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Abstracts - Résumés

MARIA GRAZIA MELCHIONNI, L'Europe: les crises et les défis.

Since several years the European Union has been facing a crisis, which is simultaneously economic, political and institutional. The incapacity to adapt the European institutions to the challenges set by the technological innovation and the globalization, the failure of the French and Dutch referenda on the ratification of the draft European Constitution, the great number of mistakes contained in the Lisbon Treaty have caused a complex and multidimensional crisis, which is a crisis of meaning and direction. At the same time, this crisis has weakened two already challenging processes: the deepening and the enlargement of the Eu.

According to the Author, the European idea is discredited especially by the technical nature of the European narrative, which has no appeal on citizens, and by the personalization of politics. In order to develop itself, the European integration needs the collective action and the patient and rational research of compromises rather than individual actions or *coups de théâtre*.

Nevertheless, the European public opinion has a quite positive vision of the Eu, the principle of union among the European States, the necessity of a European monetary policy, the Pesc and the Pesd. Furthermore, the globalization and the financial and economic crisis could strengthen little and middle countries' attachment to the Eu.

The Author stresses that with 28 members the decisional process is slow and difficult, whereas the critical situation needs decisions taken quickly and collectively, and suggests that nowadays the strategy of differentiated integration – limited to some international questions – looks like the only way to take the European construction out of the present stagnation.

The Eu has also to improve its socio-economic model and to develop some social policies. In other words it is necessary to balance the economic integration, the monetary policies and the social regulations.

Finally, Europe has to establish, within and out of the Eu, a system of relations among different ethnic groups, based on the awareness of their interdependence and the pursuit of the common good.

Depuis des années l'Union européenne est aux prises avec une crise, qui l'atteint soit dans le domaine économique, soit sur le plan politique et institutionnel. L'incapacité à adapter les institutions européennes aux besoins engendrés par l'innovation technologique et la globalisation, la crise financière et économique globale, l'échec des référendums français et hollandais sur la ratification du projet de constitution européenne, les nombreuses erreurs contenues dans le traité de Lisbonne ont causé une crise complexe et multidimensionnelle, qui est une crise de signification et de direction. Au même temps, cette crise fragilise deux processus déjà problématiques: celui de l'approfondissement et celui de l'élargissement.

Selon l'Auteur, l'idée européenne est discréditée surtout par le technicisme qui caractérise le discours européen, qui entraîne l'indifférence des citoyens, et par la personnalisation de la politique. En effet, pour se développer l'intégration européenne a besoin aujourd'hui de l'action collective et de la recherche patiente et rationnelle du compromis, non pas de l'action individuelle de quelques-uns ou de coups de théâtre.

Néanmoins, l'opinion publique européenne a une vision plutôt positive de l'Ue, du principe de l'union entre les États européens, de la nécessité d'une politique monétaire européenne, de la Pesc et de la Pesd. En outre, la globalisation et la crise financière et économique globale pourraient renforcer l'attachement à l'Union des pays de petite et moyenne dimension.

L'Auteur souligne qu'à 28 le processus décisionnel est lent et difficile, alors que les situations de crise exigent des décisions rapides et prises collectivement, et suggère que aujourd'hui la stratégie de l'intégration différenciée – limitée à quelques domaines d'action de portée internationale – semble le seul moyen pour sortir la construction européenne de la stagnation actuelle.

L'Ue doit aussi perfectionner son modèle socio-économique et développer des politiques sociales. C'est-à-dire qu'il faut équilibrer correctement l'intégration économique, la politique monétaire et la réglementation sociale.

Enfin, l'Europe doit réussir à établir, à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'Ue, un système de relations entre des groupes ethniques différents, basé sur la conscience de leur interdépendance et sur la poursuite du bien commun.

MOTS CLÉ: Discours européen; Personnalisation de la politique; Opinion publique européenne; Intégration différenciée; Politiques sociales européennes.

CARLO JEAN, *La sicurezza nel Mediterraneo.*

The analysis of security in the Mediterranean basin should be extended to its 'maritime hinterlands', which includes the Black and the Red Seas and the Gulf. This area is also referred to as the «arc of crises» or the «Great Middle East», as it was in the American National Security Strategy, which focused on that region after 9/11. Complexity also exists in the area, which is referred to as «Mediterranean proper» - from Gibraltar to the Levant – both in the West to the East and in the North to the South dimensions. The Maghreb is very different from the Mashrak. The Eu is unified, while Northern Africa and the Levant have become increasingly fragmented. This is due, in part, to the consequences of the 'Arab Awakening'. The region is now the stage of geopolitical and confessional struggles. These struggles occur between Sunnis and Shias. The former are divided between the competing Muslim Brothers and Salafi/Wahhabi. After the end of the Cold War, the Eu tried to re-create a certain geopolitical and geo-economic unity in the basin with the Barcelona Process, with the Unity for the Mediterranean and the Eu Neighbourhood Partnership. All these initiatives have failed, as has the Nato Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperative Initiative. One of the reasons of that failure was that European attention and resources devoted to the South were reduced and the priority given to the East. The 'Arab Awakening' further fragmented the basin, provoking new instabilities and conflicts. Moreover, North Africa's stability has become increasingly linked to that of Sahel and in Syria the civil conflict is also a proxy war between Sunni and Shias and between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Cooperation between Africa and the West is suffering due to the instability that dominates the region and to European divisions and crises. Although there was hope that the 'Awakening', immediately nicknamed 'Arab Spring', would represent «the fourth wave of democratization», it has instead marked the beginning of a chaotic movement similar to an 'Arab 30 Years War'. In the long term, it could produce a new regional order, different from that created by the Sykes-Picot accords and by decolonization. Perhaps the Arab World can retake the centrality lost to Turkey on the one side and to Iran on the other. This article concludes by setting forth the importance of Italian and European security in the Mediterranean and formulating some cautious perspectives on short-term evolution.

Dans l'article, les différents aspects de la sécurité dans le bassin de la Méditerranée sont examinés. Leur complexité géopolitique, compte tenu de la fragmentation et des compétitions existant dans la région, est stressée. L'analyse des problèmes de sécurité devrait être étendue à l'espace que les États Unis appellent le «Grand Moyen Orient», de Gibraltar à l'Afghanistan. Mais même si on se borne à la Méditerranée au sens propre du terme – ainsi comme il est considéré par Fernand Braudel, de Gibraltar jusqu'au Levant - on ne peut pas parler d'une région géopolitiquement unitaire. Des différences profondes existent sur les dimensions soit Nord-Sud, soit Ouest-Est. Sur la première, l'unité relative des pays méditerranéens de l'Europe est interfacée

par les divisions, les différences et les tensions entre les pays de l'Afrique du Nord et du Levant. Aussi pour le Maghreb, où l'Uma tente en vain de créer une certaine intégration avec le Nord, les contacts sont essentiellement bilatéraux. Peut-être l'élargissement à l'Égypte et à la Grèce du 'Groupe 5+5' pourrait être un moyen utile pour renforcer la coopération. Les États Unis dominent dans l'Est du Bassin, malgré leur indisponibilité croissante à s'engager directement. L'Ue est marginalisée soit par ses divisions, accrues par la crise financière, soit par l'absence de volonté politique et de moyens d'intervention. Les liens bilatéraux prévalent sur l'approche multilatérale. L'article, après avoir examiné les défis que l'instabilité de la Méditerranée pose à la sécurité de l'Europe, traite de la position particulière de l'Italie et souligne – contrairement à l'opinion courante sur les liens structurels entre le développement de la Méditerranée et celui du Mezzogiorno – que ce dernier dépend essentiellement d'un accroissement de la compétitivité internationale et de l'europanisation du Sud de l'Italie.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Risveglio arabo; Grande Medio Oriente; Bacino Levantino; Sicurezza globale; Mezzogiorno.

UMBERTO MONTUORO, Inverno arabo, *cyber* e campi profughi siriani in Medio Oriente.

One of the essential keys to understand the weave of functional links between groups of individuals in the phenomenon of transnational migration affecting, in particular, the Syrian population, is to imagine a virtual common square, divided into a thousand tents, housings, streets and barricades. The *cyber* environment, in fact, allows to build and maintain a network of contacts, structured horizontally and vertically, even at a distance of thousands of kilometres, crossing the porous or rarely closed and hostile borders of national States easily and in real time. State boundaries abstractly imposed by Western diplomacies only a few decades ago, upon ethnic groups and nations, often nomadic, but unified by centuries of history, religious traditions and a transnational language. The mass media and social networks have burst the explosion of the tumultuous protest movements, along the borders of the southern Mediterranean. The hypothesis that the new regimes would embrace a set of universal values and the secular models embodied by Western democracies was soon denied.

The Syrian internal conflict, turned to the demolition of an old authoritarian regime, has exercised an extraordinary power of transnational attraction on individuals and groups, often with a strong religious connotation, coming to fight not only from neighbouring countries. More than a million and a half refugees have poured into Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey and Iraq, and throughout the Mediterranean to Italy.

One of the most tangible consequences of the 'Arabian Spring' was the evolutionary leap of the League of Arab States, particularly concerning its relations with the Eu and Nato.

The passing of the centuries has not radically eradicated some brutal reasoning of indiscriminate violence of the fighting forces. In fact, there has been repeated conduct of violent constriction and compression of the most basic needs of the civilian population of the adverse party, subjected to treatments that are offensive to personal dignity and to the right of physical integrity and health's preservation.

All through the Middle East and the Gulf the use of social media is strongly influenced by technologies and services brought into that rich market by many commercial and multinational companies, some of them established in the Eu. During and after the first phase of the 'Arabian Spring', operators and service providers were requested to supply sophisticated management and control software, sophisticated new satellite connections, lots of hardware. The presence of small computer services companies in the international market allows freedom-killing regimes to acquire invasive systems, functional for an authoritarian control of the Internet and social media. Exports to and from the common market, or simple triangulations, represent the first border over which the entire extended Europe has the duty to keep watching.

Une des clés de lecture indispensables à la compréhension de l'intrigue de liens fonctionnels entre des groupes d'individus qui est présent dans le phénomène de la migration concernant, en particulier, la population syrienne, est celle d'imaginer une place virtuelle commune, partagée en

mille tentes, en habitations, en rues et barricades. L'environnement *cyber*, en fait, permet de construire et d'entretenir un réseau de contacts, structuré de façon horizontale et verticale, même à une distance de plusieurs milliers de kilomètres, traversant facilement et en temps réel les frontières poreuses ou rarement fermées et hostiles des États nationaux. Des frontières imposées abstraitement par la diplomatie occidentale il y a seulement quelques décennies, dans une région où les ethnies et les gens, souvent nomades, se mêlent depuis de longs siècles d'histoire, se rassemblant dans les traditions religieuses et dans une langue transnationale. Mass média et *social networks* ont caractérisé, non par hasard, l'explosion des mouvements tumultueux de protestation qui se sont développés sur les rives de la Méditerranée méridionale. L'hypothèse d'un élan choral et immédiat de la part des insurgés et des nouveaux régimes pour embrasser les valeurs «universelles» et les modèles laïques incarnés par les démocraties occidentales a été démentie par les faits.

Mais les formidables possibilités d'action et de communication dans le territoire urbain, dans les immenses banlieues, dans les campagnes ou dans les zones désertiques, offertes par les réseaux de l'Internet et des *social networks* aux insurgés, n'ont pas disparu. Le conflit interne syrien visant à la démolition d'un ancien régime autoritaire a exercé une attraction transnationale extraordinaire sur des individus et des groupes, des combattants, souvent avec une forte connotation religieuse, provenant non seulement des États voisins. Plus d'un million et demi de réfugiés sont afflués dans les pays voisins, le Liban, la Jordanie, l'Égypte, la Turquie, l'Irak, et aussi en Italie, dans un véritable exode à travers la Méditerranée des gens qui essaient d'échapper à la faim et aux conflits qui sévissent en différents pays de l'Afrique.

Une des conséquences du 'Printemps arabe' a été l'évolution que la Ligue des États arabes a imprimé à ses relations avec l'Ue et l'Otan.

Le passage des siècles n'a pas détruit une certaine logique cruelle par rapport à l'emploi de la violence sans discrimination. En effet, la population civile de partie adverse a été aveuglement soumise à des traitements qui offensent la dignité personnelle et le droit à l'intégrité physique et à la préservation de la santé.

Dans toute la région du Moyen-Orient et du Golfe la diffusion des *social networks* a été fortement favorisée par l'introduction dans ce riche marché des technologies et des services de la part de nombreuses sociétés commerciales, souvent des multinationales basées dans l'Ue. Pendant et après la première phase du 'Printemps arabe' la demande aux opérateurs et fournisseurs européens de logiciels sophistiqués, de nouvelles connexions satellitaires sophistiquées, de matériel s'est même accrue. La présence sur le marché international de petites sociétés de services informatiques permet d'acquérir des systèmes envahissants, fonctionnels à un contrôle autoritaire du réseau et des *social networks*. Les exportations vers et du marché commun, ou les simples triangulations, représentent la première frontière que l'ensemble de l'Europe élargie a le devoir de surveiller.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Primavera araba; Ambiente *cyber*; Conflitto interno siriano; Lega degli Stati Arabi; Mercato tecnologico.

EKATERINA ENTINA, On all four sides: shock of Serbian diplomacy's Five years plan?

For many years the Balkan region has been the scene of a collision of interests of great powers. Being one of the central links of the region, Serbia throughout its history has experienced multidirectional and often mutually exclusive influences of certain world powers. The end of XX and the beginning of XXI century became the turning point for the entire Balkans region where all the countries chose the European perspective. However, for some of them the path to Europe has turned out to be fraught with incredible difficulties, often associated with the choice between a recognized membership in the modern world and the preservation of national dignity. For the Serbs this question turned out to be the key one. Based on the methods of phenomenology, behaviourism and comparative analysis, the Author of the article demonstrates that the most important factor in achieving the goals for Serbia is a competently conducted foreign policy. The subject of this article is the analysis of the features of Serbian foreign policy during the last five years, after a new political team came to power. Having comprehensively considered the foreign

policy aspects, the Author concludes that for many countries Serbia is still a strategically important and attractive market in the region, the core of the Western Balkans area. With skilful manoeuvring between the interests of others and their own main foreign policy objectives, Serbian diplomacy could achieve more rapid, painless, and most importantly, more favourable terms of membership in the common European family.

Pendant des années et des années les Balkans ont été la scène de confrontation des intérêts des grandes puissances. Tout en étant un des liens centraux de la région, la Serbie avait toujours été sous l'influence des forces mondiales différentes qui la poussaient dans des directions opposées et parfois peu conciliables. La fin du XX^{ème} et le début de XXI^{ème} siècle sont devenus pour toute la région des Balkans le moment-charnière car tous les pays qui y appartenaient ont choisi la perspective européenne. Mais pour quelques uns d'eux la voie vers l'Europe s'est avérée pleine de difficultés, jumelée avec le choix entre l'appartenance à part entière au monde contemporain et la sauvegarde de la dignité nationale. Pour les Serbes cette question-là est devenue fatidique. S'aidant des méthodes de la phénoménologie, du comportementalisme et de l'analyse comparative, l'Auteur de cet article essaye de démontrer que l'un des facteurs les plus importants pour que la Serbie parvienne à atteindre ses objectifs est qu'elle exerce sa politique étrangère d'une manière professionnelle et maline. L'article est consacré à l'étude des caractéristiques principales de la politique étrangère de la Serbie pendant les cinq dernières années, quand une nouvelle équipe politique a accédé au pouvoir. À l'issue de l'analyse exhaustive des différents aspects de cette politique étrangère l'Auteur arrive à la conclusion que pour plusieurs États la Serbie reste tout de même le pays de référence dans la région du Balkan occidental, un marché stratégique et l'un des plus attractifs. Si la diplomatie Serbe trouve une balance ingénieuse entre les intérêts des autres et ses propres buts politiques, elle pourrait profiter de conditions beaucoup moins douloureuses et, ce qui est encore plus significatif, plus favorables pour une prompt entrée dans la famille commune européenne.

KEY WORDS: European integration; Serbian foreign policy; Russian-Serbian relations; Serbian-Chinese relations; Kosovo issue.

CRISTINA ELÍAS MÉNDEZ, Current trends and perspectives regarding constitutional jurisdiction in the Member States of the European Union

The aim of this paper is to contribute to the analysis and development of European constitutional law from the constitutional interaction between the European Union and the Member States. Against the traditional definitions of constitutional jurisdiction, it is now necessary to establish a concept of constitutional jurisdiction that is coherent with the multilevel constitutionalism of the European Union. From these methodological premises, the different models of constitutional jurisdiction in the Eu, their characteristics and their main processes are described and analysed. This comparative analysis shows the asymmetries and differences in constitutional jurisdiction within the European Union, to inform a model of constitutional jurisdiction that is coherent with the different national identities of the Member States but that is adapted to provide the necessary degree of homogeneity for the process of constitutional integration, thus responding to the new needs of the European Union. Thus, the paper discusses the role that the different models of constitutional jurisdiction can or must play in the new European constitutional context.

Le but ultime de ce travail est de contribuer à l'analyse et au développement du droit constitutionnel européen à partir de l'interaction constitutionnelle entre l'Union européenne et les États membres. Face aux définitions traditionnelles de la juridiction constitutionnelle, il est maintenant nécessaire de fournir un concept de juridiction constitutionnelle qui est compatible avec le constitutionnalisme multiniveaux dans l'Union européenne. À partir de ces prémisses méthodologiques, nous décrivons et analysons les différents modèles de juridiction constitutionnelle dans l'Ue, leurs caractéristiques et les procédures principales. Cette analyse comparative montre les asymétries et les différences dont on a déjà parlé, afin de proposer un modèle de juridiction constitutionnelle qui est compatible avec les différentes identités nationales et s'adapte également à l'homogénéité nécessaire pour consolider le processus d'intégration

constitutionnelle, répondant aussi aux nouveaux besoins de l'Ue. Ainsi, le texte aborde le rôle que les différents modèles de juridiction constitutionnelle pourront ou devront jouer dans le nouveau contexte constitutionnel européen.

KEY WORDS: Constitutional Court; European constitutional law; European integration process; Composition of Constitutional Courts; Constitutional Courts' procedures.

ROCCO ROMANO, L'oleodotto Suez-Mediterraneo e il riavvicinamento dell'Egitto al campo occidentale (1967-1976).

The idea of building a pipeline, on Egyptian territory, with the purpose of connecting the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea emerged before the 1967 War, which was responsible for the prolonged closure of the Suez Canal. The pipeline was inaugurated only in 1977 because of regional security issues. Despite the delay in its implementation, today the Sumed pipeline represents a strategic passage route which allows Middle Eastern oil to reach Western markets.

L'idée de construire un oléoduc avec comme objectif de mettre en communication la Mer Rouge avec la Mer Méditerranée s'est développé avant la Guerre des six jours, laquelle a provoquée la fermeture prolongée du Canal de Suez. L'oléoduc a été inauguré seulement en 1977 à cause des problèmes liés à la sécurité régionale. Malgré le retard dans la mise en œuvre, aujourd'hui le Sumed représente une voie de passage stratégique du pétrole du Moyen-Orient.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Petrolio; Medio Oriente; Israele; Energia; Sumed.

CHIARA D'AURIA, La propaganda comunista in Cina nella corrispondenza di mons. celso Costantini.

On the base of the informative reports sent to the Vatican and kept inside the Archivio Vaticano Segreto, the Author presents the mission of mgr. Celso Costantini to China, where he founded the first nunciature and served as Apostolic Nuncio during the 20th and the 30th years of the past century.

Celso Costantini is presented as a man of the Roman Church, as a missionary and as a diplomatic agent at the same time. His mission was not only to build a nunciature in the biggest country of Asia but also to provide the Vatican with any information on the Bolshevik propaganda going on and the strength of the Chinese Communist Party.

The documents, mostly inedited, show the ecumenical spirit of the Nuncio and his deep knowledge of the country, as well as the growing force of Ccp during those years.

Sur la base des rapports envoyés au Saint Siège et gardés aux Archives secrètes du Vatican, l'Auteur présente la mission en Chine de mgr. Celso Costantini, qui fonda la première nonciature et y servit en tant que homme apostolique pendant les années Vingt et Trente du dernier siècle.

Dans l'article Celso Costantini apparaît être au même temps un homme de l'Église romaine, un missionnaire et un agent diplomatique. Il n'était pas chargé seulement de bâtir une nonciature dans le plus grand pays de l'Asie, mais aussi de renseigner le Saint Siège au sujet de la propagande bolchevique et de l'essor d'un Parti communiste en Chine.

Les documents fouillés, le plus souvent inédits, montrent l'esprit d'écoumène du nonce et sa connaissance profonde du pays et de la force croissante du Pcc dans ces années-là.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Partito comunista cinese; Archivio segreto vaticano; Nunziature; Bolscevichi; Politica estera della Santa Sede.

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EKATERINA ENTINA

Introduction

Over the last quarter of a century, Serbia and the Serbs appeared perhaps too often in not the most glowing reports of world news: the repression in Kosovo; the disintegration of the Federation and the civil war; international sanctions and Nato bombing; the overthrow of the regime of Slobodan Milosevic and his subsequent transfer to the Hague Tribunal; the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic; the disintegration of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro; and Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence. This is not a definitive list of what happened in this Balkan land during its regular (not the first in its history) sunset.

The successes of this period are quite ambiguous. Of course, change of the authoritarian regime to democracy is a major achievement, but everyone from political scientists and historians to the Serbian establishment share the opinion that all meaningful prospects for the life of the country are made by a person, or group of people, in power and do not depend much on the interests of the State, but on the moods, political views and opinions of its leaders.

The political system is far from the bipartisan ideal inherent to Europe. Governments of the last decade were formed on the basis of coalitions, while small parties had significant influence because of their blackmailing potential¹. Former President Boris Tadic, a longtime favorite of the West, could not keep his word given to European and international partners in solving Kosovo issue and was forgotten. The current president Tomislav Nikolic, who aspired for power for twenty years, turned out to be an incredibly weak player. The hopes are that the electorate who supported him is buried already.

The foreign policy achievements of the last five years include the elaboration of the Four pillars program (the Eu, Russia, China and the United States) and ongoing process of joining the European Union. Though, the latter is not due to Serbian diplomacy itself, rather due to the absence of alternatives in the real long-

¹ For details: Ekaterina Volkova (Entina), *One more way to Europe: from Yugoslavia to Serbia*, Ekaterinburg, Ural Federal University Publishing House, 2011 (Екатерина Волкова (Энтина), *Еще один путь в Европу: от нерушимой Югославии к неделимой Сербии*, Екатеринбург, Издательство Уральского федерального университета, 2011).

term planning for European prospects – both objective and subjective – and the determined efforts of the European Union. As for the other three directions, unfortunately, Serbian diplomacy during this time has failed to positively implement an efficient strategy of cooperation.

Finally, both the signing of the Agreement on the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina on the 19th of April 2013 and subsequent implementation of the plan cannot be assessed to be unambiguously positive. However, it cannot be regarded as unequivocally negative, as it is explained further below.

The economic situation in Serbia, as in many other European countries, is catastrophic. The country is on the verge of bankruptcy, a fact the European partners are well aware of. Hence, Europe has a general reluctance to be bound by moral obligations to provide substantial financial assistance. While in Serbia everyone, from politicians to ordinary citizens, recognizes that the State needs money more than ever. This makes the Serbs unconditionally surrender all foreign policy positions.

All internal practices in Serbia today, one way or another, directly and strongly influence its position in the international arena. The country is experiencing the deepest crisis of foreign policy and now it is necessary to find a positive way out of it; to develop a counter play.

Perhaps the crisis which has overtaken the Serbian nation and stirred up the State, society, politics and economy will be a good opportunity for the Serb *élite* to wonder how and why it happened. In search of answers to these questions, the public of Serbia can go two ways: to point the finger of blame or to look at the causes of the crisis, its dimensions and consequences, to try to understand and explain what happened.

The first way is more attractive to Serbian mentality for offering simple, black-and-white answers and solutions. It allows unequivocal condemnation of ‘the guilty’ and grants amnesty ‘to the victims’. However, experience shows that the elimination of ‘the guilty’ from the political scene has never led to a rapid and definitive solution to all problems².

One of the most important points of this analysis should be the political and foreign policy situation in Serbia in the last five years, in the context of the ongoing process of its integration into the European Union.

Relations between Serbia and the European Union

Indeed, politics is perceived by the Serbian people as a kind of fate; as an activity only of individuals, not institutions. But this is not a genetic propensity of the nation to accept an authoritarian type of government, as many researchers tend to think. This situation is a result of a long history of uneven development.

² Miroslav Jovanovic, “Serbia at the beginning of the XXI century, or about the crisis, its causes and responsibility”, in Miroslav Jovanovic (ed.), *Serbia about itself, a collection of articles*, Moscow, Evropa, 2005, pp. 500-501.

Over the past two hundred years, for ten times Serbia and the Serbs have been involved in wars, almost the same number of times they have had a radical change of political regime and foreign policy (since the internal political activities in the Balkans almost always were and are mediated by an external factor). As a result it was strong personalities, rather than institutions who determined the vectors of Serbian development. This has led to relatively inactive institutions.

The policy of the last decade has been a joint attempt with Europe to overcome this pattern. However, without the total commitment of the European Union it always fails. As a result, since the 2000s, the European Union almost openly forms the party-political system in Serbia. A good example was the recent presidential and parliamentary elections in 2012. It is clear that the Kosovo problem is a stumbling block, both for the further development of Serbia and for the reputation of the European Union. Nevertheless, the public mood was so tense that the attempt to solve the problem by Democrats could lead to adverse consequences. Quite naturally the Progressive Party of Tomislav Nikolic came to power and he became President. The main slogan of his campaign was «We do not give up Kosovo». Boris Tadic, despite negligible gap in the votes, did not require a recount. And the European Union in general congratulated Tomislav Nikolic on his victory even before the official announcement of election results.

It may seem illogical, but it quickly becomes clear that this is a strategically planned step of the European Union. The need for joining the Eu is not disputed by anyone in Serbia. It is not disputed by Tomislav Nikolic. His election bid dependent on Russia and its aid has not justified itself. Russia is implementing its economic interests in the region, deliberately distancing itself from interfering in Serbian political issues, that according to the Serbian scenario, *de facto* provides confrontation between Russian and the international community. Serbs themselves – as it is revealed later in this article – are pursuing an extremely inconsistent policy, trying to hold their position using emotions rather than trying to build a solid alternative strategy.

In theory it is only the European Union today who can tackle Serbia's economic problems as such, rather than their individual parts. The European Commissioners placed reliance on this and were not mistaken. They not only managed to get Belgrade and Pristina to the negotiating table, but also to achieve the conclusion of the agreement. The reforms, which would normally be carried out by the 'right' forces were implemented by the 'left'. Why? The explanation is simple: if such an agreement was signed by a democrat, Boris Tadic, he would suffer the fate of Zoran Djindjic³. A radical change in domestic and foreign policy, and as a result the temporary isolation of Serbia⁴, would be almost inevitable. But now, as of today, European higher representatives have suffered just a little

³ Zoran Djindjic, Prime Minister of Serbia in 2001-2003, was killed on the 12th of March, 2003.

⁴ Temporary not because the world community would soon forgive the Serbs this move but because the Serbs would have been very quickly forced to seek economic and financial assistance.

lowering of Eu rating among Serbs. And Serbian government itself is just faced with regular, but not numerous protest rallies which don't have much influence. However, this is the current situation. What will happen next in a situation where Kosovo *de facto* is given up for nothing is unknown.

Departing from current political, spiritual, and moral issues, it is necessary to dwell upon the concept of development of Serbia's foreign policy in its forward-looking approach, or more precisely in its absence.

«The strategy of foreign policy is one of the key elements of the foreign policies of all Eu countries, as well as to Serbia's neighbours. It is the key aspect on which all future foreign policy decisions are based. However, Serbia has no foreign policy strategy. And no one, neither society nor the political *élite*, expressed their desire that a strategy document appeared»⁵.

Serbia could 'return to Europe' on the basis of a well-constructed foreign policy. However, it is indeed very difficult to create it until the Kosovo issue is resolved. The absence of such a single document forces us to collect the key areas of foreign policy of Serbia literally bit by bit, from various documents: resolution of the Assembly of Serbia on Kosovo, statements by political leaders, separately signed agreements, etc.⁶. As a result, a mixed picture of Serbian priorities is being developed, which is headed by European integration. However with all of this, it is clear that the entire Serbian foreign policy is retrospective rather than focused on the future. And today it is this link that does not let Serbia develop normally and not find itself in the position of the one to blame.

So, Serbia-European Union relations in the context of solving the Kosovo issue⁷ and hence the first Agreement on the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina today, are crucial to relations between Serbia and the Eu.

The very fact that the conclusion of such an agreement, and the negotiations leading up to it, should cause debate in scientific circles and in the press demonstrates its significance. Some analysts have rightly pointed to double standards, about the uncompromising attitude of Western partners towards Serbia:

⁵ Igor Novakovic, *From four pillars of foreign policy to European integration: is there a will for strategically orienting Serbia's foreign policy?*, Beograd, Isac Fund, 2013, p. 15.

⁶ National Security Strategy; Defense Strategy of the Republic of Serbia; National Strategy of Serbia in the Accession of Serbia and Montenegro to the European Union; Declaration on Defense of the National Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of the Republic of Serbia; Resolution on the Eu Accession of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia.

⁷ The process of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina with the mediation of the European Union began after the adoption of the Un General Assembly Resolution A/Res/64/298 on the 9th of September 2010. As a result, contracts were signed in the following areas: book of civil registration, freedom of movement, customs regulation, inventory, operation of Cefta, recognition of university diplomas, integrated control of the administrative border, regional representation and cooperation, an agreement on the normalization of relations. A total of 10 rounds of negotiations were held in Brussels. First contracts were signed in six months - on the 2nd of July, 2011 (freedom of movement and the civil status). During the sixth round of talks on the 2nd of September, 2011 customs and inventory agreements were signed, during the seventh round on the 21st and 22nd of November, 2011 agreement on the mutual recognition of diplomas was reached. The round n. 8 - 30th of November and 2nd of December, 2011 - integrated control of administrative boundaries, the round n. 9 - 21st - 24th of February 2012 - regional cooperation and representation, after which on the 2nd of March, 2012 Serbia received the status of candidate for Eu membership. During the 10 rounds of talks the 19th April, 2013 an agreement on the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina was signed.

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«Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has shown a typical example of such a relationship when she abruptly dismissed all thoughts of compromise. “We oppose any discussion of territorial changes or reopening Kosovo’s independent status”, Clinton stated during a meeting in October 2012 with Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaci. “These matters are not up for discussion. The boundaries of an independent, sovereign Kosovo are clear and set”. A majority of countries in the European Union, especially Germany, have adopted a similar rigid stance. In December 2011, German Chancellor Angela Merkel told officials in Belgrade that the “path of Serbia into the Eu can only result through the normalization of its relations with Kosovo”. By “normalization”, she meant Serbia’s recognition of an independent Kosovo with no boundary changes whatsoever. That is an extra-legal requirement that has never been a condition for any other current or prospective Eu member. Moreover, the demand is in stark contrast to the Eu’s decision regarding Cyprus’s membership. Nicosia did not have to recognize the independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which Ankara had created in the portion of the Island that Turkish troops had invaded and occupied in 1974»⁸.

Others quietly perceived the *fait accompli* as a fact that proved that international law objectively did not have time to adapt to the arising requirements of contemporary international relations:

«Kosovo has become the last, but one of the many new States in Europe. And, in general terms, everything is over. As one becomes accustomed to the fact that the State has formed and is recognized, the existence of the Serb enclaves in Kosovo does not provoke violence from the Kosovars. With the realization that this land will never be taken back, the situation in Serbia is becoming calmer. Ninety-eight States have recognized Kosovo. It is slightly more than half of all Un member States. However, no one is counting them. Recognition or non-recognition is only an opportunity for a diplomatic casuistry, miscalculations and accusations of double standards. Everyone knows that the page has been turned, maybe contrary to the rules of the game called international law. But Kosovars are certainly not the ones to blame for the fact that these rules have not changed in time»⁹.

But one thing is certain: an agreement between Pristina and Belgrade in the real world was and is necessary. Despite many claims, in reality it is not a legal recognition of Kosovo’s independence by Serbia. This is a document, which today covers at least some, albeit largely fictitious, guarantees for the Serb population of the region. They *de facto* did not exist before but independence did.

However, strategic blunders of Serbian diplomacy are obvious.

Firstly, why start the talks without a strategy, without a patron to back it and with a clear understanding of the fact that you will lose anyway? After all, the ‘golden rule’ of diplomacy is neither to win, nor to lose, but to leave the table of negotiations at least with zero. But once it happened, then we will proceed on the basis that the Serbs had to start these negotiations and to reach concrete solutions. Then the second: if a team had to lose, then why so heedlessly? In this sense, the

⁸ Ted Galen Carpenter, *Serbian olive branch*, Inosmi.ru, 24th January 2013, <http://www.inosmi.ru/world/20130124/205000563.html>.

⁹ Vadim Dubnov, *Kosovo. Five years experiment on creation of the world*, Ria.ru, 17th February 2013, <http://ria.ru/analytics/20130217/923087575.html>.

famous Serbian historian and diplomat Dusan Batakovic is right: while the negotiations were conducted within the framework of the Un, the Serbs had more room to manoeuvre – that’s the first thing. And secondly, but more importantly: Serbian diplomats had to link the start date of the accession negotiations not with the ultimate successful signing of the agreement at a later date, but on the contrary, with the anticipated signing of an agreement in exchange for the date of the start of negotiations¹⁰. To do this, the Serbs had to manoeuvre.

The European Union has failed in Africa, Syria, the Middle East, Greece, Cyprus and in the domestic economic situation. It is going through a serious crisis of solidarity and has a vital interest in the resolution of the Kosovo problem to maintain its reputation. This would prove that the organization is at least able to do something, or it will be considered in full crisis and unable to respond to the challenges of our time.

The Kosovo issue was the one straw which it could catch. Consequently, it probably would have agreed on greater Serbian demands. But the Serbs were only allowed to save face in a bad game, to which they agreed. The signed plan of implementation does not make anything clear, but only adds elements of potential pressure on the Serbs. For example, the Serbs and the Albanians have fundamentally different views on the process of replacing the existing institutions in Kosovo with the new. Although the parties did not agree on this during the last negotiations, the implementation of the plan has been signed and accepted¹¹.

The contents of the negotiations and the agreement itself have serious flaws. With the *de facto* signed Agreement Belgrade agreed that Serbs in Kosovo would be a minority and not a «State-forming» nation. There is no point in the Agreement that mentions that communities with Serbian majority population have the same equal rights of the Albanian population. Paragraph 1 of the Agreement states that «the Serb-majority associations/communities will be established in Kosovo». Paragraph 4 says that «Associations/communities will be self-sufficient in the areas of economic development, education, health, urban and rural planning»¹². It is clear that the Serbs are not legally able to enter into being part of the State-forming nation or of a national minority in the context of the text of the Agreement. But it was necessary to secure that status in some other way. After all, the concept of ‘national minority’ itself is defective. It does not give equal rights compared to the titular nation. This is self-deception of international law. History has proved that the only working example in areas with painful national issues is the type of the Swiss Confederation, where all nations

¹⁰ Dusan Batakovic, *After Kosovo there will be a turn of other parts of Serbia, New Serbian political thought*, 14th May 2013, <http://www.nspm.rs/kuda-ide-srbija/nema-krajaposle-kosova-porasce-apatiti-sveta-i-za-drugim-delovima-srbije.html> (Душан Баќаковић, *После Косова поратуе апетити и за другим деловима Србије*, *Нова српска политичка мисао*, 14th Мау 2013, <http://www.nspm.rs/kuda-ide-srbija/nema-krajaposle-kosova-porasce-apatiti-sveta-i-za-drugim-delovima-srbije.html>).

¹¹ Implementation plan was signed in May 2013. Its text is available at the following link: <http://www.nspm.rs/dokumenti/izvestaj-o-politickom-i-tehnickom-dijalogu-sa-privremenim-institucijama-u-pristini.html>.

¹² *First agreement of principles governing the normalization of relations*, Report on political and technical dialogue with Pristina institutions, Government of Serbia, 24th April 2013 (Извештај о политичком и техничком дијалогу са привременим институцијама у Приштини, Влада Србије, 24 април 2013).

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have the status of constituents. With regard to Kosovo, this is the scenario where the rights of the Serbs could have been guaranteed not only in words but in deeds.

Thirdly, the Balkan region has always been the object of great political games; it's part of its history. This is a kind of standard solution of internal and external issues in the region. The Kosovo issue was, in this sense, exceptional for the Serbian side. The United States backed Albanian negotiators in Brussels all the time. Us Secretary of State, John Kerry, repeatedly flew to Brussels and was invisibly present at the talks. The Serbian delegation was left alone. They not only allowed turning the negotiation process from under the auspices of the Un to the Eu format¹³, but failed to win over any strong country for support. Had there been a Russian or, for example, a Chinese representative at the time in the corridors of the European institutions, the negotiating position of Serbs certainly would not have been a dead end.

The fourth aspect is linking the Eu accession with a positive or negative decision on Kosovo. On one hand, it intensifies Serbian relations with Europe. In this case, both parties understand that no matter how the issue of Kosovo is resolved, Serbia will continue its way to Europe. Its leaders just do not see any other solution. On the other hand, it heats the moods of Serbian public. During the election campaign, Tomislav Nikolic, Aleksandar Vucic, and other leaders of the Progressive Party not only swore to defend Kosovo with weapons as their ancestors had, but also to give their lives to save this land as a part of Serbia¹⁴. Serbs from Kosovo voted for this; the Serbs voted for this as a nation. But in reality, they have signed an agreement in exchange for a date that the Serbs technically did not get. They have achieved only a very abstract 'green light'. On the 25th of June 25, 2013 at a meeting of the Council of Ministers in Luxembourg, Serbia was invited to start membership negotiations not later than January 2014. This is due to the fact that Germany insisted that the December European Council would reaffirm its decision, to ensure that the Agreement on the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina was actually being realized¹⁵. On the 28th of June 2013 European Council President Herman Van Rompuy announced that the Board had decided to start negotiations with Serbia not later than January 2014. The requirement that the Eu Council in December have to confirm the decision again was removed from the conclusion¹⁶. However, there remains no actual date.

¹³ The talks between Belgrade and Pristina are held by the European Union in accordance with Un General Assembly Resolution of 9th September 2010 A/RES/64/298.

¹⁴ Dusan Batakovic, *After Kosovo there will be a turn of other parts of Serbia, New Serbian political thought*, 14th May 2013, <http://www.nspm.rs/kuda-ide-srbija/nema-krajaposle-kosova-porasce-apetiti-sveta-i-za-drugim-delovima-srbije.html> (Душан Батаковић, *После Косова поратне апетити и за другим деловима Србије*, Нова српска политичка мисао, 14th May 2013, <http://www.nspm.rs/kuda-ide-srbija/nema-krajaposle-kosova-porasce-apetiti-sveta-i-za-drugim-delovima-srbije.html>).

¹⁵ *Today the Brussels Summit will begin (Danas počinje briselski samit, o Srbiji u petak)*, Blic.rs, 27th June 2013, <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Politika/390261/Danas-pocinje-briselski-samit-o-Srbiji-u-petak>.

¹⁶ *Van Rompuy: we will begin negotiations with Serbia as latest in January, there will be no additional conditions (Van Rompej: Pregovore sa Srbijom, pocinjemo najkasniji u januaru, nece biti novih uslova)*, Blic.rs, 28th June 2013, <http://blic.rs/Vesti/politika/390520/>.

For the Eu in the absence of counter-play it is clear that, the Serbs will gradually hand over everything. Therefore, no one was going and is going to make any concessions. The Serbian side understands the same. But desperate situations do not exist in principle. The art of politics is always to be able to find an alternative.

Of course, the issue of Kosovo has become so psychologically dominant over the Serbs that the society has been living in absolute certainty that only its resolution could open the way to a normal existence. This is true and not true at the same time. The fact that the Serbian public is willing to accept the loss of Kosovo is proved by relatively small and hushed protests against the Agreement. Immediately after the conclusion of the Agreement the analyst Dejan Vuk Stankovic predicted that the citizens of Serbia as a whole would accept the normalization of relations with Kosovo:

«If you look at the balance of forces of supporters of different political parties in the elections, the radical anti-Agreement could come up from 7 to 13% of the citizens of Serbia. The Agreement did not become a reason for either parliamentary or for the government crisis. Protest demonstrations need to be much longer and more widespread to be crowned with political success»¹⁷.

This is what happened in reality; here is a report from the mass rally held on the 10th of May, 2013. Thousands protest in the centre of Belgrade on Friday against the policy of the Government of Serbia to get closer to the Albanian authorities in Kosovo. According to the police, the action organized by the Kosovo Serbs and a number of Serbian right-wing organizations, gathered about 4000 people. Organizers reported about the presence of more than 10,000 people¹⁸. Yes, we can say that buses with protesters from the Republic of *Srpska* in Bosnia could not break through and get to Belgrade, but even though they formally hold Serbian passports, they cannot be regarded as spokesmen of interests and attitudes in Serbian society. Serbian society, unfortunately, has demonstrated that a football game of Crvena Zvezda or Partizan attracts more people than the protest rally for the major part of its historical territory. This is right as such matters cannot be resolved by demonstrations. This is a ‘dummy’. In recent years the Serbian people have seen this more than once.

In reality, one should not accuse a specific group of people, - i.e. today’s politicians. The Agreement on Kosovo of 19th of April, 2013 is the natural result of inaction or inadequate action of all Serbian politicians, starting with the 1980s. The historical problem for the Serbs themselves, regarding the solution to the issue of Kosovo, is that in this way they have lost their cultural foundation. The history of Serbian statehood is not too rich. Kosovo occupies the central place in

¹⁷ *Experts from Belgrade and Pristina - on the agreement on normalization of relations*, «Echo of the Caucasus», 25th April 2013, <http://www.ekhokavkaza.com/content/article/24968360.html>.

¹⁸ *The Serbian Orthodox Church supported the protest against the policy of the Government of Serbia for Kosovo*, «Orthodox Church and the world», 11th May 2013, <http://www.pravmir.ru/v-belgrade-proshel-miting-protiv-politiki-pravitelstva-serbii-v-otnoshenii-kosovo/>.

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it. Without it, without its specific, mythological but very important role, there is no room for the Serbs for respect, celebration and pride in themselves as a nation. Without respect and spiritual uplift there is no development.

Of course, today Kosovo is not *de facto* given away as in exchange of a formal date. Without strong financial support, Serbia will go bankrupt in a very short time. The Serbian authorities are hoping for a European credit. In this regard, everybody was waiting for the 28th of June, 2013, another Vidovdan¹⁹. In this regard, it is worth remembering the 28th of June of 2001: this was the date of the transfer of Slobodan Milosevic to the Hague Tribunal. Zoran Djindjic carried out the extradition exactly on this date. The World Investment Conference, supported by the European Commission and the World Bank, was held on the 29th of June, 2001. Yugoslavia expected to receive more than a billion euros of investments, specifically 1.3 billion euros²⁰. In reality Serbia received a much smaller amount from these investments. This, as an instructive example, brings us back to the beginning of this paragraph. You cannot give something for nothing. Exchange should be transparent and in any way equal. Serbs, unable to find a reliable and strong partner, *de facto* gave a part of its territory for a promise. This precedent, in the absence of strong financial revenues and support, could be the starting point of new unrests in a hungry country on its last legs.

Other priorities of Serbian foreign policy and the principle of political and military neutrality

As for Serbian foreign policy priorities, four areas were selected: the European Union, Russia, China and the United States. This was stated by President Boris Tadic on the eve of the 2008 presidential campaign²¹. But then this step was simply inevitable in order to win. However, over the next five years, the concept was not developed or transformed. In its contents it is not equal, it is incomplete and does not give Serbia any room for manoeuvre.

As mentioned above, the Serbia-Eu relationship fundamentally differs from all other identified priorities. As its main foreign policy priorities, Serbia has chosen integration into Eu structures, i.e. joining the organization with all the ensuing legal obligations. In addition, the relationship of Serbia-Eu involves the so-called «Europeanization of Serbia», its integration into European standards and formats. Thus, it becomes apparent that this is not a relationship of equal partners.

A good example of how the Eu 'forms' the foreign policy agenda in Serbia is the relationship with the other countries of South-Eastern Europe. On the one

¹⁹ Vidovdan is one of the key dates in Serbian history. On the 28th of June, 1389 the Serbs were defeated by the Turks at Kosovo Field. This symbolized the end of the medieval Serbian State and the beginning of a period of centuries of Ottoman rule.

²⁰ For details: *Chairmen's conclusions. First Donors' Conference for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*. Co-chaired by the European Commission and the World Bank, Brussels, 29th June, 2001.

²¹ For details: Ekaterina Volkova (Entina), *One more way to Europe: from Yugoslavia to Serbia*, Ekaterinburg, Ural Federal University Publishing House, 2011 (Екатерина Волкова (Энтина), *Еще один путь в Европу: от нерушимой Югославии к неделимой Сербии*, Екатеринбург, Издательство Уральского федерального университета, 2011).

hand, these are purely bilateral relations. However, their development is under the strict control of the European Union. This is due to two factors. Firstly, the security of Europe as a whole, and the development of the European integration project in particular, directly depends on how these develop. Secondly, for the countries of the former Yugoslavia, with respect to the Copenhagen criteria this is an extra criterion for readiness to Eu membership.

At the initial stage, Serbia, like other countries of the region, began the process of normalizing relations and signed a large number of regional agreements. For 2012, the European Commission assessed the relations with the countries of the region positively²². Meanwhile, formally Serbia has serious conflicts in the region, but no really intense and structurally conceived relations with any neighbouring country. And here all joint projects are extremely scattered, they do not have a key unifying idea.

Today the most important neighbour in the region to Serbia is, of course, Croatia – a member of the European Union since the 1st of July, 2013. It is the stabilizing and positive development of relations between Serbia and Croatia that determines the trend in the region. In general, simultaneous accession of all countries of the former Yugoslavia to the European Union would meet the interests of the region as a whole. However, this has not happened. But, oddly enough, it is Croatia's membership in the Eu that gives Serbia the opportunity to gain consistent partnership within the European Union. According to the famous historian and expert in the Balkan region, and today an advisor to the President of Croatia, Prof. Dejan Jovic, Croatian political establishment is concerned that after Zagreb the Eu's doors could be closed. In this case, the border will be imposed at Croatia's borders, where relevant border crossing points will be placed. Security will be improved. All of this, according to experts, is a potential danger to the strengthening of nationalist sentiment in society and the State, which is absolutely not in the interests of modern Croatia²³. Today, therefore, the Croats are ready to support Serbia. This position demonstrates a rational policy of Croatia towards Serbs in the last five years, since Ivo Josipovic came to power. The Serbs should certainly take advantage of this.

It is also clear that in a bilateral relationship, whether Russian-Serbian, Serbian-American, or Serbian-Chinese, and no matter how they are perceived by Russian, Chinese and American *élites*, Serbia and Serbs cannot function in principle in the format of 'tutor-student'. The statement about the 'four equal pillars' of Serbian foreign policy is rather populist than actually existing.

The same applies to the 'military-political neutrality' of the State in respect of 'effective regional alliances and security structures'. This position does not

²² *Serbia 2012 progress report accompanying the document "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council"*, Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2012-2103, Brussels, 10th October 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/package/sr_rapport_2012_en.pdf.

²³ Dejan Jovic's point of view expressed during a discussions at the conference in Belgrade in June 2013.

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have a strategic base. It is formally influenced by two factors: psychological rejection of Nato and the desire not to escalate the relationship with Russia, which expresses a sharply negative attitude to any attempt of expansion of this military-political union²⁴. If you look at the real Serbian foreign policy interests, you will see the opposite. Firstly, all countries of the region are somehow integrated into Nato, which strategically puts Serbia in an extremely disadvantageous isolated position. Secondly, Serbia is a partner country of Nato, which in itself does not make it absolutely neutral. Thirdly, Serbia is committed to the European Union, where one of the pillars is a «common foreign and security policy»²⁵. Yes, in principle, Serbia's claims for 'neutrality' are very far-fetched. Historically, it has no such experience, with the exception of the period of 'Tito' Yugoslavia, but that neutrality has nothing to do with modern understanding. And then, usually the power of 'neutral' countries and their neutrality are based on the ability to act as a mediator in solving various conflicts. Serbia, torn by internal and external contradictions, is unlikely to be perceived as a mediator.

With regards to the three other pillars – Russia, China and the United States – nothing is too easy. This is a two-way communication, where Serbia is not a subject but rather an object of relations.

For example, the United States as an announced key area of Serbian foreign policy. To date, it is strange to speak about it as a crucial moment in international politics for Serbia. Formally Serbia and the United States are in a neutral-positive relationship. The Us regularly provides financial assistance to its Serbian partners.

«Thus in 2011, Serbia received 45 million dollars for political and economic reforms, 1,896 million dollars to finance the military sector, 0.9 million dollars for the training of military personnel and 1.15 million dollars for the fight against terrorism and related issues. In 2012, Serbia received 33.5 million dollars for political and economic reforms, two million dollars for the military sector, 0.9 million for the training of military personnel and 2.65 million dollars for the fight against terrorism»²⁶.

Any formal political cooperation between Serbia and the United States is strongly emotionally charged, both because of memories of the bombing in 1999 and as a result of an uncompromising Us position on the issue of Kosovo. Therefore, it is too early to talk about the possibility of deploying a fully-fledged and more determined cooperation between these two countries.

Furthermore, there are the Russian-Serbian relations. Contrary to what some Serbs and Serbian politicians might think, these cannot be independent from the Serbian-Eu cooperation vector. Russia deliberately avoids interference in the resolution of political and foreign policy issues which are extremely important for

²⁴ Zarko Petrovic, *Rusko-srpsko stratesko partnerstvo: sadrzina I domasaj*, Odnosi Rusije I Srbije na pocetku XXI veka, Beograd, Isac Fund, 2011, pp. 26-39.

²⁵ For details: Igor Novakovic, *Neutrality in Europe in the XXI century and the case of Serbia*, Belgrade, Isac Fund, 2012.

²⁶ Steven Woehrel, *Serbia. Current issues and Us policy*, Crs report for Congress, 13th May 2013, p. 11.

Serbia. Russia doesn't have any leverage or potential to fully influence the resolution of Serbian issues on the international agenda. However, it may well be a player with the help of which the Serbs could benefit, providing they have got properly constructed strategies. Russia supports the Serbs, primarily because of its international interests that lie in the legal field, and only in part because of the traditional Balkan patronage²⁷. On the foreign policy level, Serbia cannot be a reliable pillar of Russian diplomacy for several reasons: a) it does not carry sufficient weight and b) it follows, above all, the interests of the Eu. What's more, modern Serbia is not a partner consistently supporting the position of the Russian Federation in the international arena. A striking example of this was the fact that Serbia did not support the Russian draft of a new Treaty on European security in 2008, though it objectively met the interests of the State. Whenever it comes to a complete dead end, Serbs seek to enlist the support of Russia²⁸. When they feel that there is room for manoeuvre, they prefer to make their own decisions, in accordance with the agreements with European partners. Let us consider the talks on Kosovo from the Un format under the wing of the Eu:

«Yes, Russia voted for a Un General Assembly resolution of the 9th of September 2010, which had been proposed by countries including Serbia. Following it, the European Union introduced the mechanism of mediation. And then Serbia was alone, without allies and support. Today, as before, we say that we are not going to push Serbia to a particular decision. It is Serbia's own business and the Serbian government's and Serbian people's own business»²⁹.

The strategic relationship cannot be built on the basis of market conditions, as demonstrated in cooperation between Russia and Serbia. So they can never lead to a real partnership.

In terms of economic cooperation, this area is attractive to Russia because of its markets, real and potential, but Russia's objective here is not to help development of the Serbian economy, but to implement their own economic interests. Most of the allocated credits are targeted and focused on the implementation of joint Russian-Serbian projects. The last two were allocated for the purchase of Russian Mig helicopters and reconstruction of Serbian railways for better implementing the South Stream project.

Serbia asked Russia for a loan of one billion dollars in 2008. The loan agreement was signed in April 2010. The first *tranche* of two hundred million dollars was allocated in 2010 to cover the budget deficit of the country. The remaining eight hundred million dollars were intended for modernization of the

²⁷ For details: Ekaterina Entina, "From disintegration to modernization. On the question of the modern Russian-Serbian relations", in *The history of the XX Century*, Vol. 2/2012, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, pp. 197-221.

²⁸ *Meeting of V. Putin with the Prime-Minister of Serbia Ivica Dacic*, 10th April 2013, <http://президент.рф/%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8/17870>.

²⁹ *Interview of the Ambassador of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Serbia A.V. Chepurin for "Geopolitics" magazine*, Web of the Embassy of Russia in Serbia, <http://www.ambasadarusije.rs/ru/vesti/intervju-avcepurina-zurnal-geopolitika>.

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railway infrastructure in Serbia³⁰. In accordance with the contract concluded between the Jsc Serbian Railways and Jsc Russian Railways, the following works are to be implemented: construction and electrification of 16 km of the second track of the railway line Belgrade-Pancevo; reconstruction of six parts of the Pan-European Corridor X with total length of 112 km; reconstruction of the existing and construction of a second new track on the railway Stara Pazova-Novi Sad, 44 km long; reconstruction of the Serbian part of the railway line Belgrade-Bar with a total length of 200 km (Belgrade-Vrbnica); supply of 26 diesel trains manufactured by Jsc Metrovagonmash (Russia).

From the Jsc Russian Railways side these works are to be done by the Llc Russian Railways International – a subsidiary of the Jsc Russian Railways, specializing in the implementation of foreign infrastructure projects of the holding.

Works will be performed mostly by Russian contractors with the participation of Serbian companies³¹. Obviously, it is more in current Russian interests and is done to meet the specific needs of the Russian side.

The Strategic Partnership Agreement between Serbia and Russia, signed in Sochi 24th May 2013³² cannot be considered something out of the ordinary. Serbia and Russia have many such agreements. They are pleasant, show friendly relations and good intentions, but are not binding. Moreover, even in Serbia the attitude is ambiguous: «after nearly years of negotiations and after three such documents signed with Italy, China and France, it was the turn of Russia. The only aspect is that this latest Agreement was signed at a time when it may be seen in two ways, if not wrong, especially in Berlin»³³. The problem, and at the same time the window of opportunity in relation to the Agreement, is not in its signing but in the fact that in the long term it, on a par with the Agreement of Free Trade between Russia and Serbia, is openly contrary to the conditions for membership in the European Union.

«With the move of Serbia towards the Eu and Free Trade Agreement of 2000, the Protocol of 2011 will lose its power, which will not allow Serbia to export their products duty-free, for example, farm produce (which represents 14% of Serbia's exports to Russia). Some of the earlier arrangements may be denounced. As a result, the country could lose the feasibility of its products which have high quality, but are non-competitive on the European market. This is evident»³⁴.

³⁰ *Russian Railways signed a contract to modernize the railways of Serbia*, Ria.ru, 23rd May 2013, <http://ria.ru/economy/20130523/939101315.html>.

³¹ *The contract for the performance of works on modernization of railway infrastructure was signed*, Web of the Embassy of Russia in Serbia, <http://www.ambasadarusije.rs/ru/vesti/podpisan-kontrakt-o-vipolnenii-rabot-po-modernizacii-zeleznodoroznoi-infrastrukturi>.

³² *The declaration on strategic partnership between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Serbia*, 24th May 2013, <http://события.президент.рф/%D1%81%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BA%D0%B8/1461>.

³³ *The Russian melody operated by the European director* (Пуска романса по европском такму), НИИ online, 23rd May 2013, www.nin.co.rs/pages/issue.php?id=78763.

³⁴ *Interview of the Ambassador of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Serbia A.V. Chepurin for "Geopolitics" magazine*, cit..

But this is obvious not only to Russians, but also for the Europeans. It all depends on the Serbs. If they can build a competent and consistent counter play, their chances of reaching compromises on issues important for them on the path to Eu membership will increase significantly. If they continue the existing course, the long-term fate of the Strategic Partnership Agreement with Russia is unenviable. It is clear that the Serbs today concluded an agreement only to show resistance to external pressure from the *Bundestag*³⁵.

Ironically, Serbian-Chinese relations are more consistent, but also without considering the real interests of Serbia. An Agreement on Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Serbia and the People's Republic of China was signed in 2009. It is known that today China is one of the few countries with monetary surplus. China is ready to invest in the future, with no concerns about security or stability or even about a quick financial return.

From the late 1970s, China has maintained close relations with Serbia. It did not turn away from its Balkan partner even in times of international isolation, in the 1990s. In the past decade, Beijing is one of the most trusted friends, supporting the Serbian leadership position on Kosovo. It was against the bombing of Serbia by Nato forces in 1999, declaring that Western intervention violated international law. Since 2008, the Chinese government has consistently opposed the recognition of Kosovo's independence. It is clear that this position is not an act of demonstration of friendship, but the consequence of a real concern for the growth of secessionist sentiments within China itself, however in general, it creates a very positive image of China in Serbia.

In turn, the Serbian leaders support the position of the Chinese partner where they can. The most famous speech of the Serbs in defence of China's position, which caused a rapid reaction within the ruling circles of Serbia, was a statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremic in 2010, that Serbia would join those countries which ignored the Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese dissident Li Ksiabo. In addition, since 2008, Serbia has not joined the Eu criticizing the condition of human rights in China and in the countries supported by it (for example, in Iran, Sudan, Zimbabwe, North Korea)³⁶.

Regarding economic cooperation, recently we can say that it is gaining momentum. Conventionally, it can be divided into two areas: energy cooperation and reconstruction of transport infrastructure for the trans-European markets.

«Scheduled for late 2013 completion of the Pan-European Corridor X will link Western Europe and Turkey via the former Yugoslav Republic on the track of "Brotherhood and unity". Chinese entrepreneurs and the Chinese Development Bank expressed interest in financing and construction of the railway through Serbia, worth 4.5 billion euros, and also the route Belgrade-South Adriatic»³⁷.

³⁵ *The Russian melody operated by the European director (Руска романса по европском такту)*, НИИ online, 23rd May 2013, www.nin.co.rs/pages/issue.php?id=78763.

³⁶ Loic Poulain, *China's new Balkan Strategy*, Central Europe Watch, Center for strategic and international studies, Vol.1, Number 2, Washington, August 2011.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

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As part of a Chinese 170 million dollar loan, a so-called bridge of Serbian-Chinese friendship is being constructed. It is designed to connect Zemun and Borca, the two banks of the Danube. The works under this contract are performed by the China Road and Bridge Construction Company. The construction employs about 500 workers, 280 of them, including most of the highly skilled, are from China. The opening of the bridge is scheduled for October 2014³⁸. In addition, in January, the Minister of Natural Resources and Regional Planning of Serbia, Milan Bacevic, signed in Beijing a Protocol of Intention to construct a navigation channel, Channel Morava, with the President of the Chinese company China Gezhouba Group Corporation, Zen Dzhengou³⁹. A contract about a loan for the construction of Corridor XI in Serbia and other elements of the transport infrastructure has also been signed⁴⁰. This allows many researchers to call the Balkan transport policy of China the construction of a new «Silk road». Such a claim is legitimate and very profitable for the Balkan States.

The second direction of the economic policy of China in the region in general, and in Serbia in particular, is the energy sector.

«In recent years, Chinese investors have taken up energy projects in the region. In Romania, the China National Electric Equipment Corporation has already invested 1 billion euros in the construction of power plants with capacity of 500 MW, and in Chernovodi, Chinese Nuclear Power Engineering plans to build two new nuclear reactors. In neighbouring Bulgaria, China National Nuclear Corporation has expressed interest in building a new nuclear power plant at Kozloduy with the nuclear power capacity of 1000 MW [...] China Exim Bank has issued Electroprivreda of Serbia a loan of 1 billion euros to upgrade the power supply and construction of a new thermal power plant in Kostolac. The Chinese are not only willing to take risk, in contrast to their European counterparts, but also offer more favorable conditions. For example, China Development Bank finances the construction of a coal plant in Stanari in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project, worth 500 million euros, is carried out by China Dongfang Electric Corporation and costs half of what was previously proposed by competitors, a French company Alstom or Canadian-Polish consortium Snc-Lavelin and Rafako»⁴¹.

From the 26th to 29th of August 2013 the President of Serbia, Tomislav Nikolic, paid a State visit to China. In the course of his visit six agreements were signed⁴². First, the Agreement for a Strategic Partnership was extended. Furthermore, Serbian Foreign Minister Ivan Mrkic and the Minister of Resources of the Chinese Government signed the Agreement between the Governments of

³⁸ *The bridge Zemun-Borca will be ready till the end of October, next year (Most Zemun-Borca gotov do oktobra iduce godine)*, «Rts», 25th March 2013.

³⁹ *A protocol on Morava Chanel is signed with China (Sa Kinezima potpisan protokol o Kanalu Morava)*, «Rtv», 28th January 2013.

⁴⁰ *Chinese Sandong group plans to invest more in Serbia (Kineska Sandong grupa osim Koridora 11 planira jos investicija u Srbiji)*, «Pks», 21st June 2013.

⁴¹ Poulain, *China's new Balkan strategy*, cit..

⁴² *The President of Serbia (Predsednik Srbije)*, <http://www.predsednik.rs/node/875>.

Serbia and China on economic and technical cooperation⁴³, as well as Annex 2 to the Agreement on economic and technical cooperation in the field of infrastructure. Mrkic with colleagues from the Chinese Government signed a Memorandum of understanding on cooperation in telecommunication and information technology between the two Governments, as well as a Memorandum of understanding in the field of agriculture. Construction and Urban Planning Minister Velimir Ilic signed a loan agreement, for a loan to a privileged customer, for the construction of the highway Obrenovac-Ljig.

Finally, the Chinese side allocated 5 million euros in grants for Serbia.

All this once again confirms the seriousness of the Prc on the Balkan Peninsula. It is obvious that Serbia today is still a key player, which China relies on.

Serbia is potentially the most capacious and profitable market in the region, which, despite its instability, is able to attract a lot of investment. The only difficulty for the Serbs is that, at least for a moment, they have to break away from the endless talks over Kosovo and Eu membership and formulate their own strategic vision of investment projects. As one can see there are a lot of suggestions. But they are all basically in the field of infrastructure, i.e. do not give anything for domestic economic development of Serbia. The country leaders must develop an investment strategy. Until this is done, all the partners, including Russia and China, will use Serbia for their own advantage.

Conclusion

The lack of an alternative development strategy to the one focusing on the European Union leads to disorientation in foreign policy. The objectives and priorities are articulated in accordance with the present political situation but on an emotional basis, without reference to the real strategic interests. This is why Serbs are unable to build a matrix of a negotiating position. Hence there is an inability to attract stable non-Eu partners. No one but the Eu offers Serbia a development strategy, and Serbia seems to have been so exhausted by international scorn that it is unable to develop this strategy.

The real option for strategic development is the integration into Europe. It is important for its implementation the country's desire to be heard, to be equal and part of the usual civilized community. The entry puts Serbia on an equal footing with the so-called civilization. The right to block any serious decision which does not meet the interests of the country, gives the opportunity to really be heard. All of the small Eu countries are actively using it. They see this as their main strength and advantage. There is only one 'but'. To join the Eu as painlessly as possible, Serbia must find a strategic alternative to it.

⁴³ *The Government of Serbia (Vlada Srbije)*, http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/predlozi_zakona/2402-13Lat.pdf.

It may sound too pompous, but today the Serbs have the last chance in the foreseeable future not only to stay as a State, with its national dignity and honour, but also become a successful country with its interests and the ability to implement its objectives. But this is an all-in game; in all directions; all or nothing. Its essence is to attract by any means, and on any terms, investments from China, Arab countries, Russia, Brics, including the sphere of small and medium business and maximizing the opening of markets.

These countries need access to European markets; they put it as one of their main tasks. They are less concerned about stability in other regions in which they invest. Proof of this, for example, is the active work of China in Africa. Overall, Serbia needs to demonstrate to the Europeans that there is an alternative to European integration. It is important to demonstrate that for Europe it is easier, more profitable and safer to take Serbia into its ranks than to leave it outside. This 'all or nothing' game has already been successfully implemented by the Kosovo Albanians, when they offered Europe a choice without a choice: either the solution of the Albanian issue through recognition and europeanization, or State terrorism, drug and slave trade right in the heart of Europe. Now it is down to Serbs to put everything at stake. The Albanian scenario is historically not theirs. But there are other scenarios. Sometimes, in order to get closer to the goal, it is necessary to get further from it, to drop it. Otherwise there is the risk of going to Europe without a face, to be torn to pieces, humiliated, as a helpless and a powerless country. But it is quite another pair of shoes for the State within the European Union.

As for the international community, it is very unfortunate that after a hundred years since the outbreak of the First World War, everyone has forgotten what the true cause was. For the Balkans and for Serbia, which lost a third of its male population in it, it was a national issue. In the Balkans today, there are several national issues, not only the Albanian, but also the Serbian, the Muslim question, and the Hungarian issues. And the Albanian issue includes not only Kosovo but also Macedonia and Montenegro. Serbia is concerned not only about Kosovo, but also about *Republika Srpska* in Bosnia and the less often cited example of Montenegro, where almost 50% of the population are Serbs, whose even basic rights in general are not articulated. The way the international community treats the Serbs today is not only unfair, but also fraught with the emergence of new centres of tension and conflict. The Balkans is a region where all the problems were traditionally solved by the great powers. The claims of these countries to full independence are rather illusory. The only historical period when these countries were a political force was the existence of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Sfry). But even then, stability, prosperity and prestige were directly related to the favourable geopolitical location and correct strategic positioning. Today, no country in the former Yugoslavia has political and spiritual readiness to recreate a united front. All they can do is strive to realize their interests through the participation of strong players.

To date, the most strategically stable project has been the project of European integration. It remains the same. Again with a 'but' which was expressed, by the way, by an American expert:

«If the Europeans really want to find the right solution, they must find the strength to begin honest negotiations between the new Balkan States, Serbia and other dissatisfied minorities. A reasonable change of borders is the only way you can ensure peace. Further collision of Serbian interests in the Balkans is fraught with the danger of new conflicts»⁴⁴.

⁴⁴ *American expert: two decades of mixing the war and the diplomacy showed to everybody - Serbs are always losing the game (Americki ekspert: Dve decenije toksicne mesavine rata I diplomatije sledi doslednu politiku – Srbi uvek gube)*, Blic.rs, 22nd May 2013, <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Politika/383875/Americki-ekspert-Dve-decenije-mesavine-rata-i-diplomatije-sledi-doslednu-politiku—Srbi-uvek-gube>.