

INTRODUCTION

As Asta Maskaliūnaitė rightly claims in Her opening article in this Issue, “*Radicalization*” became a new buzz word and it is within Western societies and their integrated or non-integrated immigrant communities that the birth of a terrorist was sought. The importance of “radicalization” only grew with the start of Syrian civil war and the influx of ‘foreign fighters’ with European passports into it.” In 2006, the European Commission defined radicalization as “[t]he phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of terrorism.” These types of radicalization which are leading to acts of terrorism are clearly visible in Western Europe, to mention only the most recent attack in the streets of London, Paris and Copenhagen. Moreover, we can observe in Europe the emergence of both old and new radical political parties, movements, organizations, social networks and above all ideas influencing the public and transforming politics. Along that goes notable increase in number of violent incidents, including street fighting between members of radical factions, clashes with the police, online hating and “hate crimes,” attacks on journalists, public insults and publishing so called “target lists” in social media. We can also observe increase in international co-operation between radical groups and networks – far right, far left, radical ecologists, neo-nazis, anarchists, neo-communists and above all – jihadists – in many European countries. Members of foreign groups participate in local events supporting local groups e.g. 11.11.2011 *Independence Day* marches in Poland gathered militant leftists from Germany who were involved in street fighting.

Are we facing a new stage of radical politics in Europe? Can we expect going from *pressure* and *coercion* towards more *political violence* and further *terrorism* there? What is the scope and dynamics of this processes? Are they stable or reversible? Is the economic crisis the central factor in explanation of radicalization or other

factors should be considered more important? What role is played by radical ideologies – old and new – in this process? Could all these processes lead to the emergence of new terrorist organizations/networks or facilitate the actions of new generation of so called “lone wolves”? In the 2015 Issue of *International Studies* we attempt to address these problems in a wide variety of contributions delivered by the Authors coming from many European countries.

We start with the review of the key theoretical perspectives and concepts proposed by Asta Maskaliūnaitė, who proposes brief definition od “radicalization” as well as the matrix of analysis of factors leading to this phenomenon. Her “theoretical” contribution is followed by Monika Bartoszewicz’s article offering „a comprehensive overview of European radical parties,” providing the readers with the “practical” review of central themes of radical politics in Europe. Our next author, Ljupcho Stevkovski focuses his attention on the problem of right-wing extremism in the European Union and the methods of coping with this problem. Marko Babić follows with careful presentation and analysis of the extremist movements in Serbia. Stefan Mertens investigates a sample of articles that were published about Breivik and his deeds in the Flemish and Dutch press, looking for the so-called “attribution of responsibility frame.” Moreover, Stefan presents a typology of subtypes of frames and investigates how many times these types of frames occur in different media outlets.

Then we are entering the domain of the European jihadi extremism analysis, starting with the critical insight of Denis Proszin into so called *Wave Theory of Terrorism*. His interesting remarks prove that this approach has rather limited explanatory value at least as far as jihadi terrorism is concerned. In the next article Miroslav Mares identifies the most important variants of Islamist extremism in Europe and deals with their goals and with strategic approaches of how to achieve these goals. A comprehensive outlook and threat assessment of Islamist extremist strategies are also included in his article. This subjects are continued in the next article: Damian Szlachter and Aleksandra Zięba explore selected factors influencing the process of radicalisation leading to the use of political violence and terror by the Muslim minorities living in the European Union member states and examine various counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation efforts of the EU. We conclude our *Issue on Radicalism* with an insightful analysis of the debate on the relationship between security and human rights exploring the case of the introduction of body scanners on the European airports, provided by Iztok Prezelj.

We hope that this issue of 2015 *International Studies* contributes to the difficult task of understanding the varieties of contemporary political radicalisms in Europe. I would like to thank very much Katarzyna Fossa and Kamil Kuśmider for their assistance in preparation of this Issue.

Ryszard M. Machnikowski