *Rozwój terytorialny narodowości polskiej. Część III. Statystyka narodowościowa kresów wschodnich*, Kielce 1917, pp. 3-4.

⁵ All of them gained independence in 1918.

⁶ An exception to this rule was the Union of Polish Patriots, operating in the years 1943-1946.

became the first secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and introduced the policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost*.

The first of these – *perestroika* – referred to the economic sphere, although Mikhail Gorbachev defined its sense in the following words:

“We are convinced that only through democratization one can move forward vigorously, reveal the great possibilities of the socialist system and the whole richness of the human personality, build a society of leading economics, science, technology, and at the same time great humanism.

Why is technical progress worthwhile if, as it develops, ethical norms become smoother and morality lowers?

Creation of social conditions in which economic and scientific-technical progress will connect with social justice and morality, with the wealth of the spiritual existence of a human being – a worthy goal”⁷.

In turn, the term *glasnost*, that is transparency, referred to various areas of life, but above all to media policy. The top-down pressures as well as personnel changes in the leading editorial offices led to the disclosure of information that has been censored so far. However, as noted by Canadian historian David Roger Marples: “In general, more *progressive* reportages could be found in the central press rather than in individual republics, with a notable exception to the Baltic states”⁸. Although *perestroika* in the initial years contained processes with varying effects, it finally ended in defeat. The failure of *perestroika* coupled with the success of *glasnost*, therefore made it impossible to cover up the first one. Additionally, it all happened during a lack of political unity in the Kremlin⁹. What’s more, Gorbachev’s policy led to a situation in which: „A sense of national identity was growing significantly in each of the republics belonging to the USSR. It also had a huge impact on the mood of all groups of national minorities, reflected in the desire to revive and preserve their mother tongue and national traditions”¹⁰.

Thus, an increase in the consciousness of belonging to a particular nation was, on one hand, a factor leading to the desire for independence by societies of individual republics, and on the other hand, had a decisive influence on the revival of the identity of national minorities in their territory.

One of the consequences of the *glasnost* policy was the undermining of the legality of joining the Baltic states to the USSR in 1940. The annexation of these states was made under the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. The secret protocols included in the pact were published in the local Estonian press in 1988. Officially, the Soviet Union denied the existence of such documentation, and after its publication, denied that they were related to the “independent” movements that demanded their countries join the USSR. The Soviet authorities

⁷ Przemówienie Michaiła Gorbaczowa na uroczystym posiedzeniu Sejmu PRL 11 lipca 1988 r., [in:] *Pieriestrojka i socjalistyczna odnowa – wspólna przepustka w XXI wiek. Wizyta Michaiła Gorbaczowa w Polsce w dniach 11-14 lipca 1988 r.*, red. I. Kwasiborska, Warszawa 1988, p. 7.

⁸ D. R. Marples, *Historia ZSRR. Od rewolucji do rozpadu*, Wrocław 2011, p. 291.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 307.

¹⁰ Z. Woronowicz-Tiits, *Życie organizacyjne Polonii estońskiej po II wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Polacy w Estonii*, red. E. Walewander, Lublin 1988, p. 253

also recognized that the invasion of the USSR by Nazi Germany had invalidated the provisions contained in the pact. For patriotically minded citizens of the Baltic countries, this was a fundamental issue, since the recognition of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact as invalid would invalidate the grounds for the incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the USSR¹¹. Awareness of these facts certainly had an impact on the further course of events.

At that time, the Popular Fronts headed by the Lithuanian Sajūdis, began to emerge in the Baltic States. In February 1990, this movement obtained the majority of seats in the Highest Council of the LSRR (Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic) and on 11 March the Act of Restoration of the Lithuanian State was signed. Although it resulted in military intervention by Soviet troops and the decision to declare independence being postponed, the colossus on the clay legs began to waver. On 9 February 1991, the question of Lithuanian independence was submitted to a general vote. As a result, over 90% of citizens voted for it. On 3 March Latvia and Estonia followed this action obtaining a slightly weaker result. These republics also declared independence after the unsuccessful Janyev coup, in August 1991. In September of the same year, it was recognized by both the United States and the Soviet Union¹².

In the three Baltic states, the largest group of Poles is located in Lithuania. They live closely in the area around Vilnius, where they constitute the majority of residents. In 1989, around 258,000 citizens of Polish nationality lived in Lithuania, which constituted 7% of Lithuanian society¹³, while according to the last census of 2011 there were around 200,000 citizens, which constituted 6.6% of the country's population¹⁴. Even before the Lithuanian Movement for Reform Sajūdis was established, the Lithuanian Poles had created their organization. The initiative group included representatives of local Polish elites: Jerzy Surwiło, Henryk Mażul, Jan Sienkiewicz, Romuald Mieczkowski, Krystyna Marczyk and others¹⁵. On 5 May 1988, more than 300 people appeared at the founding meeting of the Socio-Cultural Association of Poles in Lithuania. Jan Sienkiewicz was elected its president. The Association's goals to its statute were, among others, as follows:

- „propagating and supporting Polish language and culture, shaping the national consciousness of Poles in Lithuania – in the name of their unhampered functioning and development on a par with other national languages and cultures;
- Strengthening cultural ties with the Polish People's Republic to shape civic attitudes in the spirit of patriotism and internationalism;
- Counteracting all kinds of nationalistic superstitions, prejudices, stereotypes impeding mutual understanding and harmonious cooperation between the citizens of the republic;
- Undertaking all kinds of initiatives aimed at the cultural advancement of the population of rural Polish nationality”¹⁶.

¹¹ D.R. Marples, *Historia ZSRR...*, p. 316.

¹² Ibidem, pp. 317-322.

¹³ P. Eberhardt, *Przemiany narodowościowe na Litwie*, Warszawa 1997, p. 212.

¹⁴ *Lietuvos gyventojai 2011 metais*, Vilnius 2011, p. 20.

¹⁵ A. Bobryk, *Odrodzenie narodowe Polaków w Republice Litewskiej 1987-1997*, Toruń 2006, p. 120.

¹⁶ *Statut Stowarzyszenia Społeczno-Kulturalnego Polaków na Litwie*, [in:] *Dokumenty Związku Polaków na Litwie 1988-1998*, red. J. Sienkiewicz, Wilno 2003, p. 7.

On 16 June 1988 the association was registered with the Lithuanian Cultural Fund¹⁷. It was a breakthrough event for Poles throughout the USSR and became a pattern for them to follow, which I will further mention later on. Less than a year later, on 15-16 May 1989, the First Congress of the Socio-Cultural Association of Poles in Lithuania (in Polish known as Stowarzyszenie Społeczno-Kulturalne Polaków na Litwie – from here on referred to by the acronym SSKPL,) took place in Vilnius, during which over 12,000 people joined the Association. During the Congress, a decision was made decouple the organisation from the Lithuanian Culture Fund and transform it into the Union of Poles in Lithuania (in Polish known as Związek Polaków na Litwie – from here on referred to by the acronym ZPL)¹⁸.

On 24 August 1989 it was registered by the Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic¹⁹. In the Union's Statutes, most of the provisions of the SSKPL were retained, but it was broadened mainly with provisions regarding political activity, i.e. the possibility of promoting candidates to elected bodies of power²⁰. The Union of Poles in Lithuania is undoubtedly the largest organization of the Polish minority that exists in the former republics of the Soviet Union. However, apart from this one other social, educational, cultural and professional organizations were formed, often in cooperation with the Union of Poles. It is on these organizations I would now like to concentrate, because there has already been enough written about the ZPL²¹. There is one thing that currently needs to be clarified in the organization's activity, and it is the allegation of embezzlement of money transferred to them by the Foundation "Help Poles in the East". An investigation is pending in this case²².

The first Polish educational organization established in the LSRR was the Association of Polish Researchers in Lithuania. It was formed on 14 April 1989. Prof. Romuald Brazis, prof. Edward Szpilewski, Emalia Maria Iwaszkiewicz Ph.D., Medard Czobot Ph.D. and others were its founders. The main scope of the activity of the organization included: conducting research in various fields of science, supporting Polish education in Lithuania, publishing scientific and didactic literature, promoting organization of conferences, etc. One of the most important tasks was to lead the now non-functioning Polish University in Vilnius. The Association still works actively, organizes scientific conferences and publishes the Yearbook of the Association of Polish Researchers in Lithuania²³.

The second most important educational organization is the Polska Macierz Szkolna, established in November 1990, bringing together teachers of Polish schools in Lithuania. The organization's activities are concentrated, among others, on organizing school equipment, expanding school libraries' collection of books and training teachers²⁴.

¹⁷ A. Bobryk, *Odrodzenie narodowe...*, p. 120.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 121.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ A. Bobryk, *Społeczne znaczenie funkcjonowania polskich ugrupowań politycznych w Republice Litewskiej 1989-2013*, Siedlce 2013, p. 87.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 84-110.

²² E. Mokrzecka, *Mackiewicz fałszował faktury*, <http://zw.lt/wilno-wilenszczyzna/mackiewicz-falszowal-faktury/> [viewed 06.08.2018].

²³ M. Wakar, *Polskie środowisko naukowe w Republice Litewskiej*, „Sprawy Narodowościowe. Seria Nowa”, 2012 nr 41, s. 140-141.

²⁴ A. Bobryk, *Odrodzenie narodowe...*, s. 128-129.

During an academic internship that the author of this article held at the Institute of Lithuanian History in Vilnius, he had the opportunity to take part in the founding meeting of the Association of Polish Language Teachers in Lithuania. The meeting took place in the building of the former Vilnius Pedagogical University in autumn 2011 (today it is the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences). This organization was created primarily as a forum for cooperation and exchange of experience for Polish language teachers in Lithuania. In addition, the other goals of the Association's activities include: "Participating in the creation and discussion of program content, conditions and means of teaching Polish language in general education secondary high schools, public speaking on the issue of the shape of examinations and final tests, qualifications and attestation of teachers; representing the opinions of the Association's members in public discussions; delegating representatives to appointed commissions and working groups dealing with matters of education"²⁵.

In addition to the above mentioned, the Polish Third Age University in Vilnius also operates actively. It was established in 1995, with Ryszard Kuźmo as the rector from the very beginning. It was the first university for seniors established in Lithuania²⁶. Today there is also the Polish Third Age Academy in Vilnius and Polish universities in Šalčininkai, Nemenčinė and Kėdainiai²⁷ and, of course, many Lithuanian universities for seniors.

According to Henryk Sosnowski, the president of the Jerzy Montwiłł Polish Culture Foundation in Lithuania, this foundation was the first Polish non-governmental organization that was established in Lithuania. Although it was actually registered in 1989, its founding is dated to 1987, when in Poland, the Polish Cultural Foundation was founded upon the initiation of prof. Tadeusz Polak, a friend of Henryk Sosnowski. The organization mainly conducts all activities for the inventory of Polish mementos in Lithuania and commemoration of Poles who are important to the Vilnius region²⁸. Later, in 1993, the St. Moniuszko Center of Polish Culture was established and has been headed by Apolonia Skakowska from the beginning. She presented the activity of this organization as follows: "Today we have 95 music bands. Let it be folkloric, but not only! There are also bands that are formed on the basis of new forces – young graduates of the Music Academy [...]. And it really encouraged me and my work in that they attracted people to culture. Some people complain that only folklore is present. Well, not only folklore. There are choirs, and church choirs. I work with churches and bring Polish choirs to churches"²⁹.

With regard to culture, the most important event for the whole Polish community of Vilnius was the establishment of the House of Polish Culture in 2001, which operates thanks to the Foundation of Charity and Help "Polish Culture House in Vilnius". This building is a seat for 25 Polish organizations, theatre performances take place here as well as many concerts and exhibitions³⁰.

Organizations of a professional nature are very dynamic, such as the Polish Association of Doctors in Lithuania established in 1989 (initially as a circle near the Union of Poles

²⁵ http://polonista.lt/?page_id=4 [viewed 19.06.2018].

²⁶ <http://zw.lt/wilno-wilenszczyzna/wesole-jest-zycie-staruszka-czyli-jubileusz-universytetu-trzeciego-wieku/> [viewed 19.06.2018].

²⁷ <https://wilno.msz.gov.pl/resource/faeac155-53a9-41d4-8963-5485fabaga9b:JCRI> [viewed 19.06.2018].

²⁸ Interview with Henryk Sosnowski conducted in Vilnius on June 13, 2014. Recording in author's collection.

²⁹ Interview with Apolonia Skakowska conducted in Vilnius on June 3, 2014. Recording in author's collection.

³⁰ <http://polskidom.lt/pl/apie-mus/> [viewed 19.06.2018].

in Lithuania) or the Association of Polish Engineers and Technicians in Lithuania which has been operating since 1996³¹. Legal assistance in difficult matters is provided free of charge by the Association of Polish Lawyers in Lithuania, which has recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary³².

It should not be forgotten that political parties of the Polish minority exist or have existed in the Republic of Lithuania. The amendment to the Act on Social Organizations has led to a situation in which the Union of Poles in Lithuania could not put forward candidates in local government elections. Therefore, on 12 August 1994, a political party called the Electoral Action of the Union of Poles in Lithuania was established³³. This party, under modified names, introduced its candidates not only to the local governments, but also to the Lithuanian parliament and the ruling coalition. In addition, there were other political organizations, such as the Polish Lithuanian Congress or the Polish People's Party. However, these last organizations mentioned were unable to mobilize a significant electorate around them and were forced to suspend their activities.

Moreover, there are also charitable, political, veteran, creative, youth, religious, economic and other organizations existing. There are as many as 87 items on the list of Polish minority organizations in Lithuania, published on the website of the Polish Embassy in Vilnius³⁴.

A completely separate issue is the attempt to establish Polish territorial autonomy in the Vilnius region. The period of the national revival of Lithuanians is also the time in which Poles living in Lithuania met with indifference or even harassment, while the monuments of Polish culture in the Vilnius region were devastated by "unknown violators". This situation led to a congress of delegates of Soviets of People's Deputies from the communes of the Vilnius region inhabited by Poles. It took place on 12 May, 1989 in the town of Mickuny. During the congress, it was decided to establish a Polish National Autonomous District within the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. This was met with a definitely negative reaction by Lithuanians, who accused the Poles of the territorial disintegration of the republic, and a resolution about autonomy and unconstitutionality. However, at the same time, the Union of Poles in Lithuania supported the idea of autonomy, on 6 September in Šalčininkai and on 15 September in Nemenčinė, the Council of People's Deputies of the Šalčininkai and Vilnius regions proclaimed the creation of a Polish national-territorial region. However, these resolutions were annulled by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Council of Ministers, which then adopted the "Law on National Minorities". It was created to ensure, among others, preservation of rights to use one's own language in offices and the right to bilingual information signs in areas inhabited by a national minority³⁵. Nevertheless, in May 1991, the Šalčininkai People's Council under the leadership of Czesław Wysocki adopted a resolution that only the constitution and legal acts of the USSR could be recognized in the area. Eventually, Wysocki left Lithuania together with the retreating Soviet army³⁶. Some of the activists, so-called Autonomists, went to the Lithuanian courts accused of

³¹ A. Bobryk, *Odrodzenie narodowe...*, p. 129.

³² <http://kirp.pl/20-lecie-zwiazku-prawnikow-polakow-litwie/> [viewed 13.08.2018].

³³ A. Bobryk, *Spoleczne znaczenia...*, p. 121.

³⁴ <https://wilno.msz.gov.pl/resource/faeac155-53a9-41d4-8963-5485fabagagb:JCR> [viewed 18.06.2018].

³⁵ A. Srebrakowski, *Polacy w Litewskiej SRR 1944-1989*, Toruń, 2002, pp. 299-301.

³⁶ A. Radczenko, *Czerwony „Baron” polskiej autonomii*, <http://rojsty.blox.pl/2013/09/Czerwony-8222baron-8221-polskiej-autonomii.html> [viewed 20.08.2018].

activities to the detriment of the Lithuanian state. The judgments were severe, but in the end only Leon Jankielewicz was sentenced and spent a year in prison³⁷.

And how does it look in other Baltic countries? Latvian Poles who had no pre-war Polish citizenship, were not subject to the so-called repatriation to Poland. Statistically, their number between 1935 and 1959 increased, but – as Piotr Eberhard stated – this was mainly due to the bias of the pre-war Latvian census³⁸. In any case, in 1989, the population of Poles in Latvia was 60.4 thousand, which constituted 2.3% of the population of this country³⁹.

While the authorities of the Soviet Union tried to cope with the socio-economic and political crisis, and the Social and Cultural Association of Poles in Lithuania had already existed for more than half a year, in November 1988, the Society of Polish Culture was established in Riga. Shortly thereafter, analogous organizations were established in Daugavpils, Rezekne, Ilūkste, and Jelgava. The organizations merged and on 14 January 1990 the Union of Poles in Latvia (in Polish: Związek Polaków na Łotwie, –with the acronym ZPŁ) was established, headed by Ita Maria Kozakiewicz⁴⁰. Her mandate did not last long, because she died tragically in October of the same year. Robert Seliszka became the next president. The Union set its main goals as, among others: preserving ethnic identity, developing the language and culture of Poles living in Latvia, identification and protection of monuments of Polish culture in Latvia, restitution and extension of the network of Polish educational and sports facilities in Latvia, etc⁴¹.

Similarly to the other Baltic States, the turning point of the rebirth of Polishness in Latvia was the announcement of independence by the state, on 21 August 1991. Wanda Krukowska, a Polish activist from Rezekne, described this: "At the end of 1991 a new stage in the life of Poles in Latvia has begun. With the establishment of an independent Latvian state, in Riga, a representation of the Republic of Poland was created in the person of Ambassador Jarosław Lindenberg and numerous employees of the Embassy; the activity of the ZPŁ shall facilitate a contact with them"⁴².

Zofia Woronowicz-Tiits from Tallinn used the same tone describing the activities of the Union of Poles in Estonia "Polonia": "The unexpected breakthrough which then occurred [the collapse of the USSR and the establishment of an independent Estonia] proved to be a great support and facilitation for the organization [...]. The first 20 children went by train to summer camps to Poland. The first representatives of the Union went to summer courses to Lublin, Kraków and Toruń. It was as strange as a beautiful dream"⁴³.

³⁷ M. Maszkiewicz, *Repatriacja czy repatriotyzacja. Wybrane problemy polskich strategii politycznych wobec rodaków za wschodnią granicą: (1986-1990)*. Wojnowice 2017, p. 300.

³⁸ P. Eberhardt, *Przemiany narodowościowe na ziemi łotewskiej w XX i na początku XXI wieku*, Sprawy Narodowościowe. Seria Nowa, 2017 nr 49, <https://ispan.waw.pl/journals/index.php/sn/article/view/sn.1288> [viewed 06.06.2018], p. 8.

³⁹ *Natsional'nysostavnaseleniia*. (1991). Moskwa 1991, Goskomstat SSSR, [in favour of:] P. Eberhardt, *Przemiany narodowościowe na ziemi łotewskiej w XX i na początku XXI wieku*, Sprawy Narodowościowe. Seria Nowa, 2017 nr 49, <https://ispan.waw.pl/journals/index.php/sn/article/view/sn.1288> [viewed 06.06.2018], p. 9.

⁴⁰ <http://ryga.zpl.lv/o-nas/> [viewed 08.06.2018].

⁴¹ *Statut Stowarzyszenia „Związek Polaków na Łotwie”*, http://www.polonia.lv/index.php?lang=2&cPath=7&txt_id=17 [viewed 08.06.2018].

⁴² W. Krukowska, *Działalność Związku Polaków na Łotwie*, [in:] *Polacy na Łotwie*, red. E. Walewander. Lublin 1993, p. 307.

⁴³ Z. Woronowicz-Tiits, *Życie organizacyjne Polonii estońskiej po II wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Polacy w Estonii*, red. E. Walewander. Lublin 1988, p. 254.

According to the 2011 census – 1,622 citizens with Polish nationality live in Estonia⁴⁴. The Union of Poles in Estonia "Polonia" developed into the Polish Cultural Society "Polonia" in 1988 upon the initiative of Krystyna Maria Luite. The organization was registered on 20 January 1989, and engineer Jan Łapian was chosen as its chairman. In 1995, the Society was transformed into the Union of Poles in Estonia "Polonia"⁴⁵ (with Zofia Tiits as the president). The Society, and then the Union, started its activity by conducting Polish language, culture and history courses.

Today, the organization under the leadership of Halina Krystyna Kistacz primarily organizes celebrations of national anniversaries, concerts, exhibitions and competitions. Among others, the folkloristic band "Lajkonik" and the Polish library works at the Union⁴⁶.

At the website of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tallinn, in the "Cooperation with Polonia" tab there is a comprehensive article on the history of Poles in Estonia. At the end of it, an active cooperation of the embassy with the Union of Poles in Estonia "Polonia" is mentioned (giving an incorrect date of the organization). However, there is no information about other Polish organizations in this country⁴⁷. And there are three more besides the abovementioned Union: the Union of Poles in Kohtla Järve, whose president is Wiktor Koleseń; the Polish Association in Narva, whose president is Natalja Belotserkovskaja; and the Polish Club "Polonez" in Narva, whose president is Anna Malinowska⁴⁸.

The lack of information about these organizations may be explained by the statement by Consul Wactaw Oleksy. He stated that: "These organizations have more of a *pro bono* rather than Polonia character. They also did not have typical representatives of the Polish community. They are more likely to use Polish threads to present their interests"⁴⁹. Further, in the same article, he states that only the Union of Poles in Estonia "Polonia" meets the requirements of the World Polish organization. It should be noted that this statement may be unfair and it is worth revisiting this topic in later studies, because even the Union of Poles in Estonia informs on its website about events prepared by other organizations of Poles in this country⁵⁰.

To sum up, it can therefore be said that the crisis of the Soviet state, and consequently the Soviet ideology with internationalism at the forefront, were direct factors in the revival of national identity in the Baltic Republics. On the one hand, this led to the proclamation of independence by these countries, and on the other hand, it was an impulse to revive national consciousness among Poles living there, as well as other national minorities. It should be emphasized that the Socio-Cultural Association of Poles in Lithuania was established earlier than the Lithuanian Sajūdis and became a model for organizations that were later established in other republics, not only in Baltic ones. It was then transformed into the Union of Poles in Lithuania, which today has about 10,000 members in its ranks. This organization, although not always well managed, laid the foundations for the revival of Polishness in the Baltic States.

⁴⁴ <http://pub.stat.ee/px-web.2001/Dialog/Saveshow.asp> [viewed 07.06.2018].

⁴⁵ Z. Woronowicz-Tiits, *Życie organizacyjne...*, p. 255.

⁴⁶ <http://polonia.ee/index.php?id=23> [viewed 07.06.2018].

⁴⁷ <https://tallinn.msz.gov.pl/pl/ambasada/wspolpraca/> [viewed 07.06.2018].

⁴⁸ M. Boruta, *Polacy w Estonii*, <http://www.krakowniezalezny.pl/polacy-w-estonii/>, [viewed 07.06.2018].

⁴⁹ <http://www.gazetazagazeta.com/2017/09/polacy-w-estonii-i-wzajemne-stosunki-polsko-estonskie/> [viewed 07.06.2018].

⁵⁰ <http://polonia.ee/index.php?id=186> [viewed 19.06.2018].

ALEKSANDRA GRYŹLAK

CENTRE FOR EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

The Georgian Herald Samizdat Journal*

From the very beginnings of Soviet rule in Georgia, the communists were not very popular throughout Georgian society and treated as occupants. Almost all active forms of resistance ceased to exist after the bloody suppression of the August Uprising of 1924¹. The massive purge of the Georgian intelligentsia that followed deprived the nation of its patriotic elites. Only after the death of Stalin and in the wake of Nikita Khrushchev's famous speech in 1956, did the situation change. Khrushchev's words of accusation and criticism, leveled at Stalin for his cult of personality and other mistakes, were treated in Georgia as an attack on their nation and an element of Russian chauvinism. It gave rise to a series of mass protests in Tbilisi in March 1956, that were brutally dispersed by the army. Approximately 150 people died as a result².

During the 1950s and 60s, Vasillii Mzhavanadze was the leader of the Georgian Communist Party. In keeping with Khrushchev's strategy of somewhat reduced control over the national republics, one could observe a consolidation of power by the ruling elite in Georgia³. This led to the spread of corruption, bribery and other illegal economic operations. Despite a weak economy, according to official statistics, the average Georgian's savings in the 1970s were nearly twice that of the average Russian. Also, during this time, a very high number of educated specialists – who while graduating, did not take job assignments –

* This publication was prepared in the framework of a project financed by the National Science Centre Poland issued according to decision no. 2012/05/N/HS3/01778.

¹ See D.de Souramy, *Sirdar de la Géorgie Insurgée. Tiflis contre Moscow*, Brussels 1939; A. Furier, *Relacja Józefa Łaszkiewicza o gruzińskim powstaniu antybolszewickim 1924 r.*, "Pro Georgia", vol. VII, 1998, p. 137-149; W. Materski, *Powstanie narodowowyzwolenicze 1924 r. w Gruzji*, "Studia z Dziejów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej", vol. XXXIV, Warsaw 1999, pp. 57-67.

² D. Rayfield, *Edge of Empires. A History of Georgia*, London 2012, p. 370.

³ R. G. Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, p. 301.

were still able to live reasonably well. Another phenomenon characteristic for the 1950s and 60s was a growing sense of nationalism. Symptoms of this included a relatively small number of national minority representatives able to gain access to higher education in the Georgian Republic, as well as clear-cut Georgian control over local and national party structures. The situation did not change after the fall of Khrushchev.⁴

Only in the early 1970s, did things start to change. In 1972, the key position of the First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party was passed to the former Minister of the Interior – Eduard Shevardnadze, who began his rule with a broad campaign against corruption, overgrown bureaucracy, nepotism, and the so-called “second economy” (black market). Harsh administrative methods used in this campaign brought some positive effects –

especially in the agricultural sector – but also resulted in a negative reaction from Georgian society⁵. Shevardnadze was also supposed to fight against growing Georgian nationalism. Campaigns, that condemned such things as reluctance to learn Russian language and promotion of national chauvinism in culture, were initiated. The teaching curriculum of the subject of history was also put under siege by the new authorities⁶.

Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights in Georgia

Mass disbelief in the possibilities of the Soviet economy, censorship and social pathologies, as well as the failure of Khrushchev's reform to challenge the old elites – resulted in the emergence of legal, organized forms of opposition – dissident movements. The first such group in Georgia was the Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights, established in 1974, by the two most famous Georgian dissidents – Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava. They were both born in Tbilisi and were childhood friends. Zviad was the son of the famous Georgian writer, Constantine Gamsakhurdia; belonging to a family with very strong patriotic traditions, which would play a very significant role in his later life. Already by 1953, they had established an underground student's opposition group called “*Gorgaslani*”. The secret group was caught distributing anti-communist propaganda and its members were arrested. They were able to receive suspended sentences, in part due to the fact that Constantine Gamsakhurdia was widely respected in Georgian society.⁷ Zviad Gamsakhurdia graduated from the Department of Philology of Tbilisi University, devoting his master's thesis to Anglo-American literature. Later he worked in the Ministry of Culture. He was also a member of the Writers' Union of the Georgian SSR. Merab Kostava, a pianist, graduated from the Tbilisi conservatory and worked as a music teacher⁸.

Apart from Gamsakhurdia and Kostava, another important member of the group was Viktor Rchiladze. Raised in a family of decorated sportsmen, writers and social activists, he graduated history at Tbilisi University. He worked as a history teacher for some years and later in the Inspectorate of Historical Monuments at the Ministry of Culture of the

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 304.

⁵ W. Materski, *Gruzja*, Warsaw 2010, p. 246.

⁶ R. G. Suny, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

⁷ R. Rayfield, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

⁸ L. Berdzenishvili, *Zviad Gamsakhurdia*, (in:) *Słownik Dysydentów – tom 2*, Warsaw 2007, p. 204; V. Rchiladze, T. Chanturishvili, *Merab Kostava*, (in:) *Słownik Dysydentów – tom 2*, Warsaw 2007, p. 210.

GSSR. During his studies he met Zviad Gamsakhurdia and they became close friends.⁹ Other members of the Initiative Group included Bego Bezhuashvili and Irakli Kenchoshvili.

The Group's main task was to defend people's rights and to make sure that Soviet law was adhered to. The members of the Group wrote various letters and petitions in defense of people unjustly arrested or fired, of historical monuments and of human rights, in general. These petitions were signed by other members of society and were mainly addressed to the Party hierarchy, Russian dissidents and sometimes, even to the foreign media.¹⁰

Already by 1972, Gamsakhurdia and Kostava had been keeping close ties with Russian human rights advocates. Gamsakhurdia was passing on information on the situation in Georgia to the "*Chronicle of Current Events*"¹¹. The Initiative Group was distributing Russian samizdat in Georgia – literature as well as materials connected to the defense of human rights. Thanks to the Group's activity, articles by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov and Yurii Orlov appeared in Georgia.

The second half of the 1970s was a period of development of Georgian samizdat. In 1975, the journal "*Okros Sacmisi*" (Golden Fleece) was established in Tbilisi and four issues were eventually published. The *Golden Fleece* had a literary-cultural profile and mainly published poetry, reviews and articles devoted to literature. Only the last issue¹² contained some materials that could be considered political and anti-Soviet. Already in the preface, one could read about the servile situation of Georgia, which was being enslaved by Russia, and was in danger of losing its sense of national identity and falling into moral degradation. There are also poems spiced with political and oppositionist flavors, such as "*To New Leadership*", in which the author calls for society to enter into the struggle against Soviet authority in Georgia or "*25th February*", which is devoted to Solzhenitsyn, in which the Soviet Union is portrayed as an agglomerate and the author hopes for the fall and breakup of the USSR, while the famous Russian dissident is presented as a warrior fighting with the "dark forces". In the poem "*Enough Sleep*", the author convinces us that the whole state has been transformed into a maximum security psychiatric hospital.

A year later, another underground journal was established – "*Sakartvelos Moambe*" (The Georgian Herald). Its purpose was to deliver information concerning the national and social situation in Georgia and the whole of the Soviet Union. The editors of both periodicals were Gamsakhurdia, Kostava and Rchiladze. Two issues of the Herald were published in 1976, in the Georgian language. The title itself had already appeared in Georgian history in XIX c. The first, "*Sakartvelos Moambe*", was edited by Ilia Chavchavadze in 1863, and although it only existed for one year, was considered very influential.¹³ The editors of the new "*Moambe*" were Merab Kostava, Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Viktor Rchiladze.

The journal was published on ordinary paper and had a sticker on the front page with the title, issue and year. The editors looked for different places and people to print and copy the journals in Tbilisi – at friends' houses, sometimes by retired professional typ-

⁹ T. Chanturishvili, *Viktor Rchiladze*, (in.) *Słownik Dysydentów – tom 2*, Warsaw 2007, p. 218.

¹⁰ *Interrogation Protocol of Irakli Kenchoshvili, September 7, 1977*, Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia Archive (MIA Archive), f. 6, c. 7726, v. 9, pp. 19–25.

¹¹ One of the longest-running and best-known samizdat periodicals in the USSR dedicated to the defense of human rights. From 1968 to 1983, a total of 64 issues of *The Chronicle* were published.

¹² "*Okros Satsmisi*" no 4, MIA Archive, f. 6., c. 7806, v. 14.

¹³ R. G. Suny, op. cit., p. 129.

ists. It was copied illegally in underground typographical centers in Tbilisi. The distribution took place via a broad network of friends, work colleagues, neighbors; at universities and churches. The journal was passed from person to person. Some issues were also sold. The KGB confiscated any and all copies they could get their hands on (most of them); questioning those who were caught with them. It also made its way outside the borders of the Georgian Republic. It was even received by "Radio Free Europe".

"Georgian Herald" No 1¹⁴

The first issue of the journal begins with the following: *"It is characteristic of the Soviet totalitarian system to hide all information inconvenient to the authorities in administrative-political spheres of life. The "Georgian Herald's" goal is to pass on information to the Georgian nation about important national and social problems, as well as about the general situation in the country".*

This issue contains the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Principles by the Moscow Human Rights Committee, founded in 1970. The second article is written by the three founders of the Committee – Andrei Sakharov, Andrei Tverdokhlebov and Valerii Chalidze. It explains the basic principles of the Committee: that the organization will be acting within the existing law and that its members should not belong to any political party. The founders declare their support and intention to cooperate with people and institutions that conduct research on human rights or need their expertise. This section ends with information concerning the existing Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights in the USSR and about the creation of its sister group in Georgia in 1974.

The readers can find a section of articles concerning attempts at the russification of Georgia. The first article is about history education in Georgian schools. It is quite short and anonymously authored, entitled: *"The Teaching of Georgian History in Georgian Schools"*. It was intended to inform the readers about attempts, already begun in the late 1950s, of the central Soviet powers to eliminate national history as a separate subject in schools of all the republics and integrate it with the history of the USSR; more specifically, the history of Russia. In the case of Georgia, that would have meant a loss of all material before the 9th century. A second article in this section was, *"The Issue of Teaching Georgian History"* written by Nikoloz Samkharadze, a history teacher well known for his opposition against any and all forms of discrimination and russification. His text is a protest against attempts and decisions of the Soviet authorities to erase the pre-9th century history of Georgia from the school's curriculum and to incorporate the rest into a common history of the USSR. In his view, it was an act of russification and an attempt at assimilating the Georgian nation. Samkharadze strongly believed that knowledge of a common history is one of the foundations of a nation. There were also essays raising the question of the Soviet authorities' attempts to assimilate and russify the Tbilisi University and Academy of Art. An anonymous author reveals that in 1975, Professor Marika Lortkipanidze – head of the Georgian history department – was called by the Rector and asked to deliver all her lectures in Russian. After her strong objections, he asked the same of the Deans of several other university faculties –

¹⁴ "Sakartvelos Moambe", no 1, 1976, MIA Archive, f. 6, c.7726, v. 8, pp. 1-145.

however, most of them also refused. Another problem pointed out by the author concerns a USSR Council of Ministers resolution, set forth in 1975, demanding that all dissertations be written and defended in Russian. Russian was also intended to be the language for all textbooks.

Apart from the samizdat and dissidents – the fear of russification was also expressed by many Georgian intellectuals. For example, Revaz Japaridze, a member of the Writer's Union, gave an exceptionally emotional speech at the 8th Congress of the organization, against all suggestions or instructions to make Russian the teaching language in Georgia. He also expressed strong opposition towards the idea of dissertations and textbooks in Russian¹⁵. His speech was met with fervent applause and enthusiasm. A petition from 365 prominent educators, addressed to Shevardnadze and Brezhnev, containing opposition against forced bilingualism¹⁶ is also worthy of note.

In the 1950s, the Georgian Orthodox Church was more independent in administrative matters than its Russian counterpart. Patriarch Ephraim II, consecrated in 1960, often preached on the topic of patriotism amongst followers of the Orthodox faith. In the 1960s, many young people manifested their national pride and devotion to Georgian traditions by attending mass and other religious celebrations. The growing popularity of the Church, as well as its Patriarch, brought forth a reaction from the authorities; more control and infiltration of the Church. David V, the successor to Ephraim II, consecrated in 1972, proved to be very unpopular throughout Georgian society; standing accused of being controlled by the authorities.¹⁷

Articles concerning the condition of the Georgian Orthodox Church also appeared on the pages of the first issue of "*Sakartvelos Moambe*". This group of articles begins with an anonymous introductory article. The author begins with the notion that the state aggressively interferes in the affairs of the Church, despite its constitutional independence. He presents the history of Soviet repression towards the Georgian Orthodox Church, starting with the arrest of Patriarch Ambrose for his memorandum to the Genoa Conference, containing a description of the situation in Georgia after the Soviet invasion and demanding international intervention. The article also focuses our attention on the phenomenon of the creation of the so-called "red clergy" – members of the Church who were corrupt, dishonest and, above all, completely loyal to the authorities. Even worse, their main task was to discredit the institution of the Church amongst society. The author complains about the reduction of the number of churches in the Georgian SSR, the ban on religious publications or journals (other than calendars), as well as the fact that there was no clerical seminary on the territory of Georgia. Another important theme was the theory that the then-Patriarch, David V, was a loyal servant of the state and was, in fact, controlled by a "grey eminence" – Metropolitan Gaioz; in the eyes of the author, a criminal and clear representative of the "red clergy".

The author also describes a series of purely criminal cases connected with the Georgian Orthodox Church in the 1970s. One of them is presented in a report by the Assistant Prosecutor for the region of Tblisi-Kirov, David Koridze, addressed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, dated March 19 1973. The prosecutor's report

¹⁵ R. Japaridze, *Slovo proiznesennoie na VIII siezde pisateley Gruzii*, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v. 19, pp. 255-258.

¹⁶ R. G. Suny, op. cit., p. 310.

¹⁷ L. Alexeyeva, *Istorija inakomyслиja w SSRR. Nowiejszyj pieriod*, Vilnius-Moscow 1992, p. 83.

states that since the consecration of Patriarch David V, there has been a massive return of priests to the church that previously, during the reign of Patriarch Ephraim II (1960-1972), were not permitted to conduct mass on account of their corruption, alcoholism and depravity. Koridze advances the thesis that the very consecration of David V was illegal and in opposition to the genuine testament of the previous Patriarch. The main part of the report is devoted to the case of a robbery in the Patriarchate, just a few days after the death of Ephraim II. Apart from the Church depository (icons, crosses, old books – of significant historical and cultural importance), private objects of the late Patriarch were also stolen. According to materials presented to Koridze, it was Metropolitan Gaioz who was to blame for the crime.

It is interesting that this crime could only be prosecuted after Eduard Shevardnadze came to power in Georgia. It coincided perfectly with his anti-corruption campaign. It was also a strong blow against former First Secretary Vasilii Mzhavanadze and his clique, which had strong connections with David V and Metropolitan Gaioz. Koridze was then sacked from his position of Assistant Prosecutor for passing classified documents to Zviad Gamsakhurdia¹⁸.

In the first issue of "*Sakartvelos Moambe*" there is also an open letter to Patriarch David V from Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava and Valentina Pailodze, requesting the dismissal of the unworthy Metropolitan Gaioz. A copy of this letter was also sent to the Council of Ministers of Georgia. The subsequent three articles by Leo Jikuria, Teimuraz Janelidze and Valentina Pailodze protested against the fact that the authorities forbade or impeded the celebration of religious holidays.

Valentina Pailodze was a religious activist and the director of her church's choir. She was arrested in 1974, for preparing and distributing leaflets calling for a Christian way of life and demanding religious freedoms. She also revealed various scandals and thefts in the Georgian Church. She was sentenced to a year and a half in a female prison-colony in Tbilisi. After being released, she continued her activity and cooperation with the editors of "*Sakartvelos Moambe*"¹⁹.

The next subject of interest to the *Moambe's* editors was the protection of historical and cultural monuments in Georgia. Zviad Gamsakhurdia devoted a large article to this subject, entitled "*Condition of Georgian Cultural Monuments*". The article is divided into five parts. In the first one – "*Monument Protection or Burglary?*" – he reports on the methods and effects of the works of a special state conservation workshop located in the Ministry of Culture of the GSRR. Both Gamsakhurdia and Rchiladze were working in this workshop. According to the author, money designated for monument preservation was not spent accordingly. He points out corruption and bribe-taking in the Georgian system of monument protection and its acceptance by the authorities. In the second part – "*Monuments and Feasts*" – Gamsakhurdia writes about the disgraceful occurrence of organizing different feasts and parties at historical or religious monuments. This took place with the consent of the authorities. The following part – "*Raid of Herostrates*" – alarms the reader about the reality of monument care; where they are in fact merely left to deteriorate. The author points out that they are often converted into storage facilities or other utilitarian buildings. Sometimes they are disfigured by various added extension. The next part of the

¹⁸ A. Daniel, *Wprowadzenie*, (in:) *Słownik Dysydentów – tom 2*, Warsaw 2007, p. 188.

¹⁹ G. Soselia, *Walentyna Pailodze*, (in:) *Słownik Dysydentów – tom 2*, Warsaw 2007, pp. 215-216.

article is entitled: "Artillery Destroys Frescos", devoted to the protection of the David Gareja Monastery complex. Its territory was used as a training ground for the Soviet military that inflicted damage to the unique series of murals in the monastery. Gamsakhurdia warned of the worsening condition of the complex, due to the proximity of the artillery firing range. In the final part of the text – "Monuments and the Youth" – the author calls upon young people to visit monuments, simultaneously documenting and photographing their condition, with the aim of presenting it to the Chief of Monuments Inspection, Victor Rchiladze.

"Sakartvelos Moambe's" editors – Gamsakhurdia and Rchiladze – became aware of the condition of Georgian cultural monuments while they were both working in the Inspectorate of Monuments at the Ministry of Culture of the Georgian SRR in the early 1970s. They went on various official trips and were able to inspect the condition of different monuments and see the level of corruption and unprofessionalism among the people who were supposed to protect and maintain them. Besides publishing articles in samizdat, they also wrote official letters to the authorities concerning corruption and irregularities in the activity of the Inspectorate²⁰. They also addressed petitions to the authorities in defense of David Gareja complex. Despite many letters and official complaints – the authorities ignored the issue.

At the end of the article, Gamsakhurdia writes: *"...the pitiful condition of Georgian cultural monuments seems to not only be a result of indolence and various corrupt officials. This is an intentional policy of the authorities, directed against Christian culture in general, but particularly against Georgian Christian culture... Once again, this confirms that the authorities desire a great majority of monuments of old Georgian culture to gradually be destroyed by lack of care and restoration. It is obvious that in the communist system, there is no place for them"*.

The last few articles deal with social issues. Zviad Gamsakhurdia writes about the problem of tortures and violence in Georgian jails – "Torture of Inmates in Prisons of the Georgian SRR". The journal presents documents concerning the case against Yuri Tsirekidze and Valiko Usupiani. They were both prisoners of the pre-trial detention center in Tbilisi and in April 1975, they were accused and sentenced for "substantive physical damage causing death" and "refraining from aiding a victim". The victim's name was Ismailov and perhaps there was nothing particular about this case, but for the fact that in the previous three years numerous cases such as this had gone uninvestigated. Gamsakhurdia reveals that Tsirekidze and Usupiani were, in fact, both agents recruited by the KGB after sentencing and utilized to beat and torture fellow inmates. A special place for such actions was "Special Cell No. 40", in the second building of the pre-trial detention centre. Everybody in the center must have been involved, including the medical staff. In the case of Ismailov, the victim was probably not supposed to be "discarded" and this had effected the trial.

The journal presents a letter from Tsirekidze, including his declaration and testimony, in a piece entitled "Roots of Evil", where he presents his life story, focusing on the reasons for his behavior and explaining why he became a KGB agent. This material reveals a whole machinery of violence and corruption in the penitentiary system. All of this was taking place while Eduard Shevardnadze was Georgia's Minister of the Interior.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia, under the pseudonym Karaman Lbadze, in his article "Simple Arithmetic", compares wages with prices in the USSR. He analyzes wages using as an

²⁰ Interrogation protocol of V. Jakashvili, May 28, 1977, MIA Archive, f. 6, c.7726, v. 14, pp. 59-65.

example the spending habits of a simple laborer, a public administration employee and an academic worker. He goes on to explain that in the Soviet Union, people not belonging to the *nomenklatura* are not able to live off their "regular" wages and that this is the reason for corruption, bribe-taking and theft.

"Georgian Herald" No 2²¹

The second issue begins with an article on the Group to Promote Fulfillment of the Helsinki Accords in the USSR. It outlines the most serious problems concerning human rights violations in the USSR: the use of psychiatric repressions against political prisoners, lack of freedom to associate in political organizations, forced enrollment in the army to stop emigration from the USSR, lack of freedom of information, as well as no cohesion between the international conventions signed by Moscow and existing Soviet law. All these matters were reasons for the creation of the Group.

The most hard-pressed subject of the second issue of the journal was the Muslim population of Southern Georgia in Meskhetia (presently Samckhe-Javakheti region). Due to mass repressions in the 1930s, and especially after Stalin's deportation order in 1944, the whole population was either killed or displaced to the territories of Central Asia. Only in the 1960s and 70s, did they started to demand the right to return to their homeland²².

Viktor Rcchiladze wrote of the history of their deportation, their situation and the need for repatriation to Georgia. His main thesis was that Meskhetians were simply Georgians who (mainly) as a result of Moscow's policy had lost their homeland. The author condemned the fact that the Soviet authorities were not willing to agree to their repatriation to Georgia because they were regarded as an excellent labor force in the cotton plantations in Central Asia. Rcchiladze compared this to African-American slavery and exploitation in the United States.

The author wrote: *"It is interesting to see the reasoning behind such violation of Soviet law: criminal indifferentism, bribes from Armenian nationalists or a decree from invasive Russian imperial chauvinism; which acts according to the classic imperial formula – divide and rule."*

The article is followed by a supplementary text by Merab Kostava, who emphasizes that using the term "Turks" when referring to Meskhetians is very misleading, as they descend from an ancient Georgian tribe. Later in the text, the author explains how they were converted to Islam after the Ottoman invasion in the 16th century. At the same time, he points out that they never lost their feeling of national belonging or their knowledge of the Georgian language. After Georgian territory was annexed by the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 19th century, everything concerning nationality was suppressed, which excluded the possibility of a full return of the Meskhetians into the Georgian cultural sphere. They were treated as Turks. Kostava underlines that only during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years was the question of their repatriation raised. This section of the journal ends with copies of letters concerning the Meskhetians' repatriation, addressed to the

²¹ "Sakartvelos Moambe", no. 2, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v.19, pp. 15-155.

²² See A. Yunusov, *Meskhetian Turks: Twice Deported People* (Baku 2000); R. Conquest, *The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of Nationalities* (London 1970).

leader of the Georgian Communist Party, as well as an official complaint addressed to the XXII Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR. Unfortunately, despite numerous Meskhetian delegations and petitions, the process was continuously blocked by Moscow.

In summer 1976, Gamsakhurdia asked Rchiladze to write an article about the Meskhetians. He found out who they were from the "*Chronicle of Current Events*". Rchiladze went to Kabardino-Balkaria in order to meet the Meskhetian representatives²³. The Meskhetians were also guests in Georgia, mainly in the house of Merab Kostava. They were from Azerbaijan and the North Caucasus region.²⁴ Members of the Initiative Group had many meetings with the Meskhetian delegation and helped them with official letters to the authorities concerning the need for their repatriation – among others – to Eduard Shevardnadze, Yuri Andropov and Leonid Brezhnev. Rchiladze also cooperated with one of the leaders of the Meskhetians – Khalil Gozalishvili.²⁵

Another very interesting article in this issue was a profile of General Shalva Maghlakelidze, a compelling and significant figure in Georgian history. He was a lawyer by profession, having graduated law in Berlin. During the independent Georgian Democratic Republic, he was made Governor General of Akhaltsikhe and later Tbilisi, as well as serving as a military commander. After the Soviet invasion in 1921, he went into exile in Latvia, France and finally, Germany, where he became one of the founders of the "*Tetri Giorgi*" (White George) an anti-Soviet, independence émigré organization. During World War II, he collaborated with Nazi Germany in exchange for promises to liberate Georgia from Soviet occupation and reconquer it as a German protectorate, much like Slovakia²⁶. He was commander of the Georgian Legion, which fought alongside the Wehrmacht. After the war, he became military advisor to President Konrad Adenauer. In 1954, he was kidnapped by KGB agents and, together with his family, brought to Georgia, but was not brought to stand trial. He was widely used by the Soviet propaganda machine as an example of a "fascist" Georgian émigré. He died in 1976.

The article devoted to General Maghlakelidze – "*Martyrologi*" (Portrait of a Martyr), was anonymously authored and endorsed by the editors. It was, first of all, an attempt to show the story behind the man – in opposition to the one presented by Soviet propaganda. The editorial team of the journal decided to portray him as a hero and a patriot, not hiding his Nazi collaboration during World War II – rather showing it as a historical necessity; a way to save his country. The author writes: "*If Georgia has a future, Shalva Maghlakelidze will surely have his well deserved place in the pantheon of Georgian heroes.*"

The article ends with a strong accusation that the authorities and the KGB poisoned General Maghlakelidze. The text was written by Viktor Rchiladze, who was his neighbor and conducted a series of long interviews with the General²⁷. The article ends with a strong accusation that the authorities and the KGB poisoned General Maghlakelidze. In fact, these suspicions prompted the KGB to question the General's family and even the doctors at the hospital where he officially died of a stroke²⁸.

²³ *Interrogation protocol with V. Rchiladze, July 6, 1978, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7806, v. 2, pp. 75-80.*

²⁴ *Interrogation protocol with L. Cikoliya, May 11, 1977, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v.7, pp. 75-85.*

²⁵ Interview with Viktor Rchiladze conducted by the author on August 1, 2013 in Tbilisi.

²⁶ R. Rayfield, op.cit., p. 359.

²⁷ Interview with Viktor Rchiladze conducted by the author on August 1, 2013 in Tbilisi.

²⁸ *Interrogation protocols: with T. Lagvileva, 15.VI.197, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v. 9, pp. 229-231; with T. Maghlakelidze, July 7, 1977, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v. 10, pp. 156-158; with N. Barnabishvili, July 21, 1977, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v.*

Another element of the journal is an article by Merab Kostava on Andrii Sakharov's book *"My Country and the World"*. Kostava decided to translate the book into Georgian, because it revealed the absolute lack of respect for the rule of law in the Soviet Union. Sakharov was writing about the internal and external policies of the USSR; about their ideological and material attacks on human rights, even in the smallest and most private matters. Kostava strongly felt that this particular book should be known in Georgia. The article speaks of Russian chauvinism and the invasive character of power emanating from Moscow, where the USSR is compared to the Russian Empire.

This article shows the strong ties between Georgian and Russian dissidents in the 1970s. Gamsakhurdia was writing about the situation in Georgia to the *"Chronicle of Current Events"*; books and texts of Sakharov, Solzhenitsin and Orlov appeared in Georgia – among them *"The Gulag Archipelago"*. At the time, Georgian dissidents signed open letters in defense of their Russian colleagues and Kostava and Gamsakhurdia kept close relations with Andrei Amalrik. Such good relations ceased to exist in the 1980s, when slogans about human rights in the USSR were replaced with slogans for an independent Georgia.

The next section of the journal is called *"Strictly Facts"* and starts with an article by Merab Kostava, *"Political Agitation or Violence"*, where the author criticizes the so-called *"Politzaniatia"* political lessons (Russian: politicheskie zaniatia). He goes on to say he feels that people should be free to choose what they want to read and which ideology they want to follow. Another article, also written by Kostava, was entitled – *"Slave Work in Soviet Georgia"* – where he opposes the exploitation of (unpaid) students working in agriculture. There were also an article appealing for the opening of a new church in Tsalka village, written by Daniel Chiknizov; a stenographic report from the 10th Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR; an article about the arrest of Nikoloz Samkharadze and, finally, Merab Kostava's appeal to the Chairman of the Georgian KGB, concerning the confiscation of his copy of Sakharov's book *"My Country and the World"*.

The next section, entitled *"On the Pages of the Foreign Press"*, begins with materials concerning the alleged attempt to poison Zviad Gamsakhurdia, that were published in the foreign media. It is followed by the content of a leaflet entitled: *"Before the 20th Party Congress. Citizens!"*, which contains an alarming description of the way the Communist Party treats the working class – like cogs in a machine or servants of the regime; deprived of their land, their traditions and their religion. He calls upon the National-Labor Union to fight for their rights at the 20th Congress.

The final section of the second issue of *"Sakartvelos Moambe"* was entitled *"Person-ages"* and included a memorial of the famous film director, Kote Mikaberdze, who was sentenced to death in 1957 for his anti-Soviet activity. In this section, Viktor Rchciladze also raised the idea of moving the grave of émigré Georgian composer, Irakli Jabadari, back to his homeland.

10, p. 255-256; Letter of L. R. Naneishvili, 24.VI.1977, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v. 10, p. 259; Death certificate of Shalva Maghlakelidze, November 2, 1976, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v. 10, p. 265.

Consequences

In January 1977, members of the Initiative Group established a Georgian Helsinki Group. Apart from the founders, other members included Valentina Pailodze and the brothers, Isaj and Grigorij Goldstein. In April 1977, the organization ceased to exist due to the arrests of its activists, which also meant the end of the "*Georgian Herald*".

Gamsakhurdia and Kostava were arrested in April 1977. The investigation into their activities lasted until March 1978. Both dissidents were put on trial based on Paragraph 71 of the penal code of the USSR, concerning "anti-Soviet activity". Over 160 witnesses were interrogated and tens of houses searched. The Georgian KGB confiscated a great deal of material and examined them thoroughly, using specialists to examine paper, handwriting styles and the fonts of typing machines. Both of the accused were also examined by psychiatric experts, a common practice in the case of Soviet dissidents.

The verdict was announced on May 19, 1978. They were judged guilty of anti-Soviet activity and sentenced to three years in a penal colony and two years in exile²⁹. Zviad Gamsakhurdia was released after two months as a result of a public denial of his earlier views during a broadcast of the "*Vremia*" television news. He was rewarded with a job at the prestigious Institute of Georgian Literature in Tbilisi. Many of his companions turned their backs on him. Only when Merab Kostava gave him his full support after spending ten years in jail and the gulag, did people forgive Gamsakhurdia.

Viktor Rchiladze was initially arrested together with Gamsakhurdia and Kostava, but was soon released because of health problems. In fall 1977, he and Manana Archvadze (Gamsakhurdia's wife) came up with the idea of writing and distributing texts in defense of Zviad and Merab. Two texts were published in samizdat – "*Information*" and "*Critique*". The first contained a description of both arrested dissidents and their activity which, in the authors' opinion, revealed the shortcomings of the Soviet regime in Georgia, as well as crimes of the regime against both the Georgian nation and civil rights. Illegal journals were presented as the only ones free of Marxist dogmas, censorship and Russian imperialism, as well as the only source of objective information.³⁰

"*Critique*" was a protest against all official press articles accusing Gamsakhurdia and Kostava of criminal activity. The readers were reminded of heroes of Georgian history, such as Kakutsa Cholokashvili and Shalva Maghlakelidze, who fought against Soviet authority for the freedom of Georgia. Both texts were signed with a pseudonym – Vakhtang Inatashvili – and falsely dated May 1977.³¹

In January 1978, Rchiladze was arrested. His interrogation lasted until August 1978. He was accused of publishing and distributing illegal journals and articles containing anti-Soviet rhetoric, as well as distributing non-Georgian samizdat. He was sentenced to two and a half years in prison and two years in exile. He spent his term of exile on the territory of Kazakhstan.

²⁹ *Verdict in the Gamsakhurdia and Kostava case, 1.V.1978*, MIA Archive, f. 6, c. 7726, v. 56, pp.102-122.

³⁰ *Interrogation protocol with V. Rchiladze, 8.VIII.1978*, MIA Archives, f.6, c. 7806, v. 2, pp. 199-209.

³¹ *Ibidem*.

Valentina Pailodze was arrested in spring 1977. On October 6th, the Tbilisi City Court sentenced her to two years of prison and exile. She spent her exile in Kazakhstan, returning to Tbilisi in January 1981.³²

* * *

The "*Georgian Herald*" was the first independent political and social journal in the Georgian SSR. Just as in other Soviet republics, the first dissident movements appearing in the mid-70s were not mass movements. Neither the Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights in Georgia, nor the later Georgian Helsinki Group, was able to gather a mass following. That was never their intention. It was still too early to gather mass demonstrations demanding independence, as no one really believed in the (impending) fall of the USSR. The idea was simply to spread objective information about the true face of the Soviet regime and the situation in Georgia. These groups were meant to stand in defense of rights that had been violated by the authorities. Their contributors were members of elite circles; therefore "*Sakartvelos Moambe*" was a journal whose range was foreseeably limited to mostly academic circles and intellectuals. Nevertheless the "*Georgian Herald*" was circulated amongst the common people, as well.

Reading the journal today gives us a unique opportunity to look at problems that had to be addressed by the Georgian intellectual elite in the 1970s. Topics taken up by the editors of the journal were up-to-date and significant to its readers. Therefore, they forced people to think about, discuss and question the Soviet system they lived in.

Articles and texts in the "*Sakartvelos Moambe*", on the one hand, presented the Georgian dissident movement in the broad context of opposition in the USSR. On the other hand, they also contained underlying characteristic features of Georgian culture and society. Despite focusing mainly on the defense of human rights, the editors also brought a clear anti-Soviet message to the pages of their periodical. Despite cooperating with Russian dissidents, they strongly opposed the precedence of Russian language, culture and history in Georgia. Their work was, and is, significant – the Meskhetian repatriation is an issue which is still current to this day.

After the slew of arrests in 1977, the editors of the journal never worked in the same collective again. However, all the editors continued their work in anti-Soviet opposition in some form or another. Apart from Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava, they all went their separate ways. Gamsakhurdia and Kostava remained best friends and continued their cooperation. The "*Georgian Herald*" was never revived.

"*Sakartvelos Moambe*" was one of the first platforms for cooperation between people who didn't necessarily agree with the authorities in Soviet Georgia. This cooperation proved to be a valuable source of experience for future work. The journal constitutes one of the first elements in the creation of the Georgian national movement and therefore should occupy a significant place in Georgian remembrance and history

³² G. Soselia, op. cit. p. 216.

FRANCISAK VIACORKA

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

The Structure of Government Elites within the Regime of Alaksandar Lukashenka

Abstract: This paper reveals the structure and trends within Belarus government elites in the period between 1994 and 2017. Belarus remains one of the least free and under-reformed post-Soviet countries yet it seems to have a strong functional bureaucracy. Seventy-eight percent of ministers and state committee chairs are employed according to their professional career background. The share of appointees with specialized education rose from 71.9% to 86% during Lukashenka's presidency. So the author assumes that in the case of unrest or political transition, a bureaucratic apparatus composed of specialized professionals could play a stabilizing role. This research also shows slight indigenization¹ and westernization of Nomenklatura². The number of officials born in Belarus increased from 71.9% to 81.4%, and those from the western Horadnia region increased from 4% to 20%. At the same time, the research revealed, that the Government continues to have an inadequate representation of women (<5%), and other parties (<11%); meanwhile, it has an increasing presence of professional military (from 15% to 20%).

Introduction

Belarus under the authoritarian rule of President Alaksandar Lukashenka claims the status as the last free country in Europe³. In contrast to neighboring Ukraine, Russia, and

¹ Reference to the policy of "indigenization" in the U.S.S.R in 1920s, which involved recruitment of cadres from the indigenous populations (*'korenizatsija'*).

² The *Nomenklatura* (Russian: номенклатура) was a category of people in the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries who held various key administrative positions in the bureaucracy, running all spheres of those countries' activity: government, industry, agriculture, education, etc., whose positions were granted approval only by the communist party of each country or region (source: Wikipedia).

³ "Freedom House. Belarus," June 28, 2017, accessed December 03, 2017, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/belarus>.

the Baltic States, no structural reforms have been implemented in Belarus: the system of power remains strictly centralized; the government replicates the Soviet vertical system with its multiple bureaucratized ministries and departments; the economy is mainly state-owned, and the opposition is excluded from all state institutions and the government. The personalistic dictatorship of Lukashenka who has uncompetitively remained in power since 1994, lets neither politicians nor officials accumulate sufficient economic or political power. The bureaucracy in Belarus is formed primarily of people who demonstrate full loyalty to the regime. This makes the cabinet of ministers a purely technical, not political body. However, could not this be the evidence of its unprofessionalism?

The research statement of the current paper is that Belarus government appointees and bureaucrats take their offices according to their experience and competence, not only because of their personal or political ties. In particular, I assume that for an absolute majority of ministry staffers their way to power was paved with specialized education and professional careers in their area, and later they were appointed to leading positions in the Government or state-building institutions without building political careers.

The empirical basis for the research is the biographical information of 162 high-level officials and politicians. The collected data on their career paths, status, education and age reveal the exponential trends in the circulation of nomenklatura, and also some informal rules of the organization of power in Belarus. This is important for understanding the nature of Lukashenka's regime, as well as the grounds for its long-term stability and potential unrest as well.

This research paper begins with the introduction of basic theoretical concepts on state, elites, and infrastructural relationships within them. Then I give a historical overview of the formation of the elite in Belarus before and during Lukashenka's presidency, as well as show some ideas of relevant studies on Belarus elites and their structure, including the relationships between elites and Lukashenka. In the final part, I present the findings of my quantitative research and outline their conclusions in the Summary.

Elites and bureaucracy in state building

After the Springtime of Nations in 1989-1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed and fifteen new countries appeared, the question of how new states could be built, arose again⁴. The most well known state-theorist Max Weber sees the state as the monopolistic, hierarchical, impersonal, and competent bureaucratic structure to perform the coercive and extractive tasks of statehood⁵. However, after Weber conceptualized the state a hundred years ago, the role of a state as an institution increased enormously, it penetrated all spheres, imposed rules and norms, regulated economic relations, monopolized tax collections and defined the order of life on each particular territory. State structures became more complicated and expanded.

⁴ Michael Howard, "The Springtime of Nations," January 28, 2009, accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1990-02-01/springtime-nations>.

⁵ Max Weber, "Economy and Society," accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.ucpress.edu/book.php?isbn=9780520280021>.

Obviously, the structure of a state determines its relationship with citizens, including the level of violence it can use. In liberal democracies, formal state leadership is elected by the population, can be easily changed, and controlled by society. In other countries, like Belarus, the whole power of the state is concentrated in one hand or group of people I call the *elite*. According to American sociologist C. Wright Mills, elites are «*those political, economic, and military circles, which as an intricate set of overlapping small but dominant groups share decisions having at least national consequences. Insofar as national events are decided, the power elite is those who decide them*»⁶.

There are different types of governing elite structure. Idealized by classic state-building theorists a monopolistic *bureaucracy* works until a parallel organization like a party, a grouping or a clan appears. These informal organizations could substitute the formal system, where both principal and agent remain within the state apparatus⁷. States built on informal ties could be of the same strength as pure bureaucracies.

The infrastructural strength of the state is defined by how efficiently it implements policies, controls a territory, extracts resources and employs coercion⁸. According to Thomas Ertman, there are two types of infrastructural relationships within the state institutes: "*bureaucratic*" and "*patrimonial*."⁹ The patrimonial system is defined by a personalistic approach of selecting, appointing and removing executives, as well as by appropriation of state or public resources by those who are in power. In contrast to patrimonial, a bureaucratic infrastructure is distinguished by "*a set of standard operating procedures subject to the structures of a formalized, impersonal administrative law*."¹⁰ In the bureaucracy, expertise and merit serve as the primary basis for selection, and there are routine mechanisms for any official's removal from office. When an efficient bureaucracy lacks significant organizational, financial, and human resources, personal network ties became the means by which the power center coerces the state institutes and regions¹¹. Informal structures help to exchange information, allocate resources, and coordinate activities. In this particular research, based on the case of Lukashenka's Belarus, it is possible to see how the combination of a patrimonial (based on informal networks) and bureaucratic (based on formal relationship) approach could be essential to building a robust coercive power center.

According to M. Mann's framework of state power dimensions, Belarus is an *authoritarian* state. This type suggests that Belarus is high in both dimensions, having high despotic power over civil society groups and being able to enforce this infrastructurally. It prevents any competitive force from influencing the state significantly. However, this also means, that in the case of potential changes and diminishing presidential power, bureaucratic structures remain functional. For more bureaucratic efficiency, the state government hires professionals and distributes the power according to their capabilities. The power of

⁶ C. Wright Mills, *The power elite* (London (etc.): Oxford University Press, 1959).

⁷ Keith Darden, "The Integrity of Corrupt States: Graft as an Informal State Institution," *Politics & Society* 36, no. 1 (2008): . doi:10.1177/0032329207312183.

⁸ Gerald M. Easter, "Reconstructing the State," 2000, doi:10.1017/cbo9780511571527.

⁹ Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the leviathan: building states and regimes in medieval and early modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹⁰ Max Weber, *Economy and society* (Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press).

¹¹ Gerald M. Easter, "Reconstructing the State," 2000, . doi:10.1017/cbo9780511571527.

experts, who efficiently perform the administrative tasks is often called a *meritocracy*¹², or *technocracy*¹³. In this system, economists govern the economy, political scientists dictate social policy and medical professionals manage the health system. Various branches of specialists, who work together and share knowledge, are coordinated by specialists-managers, and the performance of each is maximized. Belarus is an example of a state which has moved toward a technocratic government.

Study of Belarus government elites

Formation of government elites in Belarus

To understand how the current system of elites was shaped, it is important to look back to the B.S.S.R. model of recruitment which is based on the rotation of vacancies and does not depend on the influence of the center¹⁴. The elite in Soviet Belarus consisted of separate patronage groups of different roots which fought with each other for political influence: "*Partisans*", "*Minsk city industrial group*" (directors of huge enterprises), "*Brezhnev's protégés*" (directly sent from Moscow) — according to M. Urban who described the key features and tendencies of development of the Belarusian Soviet elite in 1960–1980¹⁵. The elites for the central level were hired primarily from managers of large state-owned enterprises loyal to the center (*industrial* model), and the regional elite was hired mostly from provincial functionaries (*agrarian* model). Law-enforcement authorities, security officials and border guards usually formed separate elites grouping (*bordering* model)¹⁶. It must be stressed that all the law-enforcement structures except of the militia (police) were extraterritorial and directly depended on Moscow. In contrast to other post-Soviet states, in Belarus there was no significant change in the elites structure and personal composition between the Soviet Union collapse and the first Presidential elections in 1994.

After Lukashenka became president, three major stages of the formation of this elite may be noticed¹⁷. They are characterized by changes in domestic and foreign policy, and in particular, relations with Russia.

¹² Tuong Vu, "Studying the State through State Formation," *World Politics* 62, no. 01 (2009): , doi:10.1017/s0043887109990244.

¹³ "Technocracy," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, accessed December 03, 2017, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/sociology-and-social-reform/sociology-general-terms-and-concepts-18>.

¹⁴ In 1989, Michael Urban made the first advanced study on Belarusian Soviet elite. Using the corresponding mathematical tool. Urban investigates the examples of recruiting of elite to the BSSR party and administrative apparatus in the period from 1966 to 1986 (actually, in the times of Brezhnev "stagnation"). The author analyses a career ladder of 3127 individuals and 2034 current positions. He comes to the conclusion that the model of recruitment is based on the rotation of vacancies and does not depend on the influence of the center (Markov chain) —Vasilevič .

¹⁵ Michael E. Urban, *An algebra of Soviet power: elite circulation in the Belorussian Republic 1966-86* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹⁶ Piotra Natčyk, "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment. Lukashenka's Staff Policy," *Belarusian and Political System and Presidential Elections*, (2001)

¹⁷ Natčyk., "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment..."

During the **first**, *pseudo-parliamentary* (pseudo-democratic) stage, Lukashenka appointed high officials through personal contacts and regional acquaintanceship ("Mahiloŭ group" of his countrymen, loyal members of Parliament who supported his candidacy, and the high-level Nomenklatura) to high ministerial positions¹⁸. I suggest there were three major groupings within the central elite during Lukashenka's early presidency: *the «old elite»*, *«security people»* and *parliamentarians*¹⁹. The old (Soviet) elite apparently saved key positions in the economic/finance; security officials were significantly rotated; however, the most unstable and fractured group were the parliamentarians.

The **second stage** began in 1996 after the constitutional crisis caused by a standoff between the president and the parliament²⁰. The post-Soviet Nomenklatura confronted democratic leadership of the *Viarchouny Saviet* (Supreme Council) -- the Parliament -- in the legislative field. The power takeover was enabled by a relatively stable and conservative administrative apparatus. After the controversial referendum, Lukashenka dismissed Parliament and got full control over the state with Nomenklatura support²¹. It was a moment when the Old Nomenklatura from primarily the "Mahiloŭ grouping" gained its stature through personal relations with the president²² (the model of patron-client relations)²³. Lukashenka needed the Nomenklatura to heighten his impact on Russia. It was even believed that Yeltsin could assign Lukashenka as his successor²⁴; Lukashenka himself miscalled himself «a president of Russia» multiple times²⁵. However, regional and industrial elites were losing their positions to the advantage of well-organized power ministries' officers²⁶.

The **third stage** began after Putin became President, and the Russian factor in Belarus elites structure gradually decreased. Russia continued supporting Lukashenka, providing cheap hydrocarbons in exchange for political loyalty, however, they left him autonomous enough in domestic issues. After an unconvincing victory in the elections of 2001 and following mass protests, Lukashenka started to tighten his control inside the country and began building a strong power vertical. The old Nomenklatura lost its influence, loyal "*siloviki*" got more power. The industrial-economic elite became more dependent on the center.

¹⁸ Natallia Vasilievič. "Study of Belarusian Elites: Between Algebra and Geography." *Political Sphere*, no. 13, (2009).

¹⁹ Natčyk. "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment.."

²⁰ "Referendum 1996 hodu: Kanstytucyja dyktatury," Radio Svoboda, November 27, 2017, , accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.svoboda.org/a/28877709.html>

²¹ Zianon Pazniak, „Camu nomenklatura za prezidenta," Pazniak.info, accessed December 03, 2017, http://pazniak.info/page_chamu_nomenklatura_za_prezidenta_.

²² Nina Antanovic, "State Power Organs Structure in the Republic of Belarus and Their Transformation," *Belarusian Political System and Presidential Elections*, 2001, pp 127-142

²³ Gerald M. Easter, "Reconstructing the State," 2000, doi:10.1017/cb09780511571527.

²⁴ Halina Pryhara, „Bierazouski: Lukasenku razhladali na prezidenta Rasiei," Radio Svoboda, March 24, 2013, accessed December 03, 2017, <http://www.svoboda.org/content/article/24937681.html>

²⁵ "Lukashenko: Ya kak pervyi prezident Rossii," YouTube, February 26, 2016, accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wbRDzalF4>.

²⁶ Vasilievič. "Study of Belarusian Elites: Between Algebra and Geography."

Establishing the current structure

Scholars note two levels of bureaucracy existing within the newly emerged system: 1) political, which contains the highest-level bureaucracy that decides on the political course; and 2) professional layer, basic mass of government officials²⁷.

In the new system four principal levels of decision making were formed (from highest to lowest)²⁸:

1. Presidential Administration (which functionally altered the Communist Party Central Committee of Soviet times²⁹ with all its power, a few hundred officials who dispose of about 90% of state property and issue orders to the ministers);
2. State Control, KGB, Security Council;
3. Council of Ministers, Ministries, state committees;
4. Administration bodies (directors of large industrial enterprises, directors of collective farms, and members of parliament).

I must point out that this system of decision-making obviously contradicts the existing constitutional order.

The new system was built on a centralized redistribution of benefits by the administrative apparatus. The state officials' ruling functions, including power, field of activity, duties – all these things became the functionaries' resource and by using this resource they built systems of interaction within the economic and business sphere (patron-client relationship)³⁰.

Parties and groupings within the Government

Political parties, even formally registered (not all the parties in Belarus enjoy this status), do not play a significant role in the current system. The only remarkably multi-party parliament was elected in 1990. The dominance of the communist platform was opposed by the pro-independence national democratic Belarusian Popular Front (BNF) and the more "moderate" and diffused pro-democratic MPs. However, emerging political parties were feeble and just in their beginning at the formation of the current system. They were too weak to resist Lukashenka's rising authoritarianism and reconsolidated centralized post-Soviet Nomenklatura in 1995-1996. As a result of elections in 1995, pro-democracy parties (BNF, Social Democrats) failed, the major part of seats were occupied by formally non-partisan functionaries of power. Those functionaries who supported the installation of Lukashenka's regime got seats in his government. The bifurcation point was the forcible dissolution of the last elected Parliament in 1996 and nomination of the "new MPs" by the decision of Lukashenka according to the level of loyalty of the "old MPs". The new body called the Chamber of Representatives had lost the majority of its power rights and turned into a typical rubber-stamp parliament³¹.

²⁷ Nina Antanovic, "State Power Organs Structure in the Republic of Belarus and Their Transformation."

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus (Tsentralniy Komitet Kommunisticheskoi Partii Belorussii-TsK KP(b)B).

³⁰ Nina Antanovic, "State Power Organs Structure in the Republic of Belarus and Their Transformation."

³¹ "Parliament court fail to prevent lukashenka from staging coup in 1996", Belsat, accessed December 04, 2017, <http://belsat.eu/en/news/parliament-court-fail-to-prevent-lukashenka-from-staging-coup-in-1996-ex-mp>.

The only real attempt to create a Nomenklatura party was in 2007, when the public organization «Bielaja Rus» was founded. There is an opinion, that Bielaja Rus was created before potential electoral reform, which was supposed to switch a majoritarian system of electing Parliament to a proportional one³². The huge number of its members is explained by the administrative obligation of every high- and medium-level state official to enter this organisation. Many state workers like teachers, lawyers, communal workers etc. are forced to enter Bielaja Rus as well. Experts explain its existence in a form of pro-party by Lukashenka's idea to have it "just in case", when internal and external conditions would require him to imitate multi-party competition in Belarus.

In contrast to parties, clans and groupings within the government elites played a significant role, especially when the system was establishing itself. Scholar Piotra Natčyk emphasizes existing differences, though not always clear, between elite «clans» — power ministries officer ("*siloviki*") and "*Mahiloŭ grouping*" (a regional faction of Lukashenka's fellow countrymen). He shares an opinion that the ruling elites had considerable contradictions and particular interests, and the opposition tried to use them during the presidential campaign in 2001³³. At that campaign the so-called "official" (state-controlled, post-Communist) trade unions leader Uladzimir Hančaryk was selected as a single opposition candidate in order to get more impact from the Nomenklatura³⁴. However, the attempt did not succeed³⁵. After 2001 Lukashenka re-shuffled the government in order to diminish the power of these groups.

Relationships between Lukashenka and elites

The only strongly visible informal network left within the government is tied to Lukashenka personally. It contained former people from "Mahiloŭ grouping", «Siloviki», and the most loyal former communist bureaucrats. These officials are usually members of either the Presidential Sports Club, National Olympic Committee, or they worked in the most powerful executive branch — the Presidential Administration. The changes apparently began in the 2000s when young career professionals were hired to high ministerial and committee commissions without any evident personal ties to Lukashenka. However, that does not undermine the fact that the system itself remains vertical and strictly authoritarian, all ministers and high-level officials are appointed personally by Lukashenka, and their welfare depends on him (e.g. he provides judges with apartments). So, they have limited power to use any kind of independent force.

Could discontented elite groupings unite and form an opposition to Lukashenka? Political analyst Jury Čavusaŭ assumes several variants of the course of events in which Nomenklatura could impose a threat for existing regime³⁶. According to the **first** version, the

³² „Ci hatovaja ūlada pierajsci da vybaraŭ pa partyjnych spisach?“ Novy Cas, accessed December 04, 2017, <https://novychas.by/palityka/ci-hatovaja-ulada-perajsci-da-vybarau-pa-partyjnyh>.

³³ Natčyk, "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment.."

³⁴ Vasilievič. "Study of Belarusian Elites: Between Algebra and Geography."

³⁵ Natčyk, "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment."

³⁶ Jury Čavusaŭ, "Revolutionary Sub Consciousness of the Belarusian Elite", Political Sphere, accessed December 06, 2017, <http://palityka.org/2005/09/revolyucionnoe-podsoznanie-beloruskoj-elity/>.

groupings of elites may have realised that their personal interests differ from the interests of Lukashenka's regime, but they would not be able to form a separate political class. In the **second** scenario, the Nomenklatura may be shaped as a separate political class and realize their own interests, which will lead to a revolutionary situation. The **third** variant is status-quo, it means the Nomenklatura will remain an amorphous non-politically threatening group³⁷.

It was commonly believed that in the first term of Lukashenka's presidency, Belarus' ruling elite had considerable contradictions and particular interests of which it was supposed to take advantage during the presidential campaign in 2001 with a Nomenklatura accepted candidate. During the next presidential campaigns the opposition attempts oriented for Nomenklatura upheaval clearly failed. Lukashenka successfully prevented consolidation of the business elite and decentralization of the ruling elite through the strict state-control over property, large enterprises, and whole economic branches. It's important to mention, that several prominent representatives of the technocratic elite and business, who previously strongly supported Lukashenka but became his opponents, disappeared or died in unclear circumstances³⁸. Elites took this as a strong warning to each of them.

Elites as an ideological phenomenon

Different from the structuralist approach to Belarus, studies of the elite have been presented by Andrej Kazakievič, who sees elites as a cultural and ideological phenomenon – in the context of the geopolitical apprehension of Belarusian identity³⁹. Within current government elites, Andrej Kazakievič identifies four groups: 1) *Belarusian post-Soviet elites* 2) *the national elite* 3) *"new elites"*, and 4) *the young generation*. The Belarusian post-Soviet elites appeal to the Soviet identity and culture, understand Europe and Russia as geographic territories but not as political or civilized choices, and have a rather positive but purely pragmatic, not value-based, attitude towards Europe. In contrast, the national elite is relatively new, they refer to the European past, seeing Europe as the sign of a Belarus National revival, favoring "*desovietization*" and "*derussification*" as a reasonable alternative to the status-quo. The "New elite" are the present-day ruling elite, characterized by an anti-West rhetoric, they see Belarus as the geographical center of Europe. The young generation is eclectic, fragmented, and comprehends the basic forms of identity of the existing groups. Such an identity is based on two questions: "who are we?" (what makes Belarusian people Belarusians) and "where are we?" (choice of civilization model)⁴⁰. Different visions and concepts of Europe, Belarus, and the Slavic (or rather post-Soviet and loyal to Russia) community could lead to a deconsolidation of elites.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Carl Schreck, "U.S. Presses Belarus On 'Disappeared'," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, September 16, 2014, accessed December 06, 2017, <https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-disappeared-hanchar-krasouski-us-pressure/26585897.html>.

³⁹ Andrej Kazakevich, "Čatyry karparacyja bielaruskaje elity," Bielarus: ni Eüropa, ni Rasieja, 2006, doi: ISBN 83-89406-77-2.

⁴⁰ Vital Silicki, "The Dilemma of Choice", in Belarus: Neither Europe nor Russia," (Warsaw, 2006).

Research findings

Hypothesis

The initial assumption of the current research is that Belarus Government appointees in specialized ministries and state committees took their offices, as a rule, according to their experience and competence, not only because of their personal ties. Using the available data, I expect to prove a tendency towards the further *professionalization and indigenization of elites* since 1994, when Lukashenka came to power. As I assume, after 2000 younger and Belarus-born officials were appointed to the high positions in power. I expect to reveal some patterns of informal ties within the Government. Some groups of officials share membership in same sports-clubs, graduated the same military schools, have a close personal relationship with Lukashenka and Russia. However, within the state apparatus, they are still distributed according to their professional backgrounds.

Significance of the Study

Understanding the political elite is essential for assessing the likelihood of change, the continuity of power, the level of political consolidation and stability, as well as a coherent vision of internal and external policies. Currently, no reliable criteria for the definition of the Belarusian political elite has been developed, so I have used the formal structure of the government as a basis for analysis.

Our study reveals the level of government Nomenklatura exponential trends in the circulation of elites, their socio-demographic characteristics, and also some informal rules of organization of power in Belarus. Based on the available findings, I can speculate, that in case of potential political unrest, significant democratic and institutional change, the current structure of power elites could guarantee a softer transition in contrast to neighboring Ukraine or Russia where elites are pure political appointees.

Research design and data analysis

The authors studied 31 entities in the Government structure, i.e. 23 ministries and State committees: State Customs Committee, Committee for State Security (*KGB*), Military Industrial Committee (*Goskomvoenprom*), State Border Committee (*Gospogrankomitet*), Committee on State Property (*Goskomimushestvo*), Committee on Science and Technology in the period between 1994-2017. In addition, high profile personalities of such formally independent structures as the National Bank of Belarus (Economic sector) and the General prosecutor's office (Judicial sector), are regarded.

Then I classified all these entities according to the professional sector they belong to. It is made to define how the educational or professional background of the person corresponds to the specialization of the organization he or she was appointed to lead.

Table 1. List of ministries and state committees in accordance to their professional sectors

ECONOMIC SECTOR	Antimonopoly Regulation and Trade Ministry (MART), Ministry of Economy (Minekanomiki), Ministry of Finance (Minfin), Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (Minpracy), Ministry of taxes and fees (MPZ), National Bank
AGRICULTURE	Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Minsielhasprad)
JUDICIAL SECTOR	Ministry of Justice (Minjust), General prosecutor's office
CULTURE/EDUCATION/SCIENCE	Ministry of Education (Minadukacyi), Ministry of Culture (Minkultury)
SPORTS	Sports and Tourism Ministry (Minsport)
HEALTH	Ministry of Health (Minzdar)
DIPLOMACY	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MZS)
SECURITY	State Customs Committee (DzMK), Committee for State Security (KGB), Ministry of Emergency situations (MNS), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUS)
MILITARY	Military Industrial Committee (Goskomvoenprom), State Border Committee (Gospogrankomitet), Ministry of Defence (Minabarony)
COMMUNICATIONS	Ministry of Information (Mininfarm), Ministry of Communications and Informatization (Minsuviazii)
ENERGY	Ministry of Energy (Minenerha)
FORESTRY, LAND, REAL ESTATE,	Committee on State Property (Goskomimushestvo), Ministry of Forestry (Minleshas)
ENVIRONMENT	The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Minpryrody)
CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION	Ministry of Architecture and Construction (Minbudarchitektury), The Ministry of Transport and Communications (Mintrans)
INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY	State Committee for Science and Technology (GKNT), Ministry of industry (Minpram)

Then I analyzed 162 biographies of all officials appointed by Alaksandar Lukashenka to lead those ministries and committees in the period between 1994 and 2017, this became the empirical base for our study. Based on this received data, I created a dataset which consists of 171 positions since some people take the same or different positions multiple times. Variables for each entry shows the name, date of birth, age (when they were appointed), name of the organization, year of start and end being in office, education area, professional career area, membership of «presidential clubs», political parties and organizations, ties with Russia, military background, region of birth.

Table 2. List of variables employed in the research

VARIABLES	
Name	Second and first name of official written in Belarusian transliteration
min_name (min_num)	organization (ministry or committee)
min_area (min_area_num)	professional sector of organization according to table 1. (1-18)
educ_area	the area of education received prior to working in the profession according to the table 1. It means, if their first education was in agriculture, and second was a mid-career economics program in the Academy of Public Administration, only the first (agriculture) is counted. (1-18)
Prof	If area of education and area of ministry matched (0 or 1)
prof_area	If area of professional career and area of ministry matched (0 or 1)
Dob	year of birth
year_start	year when appointed
year_end	year when dismissed
Age	age when appointed
club_member	membership in Presidential sports clubs, National Olympic Committee, positions in National Sports Federations, work for Presidential Administration or Presidential Property Management
party_member	member of the political party (0 or 1)
military	professional military background (0 or 1)
russiarel	Any relationship or ties with Russia, Russian-Belarusian Union, CIS, Euroasian Economic Union initiatives, awards from Russian Government (0 or 1)
born_bel	was born on the territory of Belarus including of Polish, German and Soviet occupation (0 or 1)
Region	in which part of Belarus was born: 0 (non-belarus), 1 (Bierascie), 2 (Homiel), 3 (Horadnia), 4 (Mahilou), 5 (Minsk region), 6 (Viciebsk), 7 (Viciebsk)
Period	When appointed by periods: 1994-2000 (1), 2001-2009 (2), 2010-2017 (3)
period_new	When appointed by periods: 1994-2005 (1), 2006-2017 (2)
Actual	Is a currently serving representative (0 or 1)

To understand the trends and how the situation changed over time, I introduced two variables on periods. According to the first approach, I define three periods: 1994-2000 (1), 2001-2009 (2), 2010-2017 (3). It corresponds to periods mentioned in chapters 3.2 and 3.3. According to the second approach, I have equally divided two periods of Lukashenka's presidency: 1994-2005 (1), and 2006-2017 (2).

Limitations of the study

The presented research cannot reflect the whole situation in Lukashenka's Government, but the government bureaucracy on the ministerial level only. I acknowledge, that within the current system all the decision-making power is consolidated in the hands of Lukashenka and the Presidential Administration. As I mentioned above, it duplicates the role of the Communist Party Central Committee with all its branches : industry, finances, administrative bodies, education etc. However, ministries and committees do execute these decisions and form a primary level of bureaucracy.

The Presidential Administration, Presidential Affairs Management, the Prime minister and his deputies, the House of Representatives and House of the Republic, the Security Council, the House of Representatives, the Belarus Youth Union (BRSM), the Eurasian Economic Commission, State Control Committee (KGK), State Committee for Standardization (Gosstandart), the Ministry of Housing and Communal Services, state-run enterprises, regional executive and legislative bodies were purposefully excluded from the analysis. These organizations do not have explicit professional specialization, and are not relevant to this particular research.

Characteristics of Government elites:

Rotation

Belarus is the absolute leader in terms of its number of ministries among post-Soviet states. It has 24 full-scale ministries and seven ministry-level committees. Most of these ministries are inherited from the B.S.S.R, and the government system has not undergone significant changes since the Soviet Union's collapse. An increase in the number of ministries has also been planned with the creation of the Ministry of Industrial Politics⁴¹. Comparably close by size and population Czech and Sweden have 14 and 12 ministries respectively, neighboring Ukraine has 18 (including a brand new Ministry for occupied territories), and Russia — 21.

There is not significant rotation between ministries. Since 1994, I found only nine cases (among 171) when the former minister took his position again or moved to another ministry or committee. For example, Michail Rusy served twice as Minister of Agriculture (2001-2003 and 2010-2012) and once as a Minister of Natural Resources (1994-2001). There is a slight rotation between "siloviki" ministries, which is supposedly made to prevent them from having a concentration of power.

However, Lukashenka changes ministers frequently enough. Twelve different people have ruled the Ministry of Agriculture, including Michail Rusy twice, and short-term ministers Vadzim Papou (only four months in 2000), and Zianon Lomac (6 months in 2003). Lukashenka has replaced seven ministers of culture, seven chairmen of the KGB, where no one has stayed in their seat for more than five years. «Siloviki» (military, police) are

⁴¹ "Ministerstvo promyshlennoy politiki: ideya novaya, sut' – staraya. Analiz," *Nashe mneniye*, accessed December 09, 2017, <http://nmnbj.eu/news/analytics/5791.html>.

often rotated, but always stay in the «Nomenklatura pool». For example, Lukashenka has changed ministers of defense six times, and Leanid Malcau has been appointed as a minister twice and served in that position for exactly nine years. Even after being fired from that position after a grand scandal, he managed to stay in the government as a chairman of the Committee of Border Control, the Security Council, and then came back to the ministry. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has had eight ministers since Lukashenka became president, starting with post-Soviet Nomenklatura representative Jahorau and finishing with the very anti-opposition, and Lukashenka's favorite, Ihar Shunievic.

There have been six ministers of Foreign Affairs, four ministers of Emergency Situations, four ministers of Housing and Communal Services. The longest-serving official was a National Bank director Piotr Prakapovich (13 years), beside him three people served in this position.

We can also observe some cyclism in the Ministry of Education. Directors there stay in office in most cases for 2 or 7 years: Viktar Hajsionak (1992), Vasil Strazau (1994), Piotr Bryhadzin (2001), Alaksandar Radzkou (2003), Siarhiej Maskievic (2010), Michail Zuraukou (2014), and Ihar Karpienka, who was, by the way, the leader of Communist Party (2016). However, there is no particular logic in this rotation in contrast to the Ministry of Sports where eight ministers changed due to bad results at world competitions, the Olympics or near-sports intrigues.

Specialized education and career path

All the appointees without exclusion have a higher education (100%), in most cases according to their field of ministerial work (73.7%). Usually, before getting a significant position, a future minister or committee chair graduates the Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President of the Republic of Belarus⁴². In many of the analyzed careers, it has become a springboard for the Nomenklatura especially for those who work in the regions.

There is no clear evidence of dominance of a specific profession in the government for the last 23 years. Obviously, specialists in economics (16.5%), military (12.4%) and agriculture (11.2%) are the most represented in the government. Law (11.1%) and technology (10.5%) are less in demand. This general pattern corresponds with ministries' specialization which is additional proof of the continuing professionalization of the Nomenklatura.

The vast majority of officials I analyzed show that they were employed according to their education (74%). The specialists in health usually work as Ministers of Health (87.5%), those graduated schools or programs on sports (100%), energy (75%), forestry (80%), law (69%) are appointed to relevant committees or ministries. The most specialized are the Customs Committee, General Prosecutor Office, Defence Ministry, Ministry of Architecture and Construction, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of finances, Ministry of Health, National Bank. All of them have 100% appointees with education in the area. The

⁴² Before 1994 — the Academy of Public Administration under the Council of Ministers of the BSSR; before 1995 — the Academy of Public Administration under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus.

least specialized is Ministry of Foreign Affairs (33%), Ministry of Information (40%), Ministry of Nature (20%).

In order to prove the hypothesis about professionalization of elites and to exclude potential coincidences, I also analyzed their career path. 77.8% were appointed to ministerial positions from the same field or even the same ministry or department (1994-2017). However, during the last decade the percent of those with specialized education overcame career professionals (86% vs. 83.7%).

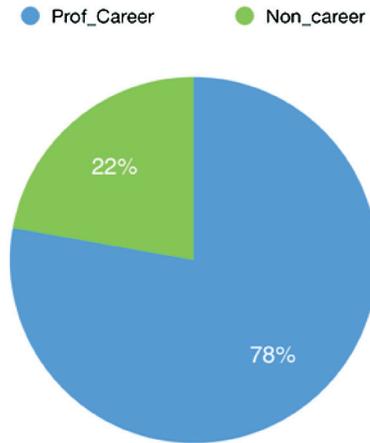


Figure 1. Ministers employed according to their professional career 1994-2017

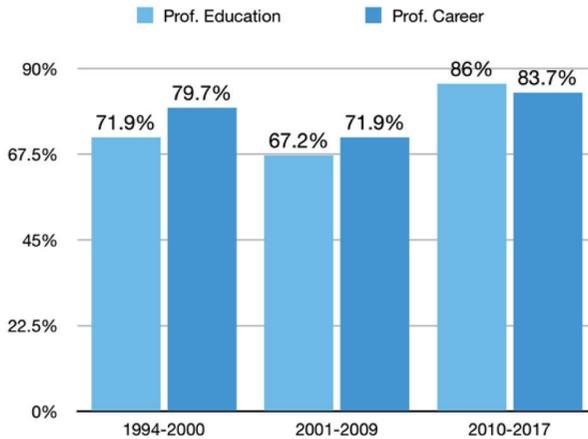


Figure 2. The first column in each time period shows the percentage of officials who work in the same field as their education. The second column shows if their appointment was preceded by the professional work of someone in the same field.

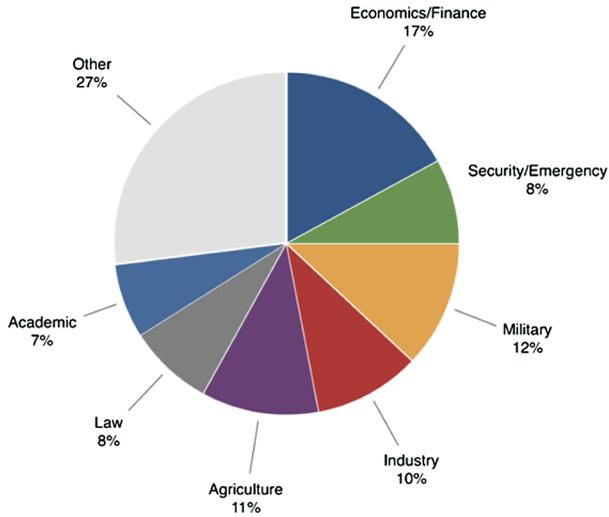


Figure 3. Education specialization among ministers and state committee chairs, 1994-2017

We can emphasize three major career paths to the minister position:

- 1) **Vertical institutional.** The full career cycle in one branch of executive power. The Minister of Taxation Uladzimir Palujan started his career as a regular specialist Committee of State Control, was promoted to Minsk department of the Ministry of Taxation as expert and then director, moved to the position of vice-Minister, and then became a minister. This career path is the most common among appointees, and I assume these kind of appointees are more professional, and less politicized.
- 2) **Horizontal inter-institutional.** As director of a large state-owned organization and then promoted to ministerial positions, the Minister of Industry Dzmitry Kaciarynich first built a career as a tire manufacturer «Belshyna» until he was appointed as its director, and later as the Minister of Industry. After ministerial work, he was moved by Lukashenka to work as president for the Minsk Car manufacturer (MAZ). Another example, the current Minister of Information Ales Karlukevich, before being appointed, served on various management positions in state-run newspapers and publishing houses, and his ministerial work might be considered by him as career promotion. However, there is no particular logic in horizontal rotation, it is usually a personal decision of Lukashenka. In 2005, National TV and Radio chief Uladzimir Matvijachuk called his appointment to the Ministry of Culture «absolutely unexpected» (he served there for five more years, until 2009).
- 3) **Political appointees on rotation.** Significant numbers of bureaucrats and regional administrators are moved from one position to another within the government without having special experience or education in the field. For example, former Komso-mol and Communist bureaucrat and regional administrator Zianon Lomac first was appointed a Slucak administration director, then to a presidential advisor, and later became a Minister of Agriculture. There is no particular logic in these moves, and I believe he is political appointee because of his ties with Lukashenka.

It is also important to mention each career path after being dismissed from office. Usually, officials: 1) continue working for government in state or private companies or institutions (former minister of Agriculture Jury Maroz became a director of farm-type agricultural company «Bielavieski»⁴³; 2) move to Presidential administration or Presidential Affairs department (Minister of trade Uladzimir Kulickou was appointed a Director of Presidential Affairs in 2005)⁴⁴ 3) get nominated for a foreign diplomatic mission (former Minister of Culture Pavel Latushka went to France as Ambassador), 4) start working for a Russian-Belarusian Union or other regional and Eurasian initiatives (for example, Minister of Culture Uladzimir Matviaycuk moved to Moscow to work as leader of «Soyuznoe Gosudarstvo»⁴⁵).

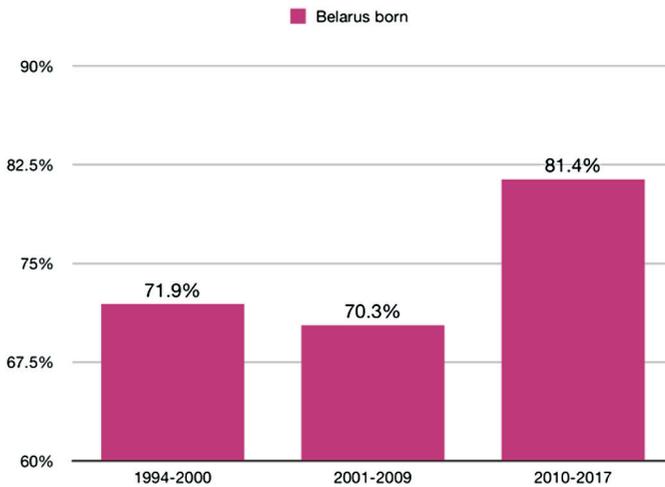


Figure 4. Officials born in Belarus

Origin

More than 26% of appointees were born abroad, mostly in Russia (16%), and no one was born from outside the territory of the former Soviet Union⁴⁶. Russian-born ministers prevail in "siloviki" ministries such as defense, internal affairs, and KGB, and apparently, preserve their ties with Russia.

⁴³ "Bielavieski abysou 45 rajonau," Zviazda.by, February 22, 2017, accessed December 04, 2017, <http://zviazda.by/be/news/20170222/1487771994-belavezhski-abysou-45-rayonau>.

⁴⁴ "Ukaz Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus' ot 21 fevralya 2005 g. №96 "O naznachanii A.N.Kulichkova Upravlyayushchim delami Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus'", Pravavaja biblijateka Archiu, accessed December 04, 2017, <http://laws.newsby.org/documents/ukazp/pos02/ukazo2159.htm>.

⁴⁵ "Gde seychas Vladimir Matveychuk? — Narodnaya Volya," Narodnaya Volya, September 23, 2014, accessed December 06, 2017, <https://www.nv-online.info/np/gde-seychas-vladimir-matvejchuk>.

⁴⁶ Officials born in Western Belarus (formally Poland) or under German occupation but on the territory of Belarus are counted like Belarus-born.

Over time, we see an increasing number of appointees born in Belarus, especially those who were appointed after 2010 (81.4%). This trend is universal for all ministries and committees.

Among those born in Belarus, there is not one dominant region despite the popular belief of a «Mahilou clan» which keeps control over power. However, the presence of those born in eastern Belarus (Viciebsk, Homiel, Mahilou) is still significant (28%). And those from Eastern Belarus are slightly more likely to take ministries of “siloviki” (defense, KGB, police).

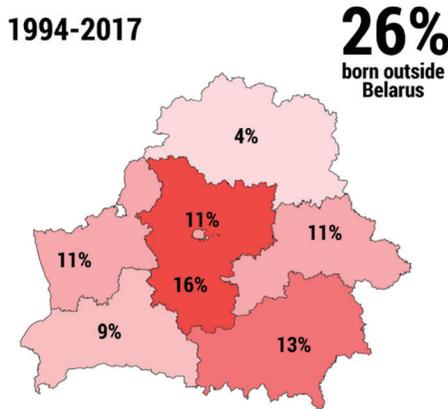


Figure 5. Where officials were born 1994-2017

There is an evident trend in favor of a westernization of the elites (those born in western regions being preferred). Before 2006, appointees from the eastern regions of Belarus made up more than 30% of all positions, while the westerners only 16% (from the Bierascie and Horadnia regions). Since 2006 “western” representation has achieved 26%, and “eastern” has decreased to 24%. It is important to emphasize that western regions are much less populated (2.3 million) than in the East (3.6 million).

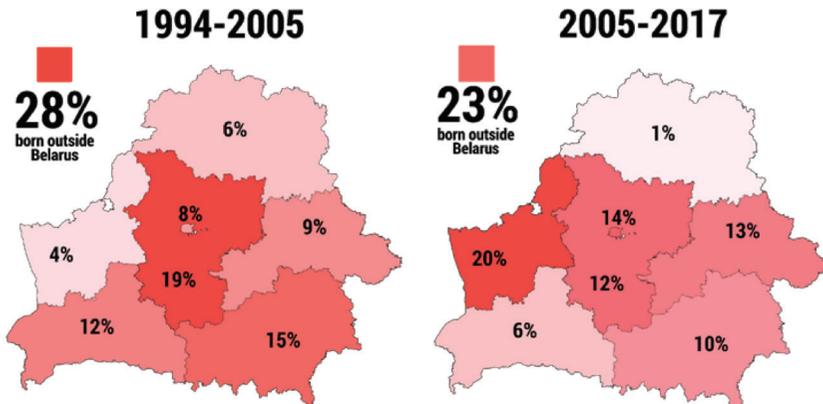


Figure 6. Where officials were born

Over time there has been a significant shift to the Horadnia region (the most west-ernized, pro-European and catholic). Since 2005 the number of appointees born in the Horadnia region has risen from 4% to 20%, however, another western region, Bierascie, has dropped in half from 12% to 6%, as well as the north-eastern Viciebsk region (from 6% to 1%), usually considered as pro-Russian. These regional trends might be a sign of the influ-ence of various groupings within the elite.

Some regions have their specialization, for example Bierascie (south-west) region is a primary source for specialists in economics and finances, with a significant number of them having graduated from the Paleski State University in Pinsk⁴⁷.

Political affiliation (party membership)

Almost 90% of appointees have not been members of a political party or any political organization. Lukashenka’s government is explicitly non-partisan. Since the installment of his regime, Lukashenka has not succeeded in creating his own party. The only real attempt was in 2007 when “Belaja Rus” was founded to represent the interests of the Nomen-klatura. Some appointees were also members of the pro-Lukashenka Communist Party and Agrarian Party. Not one appointee has been a member of an oppositional party or pro-democracy NGO.

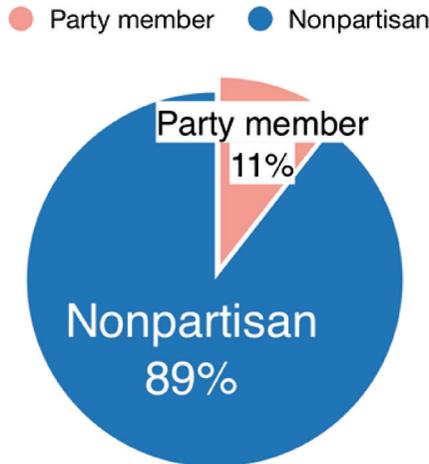


Figure 7. Officials—members of parties or political organizations

This model of nonpartisan Nomenklatura distinguishes Lukashenka’s regime from other post-Soviet authoritarianisms. In Belarus, the fact of being on the board itself (when you work for government), is kind of an informal membership into the system which might guarantee your security and career growth.

⁴⁷ It was known earlier as Pinski Ulikova-Kredytny Technikum (Пінскі ўлікова-крэдытны тэхнікум).

Personal ties (President, Russia, Military)

The majority of appointees do not have evident ties with Lukashenka (79%). There have been some fluctuations, especially between 2001-2009, when almost a third of all appointees were members of Lukashenka's sports club, the National Olympic Committee or used to work in Presidential Administration or for the Presidential Property Management Department. As I mentioned, after 2001 Lukashenka enforced building a strong power vertical, and he needed loyal officials in the government. After 2010 this number dropped (9.3%). It might be a result of a new generation of officials taking offices, and they do not fit completely into the presidential circle of friends. The closest officials to Lukashenka are obviously appointed to the Security Council or Presidential Administration, not ministries or state committees.

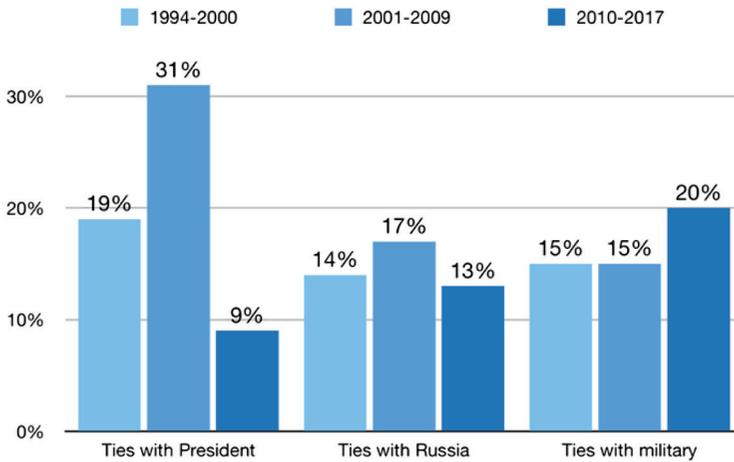


Figure 8. Informal or formal ties with the President, Russia, or with a Military background

We also can observe the permanent presence of a slight Russian influence within the government (15%). This does not mean these officials serve as Russian agents or influencers directly, but shows the continuing importance of Russia in shaping Belarus government elites. Some officials after governmental work continue working in Russian-Belarusian Union institutions, the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union, or move to Russia with other purposes, including business. There is a significant overlap between those with Russian ties and those who belong to Lukashenka's closest environment (34%).

Military

Twenty-nine people of the 171 (17%) have a professional military background, which might be a kind of informal network. Many of them graduated the same educational institutions in Russia during Soviet times, and 52% of them are non-Belarus born. In contrast to many European Union countries, where military members are not supposed to take

ministerial position, Belarus follows Soviet tradition. Even within the current government, at least eight people in the government have a military background, and not only in “siloviki” ministries.

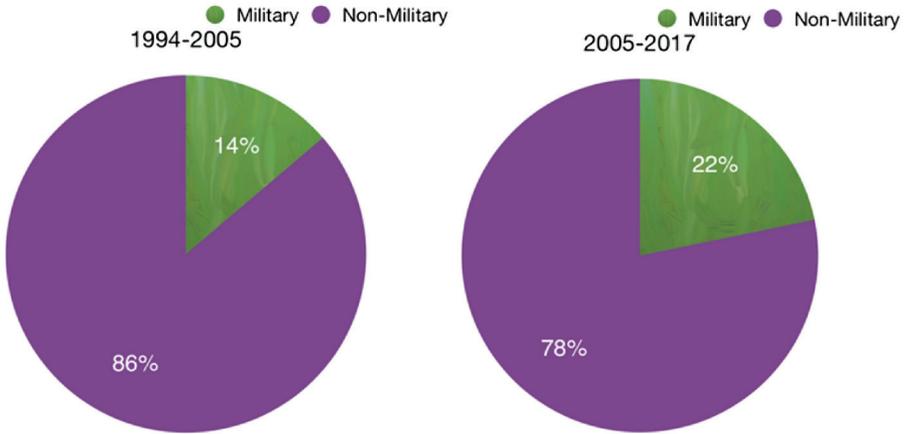


Figure 9. Officials with a military background

Age and Sex

The average age of appointees (based on the age when position was taken) is 50.5 years old which means the government is relatively young. And this number has stayed the same during all of Lukashenka’s presidency. Ministers of Taxation were the youngest (an average of 44 years old for appointees), Ministers of Finance (46). Directors of Military Industry (58), Ministers of Communication (55) and Ministers of Agriculture (53) are the oldest.

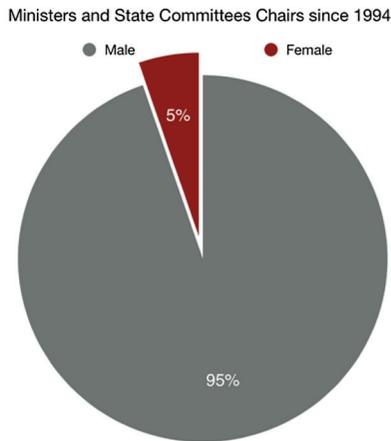


Figure 10. Gender

Among the 171 ministers and state committees chairs appointed by Lukashenka since 1994 only nine were women. Among ministers and committee chairs, women have been traditionally represented in the Ministry of Labor. This fact inspired the joke, that women are in charge of labor because the word «praca» is feminine in Belarusian. Another "female" ministry is health represented by Inesa Drabyseuskaja (1994-1997) and the mother-in-law of Lukashenka Ludmila Pastajalka (2002-2006).

Women are incredibly underrepresented in ministries compared to in neighboring Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine or Russia. And there has not been any particular evidence of change since 1994. After 2011 only three women were trusted enough for such high positions in the government. However, this tendency is not universal for institutions of Lukashenka's regime. It depends on real power in the hands of appointees. In the parliament (which is deprived of any real power) the percentage of women has kept stable at 30-35% over the last decade (which is the highest rate in post-Soviet space, Ukraine 12%, Russia 16%).

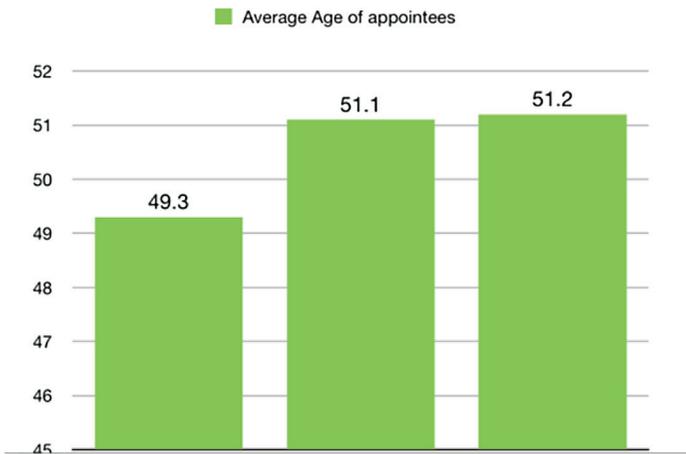


Figure 11. Average age when appointed

Data sources, difficulties in collecting information

The information was taken from open sources on the internet and in print. I have used data published on the website of the Belarus Information Agency «Belta»; the National Center of Legal Information; «Who is who in the Republic of Belarus 2016»; wikipedia, and publications in various Belarusian outlets, both state and independent.

I lacked some biographical information (fully or partially) on a few officials appointed before 1999; it is not available online in official government publications. I also cannot guarantee the completeness of some biographies published by official and unofficial resources, especially concerning data related to ties with Russia or the President. It is assumed, that some facts important for the research could have been hidden or omitted. However, I believe, it would not significantly influence our findings and conclusions.

Conclusions

Belarus remains one of the least free post-Soviet countries, with a poor rule of law, absent separation of powers and lacking political competition. After coming to power in 1994, president Lukashenka has successfully monopolized the power by diminishing the role of Parliament and the post-Soviet Nomenklatura. It has taken years and several stages have passed until the current structure of "power vertical" and state elites could be finally established.

Lukashenka's regime replicates the Soviet model of governance, where the presidential administration plays the role of Communist Party Central Committee with its enormous executive power. Ministries and state committees are not autonomous bodies, but the top layer of state bureaucracy, implementing presidential decisions and distributing goods as allowed for them. In this model, in contrast to other post-Soviet and East European countries, hired ministers are not necessarily political appointees but narrowly specialized bureaucrats-managers.

This research based on a quantitative analysis, revealed several spectacular trends within Belarusian government elites (at least at a ministerial level) in the period between 1994 and 2017:

1) **Professionalization.** 78% of ministers and state committee chairs are employed according to their professional career background. The number of appointees with a specialized education has risen from 71.9% to 86% during Lukashenka's presidency. Since 2010, almost 84% of new appointees have come to ministerial offices after making their careers in related areas, or even working in the same ministry.

2) **Indigenization.** The number of officials born in Belarus has increased from 71.9% to 81.4%. There is a clear tendency to mono-nationalize the elite. Those born abroad are primarily from Russia and occupy power ministries and committees. In contrast to neighboring Ukraine, the absolute majority of appointees are Belarusians.

3) **Westernization.** More of the appointees than previously have been born in Western Belarus (which had two generations less time under Soviet rule than Eastern Belarus). It is hard to say if there is any evidence for them having a more pro-Western or progressive position. Before 2006 appointees from Eastern regions formed more than 30% of all appointees, whereas, Westerners (Bierascie and Horadnia regions) made up only 16%. Since 2006 Western representation has reached 26%, and the Eastern one has decreased to 24, despite these regions being more populated. After 2005 the number of appointees born in the Horadnia region has risen from 4% to 20%.

4) **Informal networks.** The number of appointees tied to Lukashenka (through sports clubs, work in presidential administration, etc.) has significantly decreased during the last decade (from 31% to 9%). This could be a result of generational change within the elite, but also corresponds with a tendency for more professionalization. At the same time, the number of officials with professional military backgrounds has increased from 15% to 20%.

Based on the available data, it is possible to speculate that the current structure of government elites, especially those on the ministerial level, consists of professionals with no apparent political affiliation. This means, in the case of political unrest and democratic transition, that they could keep state mechanisms properly functioning even when the highest leadership is changed.

Bibliography

- Antanovic, Nina. "State Power Organs Structure in the Republic of Belarus and Their Transformation." *Belarusian Political System and Presidential Elections*, 2001, 127-42.
- "Belarus." June 28, 2017. Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/belarus>.
- Bendix, Reinhard, and Samuel P. Huntington. „Political Order in Changing Societies." *Political Science Quarterly* 86, no. 1 (1971): 168. doi:10.2307/2147388.
- "Bielavieski abysou 45 rajonau." Zviazda.by. February 22, 2017. Accessed December 04, 2017. <http://zviazda.by/be/news/20170222/1487771994-belavezhski-abyshou-45-rayonau>.
- Čavusaŭ, Jury. "Revolutionary Sub Consciousness of the Belarusian Elite", Political Sphere. Accessed December 06, 2017. <http://palityka.org/2005/09/revolyucionnoe-podsoznanie-beloruskoj-elity/>. No. 4: 68–74.
- „Ci hatovaja ŭlada pierajsci da vybaraŭ pa partyjnych spisach?" *Novy Cas*. Accessed December 04, 2017. <https://novychas.by/palityka/ci-hatovaja-ulada-perajsci-da-vy-barau-pa-partyjnyh>.
- Darden, Keith. "The Integrity of Corrupt States: Graft as an Informal State Institution." *Politics & Society* 36, no. 1 (2008): 35-59. doi:10.1177/0032329207312183.
- Easter, Gerald M. "Reconstructing the State." 2000. doi:10.1017/cbog780511571527.
- "Economy and Society." Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://www.ucpress.edu/book.php?isbn=9780520280021>.
- Ertman, Thomas. *Birth of the leviathan: building states and regimes in medieval and early modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Fukuyama, Francis. "What Is Governance?" *Governance* 26, no. 3 (2013): 347-68. doi:10.1111/gove.12035.
- "Gde seychas Vladimir Matveychuk? — Narodnaya Volya." *Narodnaya Volia*. September 23, 2014. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://www.nv-online.info/np/gde-sejchas-vladimir-matvejchuk>.
- Golubev, Valentin Fedorovič. *Kto est kto v Belarusi 2001 = Hto ěsc hto ŭ Belarusi*. Minsk: Medžik Buk, 2001.
- Howard, Michael. "The Springtime of Nations." January 28, 2009. Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1990-02-01/springtime-nations>.
- Kazakevich, Andrei. "The Belarusian system: Morphology, physiology, Genealogy." *Crossroads. The Journal for the studies of East European borderland*, no. 1 (2006): 67-98.
- Kazakevich, Andrej. "Čatyyr karparacyja bielaruskaje elity." *Bielaruś: ni Eüropa, ni Rasieja*, 2006, 239-48. doi:ISBN 83-89406-77-2.
- Kazakevich, Andrej. "Trends in regional elites Belarus (According to the results of local elections 1999, 2003, 2007)." *Political Sphere*, 2009, 40-55.
- Kazakevich, Andrej. "Parliament: Changes without consequences?" *Belarusian Yearbook*, 2017. Accessed October 13, 2017. <http://nmnby.eu/yearbook/2017/en/page4.html>.
- Kazakevich, Andrej. „Parlament Białorusi: ewolucja postów, 1990-2010." *Politeja. Pismo Wydział Studiów Międzynarodowych i Politycznych Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, 2017.
- *Kto jest kto v Bielarusi*. Moskva: : Knižnyj dom Univiersitet, 1999. doi:5-8013-0068-6.
- Kukhlei, Dzmitry. "Representative bodies: The parliament of foreign affairs and Myasnikovich's senate." *Belarusian Yearbook 2016*, 2016, 35-43.

- "Lukashenko: Ya kak pervyi prezident Rossii." YouTube. February 26, 2016. Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wbRDzalFL4>.
- Mann, Michael. "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results." *State/Space*: 53-64. doi:10.1002/9780470755686.ch3.
- Mills, C. Wright. *The power elite*. London (etc.): Oxford University Press, 1959.
- "Ministerstvo promyshlennoy politiki: ideya novaya, sut' – staraya. Analiz." *Nashe mneniye*. Accessed December 09, 2017. <http://nmnby.eu/news/analytics/5791.html>.
- Natčyk, Piotra. "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment. Lukashenka's Staff Policy." *Belarusian and Political System and Presidential Elections*: 143-61.
- Pazniak, Zianon. „Camu namenklatura za prezydenta." Pazniak.info. Accessed December 03, 2017. http://pazniak.info/page_chamu_namenklatura_za_prezydenta_.
- Pryhara, Halina. „Bierazouski: Lukashenka razhladali na prezydenta Rasiel." Radio Svaboda. March 24, 2013. Accessed December 03, 2017. <http://www.svaboda.org/content/article/24937681.html>.
- Ramasheuskaya, Ina. "The Kobyakov Cabinet: Circular firing squad." *Belarusian Yearbook*, 2016, 20-26.
- "Referendum 1996 hodu: Kanstytucyja dyktatury." Radyjo Svaboda. November 27, 2017. Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://www.svaboda.org/a/28877709.html>.
- Rovdo, Vladimir. "Kadrovaya politika A. Lukashenko v usloviyakh ekonomicheskogo krizisa." April 27, 2016. Accessed October 13, 2017. <http://nmnby.eu/news/analytics/6045.html>.
- Schreck, Carl. "U.S. Presses Belarus On 'Disappeared.'" RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty. September 16, 2014. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-disappeared-hanchar-krasouski-us-pressure/26585897.html>.
- Silicki, Vital. "The Dilemma of Choice", in *Belarus: Neither Europe nor Russia*, Warsaw (2006): 9-22.
- "Technocracy." International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. Accessed December 03, 2017. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/sociology-and-social-reform/sociology-general-terms-and-concepts-18>.
- "The political elite of Belarus and Ukraine in the conditions of post-totalitarian transit: an attempt of comparative analysis." *REGIONALISM TO INTEGRATION. Naukova scho- richnik. 1. Key infrastructure – Chernivtsi: Chernivetsky National University*, 2014, 266-73.
- Theobald, R. "Patrimonialism." *World Politics* 34, no. 04 (1982): 548-59. doi:10.2307/2010334.
- "Ukaz Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus' ot 21 fevralya 2005 g. N°96 "O naznachenii A.N.Kulichkova Upravlyayushchim delami Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus." Pravavaja biblijateka Archiu. Accessed December 04, 2017. <http://laws.newsby.org/documents/ukazp/pos02/ukaz02159.htm>.
- Urban, Michael E. *An algebra of Soviet power: elite circulation in the Belorussian Republic 1966-86*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Vasilievich, Natallia. "Study of Belarusian Elites: Between Algebra and Geography." *Political Sphere*, no. 13 (2009): 128-41.
- Vu, Tuong. "Studying the State through State Formation." *World Politics* 62, no. 01 (2009): 148-75. doi:10.1017/s0043887109990244.
- Weber, Max. *Economy and society*. Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press.

GORDON N. BARDOS

SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN RESEARCH & CONSULTING, LLC

Militant Islamism in Southeastern Europe: Infrastructure, Actions and the Future Threat Horizon

More than a few alarm bells rang recently when a Sarajevo security specialist claimed that many of the alleged 30–50,000 illegal migrants who have entered Bosnia & Herzegovina over the past few years were in fact ISIS members fleeing the collapse of the Caliphate.¹ Such claims gained credibility with the October 2017 arrest in Sarajevo of Mirsad Kandić, ISIS' alleged "intelligence chief," who was discovered hiding in Sarajevo. Kandić's portfolio in the Islamic State had been to provide prospective suicide bombers with explosive vests, obtain weaponry for ISIS, and of allegedly helping 20,000 "brothers" join the Islamic State.² Most recently, a large illegal weapons cache was discovered in a Sarajevo apartment housing Syrian migrants.³ In November 2017, Syrian-jihad returnee Emin Hodžić was arrested in Sarajevo near the U.S. Embassy; upon examining his vehicle police discovered three hand grenades, an explosive device, two combat vests, and various other weaponry.⁴

¹ See the comments by Goran Kovačević on the news program *Dnevnik*, posted on 13 May 2018, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPG77M4Cahk>.

² See Boris Brezo, "Kako je lociran i uhapšen Mirsad Kandić," *N1 Info*, 2 November 2017 at <http://ba.n1info.com/a224409/Vijesti/Vijesti/Kako-je-lociran-i-uhapsen-Mirsad-Kandic.html>; Avdo Avdić, "Opasni suradnik ISIL-a izručen SAD: Teroristički logistigar skrivao se pola godine na Grbavici," *Slobodna Bosna* (Sarajevo), 31 oktobar 2017, at https://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/63687/opasni_suradnik_isil_a_izruchen_sad_teroristiccki_logisticigar_skrivao_se_pola_godine_na_grbavici.html; "U.S. Charges Man Extradited From Bosnia With Supporting Terrorism," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 2 November 2017, at <https://www.rferl.org/a/islamic-state-bosnia-kandic-terrorism-charges/28830776.html>.

³ See "Sarajevo: Pronađeno oružje kod migranata," *Bosna-Herzegovina Radio-Televizija*, 24 September 2018, at <http://www.bhrt.ba/vijesti/crna-hronika/sarajevo-pronadjeno-oruzje-kod-migranata>.

⁴ See "Arsenal oružja pronađen u Sarajevu kod povratnika sa sirijskog ratišta," *Klix.ba* (Sarajevo), 30 November 2017 at <https://www.klix.ba/vijesti/crna-hronika/arsenal-oruzja-pronadjen-u-sarajevu-kod-povratnika-sa-sirijskog-ratista/171130085>.

The problem of returning foreign fighters, of course, is more than just a problem for the Balkans. Germany's interior ministry believes that most illegal migrants entering Europe are now using Bosnia as their gateway,⁵ and Austrian authorities have described a "mosque route" of way stations through Bosnia that migrants are using as a pipeline into the EU.⁶

The combination of ISIS cadres finding refuge in the Balkans, migrants using surreptitious Balkan channels to get into the EU, and active indigenous radicals make for a dangerous situation. In many ways, southeastern Europe is now arguably more threatened by the phenomenon of returning foreign fighters than anywhere else in Europe.

In addition to the problem of Islamist extremists infiltrating Europe through the Balkans, southeastern Europe remains a source and incubator of Islamist extremism itself. One example of this was seen in the June 2017 arrest of Begzad Spahić, a Bosnian jihadi from a village near Zenica, who was arrested near the Turkish border with Syria in the company of several other extremists; in their possession was a large quantity of explosives and several suicide vests.

The Dimensions of the Problem

A large number of individuals from the Balkans have joined ISIS, Al Nusra, or other Islamist militant organizations over the past several decades and are now returning home—possibly with other comrades-in-arms in tow. Bosnia has provided more jihad volunteers (per capita) than any other country in Europe.⁷ Bosnia also reportedly serves as ISIS' favorite location for transferring monies from European donors and sympathizers to the Caliphate.⁸

A 2014 study by the International Center for the Study of Radicalization estimated that some 300 individuals from Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia have joined the Iraqi and Syrian jihads,⁹ while other estimates put the figure at 600;¹⁰ one analysis claimed that one thousand individuals from Kosovo alone had joined ISIS.¹¹ Several dozen individuals from Montenegro are also believed to have joined the Syrian jihad,¹² although Aida Skorupan,

⁵ See "Flüchtlinge kommen vermehrt über Bosnien," *Die Zeit* (Hamburg), 29 May 2018, at <https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2018-05/migration-balkanroute-bosnien-herzegowina-fluechtlinge>.

⁶ See Mladen Lazic, Dusica Tomovic, and Gjergj Erbara, "New Balkan Route for Migrants, Refugees, Causes Alarm," *BalkanInsight*, 4 June 2018, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/region-on-alert-as-migrants-open-new-balkan-route-06-03-2018>.

⁷ Estimate according to Dr. Thomas Hegghammer of the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment, as cited by Frank Gardner, "Europe Could Feel the Backlash from Jihadist Conflicts," at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-25155188>.

⁸ See Magnus Normark and Magnus Ranstorp, *Understanding Terrorist Finance: Modus Operandi and National CTF-regimes* (Stockholm: Swedish Defense University, 18 December 2015), 19.

⁹ Besar Likmeta, "Albania Nabs Suspected Al Qaeda Recruiters," *BalkanInsight*, 12 March 2014, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albania-arrests-seven-suspected-al-qaeda-recruiters>.

¹⁰ See Lindita Çela, "Maqedonia më e rrezikuar nga grupet radikale islamike," *Ora News* (Tirana), 18 January 2015, at <http://www.oranews.tv/rajoni/maqedonia-me-e-rrezikuar-nga-grupet-radikale-islamike-tahiri-te-krijohet-keshilligjithkombetar>.

¹¹ See David Phillips, "Islamism in Kosovo," *The World Post*, 21 December 2015, at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-l-phillips/islamism-in-kosovo_b_8855128.html.

¹² Estimate according to Aida Skorupan; see Predrag Tomović, "Vehabije na Balkanu su izmanipulisane," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 1 June 2013, at <http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/vehabije-na-balkanu-izmanipulisane/25003930.html>.

who has closely followed the Wahhabi movement in Montenegro, believes the number of Montenegrin volunteers is significantly higher than the estimate of thirty or so individuals usually used.¹³ In March 2016, Macedonian foreign minister Nikola Poposki reported that some 140 Macedonian citizens were fighting for ISIS.¹⁴ Albanian security specialist Ilir Kulla has claimed that the number of jihad volunteers from the region could be "in the thousands" if one includes individuals from the Balkan diaspora.¹⁵

Comparing these numbers with extremist mobilization in the EU reveals the worrying levels to which militant Islamism has grown in southeastern Europe. The Soufan Group, for instance, has estimated that western European (i.e., EU countries) with a total population of some 510 million people, have provided some 5000+ jihad volunteers.¹⁶ By way of comparison, the western Balkan states (i.e., Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia) with a combined population of approximately twenty million, have provided some 1000, which suggests that western Balkan countries are generating four-to five-times more jihad volunteers per capita than EU states.

Unfortunately, these numbers are only the tip of the extremist iceberg in southeastern Europe. As security specialist Adrian Shtuni has noted, the Balkan jihad volunteers going off to Syria and Iraq constitute "merely a fraction of an extensive network of like-minded militants, supporters, and enablers who not only openly share the same ideology, but are also actively engaged in its dissemination and recruitment efforts through physical and virtual social networks."¹⁷

Determining the size of the Balkan militant Islamist movement is complicated, but a range of recent public opinion surveys suggest that at least 5-10 percent of the Muslim populations in the western and southern Balkans have become radicalized. One indicator of the pool of individuals psychologically and politically predisposed to ISIS' message and activities can be seen in the results of the Pew Research Center's 2012 survey of Muslim public opinion around the world. A cluster of questions within the survey provided disturbing evidence of the progress of radicalization within the Balkans. Thus, in response to questions on the desirability of imposing sharia law, on support for suicide bombing and other forms of violence, on support for public whippings and cutting off the hands

¹³ See Aida Skorupan's comments as cited by Petar Komnenić, "Crnogorske vlasti najavile reakciju nakon vijesti RSE o odlasku na strana ratišta," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 18 September 2014, at <http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/dobrovoljci-iz-crne-gore-u-isiriji-i-iraku-vlast-reagovala-nakon-vijesti-rse/26592466.html>. See also Dejan Peruničić, "ANB drži na oku džihadiste iz Crne Gore," *Vijesti* (Podgorica), 20 September 2014, at <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/anb-drzi-na-ok-u-dzihadiste-iz-crne-gore-796626>, and Samir Kajošević, "U ISIL otišlo tri puta više državljana Crne Gore," *Vijesti* (Podgorica), (no date given, but appears to be September 2014), at <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/u-isil-otislo-tri-puta-vise-drzavljan-crne-gore-843389>, and Dusica Tomovic, "Montenegro to Keep Track of ISIS Threat," *BalkanInsight*, 21 July 2015, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/montenegro-on-guard-after-isis-threats>.

¹⁴ See the report on Poposki's speech before the Israel Council on Foreign Relations, "140 Macedonians fighting for ISIS, could return soon," 10 March 2016, at <http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/140-macedonians-fighting-for-isis---macedonian-fm-3-4-2016>.

¹⁵ See Kamil Arli, "Albanian Expert: Turkey Waypoint for Balkan Jihadists," *Today's Zaman* (Istanbul), 19 July 2014, at http://www.todayszaman.com/interviews_albanian-expert-turkey-waypoint-for-balkan-jihadists_353477.html.

¹⁶ *Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq* (The Soufan Group, December 2015).

¹⁷ See Adrian Shtuni, "Dynamics of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Kosovo," *United States Institute of Peace Special Report* 397 (December 2016), 2.

of alleged thieves, on stoning accused adulterers to death, on imposing the death penalty for apostasy, and on the moral acceptability of polygamy ----- some 400,000 people across Albania, Bosnia and Kosovo expressed their support for all of these things.¹⁸ Similarly, a May 2016 survey in the Sandžak found that twenty percent of those interviewed believe that the use of violence is legitimate to defend one's religion, eleven percent believe it is acceptable to go to a foreign country to wage war, and over 35% claimed that there were individuals or groups in their area who express extremist positions.¹⁹ An April 2018 International Republican Institute public opinion survey in Bosnia conducted found that nine percent of Bosnian Muslims have a "mostly or somewhat positive opinion of ISIS and/or the Islamic State" (up from seven percent in 2017).²⁰

What such surveys also show is that the efforts of local extremists and the tens of millions of dollars being spent by Middle-Eastern donors are having an effect on changing the identities of the indigenous Balkan Muslim populations. For instance, according to a 2016 study conducted in Kosovo, up to 32 percent of Kosovo Albanians now claim their primary form of identity to be "Muslim" rather than "Albanian." The implication of these changing identities is likely to be profound; as the study goes on to note, "the results of the opinion polls [c]learly indicate a major identity shift of Kosovo Albanians from the secular ethnic identity to religious ethnicity . . . if the current trend of de-secularisation of the ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians continues in the next two decades with the same pace [it] would undoubtedly mark the end . . . secular and pro-Western Kosovo as well."²¹

All told, such numbers suggest that some five- to ten-percent of the Balkans' Muslim populations have become radicalized. Although not all of these people should be considered active threats, they do, to paraphrase Mao Zedong, provide the proverbial sea terrorists swim in.

Unfortunately, a number of factors suggest that militant Islamism in southeastern Europe has the potential for further growth. First, Islamist states such as Iran and Saudi Arabia continue to invest significant sums in the region, building mosques and madrasas in which more extreme interpretations of Islamic doctrine are taught, and expanding their influence through a variety of "NGOs" and "charities" (this latter topic will be discussed in more detail in subsequent sections). As Mehmet Gormez, the head of the Diyanet (Turkey's official government directorate of religious affairs) himself noted, the individuals who graduate from places such as Al-Azhar University in Cairo and Medina Islamic University in Saudi Arabia" are becoming the problem themselves, rather than solving problems."²²

Middle-Eastern funders have established some 25 *madrasas* (Islamic religious schools) in Bosnia through which some 2000 students have already passed,²³ and the Islamic fac-

¹⁸ See *The World's Muslims: Religion, Politics & Society* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2013).

¹⁹ See the survey conducted by Prof. Dr. Vladimir Ilić, *Stavovi Mladih u Sandžaku: Koliko Su Mladi Otvoreni Prema Islamskom Ekstremizmu* (Beograd: Helsinški Odbor za Ljudska Prava u Srbiji, May 2016).

²⁰ See *Bosnia and Herzegovina: Understanding Perceptions of Violent Extremism and Foreign Influence* (Washington, DC: International Republican Institute, March 29, 2018—April 12, 2018), 99.

²¹ See "What Happened to Kosovo Albanians. The impact of religion on the ethnic identity in the state-building period" (Pristina: Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development Policy Paper No. 1/16, 2016), 6.

²² As quoted by David Lepasca, "Turkey Casts the Diyanet: Ankara's Religious Directorate Takes Off," *Foreign Affairs*, 17 May 2015, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/turkey/2015-05-17/turkey-casts-diyamet>.

²³ See Ceresnjes, A. and Green, R., "The Global Jihad Movement in Bosnia: A Time Bomb in the Heart of Europe," (Washington, DC: Middle East Media and Research Institute, June 2012).

ulties in Bihać and Zenica, built with generous donations from Saudi Arabia, promote the more extreme Salafi/Wahhabi interpretations of Islam.²⁴ During the Bosnian jihad the Egyptian extremist/Bosnian citizen Imad el-Misri, a.k.a. Abu Hamza, who was in charge of educational indoctrination for local recruits to the El Mudžahedin unit, allegedly established nineteen madrasas, and a further six after the war through which hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of Bosnian volunteers passed. Abu Hamza was also active in giving lectures to the AIO.²⁵ In Kosovo, the Saudi Joint Committee for the Relief of Kosova and Chechnya (SJCRKC) has built a network of some 98 primary and secondary schools in Kosovo's rural areas, which then feed students into thirty specialized Koranic schools built throughout the state.²⁶ In Kosovo, numerous Middle-Eastern NGO's tied to Islamic extremism and terrorism have been building kindergartens, schools and dormitories, allegedly with the government's acquiescence.²⁷ Similarly, in Bulgaria over the past twenty years dozens of new mosques and Wahhabi "teaching centers" funded by Middle-Eastern donors have been opened, a number of which the government shut down in 2003 because of their ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and other extremist groups.²⁸ Bulgarian security analysts have estimated that some 3000 youths have passed through these Wahhabi-funded educational centers in the past two decades.²⁹ Middle-Eastern donors have also been active in Montenegro; in April 2014, for instance, a Kuwaiti foundation, *Rahma al-Alamiya*, opened an all-female madrasa for 200 girls in the village of Miljes, near the Montenegrin capital of Podgorica. Another all-female madrasa, opened in 2001, operates in Rožaje.³⁰ This influx of Iranian, Saudi, and Turkish organizations in the region is promoting a view of state-society relations incompatible with the requirements of modern European democracies.

Second, a large number of locally-born Islamic clerics have been educated in the Middle-East. Such individuals include people such as Nedžad Balkan, Jusuf Barčić, Bilal Bosnić, Mustafa Cerić, Nezim Halilović-Muderis and Nusret Imamović. The infiltration of Wahhabi/Salafi thinking and ideology into the region started in the 1980s, when a significant cohort of individuals from the former Yugoslavia began studying at universities in Mecca, Medina and other places in the Middle-East.³¹ The late Esad Hećimović, a leading

²⁴ See the comments by Professor Adnan Silajdžić of the Faculty of Islamic Sciences in Sarajevo in the program "Tkz. Selefije i Vehabije," (Sarajevo: Bosnian Federation TV program *Pošteno*). Date unknown.

²⁵ See Esad Hećimović, "Ljeto kada su hapsili mudžahedine," *BH Dani* 222 (Sarajevo), 7 September 2001, at <https://www.bhdani.ba/portal/arhiva-67-281/222/t22204.shtml>.

²⁶ See Isa Blumi, "The Islamist Challenge in Kosova," *Current History* (March 2003), 125.

²⁷ See "Investimet e ekstremistëve islamikë në arsimin në Kosovës," *Koha Ditore* (Priština), 19 May 2015, at <http://koha.net/?id=27&l=58033>.

²⁸ See Konstantin Testorides, "Radical Islam on Rise in Balkans," *Associated Press*, 19 September 2011 at http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/E/EU_BALKANS_RADICAL_ISLAM?SITE=TNMEM&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT.

²⁹ See the comments by Dmtar Avramov in Veselin Toshkov, Sabina Niksic, Dusan Stojanovic, L Lazar Semini, Nebi Qena, and Elena Becatoros, "Radical Islam on Rise in Balkans, Raising Fears of Security Threats to Europe," *Associated Press* (dateline Skopje), 18 September 2010.

³⁰ See Dusica Tomovic, "All Female Islamic School Opens in Montenegro," *BalkanInsight*, 28 April 2014, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/montenegro-gets-female-madrasah>.

³¹ According to Professor Adnan Silajdžić of the Faculty of Islamic Sciences in Sarajevo, see his interview with Šefko Hodžić entitled "Vehabizam u BiH će biti još snažniji i agresivniji," available on the *Zëri Islam* website at <http://www.zerislam.com/artikulli.php?id=884>. The original interview was published in *Oslobodjenje* (Sarajevo) on 11 November 2006.

expert on the Bosnian jihadi movement, noted that "There is now a new generation of Islamic preachers in Bosnia who were educated after the war at Islamic universities in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, and other countries . . . Thus, it is no longer possible to distinguish between 'imported' and 'local' versions of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina anymore."³² Enver Kazaz, a professor at the University of Sarajevo agrees, and adds that Middle-Eastern ways of thinking have now been transplanted to Bosnia. According to Kazaz, "salafism was transported to Bosnia thanks to the SDA and the Islamic Community of BiH even during the war and it has planted deep roots in this area. Bosnia & Herzegovina at this moment cannot be healed of Salafism. In this sense it could be said that our educational system is more rigid than the Saudi system."³³

By 2012, some seventy percent of the officials in the official Islamic Community in Bosnia were due either to retire or for their mandates to expire, to be replaced by "new people, many of them educated abroad, notably in Saudi Arabia."³⁴ A majority of the muftis in Bosnia have now been educated at Cairo's Al Azhar Islamic university or other Islamic educational institutions in the Middle-East, where they were "exposed to Salafi teachings, schools of jurisprudence and lifestyles . . . Some of these imams [have] returned home with a hardened spirit and a politicized theocratic world-view, which they then tried to instill in their communities."³⁵ Similarly, in Montenegro, observers have suggested that Middle-Eastern educated extremists were able to make inroads into some sections of the Montenegrin Muslim population because "Montenegro's 'poorly educated' mainstream imams were at a disadvantage against aggressive and self-assured newcomers claiming to practice 'true Islam.'"³⁶ The fact that a majority of Balkan Islamic clerics and scholars are now being educated in the Middle-East—where they are not only trained in more extreme forms of Islamic doctrine, but also developing various unsavory relationships and networks—is an exceptionally negative development which requires considerably more attention.

The combination of Islamists from the Middle-East pumping tens of millions of dollars into the Balkans to create an educational and recruiting infrastructure for the indigenous militant Islamist movement, together with the fact that most local Muslim clerics are now being educated in the more radical interpretations of Islam emanating from the Middle-

³² See Esad Hećimović, "Radical movements—a challenge for moderate Balkan-Islam?" (paper available at http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/rel_exterm_vs_fried_beweg_05_radical_movements_moderate_balkan_islam_e_hecimovic_17.pdf , 96, 109.

³³ See Kazaz's statements as quoted by Aida Dugum, "Šta radi Saudijska Arabija u obrazovanju BiH?", *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 23 November 2016, at <http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bih-arabija-obrazovanje/28135385.html>.

³⁴ See Azinović's comments in Rusmir Smajilhodžić, "Saudi Style Wahhabism Flourishes in Bosnia," *Middle East Online*, 29 September 2010, at <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=41577>. Similarly, Bosnian imam Senad Agić warned as far back as 2004 that Wahhabi groups in Bosnia "are increasing in strength, publishing magazines, and have their own radio stations. If that is not monitored and controlled, there is a possibility that traditional Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina will change." See Agić's comments as quoted by Stephen Schwartz, "Wahhabism and Al Qaeda in Bosnia-Herzegovina," *The Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 2, Issue 20, 20 October 2004, at <http://www.islamicpluralism.org/1270/wahhabism-and-al-qaeda-in-bosnia-herzegovina>.

³⁵ See Kerem Öktem, "New Islamic actors after the Wahhabi intermezzo: Turkey's return to the Muslim Balkans," (European Studies Center, University of Oxford: December 2010), 19.

³⁶ See the State Department cable entitled "Radical Islam in Montenegro." (Origin: Embassy Podgorica, Cable date 10 July 2009), Reference # PODGORICA 0000171, at <http://www.cablegatesearch.net/cable.php?id=09PODGORICA171>.

East, is likely to have profound consequences over the coming years. As David Kanin, a leading American observer of the Balkans has noted,

... over time increasing numbers of Balkan Muslims will resist US and EU efforts to impose civic, multicultural, secular norms ... The continuing influx of significant numbers of Muslim migrants to Europe could have a magnifying impact on this phenomenon by deepening a stagnant Europe's dependence on their labor and thrusting a vibrant, disputatious religiosity against the contrasting self-absorbed sterility of European and Western culture.³⁷

The slow but apparently steady increase in the number of people expressing support for militant Islamism in southeastern Europe raises an important question (and concern) for policymakers—is there a tipping point at which the size of such a population makes multi-ethnic democracy in the Balkans impossible? None of the countries in the region (with the exception of Greece) qualify as stable democracies. If democracy is on such shaky ground with only five-to-ten percent of the local population embracing the ideology of militant Islamism, what happens to these societies and polities if this percentage rises to 15-20 percent? As of now it is difficult to answer this question definitely, but what we do know, and what will be seen in the following sections, is that the militant Islamist movement has developed a substantial infrastructure dedicated to increasing its influence in the Balkans.

The Infrastructure of Militant Islamism in Southeastern Europe

Over the past three decades militant Islamists in the Balkans have created a sophisticated infrastructure consisting of four main components: 1) local allies in political, security, and religious establishments; 2) safe havens consisting of radical-controlled mosques and remote villages which provide militant Islamists places to recruit, organize, train and hide; 3) NGO's and financial institutions providing terrorist organizations with cover identities and the ability to transfer operational funds clandestinely; and 4) various electronic and print media promoting their extremist ideology. Such complex, multi-faceted organization allows militant Islamist groups to sustain the occasional crackdown or arrest without substantial damage to their networks or infrastructure as a whole.³⁸

1) Local Allies

Local allies provide the international militant Islamist movement and its affiliated terror networks with various forms of assistance. Perhaps the most important assistance comes from the fact that the legal authorities of sovereign entities have the power to provide such groups with the operational space with which to organize themselves and plan actions while local security and intelligence authorities conveniently look the other way. The

³⁷ See David B. Kanin, "In the Balkans, Perhaps it is time for an Ummah," *Transconflict*, 27 April 2017, at <http://www.transconflict.com/2017/04/in-the-balkans-perhaps-it-is-time-for-an-ummah-274/>.

³⁸ A point made by Yossef Bodansky; see *Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America* (New York: Forum, 2001), 100.

benefits such local allies provide are numerous: from providing logistical bases and safe havens for terrorists on the run (and providing them with new cover identities); to facilitating the operation of ostensibly "legitimate" NGO's and charities that allow terror networks to launder and transfer monies across continents; and, finally to providing areas in which terror networks can proselytize and gain new recruits.

In the Balkans the importance and utility of such local allies has been most especially seen in Bosnia, where the political movement founded by the country's late Islamist leader, Alija Izetbegović, became the main Balkan pillar of support for the international jihadi movement. As Ali Hamad, a Bahraini-born Al Qaeda operative, has claimed "from the political and military leadership in Sarajevo at the time we received the highest privileges and immunity from the police,"³⁹ and that Al Qaeda figures would visit Bosnia with "state protection."⁴⁰ This phenomenon was so prevalent that the *BBC* even named Bosnia "the cradle of modern jihadism,"⁴¹ and Aimen Deen, a founding member of Al Qaeda and Bosnian jihad veteran himself has noted that

Bosnia was a school in which many talented leaders of al-Qaeda were born. Khalid Sheikh Mohamed [the architect of the 9/11 attacks] was one of those people who were in Bosnia . . . The impression I had at that time, was that he was there in Bosnia in order to spot talent, let's put it this way, in order to you know scout for talents who will be useful for the later struggle.⁴²

Indeed, the extent to which Izetbegović and his cohorts had become an integral part of international Islamist extremism was evident in a leaked CIA report from 1996, which claimed that Izetbegović himself was "literally on the [Iranian] payroll," receiving on just one occasion \$500,000 (U.S.) in cash from Iranian agents.⁴³

Thus, starting in the 1990s Bosnia became, according to Evan Kohlmann, "[a] new refuge, close to both the heart of Europe and the Middle East . . . an excellent tactical base for espionage, fundraising, and terrorist activities . . . a major center for terrorist recruitment and fundraising. . . a place where recruits could train, coalesce into cells, and seek shelter from prosecution by foreign law enforcement."⁴⁴ Along similar lines security analyst Douglas Farah has noted,

³⁹ See Renate Flottau, "Weiße Qaida in Bosnien: 'Mit Motorsägen zerstückeln.'" *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), 3 December 2006, at <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/aUSland/weiße-qaida-in-bosnien-mit-motorsaeagen-zerstueckeln-a-451729.html>.

⁴⁰ See "Jihad, Bought and Sold," *ISN Security Watch*, 26 January 2009, at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Security-Watch/Articles/Detail/?lng=en&id=95734>.

⁴¹ See Mark Urban, "Bosnia: The cradle of modern jihadism?," *BBC News*, 2 July 2015, at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33345618>.

⁴² See Aimen Deen's interview, "The Spy Who Came in From Al Qaeda," *BBC News*, 2 March 2015, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-31700894>.

⁴³ See James Risen, "Iran Gave Bosnia Leader \$500,000, CIA Alleges," *The Los Angeles Times*, 31 December 1996, at http://articles.latimes.com/1996-12-31/news/mn-14139_1_iranian-influence.

⁴⁴ See Evan F. Kohlmann, *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), xii, 11, 221, and 230, respectively; and Harry de Quetteville, "US Hunts Islamic Militants in Bosnia," *The Telegraph* (UK), 26 July 2004 at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/bosnia/1467897/US-hunts-Islamic-militants-in-Bosnia.html>. Alison Pargeter suggests that Bosnia was particularly useful to North African and Syrian extremists who could not return to their home countries to continue the jihad. See Pargeter, *The New Frontiers of Jihad: Radical Islam in Europe* (London: I.B. Taurus & Co., 2008), 46.

It is often forgotten that Bosnia played an extremely significant role in the formation of al Qaeda, and that the infrastructure established during that war was never eradicated. Al Qaeda and other Salafist groups used Bosnia as a training ground, a financial center, a weapons storage site and a money laundering center.⁴⁵

This situation holds true even today with the rise of ISIS. As Bosnian security specialist Vlado Azinović has noted, for the Islamic State "Bosnia is a country in which one can have a rest. In which an IS-fighter can change their identity and then travel on into the European Union. And to get logistical support."⁴⁶

There is ample evidence for the above claims. In the 1990s the Izetbegović regime frequently gave international terrorists Bosnian passports and citizenship, providing them with new identities and the consequent enhanced freedom to move around the globe. By one count some 12,000 Bosnian passports were distributed to international jihadis,⁴⁷ and both the U.S. and Saudi Arabia accused the Izetbegović regime of giving Bosnian passports to known terrorists.⁴⁸ Bosnian authorities sympathetic to Islamist terror groups apparently continue with this practice; in 2015 American authorities arrested an Ohio man, Robert C. McCollum, for providing material support to ISIS. McCollum (a.k.a "Amir Said Abdul Rahman al-Ghazi") had been given Bosnian citizenship.⁴⁹

Over the past twenty-five years there has been ample evidence of this. In 1997, Italian police discovered a plot to assassinate Pope John Paul II in Bologna; all fourteen men arrested were travelling on Bosnian passports.⁵⁰ In March 1997, Lionel Dumont, a French convert to Islam who joined the Bosnian jihad and afterwards was involved in an attempted car-bombing of the March 1996 G-7 meeting in Lille, was arrested in Bosnia—in an apartment belonging to the Zenica-Doboj Canton Interior Ministry—yet managed to "escape" from a Sarajevo prison just five days before he was to be extradited to France.⁵¹

⁴⁵ See Douglas Farah, "London and the Possible Bosnia Connection," 14 July 2005, at http://counterterrorismblog.org/2005/07/douglas_farah_london_and_the_p.php. Emphasis added. Even Bosnia's former deputy security minister, Dragan Mikić, noted that "all the indicators show that Bosnia is a territory where [terrorists] can come and rest, organize their activities, and then go and carry out [attacks elsewhere]." See Nicholas Wood, "Police Raid Raises Fears of Bosnia as Haven for Terrorists," *The New York Times*, 3 December 2005.

⁴⁶ See Azinović's comments as cited in Bodo Hering, "Bosnien: Das Tor der Terrormiliz IS nach Europa," *Berlin Journal*, 5 June 2016, at <https://www.berlinjournal.biz/bosnien-das-tor-der-terrormiliz-is-nach-europa>. On another occasion Azinović would similarly note that "The Islamic State probably considers BiH as a territory suitable for logistical support, radicalization, recruiting, transferring their people because of the often dysfunctional security system, and possibly as a recruiting base." See "Riječ stručnjaka Azinović: Trend odlazaka naših građana na strana ratišta u opadanju," *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 9 April 2016, at <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/229612/rijec-strucnjaka-azinovic-trend-odlazaka-nasih-gradana-na-strana-ratista-u-opadanju?url-clanak/229612/rijec-strucnjaka-azinovic-trend-odlazaka-nasih-gradana-na-strana-ratista-u-opadanju>.

⁴⁷ See "Bin Laden and the Balkans: The Politics of Anti-Terrorism" (Belgrade/Podgorica/Pristina/Sarajevo/Skopje/Tirana/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 9 November 2001), 11.

⁴⁸ See Wood, "Police Raid Raises Fear of Bosnia as Haven for Terrorists," op. cit.

⁴⁹ See <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/amir-said-abdul-rahman-al-ghazi>.

⁵⁰ See Anes Alic, "Wahhabism: From Vienna to Bosnia," *ISN Security Watch*, 6 April 2007 at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Security-Watch/Articles/Detail/?id=53104&lng=en>.

⁵¹ See Anes Alic, "Bosnia Compensates Terror Suspects," *Transitions Online*, 22 November 2003, at <http://www.to.org/client/article/11373-bosnia-compensates-terror-suspects.html?print>; and the report on the Wahhabi movement in Bosnia that aired on *Mreža-Politički Magazin* (Sarajevo: Federalna Televizija), aired on 14 November 2014. Reporter: Amarildo Gutić. At <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lg1xkutJqho&list=PLDXGkGdGoJIYYaWE3k1Kiq2lBwOKLugZH>.

A Saudi terrorist named Ahmed Zuhair, a.k.a. Abu Hanzala, wanted in connection with the September 1997 Mostar Car bombing and the November 1995 murder of U.S. citizen William Jefferson near Tuzla, was revealed to have been hiding at one point in the apartment of the Travnik chief of police (American intelligence ultimately captured Zuhair in Pakistan and transferred him to Guantanamo).⁵²

Another international terrorist given cover in Bosnia was Karim Said Atmani, the document forger for the Millennium Bomb plot and former roommate of would-be LAX bomber Ahmed Ressay. After Ressay was arrested on the U.S.-Canadian border in December 1999, U.S. and Canadian officials tracked Atmani to Bosnia, where he was known to be traveling between Sarajevo and Istanbul. Bosnian officials denied that Atmani had ever been there—but investigators later discovered that Atmani had been in Bosnia the whole time, had married a local woman and taken the name Said Hodžić, and had even been issued a Bosnian passport six months earlier.⁵³

Given these and numerous other examples of collusion between the Bosnian government and the international Islamist terrorists, the late Esad Hećimović would note (in the aftermath of the October 2011 attack on the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo), "Terrorists have their protectors at the summit of power, and that is the problem of this state. Some politicians clearly think that at a given moment the terrorists will be useful."⁵⁴

Unfortunately, the only moment in the past twenty-five years in which American or other international officials have taken this problem seriously was in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. In October 2001, Alija Izetbegović was forced to resign from the last of his public positions after American officials threatened to declare his political party a terrorist organization.⁵⁵ As one analyst has noted,

Despite desperate attempts to conceal his duplicity in his dealings with Muslim militants, Izetbegović's days as a respected political leader were permanently over. A month after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, he officially stepped down as head of Bosnia's most powerful Muslim nationalist party, citing health reasons.⁵⁶

⁵² See Vildana Selimbegović, "Slučaj Leutar: Rat AID-a i Hrvatskih Obaveštajnih Službi," *BH Dani* 98 (Sarajevo), 29 March 1999, at <https://www.bhdani.com/portal/arhiva-67-281/98/tekst898.htm>; and Kohmann, *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network*, op. cit., 199.

⁵³ See Esad Hećimović, "Ljeto kada su hapsili mudžahedine," *BH Dani* 222 (Sarajevo), 7 September 2001, at <https://www.bhdani.ba/portal/arhiva-67-281/222/t22204.shtml>, and Craig Pyes, Josh Meyer, and William C. Rempel, "Bosnia Seen as Hospitable Base and Sanctuary for Terrorists," *The Los Angeles Times*, 7 October 2001.

⁵⁴ Hećimović made the comments during an interview on the Bosnian TV program *Dobar, loš, žao*. Comments as carried by *Postaja.ba*, 7 November 2011, at <http://www.postaja.ba/index.php/vijesti/bosna-i-hercegovina/8152-esad-heimovi-teroristi-imaju-zatitnike-u-vrhu-vlasti-i-to-je-problem-ove-drave->.

⁵⁵ See Nedžad Latić's interview entitled "Pametnije je bilo reisu da je ranije 'lupio šakom' nego što je pomjerao vrijeme ezana!" *The Bosnia Times*, 29 November 2015, <http://thebosniatimes.ba/clanak/2070>. Similarly, former SDA vice-president Mirsad Kebo has claimed that American officials were treating the SDA as a "semi-terrorist organization" during this time. See Kebo, "SDA je imala tretman 'poluterorističke' organizacije," *The Bosnia Times*, 26 May 2016.

⁵⁶ See Kohmann, *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe*, op. cit., 218.

2) Balkan Bases

In remote, isolated villages around the Balkans militant Islamists have developed a network of extra-territorial, sharia-run enclaves that serve as recruiting stations for local converts and safe havens for jihadis from around the world. Usually these enclaves are situated in places of strategic significance; in Bosnia, for instance, they are usually set up along Bosnia's international borders, or along the inter-entity boundary line, and in places where there is only one point of entry and egress.⁵⁷ In November 2015, Bosnia's security minister publicly admitted that there were areas in the country in which the legal authorities did not function, and where Islamist militants had set up roadblocks and checkpoints and imposed their own order.⁵⁸ Similarly, in September 2014, Albanian foreign minister Ditmir Bushati acknowledged that terrorist training camps for individuals joining the jihads in Iraq and Syria had emerged in Albania.⁵⁹

In remote Bosnian villages such as Bočinja Donja, inhabited by some 600 people, extremists live "separate lives untroubled by local police, tax-collectors or any other authorities. Outsiders never set foot in the small community."⁶⁰ Bočinja Donja has been associated with numerous international terrorists, such as Karim Said Atmani, the document forger for the Millennium Bomb plot, and former roommate of would-be LAX bomber Ahmed Ressam. After Ressam was arrested on the U.S.–Canadian border in December 1999, U.S. and Canadian officials tracked Atmani to Bosnia, where he was known to be traveling between Sarajevo and Istanbul. Bosnian officials denied that Atmani had ever been there—but investigators later discovered that Atmani had been in Bosnia the whole time, had married a local woman and taken the name Said Hodžić, and had even been issued a Bosnian passport six months earlier.⁶¹ Other Bočinja Donja residents have included Khalil Deek, arrested in December 1999 for his involvement in a plot to blow up Jordanian tourist sites, and Omar Saeed Sheikh, involved in the murder/beheading of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl.⁶²

Another Bosnian village, Gornja Maoča, was formerly the headquarters of Bosnia's main Wahhabi leader, Nusret Imamović, whom the U.S. State Department in September 2014 designated one of ten "global terrorists." Large weapons caches have been discov-

⁵⁷ See "Terorizam u Zvorniku: pojedinac u službi zajednice," *Federalna.ba*, 1 May 2015, <http://www.federalna.ba/bhs/vijest/129479/iz-mreze-kalesijski-trougao>.

⁵⁸ See S.D., Mi. K., "Mektić: Moramo silom uspostaviti pravni poredak, ako ne može redovnim putem," *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 17 November 2015, at <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/205968/mektic-moramo-silom-uspostaviti-pravni-poredak-ako-ne-moze-redovnim-putem>.

⁵⁹ See "Bushati Says Terrorists Are Trained in Albania," *ALBEU*, 2 September 2014, at <http://english.albeu.com/news/news/bUShati-says-terrorists-are-trained-in-albania/168317/>.

⁶⁰ See Janez Kovac, "Mujahedin Resist Eviction," *IWPR Balkan Crisis Report*, 21 July 2000, at <http://iwpr.net/report-news/mujahideen-resist-eviction>.

⁶¹ See Hećimović, "Ljeto kada su hapsili mudžahedine," op. cit., and Pyes et. al., "Bosnia Seen as Hospitable Base and Sanctuary for Terrorists," op. cit.

⁶² See R. Jeffrey Smith, "A Bosnian Village's Terrorist Ties: Links to US Bomb Plot Arouse Concern About Enclave of Islamic Guerillas," *The Washington Post*, 11 March 2000, A01 at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPcap/2000-03/11/006r-031100-idx.html>, and Yaroslav Trofimov, *Faith at War: A Journey on the Frontlines of Islam, From Baghdad to Timbuktu* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2005), 289.

ered in forests surrounding the village,⁶³ and international intelligence agencies have suspected that Gornja Maoča residents have been involved in drug smuggling and human trafficking.⁶⁴ The former Bosnian-Sandžak extremist Irfan Peci, who headed up the German branch of the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF), the "unofficial news agency for Al-Qaeda", described his visits to Gornja Maoča and the weapon-training exercises carried out there in his recent memoir.⁶⁵ According to another source, Gornja Maoča-based instructors train volunteers in urban guerrilla tactics, such as the use of car bombs and making a variety of explosive devices, and these "lectures" are then filmed and distributed in various radical-controlled mosques and "Islamic Arts Centers" around Europe.⁶⁶

In these remote Islamist-controlled areas, under the guise of "youth camps," former mudžahedin take young people into the local hills and forests where they receive military training and build the relationships needed to sustain extremist networks. The camps are intentionally non-permanent, making it more difficult for security officials to track them.⁶⁷ According to Jürgern Elsässer, a German specialist on Islamist terror groups in the Balkans who reviewed Western intelligence reports on the situation in Bosnia in 2003-2004, "In those reports it is clearly implied that in rural areas of Bosnia some types of camps exist for terrorist and religious education of young men which are organized by youth groups connected to the SDA . . . these are summer camps whose attendees are indoctrinated in radical Wahhabism and taught how to kill."⁶⁸ Training regimens typically last 6-7 weeks, and involve intensive religious indoctrination and other activities, such as watching videos of jihads in Afghanistan and Iraq.⁶⁹ As one analysis of the militant Islamists' recruiting strategies described their efforts

Extremist recruiters, who are likely to be a few years older, take the young people under their care, organizing bonding activities like camping trips and sporting events. The recruiter gradually isolates the recruits from their families and steps into the role of mentor. In this newfound clique, young recruits find the social integration and spiritual space they have yearned for, as radical indoctrination intensifies, and bonds tighten around a shared worldview. Radical religious groups are also offering health and social services to former drug us-

⁶³ Suzana Mijatović, "Gornja Maoča je transit za vehabije koje odlaze u sveti rat," *Slobodna Bosna* (Sarajevo), 2 April 2012, at http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/275/gornja_maocha_je_tranzit_za_vehabije_koje_odlaze_u_sveti_rat.html

⁶⁴ See Erich Rathfelder, "Bosnien: Razzia in der Hochburg der Islamisten," *Die Presse* (Vienna), 2 February 2010, at http://diepresse.com/home/politik/aussenpolitik/537079/Bosnien_Razzia-in-der-Hochburg-der-Islamisten.

⁶⁵ For more on Irfan Peci, see Guido W. Steinberg, *German Jihad: On the Internationalization of Islamist Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 134-137. See also Peci's interview for ZDF Mediathek, "Ein Islamist im Staatsauftrag," at <http://www.zdf.de/ZDFmediathek/beitrag/video/2412710/Ein-Islamist-im-Staatsauftrag#/beitrag/video/2412710/Ein-Islamist-im-Staatsauftrag>.

⁶⁶ See Richard Labévière, *Dollars for Terror: The United States and Islam* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2000), 74.

⁶⁷ Sherrie Gossett, "Jihadists Find Convenient Base in Bosnia," 17 August 2005 at <http://www.aina.org/news/20050817121245.htm>.

⁶⁸ See Elsässer's description of these camps as quoted by Azinović, *Al-Kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini: Mit ili Stvarna Opasnost?* (Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007), 73-74.

⁶⁹ See, for instance, Dzenana Karup's description of the experiences of a Central Bosnian recruit to the Wahhabi movement, Samir Pracalić, in "Poslednji dani raja," *BH Dani* 67 (Sarajevo), January 1998, at <https://www.bhdani.com/portal/arhiva-67-281/67/tekst567.htm>; and the description of the recruitment process into the El Mudžahid battalion by Esad Hećimović in the documentary *Bosanski Lonac* ("The Bosnian Kettle"). Belgrade: TV B92, 2009. Producer: Petar Ilić Čiril. Available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAZcRjXGVWw>.

ers and petty criminals. The weak mental and physical condition of the addicts makes them easy targets for indoctrination and recruiting. In addition, former drug users are familiar with illegal activities and once recruited these individuals may be used to support the organization, through criminal activity. For these reasons petty criminals inside jails all around Europe are also recruited.⁷⁰

Leaked *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND) reports obtained by German media have described how Arab mudžahedin with Bosnian citizenship trained locals the proper techniques to "cut throats [and] use explosives,"⁷¹ and relatives of individuals who join ISIS have similarly described the military training these people get in Bosnia before they are sent to the Middle-East.⁷² According to the global intelligence networks Stratfor, German and Israeli intelligence sources believed such Balkan facilities were part of an organized, integrated effort that spread from the Afghan-Pakistani border through southeastern Europe, the goal of which was to facilitate the infiltration of operatives into Europe. With the rise of ISIS, these camps now provide local recruits for the Syrian and Iraqi jihads.⁷³

Europol's January 2016 report on *Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks* has described how training facilities in the Balkans (and within the EU itself) provide ISIS recruits with survival and interrogation-resistance training, and "sports activities" simulating combat experience.⁷⁴ In January 2018, a video of one such camp providing paramilitary instruction and Islamic indoctrination for children and teenagers emerged. The camp, which operated near the central Bosnian town of Tešanj, was run by a group named "Askeri" (Turkish for soldier).⁷⁵ The extent to which these Balkan terrorist training camps have become a concern for Europe is evident from the fact that they were discussed at the June 2015 G7 Summit at Schloss Elmau.⁷⁶

These isolated militant Islamist enclaves also provide excellent outposts for militant Islamists to smuggle people or weapons into and out of the EU. Bosnić's enclave in the village of Bosanska Bojna—acquired thanks to \$200,000 provided by Qatari donors—is only a few dozen meters from the Croatian (i.e., EU) border, and as a recent report in *Der Spiegel* noted, "those looking to smuggle people, weapons and money into the EU could hardly

⁷⁰ See Juan Carlos Antúnez, "Wahhabism in Bosnia-Herzegovina," 16 September 2008, available at http://www.bosnia.org.uk/news/news_body.cfm?newsid=2468.

⁷¹ See Jan Drebes, Gabl Peters and Jan Schnettler, "Salafisten und Terror," *RP-online.de*, 28 June 2011, at <http://www.rp-online.de/nrw/staedte/moenchengladbach/salafisten-und-terror-aid-11316577>.

⁷² See, for instance, the comments by Šefik Čifurović, the father of a young man who went to Syria, in Walter Mayr, "Sharia Villages: Bosnia's Islamic State Problem," *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), 5 April 2016, at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/islamic-state-presence-in-bosnia-cause-for-concern-a-1085326.html>. See also the comments by the mother of a young Sarajevo man who was given weapons training in an area outside Zvornik, as cited by Dzana Brkanic and Denis Dzidic, "ISIS Recruiters Prey on Bosnia's Forgotten Youth," *BalkanInsight*, 18 July 2016, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/isis-recruiters-prey-on-bosnia-s-forgotten-youth-07-15-2016-1>.

⁷³ See "Balkan Training Camps Pose a New Attack Threat," *Stratfor*, 2 April 2005, at <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/balkan-training-camps-pose-new-attack-threat>.

⁷⁴ See "Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks," *Europol* (The Hague), 18 January 2016, 6.

⁷⁵ See "Kamp u Tešnju zabrinuo građane: djecu uče Islamu i borbenim vještinama," *RadioSarajevo.ba*, 6 February 2018, at <https://www.radiosarajevo.ba/vijesti/bosna-i-hercegovina/vehabijski-kamp-u-tesnju-zabrinuo-gradane-djecu-poducavaju-islam-u-i-borbenim-vjestinama/290240>.

⁷⁶ See Nemanja Rujevic, "Are the Balkans Becoming a Gateway for IS?," *Deutsche Welle*, 18 June 2015, at <http://www.dw.com/en/are-the-balkans-a-gateway-for-is/a-18526062>.

find a better place to do so."⁷⁷ Indeed, in the recent trial against Bosnić a protected witness testified groups involved in sending recruits to Iraq and Syria had ties to local police, who allowed jihad volunteers to cross the Bosnian border.⁷⁸

These Islamist extremist enclaves often serve as incubators for terrorist violence. Arid Uka, the Kosovo émigré who murdered two U.S. servicemen at Frankfurt Airport in March 2011, spent two months in the town of Zenica, the heartland of the Bosnian Wahhabi movement, in the period leading up to his attacks.⁷⁹ Mevludin Jašarević, who spent 45 minutes shooting at the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo in October 2011, had spent the previous few days in Gornja Maoča. (One of Jašarević's companions that day, Emrah Fojnica, carried out a suicide bombing in Iraq in August 2014.⁸⁰ [40] Nerdin Ibrić spent three days in the extremist enclave of Dubnica before attacking a police station in Zvornik and killing two police officers.⁸¹

3) NGO's and Financial Institutions

A third element in the Balkan militant Islamist infrastructure is a network of "NGO's," "charities" and "humanitarian aid" organizations, often funded by known Al Qaeda financial donors. The CIA has estimated that one third of the Bosnian NGO's operating worldwide have terrorist connections or employ people with terrorist links.⁸²

During the Bosnian jihad, various NGO's with known ties to Al Qaeda funneled several hundreds of millions of dollars to Izetbegović's war effort.⁸³ In the aftermath of 9/11, a raid in Sarajevo on such a "charity," the Saudi High Commission for Relief of Bosnia & Herzegovina (SHC), netted "maps of Washington, material for making false State Department identity cards and anti-American manuals designed for children."⁸⁴ (The SHC has been named

⁷⁷ See Mayr, "Sharia Villages: Bosnia's Islamic State Problem," *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), 5 April 2016, at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/islamic-state-presence-in-bosnia-cause-for-concern-a-1085326.html>.

⁷⁸ See the report of the testimony of a protected witness in the case against Bilal Bosnić, entitled "Zaštićeni svjedok Tužilaštva BiH optužio lokalnu policiju da je saradivala sa Bilalom Bosnićem," *Saff* (Zenica), 7 October 2015, at <http://saff.ba/zasticeni-svjedok-tuzilastva-bih-optuzio-lokalnu-policiju-da-je-saradivala-sa-bilalom-bosnicem/-Vhb3Rm78tul>.

⁷⁹ See Esad Hećimović, "Atentator iz Frankfurta boravio u Zenici," *BH Dani* 734 (Sarajevo), 8 July 2011, at <https://www.bhdani.ba/portal/clanak/734/arhiva/atentator-iz-frankfurta-boravio-u-zenici>.

⁸⁰ In 2010, Jašarević had been arrested in Novi Pazar while standing in front of the Municipal Hall carrying a long-blade knife during a visit by the American ambassador to Belgrade, Mary Warlick. See "Radical Groups in the Balkans: The Case of Wahhabi Jašarević," *Helsinki Bulletin* No. 84 (Belgrade: Helsinki Human Rights Committee in Serbia, November 2011), 1. For more on would-be suicide-bomber Emrah Fojnica, see "Emrah Fojnica poginuo u Iraku," *Oslobodjenje* (Sarajevo), 12 August 2014, at <http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/vijesti/bih/emrah-fojnica-poginuo-u-iraku>.

⁸¹ See "Terorizam u Zvorniku: pojedinac u službi zajednice," *Federalna.ba*, 1 May 2015, at <http://www.federalna.ba/bhs/vijest/129479/iz-mreze-kalesijjski-trougao>.

⁸² The CIA report is available at <http://intelfiles.egoplex.com/cia-ngos-1996.pdf>.

⁸³ See Marcia Christoff Kurop, "Al Qaeda's Balkan Links," *The Wall Street Journal (Europe)*, 1 November 2001. For a useful survey of how Saudi sources financed various NGO's with links to Al Qaeda, see David E. Kaplan, "The Saudi Connection: How Billions in Oil Money Spawned a Global Network of Terror," *US News and World Report*, 7 November 2003, at <http://www.USnews.com/USnews/news/articles/031215/15terror.htm>.

⁸⁴ See Nidzara Ahmetasevic, "Emissaries of Militant Islam Make Headway in Bosnia," 21 March 2007 at <http://birn.eu.com/en/75/10/2490/>. See also Matthew Levitt, "Charitable and Humanitarian Organizations in the Network of

as a defendant in the lawsuit brought by 9/11 victims and families in U.S. federal court.) Also found in Sarajevo in March 2002 was Al Qaeda's donor's list, the so-called "Golden Chain." In Kosovo, a prominent political analyst, Ilir Deda, has claimed that Middle-Eastern "charities" invested some \$800 million there between 1999-2010.⁸⁵

An example of how "Islamic charities" operate in Bosnia can be seen in the case of Younis Hiyari, the leader of Al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia who had been a Bosnian Jihad veteran, Bosnian passport holder, and married to a local Bosnian woman. After leaving Bosnia Hiyari became the most wanted figure in Saudi Arabia. Hiyari maintained his contacts to Bosnia through an Algerian tied to the Kuwaiti-based "Revival of Islamic Heritage Society" (RIHS), run by a former member of the El Mudžahedin battalion (the Al Qaeda unit in Izetbegović's army). According to a cable issued by then-U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice,

Information available to the U.S. Government shows that RIHS in Bosnia hides, shelters and launders money that allows extremists and their facilitators to fund terrorist-related activities, including education and training, travel, and document procurement. Money from RIHS accounts in Bosnia has also been laundered and used to fund individuals tied to international extremist groups, including al Qaida.⁸⁶

Indicative of Hiyari's close ties to Bosnia was the fact that on the day he was killed by Saudi security forces, Hiyari had sent two emails to his Bosnian accomplice.

Bosnia remains an important nodal point for terror finance. Most of the funds collected for ISIS in the U.K. are laundered through Islamic State agents in Bosnia via Moneygram.⁸⁷ A recent study on terrorism finance has reported that ISIS has put out instructions that donations are to be routed through Bosnia or Turkey (with Bosnia considered the safer option).⁸⁸ In July 2016, Bosnia joined a group of countries (including Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and North Korea) which the European Commission considered whose anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism regimes (AML-CFT) posed "significant threats to the financial system of the Union."⁸⁹

International Terrorist Financing," 1 August 2002 (Testimony before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, Subcommittee on International Trade and Finance), at <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/charitable-and-humanitarian-organizations-in-the-network-of-international-t>.

⁸⁵ See Sylvia Poggioli, "Radical Islam Uses Balkan Poor to Wield Influence," *National Public Radio*, 25 October 2010, at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=130801242>.

⁸⁶ See Secretary Rice's "Non-Paper on Revival of Islamic Heritage Society," 16 February 2006, Canonical ID: 06STATE25359_a, at https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06STATE25359_a.html. See also "Saudi Arabia issues New list of wanted 'terrorist' suspects," *Asharq al-Awsat* (London), 29 June 2005, at <http://english.aawsat.com/2005/06/article55270988/saudi-arabia-issues-new-list-of-wanted-terrorist-suspects>.

⁸⁷ See Joe Hinton, "UK mosques fundraising for terror," *The Daily Star* (U.K.), 22 November 2015, at <http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/476949/UK-mosque-terror-fund-cash>; Omar Wahid, "White British Muslim is arrested for 'collecting jihadi cash' in MoS sting," *The Mail on Sunday* (UK), 24 October 2015, at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3288009/ARRESTED-White-UK-Muslim-caught-MoS-sting-collecting-jihadi-cash.html>.

⁸⁸ See Magnus Normark and Magnus Ranstorp, *Understanding Terrorist Finance: Modus Operandi and National CTF-regimes* (Stockholm: Swedish Defense University, 18 December 2015), 19.

⁸⁹ See Jean -Claude Junker, "Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) . . . of 14.7.2016 supplementing Directive (EU) 2015/849 by identifying high risk third countries with strategic deficiencies" (Brussels), at <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2016/EN/3-2016-4180-EN-F1-1.PDF>.

4) Militant Islamist Media and Propaganda

Finally, the fourth element in the Balkan militant Islamist infrastructure is a well-developed network of media and propaganda outlets intended to help recruit and radicalize new followers, and to transmit messages from Al Qaeda and ISIS leaders to local extremists. Towards these ends, militant Islamists in the Balkans have developed an extensive array and network of print periodicals, bookstores, websites, and YouTube spots spreading religious intolerance, glorifications of violence, and anti-American, anti-Semitic, anti-democratic messages. Public lectures by Islamist extremists draw hundreds of attendees; for instance, in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris, a prominent Islamic scholar in Bosnia, Safet Kuduzović claimed "Who insults the Prophet is killed, whether they repent or not, it does not matter. If he curses or insults the Prophet he should be killed."⁹⁰ A public lecture by Kuduzović in Zenica a week later drew one thousand people.⁹¹

Indeed, in Bosnia's blogosphere the attack on Charlie Hebdo enjoyed widespread support; a study by a BiH security agency found that more than 80% of the commentators on social media in Bosnia expressed a positive view of the attack and the perpetrators.⁹²

According to Fahrudin Kladicinan, the co-author of a recent study on Balkan extremists' use of the internet and social media, "The number of those who are 'liking,' making comments and sharing the content of these pages, especially when it comes to religious leaders, extreme Islamists and Wahhabists, is rising on a daily basis."⁹³

Evidence of the increasing technological sophistication of Balkan militant Islamists can be seen in the case of Ardit Ferizi, a Kosovo native arrested in Malaysia on a U.S. Justice Department warrant for providing ISIS with information obtained by hacking into the computer system of a company that had the personal information of over 1,300 U.S. military and governmental personnel. Ferizi was reportedly the leader of a group called "Kosova Hacker's Security," and had been in communication with ISIS recruiter Juneid Hussain, who was killed in a U.S. airstrike in Syria in August 2015. Berat Buzhala, the CEO of a prominent Kosovo news outlet, *Gazeta Express*, subsequently told reporters "Many times [Ferizi] sent me security camera photos from Kosovo institutions. From border crossings. He had all Kosovo security cameras under his control. Also from the airport. He had access in real time." Buzhala also claimed Kosovo police were "totally indifferent" to his warnings about Ferizi.⁹⁴ Before being killed, Ferizi's recruiter, Juneid Hussain posted the list of U.S. personnel Ferizi had provided him online with the following note:

⁹⁰ As quoted by Boris Dežulović, "Islamska država Bašćarsije i Levanta," *Oslobodjenje* (Sarajevo), 15 January 2015, at <http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/kolumne/islamska-drzava-bascarsije-i-levanta>.

⁹¹ For reports on these gatherings, see "Preko hiljadu osoba na javnoj tribini Dr. Safeta Kuduzovića u Zenici," *Minber.ba*, 18 January 2015, at <http://minber.ba/index.php/islamske-teme/aktuelno/21981-preko-hiljadu-osoba-na-javnoj-tribina-dr-safeta-kuduzovica-u-zenici>.

⁹² See Vlado Azinovic, "Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Nexus of Islamist Extremism," Democratization Policy Council *Policy Note #05* (Sarajevo: November 2015), 13, fnnt. 45.

⁹³ See the comments by Fahrudin Kladicinan of the Forum 10 academic initiative from Novi Pazar in Ivana Jovanovic, "Extremists Use the Internet to Recruit in the Region, Experts Say," *The Southeast European Times*, 19 November 2013, at http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2013/11/19/feature-01.

⁹⁴ See Evan Perez, Catherine E. Shoichet and Wes Bruer, "Hacker Who Allegedly Passed U.S. Military Data to ISIS Arrested in Malaysia," *CNN.com*, 16 October 2015, at <http://www.cnn.com/2015/10/15/politics/malaysian-hacker-isis-military-data/>; Fatos Bytyci, "Man Accused of Hacking U.S. Data for IS Was Well Known to Kosovo Police," *Reuters*

We are in your emails and computer systems, watching and recording your every move, we have your names and addresses, we are in your emails and social media accounts, we are extracting confidential data and passing on your personal information to the soldiers of the Khilafah, who soon with the permission of Allah will strike at your necks in your own lands!⁹⁵

What should be of particular concern to western intelligence and security organizations, as security analyst Ebi Spahiu has warned, is the degree to which Balkan militant Islamists can (or have) established ties with southeastern Europe's flourishing organized crime networks, which are amply skilled in human trafficking, and drugs and weapons smuggling.⁹⁶ Indeed, given the current state of the Balkans it would not be difficult to put together all of the elements needed to make everyone's nightmare scenario—Islamist terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons—come true. At least three times over the past five years, the FBI has helped to thwart efforts to sell nuclear and radioactive material in Moldova.⁹⁷ In June 2018, the BiH State Regulatory Agency for Radioactive and Nuclear Security revealed that radioactive materials that could be used to make a dirty bomb could easily be acquired by terrorists.⁹⁸ The combination of weapons-grade uranium on the black market, organized crime groups skilled in smuggling, weak, unprotected borders, and terror groups with known ambitions to acquire nuclear weapons should be a loud wake-up call to everyone concerned.

Conclusions

The decline in the number of Balkan jihad volunteers setting off for the Islamic State over the past couple of years should not lull observers into the belief that the threat posed by the militant Islamist movement in southeastern Europe has declined as well. In fact, the collapse of the Caliphate might increase the threat in the Balkans; as Bajro Ikanović, a Bosnian extremist warned, "your intelligence agencies made a mistake thinking that they would be rid of us, however, the problem for them will be the return of individuals trained for war."⁹⁹ Ikanović himself will not be carrying out this threat, however, because he was killed in Syria, but no doubt many of his comrades feel the same way.

(Dateline Pristina), 16 October 2015, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/10/16/us-malaysia-islamic-state-kosovo-idUSKCN0SA22P20151016?mod=related&channelName=cybersecurity>.

⁹⁵ See Devlin Barrett, "U.S. Charges Man in Malaysia with Hacking, Aiding Islamic State," *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 October 2015, at <http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-charges-man-in-malaysia-with-hacking-aiding-islamic-state-1444950858>.

⁹⁶ Ebi Spahiu, "Militant Islamists, Organized Crime, and the Balkan Diaspora in Europe," *Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor* 13 (2 December 2015) (<https://jamestown.org/program/militant-islamists-organized-crime-and-the-balkan-diaspora-in-europe/>).

⁹⁷ Kathy Gilsinan, "Why Moldova Might Be the Scariest Place on Earth," *The Atlantic*, 8 October 2015 (<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/10/moldova-nuclear-weapons-isis/409456/>); Evan Perez, Michael Martinez and Cosmin Stan, "FBI helped thwart nuclear smuggling plot in Moldova," *CNN.com*, 8 October 2015 (<http://www.cnn.com/2015/10/07/politics/fbi-helped-thwart-nuclear-smuggling-plot-in-moldova/>).

⁹⁸ See "Nuklearni otpad i terorizam: Prljava bomba u BiH je 'na izvol'te'?", *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 25 June 2018, at <https://avaz.ba/vijesti/bih/391798/nuklearni-otpad-i-terorizam-prljava-bomba-u-bih-je-na-izvol-te>.

⁹⁹ See "Selefije u 'svetom ratu': ekskluzivna isповijest bh. džihad ratnika u Siriji," 10 July 2013, at <http://source.ba/clanak/1400134/vijesti/Ekskluzivna%20isповijest%20bh.%20d%C5%BEihad%20ratnika%20u%20Siriji/?ref=najcitaniji>.

As has been seen, there are a number of reasons to believe that the militant Islamist movement in southeastern Europe has the potential for further growth. The infrastructure such extremists have developed continues to operate, largely unhindered. Despite periodic crackdowns, the militant Islamist movement in the Balkans is now large and multi-faceted enough, has sufficient tacit indigenous political support, and obtains enough financial and material funding from Middle-Eastern donors that it can survive the occasional police raid or closure of a bank account. This is all the more true because there is little political will in western capitals to engage in the systematic effort needed to fully halt or reverse the process of radicalization that is taking place in the region.

Moreover, as has been argued above, another dynamic likely to reinforce the growth of the militant Islamist movement in the Balkans is the increasing number of ties between local Muslim communities and the Middle-East. This can be seen in the increasing number of local Islamic clerics being educated in places such as Saudi Arabia or Egypt, and the subsequent transplantation of more severe, hardline interpretations of Islamic doctrine into southeastern Europe.

These more hardline interpretations of Islam, it should be noted, are by their very nature more difficult (if not impossible) to reconcile with the societal and political requirements of liberal democracy—all the more so, of course, in a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional environment. Bilal Bosnić, a Bosnian extremist dubbed “ISIS’ headhunter in Europe” has argued that non-Muslims in Bosnia should be required to pay the *jizya*, a poll tax imposed on non-Muslims in “Islamic” countries,¹⁰⁰ and Bosnić has further claimed that “We have to love the one who loves Allah, and hate the one who hates Allah. We have to hate infidels, even if they are our neighbors or live in our homes.”¹⁰¹ Along similar lines, Džemaludin Latić, at one time the leading ideologist of Alija Izetbegović’s political movement, once admitted that “spiritually and emotionally, I feel closer to a Muslim in the Philippines than I do to a Croat in Sarajevo.”¹⁰² And, of course, the “father” of modern-day Bosnia, Alija Izetbegović, himself set the tone for this movement when he argued

There is no peace or co-existence between Islamic faith and non-Islamic social and political institutions . . . Our means are personal example, the book, and the word. *When will force be added to these means?* The choice of this moment is always a concrete question and depends on a variety of factors. However, one general rule can be postulated: the Islamic movement can and may move to take power once it is morally and numerically strong enough, not only to destroy the existing non-Islamic government, but to build a new Islamic government.¹⁰³

Clearly, as long as these types of individuals are in power, and the clandestine structures they tacitly support exist, the Balkans will remain a breeding ground for militant Islamism well into the foreseeable future. Inattention to this problem has given these groups the operational space and time needed for them to grow, and to use the region

¹⁰⁰ See “Srbi i Hrvati trebaju dati ‘harač’ da ih niko nebi dirao,” *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 18 February 2013, at <http://www.avaz.ba/vijesti/iz-minute-u-minutu/srbi-i-hrvati-trebaju-dati-harac-da-ih-niko-ne-bi-dirao>.

¹⁰¹ See Bosnić’s sermon, “Muslimani, Jedno Tijelo,” at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyiDp5jeOPE>.

¹⁰² *Oslobodenje* (Sarajevo), 26 September 1997, 8.

¹⁰³ See Izetbegović, *Islamska Deklaracija* (Sarajevo: Bosna, 1990), 22–43. Emphasis added.

as a recruiting ground and launching platform for attacks around the world. Individuals involved in the attack on the USS Cole, the 9/11 attacks, the Madrid Train bombings of 2004, the Istanbul attacks of 2003, and countless other attacks had all operated in the Balkans in the 1990s. If we had been paying attention and taken action back then, there is a good likelihood that Al Qaeda (and later ISIS) would never have become the global threats they eventually turned out to be. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that international policy-makers have learned these lessons.

GORDON N. BARDOS¹

SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN RESEARCH & CONSULTING, LLC

The Balkan Front in the New Cold War

As relations between Russia and the U.S.¹ continue their downward spiral, the Balkans have become another front in what scholars such as Stephen F. Cohen and Robert Legvold have dubbed “the New Cold War.”² Yet the return to cold war, as Legvold notes, involves numerous opportunity costs for both countries—and considerable collateral damage as well.

One of the areas in which the collateral damage will be most severe is the Balkans. Indeed, the costs of the new confrontation between Washington and Moscow are already evident in the democratic backsliding that has occurred throughout the region over the past decade. The Economist Intelligence Unit’s *Democracy Index 2016*, shows that of the nine countries in southeastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia), only one (Bulgaria) showed any improvement, one (Albania) showed no improvement, and the remaining seven all regressed in terms of their democratic development.³ Freedom House’s *Nations in Transit* and the Bertelsmann Transformation Index have similarly shown significant democratic backsliding in the Balkans since 2008.⁴

¹ Gordon N. Bardos is president of SEERECON LLC, a political risk and strategic consulting firm specializing in southeastern Europe. This article is a revised and expanded version of testimony he gave to the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats, House Committee on Foreign Affairs (U.S. House of Representatives) in Washington, DC, on 17 May 2017.

² See, respectively, Stephen F. Cohen, *Soviet Fates and Lost Alternatives: From Stalinism to the New Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), and Robert Legvold, *Return to Cold War* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2016).

³ See *Democracy Index 2016: Revenge of the “deplorables”* (London: Economist Intelligence Unit, 2017), 5.

⁴ For a brief analysis of the most recent Bertelsmann scores as they pertain to southeastern Europe, see Marcus Tanner, “Balkan States Rank Poorly in Governance Index,” *BalkanInsight*, 29 September 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/balkan-states-rank-poorly-in-governance-index-09-29-2017>.

During this same time a cohort of petty Balkan authoritarians has learned how to benefit from the new Cold War. By portraying themselves as “anti-Russian” and “pro-NATO,” the Balkans’ new strongmen know that Washington and Brussels will turn blind eyes to practically any attacks on democratic institutions and processes. Abetting this process is a small army of special interests and lobbying groups willing to promote any distortion of reality for the sake of advancing parochial interests—even to the detriment of U.S. national interests.

The parallels with another recent (and tragic) episode in U.S. history are inescapable. In many ways, the U.S. foreign policy establishment today is making the same mistakes in southeastern Europe that it made some fifteen years ago on the road to war in Iraq. In 2002-2003, the neocons driving Bush Administration policy were neither responding to Saddam Hussein’s intentions nor to his capabilities. Instead, they were implementing a pre-determined agenda and polluting what little public debate there was about the rush to war with dubious allegations, assumptions and rumors about WMD’s and Saddam’s supposed ties to Al Qaeda.

Switch your geographic focus back to the Balkans, and much the same is taking place today. Just as happened in the run-up to war with Iraq, many quarters are now exaggerating and inflating the “Russia factor” in the Balkans to cover up what is really happening in southeastern Europe—the deterioration of democratic institutions and processes, and the entrenchment of corrupt, political-criminal elites.

The damage this is causing affects more than just southeastern Europe. Because of the difficulty in compartmentalizing our various foreign policy disagreements with Moscow, opening a Balkan front in the New Cold War will have implications for broader U.S. national security interests. How Washington, Brussels and Moscow, for instance, manage their respective policies in southeastern Europe inevitably impacts the overall security equation throughout central and eastern Europe. In turn, how these problems are managed affects the degree of conflict or cooperation we can reasonably expect from Russia to deal with Iran, North Korea, or Syria. All of this ultimately affects the most fundamental, existential aspect of the U.S.-Russian relationship, nuclear arms control. As a recent report by James N. Miller, Jr. and Richard Fontaine notes,

the overall state of U.S.-Russian relations substantially influences the pace of strategic arms development, the likelihood of crisis and conflict, and the likelihood of preventable or accidental escalation due to poor communications and worst-case assumptions . . . The future course of bilateral relations will have a significant impact on the likelihood of a U.S.-Russian crisis, and in the event of it, on the ability of both sides to find acceptable political solutions without resorting to armed conflict.⁵

With so much at stake, understanding Russia’s real capabilities in southeastern Europe is of paramount importance. Unfortunately, the current atmosphere in Western capitals concerning all things Russian seriously impedes any such effort.

⁵ See James N. Miller, Jr., and Richard Fontaine, “A New Era in U.S.-Russian Strategic Stability: How Changing Geopolitics and Emerging Technologies are Reshaping Pathways to Crisis and Conflict” (Cambridge, MA: Harvard/Kennedy School Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Center for a New American Security (September 2017), at <https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.cnas.org/documents/CNASReport-ProjectPathways-Finalb.pdf?mtime=20170918101504>.

The Russian Boogeyman in the Balkans

The result has been, as Glenn Greenwald aptly put it, “an offensive assault on reason”—a flood of ominous news reports ranging in quality from absurd allegations to sheer ignorance and pure disinformation. Common to this genre of analysis and reporting is that it leans heavily on anonymous sources, unverifiable claims, and unsubstantiated assertions, which makes many of the allegations in such pieces non-falsifiable. Such dubious methodology is then made additionally suspect by the use of cherry-picked facts taken out of context, which distorts the reality and totality of a given issue. On the other hand, and perhaps more importantly, such tactics are useful for scoring cheap propaganda points with gullible or uninformed readers. Unfortunately, however, simple explanations promising easy solutions to the complex problem of dealing with Russia in the Balkans are doing more harm than good.

In reality, Russian policy in the Balkans has been much more passive than most of the commentary one sees in western analyses would suggest. This follows a pattern throughout East-Central Europe; as many veteran Russia watchers have argued, for the past two decades Russian policy throughout Eastern Europe has been essentially reactive, insofar as significant Russian moves in the area have been a response to prior U.S./NATO moves (for a sampling, see Stephen Cohen,⁶ Nikolas Gvosdev and Chris Marsh⁷, George Kennan,⁸ Henry Kissinger⁹, Anatol Lieven¹⁰, Jack Matlock,¹¹ John Mearsheimer,¹² and Stephen Walt¹³).

Nevertheless, “evidence” of the growing Russian menace in southeastern Europe can now be found every day on every corner—in the visit of a Cossack folklore troop to Bosnia (supposedly analogous to the “little green men” that took over Crimea),¹⁴ a road trip by a Russian motorcycle gang to Podgorica,¹⁵ the graffiti on a kitschy Russian-built train car

⁶ See Cohen, *Soviet Fates and Lost Alternatives*, op. cit., Chapter 7.

⁷ See Nikolas K. Gvosdev and Christopher Marsh, *Russian Foreign Policy: Interests, Vectors and Sectors* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2013), 221-226.

⁸ See Kennan, “A Fateful Error,” *The New York Times*, 5 February 1997, at <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/02/05/opinion/a-fateful-error.html>.

⁹ See Jacob Heilbrunn’s discussion with Kissinger entitled “The Interview: Henry Kissinger,” *The National Interest*, 19 August 2015, at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-interview-henry-kissinger-13615>.

¹⁰ See Lieven, “Why Trump is Right on Russia,” *The New York Times*, 14 February 2017, at https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/14/opinion/why-trump-is-right-on-russia.html?_r=0. Lieven make a more sustained version of this argument in “The Dance of the Ghosts: A New Cold War with Russia Will Not Serve Western Interests,” *Survival* 60 (October-November 2018), 115-140.

¹¹ Matlock, “Who is the Bully? The U.S. has treated Russia like a loser since the end of the Cold War,” *The Washington Post*, 14 March 2014, at https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/who-is-the-bully-the-united-states-has-treated-russia-like-a-loser-since-the-cold-war/2014/03/14/b0868882-aa06-11e3-8599-ce7295b6851c_story.html?utm_term=.c279776087a7.

¹² Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West’s Fault: The Liberal Delusions that Provoked Putin,” *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2014), 1-12.

¹³ See Walt, “Why Arming Kiev is a Really, Really Bad Idea,” *Foreign Policy* 9 February 2015, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/09/how-not-to-save-ukraine-arming-kiev-is-a-bad-idea>.

¹⁴ See Christo Grozev, “The Kremlin’s Balkan Gambit: Part 1,” 4 March 2017, at <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2017/03/04/kremlins-balkan-gambit-part>.

¹⁵ See Andrew Higgins, “Finger Pointed at Russians in Alleged Coup Plot in Montenegro,” *The New York Times*, 26 November 2017. Symbolic of the exaggeration used to describe anything related to Russia in the Balkans was the claim that the visit by the Night Wolves to Bosnia in March 2018 was “the most significant threat to the Dayton peace [accords] since 1996.” See Gordana Knežević, “Putin’s Pals, The Night Wolves, Troll Bosnia and the Region,”

travelling from Belgrade to Mitrovica, or the building of a monument to Russian monks who served in Macedonia in the early twentieth century. Some claim talk of Islamist terror groups in the Balkans is a conspiracy theory exploited by Russia,¹⁶ while others suggest Russia itself is funding such groups.¹⁷

Croatia has been portrayed as “the next Russian domino to fall”¹⁸ and even of offering itself to Moscow as a replacement for Serbia as the main Russian ally in the Balkans.¹⁹ Yet apart from the propaganda value to be had from making such claims, there is clearly no validity to the charges. Croatia is both an EU and NATO member; it refused to sign up for the Moscow-sponsored South Stream pipeline project; it joined the EU sanctions regime against Moscow resulting from the annexation of Crimea; it joined the Western response to the Skripal affair by expelling a Russian diplomat; it joined Western countries in condemning Russia for the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria in April 2018 and is helping the Pentagon provide weapons to U.S.-backed, anti-Assad opposition groups in Syria. Croatia also has close ties to Kyiv, Croatian officials have voiced their support for Macedonia joining NATO and the EU, and the entire ideological foundation of Croatia’s ruling party is based on being the Western European, Roman Catholic antithesis to Eastern Orthodox Slavs (Serb or Russian). Finally, one might add that Croatia’s current president used to be assistant secretary-general of NATO.

The list goes on and becomes increasingly silly. In Kosovo, an individual politically irrelevant since the 1980s was recently shot and immediately claimed that “the Russians” were behind the “assassination attempt.” Putin stands accused of trying to turn the Orthodox monastic republic of Mount Athos into a Russian spy post,²⁰ and Moscow is variously accused of promoting Croatian nationalists,²¹ Macedonian nationalists,²² Serbian

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 20 March 2018, at <https://www.rferl.org/a/night-wolves-motorcycle-club-troll-bosnia-region-putin/29111436.html>. A *New York Times* report on the Night Wolves’ visit put the trip in more sober perspective, describing “tattooed, potbellied bikers” who “looked pathetic” and left their bikes behind because of cold weather. See Andrew Higgins, “Russia’s Feared ‘Night Wolves’ Bike Gang Came to Bosnia. Bosnia Giggled,” *The New York Times*, 31 March 2018, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/31/world/europe/balkans-russia-night-wolves-republika-srpska-bosnia.html>.

¹⁶ See Janusz Bugajski, “Balkans Terrorist Threats,” Center for European Policy and Analysis, 18 May 2015, at <http://cepa.org/index/?id=daa172021eb0b28d756615925486f129>.

¹⁷ See David L. Phillips, “Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans: External Influences and Local Drivers” at: http://www.humanrightscolumbia.org/sites/default/files/2017_01_22_violent_extremism_balkans.pdf.

¹⁸ See Jasmin Mujanovic, “Russia’s Bosnia Gambit: Intrigue in the Balkans,” *Foreign Affairs*, 6 September 2017, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/bosnia-herzegovina/2017-09-06/russias-bosnia-gambit>.

¹⁹ See Ibro Čavčić, “Mujanović: Zagreb nudi svoju političku lojalnost Kremlju za bolji kreditni aranžman u vezi s Agrokorum,” *Klix.ba*, 20 October 2017, at <https://www.klix.ba/vijesti/bih/mujanovic-zagreb-nudi-svoju-politicku-lojalnost-kremlju-za-bolji-kreditni-aranzman-u-vezi-s-agrokorum/171020015>. Attempting to discredit Croatian politicians in both Bosnia and Croatia proper by labeling them “pro-Russian” has become the standard propaganda ploy of the Sarajevo political establishment; for examples, see Mujanovic, op. cit., and Edina Bećirević and Senad Pečanin, “Dodik i Čović na istom zadatku,” *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 30 November 2017, <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/hdz-bih-dodik-covic-rusija/28888178.html>.

²⁰ See Jeremy Norman, “What is behind Vladimir Putin’s curious interest in Mount Athos?,” *The Spectator* (UK), 10 September 2016, at <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/09/what-is-behind-vladimir-putins-curious-interest-in-mount-athos>.

²¹ Mujanovic, “Russia’s Bosnia Gambit: Intrigue in the Balkans,” op. cit.

²² See Luke Harding, Aubrey Belford and Saska Cvetkovska, “Russia actively stoking discord in Macedonia since 2008, intel files say,” *The Guardian* (UK), 4 June 2017, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/04/russia-actively-stoking-discord-in-macedonia-since-2008-intel-files-say-leak-kremlin-balkan-nato-west-influence>.

nationalists, and even, most remarkably, of trying to create a Greater Albania.²³ Russia is also accused of trying to get the Serbs in Serbia proper into the EU to use it as a Trojan Horse within the union,²⁴ while simultaneously using the Serbs in Bosnia to prevent that country from joining the EU.

Emblematic of this genre of analysis was a recent British tabloid story, the title of which screamed "Warning Putin could DEFEAT NATO and smash through the Balkans in just THREE DAYS."²⁵ The report by the RAND Corporation the article cited, however, was about the Baltics, not the Balkans. The same tabloid would continue with this theme a few months later, with an article suggesting that Putin was planning to annex the Balkans.²⁶

Many of these pathologies are perfectly exemplified in a series of *Guardian* articles alleging various nefarious Russian activities in Bosnia. The first in the series claimed Bosnian Serb authorities had set up a paramilitary unit trained in the "Serbian-Russian Humanitarian Center" in the southern Serbian city of Niš. One source for the piece melodramatically claimed that the event was "part of a larger change in the international order, starting with the invasion in Georgia, Syria, Ukraine, the meddling in the US elections . . . [it is] a watershed moment."²⁷ The group in question, however, called *Srbska Čast* ("Serbian Honor") was so unknown and insignificant that it was not even mentioned in an exhaustive, 203-page study of pro-Russian organizations in Serbia.²⁸ Moreover, repeated visits by western diplomats and journalists to the Russian facility in Niš have revealed no military activity there (see below), and in any case the only apparent tie the group had to the Russian facility was a Facebook picture of members in front of the building.

The follow-up article then claimed that the RS was embarking on a massive weapons-purchasing spree as a prelude to using violence in upcoming elections.²⁹ The weapons acquisition in question, however, had been vetted and approved by four of Bosnia's central state authorities (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Security, as well as by Bosnia's Intelligence and Security Ministry); moreover, it was the first time the RS police had been re-equipped in some two decades.³⁰ Borger's article also

²³ See Emily Holland and Rebecca Friedman Lissner, "Countering Russian Influence in the Balkans," *lawfareblog.org*, 6 August 2017, at <https://www.lawfareblog.com/countering-russian-influence-balkans>.

²⁴ See Mark Galleoti, "Do the Western Balkans face a coming Russian storm?" *European Council on Foreign Relations Policy Brief* (4 April 2018), 12.

²⁵ See Alex Culbertson, "Warning Putin could DEFEAT NATO and smash through the Balkans in just THREE DAYS," *The Daily Express* (London), 27 October 2016, at <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/726066/Putin-defeat-NATO-Balkans-two-days>.

²⁶ See Jon Rogers, "Is Putin plotting to annexe the BALKANS? Russians expelled over suspected Montenegro COUP," *The Daily Express* (London), 31 January 2017, at <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/761055/Russians-expelled-Montenegro-coup-Vladimir-Putin-annexe-Balkans>.

²⁷ See Julian Borger, "Russia-trained mercenaries back Bosnia's Serb separatists," *The Guardian* (UK), 12 January 2018, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/12/russian-trained-mercenaries-back-bosnias-serb-separatists>.

²⁸ See *Eyes Wide Shut: Strengthening of Russian Soft Power in Serbia: Goals, Instruments and Effects* (Beograd: Centar za Evroatlantske Studije, May 2016).

²⁹ Julian Borger, "Arms shipment to Bosnian Serbs stokes EU fears," *The Guardian* (UK), 13 February 2018, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/13/bosnian-serb-police-arms-purchase-stokes-eu-fears>.

³⁰ See S. Demirgenđić, "Otkrivamo: OSA dala pozitivno mišljenje na uvoz oružje za MUP-RS," *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 15 February 2018, at <http://avaz.ba/vijesti/bih/351576/otkrivamo-osa-dala-pozitivno-misljenje-na-uvoz-oruzja-za-mup-rs>.

failed to mention that at precisely the same time, Sarajevo Canton had budgeted a weapons purchase which amounted to an expenditure three times larger per capita than the RS had planned.³¹ Even more importantly, RS officials claim that Russian instructors have never even been involved in training RS police units at the facility, while American military instructors are there on a weekly basis.³² In a similar example of propagandistic sleight-of-hand, the RS Interior Ministry was recently attacked for signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Moscow's Interior Ministry,³³ but the deal is fully in line with a number of such agreements between central Bosnian state authorities and the RSFSR.³⁴

The Russian ties to the alleged "Montenegrin coup plot" are a story unto itself. More perceptive quickly noted the absurdities in the Montenegrin government's official account of the so-called coup-attempt. Many of the people arrested in the plot "were elderly and in ill-health,"³⁵ who were "more suited to opera buffa than espionage."³⁶ The *BBC* would note that "the only element missing is the poison-tipped toe caps of agent Rosa Klebb."³⁷ This motley band of alleged coup plotters, it should be noted, was supposed to overthrow a government defended by 5000 trained police officers and 2000 military personnel.

The man on whose testimony the entire case rests (and the only person who claimed any contact with Russians), Saša Sindjelić is a fantasist with a history of mental illness whose greatest achievement in life appears to have been the theft of a tractor (and the murder of its owner).³⁸ In addition to claiming that the Russians had paid him to organ-

³¹ See "PLAN NABAVKI UPRAVE POLICIJE MINISTARSTVA UNUTRAŠNJIH POSLOVA KANTONA SARAJEVA ZA 2018. GODINU," at: https://mup.ks.gov.ba/sites/mup.ks.gov.ba/files/plan_nabavki_2018.pdf

³² According to Tatjana Telić, Head of the Department for International Cooperation of the RS Ministry of the Interior, Washington, DC, February 2018. See also Dejan Šajinović, "Lukač: Neće nas obučavati Rusi nego Amerikanci," *Nezavisne Novine* (Banja Luka), 14 February 2018, at <https://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/bih/Lukac-Nece-nas-obucavati-Rusi-nego-Amerikanci/464836>.

³³ See, for instance, Reuf Bajrović, Richard Kraemer, and Emir Suljagić, *Bosnia on the Chopping Block: The Potential for Violence and Steps to Prevent it* (Philadelphia, PA: Foreign Policy Research Institute, March 2018), 6.

³⁴ Compare, for instance, "СОГЛАШЕНИЕ О СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВЕ МЕЖДУ МИНИСТЕРСТВОМ ВНУТРЕННИХ ДЕЛ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ И МИНИСТЕРСТВОМ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ БОСНИИ И ГЕРЦЕГОВИНЫ," (Moscow, 8 September 2004, and "МЕМОРАНДУМ о разумевању између Главне управе Министарства унутрашњих послова Руске Федерације за град Москву и Министарства унутрашњих послова Републике Српске (Босна и Херцеговина). (Facsimiles of both agreements in the author's archives.) More recently, in April 2018 Bosnian state security minister Dragan Mektić met in Sochi with Nikolai Patrushev to discuss strengthening cooperation between Bosnia and the Russian Federation in the fight against terrorism, promoting cyber-security, and dealing with illegal migration and human trafficking. In his capacity as an official of the Bosnian central state government, Mektić also signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with his counterpart in Russia's Interior Ministry concerning labor force migration. See "Bosnian Security Minister Meets Russian security officials," *N1 Bosnia*, 26 April 2018, at <http://ba.n1info.com/a257046/English/NEWS/Bosnian-Security-Minister-meets-Russian-security-officials.html>. For an example of how uninformed journalists and policy analysts manufacture misrepresentations of this issue, see Vera Mironova and Bogdan Zawadewicz, "Putin is Building a Bosnian Paramilitary Force," *Foreign Policy*, 8 August 2018, at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/08/putin-is-building-a-bosnian-paramilitary-force>.

³⁵ See Andrew Higgins, "Finger Pointed at Russians in Alleged Coup Plot in Montenegro," *The New York Times*, 26 November 2017, at <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/11/26/world/europe/finger-pointed-at-russians-in-alleged-coup-plot-in-montenegro.html>.

³⁶ Hopkins, "Indictment Tells Murky Montenegrin Coup Tale," op. cit.

³⁷ See Delauney, "Rumours and spies in the Balkans as Russia seeks influence," *BBC News*, 12 December 2016, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38289421>, accessed on 14 January 2018 at 9:22am EST.

³⁸ See Valery Hopkins, "Indictment Tells Murky Montenegrin Coup Tale," *Politico.eu*, 23 May 2017, at <http://www.politico.eu/article/montenegro-nato-milo-ukanovicmurky-coup-plot/>.

ize the coup, he also claimed that Chechen president Ramzan Kadyrov was involved in financing a post-coup government,³⁹ and professed his belief that Montenegro's "pro-Russian opposition" was in fact working for Western intelligence services. Indeed, in August 2018 Montenegrin officials even sought the extradition of a former CIA agent who was alleged to be part of "the plot."⁴⁰ Montenegrin officials also claim Sindjelić's Russian contacts sent him funds via wire transfer from a Western Union office located on the same street as GRU headquarters—a claim apparently meant to make people believe that to finance the overthrow of a foreign government and assassinate a country's leader Russian intelligence agents do not use untraceable black budget funds, they walk down the street and stand in line for a teller at their local American financial services institution. Having played his role in the court proceedings, in March 2018 Sindjelić disappeared altogether.

Sindjelić's "accomplice", Miroslav Velimirović, claimed he bought armaments for the plot (which have never been produced), and gave "wildly conflicting accounts" of the weapon that was to be used to assassinate Djukanović. In April 2017 he renounced his testimony altogether. The weapons Velimirović allegedly bought have never been found, and the person Velimirović allegedly bought the weapons from has never been identified.⁴¹ In any case, for his role in attempting to overthrow the constitutional order and assassinate the country's prime minister Velimirović was released on €100 bond. (By way of comparison, individuals charged with disturbing the court proceedings have been given €500 fines.) A former Montenegrin diplomat even testified before a U.S. Senate committee that a Serbian police official named Bratislav Dikić admitted his involvement in the affair, although Dikić has done no such thing.⁴²

Lurking in the background of this story is the claim that Russia was interested in acquiring military bases and naval facilities in Bar and Kotor, although this seems questionable as well. Former Montenegrin foreign minister Igor Lukšić has claimed that Montenegro and Russia never discussed this issue; similarly, a member of Montenegro's Parliamentary Commission for Defense and Security, Obrad Mišo Stanišić, has claimed that *"For as long as I have been a member of the Commission for Defense and Security, and this is already my second term, this topic has never been discussed. It was not mentioned during the commission's sessions. I believe these are irrelevant stories."*⁴³ *Indeed, the military value of having*

³⁹ See "Šesnaesti dan sudenja: Sindelić priča o Ediju, Dikiću, DF, Branku Mićunoviću . . ." *Vijesti* (Podgorica), 26 October 2017, at <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/sesnaesti-dan-sudenja-sindelic-pricao-o-ediju-dikicu-df-branku-micunovicu-960274>.

⁴⁰ See Eli Lake, "Montenegro Takes on Russia, America, and a Former CIA Officer," *Bloomberg.com*, 14 August 2018, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-08-14/montenegro-takes-on-russia-america-and-a-former-cia-officer>.

⁴¹ See Glenn Ellis and Katerina Barushka, "A Very Montenegrin Coup," *Al Jazeera*, 2 March 2017, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2017/03/montenegrin-coup-170302060130440.html>.

⁴² See the testimony of former Montenegrin Ambassador Vesko Garčević before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, entitled "Russian Interference (sic) in European Elections: Russia and Montenegro," 28 June 2017, page 7, at <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sfr-vgarcevic-062817b.pdf>. For a detailed analysis of the so-called "coup plot," see Gordon N. Bardos, "Coup or Hoax in Montenegro," *American Center for Democracy*, 20 December 2017, at <http://acdemocracy.org/coup-or-hoax-in-montenegro>.

⁴³ See Srdjan Jankovic, "Officials Dismiss Talk of Russian Military Base in Montenegro," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 10 February 2015, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/officials-squash-talk-of-russian-military-base-in-montenegro/26839898.html>.

a base in the Bay of Kotor is practically nil; as anyone who has seen the narrow fjord knows, in the event of hostilities a fleet holed up in Kotor Bay would represent the naval equivalent of Dien Bien Phu.

The Military Balance in the Balkans

In contrast to the above, a serious analysis of Russia's position in southeastern Europe—military, diplomatic, and economic—reveals that the EU and NATO (the main instrument of U.S. power in Europe) have achieved dominant positions in the Balkans. Thus, the real question for U.S., EU and NATO policymakers is not how to thwart Russian advances in the Balkans, but how to reinvigorate democratic reform in the region. In other words, we need to start confronting the challenges of the present and the future in the Balkans, rather than reviving Cold War ghosts from the previous century.

Militarily, Russia has had little influence in southeastern Europe over the past two decades. Putin withdrew Russian peacekeeping forces from Bosnia and Kosovo in 2003, and in December 2014 Putin cancelled what was supposed to be the grand instrument of Russian geo-strategic and economic power-projection in the Balkans, the South Stream Pipeline Project.

Over this same period Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania and Slovenia have joined NATO, Macedonia is a candidate country, and Bosnia and Serbia are members of NATO's Partnership for Peace Program (see Table 1). The latter two have also concluded Status-of-Forces Agreements (SOFA) with NATO which give alliance personnel immunity from prosecution on their territory. Russia's only formal military association with any country in southeastern Europe comes from Serbia's observer status in Moscow's Collective Security Treaty Organization. Indeed, as *The Economist* sarcastically noted, when Moscow threatened to cancel joint military projects with Montenegro if the latter joined NATO, "the Montenegrins were baffled, because there are none."⁴⁴ What is widely cited as a Russian spy base near the Serbian city of Niš has a full-time staff of six Russian nationals; by way of comparison, the largest U.S. military base built since the Vietnam War is just across the border in Kosovo. Moreover, the Russians in Niš have not been given the same status provided for by Serbia's SOFA with NATO.⁴⁵ In March 2016, journalists from *Radio Free Europe* visited the center and claimed to find "nothing that could be used for military purposes."⁴⁶ In July 2017, a delegation of the U.S. diplomats visited the Niš center, also finding nothing out-of-the-ordinary;⁴⁷ indeed, even personnel from NATO countries train there.⁴⁸ As former

⁴⁴ "In the Balkans, NATO has outmuscled Russia," *The Economist*, 11 December 2015 at <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21683967-montenegros-accession-fills-one-few-remaining-gaps-western-alliance>.

⁴⁵ See Dusan Stojanovic, "Inside Russian 'spy base' in the Balkans," *Associated Press* (Dateline Nis, Serbia), 6 October 2016, at <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/03f70a64ec5b48bbb1c2f56bdeag255e/inside-russian-spy-base-balkans>.

⁴⁶ See Predrag Blagojević, Ljudmila Cvetković, and Iva Martinović, "RSE u ruskom centru u Niš," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 7 March 2016, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/rse-u-ruskom-centru-u-nisu/27592623>.

⁴⁷ See "Američke diplomate posjetile Srpsko-ruski centar u Nišu," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 12 July 2017, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/28612732.html>.

⁴⁸ For instance, Hungarian disaster-response personnel trained at the Niš facility in 2018; see Michael Birnbaum, "Russia's low-cost influence strategy finds success in Serbia," *The Washington Post*, 3 October 2018, at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2018/10/03/russia-s-low-cost-influence-strategy-finds-success-in-serbia/>.

U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs Brian Hoyt Yee himself has noted, the U.S. concern about the Russian outpost is “not so much for what it is now, but what it might become.”⁴⁹

Table 1. Balkan Military Alliances

NATO/PfP Members	Collective Security Treaty Organization
Albania Bosnia & Herzegovina (PfP) Bulgaria Croatia Greece Kosovo (submitted PfP application) Macedonia Montenegro Romania Serbia (PfP)	Serbia (observer status)

While Serbia’s recent purchase of second-hand MIG-29 fighter jets from Moscow made headlines, this misses the more important overall point; as defense analyst John Cappello has noted, Serbia’s “relations with the Euro-Atlantic alliance have never been stronger . . . the vast majority of its international defense cooperation is with NATO and the West.”⁵⁰ Moreover, according to one American analyst, the MIG’s are “obsolete and unusable.”⁵¹

Indeed, in a detailed examination of Serbia’s military relations with foreign powers, Aleksandar Radić has noted that the only genuine donation the Russian military has made to Serbia since 2014 consisted of ten parachutes. By way of comparison, Radić notes that “when it comes to contracts of a purely commercial nature, Serbia is heavily oriented towards purchases from NATO . . . An overview of the cooperation with NATO and the Russian Federation shows that relations with NATO are much more complex and deeper,

washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russias-low-cost-influence-strategy-finds-success-in-serbia--with-the-help-of-fighter-jets-media-conspiracies-and-a-biker-gang/2018/10/03/49dbf48e-8f47-11e8-ae59-01880eac5f1d_story.html?utm_term=.079df9337af1.

⁴⁹ See Milena Djurdjic, “US Sees Russia’s ‘Humanitarian Center’ as Spy Outpost,” *VOANews*, 15 June 2017, at <https://www.voanews.com/a/united-states-sees-russia-humanitarian-center-serbia-spy-outpost/3902402.html>. See also See Maja Zivanovic, “Russian Center in Serbia Scorns Espionage Claims,” *BalkanInsight*, 11 September 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/russian-serbian-humanitarian-centre-rebuffs-spy-accusations-09-08-2017>.

⁵⁰ See Cappello, “Russian Information Operations in the Western Balkans,” *RealClearDefense.com*, 2 February 2017, at http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/02/02/russian_information_operations_in_the_western_balkans_110732.html. Regarding the MIG-29s, one report noted that “Belgrade will have to pay close to €200 million to rebuild them. It will take some time before the newly delivered MiGs are in good enough shape to start flying, putting in doubt their ability to really strengthen the Serbian armed forces.” See “Second-hand Russian jet fighters arrive in Serbia,” *EurActiv.rs*, 6 October 2017, at http://www.euractiv.rs/vesti/11862--secondhand-russian-fighter-jets-arrive-in-serbia-.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A_euractiv%2F_aenglish+%28EurActiv+English%29.

⁵¹ See Daniel Server’s comments in “Lavrov: BiH ne bi izdržala Dejton 2,” *Deutsche Welle*, 23 January 2018, at <http://www.dw.com/bs/lavrov-bih-ne-bi-izdr%C5%BEala-dejton-2/a-42271083>.

since various forms of cooperation based on training, equipping and international engagement are intertwined."⁵²

During his visit to Belgrade in April 2017 the late Senator John McCain noted that the U.S. is Serbia's most important defense partner, with the two countries engaging in 90 joint activities a year.⁵³ In 2015, for example, Serbia held 567 military activities with NATO or with NATO countries bilaterally. In the same year Serbia had a total of 36 similar activities with Russia.⁵⁴ In 2017, Serbia was reported to have held two military exercises with Russia, thirteen with NATO or with members of the alliance, and seven with American forces.⁵⁵

The Balkan Diplomatic Tug-of-War

Diplomatically, the U.S. and the EU also enjoy a dominant position. The official foreign policy goal of every country in the Western Balkans is to join the European Union, while not a single country in the region has applied for membership in the Moscow-sponsored Eurasian Economic Union (see Table 2). In keeping with this, most states in the region have aligned their foreign policies with those of Washington and Brussels. Even Serbia, which has not joined the sanctions regime against Moscow, has at the same time refused to recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea. The current Serbian prime minister (who worked with USAID for a decade) has publicly said that if it came to a choice between Russia and the EU, Serbia would pick the EU,⁵⁶ and to accentuate the point her first official foreign trip was to Brussels.

Much of the current commentary on Russia in the Balkans also misses how often Russian positions have aligned with Western policies in the region. In 1998-99, Russian diplomats worked closely with American and European officials in trying to avert and end the Kosovo war.⁵⁷ Indeed, in May-June 1999, Russian security services, working through the private offices of Swedish businessman Peter Castenfelt, played a key role in convincing Milošević to accept terms to end the conflict.⁵⁸ In 2006, when Western countries supported Montenegro's declaration of independence, Moscow voiced no objections and quickly

⁵² See Radić, "Whom to Rely On: Serbia Between East and West," *European Western Balkans*, 6 December 2017, at <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2017/12/06/rely-serbia-east-west>.

⁵³ See "Vučić i Mekejn o regionalnom miru, saradnji i zajedničkim akcijama," *Politika* (Belgrade), 10 April 2017, at <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/378089/Vucic-i-Mekej-n-o-regionalnom-miru-saradnji-i-zajednickim-akcijama>.

⁵⁴ Figures according to Sergey Belous, "How long will Belgrade seesaw between NATO and Russia?," *Oriental Review*, 23 April 2016, at <http://orientalreview.org/2016/04/23/how-long-will-belgrade-seesaw-between-nato-and-russia>.

⁵⁵ See Emili Šervin, "Na dve stolice, dok god može," *Deutsche Welle*, 19 December 2017, at <http://www.dw.com/sr/na-dve-stolice-dok-god-može/C5%BEe/a-41855320>.

⁵⁶ See Brnabić's comments in Misha Savic and Gordana Filipovic, "Serbia Will Choose EU Over Russia If Forced to Choose, Premier Says," *Bloomberg.com*, 4 July 2017, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-07-03/serbia-will-pick-eu-over-russia-if-made-to-choose-premier-says>.

⁵⁷ Regarding Moscow's participation in efforts to avert and end the Kosovo conflict, see the recollections of a senior European diplomat involved, Wolfgang Petritsch, about this period: "Russia, Kosovo and Europe: A Case-Study in Post Cold-War Conflict Management," in Petritsch, *Zielpunkt Europa: Von den Schluchten des Balkan und den Mühen der Ebene* (Klagenfurt/Celovec: Wieser Verlag, 2009), 275-289.

⁵⁸ On Castenfelt's role, see "Swede's Secret Channel to Milosevic," *BBC News*, 9 March 2000, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/671574.stm>; and Roger Cohen, "In Secret Belgrade Talks, London Financier Seems to Have Helped Milosevic Accept Accord," *The New York Times*, 15 June 1999, at <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/06/15/world/crisis-balkans-diplomacy-secret-belgrade-talks-london-financier-seems-have.html>.

followed suit. In December 2017, as a rhetorical escalation of tensions between Belgrade and Zagreb broke out, both American and Russian diplomats advised Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić to “drop it” so that the situation did not get out of control.⁵⁹ In September 2017, Putin’s United Russia Party endorsed the decision of Kosovo Serbs to enter the Kosovo government, a policy in line with U.S. preferences.⁶⁰

Diplomatic differences do of course exist between Washington, the EU and Moscow, but to dismiss these as Russian attempts destabilize the Balkans trivializes serious international problems. The Kosovo issue is a prime example. Moscow’s refusal to recognize Kosovo is frequently described as “Russian obstructionism,”⁶¹ but Georgia and Ukraine similarly refuse to recognize Kosovo, and it is difficult to see why they would be following Russia’s lead. Spain, for understandable reasons, also refuses to recognize Kosovo, as do four other EU members, as well as Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and other states representing 60-70% of the world’s population. Clearly, any serious understanding of global politics has to recognize that the refusal of so many countries to recognize Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence is not caused by “Russian obstructionism”; rather, it is driven by the very considerable implications the Kosovo case has for any multiethnic state facing an actual or potential secessionist movement.

**Table 2. Balkan Countries’ Memberships
in International Economic/Political/Trade Organizations**

European Union	Eurasian Economic Union
Albania (candidate country)	
Bosnia & Herzegovina (potential candidate)	
Bulgaria (full member)	
Croatia (full member)	
Greece (full member)	
Kosovo (potential candidate)	
Macedonia (candidate country)	
Montenegro (candidate country)	
Romania (full member)	
Serbia (candidate country)	

In Bosnia, Russian policy has been broadly in line with the West. Since recognizing Bosnia on 27 April 1992, Russia has consistently supported the country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, and even the Muslim member of the country’s joint state presidency re-

⁵⁹ See Jurica Korbler, “NOVO ZAOŠTRENJE ODNOSA HRVATSKE I SRBIJE Sve su manje šanse da Vučić početkom 2018. godine u Zagreb,” *Jutarnji list* (Zagreb), 26 December 2017, at <http://www.jutarnji.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/novo-zaostrenje-odnosa-hrvatske-i-srbije-sve-su-manje-sanse-da-vucic-pocetkom-2018-godine-u-zagreb/6878493>.

⁶⁰ See Maja Zivanovic, “Russia Backs Serb Party Joining Kosovo Govt,” *BalkanInsight*, 14 September 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/putin-s-united-russia-supports-kosovo-serb-party-09-14-2017>.

⁶¹ See Bernd Riegert, “EU looks to contain Russian influence in the Balkans,” *Deutsche Welle*, 10 March 2017, at <http://www.dw.com/en/eu-looks-to-contain-russian-influence-in-the-balkans/a-37891857>.

cently said that Russia does not have a destabilizing policy towards his country.⁶² Similarly, when the current international High Representative in Bosnia, Valentin Inzko, was asked "Do you mean to say that Russians are more constructive than destructive with regards to Bosnia?" his answer was "Absolutely."⁶³

Concrete evidence of Inzko's claims could be seen in a June 2017 communiqué issued by the international body overseeing the Bosnian peace process, the so-called "Peace Implementation Council," in which Moscow joined with Bosnia's other international overseers stating that it

... reaffirmed its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity and fundamental structure of BiH as a single, sovereign state comprising two entities. The PIC SB restated that the entities have no right to secede from BiH and only exist legally by virtue of the BiH Constitution.⁶⁴

Where differences have existed between Russia and western countries on Bosnian matters, they have been either over legitimate issues or trivial ones. An example of the former was seen in Russia's rhetorical support for the Bosnian Serbs' plan to hold a referendum on the judiciary,⁶⁵ although most Americans would also take issue with a legal system in which three foreigners sat on the Supreme Court, legal practices such as the retroactive application of laws were in effect, and an Islamist party controlled the attorney-general's office.⁶⁶

Moreover, despite frequent claims that Russia supports "Bosnian Serb separatism," Moscow has in fact consistently supported Bosnia & Herzegovina's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Nevertheless, sloppy research allows this claim to continue to be made. For instance, in a recent Minority Staff Report of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations,

⁶² See "Izetbegović: Rusija nema destabilizujuću politiku prema BiH," *N1info.com*, 19 May 2017, at <http://ba.n1info.com/a154923/Vijesti/Vijesti/Izetbegovic-Rusija-nema-destabilizujucu-politiku-prema-BiH.html>.

⁶³ See "Valentin Inzko iz Nju Jorka za 'Avaz': Bosna nije turski, već američki amanet," *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 10 November 2017, at <http://avaz.ba/vijesti/intervju/319973/valentin-inzko-iz-njujorka-za-%E2%80%9Eavaz%E2%80%9C-bosna-nije-turski-vec-americki-amanet>.

⁶⁴ Srećko Latal, "Russian Visits Reveal Push for Influence in Bosnia," *BalkanInsight*, 25 April 2018, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/russian-visits-reveal-push-for-influence-in-bosnia-04-25-2018>.

⁶⁵ James Lyon, "Is War About to Break Out in the Balkans?" *Foreign Policy*, 26 October 2015, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/10/26/war-break-out-balkans-bosnia-republika-srpska-dayton>.

⁶⁶ For instance, in July 2015 the U.S. deputy chief-of-mission in Sarajevo, Nicholas Hill, noted in a commentary "that the state prosecutor's office under the leadership of a Chief Prosecutor largely believed to be heavily influenced by Bosniak political forces . . . the prosecutor's office has too many strong-willed SDA acolytes on its staff." See "Moving Beyond Narrow-Minded Politics," (Nicholas Hill's blog on the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo's website, 8 July 2015, at <http://usembassysarajevo.blogspot.com/>). Along the same lines, a prominent Sarajevo lawyer, Vasvija Vidović, claimed that "There are actors within the SDA who without a doubt control part of the Prosecutor's Office . . . [the SDA] controls the most influential part of the Prosecutor's Office—the department for the Chief Prosecutor and the department for organized crime—the ties between the Prosecutor's Office and the SDA are completely clear and very strong." See Vidović's interview on Bosnian TV's Central Daily *Face TV* with Senad Hadžifejzović, which aired on 12 February 2016, available at <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/219694/vasvija-vidovic-svima-je-jasno-da-se-protiv-radoncica-vodi-politicki-montiran-proces?url=clanak/219694/vasvija-vidovic-svima-je-jasno-da-se-protiv-radoncica-vodi-politicki-montiran-proces>. Even Muslim media tacitly acknowledge that the BiH Prosecutor's office is controlled by SDA loyalists. Thus, an analysis in *The Bosnia Times* claimed that the BiH Prosecutor's Office has to seek "the blessing" of high-level Muslim officials, and specifically Bakir Izetbegović, to indict Muslims for war crimes. See "Ko su Bakirovi kurbani?," *The Bosnia Times*, 3 August 2015, at <http://thebosniatimes.ba/clanak/994>.

it was claimed that Russia has supported Bosnian Serb efforts to hold a referendum on independence. In fact, the article the report cites refers to Moscow's support for a Bosnian Serb referendum on choosing a holiday.⁶⁷

Moreover, few observers picked up on perhaps the most important development related to Russia-Bosnia relations in years-- that it was precisely in Moscow on 2 March 2017, after meeting with Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov, that Bosnian Serb president Dodik walked back earlier plans to hold an independence referendum. Ironically, then, in this instance, instead of destabilizing Bosnia & Herzegovina, Moscow appears to have played a role in stabilizing it.

In Macedonia, meanwhile, a much-publicized, leaked "intelligence analysis" on Russian activities there was so generic that if nouns and adjectives were redacted from the report it would be impossible to tell whether it was about what the Russians, the Americans, the Brits, the Germans, or the Turks were doing there.⁶⁸ In fact, the degree to which Macedonia factors in to Russian concerns is debatable; according to Julija Brsakoska-Bazerkoska, professor of international relations in Skopje, "Macedonia is not and never was a vital part of Russian foreign policy."⁶⁹

The problematic nature of much of the commentary and analysis on the topic of Macedonia and Russia was most prominently seen in the aftermath of the failed September 2018 referendum on the Macedonian name issue. In the runup to the referendum, German chancellor Angela Merkel, Austrian chancellor Sebastian Kurz, U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg had all traveled to Skopje to encourage Macedonian voters to support the referendum, and both the U.S. Congress and the British Foreign Office provided financial support to bolster a "Yes" vote.⁷⁰ (Interestingly, one would be hard-pressed to find a "Balkan expert" or western news reporter claim that these were examples of "meddling.")

That a substantial majority of Macedonia's population refused to endorse the name change was not surprising. Across the Balkans, decades-old promises that these countries may someday be granted EU membership are no longer taken seriously, and the EU itself has clearly and repeatedly shown that it is incapable of formulating a coherent and credible policy for southeastern Europe. Moreover, in Macedonia itself many citizens probably came to the conclusion that joining NATO and the EU might not be worth the trouble anymore.⁷¹

⁶⁷ See "Putin's Asymmetric Assault on Democracy in Russia and Europe: Implications for U.S. National Security" (Washington, DC: Minority Staff Report Prepared for the Use of the Committee and Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 10 January 2018), 83.

⁶⁸ A redacted version of the Macedonian intelligence report is available at <https://www.occrp.org/documents/spooksandspin/Document4.pdf>.

⁶⁹ As quoted by Boris Georgievski, "Macedonia: A Pawn in the Russian Geo-Political Game?", *Deutsche Welle*, 26 May 2015, at <http://www.dw.com/en/macedonia-a-pawn-in-the-russian-geopolitical-game/a-18476013>.

⁷⁰ See Simon Tisdall, "Result of Macedonia's Referendum is another victory for Russia," *The Guardian*, 1 October 2018, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/01/result-of-macedonia-referendum-is-another-victory-for-russia>.

⁷¹ For analyses along these lines, see Florian Bieber, "For Macedonia, is Joining the EU and NATO Worth the Trouble?" *Foreign Policy*, 13 September 2018, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/13/for-macedonia-is-joining-nato-and-the-eu-worth-the-trouble/>, and Srečko Latal, "EU's Withdrawal is Creating 'Domino Effect' Across Balkans," *BalkanInsight*, 4 October 2018 at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/eu-s-withdrawal-is-creating-domino-effect-across-balkans-10-04-2018>. It is worth noting that in Latal's useful analysis of the problems confronting southeastern Europe, neither "Russia," "Moscow" nor "Putin" are mentioned.

Predictably, however, in the aftermath of the name-referendum debacle, media reports quickly claimed that the effort had failed due to Russian interference. A typical example of such vacuous reporting claimed that the name-referendum's failure was the result of Russian "disinformation campaigns and "fake news", cyberwarfare and hacking, phoney Facebook and Twitter accounts and secret cash payments . . . [Western countries] were out-thought, outspent and outmanoeuvred by Moscow."⁷² Such simplistic explanations of complex problems, however, only prove a point made by Dimitar Bechev, who has noted that for U.S. and EU diplomats and journalists unwilling to accept the fact that western policies in the Balkans might be misguided, blaming Russia has become "the default option when anything goes wrong in this part of Europe."⁷³

The Balkan "marketplace of ideas" and the overall media and public relations environment in southeastern Europe is another arena in which it is useful to compare the relevant strengths of Russia and the West. While Moscow's media efforts in the region have drawn increasing attention,⁷⁴ serious examination of this topic makes it difficult to sustain the claim that such a modest investment in information operations is particularly influential.

Russia's main media initiative in the region has been opening bureaus of *Sputnik* and *RT* in Belgrade, which are staffed by some thirty people. By way of comparison, the newly-reopened BBC Serbian service bureau has twenty people on its staff, and a reported budget of close to \$800,000 annually,⁷⁵ while the N1 news channel (a CNN-regional-affiliate) has some 200 employees in the region.⁷⁶ Along with the BBC and N1 are numerous other long-established Western media organizations such as *Deutsche Welle*, *Radio-Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, and *Voice of America*, and even the Qatar-based *Al Jazeera* is now a prominent feature of southeastern Europe's media landscape. All told, Western investments in the Balkan media market are vastly greater than Moscow's.

Perhaps most interesting is to compare Moscow's *RT* and *Sputnik* initiatives with what a private Western-owned media organization is doing in the region. United Group, whose majority owner until recently was the American investment fund KKR, is considered "the most powerful telecommunications company in the territory of the former Yugoslavia," and in Serbia itself the United Group is the largest cable and internet services provider. Particularly active in lobbying for the United Group's entry into the Serbian market was the director of the KKR Global Institute, former CIA director David Petreaus.⁷⁷

⁷² See Tisdall, "Result of Macedonia's Referendum is another victory for Russia," op. cit.

⁷³ See Dimitar Bechev, "What is Happening in Macedonia?" *Al Jazeera*, 30 April 2017, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/04/happening-macedonia-170430135004624.html>.

⁷⁴ See for instance, Andrew Byrne, "Kremlin-backed media adds to western fears in the Balkans," *The Financial Times*, 19 March 2017, at <https://www.ft.com/content/3d52cb64-0967-11e7-97d1-5e720a26771b>; Jarosław Wiśniewski, "Russia has a years-long plot to influence Balkan politics. The U.S. can learn a lot from it," *The Washington Post*, 19 September 2016, at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/09/19/heres-how-russias-trying-to-sway-opinion-in-serbia-and-the-balkans/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.975241a9e61a; Cappello, "Russian Information Operations in the Western Balkans," op. cit.; and Valerie Hopkins, "In Balkans, Britain rejoins battle for influence," *Politico.eu*, 30 March 2018, <https://www.politico.eu/article/balkans-bbc-britain-rejoins-battle-for-influence-russia-soft-power/>

⁷⁵ Hopkins, "In Balkans, Britain rejoins battle for influence," op. cit.

⁷⁶ See Bojan Vučićević, "Growing Influence of Global Media in the Balkans," *MediaCentar_Online* (Sarajevo), 14 July 2016 at <http://www.media.ba/en/mediametar/growing-influence-global-media-balkans>

⁷⁷ See Bojan Vučićević, "Growing Influence of Global Media in the Balkans," *MediaCentar_Online* (Sarajevo), 14 July 2016 at <http://www.media.ba/en/mediametar/growing-influence-global-media-balkans>.

Western countries have also been incomparably more active and influential in shaping the legal and regulatory environment in which Balkan media operate. According to the watchdog group Media Observatory, for instance, “the European Commission enabled changes to the Serbian media laws, and the Serbian government unquestioningly conformed to it. . . . people working at the European Commission Directorate for Enlargement’s Unit on Relations with Serbia have adjusted the country’s draft laws according to the comments they got on the issue from major powers that threaten to undermine media pluralism in the country.”⁷⁸

Given these realities, Balkan public opinion is probably shaped more by Western policies than by Russian propaganda. This is a double-edged sword, however, because Western policy is not always interpreted as benignly as its formulators think it will be. In the U.S. Army’s Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) community, for example, there is a saying that “If your policy is broke, PSYOPS can’t fix it.” In other words, information operations specialists know that most people are intelligent enough to understand when information campaigns conform to the realities of their daily lives and to their interests; just as importantly, most people are also able to distinguish propaganda to the contrary. The political analyst Srdjan Garčević neatly summed up this phenomenon in the case of Serbia when he noted “Any analysis of Russia’s popularity in Serbia which does not start from the fact that Russia did not bomb Serbia in ‘99, is an analysis which ignores the most important reason for Russia’s popularity in Serbia. Sometimes it’s that simple.”

Russia’s Weak Economic Hand in the Balkans

Economically, Russia also has a weak position in the Balkans. Apart from some high-profile acquisitions, Russian investment and trade with southeastern Europe is relatively minor. As a recent *Financial Times* editorial noted, “As a source of trade, aid and investment, the EU dwarfs Russia. For all the Russian cultural links, migration flows from the Balkans are almost entirely to the rest of Europe.”⁷⁹

The above-mentioned high-profile Russian economic moves in the region have included acquiring a controlling stake in Serbia’s state oil company (*Naftna Industrija Srbije*), and providing Serbia an \$800 million credit (at a 4.1% interest rate) in 2013 to modernize its railway system.⁸⁰ In 2005, Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska bought Montenegro’s largest industrial concern, *Kombinat Aluminija Podgorica* (KAP) and in Bosnia, Zarubezhneft acquired an oil refinery in 2007, but both purchases have been bad economic investments. The Russian-owned oil refinery in Bosnia has lost a reported €300 million over the past

⁷⁸ See Bojana Barlovac, “Major powers tailored Serbian media-legislation for ‘Balkan CNN,’” *MediaCentar_Online* (Sarajevo), 12 September 2014, at <http://www.media.ba/en/magazin-novinarstvo/major-powers-tailored-serbian-media-legislation-balkan-cnn>.

⁷⁹ See “Europe and the US face a challenge in the Balkans,” *The Financial Times*, 10 March 2017, at <https://www.ft.com/content/ce3bd714-058a-11e7-ace0-1ce02ef0def9>.

⁸⁰ See “Rusi proizužili rok za otplatu kredita železnice,” *Tanjug*, 6 December 2016, at <http://www.blic.rs/vesti/ekonomija/rusi-proizuzili-rok-za-otplatu-kredita-zeleznice/2mkb26s>.

several years, and Deripaska has been in a legal battle with the Montenegrin government over debts owed to him for almost a decade.⁸¹

In Croatia, Gasprom has expressed an interest in acquiring Croatia's INA energy company from Hungary's MOL, although little progress has been made. Sberbank and VTB own approximately \$1.4 billion of the bankrupt Croatian retail giant Agrokor's debt; however, according to the *Financial Times*, Agrokor's Russian creditor banks have not sought to use the situation to increase Moscow's influence in the country; according to one person involved in Agrokor's restructuring, "this is purely business."⁸²

Apart from these economic moves, Russia has been a relatively minor economic actor in the Balkans. China now accounts for a larger percentage of foreign trade for Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Macedonia than Russia does, and Croatia and Serbia both import more from China than from Russia. EU sanctions imposed on Moscow after the latter's annexation of Crimea have reduced Western Balkan—Russia trade even more. In 2015, Croatian imports from Russia dropped almost 55% over 2014 levels, and exports dropped some 30 percent.⁸³ And despite the fact that Serbia has signed a free-trade agreement with Russia, 62.48 percent of the country's foreign trade is with the EU, compared to 7.9 percent with Russia. The overwhelming percentage of Serbia's foreign investment comes from EU countries. In 2016, for instance, EU states invested a total of USD 1.5 billion in Serbia. Investment from Russia, by comparison, was a relatively meager \$80 million.⁸⁴

The one area in which Russia plays a significant role in Balkan economies is the energy sector, with Russian energy products providing well over half of each country's supply. Nevertheless, Russia's role as an energy supplier has given it little leverage in swaying political and strategic priorities. Consider the following: Russian individuals and businesses account for 22 percent of the tourist arrivals in Montenegro, own almost one third of all businesses in Montenegro and 40 percent of the country's real estate, and Russia has provided one third of Montenegro's foreign direct investment.⁸⁵ Yet despite this significant Russian economic position in Montenegro's economy, it was still unable to prevent the country from joining NATO.

This inability to translate economic investment into political influence perhaps shows why the Kremlin has been relatively disinterested in providing alleged Balkan clients financial support. In the case of Greece, for instance, consider the treatment Greek prime minister Alex Tsipras received on a trip to Moscow in 2015:

. . . when [Tsipras] dramatically showed up in Moscow with his begging bowl, hoping Russia would stump up the cash to enable Greece to defy the West's harsh bailout terms, Putin turned away, unwilling to shoulder the burden. Tsipras was forced into a humiliating

⁸¹ On the Russian economic losses in Bosnia, see Mladen Ladic, "Russia Investors Lose Money in Bosnia," *BalkanInsight*, 17 April 2018, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/russia-investments-face-losses-in-bosnia-04-16-2018>.

⁸² See Neil Buckley, "Crisis at Croatia's Agrokor poses threat beyond creditors," *The Financial Times* (London), 12 April 2017, at <https://www.ft.com/content/ad8ecc4e-1edd-11e7-a454-ab04428977f9>.

⁸³ See Sven Mikelic, "Croatia Shrugs Off Slump in Trade with Russia," *BalkanInsight*, 1 December 2016, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-russia-trade-unaaffected-by-political-disputes-11-30-2016>.

⁸⁴ See "Hojt Ji: Srbi da budu svesni koliko dajemo mi, koliko oni," *B92.net*, 25 October 2017, at https://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2017&mm=10&dd=25&nav_category=11&nav_id=1318158.

⁸⁵ See Leonid Bershidsky, "Why NATO Wants Montenegro (Not for Its Military Might)," *Bloomberg.com*, 1 May 2017, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2017-05-01/why-nato-wants-montenegro-not-for-its-military-might>.

retreat, thrust right back into the hands of the dreaded Europeans under whose economic tutelage Greece has remained since.⁸⁶

Such miserliness on Putin's part hardly smacks of someone seriously trying to buy friends and influence people. It should also raise question marks about the often-repeated claim that Putin's goal is to break-up the EU. Literally presented on his own doorstep with a strategic opportunity to cleave off an EU member, Putin refused to ante up.

The story is much the same throughout the region. Despite the fact that the Serb entity in Bosnia & Herzegovina, the *Republika Srpska* (RS), is frequently described as Moscow's outpost in the Balkans, for the past decade Putin has shown no willingness to support it financially.⁸⁷

Indeed, a recent article claiming that Putin had thrown the RS "a financial lifeline" shows the extent to which absurd claims are being used in the current propaganda wars.⁸⁸ The "financial lifeline" Putin allegedly gave the RS was in fact part of Moscow's repayment of 152.2 million (USD) of Soviet-era debt to Bosnia & Herzegovina, of which the RS received 29 percent. Thus, the "logic" of the financial lifeline argument is that Moscow gave its alleged antagonists in the Muslim-Croat Federation 108 million (USD) so that it could give its supposed RS clients 44 million—which, in any case, is not much of a lifeline, as it amounts to only ten days worth of the RS's annual budget.⁸⁹ In fact, Moscow's policy here again seems to be fully in line with Western policy. In late 2016, for instance, the International Monetary Fund (which generally follows U.S. government policy preferences) provided Bosnia with a three-year, 563 million (USD) credit agreement, of which the RS was scheduled to receive approximately 185 million.

The Misdirection Strategy: Playing the Russia Card

In sum, viewed from the military, diplomatic and economic perspectives, it is difficult to see Russia as a serious threat to Western interests in southeastern Europe. Indeed, more knowledgeable observers of Russian foreign policy debate the extent to which the Balkans really factor into Russia's foreign policy priorities. Neither the Balkans as a region nor any of the countries therein are mentioned in the 10,000 word-plus "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation" released in December 2016.⁹⁰ Nor were the Balkans

⁸⁶ See Marcus Tanner, "Busting Myths About Russia's Balkan Designs," *BalkanInsight*, 27 July 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/busting-myths-about-russia-s-balkan-designs-07-26-2017>.

⁸⁷ See, for instance, the analysis provided by two Banja Luka economists, Zoran Pavlović and Damir Miljević, in the *Radio Slobodna Evropa* program *Most*, entitled "Zašto Putin ne daje pare Dodiku," which aired on 13 August 2017, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/putin-dodik-rs-rusija-pare-most/28672867.html>.

Maxim Samorukov makes the same points, noting that "Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik spent two full years between 2014 and 2016 negotiating a Russian credit, which was reported to amount to several hundred million euros. But to no avail." See Samorukov, "Russia's Tactics in the Western Balkans," *Carnegie Europe*, 3 November 2017, at <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/74612>.

⁸⁸ Mujanovic, "Russia's Bosnia Gambit: Intrigue in the Balkans," op. cit.

⁸⁹ See "Rusija plaća sovjetski dug BiH od 125 miliona dolara," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 21 March 2017, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/28383643.html>.

⁹⁰ See "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," Moscow: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 1 December 2016, at http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

a topic in Russia's recent presidential election campaign. As one analysis noted, the extent to which southeastern Europe was present was "almost not at all . . . Analysis of the election programs in Russia, especially those sections related to foreign policy, show that the term "Balkan" cannot be found listed among any of the candidates' priorities."⁹¹

At least as of September 2015, Maxim Samorukov of Carnegie's Moscow Center could argue that:

the Kremlin gave up on the Balkans a long time ago, and cares even less now that it is not concentrating on energy projects in the region . . . it is highly unlikely that Russia will make any big steps in the Western Balkans. All of Russia's major projects in the region have already run out of steam. Russia is divided from the region by a cordon of EU states, and this small, financially-strapped segment of Europe carries no economic interest for Russia. Furthermore, the local leaders, even in Serbia, do not want to jeopardize their relations with the West for Russia's sake.⁹²

Along similar lines, Mark Galeotti claimed that there was little evidence in 2017 that Russia was engaged in a "systematic campaign to assert its influence in the region, let alone a successful one."⁹³

Nevertheless, despite Russia's overall weak hand in the region, the inflated and overblown accounts of "Russian meddling" in the Balkans are having very significant—and detrimental—policy consequences. For more than a decade, U.S. and European support for democratic institutions and the rule of law in southeastern Europe have been consistently sacrificed for the sake of legitimizing authoritarians who know that by declaring themselves to be "fighting Russian advances" in the Balkans and expressing a few platitudes about democracy and human rights they can—quite literally—receive a get out of jail free card.

Consider, for instance, the case of Milo Djukanović, who has served as Montenegro's president or prime minister for most of the past 30 years, during which time he succeeded in turning Montenegro into what the political scientist Moises Naim has called a "mafia state."⁹⁴ In 2015, Djukanović was even named "Man of the Year in Organized Crime" by an international anti-corruption monitoring group. As the award announcement noted, "Nobody outside of Putin has run a state that relies so heavily on corruption, organized crime and dirty politics. It is truly and thoroughly rotten to the core."⁹⁵

Despite such a background, the Djukanović regime over the past several years managed to ingratiate itself in Washington and Brussels by playing the Russian card and moving the country towards NATO accession, and Djukanović himself even received an invitation to the White House. Dire warnings about the Russian threat are now a staple feature

⁹¹ See Ljubomir Filiopvic, "Balkans Fail to Feature in Russia's Election Race," *BalkanInsight*, 12 January 2018, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/balkans-fail-to-feature-in-russia-s-election-race-01-11-2018-1>.

⁹² See Maxim Samorukov, "The Montenegro Gambit: NATO, Russia and the Balkans," *Carnegie Moscow Center Global Think Tank*, 12 September 2015, at <http://carnegie.ru/commentary/62232>.

⁹³ See Galeotti, "Do the Western Balkans face a coming Russian storm?", op. cit., 2.

⁹⁴ See Moises Naim, "Mafia States: Organized Crime Takes Office," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2012).

⁹⁵ See "2015 Man of the Year in Organized Crime: Milo Djukanović," Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, at <https://www.occrp.org/personoftheyear/2015>.

of public statements by Djukanović and his surrogates; in one recent interview, Djukanović claimed that after Ukraine and Syria “Montenegro has found itself in the line of fire.”⁹⁶

Close observers of the Montenegrin political scene, however, claim that the purpose of such rhetoric is to distract attention from the real problems facing the country. As one of Montenegro’s leading human rights and anti-corruption activists, Vanja Čolović, observed,

Djukanović portrays NATO and Russia as the major issue; and he’s succeeding because looking at Montenegro from London or Washington, of course you’re going to say this is more important than what’s actually happening in the country: the corruption and human rights violations. Montenegro is a haven for criminals and provides them with different kinds of support like money laundering. This is what Djukanović is trying to hide from the West by putting NATO as the major issue.⁹⁷

Of course, this sort of critique does not go unpunished. For people who find Donald Trump’s comments about women unacceptable, Djukanović has taken such misogyny to a whole new level—in 2015 he and his surrogates accused Čolović of having sex with dogs. It bears noting that in the same year the U.S. Embassy in Podgorica named Čolović the “Most Courageous Woman in Montenegro.”

A similar dynamic has taken place in Kosovo, where officials routinely claim any attack against them is “Russian propaganda.” A clear example of this came in April 2018, when American reporters confronted Kosovo president Hashim Thaci with claims lodged by the Council of Europe that Thaci and his colleagues had been involved in war crimes and human organ trafficking. According to the reporters,

Mr. Thaci dismissed the Marty report as part of a Russian-orchestrated program of ‘fake news,’ a farrago of lies and disinformation intended to undermine Western influence in the Balkans. Calling Kosovo ‘the most pro-American country in the world,’ he said that by blackening its name, Russia, a firm ally of Serbia, wanted to damage the United States. He produced no evidence that Russia had a hand in Mr. Marty’s report.⁹⁸

Similarly, in a recent op-ed Kosovo’s former foreign minister, Enver Hodxaj, claimed that

Russia is clearly using Serbia not just to regain a foothold in the Balkans, but also to seek vengeance on NATO, the United States and the West with schemes to restore the regional prominence it lost when the Soviet empire collapsed.⁹⁹

Hodxaj’s rhetoric is typical of the propaganda tactics used by a political-criminal elite desperately trying to stay out of prison. Over the past few years the very top levels of Kosovo’s

⁹⁶ See Djukanović’s comments in Dusan Stojanovic, “Montenegro leader: Russia wants to destroy EU,” *The Associated Press* (Dateline Podgorica), 14 March 2017, at <https://www.apnews.com/7b98aaea166b4b77ab0145aa91916ab3>.

⁹⁷ See Ellis and Barushka, “A Very Montenegrin Coup,” op. cit.

⁹⁸ See Andrew Higgins and Valerie Hopkins, “Kosovo’s War Ended, But the Shooting Didn’t. A Court Promises Justice,” *The New York Times*, 3 April 2018, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/03/world/europe/kosovo-war-crimes-trial.html>.

⁹⁹ For an example of this as it pertains to Kosovo, see Enver Hoxhaj, “Kosovo Feels Russia’s Heavy Hand, via Serbia,” *The New York Times*, 13 April 2017, at https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/13/opinion/kosovo-feels-russias-heavy-hand-via-serbia.html?_r=0.

political class have been accused of trafficking in women,¹⁰⁰ drug smuggling,¹⁰¹ and, most grotesquely, harvesting human organs.¹⁰² And just as in the case of Montenegro, facing the prospect of imminent prosecution at a newly-established international war crimes court in The Hague, Hodxaj and his colleagues have found it convenient to play the Russia card.

Indeed, across the western Balkans local leaders have learned that by promising to fight “the Russians,” Washington will give them a free pass to crack down on the political opposition, independent media, engage in large-scale corruption, etc. As one scholar has described this process:

A new generation of autocrats has been taking over the region, sometimes with the direct complicity of overzealous American policymakers and distracted EU officials . . . Both U.S. and EU policymakers have been willing to turn a blind eye to corruption, which plagues the region's governments, and have either downplayed or ignored the creeping rise of autocratic rulers . . . [who] are well-coached in telling Western diplomats what they want to hear, while blatantly undermining democratic principles and the rule of law at home . . . U.S. and EU policymakers need to ask themselves if oligarchs, autocrats and kleptocrats, who happen to be pro-Western, are any better than Putin—or helpful for the West's long-term interests in the region.¹⁰³

If we do not get wise to this game and continue to view southeastern Europe as yet another front in the New Cold War, and our overarching goal remains “keeping Putin out of the Balkans,” we will be sacrificing Balkan democracy and regional stability for another generation. Leaders and groups that believe they enjoy Washington's favor—or believe they know how to manipulate American policymakers—will increasingly press their advantages against both domestic and foreign opponents, resulting in less democracy internally and more aggressive policies externally.¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, leaders and groups that do

¹⁰⁰ For articles on the involvement of Kosovo's political-criminal structures in trafficking in women and sex slavery, see Matt MacAllester and Jovo Martinovic, “Kosovo's Mafia: A Hotbed of Human Trafficking,” *GlobalPost*, 27 March 2011, at <https://www.pri.org/stories/2011-03-27/kosovos-mafia-hotbed-human-trafficking>; and Sebastian Junger, “Slaves of the Brothel,” *Vanity Fair* (July 2002).

¹⁰¹ See Paul Lewis, “Report Identifies Hashim Thaci as ‘big fish’ in organized crime,” *The Guardian* (UK), 24 January 2011, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/24/hashim-thaci-kosovo-organised-crime>; see also a leaked German intelligence report detailing the links between Kosovo political leaders and organized crime, at <https://file.wikileaks.org/file/bnd-kosovo-feb-2005.pdf>.

¹⁰² See Dick Marty, rapporteur, “Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo” (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, 12 December 2010), at http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2010/20101218_ajdoc462010provamended.pdf. For a journalistic investigation into allegations of human organ trafficking in Kosovo, see Carrie Ching, Michael Montgomery, and Brian Pollack, “Searching for Kosovo's Missing,” *The Center for Investigative Journalism*, 9 April 2009, at <http://cironline.org/reports/searching-kosovos-missing-2267>; and for a report by the Special Investigative Task Force for Kosovo led by U.S. ambassador Clive Williamson, see <http://sitf.eu/index.php/en/news-other/42-statement-by-the-chief-prosecutor-clint-williamson>. For an account by Carla Del Ponte, the former chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, see Del Ponte (with Chuck Sudetic), *Madam Prosecutor: Confrontations with Humanity's Worst Criminals and the Culture of Impunity* (New York: Other Press, 2008), Chapter 11.

¹⁰³ See Besnik Pula, “The Budding Autocrats of the Balkans,” *Foreign Policy*, 15 April 2016, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/15/the-budding-autocrats-of-the-balkans-serbia-macedonia-montenegro>.

¹⁰⁴ For an example of this as it pertains to Kosovo, see Enver Hoxhaj, “Kosovo Feels Russia's Heavy Hand, via Serbia,” *The New York Times*, 13 April 2017, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/13/opinion/kosovo-feels-russias-heavy->

not enjoy Washington's favor will increasingly feel the need to turn to Russia (or to China in the not-too-distant future) for support. The result will be a self-fulfilling logic in which the Balkan states are *impelled* into more and more hostile, divided camps. Given the right circumstances and taken to the most dangerous extreme, this could result in the kinds of proxy wars we are witnessing in Syria and Ukraine.

A New Approach to Southeastern Europe

As seen above, by almost every measure Euro-Atlantic institutions have achieved dominant positions in southeastern Europe. Nevertheless, these same institutions currently expend more effort parrying relatively weak Russian moves in the Balkans instead of addressing the region's real problems—weak democratic institutions, serious official corruption, and stagnant economies.

In this situation, opening a Balkan front in the New Cold War will likely derail southeastern Europe's already weak democratization processes for another generation. And the dangers resulting from pursuing unremitting conflict with Russia—both for the Balkans and for the broader East-West relationship—are already immense; lest anyone believe this is too alarmist, the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* recently set the Doomsday Clock to its most advance timing (11:58:30) since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Clearly, a new strategic and intellectual approach is needed for the region. In broad outline, this would entail four elements. First, a realistic understanding of Russian intentions and capabilities in southeastern Europe is needed. Unfortunately, most of the public debate about what Russia is allegedly doing in southeastern Europe is based on the work of petty authoritarians and propagandists trying to tilt western policy to their own advantage. In so doing, they are both sabotaging the chances for real reform and democratization in southeastern Europe, and diverting the West's attention from far more dangerous political and security challenges in the region. In October 2018, U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence noted that "what the Russians are doing pales in comparison to what China is doing across [the United States]."¹⁰⁵ Much the same can be said about Russia in the Balkans. As has been argued above, NATO, the EU, and the U.S. have achieved dominant positions in southeastern Europe. Over the past twenty-five years, using literally all of the military, political/diplomatic and economic levers of power at their disposal, these actors have shaped and transformed the political and strategic landscape of the Balkans according to their own preferences. To paraphrase Pence, what Russia has done in the region (or what it has the capability to do) pales in comparison. Moreover, the obsessive and destructive obsession with Russia in the Balkans is distracting us from other, more dangerous challenges the Balkans will pose to Western interests in the future—the increasingly important role of China in southeastern Europe, and the threat that militant Islamism poses to the continent.

hand-via-serbia.html?_r=0. For a Montenegrin example, see Dusan Stojanovic, "Montenegrin leader: Russia wants to destroy the EU," *The Associated Press* (dateline Podgorica), 14 March 2017, at <https://www.apnews.com/7b98aaea166b4b77ab0145aa91916ab3/AP-Interview:-Montenegro-leader:-Russia-wants-to-destroy-EU>.

¹⁰⁵ See "Remarks by Vice President Pence on the Administration's Policy Toward China" (Washington, DC: The White House, 4 October 2018), at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-administrations-policy-toward-china>.

Second, we need to understand that what is commonly called “the Russian challenge” in the Balkans (and by extension throughout East-Central Europe) is best met by addressing the internal problems countries have with their democratic institutions and economies.¹⁰⁶ Current U.S. and EU policy, based on looking the other way as authoritarian-criminal elites trample on democratic principles and procedures, is doing more damage to southeastern Europe’s nascent democracies than anything the Kremlin is capable of. As one scholar has argued,

EU members have turned a blind eye to the less appetizing aspects of Balkan politics . . . if there is trouble brewing in the Balkans, it has more to do with the perverse effects of the “stability” provided by incumbent governments than with the risk of all-out conflict. Combined with the weakening pull of the EU and the United States’ relative disengagement, democratic decay and insufficient economic growth add up to a general state of stagnation . . . [The West] should take a look at what has gone wrong in the domestic politics of post-Yugoslav states and apply pressure on leaders to take seriously the rule of law, media freedom, and independent civil society.¹⁰⁷

Being serious about respect for democratic principles and the rule of law, in turn, will smooth the way for the third element required for a new approach to southeastern Europe—providing western Balkan states with clear pathways and timetables for joining the EU. Barring a significant change in outlook in Brussels and other EU capitals, it is difficult to see any of the countries in the region joining before 2030. But keeping the reward of EU accession so many electoral cycles down the political and strategic horizon provides little incentive for would-be reformers to enact the difficult reforms needed for EU accession. Clearly, the easiest way to reduce Russian influence in the Balkans is to make these countries a part of the EU, as quickly as possible.

Fourth and finally, foreign policy establishments in both Washington and European capitals need to transcend the view that dealing with Russia in the Balkans is a zero-sum competition. The goal of U.S., EU and NATO policy should be to make Russia part of the solution to difficulties in the Balkans, rather than insist it is part of the problem. As former NATO supreme commander James Stavridis has argued, the EU and NATO can still usefully cooperate with Russia on a number of issues in southeastern Europe.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, the belief that stability in Europe can be achieved without Russia is a dangerous illusion that could lead to even more dangerous consequences. As Robert Legvold has argued, “European security will remain incomplete and subject to rupture until there is a genuine “common security space” incorporating Russia and its neighbors.”¹⁰⁹

There is another important reason to avoid zero-sum competition with Russia in the Balkans. For a host of cultural, historical and religious reasons, many countries and

¹⁰⁶ An argument made by Thomas E. Graham; see “Toward a New Equilibrium in U.S.-Russian Relations,” *The National Interest*, 1 February 2017, at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/toward-new-equilibrium-us-russian-relations-19281>.

¹⁰⁷ See Dimitar Bechev, “The West Needs to Call Russia’s Bluff in the Balkans,” 23 February 2017, at <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-west-needs-to-call-russia-s-bluff-in-the-balkans>. Mark Galeotti argues along similar lines; see “Do the Western Balkans face a coming Balkan storm?”, *op. cit.*, 20.

¹⁰⁸ See Stavridis, “Avoiding the New Cold War with Russia,” *Foreign Policy*, 20 April 2016, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/20/avoiding-the-new-cold-war-with-russia>.

¹⁰⁹ See Robert Legvold, “Include Russia and its Neighbors: How to Move Toward a Common Security Space” in *A New European Order?* (Brussels Forum Paper Series, March 2010), 5.

peoples in southeastern Europe (and particularly the Orthodox Christian populations) have positive attitudes and views towards Russia. To insist that such states make an either-or choice between “the West” and Russia will impose yet another damaging political and social cleavage onto polities and societies still recovering from decades of war, sanctions, and economic depression. There is little understanding in western capitals that the states of southeastern Europe are small, poor countries that cannot afford to deny themselves access to potential markets and capital, and do not have the diplomatic luxury of ignoring major international powers.

Fortunately, some experts have shown themselves to be sensitive to this problem. As Sir Alan Thomson, former UK permanent representative to NATO recently noted, “if NATO governments dwell too much on a NATO/Russia competition, they are unlikely to be doing any favours to stability in the region ... NATO’s interests ... need to be played in a more nuanced way than a straight black and white West/Russia competition.”¹¹⁰ Similarly, Cameron Munter, a former U.S. ambassador to Belgrade has also expressed confidence that the competition between Moscow and Washington in the Balkans need not be zero-sum, for any of the parties involved. As regards Serbia for instance, Munter argues,

Russia is a friend of Serbia, just as the United States is a friend of Serbia. I think it’s wise for Serbia to work with both countries, since both are on record as supporting the Serbian goal of joining the EU and contributing to peace and stability in the Balkans the best contribution America can make is by increasing investment, taking advantage of the talent countries like Serbia offer, and the promising sectors of the economy that have enormous potential for success.¹¹¹

Given the current political and media environment in Washington and other Western capitals, there is little reason to believe that politicians and diplomats will have the strategic foresight and political courage to move in these directions. Until such time, unfortunately, we can expect the western Balkans drift and descent into illiberal democracy to continue.

¹¹⁰ See Thomson’s comments in “The UK and the Future of the Western Balkans” (London: House of Lords, Select Committee on International Relations, HL Paper 53, 10 January 2018), paragraph 81.

¹¹¹ See Cameron Munter’s interview with the *Tanjug* news agency, “Cameron Munter Discusses Western Balkans,” *EastWest.ngo*, at <https://www.eastwest.ngo/idea/cameron-munter-discusses-western-balkans>.

SHAHLA KAZIMOVA

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

***Independence by Muslim Communists: “Narimanovshchina”,
the Downfall of National Communists in Azerbaijan***

After the Soviet occupation of Azerbaijan in April 1920, the country had undergone major sovietization. The troops of the 11th Red Army, which were allegedly supposed to be sent to support fighting in Anatolia, but stayed in place, brought the totalitarian reigns of terror and repression. An occupation regime was introduced in the country. Despite formal independence Azerbaijan was subject to the decisions of the Russian Bolsheviks. In order to take over the country, the Soviets proclaimed a local puppet-government on April 28, 1920, comprised of local communists, with a prominent local politician – Nariman Narimanov – as the chairman. He was also appointed the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.

The choice of Narimanov was not incidental. He was the most renowned and influential Azerbaijani communist, heard of both in the Caucasus and among central authorities in Moscow. He was in favour of the sovietization of Azerbaijan, which he deemed as the first step towards spreading revolution among the Muslim East.¹ Recent studies on the history of the sovietisation of Azerbaijan clearly show that the Soviet government wanted to use the leader of the Azerbaijan communists as a symbol of the revolution from the very beginning, although it did not intend to give him real political power. Stalin's letter of August 16, 1919, to Foreign Affairs Commissioner Georgy Chicherin, testifies to these plans:

Karakhan's² presence in the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter Narko-mindel), Armenian in origin, the only “man from the East” who was supposed to represent Muslim nations outside, does not sound good, distorts harmony in our Eastern policy, weakens the strength and effect of our policy in the eyes of the nations of the East and above all Muslims...

¹ Tadeusz Świętochowski, *Azerbejdżan i Rosja. Kolonializm, Islam i Narodowość w Podzielonym Kraju*, (Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, 1998), 107.

² Lev Mikhailovich Karakhan/ *Karakhanian* (1889-1937) – an ethnic Armenian--born Russian revolutionary and a Soviet diplomat. In 1918-1920 and 1927-1934, he was the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

*Taking this into account, during a visit in Moscow, I proposed to Lenin's companion to raise the question in the Central Committee of changing Karakhan to someone from the Muslims, even with medium party preparation. Narimanov is for me one such Muslim, and this is not a problem if he lacks a global political vision: after all, he will not lead the politics but CC and Narkomindel. **Narimanov is important as a banner.** Such a change of scenery, or at least the removal of Karakhan from the East Department and bringing a Muslim to the forefront, I find an absolute necessity. If this is interesting, I can inform you that comrade Lenin expressed his full support. Such a change would be immediately noticed among Muslims (...). To object to the fact that Narimanov does not know the Far East, that he is old and slow, for me is not decisive, because I never thought that Narimanov would be in charge of Eastern policy. I repeat, he is **just a banner and decoration** for me.³*

In the light of these data, questions arise about who Narimanov was. An idealist, naive romantic, cynic or cheated politician? To try to answer these questions, it is worth a closer look. Because Narimanov was the face of the sovietisation of Azerbaijan, the answer to the above questions will also answer to whether the Azerbaijani Socialist Republic was indeed independent.

Narimanov was born in April 1870 in Tiflis (Tbilisi) as the last child in a family of eleven.⁴ In 1879 he was enrolled in a Quranic school in Tiflis and since 1885 he continued his studies in the Russian language, in the Transcaucasian teachers seminar in Gori. After the seminar, he was sent to a newly opened school in the village of Kyzyl-Ajyli, in Borchali, in the Tiflis Governorate. Despite great commitment, it was very difficult for the young teacher. He met the resistance of local peasants who did not want to send their children to school. During this period, the so-called Russian-Tatar/Azerbaijani schools⁵ were created in Baku. Narimanov decided to take on a real teaching career, so in 1891 he travelled to Baku, where he became actively involved in educational activities. Thanks to his efforts, the first public library and reading room with literature in Azerbaijan was created with free admission for the poor. He wrote three comedies that he exhibited for charity, helping students from poor families. In 1896-1898, he wrote "Bahadur and Sona", the first novel in Azerbaijani literature. He was the first to translate into Azerbaijani the comedy of Nikolay Gogol "Revuzor" (Government Inspector). Narimanov also made great contributions to language. He actively participated in discussions on the literary language. The development of society was rightly associated with education, which, according to him, had to be conducted in a language understandable to the broad masses:

At present, nations with high culture strive to make their language and writing simpler. The simpler the spelling, the faster the language spreads, the faster the works written in that language spread⁶.

³ Dzhamil Gasanly, *Vneshniiia politika Azerbaydjana v gody sovietskoi vlasti (1920-1939)*, vol. 2, Istoriiia diplomatii Azerbaidzhanksoj Respubliki v trekh tomakh, (Moskva: Izdatiel'stvo "Flinta", 2013), 26-27.

⁴ Narimanov, *Izbrannnye proizvedeniia*, vol. 1 (1890-1917), (Baku: Azerbaidzanskoie gosudarstvennoie izdatiel'stvo, 1988), 40.

⁵ The Russian authorities had opened the so-called "Russo-Tatar" schools that were meant to assimilate the Turkic ethnicities living in Russia, many Muslims, apart from having to learn Russian, gained the opportunity to learn secular sciences – geography, mathematics, chemistry, physics, literature, etc. The authorities did not recognize or distinguish Turkic-speaking Muslims and called them all "Tatars", thus the popular naming of the schools.

⁶ Narimanov, *Izbrannnye proizvedeniia*, 49.

In 1899, he wrote the "Grammar of the Turkic-Azerbaijani language" and a self-study manual of the Azerbaijani language for Russian speakers. He also planned to publish an educational and pedagogical magazine in Azerbaijani. However, he did not obtain the consent of the Censorship Committee.

In his autobiography of 1895, Narimanov wrote that for the last five years he worked in the gymnasium continuously, even during the summer, replacing the director. He did not hide that he did it for personal reasons. During the holidays, he gave private lessons to be able to maintain a large family. In addition to his mother and aunt, he also maintained his sister with 8 children⁷. During this period, he could be described as a social activist, pedagogue-reformer, however, the dynamics of events in Russia before the revolution of 1905 politically activated the entire Muslim intelligentsia, including Narimanov.

In 1902, Narimanov left for Odessa, where he studied medicine at Odessa University. An irony of fate allowed him to study thanks to the scholarship granted to him by the Azerbaijani oil magnate and philanthropist Zeynalabdin Taghiyev – a representative of the social group that Nariman would fight against as a politician in the future. During the pre-revolutionary tension in Russia, the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) was active among the workers of the oil factories in Baku. The Russian socialists had a branch here. Many Azerbaijani activists saw in this movement the potential for the modernization spurt of their society. Narimanov was among them, in 1906, he translated the program of this party into the Azerbaijani language. At the same time, he became involved in the development of social democracy in Iran, becoming one of the ideologues and activists of the Iranian social-democratic party "Mujakhid"⁸. In addition to ideological support, he also helped the Iranian democrats in providing weapons. An analysis of this period clearly shows that he linked the effects of the Russian revolution with Iran, at least with its Azerbaijani provinces. In my opinion, this fact of cooperation with both Russian socialists and supporters of the constitution in Iran sheds light on the choices and decisions he made during the sovietisation of Azerbaijan. During the first Russian revolution, he clearly had social democratic views, he was closer to the Menshevik faction. He was associated with the milieu of Azerbaijani democratic intelligentsia. In 1908 he graduated, returned to Baku, where he began to work as a doctor in a municipal hospital. After a few months, he was arrested and sent to Astrakhan for 5 years. In 1914 he returned to Baku, where, besides medical work, he actively cooperated with the Bolsheviks. He began rising in the leadership of the Baku branch of the RSDLP (b). The Russian socialists did not have much support among the local Muslim population. Throughout his entire political career, Narimanov was convinced that Muslim communities required a different approach, other methods of cooperation due to the too-traditional model of life. The result for this reasoning was the reconstruction of the independent party "Hummat" (Hümmət – strife, will) in 1917 instead of incorporation with the Baku branch of the RSDLP. Narimanov himself became the head of the Party's executive committee. After the split in the RSDLP in June 1917, Narimanov along with Baku's hummatists followed the Bolsheviks⁹. In the same year, he also started publishing a newspaper with the same name. We can suppose that the repression he suffered and, above all, the

⁷ Narimanov, *Izbrannyye proizvedeniia*, 41.

⁸ Warrior [for freedom]

⁹ Świętochowski, *Azerbejdżan i Rosja. Kolonializm, Islam i Narodowość w Podzielnym Kraju*, 80

fact that he was detached from the milieu of national social democrats (later nationalists) moved him slowly towards the Bolsheviks. Moreover, a prolonged stay in the multinational environment of the Russian Socialists caused him to perceive the revolution and its effects in a wider context.

It should be noted here that Narimanov, similarly to other Muslim communists, such as the Tatar activist Mirsaid Sultan-Galiyev, transferred European socialism into the realms of Eastern reality¹⁰. The Russian Bolsheviks looked more at the world through the prism of class struggle than their Muslim colleagues who were seeking equal rights for nations. They interpreted the "class" struggle as the liberation movement of colonized nations against rich, highly industrialized countries whose prosperity rested on colonial policy. They did not dream about the liberation of the proletariat which, after all, hardly existed in these societies due to poor socio-economic and political development. The non-Russian Socialists were tempted by the slogans of their Russian colleagues, proclaiming the equality of all citizens, regardless of ethnic, racial or religious differences. I think they sincerely believed in the Bolshevik program, which was to make an educational revolution and, as a result, a civilizational jump for Muslim nations. My thesis is not based solely on the "faith" of the good intentions of Muslim communists, but on the analysis of the development of Azerbaijan's various political trends at the beginning of the 20th century. It is enough to recall that one of the founders of the first Muslim Social Democratic Party *Hummət* (Hümmət), Mehemed Emin Rasulzade, was later the leader of the national party "Musavat". He was also one of the founders of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic and the leader of anti-communist emigration in the inter-war years. "(...) we should be the allies of others, because we have common demands" – wrote Rasulzade in December 1906 in the newspaper "Takamul". Here we can also see a comparison with Józef Piłsudski, who recalled his teenage years as follows: "(...) During that time, the struggle of the Russian *Narodnaya Volya* with the tsar was heard all over the world. (...) At that time, socialist fashion came. The fashion for us, Vilnius people was coming from the East, from St. Petersburg... St. Petersburg socialism... gave me a certain guiding thread, a certain worldview."¹¹

I think that a very important date in the political orientation of the Azerbaijani intelligentsia was the year 1908, when after the July coup, *The Young Turks from the Committee of Union and Progress* restored the constitution, removed the sultan, and came to power.¹² For Rasulzade and many other Azerbaijani politicians, the Turkish model of change under conditions of disappointment with the Russian revolution of 1905 had become more attractive. In the same year, Narimanov was sent to Astarakhania. Geographically, he was not far from Baku, but he found himself outside the Baku mainstream. Unlike the Azerbaijani nationalists, he began to perceive a guarantee of changes in the Bolsheviks, and more precisely – in Lenin.¹³ We can assume that on the way to power he treated Bolshevik ideas instrumentally. Azerbaijan was to ignite the fire of revolution throughout the Muslim East

¹⁰ Leah Feldman, "Red Jihad: Translating Communism in the Muslim Caucasus," *Boundary 2*, vol. 43, no. 3 (August 2016), 228-230.

¹¹ Tadeusz Schaetzel, „Prace Józefa Piłsudskiego w latach 1892-1901”, *Niepodległość*, vol. III (1951), 15.

¹² See more: Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks: The Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics, 1908-1914* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

¹³ Sara Brinegar, "The Oil Deal: Nariman Narimanov and the Sovietization of Azerbaijan", *Slavic Review* 76, no 2, (Summer 2017), 372-394.

and he personally, supported by Lenin, was to lead this... Despite condemning the events of March 1918¹⁴, when the Bolsheviks and the Armenian militias slaughtered the civilian Azerbaijani population in Baku and other cities of Azerbaijan, he was still appointed the People's Commissar of the National Economy in the Baku Soviet, an executive authority of the Baku Commune¹⁵. Most likely at that time he still believed he could fix the mistakes that, in his opinion, were the result of not taking into account local circumstances and peculiarities. To me personally, this was an episode in his life which is the most difficult to comprehend and explain.

The analysis of events that took place during the Soviet period clearly shows that he misidentified the real political goals of the Bolsheviks¹⁶. According to Stalin's letter quoted above, in 1919 the Moscow leadership did not intend to give him real power, while in the session of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party on August 23, 1921, he argued that Lenin gave him a free hand in the exercise of power, asking only for a written report¹⁷.

Narimanov did not see a fundamental contradiction between sovereignty and the sovietisation of the country. He believed that including Azerbaijan in Bolshevik Russia would mean a return to colonial policy from the time of Tsarist Russia. He had the concept of an independent socialist state that would form a federal union with Bolshevik Russia. For this purpose, he undertook talks at the higher level of the party in the summer of 1919. He managed to break the resistance of the Politburo and, above all, Lenin on the issue of the separateness of Azerbaijan. He argued that for the sake of the revolution, Azerbaijan should enter into an economic and political alliance with Bolshevik Russia as an independent state. He used the argument of the cultural distinctiveness of the Muslim population also in the discussion on the independence of party structures. He argued that in Muslim countries it is impossible to introduce governments represented by politicians of different faiths and culturally alien. In his opinion, where the Russian communists will not have access, Muslim *hummatists*, as their own, will have an open door in front of them, through which they will introduce the idea of communism¹⁸.

For the Bolsheviks at the beginning of their rule, the main issue was control over the oil industry of Azerbaijan. Not having his own strong base in Baku, Lenin was forced to cooperate with Narimanov. They also needed him to legitimize Eastern policy in the eyes of those societies. In the summer of 1919, Narimanov became the head of the Eastern depart-

¹⁴ Solmaz Rustamova-Togidi, *Mart 1918 g., Baku: Azerbaidzhanskie pogromy v dokumentakh*, (Baku, 2009); Ajdyn Balajev, *Fevral'skaia rievoliutsia i natsional'nyje okrainy. Martovskie sobytija 1918 goda v Azerbajdzanie*, (Moskow, 2008); Jagub Mahmudov (ed), *Азербайджанская Демократическая Республика. Архивные документы Великобритании*, Baku 2008, 70; Richard Pipes, *The Formation of Soviet Union. Communism and Nationalism 1917-1923*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 200-201; Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Baku Commune, 1917-1918: Class and Nationality in the Russian Revolution*, (Princeton, 1972); Audrey L. Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks: Power and Identity under Russian Rule*, (Stanford University, 1992), 86; Charles King, *The Ghost of Freedom: The History of the Caucasus*, (Oxford, 2008), 167.

¹⁵ On the history of the Baku Commune see: Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Baku Commune, 1917-1918: Class and Nationality in the Russian Revolution*, (Princeton, 1972).

¹⁶ See: Atakhan Pashayev, "Perspective – Nariman Narimanov. Early Years of Bolsheviks – Wrong Directio", *Azerbaijan International*, 2005 (13.4), 36-39.

¹⁷ Jörg Baberowski, *Vrag est' vezde. Stalinizm na Kavkaze* (Moscow: Rossiyskaya politicheskaya entsiklopediya, 2010), 265.

¹⁸ Baberowski, 232.

ment at the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. This unit was tasked with monitoring the current situation in the Caucasus, Middle East, and providing information to its headquarters. In addition, he worked for a certain time as a deputy of the People's Commissar of Nationalities, (Narkomnats – Народный комиссариат по делам национальностей) he was responsible for the Muslim section. These steps assured Narimanov about the correctness of his choice. He must have felt fulfilled since he was responsible for paving the way for the revolution in the Muslim East and at the same time, pursuing his own dreams. Meanwhile, in July 1919, the Baku Communist Party Committee (b) adopted a resolution on the unification of all communist parties operating in Azerbaijan into one party. Moscow expected that Narimanov would effectively consolidate all socialist groups and thus create a local communist party. In January 1920, he managed to persuade colleagues from the *Hummet* and *Adalat* parties to self-dissolve and create only one organization¹⁹. Already by February of that year, a congress of the Azerbaijani Communist Party took place, which absorbed the members of the *Hummat* party, *Adalat* and the Baku branch of the *Russian Communist Party*. The illusory independence was very much taken care of which is why the Azerbaijani communists were part of the presidium. Mirza Davud Huseynov²⁰ was elected the head of the presidium. Mirza Davuda's election is clear in light of Stalin's opinion about him as a "less experienced and less important" politician²¹. Huseynov was among those young communists who had a sceptical attitude to the issue of the country's independence. Even before the occupation, they openly declared that Azerbaijan should be joined to Soviet Russia²². In other words, the head of the "Azerbaijani" Communist Party had to be someone less independent and more loyal to Moscow. Huseynov joined the Provisional Revolutionary Committee, a body that was formed on April 27, 1920, after the overthrow of the democratic government of Azerbaijan. On 28 May, in the newly formed Council of People's Commissars (government), he took the office of the Deputy Chairman and the Commissioner for Finance. The composition of the government gave Narimanov and his supporters a reason for satisfaction and proof of the rightness of their choice. They had a vision to build a strong sovereign state on the foundations of national communism. Narimanov became the head of the Council of People's Commissars and at the same time took over as Foreign Affairs Commissioner. Although Azerbaijan's foreign policy was reoriented to Muslim countries, an area in which Narimanov had the most experience of all commissioners, it was Huseynov who replaced him after just 5 days. This personnel change in fact showed Moscow's true plans for Azerbaijan. Thus, when Narimanov arrived in Baku on May 16, his cabinet was already set up.

There were not many Azerbaijani communists, and the largest representative group was associated with the capital. Baku had enormous strategic importance for the Bolshe-

¹⁹ The social-democratic party of Iranian immigrants *Adalat* (Justice) was founded in Baku in 1916. The organization cooperated closely with the *Hummet* party and the Baku branch of the RSDLP (b).

²⁰ Mirza Davud Huseynov (1894-1938) – Azerbaijani socialist, graduate of the Moscow Commercial Institute, member of the *Hummat* party. In 1921, the National Commissar of Finance and National Commissar of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan. From 1930 to 1933 M.D Huseynov was the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Tajikistan. In 1937 he was arrested and executed on March 21, 1938.

²¹ Gasantly, 28.

²² Nariman Narimanov, "K istorii nashey revolutsii v okrainakh", in: *Nariman Narimanov. Pisma i nekotorie dokumenty po karabakhskomu voprosu*, ed. Ramiz Mekhtiyev (Baku: Nurlan, 2002), 13.

viks because of its oil reserves. Therefore, in order to ensure control and limit the influence of Azerbaijani communists in the presidium of the Baku's Communist Party Committee (b), Russian and Armenian activists dominated. In the 1920s, such Armenian revolutionaries as Anastas Mikoyan, Sarkis Sarkisov and Levon Mirzoyan headed the Presidium of the Municipal Committee of the Party. In addition, Moscow controlled the Azerbaijani communists through the members of the Politburo of the Azerbaijani Communist Party – e.g. Grigory Kaminsky, and from 1921 Sergei Kirov. The Central Committee of the Party was dominated by Russians and Armenians who provided communication between the party leadership of the republic and the central Politburo. This meant that the national communists were in power, but they could not rule by themselves, they were under constant supervision.

The situation described above sharpened the conflicts between the Moscow leadership and the national communists headed by Narimanov. Above all, the dispute concerned the methods of sovietisation and the form it was supposed to have in Azerbaijan. "Azerbaijan is robbed from everywhere, people from the right and from the left are shot. These were the words comrades greeted me with [at the station, just after arriving in Baku – SK],” wrote Narimanov in a letter to Stalin²³. From the first days of the revolution, the country underwent sovietisation, which was carried out by means of intimidation, terror, mass murders, and plunder. A special branch of the XI Red Army acted as a terrorist organization. Formed in the first days of the occupation the *Cheka*²⁴ and the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal ("courts") became terrifying tools of repression. Compared to other ethnic groups, the Azerbaijani intelligentsia, which was suspected of ties to the previous government and the Musavat party, suffered the greatest losses. A British officer in a secret report sent to London reported that the confiscation of houses, offices, and companies was accompanied by the removal of furniture and all equipment. According to the new law, no one could have more than one set of clothes to be exchanged; it was also forbidden to make food supplies. For this purpose, mass searches in homes were conducted²⁵. The Cheka's officers and soldiers of the Red Army did not take into account the local customs, even got into women's rooms, where, under the facade of helping workers, they robbed personal-use items, valuables, even earrings from women's ears, "picked up the Muslim women's *tumans* (skirts, which equalled [in Muslim society – SK] with the shame of a woman).²⁶" The acts of discrimination also affected Azerbaijani workers. In September 1920, expropriation was applied. Officially, the action was aimed at collecting surplus rural production and passing food to the neediest. In fact, this action led to the plunder and terrorization of Azerbaijani villages by soldiers of the Red Army. Deprived of regular pay, soldiers very often appropriated food or items for themselves, and carried out attacks in the countryside. Azerbaijani historian Jamil Hasanli, in his monograph on the subject of Azerbaijan foreign policy in the interwar period, quotes an interesting passage from a witness's memoirs of those days:

²³ Ibid., 12.

²⁴ Abbreviation of " Всероссийская чрезвычайная комиссия по борьбе с контрреволюцией и саботажем" (All-Russian Extraordinary Commission) – soviet secret police organization, which was supposed to fight counter-revolution.

²⁵ Gasanly, 56.

²⁶ Nariman Narimanov, "K istorii nashej revolutsii v okrainakh", 29-30.

After filling their own pockets, the occupiers began sending everything that was left to Russia – household goods, carpets, valuables – everything that can be turned into money is transported by steam locomotives and wagons that are decorated with cynical banners to fool people. "Gift of Soviet Azerbaijan for Russia"²⁷

Deprived of the crops and tools of work, the peasants complained to the national authorities about famine, begging for the abolition of forced harvests. Narimanov informed Lenin in writing about starving regions. Moskva did not answer, and her representatives in the party such as Kirov ignored these signals. Believing yet in his driving force, Narimanov issued a decree to stop requisitioning and proposed a voluntary principle. At the same time, the Second Congress of the Azerbaijani Communist Party voted on his proposal to restore free trade and stop requisition. Both the decisions and resolutions were ignored and rejected by the Caucasian Central Committee of the Communist Party (b). This resulted in Azerbaijani workers leaving the ranks of the party. In May 1920, an uprising broke out in Ganja. In the summer, the fire of the rebellion took in more regions. The Red Army pacified the uprisings in a brutal way. The helplessness of the republic's authorities against the envoys from Moscow made it clear to the Azerbaijani communists that their sovereignty was paper-based. Despite having created a local institution in Azerbaijan, Russia still deemed the country as its province²⁸.

The Azerbaijani national communists headed by Narimanov, with reluctance and irritation, accepted the decision of the Centre about the establishment of the Transcaucasian Federation. For the elites of other republics, the idea of the federation was also a surprise. Stalin wanted to unite republics primarily for economic reasons. He believed that the leadership of individual republics would inhibit the process of creating a common economy. He claimed that functioning within one state would eliminate ethnic conflicts. Narimanov was against this, he believed that the economy of Azerbaijan would lose and, above all, it would minimize the sovereignty of the country. He made his remarks in a letter to Lenin. In his opinion, if the federation was to be established, its centre should be in Baku, not Tiflis. Azerbaijani communists believed that Azerbaijan had sufficiently helped neighbouring republics and that, in order to develop, it should be an independent country. Despite the opposition of Narimanov and others, representatives from the ACP under orders from Moscow on March 12, 1922, signed in Tiflis a resolution creating the Federative Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia (ФСССРЗ). On December 13, the name was changed to the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (ЗСФССР). A federal government was formed – an Executive Committee and a Presidium, which included three representatives from each republic. The Republics relinquished some of their functions, such as defence, finance, and foreign policy to the federal government in Tiflis. Federal institutions were superior to domestic ones. I think that depriving the country of tools for conducting even a provisional foreign policy dispelled all the illusions of the national communists concerning independence.

Another point of disagreement between the national communists and headquarters was the question of respect for the religious and cultural identity of Muslim nations. Muslim

²⁷ Gasanli, 31.

²⁸ Ibid., 30-31.

communists were advocates of the idea of including the clergy in the process of sovietisation. Narimanov also proposed to seek the support of *mujtahids* in Iran. In his opinion, it was a mistake to forbid Koranic schools. He opposed the decision of then First Secretary of the Central Committee of the ACP Kirov, to forbid the procession of "Shakhsey-Vakhsey", the self-flagellation during the month of Muharram in Baku, when the Shiites celebrated mourning after the death of the grandson of the prophet Imam Husayn. Narimanov rightly argued that the ban alone would do nothing but strengthen antagonism. In exchange, he offered to educate the masses and collaborate with the clergy²⁹.

Frivolous interpretation of socialism and the excessive independence of Narimanov irritated the centre.³⁰ In April 1922, according to the decision of the authorities, he took part in a global economic conference in Genie. His presence at the German-Soviet proceedings did not matter, but his absence in Baku was necessary, while the party ranks were reorganized and his supporters removed. In the spring of 1922, Narimanov became co-chairman of the Presidium of the Transcaucasian Federation Council. In this way he was removed from national politics. He tried to reverse his "promotion", but to no avail. Stalin tried even more, and in fact, advanced him even further from Baku³¹.

The twelfth congress of the Russian Communist Party began the fateful, ethnic policy called *Korenizatsiya* (nativization). However, the central government and national communists understood their assumptions differently. The Bolsheviks spoke of the need to stop ethnic conflicts, to ensure peace between the Caucasian nations. The policy assumed the creation of a single economic space. Narimanov, Sultan-Galiyev and other national communists opposed the vision of Stalin. In their opinion, the removal of borders would actually exacerbate the conflicts between nations. According to them, peaceful coexistence was guaranteed by the original Bolshevik declarations about the right to self-determination of nations and respect for the sovereignty of individual nations. Sultan-Galiyev spoke about Russian chauvinism, while Narimanov wrote to Stalin about "the world partitioning policy of headquarters", "about special rights of the great Russian nation"³². For his criticism, Sultan-Galiyev was expelled from the party and later arrested. Together with other national communists, he was accused of "bourgeois chauvinism" or national deviationism [natsional-uklonizm].³³

In June 1923, Stalin received a 40-page letter from Narimanov entitled "On the history of our revolution in the periphery," in which he pointed to the mistakes made during the sovietisation of Azerbaijan. The manifesto openly criticized Moscow's interference in the republic's affairs, favouring Armenian communists in the Baku Committee, and discrimination toward the Azerbaijani language and Azerbaijani workers. He wrote that Azerbaijani workers were forced to speak orally and write in Russian, because the Russians, Jews and Armenians did not know Azerbaijani. In schools, the number of hours of Azerbaijani was reduced, and replaced by Russian³⁴. He considered the party leadership's decision to exterminate religious rites, not respecting local traditions as a harmful act. He charged

²⁹ Nariman Narimanov, „K istorii nashej revolutsii v ukrainakh”, 52-54.

³⁰ Baberowski, 269.

³¹ Ibid., 277.

³² Nariman Narimanov, „K istorii nashej revolutsii v ukrainakh”, 45.

³³ The term was introduced by Stalin to determine the pursuit of national independence.

³⁴ Baberowski, 285.

the Armenians of the Baku Committee of the party – Mikoyan, Sarkis and Mirzoyan with responsibility for the wrong policy. He recalled the tragic events of March 1918. The memories of these tragic days were still alive. Therefore, the appointment of Armenians to such high decision-making positions was considered extremely irresponsible and tactless³⁵.

Criticism also affected power in the Centre. Narimanov accused them of colonial arrogance. He wrote that national deviationism creates the centre itself and its representatives in the republics. "The defence of local [national – SKJ] interests is defined by deviationism, but by defending the interests of Soviet Russia at the expense of the periphery – an act of internationalism."³⁶ Narimanov pointed to the fact that his supporters were expelled from the party, he demanded a special commission to be sent to Baku. The Politburo set up a commission of inquiry which together with the Central Committee of the ACP began the session on July 12, 1923. There was a wave of criticism for Narimanov. The opposition inside the ACP became active. The representative of the left wing of the party, Ruhulla Akhundov, accused Narimanov of megalomania, claimed that Narimanov considered himself an "Azerbaijani Lenin", and behaved like a "little dictator."³⁷ Despite the tense situation, Narimanov did not renounce his words. He stated that if he was removed from the party for criticism, he would acknowledge that such times had come. The culprit of the whole situation and conflict was recognized by Narimanov himself, to whom a warning was issued. We can suppose that the most humiliating aspect for him was the ban on returning to his homeland allegedly to prevent conflicts. He wrote a sharp letter to the Politburo, in which he described the commission's work as a staged battue. He did not give up, he repeated that he fully and knowingly signed his name once more under his report, knowing that he would be punished. He expressed indignation that he was forbidden to enter Azerbaijan. As one of the Chairmen of the Executive Committee USSR, he represented all three republics, although he did not have the right to enter Azerbaijan. He considered this situation to be abnormal and asked in his letter to dismiss him from his positions.

The Politburo rejected his request for resignation. Although Narimanov never submitted self-criticism, unlike Galiyev, he was not excluded from the party nor was he arrested. Moreover, in May 1924, he prepared an annex to the memorandum, where he repeated the accusations in an even more severe manner. Formally, the "leader of the East" had not lost his position. He was needed as a "decoration", a "banner" of Muslim communism. After the death of Lenin, Moscow began to build the cult of the individual around the "leader of the East" even more. In February 1925, the Politburo ordered a celebration of 30 years of Narimanov's literary activity. His work was published in Russian, his play "Nadir shah" was produced in the theatre, and in one work even the statement "Lenin of the East" appeared.

Narimanov died unexpectedly on March 15, 1925, on a street near the Kremlin. He was buried with great pomp within the Kremlin walls. The burial scenario was very similar to Lenin's mourning. It did not bother anyone that the deceased was a Muslim, he was buried according to the Russian tradition. For 24 hours, Narimanov's body was exhibited in the column hall at the the House of Soviets. On March 22, his body was moved to Red Square

³⁵ Ibid., 287.

³⁶ Nariman Narimanov, „K istorii nashej revoliutsii v okrainakh”, 44.

³⁷ Baberowski, 291.

and flags were lowered throughout the USSR, but even his corpse was not be returned to Azerbaijan.

In the 1930s, there was silence, the leader of the east was not mentioned, and if it was, it was only in the context of "*narimanovshchini*" – chauvinistic, reprehensible, criminal activities against the Soviet nation.

References

- Ahmad, Feroz, *The Young Turks: The Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics, 1908-1914*, London: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Altstadt, Audrey L., *The Azerbaijani Turks: Power and Identity under Russian Rule*, Stanford University, 1992.
- Baberowski, Jörg, *Vrag est' vezde. Stalinizm na Kavkaze*, Moscow: Rossiyskaya politicheskaya entsiklopediya, 2010.
- Balajev, Ajdyn, *Fevral'skaia rievoliutsia i natsional'nyje okrainy. Martovskie sobytija 1918 goda v Azerbajdzanie*, Moscow: Izdatielstvo "Flinta", 2008.
- Brinegar, Sara "The Oil Deal: Nariman Narimanov and the Sovietization of Azerbaijan", *Slavic Review* 76, no 2, Summer 2017, 372-394.
- Feldman, Leah, "Red Jihad: Translating Communism in the Muslim Caucasus," *Boundary 2*, vol. 43, no. 3 August 2016, 221-249.
- Gasanly, Dzhamil, *Vneshniaja politika Azierbaydjana v gody sovietskoj vlasti (1920-1939), vol. 2, Istoriia diplomatii Azerbaidzhanskoj Respubliki v trekh tomakh*, Moscow: Izdatielstvo "Flinta", 2013.
- King Charles, *The Ghost of Freedom: The History of the Caucasus*, (Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Mahmudov, Jagub, ed. *Азербайджанская Демократическая Республика. Архивные документы*, Baku: Institut Istorii NANA, 2008
- Nariman Narimanov, *Izbrannyje proizvedeniia, vol. 1 (1890-1917)*, Baku: Azerbaidzhanskoie gosudarstvennoie izdatiel'stvo, 1988.
- Nariman Narimanov, "K istorii nashej revolutsii v okrainakh", in: *Nariman Narimanov. Pisma i nekotore dokumenty po karabakhskomu voprosu*, ed. Ramiz Mekhtiyev, Baku: Nurlan, 2002.
- Pipes, Richard, *The Formation of Soviet Union. Communism and Nationalism 1917-1923*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Rustamova-Togidi, Solmaz, *Mart 1918 g., Baku: Azerbaidzhanskije pogromy v dokumentakh*, Baku, 2009.
- Schaetzl, Tadeusz, „Prace Józefa Piłsudskiego w latach 1892-1901”, *Niepodległość*, vol. III, 1951.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor, *The Baku Commune, 1917-1918: Class and Nationality in the Russian Revolution*, Princeton University Press, 1972.
- Świętochowski, Tadeusz, *Azerbejdżan i Rosja. Kolonializm, Islam i Narodowość w Podzielnym Kraju*, Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, 1998.

ANTONIO NEVESCANIN

ŁÓDŹ UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Creating a Modern City: Gentrification or Revitalization in the City of Łódź

Abstract: *This paper describes the process of revitalization in post-socialist countries, using the example of the city of Lodz, in Poland. The tendencies of urban planners and local authorities in countries with a transition economy, when it comes to revitalization, is to follow the pattern of western cities, and for eastern cities to be the most "west-like". However, following this set of rules of western revitalization is often problematic due to the different socio-economic structure. Problems which generally followed the revitalization in western cities, such as gentrification, studentification, touristification, also happen in cities in the east, but they happen with different intensity. This paper explains how the process of revitalization is shaping the new identity of Lodz, and which negative side-effects of revitalization occur during the process. To which amount should the city rely on private investments, and how to control the development of new and regenerated city areas? What is the role of local authorities and urban planners and architects in the process of revitalization? Defining gentrification and understanding the positive and negative effects of the process of revitalization is vital in creating the new urban plans and rules for "new cities" - cities in post-socialist countries, which still have a transition economy.*

When in 1989 communism collapsed in central and eastern Europe the new life of then freshly post-communist countries started. This event brought about changes on all socio-economic aspects of life, and also meant a new life in cities. As the structure and politics changed it was natural that urban planning would follow, city planning would fall under a different administration and the new tasks of local government could then be seen as "creating the new cities". The main aspiration of the freshly formed system was based on a structure similar to the West, which resulted in the processes of privatization and reprivatization. In the new socio-economic circumstances creating a new identity for the city also meant creating a new identity for the nation. Changes to the city happened on a much

smaller scale, such as changing the names of city streets and squares, to bigger scale changes, such as new urbanism and urban renewal and regeneration projects.

Processes that might have already been occurring in the West, in the manner of urban planning, happened with a delay in these countries, so it is not surprising that not until recently cities of Eastern and Central Europe weren't bothered by "western" terms in city development, such as revitalization and gentrification.

To understand the phenomenon of the term gentrification it should first be explained. Throughout history, since first Glass coined the term "gentrification" in 1964 to describe the influx of middle-class people displacing lower-class worker residents in urban neighborhoods using the example of London (Glass, 1964), the definition has been changing. In the late 80s gentrification was considered as making neighborhoods more elite and prestigious (Ley 1981, 1986, Chenu, Tabard 1993), while later in the 90s it was considered as a positive process of making neighborhoods better, with the negative side effect of a possible displacement of lower income residents (Cameron 1992, Bailey, Robertson 1996).

Gentrification is understood today as a phenomenon consisting of: (1) reinvestment of capital; (2) rise in social and material status of a neighborhood; (3) changes in the townscape; (4) direct or indirect displacement of lower-income residents by wealthier groups (Davidson and Lees, 2005). Today, besides the middle class, which had already become the leading group of gentrifiers half a century ago (Glass, 1964), many other social groups have participated in this process – from students (Smith, 2005) to the highest-income residents (Butler and Lees, 2006). Neighborhood improvement (or revitalization), however, is not synonymous with gentrification. Neighborhood reinvestment can occur and improve the quality of life for existing residents without the widespread displacement associated with gentrification. Looking at the example of Berlin's Kreuzberg district, which has been fully revitalized and on a smaller scale is still going through the process. Revitalization in Kreuzberg according to Drapella-Hermansdorfer (2005) has gone well and has been a successful process, without many negatives, such as gentrification, following. Drapella-Hermansdorfer (2005) says that revitalization was based on the idea of the participation of inhabitants, maintaining the technical standards, environmentally friendly solutions and an open process of taking decisions. The process of revitalization was realized in consultation with the local community (participatory design) and each of the buildings were treated individually. During the renovation activities, the local economy was supported – local services were used and building materials were provided by local suppliers.

Half a century after Glass mentioned the term gentrification, whilst continually spreading globally, it has come to Poland, and other post-communist countries with transition economies. Quick liberalization of the economy, the reintroduction of land rent, privatization and restitution of residential buildings and land have created an opportunity for profit-driven regeneration of attractive city center areas in larger post-socialist cities (Kovács, 1998; Sýkora, 2005). Inner cities in East-Central Europe appeared to be perfect spaces for gentrification, which soon began its progress and brought specific social and spatial transformations (Smith, 1996). Gentrification is not the only process to result in the transformation of inner cities after the fall of communism (Jakobczyk-Gryszkiewicz, Szybel-Boberek, Wolaniuk 2017). The social status of centrally located neighborhoods and the housing in city centers are also undergoing changes as a consequence of such processes as: regeneration and revitalisation (Kiss, 2002; Scott and Kuhn, 2012), commercialisation (Temelova,

2007), demographic and spatial changes caused by the second demographic transition (Grabkowska, 2012; Haase et al., 2012), and re-urbanisation (Grabkowska, 2015). Gentrification is part of a set of processes which lead to the diversified upgrading of inner cities (Kovács et al., 2015). Research on post-socialist gentrification shows that this process can be initiated by various types of pioneers (young households, artists, students) (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2013; Chelcea et al., 2015; Grabkowska, 2015; Kovács et al., 2015; Murzyn-Kupisz and Szmytkowska, 2015), but also by development companies building designer apartment houses in city centers (Badyina and Golubchikov, 2005).

In this paper, the focus will be primarily on the city of Lodz, where gentrification is happening under the mask of revitalization. In Lodz, the biggest gentrifier at the moment are not young artists, real estate developers, or middle-class citizens, but the local government (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, Sztybel-Boberek, Wolaniuk 2017). In 2016 the city council of Lodz officially started the process of revitalization, under the name "Program Rewitalizacji Lodzi 2026+". This is just one of many revitalization plans in process in the city of Lodz.

Lodz, although formally a city since the middle ages, began its development in the 19th century, after the industrialization revolution, as the city became not only one of the leading textile industry empires in Poland, but also in Europe. The 19th and 20th centuries were the times of a big increase in the number of inhabitants and the increased speed of development of the city. However, as with many of the other industrial cities of the time, development of Lodz was fast and concentrated on industry, not as organic as other European cities which had had a life before the industrialization process. That is also one of the reasons why city urbanism is rather stiff and modern-like, with not much architecture palimpsest as in cities with historical city centers. After the deindustrialization process, the city started losing its inhabitants rapidly (Obraniak 2007), and the identity of the city became questionable.

Revitalization per se, now in 21st century, is not the bad thing for Lodz, or any other post-industrial city which has lost its primary function – 19th and 20th-century industry. Not only is revitalization not bad for Lodz, but one can argue that it is even necessary. Creating a new identity for the city, giving it new life in a non-industrialised era is vital in order to make the city thrive. However, the question is can this revitalization and city regeneration happen without negative processes such as gentrification following?

In Lodz, as in many other cities with ongoing development and massive revitalization plans in recent years, gentrification goes hand in hand with revitalization, not only in public investments, but also private ones. The biggest revitalization project up to date, and the trigger for revitalization of post-industrial objects was certainly the Manufaktura complex, an arts centre, shopping mall, and leisure complex, located in a renovated textile factory which was built at the end of 19th century by Izrael Poznanski. The renovation of the almost fully demolished complex of brick buildings started in 2002, and it officially opened to the public in May 2006. The complex, located on 27 hectares is one of the biggest leisure-shopping areas in Poland, and it has also won some architecture and real estate development awards. Certainly, this project has raised social awareness, and in the city were post-industrial objects were in steady decay, it created a new appreciation for brick. In Manufaktura a new city square for Lodz was also created, as it did not exist before, and smaller zones with restaurants and their gardens, cafeterias and other commercial activities were created. This has changed the socio-urban functioning of the city. Manufaktura

was treated as the new city centre, and people slowly started gravitating to this "new" city, leaving the old city centre emptier day by day. This has resulted in many retail owners and food service business transferring their businesses to Manufaktura. Naturally, the surrounding areas and neighborhoods started gaining value, and what once was a rather ordinary residential neighborhood started becoming more in demand and luxury. As the tenement houses around were being renovated, facades repainted, streets cleaned with new pavements, the rents grew higher, and the area was "revitalized" rather organically. It is hard to speak about a clear displacement of inhabitants, as there are no clear records, but surely the structure of people did change, and one of the processes which also happened was the studentification of the area. In the newest areas, still undergoing renovation, is part of the complex which was originally housing for factory workers. Just as on the opposite side of the Manufaktura complex post-industrial tenement houses are located, which during the process of deindustrialization remained inhabited. However, now as the renovation has started, people here have been displaced. It is still in question what might happen once the structures have been renovated. Furthermore, another phenomenon triggered by Manufaktura can be seen – the complex before the renovation was in a bad shape, and the surrounding neighborhood was known as "unsafe". Considering that Manufaktura is a private investment, the decision was to close it with gates from every side during the night hours, making it unavailable to the public in non-working hours. This not only created a big zone in the urban planning which became a closed block, but it also took public space from people, although they treated it in this way. This shows that problems which the city, or this particular area have had before, were not trying to be solved with revitalization and urban regeneration, they were rather dealt with in a "quick" manner. New social awareness and fondness for post-industrial architecture created a market for real estate developers, and soon after Manufaktura, and other parts of the city with industrial architecture were being developed, for different functions. One of the examples, for housing architecture, was the project of revitalization for the Scheibler factory, which became luxury apartments, known as "Lofty u Scheiblera". Similarly to Manufaktura, the ex-factory complex was reinvented and redesigned for high-end lofts. It has also become a gated community, where the structure of inhabitants is rather homogenous. Just next to it, in the housing for factory workers the positive revitalization project known as Ksiezy Mlyn is located. Houses of factory workers, also inhabited in after deindustrialization, were renovated, together with the pavements and streets. In the area, but also in some of the houses, new businesses opened, mostly small local businesses, and although the area, as well as the properties gained value, the structure of inhabitants did not become homogenous, with higher income, but quite the opposite. There were no plans for displacement and no intentional displacement has happened. One could ask the question if there is a model in place for positive urban regeneration why it is not applied all around the city? The main difference is that Ksiezy Mlyn, in comparison to Manufaktura of Scheibler Lofts, was not a profit-driven investment, and its revitalization was the only and ultimate intention. Considering that Poland, Lodz specifically, is one of the post-socialist countries which did not go through the process of reprivatisation, and municipalities still hold the largest stock in housing properties (local authorities of Lodz are the biggest owner of tenement houses from all Polish cities, municipal housing now comprises 38% of the city's total housing stock (Jakobczyk-Gryszkiewicz, Szybel-Boberek, Wolaniuk 2017), creating a non-profit driven revitalization should

theoretically not be the problem. However, in reality, the fact that the municipality owns most of the structures and plots creates a bigger problem – the city does not have funds for the revitalisation of the municipal housing stock (Liszewski, Marcinczak, 2012). Major problems connected with gentrification in Lodz include unregulated property rights in some of the municipal housing, indebted council flats and very limited dialogue between the authorities and the residents of tenements being renovated. What is lacking is meetings with the inhabitants to explain the benefits of the revitalisation as well as psychological and financial support for the lowest income families (Jakobczyk-Gryszkiewicz, Szybel-Boberek, Wolaniuk 2017). With insufficient funds in local councils, city revitalization often relies on the help of private funds and investments, which in the end creates profit-driven capitalistic investments. The process of revitalization, once profit-driven, easily drives gentrification and displacement. According to the city council revitalization plan for Lodz, its primary idea of the "revitalized neighborhoods" is to bring in new investments and build up business. In the city as Lodz, with rather low cost plots all around the city, including the city centre, this often brings in investments such as corporations and office buildings. The area is "revitalized" by default, as the private investors care about the property and surroundings. In the process, market value of the plots and structures gain value, often following the opening of new restaurants, bars and other higher-end activities which serve new users of the area. Displacement of existing inhabitants happens naturally. This gentrification process does not solve the problem, with displacement of locals, the existing problems are just transferred to another area, while the "revitalized part" becomes exclusive and not available for future social investments. Existing social networks, neighborhood services and local businesses are disrupted in the community. Gentrified parts of the city suffer for not having any public typology architecture in its urban plans, such as hospitals or schools. The community transitions to an exclusive community, inaccessible to lower income households. One of the most recent examples is the gentrification happening in the city center of Lodz, in an area known as OFF Piotrkowska. It is also a post-industrial complex, on a smaller scale than Manufaktura, but also with private ownership. The whole area was in decay, and not cared for, with abandoned brick structures. Now gentrification can be observed as by the book definition. Firstly, the ground floors were occupied with a couple of cheap bars and restaurants, mostly used by the students, while the other spaces in the building were used by artists as workshops and exhibition spaces. Once it was realised that the area might become profitable, and it had already been "reinvented" by students and artists, new investments came organically, and real estate developers started investing in the area, changing it from a student and artist zone, to a popular commercial area, filled with higher cost restaurants, designer shops etc. There are protection laws concerning architecture conservation and a heritage office in order to protect the structures themselves from being changed, but there are no city plans controlling and shaping the future functions of the area. Lack of the more detailed urban plans is becoming a more serious problem when speaking of revitalization, especially concerning revitalization carried out by private ownership and real estate developers. Naturally, real-estate developers choose to implement functions which boost profit the fastest, giving them power to make a return on the investment and earn over a shorter period of time. During this process, there is mostly not much care for the socio-urban life of the city. Lodz as the city is not only going through the process of revitalization, it is also going through the process of fast development. The

number of inhabitants had been in steady decline for a long time, but now it's rather stagnating, and there are many programs in order to bring people back, starting with students, but also the opening of many workplaces in recent years has helped. Many world corporations are locating their headquarters in Poland, specifically in Lodz, for its central geographical position, cheap plots, and most importantly low-cost workforce. Economic development has also meant real estate development, and now in Lodz there is the biggest increase in building new housing since the city's development in the 20th century. However, as the problem of the "unrevitalized areas" is not urbanistically nor sociologically dealt with, new investments and housing blocks usually become gated communities, cutting themselves off from the rest of the city. Building gated communities has become standard for real estate developers in order to sell middle class, high end apartments. Creating closed housing communities does not deal with the problem of social structure of Lodz, nor does it help in the revitalization process. It just creates a bolder border between the different social structures of the city, which currently exist in all the cities in the world.

Gentrification is happening due to the revitalization process in Polish cities, but also in other cities of post-socialist countries it is different in many aspects than in Western cities, mainly because of different economic circumstances. Comparing revitalization in Lodz with revitalization in the aforementioned Berlin's Kreuzberg is almost impossible, as the social structure of Kreuzberg has been diverse prior to gentrification, and it stayed diverse post revitalization. Gentrification, if it happened, happened on a much smaller scale, but was trying to be avoided by employing local businesses, and the state did not invite private investments and real estate developers to participate in the process. Quite the opposite, revitalization was pursued on a local scale, and there were laws and protections put in place to avoid rent raise, displacement and social inequality. In Poland there is a bigger gap between lower income and higher income households, gentrification when it happens creates a bigger and more visible gap in the city structure. Also, the social state of mind calls for division, the higher income households often do not want to be mixed with lower income households, and there is a need for a certain level of exclusivity and safety which in turn led to the design of gated communities all around the city. Since the degraded housing stock in inner cities often has unregulated ownership or is municipal property, local authorities play a major part in gentrification beside developers and small businesses. The influx of the higher-income population to the new and rehabilitated buildings drives up the prices of land and apartments. Due to gentrification in revitalized areas, there are often no social and public architecture typologies being developed, as these are not pleasurable for profit-driven economies of revitalized areas. As the revitalised and new investment areas are being developed for just housing and commercial purposes, big areas in city urban planning are created without the necessary variety of urban functions needed for all areas of city to function urbanely. The main problem is the state-led gentrification process, as new-build gentrification and real estate development are also stimulated by the state. Clearly, revitalization in Poland, as well as in other post-socialist countries should be planned and delivered differently than in Western countries, as there are completely different socio-economic circumstances. Firstly government and local authorities should come up with a plan prior to revitalization, creating a set of rules which have to be applied, such as introducing public and social architecture typology in areas which are due for urban regeneration. Also, social awareness should be raised about inclusivity of the new and

revitalised neighborhoods. Private investments, as welcome as they are, should be more closely controlled, and also an urbanist set of rules regarding development of the bigger city areas should be put in place, so that commercialization can be avoided. Future processes, which many western cities are currently dealing with, such as studentification and touristification, should be expected and a plan should be set in motion how to deal with these, as studentification and touristification are in their initial phases in most Polish cities, which allows regulations to be created in advance on how to neutralize these processes in their early phase.

References:

- Atkinson, R. and BRIDGE, G. (eds.), (2005), *Gentrification in a Global Context. The New Urban Colonialism*, New York–London: Routledge.
- BADIYINA, A. and GOLUBCHIKOV, O. (2005), 'Gentrification in Central Moscow: a Market Process or a Deliberate Policy? Money, Power and People in Housing Regeneration in Ostozhenka', *Geografiska Annaler*.
- BAILEY, N. and ROBERTSON, D. (1996) *Review of the Impact of Housing Action Areas: Technical Report*. Edinburgh: Scottish Homes.
- BERNT, M., GENTILE, M. and MARCIŃCZAK, S. (2015), 'Gentrification in Post-communist Countries: An Introduction', *Geografie*.
- BUTLER, T. and LEES, L. (2006), 'Super-gentrification in Barnsbury, London: Globalization and Gentrifying Global Elites at the Neighborhood Level', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*.
- CAMERON, S. (1992), 'A Review of Policies Towards Household'Problem'Debt', *The Political Quarterly*, Volume 63, issue 2, pp. 227-233.
- CAMERON, S. (2003), 'Gentrification, Housing Redifferentiation and Urban Regeneration: Going for Growth' in Newcastle upon Tyne', *Urban Studies*, 40, pp. 2367–2382.
- CHELCEA, L. (2006), 'Marginal Groups in Central Places: Gentrification, Property Rights and Post-Socialist Primitive Accumulation (Bucharest, Romania)', [in:] ENYEDI, G. and Kovács Z. (eds.), *Social Changes and Social Sustainability in Historical Urban Centres: The Case of Central Europe*, Centre for Regional Studies of Hungarian Academy of Science, Pecs.
- CHELCEA, L., POPESCU, R. and CRISTEA, D. (2015), 'Who Are the Gentrifiers and How Do They Change Central City Neighbourhoods? Privatization, Commodification, and Gentrification in Bucharest', *Geografie*.
- CHENU, A. and TABARD, N. (1993) 'Les transformations socioprofessionnelles du territoire français, 1982-1990', *Population*, 48-6, pp. 1735-1769.
- DAVIDSON, M. (2007), 'Gentrification as Global Habitat: a Process of Class Formation or Corporate Creation?', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 32 (4), pp. 490–506.
- DAVIDSON, M. and LEES, L. (2005), 'New Built 'Gentrification' in London's Riverside Renaissance', *Environment and Planning A*, 37 (7), pp. 1165–1190
- DRAPELLA-HERMANSDORFER, A. (2005), 'Zielone osie i zielone pierzenie Berlina', *Teka Kom. Arch. Urb. Stud. Krajozn.* – OL PAN, pp. 76-82.

- ENYEDI, G . and KOVÁCS, Z . (eds .) (2006), *Social Changes and Social Sustainability in Historical Urban Centres: The Case of Central Europe*, Pecs: Centre for Regional Studies of Hungarian Academy of Science .
- GLASS, R . (1964), 'Introduction: Aspects of Change', [in:] GLASS, R., London: *Aspects of Change*, Centre for Urban Studies, London: McGibbon and Kee.
- GÓRCZYŃSKA, M. (2015), 'Gentryfikacja w polskim kontekście: Krytyczny przegląd koncepcji wyjaśniających', *Przegląd Geograficzny*, 87 (4), pp. 589-612.
- GRABKOWSKA, M. (2012), *Regeneration of the Post-socialist Inner City: Social Change and Bottom-up Transformation in Gdańsk*, Gdańsk: Pracownia.
- GRABKOWSKA, M. (2015), 'Between Gentrification and Reurbanisation: The Participatory Dimension of Bottom-up Regeneration in Gdańsk, Poland', *Geografie*, 120 (2), pp. 210-225.
- HAASE, A ., STEINFUHRER, A ., KABISCH, S ., GROSSMAN, K . and HALL, R . (eds .) (2012), *Residential Change and Demographic Challenge. The Inner City of East Central Europe in the 21st Century*, London: Ashgate.
- HOLM A., MARCIŃCZAK S. and OGRODOWCZYK, A. (2015), 'New-build Gentrification in the Post-Socialist City: Łódź and Leipzig Two Decades after Socialism', *Geografie*, 120 (2), pp. 164–187.
- JAKÓBCZYK-GRYSZKIEWICZ, J. (ed.) (2012), *XXIV Konwersatorium Wiedzy o Mieście. Procesy gentryfikacji w mieście, cz. 1*, Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- JAKÓBCZYK-GRYSZKIEWICZ, J. (2012), 'Władze samorządowe w roli gentryfikatora. Przykład Łodzi', [in:] JAKÓBCZYK-GRYSZKIEWICZ, J. (ed.) (2013), *XXV Konwersatorium Wiedzy o Mieście. Procesy gentryfikacji, cz. 2*, Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- JAKÓBCZYK-JAKÓBCZYK-GRYSZKIEWICZ, J. (ed.) (2015), 'Procesy gentryfikacji w obszarach śródmiejskich wielkich miast na przykładzie Warszawy, Łodzi i Gdańska', *Studia KPZK*, 165.
- JAKÓBCZYK-GRYSZKIEWICZ, J., SZTYBEL-BOBEREK, M., WOLANIUK A., (2017). 'Post-socialist gentrification process in Polish cities', *European Spatial Research and Policy*, volume 24, number 2, pp. 145-166.
- KACZMAREK, S. and MARCIŃCZAK, S. (2013), 'Blessing in Disguise . Urban Regeneration in Poland in a Neoliberal Milieu', [in:] KOVÁCS, Z. (1998), 'Ghettoisation or Gentrification? Post-socialist Scenarios for Budapest', *Netherlands Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 13 (1), pp. 63–81.
- LEY, D. (1980), 'Liberal Ideology and the Postindustrial City', *Annals of American Geographers*, 70, pp. 238–258 .
- LEY, D. (1994), 'Gentrification and the politics of new middle class', *Environment and Planning D*, 12, pp . 53–74 .
- LISZEWSKI, S. and MARCIŃCZAK, S . (2012), 'Geografia gentryfikacji Łodzi: studium dużego miasta przemysłowego w okresie posocjalistycznym', [in:] MARCIŃCZAK, S., GENTILE, M. and STĘPNIAK, M. (2013), 'Paradoxes of (Post)Socialist Segregation: Metropolitan Sociospatial Divisions under Socialism and After in Poland', *Urban Geography*, 34 (3), pp. 327–352 .

- MURZYN-KUPISZ, M. and SZMYTKOWSKA, M. (2015), 'Studentification in the Post-socialist Context. The Case of Cracow and the Tri-City (Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot)', *Geografie*, 120 (2), pp. 188–209 .
- OBRANIAK, W. (2007). 'Ludność Łodzi i innych wielkich miast w Polsce w latach 1984-2006 (PDF). Łódź: Urząd Statystyczny w Łodzi.
- SCOTT, J. W. and KUHN, M. (2012), 'Urban Change and Urban Development Strategies in Central-East Europe: a Selective Assessment of Events Since 1989', *European Planning Studies*, 20 (7), pp. 1093–1109 .
- SMITH, D. (2005), 'Studentification: the Gentrification Factory?', [in:] ATKINSON, R. and BRIDGE, G. (eds.), *Gentrification in a Global Context. The New Urban Colonialism*, New York–London: Routledge, pp. 72–89 .
- SMITH N. (1996), *The New Urban Frontier. Gentrification as the Revanchist City*, New York–London: Routledge .
- SMITH, N. (2002), 'New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy', *Antipode*, 34 (3), pp. 427–450 .
- SÝKORA, L. (2005), 'Gentrification in Post-communist Cities', [in:] ATKINSON, R. and BRIDGE, G. (eds.), *Gentrification in a Global Context. The New Urban Colonialism*, New York–London: Routledge, pp. 90–105 .
- TEMELOVA, J. (2007), 'Flagship Developments and the Physical Upgrading of the Post Socialist Inner City: The Golden Angel Project in Prague', *Geografiska Annaler B*, 89 (2), pp. 169–181 .
- WĘCŁAWOWICZ, G. (1966), *Contemporary Poland Space and Society*, London: University College London.

Call for Papers

The Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America is pleased to invite proposals for the Seventh World Congress on Polish Studies to be held at the University of Gdańsk, Poland, June 14-16, 2019.

Proposals are solicited for complete sessions or individual papers in any of the disciplines in the liberal arts, sciences, or business/economics. The general theme of the conference is "Anniversaries," which, because 2019 lends itself to the remembrance of so many varied historical moments, should be interpreted as any formative event. Papers do not necessarily have to address the conference theme. Since the Institute values comparative sessions that place the Polish and East Central European experience in context, individual papers need not focus specifically on Poland or the Polish diaspora, but may include papers on a central topic that focus on other national or regional experiences. Similarly, sessions including presenters from more than one country are encouraged.

Each session is scheduled for 90 minutes to accommodate three papers or 20 minutes per paper. The conference language is English, although complete sessions in Polish will also be accepted (sessions must contain either all English or all Polish presentations). All conference rooms will be equipped with AV for the use of PowerPoint and CD/DVD presentations. Presenters are invited to submit their conference papers for possible publication in *The Polish Review* subsequent to the conference.

To submit a paper or complete session, please send the name, e-mail address, institutional affiliation, a tentative paper title and a brief one-paragraph abstract for all presenters to program chair James Pula at jpula@pnw.edu. The deadline for proposals is March 15, 2019. All participants are expected to pay the conference registration fee.

The University of Gdańsk is located along the sandy shores of the Baltic Sea. Its eleven faculties, with almost 28,000 students, are concentrated in the three cities of Gdańsk,

Gdynia and Sopot that boast an efficient transportation system, an international airport, fast train connections to Warsaw and Kraków, and ferry connections to Scandinavia.

The Tri-City area is one of the most beautiful places in Poland. The charming location on the coast, as well as its many outstanding theatres, concert halls and restaurants constitute an attractive asset for conference participants. The attractions of historic Gdańsk include numerous museums of the city's fascinating past (muzeumgdansk.pl)—Maritime Museum, National Museum, World War II Museum, Westerplatte where the first shots of the Second World War in Europe were fired, as well as the European Solidarity Center located on the grounds of the former Lenin shipyard where the workers' strike of 1980 initiated a process that led to the crumbling of Communism in East Central Europe. The attractions of the modern city of Gdynia—"the city of sea and dreams"—includes the new Emigration Museum as well as museums of the Polish Navy and of the city itself. All of them are located on the shores of the bay. Sopot, the pearl of the Baltic Sea on the very coast itself, each year draws thousands of tourists to its charming beaches and cafes. Less than an hour away from Gdańsk, in Malbork, there is the 13th century Teutonic Knights castle, a world renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site.

NEW INFORMATION: We are pleased to report that Prof. Padraic Kenney has agreed to be our banquet speaker. Prof. Kenny is Professor of History and International Studies at Indiana University. He is the author of several books on East European history and politics; his area of specialization is social and political change in the contemporary world, in particular civil resistance to authoritarian regimes and democratic revolutions. His most recent book, *Dance in Chains: Political Imprisonment in the Modern World* (Oxford, 2017), examines political prisoners and imprisoning regimes from the mid-19th century to the present. He is also the author of *Burdens of Freedom: Eastern Europe Since 1989* (2006), *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe, 1989* (2002), and *Rebuilding Poland: Workers and Communists, 1945-1950* (1996). He is the past president of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies as well as the Polish Studies Association, and is a frequent contributor to the Polish online weekly *Kultura liberalna*.

DEADLINE FOR PAPER PROPOSALS:
APRIL 15, 2019

Call for papers

The Post-Soviet Space Three Decades Later Time of Troubles or Triumph?



Warsaw
East
European
Conference

University of Warsaw
June 28-30, 2019
Warsaw, Poland

The Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw (STUDIUM EUROPY WSCHODNIEJ UW) is organizing the Warsaw East European Conference, Fifteenth Annual Session, to be held in Warsaw, June 28-30, 2019.

THE WARSAW EAST EUROPEAN CONFERENCE will be held under the distinguished patronage of the Rector Magnificus of the University of Warsaw, Professor Marcin Pałys.

Below we present a list of general topics of the Conference:

- Authoritarianism
- Borders
- Civil Society, Rule of Law
- Communism, Post-Communism
- Culture
- Deportations
- East vs. West
- Eastern Partnership
- Economy, Economic Transformation
- Energy Security, NATO, Regional Security
- Globalization
- History and Contemporary Problems
- Imperialism, neoimperialism
- Minorities
- Nations, Nationalities, National Conflicts, Nation Building
- NGOs
- Religion
- Conflict of Historical Memories in the Region
- Transformation, Democratization
- West in the Post-Communist World
- and others



APPLICATION FORMS & PAPER PROPOSALS

APPLICATION FORMS as well as PAPER PROPOSAL, ABSTRACT SUBMISSION, PAYMENTS, AND ACCOMMODATION ISSUES are handled by the web-based Registration System to be found at: www.weec.uw.edu.pl/signup. Please follow instructions found on the site in filling in the correct forms. Please note that participants with individual papers will be brought together into panel groups.

PAPER PROPOSALS, full papers and their abstracts must be written in English. However, the Conference organizers will allow some presentations in the panels to be delivered in Polish, on condition that a comprehensive written summary or the entire text in English is made available to the audience and the organizers. The Programme board (conf.studium@uw.edu.pl) must be informed earlier (no less than 1 month in advance).

PANEL PROPOSAL

We are ready to consider other subjects of presentation broadly reflecting the main theme of the Conference. Panels may be proposed under these conditions:

1. the theme of the panel has to reflect the main theme of the Conference,
2. the applicant proposing the panel must guarantee 3 - 4 participants,
3. the applicant or one of the participants has to be the Chair of the proposed panel.

Furthermore, if the conditions are fulfilled, a discussant can also be assigned to the panel.

Proposals are to be submitted directly to the Secretary of Programme Board at conf.studium@uw.edu.pl

LOCATION

THE CONFERENCE will be held in the Old University Library building at the University of Warsaw main campus, in the historical centre of Warsaw, at 26/28, Krakowskie Przedmieście Street.

SCHEDULE

THE CONFERENCE will begin on Friday, June 28 at 11 AM, and end on Sunday, June 30 at 6 PM, 2019. Further information concerning schedules will be delivered to registered participants by email and the registration system.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME BOARD

RIGELS HALILI – professor at the Centre

PAWEŁ KOWAL – professor at the Centre

MYKOLA RIABCHUK – visiting professor at the Centre

KAZIMIERZ WÓYCICKI – professor at the Centre

JAN MALICKI – director of the Centre for East European Studies

WIKTOR ROSS – secretary of the WEEC Programme Board, professor at the Centre

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE

JOHN MICGIEL – Conference Director, visiting professor at the Centre

MACIEJ DUSZCZYK – Vice-Rector of the University of Warsaw for Research

PAYMENTS

ALL CONFERENCE SPEAKERS are obliged to **pay the registration fee in advance**. Speakers must pay the fee before May 25, 2018, Listeners may pay on the first day of the conference. The payment will be handled through the registrations system (Dotpay).

FUNDING

PARTICIPANTS of the WEEC are responsible for covering all travel and accommodation costs.

WEEC organizers will no longer provide free accommodation to participants of the Conference. However, registered speakers will be offered **free accommodation in University student hostels, double rooms**.

For listeners of the Conference paid accommodation (at a reduced price € 20 per night) in Warsaw University student hostels and hotels can be arranged.



SPEAKERS REGISTRATION FEE

1. East and Central European non-EU countries, Russia, Caucasian and Central Asian countries:

- scholars (incl. Ph.D. students) - 200 PLN (~50 €)
- students - 80 PLN (~20 €)

2. Poland and the EU "new" countries:

- scholars (incl. Ph.D. students) - 250 PLN (~60 €)
- students - 125 PLN (~30 €)

3. Other countries:

- scholars (incl. Ph.D. students) - 500 PLN (~120 €)
- students - 300 PLN (~60 €)

Deadline for payment:
May 15

LISTENERS REGISTRATION FEE

All listeners registration payment:

- scholars (incl. Ph.D. students) - 60 PLN (~15 €)
- students - 60 PLN (~15 €)

Students and graduates of the Centre for East European Studies - free of charge

***/** - All payments can be handled through the Registration System or a Standard Bank Transfer**

Payment from abroad:

Bank name: Bank Millennium S.A.
Bank address:
Al. Jerozolimskie 123 A 02-017 Warszawa

SWIFT CODE: BIGBPLWXXX

IBAN:

PL64 1160 2202 0000 0000 6084 9207

Account number:

64 1160 2202 0000 0000 6084 9207

Ref:

University of Warsaw, Studium WEEC

Payment in Poland in Polish zlotys (PLN) to the University of Warsaw bank account

Bank Millennium S.A.

Al. Jerozolimskie 123 A

02-017 Warszawa

Account number:

08 1160 2202 0000 0000 6084 9633

Ref:

Uniwersytet Warszawski, Studium WEEC



THE WARSAW EAST EUROPEAN REVIEW

The Warsaw East European Review is a yearly academic journal created as an output of the WEEC publishing the best papers presented by the conference participants.

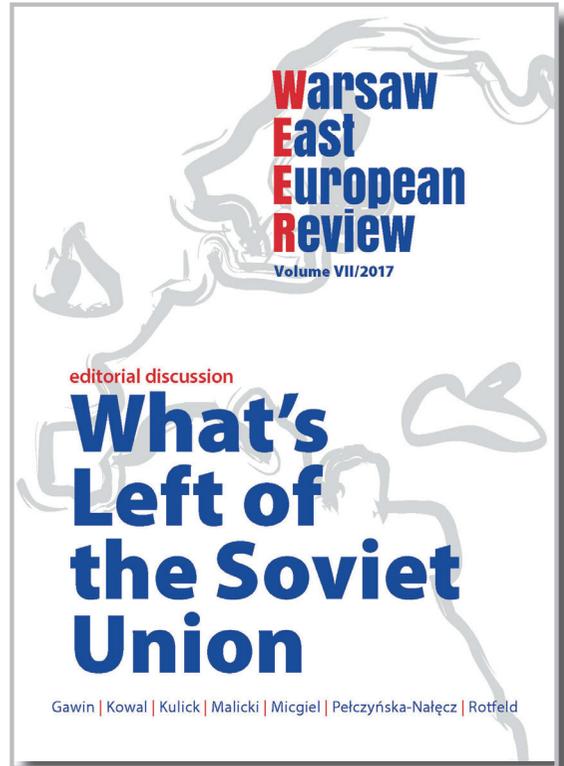
Each year the journal gathers articles under a common title closely related with the main theme of the conference. The volume also includes an interesting discussion of experts in a more relaxed form, in volume VII/2017 you will find a discussion concerning present and future of the Countries of the former Soviet Union.

The WEER is available to acquire through the Centre's distribution at:

wydawnictwa.studium@uw.edu.pl

Regular price is 15 € (worldwide shipping included) or 10 € (for shipping in Poland)

Contact us at: weer.studium@uw.edu.pl





Warsaw
East
European
Conference



UNIVERSITY
OF WARSAW

Call for papers

Warsaw East European Conference
organized by:

The Centre for East European Studies,
University of Warsaw
(Studium Europy Wschodniej
Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego)

Contact information:

mail: conf.studium@uw.edu.pl
facebook: Warsaw East European Conference
www.weec.uw.edu.pl

The Conference Headquarters are located at:

The Centre for East European Studies
The Conference Office
7/55 Oboźna St, entrance from Sewerynow street
PL 00-927 Warszawa
phone no (+48) 22-55-21-888
fax no (+48) 22-55-21-887

Studium Europy Wschodniej – Uniwersytet Warszawski

Pałac Potockich, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28
00-927 Warszawa
phone no (+48) 22-55-22-555
fax no (+48) 22-55-22-222
mail: studium@uw.edu.pl
www.weec.uw.edu.pl

DEADLINE FOR PAPER PROPOSALS:

APRIL 15, 2019

Contributors of this volume

Gordon N. Bardos | Alfonsas Eidintas | Aleksandra Gryzlak
Hubert A. Janiszewski | Stefan Kawalec
Shahla Kazimova | Paweł Kowal | Z. Anthony Kruszewski
John S. Micgiel | Antoni Nevescanin | Matthew Rhodes
Magda Stroinska | Francisak Viacorka | Marcin Wakar
Bogusław Winid

