

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Vol. 29 No. 1/2022

INTERDISCIPLINARY
POLITICAL
AND
CULTURAL
JOURNAL

Edited by Daniel Silander



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 **WYDAWNICTWO
UNIwersYTETU
ŁÓDZKIEGO**
Łódź 2022

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ISSN 1641-4233

e-ISSN 2300-8695

Published by Lodz University Press

First Edition. W.10736.22.0.C

Publisher's sheets 9.0; printing sheets 9.125

Lodz University Press

90-237 Łódź, 34A Jana Matejki St.

www.wydawnictwo.uni.lodz.pl

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Foreword

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Dear Readers of the *International Studies Journal*,

It is a great pleasure to present this issue of *International Studies: Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal*, organised by the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the University of Lodz in Poland. The first article is written by Dmytro Drozdovskyi at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Shevchenko Institute of Literature, Kyiv, Ukraine, with the title *Cultural Orientations of the Politics of Education in Ukraine (2010–2013): Ideology Strikes Back*. It departs from the political context of 2010–2014 and the many reforms taken in the educational system in Ukraine which included institutional as well as policy changes and challenges. The discussion over the law *On Higher Education* became very intensified with a political contextual debate over American and European educational norms and values vs. an anti-West and more post-Soviet orientation, where the political domination at the time strived for closer relationship to Russia,

but with limited ideas over how to solve the challenges related to people's political orientations and the Ukrainian identity.

The following article, written by Sirvan Karimi from York University, School of Public Policy and Administration and the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies in Canada, on *The Democratisation Failure in the Middle East: Causes and Prospects*, addresses socio-political conditions that have cultivated a negative environment to democratisation in many Middle Eastern countries. The lack of democratic norms and values in the region is explained in terms of historical leftist actors against imperialism with hostility towards liberal norms and values, limited industrialisation, and the existing cultural and religious competitions and often anti-democratic loyalties.

The third article of this volume is developed by Toni Mileski from the Saints Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje in North Macedonia and Daniela Pachemska from Organised and Serious Crime Department, Ministry of Interior in North Macedonia. Their article on *The Geopolitical Context of Migrant Routes and Its Impact on Organised Crime in the Republic of North Macedonia* explores the challenges of migrant routes and illegal migration often connected to organised crimes from Asia and Africa to Central and Western Europe. Over the last years, the intensification of migration flows through the Western Balkan countries has had serious impact on socioeconomic, political, and security realities in the region as well as on human rights. The analysis explores illegal migration and related organised crimes, and identifies how the geopolitical context of migrant routes impacts illegal migration and organised crimes in the Western Balkans and North Macedonia. It also shed lights on how military conflicts and the lack of security, besides limited socioeconomic conditions, are triggering factors to the migration flows.

The Fourth and following article, written by Mufassir Rashid from the KRF Centre for Bangladesh and Global Affairs (CBGA) in Bangladesh, studies *The Political Economy of the Kafala Abolishment in Saudi Arabia*. It shed lights on the controversial Kafala system and the recent announcement to end the system due to, among other things, the Saudi Arabian political will to limit its economic dependency on oil and promoting a new more diversified economy. The Saudi Vision 2030 is a major reform aimed to boost industrialisation and a growing service sector as aspects of a more diversified economy in a post-Kafala setting. The Vision 2023 points in a new socioeconomic orientation in Saudi Arabia, although the abolishment of the Kafala system has not included domestic workers leaving the country with a new economic strategy based on current political-economic concerns, but with still inhumane practices for unskilled domestic workers.

The fifth article is co-authored by Laura Schreiner and Valerie Kastrup from the Department of Sports Science at Bielefeld University, Germany, as well as by

Jochen Mayer from the Department of Sports and Exercise, University of Education Schwäbisch Gmünd in Germany. The article titled *Sport for Development and Peace in the United Nations: An Empirical Study on the Development of the Role of SDP in the UN in the Context of the Closure of the UNOSDP* seeks to analyse why it was decided in 2017 that the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) will be closed as well as what effects this decision had on Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) in the United Nations. Based on the background that sport for decades has served as an instrument to promote peace, health, and gender equality within development policy projects, this study examines how the role and relevance have developed in a post-UNOSDP context, identifying controversies over tasks and accomplishments as well as issues of legitimacy.


The last article of this volume is authored by Daniel Silander from the Department of Political Science at Linnaeus University, Sweden. This article scrutinises the role of the European Commission in times of crisis by focusing on *Europe 2020: The EU Commission and Political Entrepreneurship*. This study adds to a large bulk of studies on entrepreneurship within Economics by conceptualising political entrepreneurship and the potential role that political actors may have when being entrepreneurial in the political arena. This study explores what role the European Commission took in a time of financial crises in 2008 and onwards, and what measures the Commission pushed for to promote a smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. The Europe 2020 Strategy was a symbol of how a political institution, such as the European Commission, became politically entrepreneurial in a time when EU member-states faced serious challenges and was politically paralysed by domestic economic struggles.

Finally, in addition to six well-written and highly interesting articles, this volume includes an interview on *Today's Ukraine* (interview was conducted on 28th of March, 2022) with Professor Dmytro Drozdovsky, academic fellow of the Department of Foreign and Slavic Literatures of the Shevchenko Institute of Literature of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and managing editor-in-chief of the *VSESVIT* magazine of world literature and translations. It is followed by the paper *A Few Outlines on Contemporary Ukrainian Lyrical Poetry under Fire Attacks*, developed by Yurii Kovaliv, a Ukrainian poet and professor at the Department of History of Ukrainian Literature, Theory of Literature and Literary Creativity of the Taras Shevchenko Institute of Philosophy of KNU, Ukraine.

I wish you all a pleasant reading!

Cultural Orientations of the Politics of Education in Ukraine (2010–2013): Ideology Strikes Back

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Abstract

In this article, the author has analysed educational reforms and educational policy in general, which was implemented in Ukraine during the presidency of Viktor Yanukovich. A few political cases were analysed, in particular the opposition of the National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy” to the educational trends implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine under the leadership of Dmytro Tabachnyk. The manifestations of colonial policy in Ukrainian education, which were aimed at the rapprochement of Ukraine and Russia and the positioning of Ukraine as a colonial part of the imperial body, have been outlined. It has been discussed in what implicit way the colonial strategy was implemented in the educational reforms in Ukraine, in particular in the aspect of teaching humanitarian disciplines, e.g. Ukrainian literature. Forms of possible resistance to colonial strategies in the educational field, the principles of

overcoming imperial pressure and intensifying the narrative of resistance, which made it possible to avoid further splitting of the Ukrainian identity in the imperial body, have been analysed. The legislative activity, which was focused on strengthening the status of the Russian language as a regional language, has been outlined. Linguistic colonial approaches at the level of legislative initiatives in language policy have been spotlighted, in particular in the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko Law.

Keywords: Ukraine, language policy, colonialism, educational policy, regional languages, identity, narrative of resistance

Kierunki kulturowe w polityce oświatowej w Ukrainie (2010–2013): ideologia kontratakuję

Abstrakt

W artykule autor poddał analizie reformy edukacyjne oraz całokształt polityki oświatowej, realizowane w Ukrainie w okresie prezydentury Wiktora Janukowycza. Zbadano kilka konkretnych kwestii politycznych, w szczególności sprzeciw Uniwersytetu Narodowego „Akademia Kijowsko-Mohylańska” wobec trendów oświatowych wprowadzanych przez Ministerstwo Edukacji i Nauki Ukrainy zarządzane przez Dmytro Tabacznika. Przedstawiono przejawy polityki kolonialnej w ukraińskiej oświacie, które miały na celu odnowienie więzi między Ukrainą i Rosją oraz uczynienie z Ukrainy części imperium kolonialnego. Omówiono niejawne sposoby realizacji strategii kolonialnej w reformach oświatowych w Ukrainie, w szczególności w aspekcie nauczania przedmiotów humanistycznych, takich jak literatura ukraińska. Przedmiotem analizy były dostępne formy oporu wobec strategii kolonialnych w oświacie, metody przewyciężania nacisków imperialnych i umacniania narracji oporu, pozwalające uniknąć dalszego rozszczepienia ukraińskiej tożsamości w łonie imperium. Omówiono działania legislacyjne, zogniskowane wokół utrwalenia statusu języka rosyjskiego jako języka miejscowego. Zwrócono uwagę na kolonializm w inicjatywach

legislacyjnych w zakresie polityki językowej, obecny w szczególności w ustawie Kiwałowa-Kolesniczenki.

Słowa kluczowe: Ukraina, polityka językowa, kolonializm, polityka oświatowa, języki miejscowe, tożsamość, narracja oporu

The Ministry with two faces

During 2010–2014, major innovations emerging from the new political situation and the ideology of the new leaders of the country were introduced to the educational system in Ukraine.

The first point which is highly important to mention is that the Cabinet of Ministers, headed by Mykola Azarov, implemented a strategy of integration between ministries. The Ministry of Education and Sciences of Ukraine was united with the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport of Ukraine into one organisational body under this policy. Integration had more of a negative than a positive impact with this reform, which caused a deterioration of the policies in the areas of education and science. As a result of the merging of the ministries in 2010, the notion of 'Family' was completely lost in the name of the newly created Ministry – we had the Ministry of Education and Sciences, Youth and Sport led by Dmytro Tabachnyk¹, one of the controversial leading figures in promoting the *Russian World* politics.

The realisation of this integration strategy implemented by the Cabinet of Ministers brought negative tendencies into the spheres of education and sciences. The process of secondary education was transformed into a very bureaucratic sector, with little attention to the real needs of teachers.

At the same time, the policies adopted towards higher education (at the university level) were also marked with two antagonistic tendencies: the desire of the newly formed ministry to control university life and the desire to give to the universities all possible academic freedoms (autonomy in the European and American tradition), including the universities' right to have independent academic

¹ In 2013, the reasons for that integration between two Ukrainian Ministries were criticised by the President of Ukraine, Yanukovich, for more information see: <http://company.shodennik.ua/presscenter/42668>; <http://tsn.ua/politika/dialog-z-krayinoyu-yanukovich-viznav-pomilku-z-ob-yednannyam-ministerstv-osviti-i-sportu-283297.html>. The Ministry of Education and Sciences, Youth and Sport again was divided into two separate ministries (as it was when the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine was headed by Julia Tymoshenko) and the project of 2010 about their integration was officially proclaimed as 'non-successful' and leading to negative tendencies, both in sciences and education. The new Ministry of Youth and Sport in 2013 was headed by R. Safullin, and D. Tabachnyk, despite lots of student demonstrations and protests by teachers, professors, and journalists, became the Minister of Education and Sciences of Ukraine according to the President's law: <http://president.gov.ua/documents/15492.html>

councils which can issue PhD diplomas, invite guest professors for special courses from abroad or just other cities and academic institutions, etc. The discussions regarding the transformation of higher education were intensified in 2010 by the draft law, *On Higher Education*, lobbied for by the Ministry and Tabachnyk. Taking into account those discussions, ex-president of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy Prof. Brioukhovetskyi agrees that the

draft law “On Higher Education”, prepared with the direct participation of Tabachnyk, is so anachronistic that it is a wonder how a person who lives in the 21st century can think in categories that have been rejected long ago by the rest of the world: rigid centralization of education, restrictions on the rights of educational institutions².

In addition, the expert names the key problems of higher education in Ukraine which should be solved by the new law; however, Tabachnyk’s innovation only produces deterioration in the democratic transformation of higher education and cancels out the results of the previous work according to the Bologna Declaration:

Autonomy was declared, but autonomy does not exist. Every detail is regulated. They instruct us on which exams to administer. This did not happen previously, even during the Soviet era. Apparently, Tabachnyk is smarter than all the university rectors, and knows how to better formulate curricula, for which specialties, and at which universities across the board. However, universities differ and are diverse institutions. Only dried – up trees are alike – they all burn. Living trees grow and develop in diverse ways and they are beautiful in their diversity. This also applies to the education system which cannot be run like the army. We are not the military. Actually, Tabachnyk did not serve in the military, yet he has served himself up a ‘pseudo-colonel’ title, but I did serve and I know what he is doing. He is following an army manual like a lance-corporal. An army manual is imperative for the military, but in education – it is scandalous³.

In 2008–2013, the law *On Higher Education* in Ukraine became a ‘hot’ point, which intensified a series of professional discussions by leading Ukrainian professors and experts in education and sciences, who tried to persuade the ministry not to lobby for the new law and to use the draft of the law prepared by the alternative group headed by the President of the Kyiv National Polytechnic University Prof. M. Zhurovskyi⁴ (who also was the former Minister of Education and Sciences of Ukraine). However, the Ministry of Education and Sciences, Youth

² http://www.kmfoundation.com/p-2_1_english_publications-lan--alan-en-id-387-a-.html

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ See <http://blog.liga.net/user/achernih/article/11242.aspx>

and Sport provided their own version of the law that was completely different to the project prepared by the group of experts headed by Zhurovskyi⁵.

Besides, the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, which from 1992 onwards proclaimed its adherence to modern American and European educational principles in the academic process (the *liberum arts* education principle, etc.) tried to attack the official project of the Ministry demonstrating its anti-European basis and that it embodies trends in educational policy based on the post-Soviet paradigm⁶. However, the Ministry, under Tabachnyk's leadership, adopted undemocratic methods of 'persuasion' and attacked the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in various ways (e.g. the master program for Journalism was rejected by the Ministry, some faculties received a much smaller number of positions for students to apply for, and state funding was cut). "The Ministry of Education has cut state funding for a number of master's programmes offered by the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in Kyiv, including those in the School of Journalism"⁷.

"Tabachnyk to close Kyiv-Mohyla Academy!". This emotionally charged headline grabbed the attention of Ukraine-watchers worldwide after the Dec. 9 press conference by the university's president, Serhiy Kvit. That day, Kvit declared that Ukraine's Minister of Education, Dmytro Tabachnyk, had mounted a concerted administrative attack on Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA) by refusing to approve its statute, and by denying approval of NaUKMA student admission rules for 2011⁸.

Ministerial ideology of 2010–2012

It is important to admit that all the major tendencies in the Ukrainian educational politics after 2010 were marked with the new ideology of the Ukrainian government. In fact, these policies were the opposite of the tendencies that Ukraine had experienced during 2005–2010. Dmytro Tabachnyk became the Minister of Education and Sciences, Youth and Sport in the 'authoritarian political way'

⁵ To compare two versions of the Law *On Higher Education*, see the comparative analysis of the documents: http://osvita.ua/vnz/high_school/33641/

⁶ For more information about the confrontation between the NaUKMA and the Ministry, read: <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/kyiv-mohyla-academy-versus-ministry-of-education-318468.html?flavour=mobile>

⁷ <http://khp.org/en/index.php?id=1310421601>

⁸ The key idea of the Ministry politics against Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was to "to control it: ministry's press service declared that the NaUKMA draft statute includes various provisions that deviate from the ministerial norm for such documents, and that the English proficiency requirement that the university insists upon for new student entrants is unique in Ukraine, and therefore unacceptable". That was Tabachnyk's main goal: <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/tabachnyk-threatens-autonomy-of-kyiv-mohyla-academ-92925.html>

– despite all the representations from students and professors, and vigorous protests. This political decision was taken by President Yanukovich (December 9, 2010) despite lots of opposition to this political figure⁹. D. Tabachnyk was accused of being politically incorrect in his attitude to the Western Ukrainian region (e.g. *Halychyna*, the region of Galicia, mainly Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk regions) and, furthermore, his political views as represented in the media appear post-Soviet and totally pro-Russian. The ideas represented by the new minister often had a drastic effect. For instance, for Tabachnyk, “millions of people who came to Maidan Nezalezhnosti in 2004 during the Orange Revolution were a result of neuro-linguistic programming, a psychological technology to influence people, originating in the United States”¹⁰.

What is more, the minister was “a strong advocate of Russian as Ukraine’s second state language (which contradicts the Constitution) and considers Halychyna (a historical region that covers most oblasts in western Ukraine) to be an alien formation, with a non-Ukrainian mentality”¹¹. Tabachnyk’s sayings about ‘the primitive and dirty Galician people’ (that ‘Halychany (western Ukrainians) practically do not have anything in common with the people of Great Ukraine, not in mentality, not in religion, not in linguistics, not in the political arena’¹², etc.) were the main focus of intensive student protests. Those ideas demonstrated intolerant attitude to the people from some Ukrainian geographic regions, and a person with such views should not become a minister. Nevertheless, Tabachnyk became the new Minister of Education and Sciences, Youth and Sport (2010–2013). When being interviewed by Russian journalists¹³, he always demonstrated his totally sympathetic attitude to the Russian people, Russian history, Russian political views and traditions. The Ukrainian minister neglected the historical traumas of the Ukrainian nation during the Soviet totalitarian regime, he refused to talk about the Holodomor of 1933 as a Ukrainian catastrophe. In the media, even the Russian journalists said that, when talking with Tabachnyk, they felt as if they were talking with not a Ukrainian but a Russian Minister.

The political intentions of the Ukrainian minister were characterised by the media as a manifestation of post-Soviet KGB traditions, and the minister was

⁹ <http://president.gov.ua/documents/12612.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/tabachnyks-views-are-dangerous-in-classroom-62058.html>

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/letters/the-likes-of-tabachnyk-undermine-ukraines-democrac-63350.html>. See also: <http://www.ukrcdn.com/2010/03/17/yanukovichs-new-education-minister-believes-western-ukrainians-practically-have-nothing-in-common-with-the-people-of-the-greater-ukraine/>

¹³ Besides, in media we had the information about Tabachnyk’s intention to become the Minister of Education in Russia: <http://napare.net/tabachnik-stremitsya-zanyat-post-ministra-obrazovaniya-rf-zayavlenie>

named the unofficial representative speaker of the *Russian World* and as actively completing its ideological programmes. He was most frequently compared to the Russian politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who is a ‘mouthpiece’ for Putin’s ideology in Russia: “As for Halychyna’s linguistics and other alleged digressions, a glance at south-east Ukraine – which resembles the moonscape in terms of its absence of Ukrainian content – shows that Tabachnyk’s swipe is ludicrous. It is indistinguishable from the flapdoodle coming from Russia’s Vladimir Zhirinovsky”.

In the same Russian newspaper, Tabachnyk then escalated his tone, swiping at Roman Shukhevych and Stepan Bandera as “killers, traitors, and abettors of Hitler’s executioners”.

But these classifications actually characterise, in that order, the Soviet KGB (that rubbed out millions Soviet citizens and organised the Holodomor in Ukraine with Stalin’s blessings), “the contemptible Malorosy”, who despise themselves, and the Soviet complicity in Adolf Hitler’s ventures by way of the Nazi-Soviet pact¹⁴.

The conceptual points of view of this political figure were determined by ideas which were formulated in the ideological dimension of the *Russian World*¹⁵ (they also revitalise some of Putin’s neo-totalitarian views¹⁶). This organisation (it is based in Russia, but is also very powerful in Ukraine), whose key purposes were connected with the idea of the ‘back-USSR’ feelings, concentrated in the supervisory and leadership positions of Russia, a neo-imperial political body. D. Tabachnyk was highlighted in the Ukrainian press as a key figure of the *Russian World*, who might even have some relationship to the Moscow Patriarchate Orthodox Church (*Pravoslavna tserkva moskovs’koho patriarchatu*) and Patriarch Kirill, also a very odious figure in the new Russian politics, whose actions and viewpoints were oriented to unite Ukraine and Russia under the dominance of the Russian Federation – thus creating a new Russian Orthodox Empire.

It is important to admit that Kyiv was necessary for the ideology of the *Russian World*.

In the nineteenth-century Russian cultural universe, the government continued to be the main referee. It had a new retrospective view of history, introduced by Nikolai Karamzin, who stressed that a new conception of Rus’ as Russia completed the politically programmed sacral continuum of Russian history. Orthodoxy, as a civilizing mission, became the ideological justification of imperial expansion (Pachlovska 50).

¹⁴ <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/letters/the-likes-of-tabachnyk-undermine-ukraines-democrac-63350.html>

¹⁵ The official ideological positions of this organisation can be traced here: <http://rusmir.in.ua/>; <http://www.ruskiymir.ru/ruskiymir/ru>. The rhetoric intentions of these conceptions are close to propaganda based on Russian nationalistic superiority: http://www.ideologiya.ru/index.php?option=com_content&task=tag&id=35.

¹⁶ <http://rt.com/politics/official-word/putin-russia-focus-challenges-845/>

In present times, the language politics in Ukraine of 2010–2012 (especially as realised in the law) includes the revitalisation of the linguistic imperial expansion. Furthermore, from the historical point of view, the Kyiv Rus State was formed much earlier than the Moscow State (*Moskovske tsarstvo*).

This fact was totally neglected in the past Soviet times, because it could demolish the Soviet ideology of the ‘peaceful coexistence’ of the various Soviet nations and states (USSR consisted of 15 Republics), but, in fact, that coexistence took place under the totalitarian control emanating from Moscow.

However, speaking about the ideological tendencies of the new projects initiated by the Ministry of Education and Sciences, Youth and Sport of Ukraine in 2010–2012, we must take into account that the success of these activities (after 2010) was also connected with the fact that, even before Tabachnyk’s period, the Ministry, unfortunately, did not play a leading role in the democratic transformation of Ukrainian education. It was mainly a bureaucratic body which prevented important educational reforms. As an example, during the period when the Ministry was led by Lviv scientist and the president of the Ivan Franko Lviv National University I. Vakarchuk, the PhD problem was not solved; however, according to the Bologna Declaration, this third part of the university educational process should have been implemented in Ukraine and PhD schools organised. The implementation of PhD schools initiated a number of discussions which demonstrated that the Ukrainian scientific sphere was not ready to accept important European tendencies in education (e.g. even during the pre-Tabachnyk period VAK, the Higher Attestation Committee, created in Soviet times, still played a substantial role in this area rather than universities’ academic councils). The crises in the educational sphere could be solved first with the understanding that the Ministry needs a kind of ‘re-start’, inviting new professional staff who understand the importance of post-Soviet deconstruction of corruption and whose activities would be oriented towards the democratisation of the educational process and its adaptation towards European traditions.

Conceptions of Ukrainian liquidation in the humanities

Tabachnyk’s period in the Ministry of Education and Sciences, Youth and Sport was marked with the publication of some very tendentious documents which were required to regulate the humanitarian sphere, the educational process in the humanities (literature and languages).

The first steps of the Ministry were connected with two crude documents – *the Conception of Language Education* and *the Conception of Literary Education*¹⁷.

¹⁷ The document was cancelled in April, 2014, i.e. a few months after S. Kvit became the Minister of Education and Sciences of Ukraine.

If the first document was not officially declared and legalised (it received a totally negative expert evaluation from the Institute of the Ukrainian Language of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and some other leading Ukrainian universities and linguistic departments; Yushchuk, *Pro kontseptsiyu* 7), then the second one was signed by the new minister Dmytro Tabachnyk on January 26, 2011 (№ 58, according to the decision of the Attestation Council of the Ministry from August 20, 2010, protocol № 8/1–2) not taking into account the academic resistance (see: Klochek) (despite the negative expert evaluation from the Shevchenko Institute of Literature of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy¹⁸ and all other important recommendations¹⁹; the life of this document started with a real detective story when the ministry apparently demonstrated that the document was signed by Mykola Sulyma, vice-president of the Shevchenko Institute of Literature. However, Prof. Sulyma said officially in the media²⁰ that he did not sign that document and his signature was a fake).

The new Conception of Literary Education was revitalised to organise new forms of understanding the concept of 'literary education' which should match the new cognitive, social, and cultural transformations of the Ukrainian society. The document was structured to outline the key components of the literary educational mechanisms; however, in fact, the points of the conception were influenced by the new Ukrainian governmental ideology, based on the concepts of the revitalisation of the USSR and a pro-Russian orientation. Despite the fact that the Conception was written to develop the new paradigms for the understanding of Ukrainian literature as an independent one with its own authentically fixed cultural 'gems', the document proclaimed the superior position of Russian literature²¹, which received the highest status in that conception.

Some of the most polemical extracts from the Conception (in Ukrainian) are as follows:

¹⁸ <http://litakcent.com/2011/02/11/nebezpeky-novoji-koncepciji-literaturnoji-osvity/>

¹⁹ The expert opinions can be found here: <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/content/article/2294523.html>

²⁰ "U nashomu varianti pro vplyv rosiys'koyi literatury ne yshlosya". Odyn iz avtoriv Kontseptsiyi literaturnoyi osvity Mykola Sulyma pro te, navishcho znadobyvsvya tsey dokument ta yak do n'oho potrapyv abzats pro «osoblyvu rol' rosiys'koyi literatury» // *Ukrayina Moloda* (electronic version: <http://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/regions/0/174/0/64960/>); *Minosvity pidminylo Kontseptsiyu literaturnoyi osvity* // <http://osvita.ua/school/news/13694/>; *Yak shulers'ki metody stayut' chastynoyu kul'tury y osvity* // <http://www.pravda.com.ua/columns/2011/02/25/5954033/>

²¹ <http://tsn.ua/ukrayina/u-tabachnika-rosiysku-literaturu-v-koncepciyu-literaturnoyi-osviti-vpisali-potayki.html>; <http://editorial.in.ua/news/obshhestvo/koncepcija-literaturnoi-osviti-vid-tabachnika.html>

Предмет літературної освіти – вершинні твори українського, російського, світового письменства та представників інших національностей, що проживають в Україні». (one of the tasks) – «Прилучення учнів до найкращих здобутків українського, російського, світового письменства та представників інших національностей, що проживають в Україні».

«Особлива роль належить при цьому російській літературі як художньо-словесному надбанню, у тісній взаємодії з яким протягом декількох століть формувалася українська література, а також з урахуванням того місця, яке займає російська література у загальнолюдській системі духовно-культурних цінностей²².

According to the Conception, Russian literature was represented as a kind of separate aesthetic unity which can be compared to the concept of 'world literature'. World literature was mentioned in the document together with Russian literature. In this way, the document had mainly Russian-centric positions and could result in the transformation of courses in Ukrainian and world literature in Ukrainian secondary and higher education into one course neglecting, step-by-step, the Ukrainian literature section. Besides, for the first time in the Ukrainian education, not only the status of the Russian literature was marked as 'special', but also Russian-language Ukrainian poetry was included in the programme of the Ukrainian literature in the secondary school (the 11th forms.) This innovation was supported by ideas about the comparative motif in the educational process: Ukrainian literature should be taught in the context of other literatures and in comparison with them.

...зіставлення етапів, фактів, явищ, особливостей художніх творів української літератури, російської і світової літератури та літератур інших національностей, що проживають в Україні, дозволяє розкрити загальні закономірності літературного процесу й водночас неповторну своєрідність творів різних народів²³.

However, only the works of the Russian-language poets born in Ukraine were presented in the new programme. The Russian language has not been compulsory for pupils and students in Ukraine since 1991, so the Russian-language poetry section in the new programme initiated the necessity of possessing a good knowledge of Russian in order to be able to understand the specific features of poems by Chichebabin, Kiselyov, etc., especially if we take into account the fact that the programme was legalised not only for the eastern and southern Ukrainian regions, but also for the Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk regions, where pupils of the 11th forms are not required to speak Russian fluently.

²² The full text of the document can be traced here: <https://docs.google.com/document/edit?id=1281QvUUxOZ-SJBwT1hlp--ned7OeHokmm-JRbJV14xk&hl=uk>

²³ *Ibidem*.

What is more, no other poetry written in any other language (Polish, Romanian, Bulgarian, Crimean, etc.) was represented in the new programme of Ukrainian literature; however, we have Crimean literature and also writers who use the Romanian, Hungarian, Polish, and Slovak languages in their works. The linguistic variety of Ukrainian literature and the comparative mode of the new paradigms of teaching were limited to the study of Russian language poetry.

Let us remember that in Ukraine, Russian language use was instilled vigorously in the Soviet era. This intensive ideological work supported by the Kremlin-based leaders of the Soviet Empire resulted in the deformation of the Ukrainian language and the emergence of *surzhyk* (a kind of linguistic contamination as a result of Russian-Ukrainian bilingual situation) as a special linguistic phenomenon. Moreover, the status of the Ukrainian language also deteriorated as the Russian language was proclaimed to be the key language in Soviet times. In the post-Soviet period, the Ukrainian media still could not create a Ukrainian platform and a new conception, so the Russian language was dominant in this sphere.

The Ukrainian language minority

The language politics in Ukraine after 1991 *de jure* was oriented towards the formation of the new modern Ukrainian identity of the independent period. Since language was an essential part of the identity of the new Ukrainian state, then a new series of debates was opened after 1991. In the Constitution, the Ukrainian language was determined as a state symbol of independent Ukraine, the symbol that should be developed and maintained by Ukraine and all its state institutions. However, the situation with the Ukrainian language priority was not easy to change, as for the Soviet period the Russian language was totally maintained as the language of the Soviet peoples. All other Soviet languages had the sub-dominant positions and their speakers were not considered privileged enough. This tendency resulted in that the Russian language in Ukraine became stereotypically a symbol of *urbanity* – it demonstrated that the speakers belong to the city (urban) culture. Besides, it also demonstrated a kind of urban identity contrary to the rustically-marked identity of Ukrainian language speakers.

After 1991, media content was still created through the Russian language, which took a leading position in Ukrainian journalism. The language policies of Ukraine crashed, or, as Larysa Masenko says, ‘there was no language policy at all’²⁴. This means that no policy was created and the Ukrainian language, now the official language of Ukraine as an independent state, was perverted to a lower status

²⁴ “Znyshchyty humanitarnu auru nemozhlyvo”: rozmova z d-rom filoloh. nauk, prof. kaf. ukr. movy NU Kyievo-Mohylyans'koyi akadem. Larysoyu Masenko / viv D. Drozdovskiy // Slovo Prosvity. 2010. Dec. 9–15: 4–5.

in the social mind. The positive image of the Ukrainian language was not created, as this language was eliminated from many institutions and spheres of social, cultural, and political life.

In the years since independence, the use of Ukrainian in institutions, the media and urban public spaces has grown... But overall, Russian has retained a very strong presence, especially in the media and in public urban spaces in the southern and eastern parts of the country (Bilaniuk 341).

Throughout the period of Ukrainian independence, some of the members of the Ukrainian parliament (*Verkhovna Rada*) still used the Russian language, demonstrating a negative attitude to the official state language. Russian was the unofficial language of the Crimea and the Ukrainian south and east. In the western and central Ukrainian regions, the Ukrainian language was also developing under the pressure of the Russian-language media, which intensified the *surzhyk* tendencies. In the southern and eastern parts of Ukraine, the Ukrainian language was in effect banned from social use or perhaps its urban zones.

After the crises of President Yushchenko's regime, the new political party ("The Party of Regions", *Partiya rehioniv*) took the key roles in the governmental process, and changes took place in major governmental positions. For example, with the support of the ruling party, O. Kostusev became the mayor of Odesa. While working in Kyiv, Kostusev always demonstrated an aggressively negative attitude towards the Ukrainian language. The first steps in his policies as a mayor of Odesa were connected with a desire to eliminate the usage of the Ukrainian language, which resulted in a document that proclaimed the Russian language as the official one in Odesa. It stipulated that all official documents should be written in Russian²⁵, despite the Constitution articles (no. 10) about the priority of the Ukrainian language. And, as the experts argue about the capital of Ukraine, Kyiv still "embodies the tension between the Ukrainian-dominant west and Russian-dominant east" (Bilaniuk 341).

Let us remember that, during the Orange Revolution, a meeting in Severodonetsk decided to proclaim the Russian language as the official state language in Ukraine. We can name a large number of examples which demonstrate that the use of the Russian language in Ukraine after 1991, but especially during 2004–2012, was not a linguistic, but mainly a political issue, connected with the ideology of the *Russian World*. The Ukrainian language was aborted in many southern and eastern Ukrainian regions despite the facts that in those regions (*oblasti*) there

²⁵ *Mer Odesy zaboronyv ukrayins'ku movu v dokumentakh* // <http://tsn.ua/ukrayina/mer-odesi-zaboroniv-ukrayinsku-movu-v-dokumentah.html>; *Mer Odesy zaboronyv ukrayins'ku movu* // http://www.politinform.odessa.ua/news/mer_odesi_zaboroniv_ukrajinsku_movu/2010-12-11-665; *Kostusyev nakazav Odes'kyy mis'kradi vprovadzhuvaty movnyy zakon* // <http://tyzhden.ua/News/57545>

are a lot of Ukrainian language speakers. The sociolinguistic parameters were not taken into account by the politicians who based their state political programmes on language aberrations. The political communication of the ‘Party of Regions’ (*Partiya rehioniv*) incorporated messages based on propaganda.

In this way, the implementation of the law regarding language politics in Ukraine in August 2012 was a realisation of the ideological and propagandistic orientations of the leading party. On the one hand, the law had (or, speaking frankly, its authors had) an ambition to solve the language ‘problem’ in Ukraine, taking into account the European experience and European multilingual communications. On the other hand, the law, in fact, was created to ‘defend’ the laws of the Russian-language speakers of Ukraine. The implementation of the Law had economical ‘connotations’ – its realisation in Ukraine was supported financially by the *Russian World* organisations.

Besides, we can say that the law did not even defend the Russian-language speakers, but, rather, the desire of the politicians not to use the Ukrainian language, the rights of the Russian political parties to develop their policies in Ukraine tolerating the traditions of the Russian identity based, to some extent, on the patterns of the tyrannical identity of imperial Russian leaders. The imperial Russian mind had a special vision of the Ukrainian lands and people as useful resources which can be exploited by Moscow, a new capital of the post-Soviet neo-totalitarian world. Let us remember the fact that V. Putin was one of the world’s first presidents to greet V. Yanukovich as a president of Ukraine before the official results of the vote of 2004²⁶, which resulted in the Orange Revolution. Moscow always played a great role in Ukraine, defending the cognitive patterns of the empire’s identity and preserving its cultural heritage. For the Russian Federation, which, after 2000, chose a special strategy of nation- and state-building with the intention of combining the Soviet and Russian imperial identities existing in the neo-totalitarian, coordinates were featured as ‘past-modernism’²⁷. This notion symbolises the orientation towards the re-utilisation of the past, which, in fact, totally prevents Russia from the modernisation of the European type and it has an impact on the sociocultural, economical, and political situation in Ukraine, which on one side borders Europe, and on the other borders post-Soviet territories, some of which have chosen neo-totalitarian regimes.

The key articles from the law, ‘The Principles of the State Language Politics in Ukraine’, visualise the post-Soviet tendencies and the ideology of the *Russian World*. After the implementation of the document (when it was signed by the president, despite the all-Ukrainian protests and the letters signed by

²⁶ *Derzhsekretar ne vyznayut’ rezul’taty vyboriv zakonnyymi* // http://www.bbc.co.uk/ukrainian/news/story/2004/11/041124_powell_illegitimate.shtml

²⁷ See Irina Hakamada’s *Russia in past-modernism*: <http://hakamada-irina.livejournal.com/32967.html>; <http://so-l.ru/news/show/6809494>

the academicians, professional linguists, and famous writers), the Russian language was proclaimed the regional language in many cities and regions. However, the Bulgarian people in the Odesa region were refused the right to proclaim the Bulgarian language as regional on the territories of their settlement. The same situation happened in the Crimea when the Crimean Tatars were refused the right to proclaim their language as regional, despite that fact that the Crimean Tatars belong to the original ethnic group in the Crimea and the history of this people saw many extreme and tragic moments.

What is more, some ideas explicated in the language law had an anti-Ukrainian orientation, and this point provoked all-Ukrainian protests that lasted for some months. But this all-Ukrainian democratic resistance did not change the mind either of the politicians, who lobbied for that law, or the president. The proclamation of the regional languages in Ukraine stimulated the elimination of the Ukrainian language in a large number of social, educational, and media spheres. The new language law was initiated according to the norms of the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*²⁸.

However, we must admit that the law which proclaims anti-Ukrainian ideology cannot be implemented in Ukraine as its rules offend the rights of Ukrainian-speaking citizens. In addition, the thesis explaining this law consists of some remarks written by Kivalov and Kolesnichenko which prove that the law was implemented to defend the status of the Russian language²⁹ in Ukraine, which is not, in fact, a regional language. The distribution of this language in the country cannot be compared to the other genuinely regional languages, such as the Moldavian, Crimean, Greek, Romanian, Slovak, Polish, Hungarian, and Bulgarian languages³⁰, which are widely spread across various Ukrainian regions (as in the Odesa, the Donetsk, the Chernovtsy, the Zakarpattya regions, and in the Crimea). The existence of the Russian language in the southern and eastern Ukrainian regions has an ideological reason – it was determined by the anti-Ukrainian politics of the Russian and later the Soviet Empires. The principles of the functioning of this language in Ukraine are completely different from the reasons for the presence of the really regional languages mentioned above. For example, we can say that the distribution of the Greek language in Odesa

²⁸ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/minlang/default_en.asp; see also: <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/148.htm>

²⁹ Kolesnichenko khoche "zakhyshchaty" rosiys'ku za rakhunok inshykh mov menshyn // <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2013/02/1/6982660/>; Rada Yevropy: Zakon pro rehional'ni movy zakhyshchaye til'ky rosiys'ku // http://dt.ua/POLITICS/rada_evropi_zakon_pro_rehionalni_movi_zahischaie_tilki_rosiysku.html; Zakon pro movy zakhyshchaye rosiys'ku v dev'yat' raziv bil'she za inshykh // <http://www.expres.ua/news/2012/07/28/70655>

³⁰ However, the Bulgarian language as regional in Izmail (Odesa region) was not allowed: Na Odeshchyni ne zakhotily robyty bolhars'ku rehional'noyu // <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2012/08/18/6971054/>

and Donetsk regions was influenced historically when some Greek groups settled on geographically Ukrainian territories, or we can find powerful Bulgarian and Moldavian settlements in the Odesa region, the Hungarian villages in the Zakarpattya regions, etc. The immigrants created a regional linguistic minority. However, the Russian language distribution in eastern and southern parts of Ukraine was not determined by the Russian-speaking national minorities which settled there in different historical periods. The state policy on that territory was influenced by the ideology of colonisation and the language implementation was a part of the politics of colonisation. All other languages of the original national minorities were eliminated and ‘melted’ into a new identity constructed by the centre of the empire. The new identity had to be built on the idea of the one central language which has a high status in the Empire. Thus, the usage of that language could bring benefits to the speaker. The same colonial ideology was reinforced by the implementation of the language law in Ukraine in August 2012. The law was not a law, but a sort of mimicry of the post-Soviet propaganda used by the leading state party.

We can find many examples which prove that the document about the language politics was created to maintain the ‘friendship’ between Ukraine and Russia (that kind of friendship was a realisation of the policies promoted by the *Russian World* organisation) and not the other minority languages in Ukraine. In April 2013, the Minister of Education and Sciences, Tabachnyk, said that he found it unreasonable that a lot of Ukrainian students of the 11th form choose to write their ZNO (exam the students have to pass to be able to become students) in different languages such as Romanian or Crimean, etc. The minister characterised those tendencies as ‘anti-Ukrainian’³¹. However, Tabachnyk initiated the new section in ZNO – tests in the Russian language and literature and the translation of all the tests (except for the Ukrainian language and literature) into Russian.

All these facts demonstrate that the language distribution law was a new revitalization of the policies of the *Russian World* with no true attention to the linguistic minorities in Ukraine. The law was signed to maintain the Russian language in the Ukrainian society, educational and governmental spheres etc., popularising the Russian language.

³¹ *Tabachnyk khoche zaboronyty kyyivs'kym abituriyentam «hratysya» kryms'kotatars'koyu movoyu na ZNO* // <http://kyiv.comments.ua/news/2013/04/10/144216.html>; *Tabachnyk skarzhyt'sya, shcho abituriyenty zamovlyayut' testy ZNO movamy natsmenschyn* // http://gazeta.ua/articles/politics/_tabachnik-skarzhitsya-scho-abiturienti-zamovlyayut-testi-zno-movami-nacmenschyn/492102

Final remarks

In conclusion, it is important to underline that the policies implemented in the educational sphere in 2010–2012 were oriented towards the rethinking of the Ukrainian identity within the paradigm of the Russian identity, maintaining scientific, educational, and humanitarian bonds with Russia (a neo-totalitarian federation). The policies accepted some European forms of realisation, but the key vectors were connected to the desire of the new leading party (*Partiia rehioniv*, ‘The Party of Regions’), the Cabinet of Ministers, and the president to develop Ukraine in the closest relationship with Russia, neglecting the specific national peculiarities and destroying the positive experience implemented during 1991–2009. The new official documents, which should regulate the humanitarian sphere (Literature Conception, Language Law, etc.) were signed by President Yanukovich and Minister Tabachnyk despite the massive hurricanes of all-Ukrainian protests and representations. We can conclude that the documents were implemented in order to realise some political ambitions, but not to solve the existing problems of developing the Ukrainian identity of this independent country.

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The Democratisation Failure in the Middle East: Causes and Prospects

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Abstract

It has almost become conventional wisdom among analysts and experts on Middle Eastern politics to relate the fate of the democratisation process and its failure in the region to the foreign policy platforms of the USA and its Western allies. Contrary to the prevailing interpretations of democratisation failure in the Middle East, it will be argued that the historical proclivity of leftist organisations and parties to conflate anti-imperialism with fostering hostility towards liberal values, the limited scope of industrialisation, and culturally and religiously ingrained competing loyalties are factors that have cumulatively made a significant contribution to the cultivation of a socio-political environment that is not receptive to democracy.

Keywords: democracy, democratisation failure, liberalism, Left's anti-liberalism, Middle East, kinship, religion, tribalism

Niepowodzenie demokratyzacji na Bliskim Wschodzie: przyczyny i perspektywy

Abstrakt

Wśród analityków i ekspertów ds. polityki bliskowschodniej utarło się, że szanse na powodzenie procesu demokratyzacji w tym regionie zależą od polityki zagranicznej Stanów Zjednoczonych i ich zachodnich sojuszników. W przeciwieństwie do dominujących interpretacji niepowodzenia demokratyzacji na Bliskim Wschodzie, w artykule przedstawiono argumenty na rzecz tezy o silnym zbiorczym wpływie na utrzymywanie się niesprzyjającego demokracji klimatu przez czynniki, takie jak historyczna skłonność lewicowych partii i organizacji do utożsamiania antyimperializmu z wrogością wobec liberalnych wartości, ograniczony zakres industrializacji oraz zaszczerpiona na gruncie kulturowym i religijnym lojalność wobec rozbieżnych zasad.

Słowa kluczowe: demokracja, porażka demokratyzacji, liberalizm, antyliberalizm lewicy, Bliski Wschód, pokrewieństwo, religia, plemienność

Introduction

Democratisation failure in Middle Eastern countries has continued to remain one of the most controversial subjects of debate among political scientists and students of Middle Eastern politics. It has almost become a prevailing proclivity among analysts and experts on Middle Eastern politics to relate the fate of the democratisation process and its failure in the region to the foreign policy platforms of the USA and its Western allies. The existing literature on the interplay of Western foreign policies in the Middle East and the fate of democratisation is dominated by two competing lines of interpretation. While Left-leaning intellectuals blame the democratisation failure in the Middle East on the doors of the foreign policy of Western powers particularly, the USA in sheltering autocratic and authoritarian regimes, Right-wing intellectuals attribute democratisation failure to the lack of determination by Western powers to integrate democratisation in their foreign policy platforms. Despite their differences in identifying the cause of democratisation failure in the Middle East, there is an undeclared assumption within both right and left perspectives that the soil of the Middle East is ripe for democracy. Contrary to this underlying assumption lurking beneath both perspectives, it can be argued

that there are certain endogenous conditions that have played significant roles in fostering a socio-political environment that is not receptive to and is resistant to democratic values and principles¹.

This paper is divided into four parts. Part one outlines the competing explanations for the interplay of Western foreign policy and democratisation failure in Middle Eastern countries. Part two explains the adverse implications of the Left's anti-imperialism crusade for liberal values and principles which has, in turn, undermined the cultivation of democracy in Middle Eastern countries. In part three, the ramifications of economic structure in Middle Eastern countries for democracy will be explained. Part four analyses the adverse consequences of loyalty to kinship and tribalism for democracy. Finally, in conclusion, the main findings will be recapitulated.

Literature review on the Western foreign policy and democratisation in the Middle East

Democracy has not only been invoked as a symbol through which countries signal to one another the democratic nature of their respective regimes, but it has also been employed as a weapon of international relations². Subsequent to the termination of

¹ Two points should be clarified from the outset. First, this study does not cover North African countries. The focus is mainly on Middle Eastern countries such as Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iraqi Kurdistan, and Gulf countries. Second, Israel and Turkey are two countries in the region with relatively established democratic institutions though the legitimacy of their democratic institutions has been tarnished by the Palestinian and Kurdish conflicts respectively. They are exceptions to the general rule in this region. Their socio-political backgrounds differentiate them from the rest of Middle Eastern countries.

² The attractiveness of democracy radiates with enormous intensity across all cultural, ideological, and political divides. The appeal of democracy is so strong that democratic government has become the only acceptable form of political regime across the nations. Even dictatorial and authoritarian regimes utilise some aspects of democracy such as election (albeit a managed and flawed election) as a means to legitimise their repressive regimes. Like many political concepts and terms, democracy has been subject to different interpretations. Democracy has taken many forms (direct, representative, participatory), and there are three rival ideas of democracy (liberal democracy, socialist democracy in communist countries, and nationalist democracy in the Third World) (MacPherson). As John Schaar has pointed out, democracy has been the most used and abused term in political discourse and it has been employed as an effective and self-serving tactic to apply to one's favoured type of regime. Democracy has thus become a floating signifier since it means what people want it to mean (Heywood). Therefore, for this paper, it is essential to specify the form and the idea of democracy utilised. In this paper, the emphasis is on prevailing liberal democracy in Western nations which has become a point of reference to assess and judge the democratic nature of non-Western political regimes. The prevailing liberal democracy is a form of representative democracy where government by people has come to mean "government approved by the people" (Schumpeter 246) through a competitive party system, and where there is

WW II and the rising specter of the Cold War when the United States was propping up dictatorial regimes as a bulwark against the spread of communism, democracy came to be used by the United States and its Western allies as a powerful instrument to challenge the Soviet Bloc. Due to the titillating and mesmerising appeal of liberal democracy, the United States and its Western allies succeeded in shaping the axis of rivalry along the lines of liberal democracy/communism rather than capitalism/communism (Neep).

The elevation of promoting democracy to the top of the Bush administration's foreign policy was not a novel development. Since post-WW II particularly, with the arrival of the Carter administration, activating civic engagement, concern for human rights, and promoting democracy has been a central plank of the US foreign policy discourse pursued by both Democratic and Republican administrations. It was in fact during the Carter administration that a new Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs was established in the State Department. It was due to the pressure of the Carter administration that the Shah of Iran was forced to relax restrictive measures on political freedom which eventually facilitated the triumph of a clerical regime in Iran in 1979 (Wittes). The push for democratisation became pronounced and compelling during the Bush administration whose foreign policy was heavily influenced by the emerging neo-conservative ideology that countenanced the US invasion of Iraq (Butt).

It was and continues to be the central thrust of the neo-conservative theorisation that with the installation of a democratic government on the ruin of the Baathist regime in Iraq, the breeze of democracy would penetrate into the walls of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. In line with this neo-conservative scenario, out of the bloodshed in Iraq would emerge a flood of democratisation which would inevitably inundate the tunnel of authoritarianism in the Middle East. A wave of democratisation emanating from Iraq would accordingly coerce the repressive political regimes in the region to join the parade of democratisation. It is a corollary of this line of interpretation that a gradual inroad of democracy in the Middle East would provide peaceful channels via which oppressed and marginalised layers of the population could transmit their demands into the political arena. It is argued that the Middle East is desperately in need of an ideological plan similar to the Marshall Plan deployed in postwar Europe. But to make the investment worth its while, the United States should not refrain from assuming the role of the democratic teacher, as it did in Europe (Ahmari). In his 2003 speech during the 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy, Bush articulated the core of neo-conservative rationalisation for the democratisation project in the Middle East.

a constitutionally-expressed limitation on the power of government and strong provisions for the protection of individual civil liberties and economic freedom.

The success will send forth the news from Damascus to Tehran that freedom can be the future of every nation... The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution (Bush 1).

According to this neo-conservative explanation, the permeation of the Middle Eastern political cultures with democratic norms and values would allegedly restrict the space for the manoeuvrability of fundamentalist forces that the United States envisions as its archenemies and the sources of global instability. Since within the lexicon of neo-conservatism, Islamic radicalism is interpreted as an inevitable product of authoritarianism, the democratisation process has been found as an antidote to Islamic radicalism. According to this line of interpretation, the wind of democratisation would drain the Middle Eastern soil for the gestation of Islamic fundamentalism and would therefore break the cycle of dictatorship and extremism (Gambill).

It has already become common knowledge that the democratisation project in the Middle East has been a fiasco. The failure of the democratisation project can be explained by two sets of factors. First – the inability of architects of the democratisation project to take into consideration the existing economic, cultural, and religious factors that have not been receptive to democratic values and norms, which will be discussed in detail later. Second – the success of managed democratic reforms in Middle Eastern countries where pro-Western regimes are in power is conditional upon preventing radical Islamic forces from making electoral inroads in these countries. However, it would be a striking contradiction to exclude radical Islamic forces from political participation. Thus, the externally-manipulated democratisation process in the Middle East is not only bound to discredit democratic reforms as spurious and perfunctory, but it is also conducive to facilitating the entrance of radical Islamic forces into the political scene without committing themselves to adhere to democratic principles. In other words, these radical Islamic forces have not embraced democracy for its intrinsic virtues, but, rather, they have used elections as a bridge to capture governmental power and hence promote their radical political agenda. As Graham Fuller has suggested, Islamic forces which operate along with the traditional nationalist and populist parties regard the spread of the democratisation process as a gift since they enjoy a natural advantage in politicising social, economic, and political grievances. Francis Fukuyama, a prominent apologist of the neo-conservative project which has now come to a point where the repudiates neo-conservatism as a body of thought has highlighted how the US-led democratisation process would inevitably catapult the Islamic forces into the parliamentary scene.

Promoting democracy and modernisation in the Middle East is not a solution to jihadist terrorism. Radical Islamism arises from the loss of identity that accompanies

the transition to a modern, pluralist society. More democracy will mean more alienation, radicalism, and terrorism. But greater political participation by Islamist groups is likely to occur whatever we do about it. It will be the only way this poison of radical Islamism can work its way through the body of politics of Muslim communities (Fukuyama para 2).

Even the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research in its 2003 study on Iraq warned the Bush administration that the democratisation in Iraq "...could lead to the rise of Islamic-controlled governments hostile to the United States" (Basham and Preble para 4). It was, in fact, due to the democratisation process that radical Islamic parties in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories made impressive electoral inroads.

In sharp contrast to the neoconservatives' advocacy for the democratisation project in the Middle East, which in their views is a prelude to disrupting the relations between autocratic rule and the rise of Islamic reactionary forces, Left-leaning intellectuals have attributed the failure of progressive and democratic forces to advance the cause of democracy to the Western powers, particularly the United States, which have sustained dictatorial regimes (Brownlee; Fuller; Chomsky, "The U.S. and Its Allies..."). Despite the proclamation of the Bush administration to shift away from the Cold-War policy from dictatorial regimes in third-world countries, the United States has continued to retain political friendship with repressive regimes in many Islamic societies as long as its national interests deem such relations necessary. On the one hand, the United States has raised the flag of democratisation as a weapon of intimidation to drag the non-submissive and non-cooperative states into the American orbit and proselytise them into complaisant states. Under this scenario projected by left-wing intellectuals, the imperative of spreading freedom and liberty is invoked as a justification for disciplining non-submissive states. According to this line of reasoning deployed by leftists, beneath the democratisation project adulated by the United States lurks a surreptitious attempt to convert democracy into a modern weapon of imperial consolidation. Democratisation project is harnessed as a mechanism to coerce non-compliant states into loyal satellites and simultaneously emblazoning friendly authoritarian regimes with democratic decoration without undermining the authority of the ruling regimes (Ottaway and Carothers).

Though the USA and its Western allies have apparently called for democratic reforms in the Middle East, they have not nonetheless been keen on a seismic alteration of the political landscape in the region where compliant political regimes have been strategic partners of the West. Furthermore, despite all of those calls for democratic reform, the West feared that the alternative to the status quo would be "a radical Islamic takeover reminiscent of the Iranian revolution of 1979" (Hamid para 4).

The entire argument by the Left is encapsulated in Noam Chomsky's statement that the US and its allies will not desire the proliferation of democratic governments responsive to the will of the people, since it means the loss of their control over the region (Chomsky, "The West Is Terrified of..."). According to this leftist narrative, the democratisation project which is being utilised by the United States as a tool to expand and secure its frontier of influence might, in fact, provide a window of opportunity for the progressive and nationalist forces to utilise the mechanism of the ballot box to gain political power. The legitimacy associated with the democratic elections would, in fact, provide an atmosphere of opportunity for the emerging liberal democratic governments in the Middle East to recast their traditional pattern of alliance which would, in turn, have the potential to jeopardise the long-term strategic interests of the United States in the Middle East. Chris Zambelis has captured the possibility of the realignment of Middle Eastern countries that might follow the democratisation of the Middle East, which would have adverse strategic ramifications for the long-term interests of the United States in the Middle East. According to Zambelis, free election can, in fact, empower radical Islamists to employ populist language in order to gain power and, once in power, it will forge closer ties to US rival countries such as Russia and China (95–96).

According to Yakub Halabi, since there is a strong belief in the West that Islam and the West are natural enemies, then the Western powers are advised to strengthen their authoritarian allies in order to protect their own national interests in the region. According to this line of leftist interpretation, any Middle Eastern state that wishes to move towards democracy must first move outside of the sphere of American influence.

While the Left has blamed the foreign policy of the USA and its Western allies for suppressing the democratisation process in the Middle East, its own persistent anti-imperialist campaign has historically been conducive to generating hostility to liberal values and principles which are, in fact, essential preludes to the cultivation of democracy. In other words, the anti-imperialist crusade of the Left in the region has played a crucial role in preventing the spread of liberal norms and values which are *sine qua non* to the growth and consolidation of democracy.

The left's anti-imperialism and its adverse consequences for liberalism and democracy

Democracy has been successful in those societies where liberalism had already taken root. Democracy not only embraces but springs out of a body of liberal thought (Plattner). Liberalism promotes a liberated individual free from the shackles

of unquestioned traditionalism, dogmatic authoritarianism, and regimenting controls (Greene). Liberalism strives to promote equal opportunities, human dignity, constitutionalism, and rule of the law, all of which are also embraced by democracy (Plattner).

It can be argued that the mainstream Left in Middle Eastern countries has indirectly made a significant contribution to the emergence of a social-political environment that is not receptive to democratic principles. Fragmentation, internecine hostility, competition, ideological ambiguity, and alliance with repressive nationalist regimes have continued to be hallmarks of the Left in Middle Eastern countries. As Hisham Bustani has pointed out:

with few exceptions, the mainstream Arab Left is not a left at all... it is a compilation of psychological complexes and dissonances. The left has not been born in the Arab world... (para 31).

In most Middle East countries, leftist organisations and political parties emerged in response to the Bolshevik revolution of 1919 and were heavily inspired by Marxist-Leninist slogans of anti-imperialism. This was despite the fact that there was no strong industrial labour movement in these countries. The anti-colonial fever following the Bolshevik revolution led to the emergence of radical socialist and communist parties in several Arab and Muslim countries, which imitated the show of the Russian Bolsheviks and endeavoured to consolidate the Bolshevisation of their respective countries (Nuri El-Amin). The emerging radical regimes in Muslim countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Iraq during the Cold War era were never “devoted socialists”. They were flexible in discarding and even repudiating the titillating and mesmerising socialist slogans that they had advocated earlier. Under the slightest temptation and change in the balance of power at the international level, these so-called radical socialist regimes had no qualms in overseeing the implementation of privatisation which ran counter to their perfunctory socialist platform (Ayubi).

However, these leftist organisations and political parties presented themselves as the vanguards and mouthpieces of the working classes. In pursuit of their anti-imperialist agenda, these organisations and political parties have to a great extent conflated anti-imperialism with anti-Western liberal democracy. They have not only eschewed appreciating Western liberal democratic values, but they have also vehemently endeavoured to tarnish the image of liberal democracy. In their quest to fight imperialism, they have dismissed liberal democracy as bourgeois democracy. Despite their declared adherence to Marxism, many of these leftist organisations and political parties have historically adopted a controversial and ambivalent ideological stance that paradoxically ran counter to the Marxist paradigm. It was Marx’s exhortation to communists that in the advent of political

confrontation between liberals and conservative reactionary forces, communists should ally themselves with the formers. It has become a Marxist motto that the road to socialism will pass through liberal democracy (Bernstein).

At the heart of Marxism, there is an ingrained assertion that socialism is the radicalisation and transcendence of liberalism, and it should be seen as the radical fulfilment of liberal ideals of liberty and equality which liberalism subscribes to, but it has not fully realised those objectives (Rooksby). However, contrary to Marx's exhortation, leftist organisations allied themselves with Islamic reactionary forces which eventually culminated in the Islamic revolution of 1979 in Iran and the subsequent ascendancy of a theocratic regime whose prime victims were ironically leftists themselves. Across Middle Eastern countries, leftist organisations and political parties have historically been inclined to cooperate with Islamist organisations and political parties (Schwedler and Clark). As Chris Harman has pointed out, instead of allying themselves with the proponents of Western liberalism in Iran, leftists became the foot soldiers of Islamist conservatives who have demonstrated to be capable of imposing totalitarianism that can strangle any progressive aspirations. Thus, through its close cooperation with the Islamic regime, the left failed in defending democratic rules that were not only imperative to the development of the Iranian working class but were also vital to its own political and physical survival (Cronin; Smith, "Why the Left Has to Stand...").

The political blunder of the left in the Middle East has also been exacerbated by certain Western socialist intellectuals' attitudes towards authoritarian regimes in Third-World countries. As Rohini Hensman has meticulously pointed out, Western-based anti-imperialist leftists have not only subordinated people's struggle for democracy in Third-World countries to their obsession with fighting imperialism, but have also advertently or inadvertently condoned oppression and egregious atrocities committed by these authoritarian regimes.

The 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran was heralded by renowned leftist intellectuals in the West as an indication of the ingrained Third-World indignation and historical grievance to the USA and its Western allies in supporting the monarchical regime in Iran. The prevailing anti-American and anti-Western slogans during the revolution resonated with these Western leftist intellectuals' anti-imperialism crusade (Sixsmith). The Islamic revolution in Iran was heralded by prominent Western intellectuals with socialist orientations as a prelude to accomplishing social justice, political liberty, and equitable redistribution of wealth. Renowned leftist intellectuals such as Edward Said and Richard Falk exalted the Islamic revolution as an omen for the emancipation of oppressed people in Third-World countries (Zarnett). Since leftist intellectuals in the West have depicted the Islamic regime as anti-imperialist, they tend to mimic the Islamic regime's use of the threat of American imperialism to rationalise their indifference to the plight of the oppression of the Iranian people (Smith, "Why the Left Has to Stand with...").

In his attempt to convince the American audience of the progressive and peaceful nature of the Islamic revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic revolution who came to justify the reign of terror as a governing method to suffocate democratic and secular opposition in order to preserve the Islamic regime, Richard Falk impulsively proclaimed the birth of the Islamic regime of Iran as a harbinger of emancipation and freedom from the yoke of imperialism and colonialism:

Having created a new model of popular revolution based, for the most part, on nonviolent tactics, Iran may yet provide us with a desperately needed model of human governance for a third-world country (Falk 1).

Excessive preoccupation with challenging imperialism prevented these influential Western socialist intellectuals of high stature from comprehending the authoritarian inclination lurking beneath the Islamic revolution. As the harsh reality of the Islamic revolution manifested in suppressing democratic and secular groups and organisations pervading the entire society, these leftist intellectuals in the West came to the painful realisation of the fatal flaw in their misguided indulgence in the international acclamation of a regime that came to cultivate the reign of terror as a governing method to uproot democratic and secular opposition. Contrary to these leftist intellectuals' hasty celebration and depiction of the Islamic revolution as an anti-imperialist movement that would allegedly culminate in the ascendancy of a progressive and egalitarian political system that would become a source of inspiration for other oppressed nations, the emerging political regime can hardly be characterised as a progressive anti-imperialist regime (Bouzari). However, their premature jubilation and unconditional endorsement of the Islamic revolution which was accompanied by the systematic elimination of secular and leftist groups in Iran discredited their intellectual insight and the validity of their romanticisation of the Islamic revolution as a progressive socio-political movement (Sixsmith).

During the recent socio-political uprising known as the Arab Spring, leftist organisations in countries such as Egypt and Syria did ally themselves with the authoritarian regimes in their respective countries. By depicting the repressive Syrian regime as an anti-imperialist entity that is conducive to granting the regime a licence to quell aspiration for democracy, even certain leftist intellectuals and organisations in the West have also refrained from denouncing the indiscriminate slaughtering of Syrians by the Assad Regime and its allies (Hamad; Smith, "Anti-Imperialism and the Syrian..."). Michael Walzer has highlighted the contradiction lurking beneath the socialist platform of progressive leftists. According to Walzer, leftist and socialist-oriented intellectuals and organisations in the West have no qualms in criticising non-Islamic and nationalist movements such as Hindu

nationalists, Buddhist monks, and the messianic Zionist settlers. However, these leftist intellectuals have been reluctant to criticise reactionary and brutal Islamic regimes and organisations, because in their views these Islamic organisations and regimes are part of the global movement against imperialism. As Oz Katerji has aptly pointed out, Western socialists' anti-imperialism has become a dogmatic ideology that exhorts its followers to ignore the views of the oppressed population under dictatorial regimes "in favour of pro-regime conspiracism re-gurgitated by cosplaying revolutionary communists" (para 20).

Obviously, resisting imperialism and denouncing oppressive regimes have ideologically been the two sacred principles of left-oriented movements and organisations. Undoubtedly, a firm commitment to advance socialist principles of justice and human emancipation from the yoke of dictatorial regimes necessitates challenging both imperialism and dictatorial regimes. However, many Left-leaning organisations and intellectuals have revealed their abject failure in their own simultaneous commitment to reject both Western imperialism and authoritarian regimes. Due to their excessive preoccupation with unmasking and criticising imperial expansion and manipulation across the globe, many leftist intellectuals have condoned the oppressive and reactionary proclivity of authoritarian and undemocratic regimes that have wrapped themselves up with the flag of anti-imperialism. Clamorously assailing imperialism but disregarding the anti-democratic propensity of the so-called anti-imperialist regimes tends to tarnish and even trivialise socialists' historical commitment to promoting democracy and undoubtedly lends credence to those who have impugned socialism's affinity with democratic ideals (Karimi, "Noam Chomsky, Edward Said..."). Instead of rallying political support for progressive political forces in Middle Eastern countries, a considerable number of Western leftists have paradoxically attempted to supply intellectual legitimation for these pseudo-anti-imperialist and repressive regimes such as the Islamic regime of Iran and Assad's tyrannical regime in Syria. Consequently, their tacit support of these dictatorial regimes has, in fact, provided an auspicious atmosphere for reactionary nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism to thrive throughout the region.

While the Left-leaning intellectuals and organisations in the West can unequivocally and conspicuously formulate their ideas on national and domestic affairs as manifested in their call for deepening socio-economic equality, their stance on foreign policy is marked by a dramatic abandonment of the Left's historic mission of supporting democratic struggles in Third-World countries. In the quest of saving the world from imperialism, mainstream leftist organisations and intellectuals in the West have not only turned their back on any democratic uprising against dictatorial regimes, but have also contributed to the legitimation of repressive and authoritarian regimes. As Terry Galvin has pointed out:

Mobilization for solidarity with movements engaged in revolutionary, the democratic struggle has been almost totally supplanted by Stop the War, Gaza Flotilla spectacles, and other such highly ritualized performances that amount to little more than an exhibition of radical-chic narcissism. This has occurred either in spite of or because of the overwhelmingly “antiwar” and “anti-imperialist” claims the contemporary left makes for itself (para 4).

Thus, the Left’s excessive obsession with fighting imperialism which might be a valid point has led to their outright dismissal of the intrinsic virtue of liberal values and ideals that are indispensable to fostering democratic attitudes and mentality. Under the banner of fighting imperialism, leftists have not only tarnished the image of liberal democracy but have also become allies of dictatorial regimes which have advertently been utilising their resistance to Western powers as a justification to suppress aspiration for democracy.

Yassin al-Haj Saleh, an exiled Syrian socialist, has meticulously shed light on the fatal flaw in the anti-imperialist project by the Left in the West:

The anti-imperialist left remembers from the Cold War era that Syria was close to the Soviet Union, so its sides with this anti-imperialist regime. Consequently, those who resist this regime are “objectively” pro-imperialists. Framing imperial power as something that only exists in the West ascribes to the anti-imperialists a Western-centric tendency, which is no less severe than that of imperialist hardliners themselves (para 11).

Despite sharp differences in their analysis of the interplay of the USA and its Western allies’ foreign policy platforms and the democratisation in the Middle East, there is a common ground between both these rival perspectives. It is a shared assumption by both sides that the region is naturally ripe for democratisation. What seems to have not been discussed in explanations by both the Right and the left-wing intellectuals and analysts is a set of endogenous factors that have historically hindered the success of democracy in the Middle East.

Economic conditions

It has already become a conventional theme within the existing literature that the success of democracy in England and continental Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries was mainly due to industrialisation and its economic, political, social, and demographic corollaries. According to this line of interpretation, industrialisation and the entrenchment of liberalism as an ideological reflection of the emerging economic order broke down social and traditional rigidities and

engendered more opportunities for gratifying wants, all of which were favourable to democracy (Lipset). In addition to providing the economic basis for a vibrant education system and leisure, industrialisation and gradual institutionalisation of liberal principles were conducive to producing pluralism, which is positively correlated with democracy (Macon-Conney). Pluralism and multiplication of interests as outcomes of industrialisation tend to prevent the domination of one group and provide a check against the oligarchic tendency of all organisations.

This structural affinity between industrialisation, the entrenchment of liberal principles, and democracy can shed light on the unreceptiveness of Middle Eastern countries to the establishment of a democratic order. Despite variation across the economies in this region, the limited and incomplete scope of industrialisation is a striking feature of the Middle Eastern economies. By the time when most of Middle Eastern countries began to move towards a limited manufacturing activity in the second part of the 20th century, Western industrialised countries have already made a significant shift towards a service economy. The ubiquity of religious influence over governance has not only led to the state domination of economic activities, the rise of protectionism, and a stagnant private sector which is an engine of economic innovation and growth, but it has also contributed to the emergence of anti-intellectualism and anti-science bias which have, in turn, prevented the region's receptiveness to embrace and absorb international ideas and technological transfer³ (Rubin; Kuran, "Why the Middle East Economy is..."; Kuran, "Economic Underdevelopment in the Middle East"). According to Dr. Pervez Hoodbhoy, a Pakistani physicist and professor at the Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad, who has extensively written on Islam and science, "Muslims are seriously underrepresented in science, accounting for fewer than one percent of the world's scientists while they account for almost a fifth of the world's population" (cited in Overbye para 42).

One of the significant implications of weak industrialisation in Middle Eastern countries for democracy is the absence of an industrial working class, which is crucial for promoting democracy. Historically, labour movements have played a significant role in exerting pressure on the *status quo* for expanding the frontier of universal suffrage and multiparty elections. Industrial labour movements can harness unions, international labour networks, and their political vehicles (labour and social democratic parties) to coordinate their struggle against repressive regimes. In a major study of protests in 150 countries over a century, it has been found that

³ As Jared Rubin has pointed out, the anti-science of Islam is a modern manifestation of political Islam which has taken a hostile stance towards scientific knowledge. Islam was once a beacon of scientific progress. Nations that embraced Islam during the early centuries of its existence burgeoned not only in commercial activities but also in technology, agriculture, poetry, medicine, astronomy, and engineering, while the West was stagnating in these respects.

industrial workers have been key agents of democratization and, if anything, are even more important than the urban middle classes. When industrial workers mobilize mass opposition against a dictatorship, democratization is very likely to follow (Dahlum, Knutsen, and Wig para 3).

Furthermore, the initial national experimentation with income security programmes was, in fact, pursued in countries where the emerging industrial labour movements had appeared on the political scene. In other words, there had been a structural affinity and causal relationship between the rise of the industrial working class and the first major social welfare initiatives which were essential preludes towards the gradual consolidation of democracy in Western industrial societies (Hicks). The adverse implications of economic structure for democracy have also been exacerbated by the chronic pattern of ethnic kinship and religious tribalism in many Middle Eastern countries.

Ethnicity, religious tribalism, and democracy

Politically, most of the countries in the Middle East are marked by a history of authoritarianism, ethnic conflict, religious sectarianism, and tribalism (Faleh and Dawood; Abbas Zaidi). It is mainly due to the continuation of these inveterate social, political, ethnic, and religious cleavages that most of these countries have even failed in their nation-building project (Quandt). Furthermore, the continuation of these entrenched chasms has historically contributed to the eclipse of class struggles from the terrain of political discourse. One of the most formidable obstacles to the cultivation of democracy in Middle Eastern countries is the prevalence of religiously- and culturally-ingrained loyalty to extended kinship, tribes, and religious authorities that is conducive to stifling the growth of liberal values and norms. The reification of such cultural and religious orientation is bound to interfere with allegiance to the wider political community and democracy as a means to individual development and fulfilment (Pennock and Smith). Democracy requires the consolidation of liberal values such as individual autonomy and self-reflection which can hardly be fostered in countries where loyalty to tribes and religious authority reigns supreme. While democracy does not negate cooperation and group cohesion, individual members of the community are expected to decide based on their own convictions. It is undemocratic to tell members of the community how they should vote and whom should they support.

Tribalism and religious affiliation have taken strong roots in Middle Eastern countries (Salzman). It is a common religious practice, particularly among Shiite Muslims to adhere to religious leaders' decrees and ordinances. Furthermore, the allegiance to religious leaders is also fragmented along with various sources of *Marja-al-taqlids* (religious references). Since 1979, Iran has held numerous elections

and has claimed to have produced several democratically-elected governments. Yet, it is the supreme leader who has the final words on the main political, social, and economic issues. *Velayat-e faqih* (Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist) has served as the foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran since 1979. It is the source from which the Supreme Leader derives legitimacy for his simultaneous political and religious authority over the country. The Supreme Leader has the authority to depose the president who is elected by the people. Within the Islamic hardliner circle, obeying the Supreme Leader is tantamount to obeying God and the prophet. Representative institutions such as the national assembly are subject to strict supervision by other institutions staffed by clerics who are also appointed by the Supreme Leader. For example, the Guardian Council screens and approves candidates for the national assembly (Fisher).

In Iraq, Shiites have held deferential attitudes towards their religious leaders such as Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani, who has emerged as the centre of power, whose words can determine the legitimacy of a democratically-elected government. Since the removal of Saddam by US forces in 2003, all democratically-elected governments in Iraq must receive the blessing of Ayatollah Sistani in order to have legitimacy. In the Shiite confession, it is extremely imperative to have and follow a *Marja* (source to follow). *Marjas* (sources to follow) are recognised and respected grand *ayatollahs* who are qualified and accepted by the Shiite community to make decisions within the framework of Islamic rules and traditions. A *Marja* provides advice, and exhortation, and even makes decisions when followers are in doubt on religious, social, and even political questions (Djavadi). However, it runs counter to the spirit of democracy to order or require members of the community how they should vote and whom they should support. It is, therefore, a tall order for democratic values and norms to take root in such a socio-political climate.

Tribalism prevents the development of democracy when there is an intense rivalry between competing loyalties that avert the attachment to the wider political community and national cohesion. The situation in the Kurdish region in Iraq is also a classic example of how tribalism has aborted and undermined the consolidation of democracy in the region. Since 1991, this region has enjoyed some degree of regional autonomy due to the no-fly zone that the USA imposed on Iraq. Despite the availability of enormous financial and political opportunities provided by Western countries, the Kurdish region has failed to develop democratic institutional structures (Farhad). It is also an irony that the ruling political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) claim to have been the vanguards of democracy. One of the main reasons behind this abject failure is the fact that Iraqi Kurds' loyalty is divided among two main ruling families (Barzani which runs PDK and Talabani, which leads PUK) who have dominated Kurdish politics for several decades. The historical rivalry between these two dominant families has, in turn, led

to a sharp division and fragmentation within the Kurdish Regional Government's (KRG) administrative, intelligence, and paramilitary units (Aydogan).

In recent years, corruption, partisanship, and nepotism have led to sporadic demonstrations against the two ruling families (Saeed). It can thus be asserted that the prevalence of parochial societal attitudes as manifested in dividing loyalties towards these two ruling families has hindered the development of attachment and belonging towards a wider Kurdish political community in Iraq.

The democratisation fiasco in Iraq and Afghanistan is a striking empirical testimony to the fallacy of the democratisation project theorised by neo-conservative pundits and implemented by the George W. Bush administration. The shocking outcomes of these two cases demonstrate that it is a fatal flaw and a consequential political blunder to entertain building democratic institutions in societies where tribal loyalty, kinship, and sectarian affiliation have taken deep roots (Karimi, "Afghanistan Shows the U.S. Folly..."). Kinship as well as religious and ethnic loyalty tend to foster a political atmosphere that is not receptive to liberal values, which are indispensable to the cultivation of democratic propensity. In such an environment with a political culture that emphasises loyalty to ethnic and religious affiliations over loyalty to the whole country, democracy would inevitably fail to flourish. Liberalism is a prerequisite for democracy, and both are complementary ideals. In other words, there is an intrinsic affinity between liberal values and democracy. As Marc Plattner has eloquently pointed out, "You can't have one without the other" (1).

Conclusion

As has been argued throughout this paper, democratisation failure in the Middle East is neither necessarily due to a lack of determination by Western powers to promote democracy, nor is it the result of Western powers' support for autocratic regimes, as has been respectively argued by the right- and left-wing intellectuals. The inability of democracy to make significant inroads in this region is to a great extent due to certain endogenous conditions that have cumulatively led to the creation of a socio-political environment that is not receptive to democratic values and principles. The Left's anti-liberalism crusade, the region's economic condition that has failed in producing vibrant industrial classes, and the ingrained tribal and religious loyalty have made significant contributions to the prevailing socio-political environment, which is not amicable to democracy.

In the absence of well-entrenched liberal values and norms, democracy can hardly thrive. Thus, liberalisation is a structural prerequisite to the cultivation of democracy in this region. The growing economic globalisation, trends towards moving away from protectionism, and the ongoing revolution in information and

communication technologies have the potential to generate a wind of liberalisation in Middle Eastern countries⁴. Embracing liberal ideals is a *sine qua non* for the consolidation of democracy. The proponents of democratisation in the Middle East must realise that liberalism is ancillary to democracy.

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⁴ There are strong indications of a seismic shift of attitudes in Middle Eastern countries. There has been a sharp decline in religious faith which has been accompanied by a corresponding strong trend toward secularization (Tamimi, Maleki; Holleis).

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The Geopolitical Context of Migrant Routes and Its Impact on Organised Crime in the Republic of North Macedonia

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Abstract

As a country with a specific geopolitical and geostrategic position, North Macedonia, positioned in the centre of the Balkan Peninsula, is subject to illegal migration and is located at the crossroads of migrant routes leading from Asia and Africa to Central and Western Europe. Therefore, the article makes an effort to answer two related questions. The first question refers to the geopolitical context of migrant routes and their impact on the increase in migrant smuggling, while the second one is the focus of migrant smuggling within organised crime groups. In terms

of time, the research covers the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The methodology of this paper is based on an analysis of policy documents from open sources. Also, the authors surveyed more than one hundred Macedonian police officers who work directly on the borders and engage in the suppression of smuggling migrants, and an in-depth interview with the head of the National Unit for Combating Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in North Macedonia.

Keywords: geopolitics, illegal migration, migrant routes, organised crime, migrant smuggling

Geopolityczne uwarunkowania przebiegu szlaków migracyjnych i ich wpływ na przestępczość zorganizowaną w Republice Macedonii Północnej

Abstrakt

Ze względu na szczególną sytuację geopolityczną i geostrategiczną, położona w samym sercu Półwyspu Bałkańskiego Macedonia Północna jest celem nielegalnej migracji i znajduje się na skrzyżowaniu szlaków migracyjnych prowadzących z Azji i Afryki do Europy Środkowej i Zachodniej. Poniższy artykuł stara się zatem odpowiedzieć na dwa powiązane ze sobą pytania. Pierwsze pytanie dotyczy geopolitycznych uwarunkowań przebiegu szlaków migracyjnych i ich wpływu na nasilenie przemytu migrantów, natomiast drugie ogniskuje się wokół przemytu migrantów dokonywanego przez zorganizowane grupy przestępcze. W ujęciu czasowym, badanie objęło okres pandemii COVID-19. Podstawą metodologiczną niniejszego artykułu jest analiza dokumentów politycznych pochodzących z otwartych źródeł. Ponadto, autorzy przeprowadzili wywiady z ponad stoma macedońskimi funkcjonariuszami policji, którzy pracują bezpośrednio na granicy i są zaangażowani w zwalczanie przemytu migrantów, a także pogłębiony wywiad z naczelnikiem Krajowej Jednostki ds. Zwalczania Przemytu Migrantów i Handlu Ludźmi w Macedonii Północnej.

Słowa kluczowe: geopolityka, nielegalna migracja, szlaki migracyjne, przestępczość zorganizowana, przemyt migrantów

Introduction

In the last years of the second decade of the 21st century, we have been witnessing drastic changes in migration flows through the Balkan Peninsula countries, primarily through the Western Balkans countries. It is a well-known fact that regular migration plays a vital role in shaping a country's political, security, sociological, economic, and demographic realities, and is a necessary process that is difficult to control and even more difficult to stop. However, what will be the subject of interest of this paper is illegal migration, and even more, organised crime with the smuggling of migrants, a relatively current process that deserves the special attention of the competent institutions for law enforcement, policies, and planning measures, as well as the activities of each country affected by these processes. Illegal migration is a process that is important from several aspects: the state's, the public's, the national, but also individual security. Illegal migration is often associated with severe and organised crime, but also with human rights violations.

From a geopolitical point of view, the Balkan region, and even more so the sub-region of the Western Balkans, is a transit zone to the EU, much less a country of origin and at least a final destination zone for illegal migrants. In this context, the Republic of North Macedonia, a country with a specific geopolitical and geostrategic position in the Balkan Peninsula centre, is subject to illegal migration. North Macedonia is at the crossroads of migrant routes leading from Asia and Africa to Central and Western Europe. North Macedonia, as a 'heartland' in the Balkans, in addition to being one of the primary traffic and trade crossroads connecting Asia with Europe, is also one of the crossroads of the main routes of terrorism, illegal migration, migrant smuggling, as well as illicit drug trafficking, weapons, and people from Asia and Africa to Western Europe. The number of illegal migrants from these regions has been increasing year by year, culminating during the great migrant crisis in 2015 caused by the war in Syria. Due to poor living conditions and safety risks, many people were forced to leave their countries searching for a better life. After the grand culmination in 2015, until the closure of the Western Balkans route in March 2016, the number of illegal border crossings and the number of asylum seekers in the Western Balkan's subregion countries has decreased. However, let us analyse the statistical indicators. We conclude that this region will continue to face illegal crossings of state borders, use of Balkan routes, and increasing involvement of facilitators of illegal migration, i.e. organised criminal groups and individuals. They use the complicated political, security, and economic position of potential migrants from Asia and Africa, whose trust is gained through illicit property gain in a relatively easy way, which does not require sophistication and high expertise. In 2015, migrant smuggling networks offering facilitation services to reach or move within the EU generated an estimated 4.7 billion EUR to 5.7 billion EUR in profit. These profits have seen a sharp decline

in 2016, dropping by nearly 2 billion EUR between 2015 and 2016. This development is in line with the overall decrease in the number of irregular migrants arriving in the EU and a fall in the prices for migrant smuggling services following the peak of the migration crisis in 2015 (SOCTA, Europol, 50).

Why is it essential to investigate illegal migration and organised crime against migrants? There are many reasons, from threats to personal safety, the risk to the lives of migrants and the lives of the domicile population, or endangering their health. Migrants, using criminal groups' services, can quickly become victims of human trafficking, i.e. labour, sexual or other forms of exploitation, then a violation of human rights and social security. Illegal migration also poses a threat to national security, which primarily reflects on the breach of the state's sovereignty, poses risks to public order, and reflects on the state of crime.

Regarding the terminology used in this research, it is essential to note that different experts, institutions, and organisations use other terms in defining the same phenomena, namely illegal, irregular, and undocumented migration. In our opinion, in this context, it is best to use 'illegal migration' and 'illegal migrant', i.e. the terminology used by the institutions responsible for action, in-laws and regulations, and in the Criminal Code. For illegal migration to occur, it is necessary to have illegal entry and residence in a particular country, i.e. crossing the state border without following the necessary conditions for legal entry into the country of reception. The authors would like to mention that the paper is a shortened and reworked version of the Master's thesis defended at the Saints Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje with the title *The geopolitical context of migrant routes and their influence on organised crime in the Western Balkans, with special reference to the Republic of North Macedonia*.

The geopolitical context and importance of migrant routes

There are a lot of published books and articles related to geopolitics and migration. One of the most appropriate ones is Jennifer Hyndman's reasoning from York University in Canada. She argues that migration has long been a geopolitics barometer, from human displacement generated by war to containment practices in particular territories or camps. Additionally, Hyndman concludes that the meanings of migration and the shifts in dominant geopolitical discourse across space, over time, change dramatically. The securitisation of migration, in particular, is a defining feature of current geopolitics (Hyndman).

Furthermore, Roderick Parkes (2015) from the Swedish Institute of International Affairs has written the report titled *European Union and the geopolitics of migration*. He argues that the Europeans have been encouraged to view migration

as the epitome of globalisation, the triumph of a global economic drive over territorial order. So, it is significant that migration is now becoming an object of geopolitical competition. Across the world, countries are trying to reassert control of their borders and use people flows and differences in population size for geostrategic gain. As the author asked, is this a sign that geography now trumps economics? Instead, it suggests that US-led globalisation, as an organising principle of world politics, is losing its hold. This constatation has triggered competition to promote alternative units and modes of power. As a culturally- and ideologically-loaded form of cross-border interaction, migration has become a powerful vector in this reshuffle.

Many researchers have searched and concluded that recent migration 'crises' raise important geopolitical questions. They also asked – who is 'the migrant' that contemporary politics have fixated on? How are answers to 'who counts as a migrant' changing? Who gets to do that counting, and under what circumstances? Many scientific forums respond to and question the current saliency of migration by examining how categories of migration hold geopolitical significance – not only in how they are constructed and by whom, but also in how they are challenged and subverted. Furthermore, examining how the concepts of 'migrant' and 'refugee' are used in different contexts and for various purposes opens up critical questions about mobility, citizenship, and the nation-state. Collectively, these contributions aim to demonstrate how problematising migration and its categorisation can be a tool for enquiry into other phenomena and processes (William *et al.*).

Contemporary geopolitical research continues to question the importance and effectiveness of categories in seemingly 'ordinary' mobility contexts. For example, migrants' journeys – owing to their fluid, recursive, or largely unpredictable natures – blur the artificially orderly lines among 'origin', 'transit', and 'destination' countries (William *et al.*).

As we try to connect, in this article, the geopolitical context of migrant routes and organised crime with migrant smuggling, we used and accepted some results that Triandafyllidou and Maroukis (2013) presented in the book titled *Migrant Smuggling: Irregular Migration from Asia and Africa to Europe*. They argue that international migration has intensified during the last two decades both across the East to West and the South to North axis. Europe has been receiving increasing numbers of migrants from the so-called developing countries in Africa and Asia (and Latin America). As the authors note, part of this international movement of people illegally involves either unlawful border crossings or overstaying (with or without a visa).

Furthermore, the mentioned book looks at one specific aspect of the broader irregular migration phenomenon, notably the organisation and role of migrant smuggling networks in aiding irregular migration from Asia and Africa to southern

Europe (and from southern European countries to the wider EU area). It also discusses how migration control policies in southern European countries may inadvertently shape the migrant smuggling phenomenon and the smuggling 'business' (Triandafyllidou, Maroukis).

In the period of the migrant 'crisis', all inappropriate and criminal activities are accelerating with the changing of important migrant routes that led into the EU countries. The emergence of the Balkan Route in 2015 and its development in 2016 has temporarily shifted the refugee-related migrations' geographical axis, complementing the existing maritime routes in the Mediterranean region with new overland itineraries. This shift has caught unprepared not only the central 'transit countries' and 'arrival countries', but also the EU institutions that until that moment had had a system of control (and reception) in place which was almost exclusively focused on the Mediterranean borders. After being taken by about one million unregistered migrants in 2015, in March 2016, the Balkan Route was officially closed (Umek, Minca and Šantić).

How did the importance of migrant routes change?

Suppose we observe the global map of migrant routes. In that case, we can see several main routes (according to Frontex) for illegal migrants on their way to the European Union: the west African route, the Western Mediterranean route (from the Maghreb to Spain and France), the Central Mediterranean route (from the Libyan and Tunisian coasts to the Apennine Peninsula), the Route through Apulia and Calabria, the Western Balkan route (from Greece, Northern Macedonia, and Serbia, and Croatia), the Eastern Mediterranean route (overseas routes from the Levant to the Greek islands, thence to the Balkan Peninsula), and the (rarely used) route across the eastern borders (from the post-Soviet space) to the major countries of the European Union. The Republic of North Macedonia is part of the so-called 'Western Balkan route'. However, in order to get to the analysis of this route, we need to examine the main routes through which migrants from Asia and Africa could arrive in Europe.

The most important routes are those from the North African coast via the Mediterranean Sea to the "soft" part of the western European part of the 'Rimland' (western, central, and eastern Mediterranean route), as well as the one that goes through the Turkish coast to the Greek islands and from there to the Balkan Peninsula and Central Europe. These are the directions that have a pronounced geopolitical significance and that reflect the vulnerability and porosity of the integrated European south with the European Union with the (not yet integrated into EU) so-called subregion Western Balkans, which, in addition to North Macedonia, also includes Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. This part of the Balkans is at the same time a system of

connected vessels for illegal migration and organised crime with the smuggling of migrants, but also a shield represented by the countries of the Western Balkans for the penetration of illegal migrants to the EU countries.

From a geopolitical perspective, we could analyse how the migrant routes change their importance. In 2015, the Central Mediterranean route from North Africa was one of the most popular routes in Europe. Most migrants using this route were declining from Libya, Tunisia, Eritrea, and other sub-Saharan African countries, attracted to Italy or Malta. In February 2017, the EU should improve its cooperation with the Libyan government and the European border to prevent migration from this country. This decision, already in the middle of the same year, suppressed illegal attempts for one-fifth of another period of 2016. Libya is the main point of departure for Europe, i.e. Italy and Malta, for migrants from Tunisia and Algeria.

The Eastern Mediterranean route runs from Turkey to Greece and is the most exploited route for migrants from Syria, the United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and Somalia. Through the Eastern Mediterranean route, 885,000 people arrived in the EU (17 times more than in 2014). Most of the migrants were refugees from Syria, then Afghanistan, and Somalia, and continued their journey through our country and the Western Balkans route. In 2017 and 2018, the largest number of migrants along the Eastern Mediterranean route was from Syria and Iraq. In March 2016, after the signing of the Agreement between the EU and Turkey, we recorded a sharp decline in illegal migrants along this route, i.e. 41,720 people arrived in Europe, which is 77% less than the previous route.

The Western Mediterranean route stretches from Morocco to Spain, and the closest point to the European soil is only 14 km. The number of illegal migrants, which in 2017 doubled to 23,143, comes mostly from Morocco, Algeria, and the Ivory Coast and heads to Spain, and the trend continued in 2018, with migrants being transported by wooden fishing boats and their number sharply increased by as much as twice, i.e., over 52,000 migrants.

The primary geopolitical importance in the period of the migrant crisis in 2015 is putting on the so-called Western Balkan route. Apart from the official closeness of this route, it is imperative to research the situation and answer the question of whether Western Balkan routes are still alive. Let us avoid the statistical numbers of migrant transition; we shall focus on geopolitical meaning as well as the acceleration of organised crime and smuggling migrants.

After the entry into force of the Agreement between the EU and Turkey in March 2016, the closure of the Western Balkan route expected the number of migrants arriving from Turkey to Greece to be significantly reduced. A joint statement issued by the EU and Turkey read that all irregular migrants returning to Turkey's Greek islands would be returned to Turkey on March 20, 2016. All migrants will be protected following the international standards. In this way, the EU and Turkey sought to reach an agreement on finding a solution to the refugee crisis,

giving Ankara concessions for better relations with the Union. The Agreement provided for the return of all illegal migrants who arrived in Greece from Turkey on March 20. According to political analysts, Turkey has sought unprecedented concessions from the EU (Pachemka 26–42).

Changing EU policies have also forced the closure of borders along the Western Balkans route. The transit of migrants continued through illegal routes with reduced intensity, but with an increased risk of violating persons' freedoms and rights in transit. In the new situation, refugees and migrants were forced to sleep outdoors without access to primary healthcare, at the risk of becoming victims of violence, exploitation, or other forms of abuse by organised crime groups involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking. The border's closure found a large number of unaccompanied women and minors along the Western Balkans route. They are a particularly vulnerable category at high risk of becoming victims of human trafficking and various forms of abuse and exploitation. Other refugees and migrants who used the 'services' of smugglers were also at risk of being exploited, extorted, and other forms of abuse and violation of their rights.

The main challenge for the countries along the route was how to provide security and healthcare for people, as well as how to prevent their smuggling or even prevent security issues. For instance, refugees crossing the border into Macedonia legally or illegally pose a severe security threat to Macedonia. The statistics for 2014 show the extent of the problem. That year, the Ministry of Interior Affairs submitted 94 charges against 166 migrant smugglers and received 1,250 applications for asylum. In the clandestine movement of refugees across Macedonia's territory, dozens of migrants have lost their lives on the railways. The human smuggling business poses a further threat, because dangerous persons, including terrorists, may try to take advantage of it. In addition to human smuggling and train accidents, the refugee crisis has involved attacks on the Macedonia police force and attacks on officers in charge of securing the southern border, leading to severe injuries.

For example, on March 14, 2016, 2,445 persons were involved in an attempt at a massive illegal crossing on Greece's border. Three people were killed. The Greek authorities' investigation turned up a leaflet written in Arabic with a map and directions for alternate routes across the Greek-Macedonian border. The investigation is being pursued by the Office of Public Prosecution in Thessaloniki, which seeks to determine whether there is evidence for a case against the persons responsible for this criminal network that organises the entry of migrants from Greece while possibly endangering Greece's foreign relations with its neighbours. To enhance security, a double wire fence approximately thirty-kilometres-long was installed on the state border with Macedonia on both sides of Border Stone 59. Migrants desperate to pass into Macedonia and Western Europe reacted with violence, stoning the police and the army. Twenty-four persons were injured, among whom twenty-three were security officers. Public

peace and order was disrupted in another attack on security forces on February 29, 2016, at Border Stone 59, during which stones and other hard objects were hurled at the Macedonian police forces, injuring one officer. Greek authorities responded by releasing approximately five hundred migrants (Mileski).

Security aspects are also elaborated on in the scientific literature. We will note one of them, namely one related to the so-called ‘proxy war’ on refugees. Helen Hintjens and Ali Bilgic researched that aspect and noted that for decades, European Union (EU) member states had fought an illegal proxy war – a form of state crime – against refugees and migrants, far beyond EU external borders. Fatalities make this proxy war equivalent to international classifications of war. To justify this war, migrants have progressively been reclassified by the EU as “illegal” or criminal. These authors’ article situates the proxy war within broader deterrence-based EU migration policies. Examples such as the 2008–2009 Italy–Libya deal and the 2016 EU–Turkey deal show the high price paid by refugees and minorities, and the damage to the EU’s stability and reputation. Forcibly confining people at “holding points” along migratory routes, expelling people to unsafe countries, and raising barriers to legal movement, the proxy war’s violence became more visible in 2015. Hintjens and Bilgic (2019) conclude that far from counteracting the dynamics of mass displacement, the proxy war may have contributed to the recent refugee reception crisis in Europe.

Smuggling migrants – the new imperative of organised criminal groups

That smuggling ‘business’ as a part of organised crime is a high security risk for current states. Väyrynen (2003) argued that many of the smugglers’ routes and enclaves have become institutionalised; for instance, from Mexico and Central America to the United States, from West Asia through Greece and Turkey to Western Europe, and within East and Southeast Asia. More often than not, flourishing smuggling routes are made possible by weak legislation, lax border controls, corrupted police officers, and the power of organised crime. Naturally, poverty and warfare contribute to the rising tide of migration, both legal and illegal. In general, illegal migration seems to be increasing due to the strict border controls combined with the expansion of the areas of free mobility, such as the Schengen area, and the growing demographic imbalance in the world. The more closed the borders and the more attractive the target countries, the greater the share of human trafficking in illegal migration and the role of national and transnational organised crime. Criminal groups’ involvement in migration means that smuggling leads to trafficking and victimisation as well as to the violation of human rights, including prostitution and slavery.

National legislation in the Republic of North Macedonia provides penalties for activities related to the state border's illegal crossing. Article 402 provides penalties for the unlawful crossing of the state border; Article 418-b – for migrant smuggling; and Article 418-v – for organising a group and encouraging the perpetration of human trafficking, trafficking of minors, and migrant smuggling (Кривичен Законик [Criminal Code] 171). During 2014–2015, the government placed 429 criminal charges of ‘migrant smuggling’ against 398 offenders (Ministry of Interior). Human smuggling into Macedonia has gone through changes since 2009. Between 2009 and 2011, the smuggling organisers were Macedonian citizens who cooperated with criminal groups from Greece and Serbia. Since the beginning of 2012, human smuggling has been managed principally by organised criminal groups from Afghanistan and Pakistan which operate from Turkey and Greece. These new groups manage the complete smuggling route, from the country of origin to the country of destination. The Afghans and Pakistanis who manage these networks arrived earlier in Macedonia as irregular migrants and asylum seekers, and established contacts with Macedonian nationals. They work principally in Skopje and the Kumanovo region (Vaksince and Lojane). They have recruited people in Gevgelija to accept the migrants from Greece and transport them to Vaksince and Lojane, where they can then be transferred to Serbia. Smuggling is carried out in groups of ten to fifteen migrants. Each group has a guide from the criminal network, which leads them from Greece to Macedonia. The transportation cost of illegal migrants through Macedonia is between one thousand and fifteen hundred euros per migrant. Payments are carried out through rapid electronic payments.

From November 2015 until the present, criminal groups that smuggle irregular migrants have been active in Macedonia. Besides the Syrians, Afghans, and Iraqis, who generally have good cases for asylum, other migrants have arrived who will not be able to apply for asylum. Their origin countries include Iran, Pakistan, Morocco, Bangladesh, Liberia, Sudan, Algeria, Congo, and others. During 2015, i.e. the peak of the refugee crisis, most migrants seeking to cross into Macedonia were from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Pakistan. Their route began with crossing the Greek-Macedonian border and went from there to the Gevgelija-Demir Kapija region and on to Skopje and Kumanovo. From there, they entered Serbia for the journey to Western Europe. Former President Gjorge Ivanov of Macedonia has noted that smugglers earned about six billion euros in 2015. He discussed clandestine human smuggling in his opening speech on March 21, 2016, at a scientific conference titled ‘The Geopolitical and Geostrategic Position of the Republic of Macedonia amid the Migrant and Refugee Crisis’. The interdiction of migrant smuggling is conducted by the criminal police, customs officers, the Directorate for Security and Counter-Intelligence, the Intelligence Agency, and other police agencies. Greater collaboration, particularly in the gathering

of intelligence information and undercover policing, has enhanced police effectiveness, as have new methods of photo-documentation and other special investigative measures. New technology has been introduced, such as heat sensors that can be placed at borders to respond to the heat of the human body and scanners that detect cars and trucks that can provide evidence of the irregular transport of migrants (Камбовски, Мирчев, Мемеди).

Despite these efforts and the signing of an agreement between the European Union and Turkey to suppress migration to Europe, the refugee wave to Europe may diminish, but it will persist, because the ongoing conflicts in Syria and other countries have not been resolved. Irregular migrants will continue to be at risk for abuse and victimisation, including robbery, kidnapping, assault, and rape. To move forward, it is vital that improvements be made to strengthen the agency and interagency cooperation through regular meetings at the local, regional, and national levels with the border guard services of neighbouring countries, regular participation in joint operational activities organised by Frontex in the Republic of Macedonia and abroad, the development and maintenance of bilateral police cooperation with competent authorities of the member states of the European Union and countries in the region, as well as cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, and other international organisations and forums as well as NGOs that deal with irregular migration (Mileski).

The COVID-19 pandemic era of smuggling migrants

Academic literature has a significant effort to make a nexus between the COVID-19 pandemic era and smuggling migrants. For instance, Gabriela Sanchez and Luigi Achili (2020) argue that official state responses to the COVID-19 crisis have increased the level of insecurity among irregular migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in transit. The measures, by imposing controls on migration management, including detention and border and port closures, have contributed to migrants being left without international assistance. At the same time, the demand for migrant smuggling continued with a slightly reduced intensity. After border closures, human trafficking, smuggling, and international criminal networks frequently arise. During the COVID-19 lockdown, the number of smuggled individuals and human trafficking victims continued to rise (Ullah *et al.*).

In the pandemic era, migrant movements and attempts at illegal crossings along the Western Balkans route and the new sub-route through Albania-Bosna and Hercegovina-Croatia-Slovenia will continue in 2020. In the past period, over 110,000 illegal crossings were registered on this route despite the unique situation

with COVID-19. Generally, despite the short time distance from the adopted restrictive government measures, it is difficult to identify some general trends and assess the impact of COVID-19. However, of course, there is a passivation of the activities of organised crime groups involved in migrant smuggling in the short run. The criminal activities of profiled organised criminal groups, since the declaration of a state of emergency in March 2020, have significantly decreased. For these conditions, there are several authors' assumptions arising from conversations and internal reports with persons directly in charge of dealing with migrant smuggling:

- The fear is evident among the organisers and members of the organised criminal groups (OCG) of the possibility of being infected with COVID-19 themselves, given that a large number of illegal migrants in Greece may have the virus;
- Closing the borders and banning the movement of citizens through the official border crossings reduced the number of detected cases of illegal migrants through the territory of North Macedonia;
- There is a real danger of their detection by the security services (especially with the engagement of the army) when trying to cross the state border illegally, carrying a large amount of money with them;
- The global recession as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic will have an impact on migration processes and flows. Economic factors play an essential role in determining migration movements and will be a vital push factor in the coming period. The contact of illegal migrants who are potentially infected or transmitters of the virus is an excellent danger, because on their way to the final destination-EU they are in connection with a large number of people-facilitators of illegal migration;
- It is evident that irregular migrants are still being detected (albeit in much smaller numbers due to the enormously strengthened measures taken by the Greek police to prevent the illegal entry of migrants from Turkey to Greece), so there is some sort of control over which migrants are trying to obtain illegal entry into the territory of North Macedonia;
- From January 1 to August 20, 2020, they increased by 33.1% compared to the same period last year. 19.879 attempts were prevented, unlike the same period the previous year, when 14.933 attempts were thwarted. It is important to note that the number of detected migrants increased significantly during the winter period (January and February 2020), when Turkey decided to open its borders to migrants to Greece;
- Analysing the data weekly, it can be noticed that, on average, when trying to enter or leave the country, about 585 migrants are detected, or 85 people daily, and it is essential to note that during July the daily average of prevented

attempts reaches 150 people and in almost the same number continues during August 2020;

- As for the structure of migrants, this year the most numerous migrants come from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Syria, Libya, Palestine, Turkey, Egypt, Somalia, Morocco, Cuba, and Algeria. According to the gender structure, 90% of the detected persons are male, and according to the age limit, it is a young population aged between 18 and 25 years old.

Results in the fight against smuggling with migrants and human trafficking for the period 2016–2019

In the past period, the Republic of North Macedonia took significant measures aimed at strengthening the capacity to deal with migrant smuggling and human trafficking. A significant number of cases of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants have been uncovered, with many of these cases ending in convictions. However, the activities of organised crime groups involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking continue. In the annual reports of the State Department for Human Trafficking for 2016, 2017, and 2018, North Macedonia is in the second rank of countries, i.e. it is noted that the government does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking (US Department of State).

We could conclude that this is a clear indicator that the institutions in North Macedonia that are fighting against illegal migration have a positive approach and are appropriately targeted.

As part of this research, a survey was conducted on police officers working to combat illegal migration and organised crime. The survey was conducted on 102 respondents from the Ministry of Interior. That covers police officers working in the regional centres for border affairs, investigators in the National Unit for Combating Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking, organised crime analysts, organised crime inspectors, and liaison officers for international police cooperation, heads of the above-mentioned organisational units, advisors, and uniformed police officers in the border police. As to the gender structure, the surveys were conducted with 85 male police officers and 22 female police officers.

- When asked about the most common reasons for which migrants from the Middle East and African countries leave their countries, most of the respondents answered that the most common reason includes military and conflict areas. The second most common one includes the unfavourable economic situation in their countries of origin.
- When asked about the impact of the political and security situation in the countries of origin of migrants (the Middle East and North Africa) on the routes used by migrants to reach EU countries, most of the respondents

agreed that the impact is significant, and only 26% said that it is a crucial influence.

- Because many respondents have direct contact with illegal migrants detected in our country, the most significant percentage of them said that in interviews with migrants, they say they are fleeing war zones. Only 20% say they come from economically-underdeveloped areas or countries where they have previously sought refuge.
- Asked whether migration processes encourage criminals to target their criminal activities to facilitate illegal migration, the answer is yes in 95% of the responses.
- The same answer (very high) is given to the question of the impact of migration routes on the activities of organised criminal groups on the territory of our country and the Western Balkans.
- When asked which of the state bodies they think the Ministry of Interior should cooperate with in dealing with migrant smuggling effectively, the largest percentage of the respondents said that cooperation with the Public Prosecutor's Office is crucial, followed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, citizens' associations, Customs Administration, and so on.
- When asked about the cooperation or the need to strengthen cooperation with the police of neighbouring countries in the fight against migrant smuggling, half of the respondents answered that it is satisfactory, 21% that it is unsatisfactory, and 20% that it is excellent (this is due to the positive answers of police officers from the Regional Center East because of the positive experience they have with the Bulgarian police).
- Regarding the respondents' perception of the attitude of the domicile population towards the phenomenon of migrant smuggling, the survey results partially confirmed the hypothesis that the population has a negative attitude towards this phenomenon, but still considers it an easy way to gain illegal property (Pachemska 96–104).

To test the results of the conducted survey, and to confirm or reject the hypotheses of this research, an additional qualitative research method was applied, namely an in-depth interview with the head of the National Unit for Combating Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in the Republic of North Macedonia, which resulted in the following key findings, which support the answers given in the survey questionnaire previously:

- The most common reason for migrants to leave their countries is military action or economic reasons as well as a larger plan to change the demographic situation in Europe and its economic weakening, which is one of the reasons why the United Kingdom “timely” leaves the EU.
- The political and security situation in the countries of origin of migrants (the Middle East and North Africa) has a significant impact on the routes

used by migrants to reach EU countries. The most commonly used routes established in previous decades were those through which various excise goods were smuggled, but mostly drugs.

- Routes through unsafe countries are avoided (hostilities, political and social unrest, tribal wars), because it is effortless for refugee or economic migrants to be exploited in various ways, making them victims of human trafficking.
- The influence of socio-economic factors from the interviews conducted with the detected irregular “economic” migrants is excellent, because everyone states that they come to Europe for a secure life and work, the opportunity for better education, better access, and better health services.
- Questions remain about the funding given to migrants by organised criminal groups for their smuggling to Western European countries, i.e. where these funds come from, given that migrants come from extremely poor and economically-underdeveloped countries, who provides these funds for so many people, what happens to migrants when they arrive in the country of final destination, how they pay their debts, and what the real goal is.
- Illegal migrants transiting through our country are people fleeing conflict areas. These people have previously stayed in reception centres in other countries where they have sought asylum (and which by international standards are considered safe countries), as well as people from economically-underdeveloped countries looking for work or opportunities for better education, better access to better health services, but also members of terrorist organisations or foreign armies tasked with setting up the so-called “cells” in Western Europe to recruit people for ‘Jihad’ and carrying out terrorist attacks.
- The impact of migrant routes affects the activities of organised criminal groups on the territory of North Macedonia and the Western Balkans, i.e. many of the organised criminal groups that were targeted to commit a certain type of crime are reoriented to commit criminal activities related to smuggling of migrants or simply become poly criminal organised groups who see migrant smuggling as an easy way to earn money.
- Cooperation with neighbouring police services is at a satisfactory level, traditionally best with Serbia colleagues. There is almost none cooperation with colleagues from Greece, who have no interest (political willing) to prosecute the organisers and members of the organised criminal groups who smuggle migrants from Greece.
- The mode of action of the organised criminal groups has an impact on the creation of effective and efficient policies of the institutions involved in the fight against the smuggling of migrants; the modes used by the OCG should be monitored and analysed, as well as new trends in their action.

Appropriate strategy, including an action plan for an effective institutional response to this type of crime, should be worked out.

- The suppression of organised criminal groups does not only mean the deprivation of liberty of persons suspected of being involved in illegal activities related to the smuggling of migrants, but it also means the conduct of a complete and thorough financial investigation into the illegally acquired property (movable or immovable, cash) and its confiscation.
- The closure of an active route will reflect an increase or decrease in the number of migrants who will use the Western Balkan route, which passes through the countries that are part of the Western Balkan route. Let us take into account that the measures taken by France since early 2019, Spain, and Italy reduced over 50% of attempts to enter their territories illegally via the Western Mediterranean and Central Mediterranean routes, while at the same time increasing the influx by 120% via the Eastern Mediterranean route (Cyprus and Greece). The answer is more than evident. Also, migrants from Angola and Morocco were detected in North Macedonia.
- The geopolitical situation in the region has influenced and will continue to affect the routes of movement of irregular migrants and the irregular migration itself. In this context, the geopolitical position of North Macedonia in the Balkans – as a significant crossroads through which the main trade routes have passed for centuries, and later routes for smuggling various goods and, more recently, migrants – defines the inevitability of facing irregular migration and the need to deal with it.
- The fact that no country alone can effectively combat this kind of international criminality and that everyone stresses the need for regional cooperation between the countries directly addresses the necessity of strong political will. Any change in the political attitude or the existence of a political crisis in a country directly impacts irregular migration.

Conclusion

This research's initial idea was a theoretically elaborated geopolitical context and importance of the migrant routes, focusing on the Balkan route upgraded with theoretical and empirical research (survey and in-depth interview) about organised crime with migrant smuggling. Our goal was to prove the research question and the application of scientific research methodology, all supported by quantitative and qualitative methods, analysis of written documents, and use of open sources of information. Practically, all results are based on daily monitoring of the situation in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The key findings in the research – through surveying police officers working on this issue and then an interview with the head of the newly formed National Unit for Combating Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking, as well as an in-depth analysis of previous research in our country and reports of relevant domestic and international researchers and institutions – have shown that the geopolitical context of migrant routes affects organised crime in the Western Balkans. Consequently, the situation in the Republic of North Macedonia was marked as very critical in the field of increasing migrant smuggling, which is the central hypothesis on which this research is based. Let us take into account all previously mentioned findings. We can conclude that quantitative and qualitative scientific research methods applied in this paper confirm the research questions, or that the geopolitical context of migrant routes impacts organised crime in subregion countries in the Western Balkans, and thus over North Macedonia. For instance, this statement correlates with the respondents' answers in the questionnaire. The situation in the Middle East, i.e. the military conflicts that affect these regions, impacts the geopolitical relations and routes taken by migrants to reach European Union countries. The political and security situation in the countries of origin of migrants has the most significant impact, and the second factor is socio-economic one.

The fight against migrant smuggling is one of the European Union's priorities, based on the Europol's Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA). The severe approach of North Macedonia can be seen from the Ministry of Interior's active participation in various initiatives dedicated to combating this crime. The establishment of the National Unit for the Suppression of Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Human Beings is proof of how serious law enforcement institutions' approach is in dealing with organised crime against migrants.

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The Political Economy of the Kafala Abolishment in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia – an oil-rich rentier state, receives a large number of guest workers, and they were maintained under the controversial Kafala system. Recently, Saudi Arabia announced to abolish this system to come into effect in March 2021, but excluded domestic workers. Such observations show that there are political-economic incentives for the authority in abolishment apart from the humanitarian ground. Again, the current regime is willing to reduce its dependency on oil by diversifying its economy. Crown prince Mohammad Bin Salman announced massive reform plan – “Saudi Vision 2030” – to bolster FDIs and develop the public sector and service industries, where they need skilled labourers and experts to run their economy, where Kafala is not suitable. In this context, this paper would like to follow the political economy of migration policy as an analytical framework to provide a political-economic analysis of Kafala abolishment in Saudi Arabia by looking at the current transformation and Kafala abolishment.

Keywords: Kafala abolishment, Vision 2030, Saudi Vision 2030, Kafala Reform in Saudi Arabia, political economy of Kafala, migration policy, labour migration, political economy of migration policy, Kafala system

Założenia polityczno-ekonomiczne dotyczące uchylenia systemu kafala w Arabii Saudyjskiej

Abstrakt

Arabia Saudyjska, państwo utrzymujące się z dochodów pasywnych z wydobycia ropy naftowej, która jest jego bogactwem naturalnym, przyjmuje rzesze zagranicznych pracowników, objętych kontrowersyjnym systemem kafala. Niedawno Arabia Saudyjska ogłosiła zniesienie tego systemu ze skutkiem w marcu 2021 r., jednak z wyłączeniem pracowników domowych. Poczynione spostrzeżenia dają podstawy do przypuszczeń, że decyzja władz o zniesieniu tego systemu podyktowana była względami polityczno-ekonomicznymi, niezależnie od pobudek humanitarnych. Jest to kolejne przedsięwzięcie obecnego reżimu, obliczone na zmniejszenie zależności od ropy naftowej poprzez dywersyfikację gospodarki. Następca tronu, książę Mohammad Bin Salman, przedstawił szeroko zakrojony plan reform – „Wizja Arabii Saudyjskiej w 2030 r.”, którego celem jest pobudzenie bezpośrednich inwestycji zagranicznych oraz rozwój sektora publicznego i usługowego, wymagający wykwalifikowanych pracowników i ekspertów do zarządzania gospodarką, którzy powinni funkcjonować poza systemem kafala. Przedmiotem niniejszego artykułu są ekonomiczne założenia polityki migracyjnej w ramach analizy polityczno-ekonomicznych aspektów uchylenia systemu kafala w Arabii Saudyjskiej przez pryzmat obecnej transformacji i uchwalenia zniesienia systemu kafala.

Słowa kluczowe: zniesienie systemu kafala, Wizja w 2030 r., Wizja Arabii Saudyjskiej w 2030 r., reforma systemu kafala w Arabii Saudyjskiej, ekonomia polityczna systemu kafala, polityka migracyjna, migracja zarobkowa, ekonomiczne założenia polityki migracyjnej, system kafala

Introduction

In November 2020, Saudi government announced that it would abolish the Kafala system in the near future through its Labour Reform Initiative. By March 2021, the reform is in full effect, and Kafala has been abolished. But looking at the details, it is a partial abolishment due to its exclusion of domestic and farmworkers, who

are still operating under Kafala. However, the reform did not come out of nowhere; rather, it came as a part of a bigger transition.

Since 2017, the Saudi government has been working on their Vision 2030, which is basically an economic liberalisation project to diversify the Saudi economy. At present, the Saudi economy is a 'Rentier' economy heavily dependent upon one source of income, namely the oil market. But over the year, the performance of the oil market is not very good, and fiscal deficits are visible. The pandemic and a disruption in supply chain also revealed the volatility of the oil market. Even though the oil price skyrocketed immediately after the Ukraine war, the sustainability debate is still on the table. Moreover, sceptics also believe that Saudi oil will also run out in the future. According to Allianz Trade, the oil reserve is likely to sustain only 60 years, while gas reserve is likely to sustain for 70 years (Saudi Arabia: Pre-Crisis...). In these circumstances, the Saudi government is looking for alternative sources of income, and in order to do so, they are opting for industrialisation on a massive scale to sustain the economy in the future. Such actions will also enable the government to address the growing unemployment problems. However, the economic reform will also result in evolving labour demand. Before, the Saudi labour market mostly ran on unskilled labour, but under the industrial economy, they will require skilled labourers mostly. In this aspect, Kafala is also not suitable.

Moreover, domestic workers and farmworkers were excluded from the reform, and as a result, they will continue to operate under Kafala. Such observation shows that the abolishment is a partial one, not a full abolishment, and the abolishment is motivated by political-economic incentives rather than humanitarian and moral interventions.

In this context, the objective of this paper is to provide a political economy analysis of the Kafala abolishment. In order to do so, this paper will follow the political economy of migration policy as an analytical framework. Using the framework, this paper will describe the political economy aspects of the recent abolishment.

Methodology

This is a qualitative article based on secondary literature derived from relevant books, journal articles, newspapers, magazines, and semi-scholarly literature. To conduct the study, the content analysis method is implemented on secondary data mostly. To provide a theoretical understanding, this article will develop an analytical framework of the political economy of migration policy. To explain the Kafala abolishment, the article will follow statist model and the sub-state institutions perspective.

To provide a political economy analysis of the Kafala abolishment, this article will ask two questions.

1. How does the Kafala abolishment serve as a pre-requisition to Saudi Vision 2030 and advancement of Economic Liberalisation? and
2. What are the political economy aspects of a shift in migration policy regarding the Kafala abolishment?

Existing literature

A political economic analysis of Kafala and its abolishment is relatively a new study project as the abolishment only took place in March 2021 with the announcement in November 2020. The study project includes several topics such as political economy of migration policy, the Kafala system and its features and abolishment details, and understanding Saudi Arabia's economic reform.

To understand migration policy from the political economy approach, Hillman's study covered the role and use of migration policy in the transition of states. Hillman explained that, beyond economic needs and factors, behind every migration policy there are political-economic interests such as employment consequences, distress, and transitions (Hillman). On the other hand, Rudolph's study shows that migration policies have a lot of dynamics, including political, social, economic, and foreign policy (Rudolph). However, Freedman and Kessler's work is worthy of mention in this regard as the authors provided a cross-disciplinary political economy approach where they linked migration policy and economic effects with state, institutions, and interest groups (Freedman, and Kessler). Facchini and Mayda's research also acknowledged the role of government and interest groups in adopting migration policy, and contributed to the conceptual understanding of the political economy of migration policy (Facchini, and Mayda).

A lot of studies can be found on Kafaala and its features as well as on abolishment strategies. Most of them are self-sufficient and self-explanatory. Azhari provided a critical perspective on Kafala and Kafael from Islamic law, international Law, and human rights perspective, where the features and critiques are mostly covered (Azhari). Khan and Harroff-Tavel explored the challenges and opportunities of the Kafala abolishment (Khan, and Harroff-Tavel). However, Damir-Geilsdorf also explored the Kafala system from a legal perspective, the debt bondage and the role of the Kafael in the system, and the notorious 'maid trade' and absconding crime regarding runaway workers (Damir-Geilsdorf). Apart from scholarly works, Rothna Begum's semi-scholarly writings are worth mentioning here. In her writing in human Rights Watch', Begum identified five key elements of Kafala that give the Kafael control over the migrant workers' life including entry and exit from the country, power to cancel residency and work permit any time, controlling

the job of migrants, and, finally, the absconding crimes such as runaway (Begum). In her article, Begum also recommended that if Saudi Arabia wants to abolish the system, the abolishment must address these five issues (Begum). Apart from Begum, Robinson also wrote in the Council for Foreign Relations in the context of the Qatar World Cup human rights abuse on the Kafala system. Robinson's all-encompassing article covers almost every aspect of the Kafala system (Robinson).

Saudi Arabia's economic reform under "Vision 2030" is also explored by various scholarly and semi-scholarly writings. Al-Sulayman briefly discussed the reform and identified the 'dual pressure' for the government to adopt the reform (Al-Sulayman). According to Sulayman, Gulf Countries, due to their reliance on oil, are facing global pressure due to fall of oil price and, as a consequence, are facing deficit issues because of their 'super rentier' nature; and the second pressure is growing unemployment and the lack of domestic production market (Al-Sulayman 2). Moshashai *et al.*'s research also shows that the reform plan is motivated to diversify the revenue sectors and decrease reliance on the oil market as the performance of the market has recently declined (Moshashai *et al.*) Again, Khashan's study also supports the previous research as he identified the reform as expanding and diversifying the revenue generation (Khashan). For Khashan, this is only an economic reform of liberalisation, not a political reform (Khashan, 4). Khashan's claim is also supported logically by Feierstein. Feierstein, in his writing in American Foreign Service Association, also identified the reform as an economic liberalisation only and not democratisation or political reform (Feiersterin).

However, the aim of this study is to establish the political economy of the Kafala abolishment as a part of an economic reform, as it is a relatively new phenomenon in contemporary migration studies and in political economy research. Though in many semi-scholarly articles and opinion-editorials, the issues have been discussed for past six or seven months, they are brief, scattered, and lack further delve into the topics. In this regard, the objective of this study is to provide a better and more organised political economy explanation.

The political economy of migration policy

Political economy as an approach believes that behind every migration policy, there are political-economic incentives for the policymakers. It tries to overcome the economic and political understanding of migration policy and provide a new systematic understanding instead.

The political economy approach of migration policy believes that there can be both economic and politico-cultural influences, gainers, and losers in a migration policy. However, through the policy, political-economic consequences, distress, or transition may take place (Hillman 268–269). In the empirical aspect, it may

result in employment or unemployment, change in job security, etc. For instance, Germany's transition from socialism to capitalism and migration policy was also adopted accordingly (Hillman 268). However, the migration policy ensured a liberal market but also allowed inequality to take place, unlike before in socialism (Hillman 268–269).

Over the time, the approach evolved, and researchers facilitated the role of the state, institutions, and interest groups to make the approach more dynamic. Freeman and Kessler categorised the approach into three models. Firstly, there is the statist model, which analyses the strategic and interest-based needs of the state and places the state at the centre of the policy (Freeman, and Kessler).

Secondly, there is the institution model, which prioritises the sub-state institutions (Freeman, and Kessler). Institutions and their aggravated economic and fiscal premises motivate them to pursue certain policies; in their pursuit, a wide range of variables are present, such as domestic negotiations, various existing political economies in domestic settings, party politics, political system, etc. (Freeman, and Kessler); institutions pursue migration policy based on their motivation and needs. Here, variables are important, because they influence the policy orientations. For instance, an anti-immigrant party may prefer restrictive policies, and a capitalistic free market may prefer open policy. Culture is also important as it also influences the policy. Rudolph's study supports such claim as the author's study shows that after 9/11 and securitisation phases, the US government's migration policy was also affected by it (Rudolph 615–616).

The third and final model is the interest group's dynamics. It reflects the influential roles of interest groups in policymaking (Freeman, and Kessler). For Instance, the liberal market promoters seek open policies. Again, trade unions and rights watch groups call for better treatment of migrants. Facchini and Mayda's empirical study on the US migration policy between 1976 and 2007 also shows the importance of interest groups in migration policy (Facchini, and Mayda).

However, Facchini and Mayda also acknowledged the central role of the state in policy adoption. While adopting and passing policy, the government is the final decision-maker, and it formulates policies by taking all the factors into consideration (Facchini, and Mayda 26). For instance, the recent trend of migration policy is adopting the temporary labour migration, which allows the state to meet its economic demand and simultaneously meet the politico-cultural demand of its citizens who may dislike 'outsiders' for a long time in their countries.

Using these existing ideas, the next sections of this paper will assess the political economy of Saudi Arabia's migration policy shift from the Kafala system to its abolishment.

Kafala, problems of Kafala, and abolishment

Kafala

Kafala is a notorious sponsor system that has existed mainly in the Gulf countries since the 1950s (Azhari 63). Apart from Gulf countries, Kafala can also be found in Lebanon and Jordan. The system originated from the Islamic tradition, which emphasised 'guarantying' safety (Azhari 63). Through the system, the state gives power to private citizens and companies to control every aspect of migrant workers' life while they stay and work in that country (Robinson). Under this system, states relieve and transfer their governance duty to the private citizens (Damir-Geilsdorf 166–167). It is basically designed to maintain and employ the unskilled labour force on a temporary basis. In Kafala, a private citizen or private company works as the 'Kafeel', meaning a sponsor who covers all the expenses including travel and dormitories for a migrant (Robinson). Kafeel controls five key elements of migrant workers' life including entry permission and facilitation, residency, work permit, controlling absconding decisions, and existing permission and facilitation (Begum).

However, the Kafala system had been relevant till the present as GCC countries mostly needed unskilled labourers. To meet the required skilled labour force, they used to launch a handful of visa schemes called 'Golden visa' or 'Free visa'.

Problems of Kafala

From its inauguration, Kafala was highly criticised by human rights workers. Over the year, with the rising number of abuse cases by exploiting the powers given to Kafeel, Kafala can be identified as 'modern-day slavery' (Robinson). This is due to Kafeel's controlling key aspects of migrant workers' life. Debt bondage and unpaid labours are some of the common complaints about the system; excessive work hours and unpaid wages are common dissatisfactions among the workers (Saudi Arabia: Domestic Workers...). Moreover, as the Kafeel can take away and control the passport of migrants, migrants have no power or authority over their decisions (Begum). Apart from all these, the jurisdiction is also under the interior ministries rather than labour ministries, and so workers have no protection under the host country's labour law (Robinson). Furthermore, a greater political economy is at play by exploiting the system as recruiters and middlemen exploit the workers for recruitment and other issues (Robinson). In many cases, Kafeel also exploits workers by charging extra money for renewing, and in many cases, the Kafeel collects tax from the workers though it is the duty of the Kafeel to pay tax for the migrants according to the law.

Abolishment

Saudi Arabia announced the abolishment first in November 2020 (Saudi Arabia: Labor Reforms...). The announcement came from the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development under new labour reform. And according to the ministry, the aim is to 'enhance the contractual relationship between workers and employers', help establish an 'attractive job market', and 'improve the working environment' in the country (Saudi Arabia: Labor Reforms...). Under the new reform, migrant workers will no longer need the Kafael's permission to change jobs, travel abroad, or leave the country, and the reform also abolished absconding crime (Nereim).

After the reform, workers can change jobs willingly after one year of the contract, can travel outside the country without any permission from the employer (Saudi Arabia: Labor Reforms...), and under the digitalisation, they will be provided IDs, and they will be required to use the digital system prior to their switching jobs, travelling or leaving the country. The reform has been in effect since March 2021. However, farmers, domestic workers, drivers, gardeners, and home security are not covered under the reform (Domestic Worker, 4 Other...); for these workers, Kafala is still in effect. Such observation shows that the abolishment is only focused on transforming and boosting the profitable economic aspects rather than encompassing all aspects.

In the next section, the Saudi economic reform will be discussed, where the transformation of migration policy will be established as a prerequisite for achieving Vision 2030.

Vision 2030 – Saudi economic reform

Saudi Arabia till today is a 'Rentier' state depending on its vast oil reserves. In the last fifty to sixty years, the Sheikhs have earned a gigantic fortune from the oil trade. But in the past decade and at present, the oil market is not doing much good. There are huge fiscal deficits recorded in the oil market, and with demographic expansion over the year, unemployment also increased drastically. Moreover, speculations are present about Saudi's oil reserve, namely that it is over-calculated (Rapier). Many sceptics believe the Saudi oil reserve will run out soon. In these circumstances, the government needs to generate alternative sources of income that will both allow the generation of money and ensure employment for the unemployed youths. In order to achieve these policies, crown prince Mohammad Bin Salman introduced a new economic reform under "Vision 2030".

Its prime objective is to reduce its 'Rentier' nature by reducing dependency on oil and diversify the revenue sectors. According to Al-Sulayman, the negative performance of the oil market lately and the increasing unemployment constitute

the ‘dual pressure’ behind this reform (Al-Sulayman 2). However, Moshashai *et al.*’s research also supports such claim; the unsatisfactory performance of the oil market pushes the government to diversify the revenue sectors (Moshashai *et al.* 389–390). Under the reform, the government expects to boost ‘thrust sectors’ such as energy, tourism, information, and communication. In order to boost these sectors, they require Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), a large number of skilled and unskilled workers, and, most importantly, productive work hours. Hence, in order to achieve these by 2030, Saudi Arabia has chosen the path of economic liberalisation under “Vision 2030”.

However, it is only an economic reform, not a political transformation (Feierstein); the proof of such a claim can be found by looking at the main elements of the plan. The three core elements of Vision 2030 are: diversified sustainable economy, shifting economic growth from public to private sector (privatisation in general), and job creation for unemployed citizens (Feierstein). So, ultimately, it is an economic liberalisation, and the aim is to diversify revenue generation (Khashan 6–7). Again, liberalisation and boosting these sectors require skilled and unskilled foreign labour (Khashan 3). Moreover, the Saudi labour market is sustained by foreign workers as the number of foreign workers is almost one-third of the total population (Nereim). So, under the reform, it is important to ensure better management and equal field to attract skilled labour force and foreign investment. As a result, the abolishment and the new Labour Reform Initiative serves as a pre-requisition for Vision 2030 and the advancement of economic liberalisation.

Such observation suggests that Saudi Arabia’s Kafala abolishment can be understood under the statist model described by Hillman and Kessler. The abolishment is an outcome of interest-based need of the state. And hence, the Saudi government opted for abolishment, as it is a pre-requisite for their Vision 2030.

The observations till now suggest that there are various important political-economic aspects of the abolishment. In the next section of this paper, I will try to explore these aspects.

The political economy of Kafala abolishment

The latest abolishment has various political-economic aspects for the government. As the country heads for a ‘dual’ labour system, where domestic workers still fall under the system, such developments indicate that the abolishment may or may not be motivated by moral-social values. Rather, it is definitely motivated by the political-economic incentives for the state; there are various political economy aspects of the abolishment that are lucrative and essential for the state.

Implementing the labour reform initiative

As Saudi Arabia is now aiming to use its labour market in diverse revenue generation, a labour reform is a prerequisite. Kafala was designed only to maintain the unskilled labour forces to continue development works and had trifling participation in generating revenue. But now, as large-scale industrialisation is about to take place, labour rights are a must to enhance productivity and to ensure required labour. The Kafala abolishment and implementation of a labour reform will help the government to achieve so. The Kafala abolishment will allow liberalisation that includes wage protections, digital documentations, and labour reform (Saudi Arabia Eases...). However, the Labor Reform Initiative will also ensure mobility and regulation, as well as decrease disputes and high work rates (Ministry Of Human Resources...).

Revenue generation and job vacancy

The new reform will increase revenue for the government as under the reform, the levy will increase for both the migrant workers and for their employers. Under the levy introduced in 2017, migrants with dependants are supposed to pay a certain amount to the government. Now it is increased to around 90 USD per a dependent (Allinson). It is also an attempt to replace the foreign workers by levying with the high rate with unemployed Saudi citizens. As a result, under the new reform, revenue generation will be increased for the government, and Saudi citizens will replace their foreign counterparts in many aspects. While the revenue generation is likely to increase for the government, it will put additional economic pressure on the migrant workers.

Kafeel's hegemony

Under the Kafala system, Kafeel used to enjoy a direct hegemony in every aspect of migrants' life. They would also make a profit out of the system by burdening the migrants with unlawful insurance and tax bills. In most cases, Kafeels and intermediaries made a profit from the early stage of recruitment by charging the candidates. By controlling the migrant, they are also notorious for enjoying unpaid labour and poor wage. Under the Kafala system, Kafeel was the ultimate gainer rather than the government, and the government only shared its governance and facilitated the labour demand. After the abolishment, due to the labour reform, Kafeel's hegemony will surely decrease at least to some extent, and taxation and other fees introduced under liberalisation will also benefit the government directly.

Prerequisite for Vision 2030

The labour reform and Kafala abolishment is a prerequisite for 'Vision 2030' and its liberalisation. For Vision 2030, to diversify the economy, Saudi Arabia will require a large amount of inflow of FDIs. It is because due to the existing mistrust and vulnerability in the political landscape, Saudi businessmen do not prefer to invest in their inland; rather, they prefer to invest outside the country. It is a very common trend, especially with the people who are not on the very good side with the government. On the other hand, bonded labour under Kafala is not very suitable for industry works; rather, ensuring workers' rights and facilities is important for productivity. As a result, the abolishment is a prerequisite for liberalisation and implementing Vision 2030.

Evolving labour demand

As mentioned earlier, Kafala was designed to maintain unskilled labour that would provide service works and developmental activities, and had a trifling contribution to revenue generation. But now, liberalisation requires skilled workers as they will be engaged in profit-making businesses and will work in industries. Khashan also expressed the same, as according to him, "Privatisation requires a huge skilled worker which Saudi needs from outside" (Khashan 4–5). Moreover, dependency on unskilled foreign workers also needs to be reduced as the government wants to address unemployment in the domestic economy. So, Saudi Arabia right now has a demand for skilled labour unlike before. Before, Saudi Arabia required a handful of skilled labour which they met through their various visa schemes such as 'golden visa' or 'free visa'. But now, under the Vision 2030, with evolving demand of labour, they require skilled labour, and skilled workers are not willing to work under Kafala. So, by abolishing Kafala, the Saudi government will also meet their evolving labour demand.

Therefore, the abolishment is also a part of a transitional process in the Saudi labour market under Saudi Vision 2030, which perfectly matches with Hillman's approach to migration policy.

Institutions and the political economy of migration policy

The abolishment was announced by the Human Resource and Social Development (HRSD) ministry (Domestic Worker, 4 Other...). Before the reform, under the Kafala system, the jurisdiction of migrant workers was under the Interior

Ministry (Homeland Security). But the reform was adopted and jurisdiction was shifted to the HRSD ministry. Such a shift in jurisdiction also shows that, under Kafala, the orientation was to manage the migrants from a security perspective, and now the situation is changed, and the orientation is also changed, resulting in an institutional shift in the policy. This also supports the ‘Institutions and Political Economy of Migration Policy’ model of Freeman and Kessler mentioned before that sub-state institutions pursue migration policy based on their needs and motivations; in this case – to diversify the economy and achieve transformation – ministries have pursued the policy of abolishment and shifting jurisdiction.

A partial abolishment

One considerable observation is that the Kafala abolishment did not cover all of the workers; rather, it excluded domestic and farmworkers, including maids, gardeners, drivers, security guards. These categories are still working under Kafala. The reason for not including these categories also has political-economic dimensions. First of all, these categories do not have any significance in profit generation as they mostly provide service. Secondly, reforming these categories will result in increased wages and VATs, which will not be liked by most of Saudis (Allinson); and, lastly, employers do not want to lose the ultimate control over their labour at home. As a result, the abolishment is only partial. According to Begum, “This is not full abolition of the system,” (Nereim). Hence, the abolishment is only a partial one, motivated to set and advance the Vision 2030.

Conclusion

Saudi Arabia’s quest for Vision 2030 has several prerequisites and means to carry on the vision. Here, the labour reform is one of the crucial prerequisites. The abolishment of Kafala is, therefore, a part of this reform. Moreover, it is also an important shift in policy as the labour demand also shifted from unskilled to skilled. Kafala is not suitable to attract and maintain skilled foreign labour and FDIs. It is also not very suitable for industrialisation as the bindings may hamper productivity. So, the Kafala abolishment was inevitable once the Vision 2030 was planned. As a result of the abolishment, the government will be one step further in its quest for liberalisation. Apart from this, the abolishment will not only ensure meeting labour demand, but it will also bring increased tax for the government. Moreover, it will also reduce the Kafel’s hegemony. However, the exclusion of domestic workers and farmworkers from the reform means ‘partial abolishment’, not a full one. Such exclusion is also motivated to maintain the ‘unskilled labour’ who is not engaged in profit generation but, rather, provides services. So,

the abolishment is highly motivated by political-economic concerns that serve the government and the Sheikhs in the best way. Kafala is still not fully abolished, and it will be a long road to ensure the full abolishment of such inhumane practices. However, though it is a partial abolishment motivated by political-economic incentives, such a policy shift is also a milestone in Saudi Arabia's modern history.

Funding

This is an independent project. There is no funding for this study.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest regarding this study.

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Sport for Development and Peace in the United Nations: An Empirical Study on the Development of the Role of SDP in the UN in the Context of the Closure of the UNOSDP¹


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¹ An earlier version of this paper has been published as a chapter of a doctoral thesis (see Schreiner).

Abstract

In 2017, it was decided that the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) is to be closed. This qualitative study aims to analyse the reasons for the closure as well as its effects on Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) in the United Nations. Against the background of the systems theory, we conducted interviews with participants from relevant organisations. It is shown that the way the UNOSDP worked underwent a substantial change and that the new tasks as well as their fulfilment were viewed controversially. Additionally, broader changes in development policy set a new frame for SDP.

Keywords: sport for development and peace, United Nations, systems theory, United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, organisational structures

Sport na rzecz rozwoju i pokoju w Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych Empiryczne badanie poświęcone rozwojowi roli sportu na rzecz rozwoju w ONZ w kontekście zamknięcia Biura NZ ds. Sportu na rzecz Rozwoju i Pokoju

Abstrakt

W 2017 r. podjęto decyzję o zamknięciu Biura Narodów Zjednoczonych ds. Sportu na rzecz Rozwoju i Pokoju (UNOSDP). Niniejsze badanie jakościowe ma na celu przeanalizowanie przyczyn zamknięcia, a także jego wpływu na rolę sportu w aspekcie rozwoju i pokoju w Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych. Opierając się na teorii systemów, przeprowadziliśmy wywiady z uczestnikami z odpowiednich organizacji. Wykazano, że Biuro NZ

ds. Sportu na rzecz Rozwoju i Pokoju zmieniło tryb pracy, a nowo wyznaczone zadania, jak również ich realizacja, wzbudzały kontrowersje. Ponadto, szerzej zakrojone zmiany w polityce rozwojowej wytyczyły nowe ramy dla krzewienia idei sportu na rzecz rozwoju i pokoju.

Słowa kluczowe: sport na rzecz rozwoju i pokoju, Organizacja Narodów Zjednoczonych, teoria systemów, Biuro ONZ ds. Sportu na rzecz Rozwoju i Pokoju, struktury organizacyjne

Introduction

For almost 20 years, sport has increasingly been used as an instrument in international development policy projects (Kidd; Peachey *et al.*; Svensson and Levine; Lindsey and Grattan; for a comprehensive and detailed insight into the use of sport for development and peace, see Collison *et al.*). Projects of this kind pursue developmental goals such as furthering peace, gender equality, and health improvement (Giulianotti; Sherry *et al.*; Schulenkorf and Spaaij; Schulenkorf, Sugden, and Burdsey), and SDP projects have been implemented in different contexts and countries (see, for example, Tinaz and Knott for case studies from emerging countries and for thoughts on how sport and a country's development are related). In 2001, Kofi Annan, the then Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), appointed the first special advisor on the topic of "Sport for Development and Peace" (SDP) in the UN and, in order to support him, inaugurated the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP). The purpose of these measures was to assist government organisations and other stakeholders in taking advantage of sport as an instrument of development policy and overseeing its deployment as well as establishing relevant partnerships and monitoring and accompanying global policy developments (UNOSDP). In May 2017, the newly appointed UN Secretary-General António Guterres decided to close the UNOSDP.

The consequences of this closure for SDP in the UN are not clear at the moment, nor is it possible to judge the extent to which this development may be interpreted as a sharp weakening of the use of sport as a development instrument at the UN. The present study, therefore, examines the question of how the role and relevance of SDP has developed in the wake of the closure of the UNOSDP. For this, a qualitative interview study is conducted to analyse the reasons based on which the decision for the closure was made as well as the effects of the closure on SDP within the UN.

SDP in the context of the UN

The state of research reveals that sport was anchored in the UN development policy during the late 1990s (Coalter 301), with the SDP section being formally recognised approximately fifteen years ago (Collison *et al.*, *Sport for Social Change and Development: Sustaining Transnational Partnerships and Adapting International Curriculums to Local Contexts in Rwanda* 1689). In 2001, a Special Advisor was appointed for this area by the UN Secretary-General, and the UNOSDP was established to support his work. The position of Special Advisor was first entrusted to Adolf Ogi, who was succeeded by Wilfried Lemke in 2008 (*Secretary-General appoints Wilfried Lemke of Germany as special adviser on sport for development and peace*, UN). The duties of the Special Advisor included not only international advocacy and representation, but also facilitation (UNOSDP 7). Presently, SDP is employed by a variety of UN agencies: the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In addition, sport is explicitly referred to in UN Resolution 70/1 (UN General Assembly).

In the wake of growing doubts about the effectiveness and usefulness of many traditional development policy activities, sport above all was discovered as a new and innovative instrument (Levermore and Beacom 125; Beutler). Coalter draws the conclusion that the “dramatic increase in interest [in sport as a development tool, authors’ note] reflects broader changes in the aid paradigm, reflecting perceived failures of top-down economic aid and increased concern with issues of human and social capital, as well as the strengthening of civil society organisations” (295). Especially in respect of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UN appeared to put increasing trust in sport since sport seemed to offer a broad range of solutions for various development policy problems (Coalter 295) and was “considered [by the UN] as a ‘low-cost, high-impact’ tool to help achieve development goals” (Beutler 361).

However, some problems arose in connection with the UN and the UNOSDP: Kidd argues that the UN provided a great deal of symbolical and rhetorical support for the SDP sector, including wide-ranging information about SDP. Yet, they largely relied on other stakeholders for staff and resources when executing tasks, such as implementing SDP projects. Furthermore, Bardocz-Bencsik and Doczi, who analysed the SDP field using Bourdieu’s field theory, describe the UNOSDP as having undoubtedly become an important stakeholder in the SDP field and as being provided with institutionalised forms of symbolic capital. Even though the closure of the UNOSDP was not the specific focus of their study and, consequently, was not systematically examined, Bardocz-Bencsik and Doczi infer that “a reason for

the closure might ... [have been] that the UNOSDP's influence on decision-making processes and strategic leadership in the field was unclear" (7). If this is true and the UNOSDP had too little influence on decision-making processes, and if its leadership role had not been fulfilled sufficiently, this would mean that the UNOSDP had not accomplished its tasks.

On the whole, then, it is clear that the use of sport in development policy has been closely connected with changing paradigms of aid in international development policy (Coalter; Beutler; Levermore and Beacom). At the same time, both structural and conceptual problems associated with the endeavours of the UNOSDP emerged. What has not been taken into sufficient consideration in the previous research is the development of the role of sport in the UN, particularly against the backdrop of the closure of the UNOSDP. Thus far, there has been a lack of empirical analysis of how the role and relevance of SDP developed within the UN as well as the reasons for closing such an important organisation for the SDP sector. Thus, it remains unclear whether the closure of the UNOSDP has to be seen as a symptom of a broader change in the role of SDP in the UN.

Theoretical background

The development of the role of SDP and the reasons for the closure are analysed using an approach based on Niklas Luhmann's organisational sociology and systems theory. This makes it possible to explain how organisations are constituted and how such structural changes may be induced. By applying related organisational sociological concepts proposed by Thiel as well as Köhl, it is possible then not only to observe organisational changes but also to reconstruct the reasons behind wide-ranging structural decisions, such as those surrounding the closure of the UNOSDP.

From the systems theory perspective, organisations are construed as systems which operate on the basis of decision-making (Luhmann 245). Against this background, the UN is seen as a decision-making body whose primary purpose is oriented towards furthering world peace and whose essential organisational structures are bound to this purpose anchored in the UN Charter. Decisions on decisions are considered here to be organisational structures (Luhmann, *Die Politik der Gesellschaft*). The analysis of organisations with a focus on decisions is increasingly being applied in research on sports organisations (Thiel and Tangen; Wagner, Storm, and Hoberman; Thiel and Mayer).

According to Köhl, such structural changes of organisations may be viewed, in quite general terms, from a formal side, an informal side, and a presentation side. Here, the formal side comprises the fixed and formally anchored structures of an organisation and its conditions of membership. In the UN, such formally established structures are to be seen, for example, in the hierarchical position of

the office of the Secretary-General or the Special Advisor for Sport and Development. Discernible on the informal side are expectations “which are not (or cannot be) formulated with reference to membership status” (Kühl 115). Among such informal expectations, for example, personal agreements between the Special Advisor and the Secretary-General, which bypass the official channels normally used, are to be found. To a certain extent, the presentation side displays an image of the organisation that is shown to the outside but which does not necessarily reflect fully the actual processes taking place inside the organisation (Kühl 137ff).

Structural changes may be observed at three different levels: the normative, strategic, and operative (Thiel 57). At the normative level, changes become visible in the fundamental values and long-term objectives of the organisation, such as those formulated in the UN Charter. The strategic level comprises more concrete objectives, such as the ways in which overarching goals are to be implemented in the medium term. The operative level consists of detailed, short-term implementation plans and programmes to be put into operation in order to achieve the envisaged goals (Thiel; Thiel, Seiberth, and Mayer). Accordingly, structural changes regarding the use of SDP within the UN framework can be found, in principle, at all three levels.

By which means, then, can far-reaching structural changes be triggered in an organisation? Social systems, and thus also organisational systems such as the UN, are autopoietic, self-referential, and operatively closed (Luhmann, *Soziale Systeme* 58ff). Internal system processes can, therefore, only be directly influenced when relevant influences from the environment are processed and incorporated into the existing organisational structures. However, organisations need to ensure their resources and legitimacy; with an insufficient inflow of resources and a lack of legitimacy, organisations may endanger their chances of survival (Walgenbach; Borggreffe, Cachay, and Riedl). With regard to the UNOSDP, then, the question arises as to the expectations that various governmental organisations or NGOs had from the UNOSDP and the extent to which its continued existence was secured by their payments.

Based on these considerations, the general research question is answered using three sub-questions:

1. How did the role and use of SDP within the UNOSDP develop from the UNOSDP's founding to its closure at the normative, strategic, and operative levels?
2. What reasons can be identified for the decision to close the UNOSDP on the formal, informal, and presentation sides, and how did the factors of “legitimacy” and “resource inflow” particularly influence this decision?
3. How can the use of SDP in the UN be characterised today and what effect did the UNOSDP's closure have on the use?

Methods

To answer these questions, we implemented a qualitative research design. Between October 2018 and July 2019, we conducted 13 guided interviews (Gläser und Laudel) with representatives of a national government organisation, a state-funded implementation organisation, an international sports federation, and two regional sports federations along with five former staff members of the UNOSDP (including two former Special Advisors on Sport for Development and Peace) and two staff members of two UN agencies. Two of the interviewees (each a former/present staff member of two of the surveyed organisations) were, thus, able to report from the perspectives of the organisations they worked for. The literal transcribed interviews were analysed by means of qualitative content analysis based on Mayring, with adjustments proposed by Gläser and Laudel and with the help of the MaxQDA software.

Results

The development of the role of SDP from the creation of the UNOSDP to its closure

When the first Special Advisor on SPD was appointed at the UN in 2001, he laid the foundations both for his work and that of the UNOSDP. As reported by one of our interview partners (IP), the then Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, believed that in order to achieve the objectives of the MDGs, there was a need for the involvement of politicians, economic leaders, and scientists as well as religious and spiritual leaders (UA-1-13, 212ff).

And at the end of 2000 he realised: ‘There is a link missing in the chain. And this link is the world of sport and that means young people. The young people of today’, he said ‘are the leaders of tomorrow. In all areas of politics, in finance and industry, in sciences, in religion, in journalism, in sport, everywhere. And we need this additional link youth and sport’ (UA-1-13, 220ff).

Accordingly, at the normative level, the UNOSDP was founded for the purpose of catching young peoples’ interest and promoting this idea externally as well as internally, meaning in the UN itself (UA-1-13, 610ff).

A key role in achieving this overriding purpose was played at the strategic level by UN Resolution 58/5: “Sport as a means of furthering education, health, development and peace”. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2003, it seemed from the very start to be indispensable to the then Special Advisor and, in retrospect, “the decisive

breakthrough” (UA-1-13, 1123). As a strategic objective of this resolution, IP13 stated the following: “That sport is given a foundation within the UN, and I can point to this foundation and say, ‘It is now accredited by the UN General Assembly, and now you [the person addressed in conversation, authors’ note] must accept it” (UA-1-13, 388ff). Resolution 58/5 should, thus, convince the UN member states as well as form the basis for the use of SDP.

Especially with the appointment of the second Special Advisor in 2008, changes of emphasis were made in the use of SDP and the work of the UNOSDP. The main objectives at the normative level were now focused, above all, on promoting youth and especially furthering sport-for-all and disabled sport in the struggle for development and peace in the world (UA-1-8, 813ff). Additionally, cooperation between the UN and large sports organisations was to be intensified.

At the strategic level, these objectives were mainly put into effect with the so-called “Youth Leadership Camp”, which was planned for young, disadvantaged people (UA-1-8, 165ff). In this project, people came together in order “to support deserving young community workers with basic education levels and limited resources, by providing them with access to theoretical and practical training on how sport can be better used to effect positive change in their communities” (Third UNOSDP Youth Leadership Camp (YLC), Sportanddev.org). Additionally, the UNOSDP tried to function as a multiplier by bundling the differing approaches and areas of focus of all stakeholders of the SDP sector (e.g. national government organisations or sports organisations) in programmes within the UNOSDP (UA-1-8, 1459). The intention was to form a mutual alliance of institutions which would work together, although they had different core concerns and strategies. and whose cooperation, it was hoped, would generate certain synergies in order to achieve development policy goals.

In general, both special advisors had close ties with the Secretary-General in office and could count on his support. However, both Special Advisors on SDP implemented different strategies and set different priorities.

Reasons for the decision to close the UNOSDP

Different reasons to close the UNOSDP can be identified on the formal, informal, and presentation sides. While on the presentation side, especially a new cooperation with the IOC was named as such, the formal and informal sides reveal various additional reasons. From this point of view, the most important aspects for the closure can be found in processes of delegitimisation of the role of the UNOSDP as well as in the strategy pursued until then with SDP. No evidence showing that the lack of resource inflow was a direct reason for the closure can be found.

The closure of the UNOSDP was officially announced for 30 April, 2017. The office of the spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General stated the following in its notification of the UNOSDP's closure:

The Secretary-General has agreed with the President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, to establish a direct partnership between the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee.

Accordingly, it was decided to close the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), effective 30 April 2017 (Office of the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General).

However, a closer look at the formal and informal sides of the organisation reveals several discrepancies concerning the account given on the representation side.

On the informal side, from the time when the second Special Advisor left the office until the decision to close the UNOSDP was announced, there was uncertainty for the staff of UNOSDP as to how the office would be further managed, "i.e. no one really knew anything" (UA-1-8, 945). One UN official reported that he "assumed from conversations that the IOC was, in principle, to take over the activities of the UNOSDP to some extent" (UA-1-8, 1032ff). IP₃, himself an official of a UN agency, also stated that the IOC "[had] partly officially, partly unofficially, explicitly and implicitly taken on the function of the former UNOSDP" (UA-2-3, 140ff).

On the formal side, however, it can be seen that the vacant post of Special Advisor was not going to be filled again initially, and subsequently that "the Secretary-General decided not to appoint him or her and, following the decision, he decided to close the Office of Sport for Development" (UA-3-5, 22f). In this regard, our IPs reported that the new direct partnership between the IOC and the UN had never existed in this form. According to them, the IOC had worked together with the UN and various UN agencies for quite some time (SF-2-12, 461ff). However, since May 2017, the cooperation between the IOC and the UN has continued under a new paradigm and less in the context of a completely new partnership according to a staff member of a sports organisation (SF-2-12, 140ff).

On the whole, then, it is apparent that the formal and the representation sides of the UN differ when it comes to explaining the closure of the UNOSDP. In fact, the reasons for the closure of the UNOSDP seem to be found in missing legitimacy, firstly, of the UNOSDP and, secondly, of the strategy pursued with SDP until then.

First, the failing legitimacy of the UNOSP that it once had was visible in two ways: on the one hand, the new Secretary-General appeared to have a strong will to reform the UN. According to IP₁₂, this agenda for reform was also reflected in the decision to close the UNOSDP (SF-2-12, 358ff). Thus, in the opinion of our IPs, the new Secretary-General did not seem to accord any great degree of legitimacy to the UNOSDP. On the other hand, it was not only the Secretary-General but

also many staff members at the UN and its agencies who seemed to have doubts about the legitimacy and relevance of SDP and the UNOSDP. A number of IPs remarked that the role of the UNOSDP, its work, and peoples' interactions with it were considered controversial at times. IP1, for example, said that on account of its constitution, it was a "somewhat unorthodox organisation ... which then perhaps also ...[came] up with some innovative ideas which, at first ... [were] quite difficult to put into context" (GO-1-1, 968ff) and which, as a result of their design, required a large amount of effort to be put into them. Several IPs, thus, regarded the work of the UNOSDP and the way it was carried out quite sceptically in some phases.

Second, several UN officials saw the necessity for new strategic approaches in the area of SDP on account of changed (political) conditions. According to IP5, a staff member of a UN agency, the UNOSDP enabled a bilateral approach as well as an "administrative approach" (UA-3-5, 214) through which, for example, a distinct partner was available for sports organisations whom they could ask for support and certain services (UA-3-5, 207f). IP5 assumed, however, that it was an approach that had once met the requirements of the times but was now outdated (UA-3-5, 615ff). Hence, a "different approach" (UA-3-5, 510) was needed as well as "flexible arrangements which will respond to the ... needs of the people out there" (UA-3-5, 36f).

The need for a new approach was largely justified with reference to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in effect since 2016 as a new global agenda of development objectives:

MDGs were only eight; they were not so holistically articulated; they were covering only part of the global agenda. Today, we have a more global agenda, [which] is more articulated [and] is more interactive; it brings more constituency and partners together. It is no longer a UN-driven agenda, but it is driven by the actors and on the work. And it is no longer a north-south agenda; it is a global agenda. So, we are part of a new movement then, part of a new situation globally that will affect us and perhaps asks to be more creative in the way it addresses some of the issues (UA-3-5, 99ff).

Accordingly, the SDGs required new, creative, and multi-stakeholder approaches. The old SDP approach was not able to fulfil the new needs of the SDGs and, in the view of those involved, overlooked a number of issues that had become quite significant in the meantime, such as human rights (see e.g. UA-3-5, 615ff). There was a need, therefore, for new perspectives and new approaches (UA-3-5, 438).

In summary, the interviews show that the formal decision to close the UNOSDP is accompanied by attributed processes of delegitimisation and an ascribed failure of the strategy at that time to adapt to changing global parameters in development policy. From this point of view, it can be said that changing global parameters in development policy required a different approach, for which the UNOSDP was not needed or helpful.

Today's role and the relevance of SDP in the UN – sport as a fragile but important strategic instrument

The closure of the UNOSDP had different consequences for the use of SDP in the UN. Regarding the use of SDP, it becomes apparent that it is not of great strategic importance in the UN as a whole. Moreover, SDP is partly trivialised. The closure initially left many questions and a vacuum. However, some influential organisations within the UN still support and advocate the use of SDP.

At the strategic level, it becomes apparent that compared with other instruments, SDP generally plays “no great role” (UA-2-3, 44) as a developmental tool for (or rather within) the UN. During the interviews, the following was described:

Everything [is] more important than sport—almost everything. First and foremost, there are humanitarian obligations. When human beings are at stake, there's no demand for sport. What is important here is water supply, energy supply, hunger, migration, education, technology. All this comes first, and then sport comes afterwards (UA-2-3, 21ff).

Thus, sport only comes into play when everything necessary for survival (e.g. water and energy) is provided. Until all these things are made accessible and available, sport takes a back seat and is considered to be of no great relevance. In this regard, sport is called a “fragile issue” (UA-1-10, 1131).

This minor strategic role is also evident with regard to the inclusion of sport in the Agenda 2030. According to IP12, a sports organisation official, sport was initially not even mentioned in the zero draft of the Agenda 2030, for example as a tool or means with regard to the topic of health, to which sport could contribute. Consequently, the mention of sport in Agenda 2030, which was much celebrated in the sports world, was never planned when the zero draft was written, and it was only taken up after the intervention of the Group of Friends (SF-2-12, 259ff). This means that the naming of sport in Agenda 2030 only came about retrospectively through this intervention and was originally not planned at all.

Although sport is mentioned in § 37 of Agenda 2030, no specific reference to it is made in the SDGs. For IP12, it was very disappointing from a sporting perspective that sport is only one article among many others and not a component of a catalogue of objectives or a component of the means to achieve the objectives. In his opinion, it would be necessary to name sport in the objectives or as one of the instruments to be employed for it to be given its undisputed recognition as a development policy instrument that can effectively bring about change.

In accordance with this, a former UNOSDP official said: “Perhaps with other development policy topics, there would have been greater reservations about closing something down, or there might have been a greater interest for national governments to become involved” (UA-1-10, 1136ff). Hence, the closure of the UNOSDP today is

taken as a sign that in the view of some of those engaged in development policy, sport is a dispensable instrument of little strategic value.

At the operative level, this subordinate role is first seen in the scarcity of financial resources when compared with governance, agriculture, or climate agendas (GO-2-6, 776ff). Especially the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), which is officially responsible for sport at the UN since the UNOSDP's closure, was described to be inadequately equipped financially: "UN DESA doesn't have the means. UN DESA would be the normal place to coordinate the whole United Nations system. Sport simply doesn't play any great role; there's no re-investment" (UA-2-3, 307ff). Thus, our IPs described that the member organisations provide too little funding to allow SDP to become a priority (UA-2-3, 315ff). This is particularly evident, according to a UN agency official, in the talks which took place in the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS)²; not a single member was willing to make the suggestions discussed workable through better funding (UA-2-3, 321ff).

Second, the closure of the UNOSDP seemed to be an obstacle to the growing significance of SDP. The closure of the UNOSDP caused a vacuum and, in some way, a gap (SF-2-12, 109), especially with regard to the essential element of coordination. Surprisingly, a staff member of a sports organisation remarked that even the IOC, which is often assumed – in the SDP field in general as well as by some of our interviewees – to have taken over the role of the UNOSDP, is still looking for a leader in the field of SDP (SF-2-12, 317f). This assumption may also be based on the announcement of the Office of the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, which directly links the closure of the UNOSDP to the partnership between the UN and the IOC (Office of the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General). Following one of our interview partners, there was simply nobody at the moment that could have replaced the UNOSDP; furthermore, this area now strongly bore the imprint of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the IOC, and a number of other actors who were furthering the use of SDP. The interviewee concluded that many SDP stakeholders changed their approaches due to the UNOSDP's closure and the resulting space (SF-2-12, 329).

Nevertheless, although the strategic value of SDP appears to have little significance to the UN as a whole, there are specific UN agencies which support and forge ahead with the use of SDP and for which SDP is, accordingly, an important tool. Here, UNESCO, ILO, and the Group of Friends are especially active. This is scarcely surprising in the case of the first of these agencies, since UNESCO was already active in promoting sport as early as the 1970s (UA-1-10, 741ff) and continues to play a leading role in the International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS) as well as CIGEPS (UA-3-5, 69ff). These

² "CIPEGS is comprised of expert representatives in the field of physical education and sport from 18 UNESCO Member States, each elected for a four-year term" (UNESCO).

are currently undergoing great change and, thus, reacting to new developments. A UN official emphasised that since the closure of the UNOSDP, “the issue of Sport for Development has clearly found its way into UNESCO’s political programming” (UA-1-10, 848f). A similar tendency is to be observed at the UN member state level, since according to IP3, “more and more member states are discovering that sport can be very useful in a number of missions which have to do with more important development priorities” (UA-2-3, 38ff).

To sum up, a contrary trend can be observed: on the one hand, SDP has little strategic relevance at the UN level; on the other hand, some organisations for which SDP is an important developmental instrument are pushing the use of SDP.

Discussion and conclusion

The present study examined the question of how the role and relevance of SDP has developed in the wake of the closure of the UNOSDP. With the decision to close the UNOSDP in 2017, SDP lost an important stakeholder (Bardocz-Bencsik and Doczi) and a central point of coordination at the UN. Although the so-called Kazan Action Plan functions as a kind of strategic guideline, it is expected that those who (wish to) use sport must themselves seek an exchange with others and organise the work on their own.

Considering the reasons behind the decision to close the UNOSDP, it can be seen that the interviewees regarded the UNOSDP in general as an important player in the SDP field, but viewed its tasks as well as their accomplishment controversially. This is consistent with the observations of Bardocz-Bencsik and Doczi, who stated that the UNOSDP’s (strategic) role remained unclear. Beyond this, we were able to identify another cause of the UNOSDP’s closure: the UNOSDP and the strategy pursued until then with SDP had run into legitimacy-related difficulties. Thus, “broader changes in the aid paradigm” (Coalter 295) led, in this case as well, to a break-up of the established structures of SDP at the UN. Thus, it seems that it was not so much a specific dissatisfaction with individual projects that was the reason for the closure of the UNOSDP. However, further work is needed to find out to what extent members of the UN and other governmental organisations are at all familiar with the results (and related criticism) achieved by SDP projects and, based on this, what relevance they attribute to SDP in international development policy. Considering the organisational changes divided into the formal, informal, and representation sides of the organisation (Kühl), one can see that the changes in the formal structure (the closure of the UNOSDP) did not correspond to those on the representation side. On the informal side, the decision to close the UNOSDP led to great uncertainty. A number of developments on the formal and representation sides even seemed to contradict one another, not only with regard to the reasons for

the closure of the UNOSDP, but also with regard to the partnership with and the role of the IOC. Although the “direct partnership” (*Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*, UN) with the IOC was referred to on the representation side in the course of closing the UNOSDP, no reference was made to the concrete terms of this partnership on the formal side.

Caution is advised if the UN cooperates even more intensively with large sports organisations, such as the IOC, or even transfers tasks. There needs to be a clear demarcation from the IOC in terms of the tasks and responsibilities to be fulfilled, but also in terms of the services to be provided in the partnership. In the political system, the UN has a completely different status and higher recognition than the IOC has. The UN should be aware that “national governmental and intergovernmental organisations are key players in ‘universalising’ SDP work and in shaping the sector’s principal policy focus on meeting fundamental needs and targeting MDGs” (Giulianotti 769) and the SDGs, respectively. In other words, as desirable and positive as a strong involvement of NGOs or large sports organisations, such as FIFA or the IOC, may be seen, the UN must not neglect its role as a ‘policy guard’, much less hand it over to other (sports) organisations. While this may simplify UN structures in individual cases, it will damage the UN’s role in the long run. At the same time, careful consideration must be given to which (sports) organisations are to be cooperated with, so that, for example, not only large organisations are linked and thus gain influence (Lindsey). Hence, further research should keep an eye on partnerships between the UN and large sports organisations (see, e.g., van Luijk) in order to find out, for instance, to what extent negative criticism about mega sports events can affect the cooperations.

Although the extensive and detailed interviews with important decision-makers proved to be fruitful for answering our questions, one could argue that a limitation of our study is the lack of interview material from the two (former) UN Secretary-Generals and IOC Presidents, who might have provided alternative perspectives on the decision to close the UNOSDP. Against the background of the danger that only the communication of the organisational presentation side would be repeated, we chose to interview the employees who were likely to have a lesser interest in specifically serving the representations of the organisation’s presentation side. As all of our interviewees are closely associated with the use of SDP, this might have implicitly contributed to the fact that the significance of SDP appeared in a more positive light than it would have in the case of other actors with no sporting connections.

Further studies on sport’s relevance in development policy should include the relevant work of additional UN organs and agencies such as UNDP, ILO, UNICEF, WHO, and UNESCO in order to gain more insights into how SDP is used and for which objectives. In this respect, a closer look should be taken especially at the Kazan Action Plan and the WHO’s Global Action Plan on Physical Education.

SDP practitioners should note that the role and capability of SDP seems not to be accepted by all stakeholders in development policy. The UNOSDP no longer exists to do persuasion work, so it is up to the SDP field and participating organisations to build consensus on what SDP can and should contribute to development policy, and what it cannot. Moreover, this needs to be made transparent.

Ethical approval

The study was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of the Bielefeld University.

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Europe 2020: The EU Commission and Political Entrepreneurship

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Abstract

This study deals with the European Commission and Communication Europe 2020, which was a result of the global economic crisis of 2007–2008 and forward. Europe 2020 was an initiative to deal with the crisis by promoting smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. The Commission addressed the crisis as an existential threat to Europe, but also as a window of opportunity to build a new prosperous region. This study explores the political entrepreneurial efforts taken by the Commission as well as assesses the outcome of reforms implemented. The Commission has achieved many targets, although some challenges remain unsolved.

Keywords: European Commission, political entrepreneur, Europe 2020, economic crisis, window of opportunity

Strategia „Europa 2020” – Komisja Europejska a przedsiębiorczość polityczna

Abstrakt

W niniejszym opracowaniu omówiono założenia Komisji Europejskiej i strategii „Europa 2020”, powstałej w odpowiedzi na globalny kryzys gospodarczy w latach 2007–2008 i kolejnych. Strategia „Europa 2020” była inicjatywą mającą na celu walkę z kryzysem poprzez propagowanie inteligentnego i zrównoważonego rozwoju sprzyjającego integracji społecznej. Komisja oceniła kryzys jako egzystencjalne zagrożenie dla Europy, lecz również jako szansę na stworzenie nowego, dobrze prosperującego regionu. W niniejszym opracowaniu omówiono wysiłki podejmowane przez Komisję w zakresie przedsiębiorczości politycznej i oceniono wyniki wdrożonych reform. Komisji udało się osiągnąć wiele z wytyczonych celów, choć należy podjąć nadal nierozwiązane wyzwania.

Słowa kluczowe: Komisja Europejska, przedsiębiorca polityczny, Europa 2020, kryzys gospodarczy, szansa

Introduction

In 2007–2008, the European Union (EU) faced a global economic crisis. The crisis was the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. It began in the United States (USA) with increased indebtedness among homeowners and overvalued house prices, leading to structural crisis in the US banking sector. It hit hard on the European Union (EU), with member-states with stock markets dropped, house markets destabilised, unemployment rates increased, and economic growth declined. Another serious challenge was the exposed deficiencies in the institutional structures of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Some EU member states had capability to mitigate the economic recession, while others saw serious challenges to real estate, construction, and service sectors, social stress in homelessness and limitations of welfare benefits, expanding poverty, and social exclusion. The economic crisis had also severe political consequences in polarisation, disintegration, nationalism, protectionism, and popular scepticism towards the EU.

In 2010, the European Commission declared how the crisis was unique in post-war economic history and presented the Communication *Europe 2020*

– *A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*. The Commission urged EU institutions, member states, regional and local authorities, and the private sector to deal with the economic crisis through smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. The Commission referred to *smart growth* as promoting an economy based on knowledge and innovation, *sustainable growth* as economic growth based on resource efficiency and a greener economy, and *inclusive growth* as growth that provides for social integration (European Commission). The European crisis could serve as a window of opportunity (Cross) if the EU engaged new, bold, and innovative politics by showing political entrepreneurship (Karlsson, Silander). Although it is very hard to identify ‘cause-and-effect’ when studying the Europe 2020 strategy and the impact on the socioeconomic crisis, this study highlights the role taken by the European Commission to address the European crisis of 2008 and forward.

This study explores the possible role of the European Commission as political entrepreneur in the Europe 2020 strategy. In 2010, the Commission portrayed the economic crisis as a serious challenge as well as a window of opportunity to transform Europe’s social and economic model. Crises have historically played an important role for understanding the European integration. One of the founding fathers of European integration, Jean Monnet, once stated that he believed that “Europe would be built through crises, and that it would be the sum of their solutions” (Monnet 417). This study explores the Commission’s role on the economic crisis by asking three questions:

1. What were the main objectives of the European Agenda 2020 strategy?
2. In what ways (if any) did the Commission act as a political entrepreneur to mitigate the crisis?; and
3. To what extent did the Commission succeed in dealing with the crisis through the Europe 2020?

By exploring Europe 2020 and using statistics from Eurostat on five thematic areas, in climate change and energy, employment, education, poverty and social exclusion, and research and development, this study explores the role of the Commission to guide European politics in times of crisis. This introduction is followed by a short presentation of previous research on entrepreneurship and conceptualises in such context political entrepreneurship. The third section explores the nature of Europe 2020 and the next section analyses the impact of Europe 2020. The final section concludes the main contributions of the study.

Entrepreneurship and political entrepreneurship

There is a long tradition of scholarly work on entrepreneurship for economic and social growth (see Table 1.1). Studies on economics have explored entrepreneurs as important risk-takers and innovators, and entrepreneurship as essential for

growth and prosperity (Schumpeter; Carroll). Over the last decades, research on entrepreneurship has, however, become multidisciplinary, with new approaches from behaviour science, sociology, and anthropology, stressing new forms of entrepreneurship beyond the economic sector. Today, studies on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs refer to both business as well as public sector. Studies have explored public entrepreneurs (Osborne, Plastrik; Baumol) as innovative and creative actors within municipalities and public corporations who seek innovations in the public sector practice. Studies have also explored *social entrepreneurs* as innovative and goal-oriented people with the objective to promote the common social good within cooperative associations, interest organisations, and popular movements (Brickerhoff). In addition, studies on *policy entrepreneurs* have, on the one hand, focused on actors outside formal political institutions with the ambition to initiate new ideas into the public institutions and, on the other hand, on politicians seeking to launch alternative policy solutions (Kingdon). Finally, studies have also discussed the role of *bureaucratic entrepreneurs* in public servants, with authority to form policy processes by initiation and implementation (Carroll).

The multidisciplinary approach to entrepreneurship has also more lately included *political entrepreneurs* (Sheingate; Dahl). Originally, a political entrepreneur was about political-motivated citizens aiming to influence policymaking by seeking capacity and ability to promote collective benefits to the many and/or seeking individual profit politically. The main objective for a political entrepreneur could be to provide goods and services to citizens, to receive campaign contributions and political support (for elected politicians), and for public servants to increase political and administrative influence. The notion of political entrepreneur came from Robert Dahl, who saw resourceful politicians promoting the common good and/or individual political gains (Dahl 25, 223–227).

In this study, the political entrepreneur (and political entrepreneurship) is about the public sector of public actors and structures (politicians, public servants, bureaucrats, institutions) with the objective to create and shape favourable conditions for entrepreneurs in the economic sector (Karlsson, Silander). Political entrepreneurship initiates, shapes, and implements favourable formal and informal institutions for economic entrepreneurial activities. Although previous research clearly stresses that there is no overall favourable single political entrepreneurial policy to economic and social growth – since individual states, micro- and macro-regions, and policy sectors have different conditions – the role of the political entrepreneur is to understand such existing conditions and initiate appropriate innovative measures to promote prosperity. Political entrepreneurship is, therefore, about understanding, challenging, and changing traditional formal and informal institutions (North; Putnam), and identify a window of opportunities for successful change. In this study, focus is on the European Commission, with individual

politicians, public servants, and bureaucrats (actors), as well as institution (structures), that seeks to promote new, innovative, and favourable formal and informal institutional conditions (North; Kingdon) for growth in times of global economic crisis.

Table 1.1. Types of entrepreneurs

Term	Common definitions
Economic/Business Entrepreneurs	Actors within the business sector acting as risk-takers, innovators, and responders to market disequilibria to seek economic gains for their companies/organisations
Social Entrepreneurs	Actors within the civil society who seek societal changes within cooperative associations, interest organisations, aid branches, and rights and liberties movements
Policy Entrepreneurs	Actors inside or outside the formal positions of government/politics who seek to introduce and implement new ideas into the public sector for development of the public good rather than for individual profits
Bureaucratic Entrepreneurship	Actors who gain power from policymakers to influence the policy process and/or the public sector by initiating a political process, setting priorities, and interpreting the implementation phase
Political Entrepreneurs – traditionally used	Actors (politicians) within the political arena, driven by the common good or individual profit from the political system, acting to receive political support, votes, campaign contributions, or improved political status
Political Entrepreneurs – applied in this study	Actors and institutions (politicians, bureaucrats, officers, and institutions) within the publicly-funded sector that with innovative approaches encourage entrepreneurship/business and where the goal is growth and employment for the common good

Source: (Silander 8).

Europe 2020 and political entrepreneurship

The European Commission is often portrayed as the driving engine of the EU, navigating in the European political system of multiple actors of EU institutions and 27 member states (Hix, Goetz). Based on the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU has a division of competences (Lisbon Treaty). First, *exclusive competences* are institutionalised in Article 3 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), setting out areas where the EU has supreme authority to legislate and adopt binding acts, and where the Commission initiates and implements laws and regulations. Second, *shared competences* are set out in Article 4, with shared authority between the EU and member states to legislate and adopt legally-binding acts. Overall, member-states are sovereign to decide and legislate in areas where the EU previously has not exercised authority or addressed intention to exercise authority. Third and finally, *supporting competences* are enshrined in Article 6 with supreme authority to the individual member state. The EU may then only act upon the role of assisting member states through coordination, but such role has included the use of 'soft' influence by the Commission in terms of benchmarking, recommendations on best practices and guidelines through the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) process. The OMC was decided on at the Lisbon meeting in 2000 and has become a compromise between the idea of safeguarding member-states' main responsibility in a policy area, but ensure the EU to influence such areas through the coordination of policies. The OMC process has left the Commission with increased influence (EUR-Lex: Distribution of Competences).

Article 17 of the Treaty declares that the Commission should promote the general interest of the Union by identifying, preparing, proposing, coordinating, managing, and implementing EU policies. It leaves the Commission in a position of a driving engine within the EU system and as a possible provider of political entrepreneurship. The Commission has authority over the implementation process and thereby is in charge of managing policies and programmes as well as conduct executive decisions on the implementation of EU legislation. It is also the role of the Commission to manage the EU budget and oversee EU spending to ensure efficiency and transparency within EU institutions and member states in relation to rights and obligations to the EU. Finally, the Commission also holds authority to guard the treaties, oversee if member states adhere to EU laws and policies, and declare warnings and/or decide on bringing member states to the European Court of Justice when member states go against Treaties. In sum, the role and authority of the European Commission within the EU system provides a position for possible political entrepreneurship.

The role of the European Commission is perhaps extra-important in times of crisis (Middelcar; Copeland, James). A crisis challenges not only individual member states and EU institutions, but also European integration. Previous research

(Cross; Rosenthal *et al.*; Middelcar; Crespy, Menz) has addressed how historical European crises, from the 1950s to the early 2000s, has been perceived as a window of opportunities for change. Such European crises have been EU member states' reluctance to include new member states and to deepen integration in certain policy areas such as the Euro, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Schengen, or asylum and migration. Studies have shown how shared European crises often resulted in common debates, negotiations, policies, and laws providing for further European integration. However, this is not to argue that European crises cannot result in distrust, disengagement, and disintegration, but European integration over the last 75 years suggests that Europe's development has embedded political entrepreneurship by treating crises as possible windows of opportunity (Cross). One of the founding fathers of European integration, Jean Monnet, once stated that he believed that "Europe would be built through crises, and that it would be the sum of their solutions" (Monnet 417).

In 2010, the Commission accordingly argued that Europe had historically faced many crossroads, but always succeeded to evolve. The global economic crisis was another immediate challenge and in 2010, after a few years of economic crisis, the European Commission presented *Europe 2020 – A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*. *Smart growth* referred to promoting new knowledge, innovation, quality education, research, and communication technologies to ensure a skilled workforce, innovative products, and services. *Sustainable growth* embedded a transformation into a greener economy based on improved resource efficiency, greener technologies, new businesses and networks, and a consumer culture that demanded resource efficiency and a greener low-carbon economy. Finally, *inclusive growth* set out the importance of higher employment rates and improved socioeconomic welfare providing for economic, social, and territorial cohesion and societal integration (European Commission 10–16).

Smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth embedded flagships.¹ These were an innovative take by the Commission. The Commission took the role as driving engine, through a broad package of flagships, in a broad range of policy areas. The Commission also took the role of monitoring other EU actors on Europe 2020 by addressing the European Council to guide and steer the EU member states and the Council of Ministers to ensure implementation at national, regional, and local levels, and the European Parliament to co-legislate with the Council of Ministers and mobilise European citizens. In addition, the Commission took the overall lead to monitor reforms taken by individual member states on how they could be successful in their specific national contexts (European Commission 26–27). Based on such flagships, the overall objectives were:

¹ 1. 'Innovation Union'; 2. 'Youth on the move'; 3. 'A digital agenda for Europe'; 4. 'Resource efficient Europe'; 5. 'An industrial policy for the globalisation era'; 6. 'An agenda for new skills and jobs'; and 7. 'European platform against poverty' (European Commission 3–4).

- i) to reach 75% employment among people aged 20–64;
- ii) to secure 3% of the overall EU GDP invested in research and development;
- iii) to lower gas house emission levels by 20% compared to the overall European greenhouse gas emissions in the 1990s;
- iv) to increase the share of renewable energy sources in final energy consumption to 20%;
- v) to increase energy efficiency by 20%;
- vi) to reduce the drop-out rate to 10% (from 15% in 2010);
- vii) to increase the share of the population between 30–34 years old completing tertiary education to 40% (from 31% in 2010);
- viii) to reduce by 25% the number of Europeans living in scarcity by lifting at least 20 million people out of poverty (European Commission 3, 10–11).

Europe 2020 – a window of opportunity?

Since 2010, scholars have analysed the prospects for the Commission to succeed to meet the Europe 2020 objectives (Crespy, Menz; Copeland, James; Tusińska; Gros, Roth). One identified hindrance has been the fragility of the financial system and the banking sector imposing restraints on business sectors, companies and family households to access money for investments and spending. The economic crisis demanded rapid political and financial assistance to EU member-states from other EU member states, the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (European Commission 5). Another hindrance has been the low average European growth rate due to low levels of investments in research and development, limited implementation of information and communications technologies, and a weakened business environment. The third mentioned hindrance has been the complex system of EU governance, demanding collaboration and stronger cohesiveness between member states, but also within member states at local, regional, and national levels (European Commission 6).

Based on statistics provided by Eurostat, we may assess the progress made by the EU to achieve the objectives set out in Europe 2020. Table 1.2. demonstrates important objectives, including different policy areas in employment, research and development, climate change and energy, education and poverty reduction, and social inclusion.

Table 1.2. Assessment of Europe 2020 Objectives (Eurostat, a)

No.	Policy Area	Objective	Result						Target
			2008	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
1	Employment	75% of 20–64 year old to be employed	70.2	70.1	71.1	72.2	73.2	73.9	75.0
2	R&D	3% of EU GDP to be invested in R&D	1.83	2.03	2.04	2.06	2.11	3.0
3.1 3.2	Climate Change & Energy Sustainability	Greenhouse gas emissions 20% (or even 30%, if the conditions are right) lower than 1990	90.7	77.5	78.1	77.8	78.3	80.0
		20% of energy from renewables	11.3	16.2	16.7	17.0	17.5	20.0
4.1	Education	Reducing the rates of early school leaving below 10%	14.7	11.0	10.7	10.5	10.6	10.3	<10
4.2		At least 40% of 30–34-year-olds completing tertiary education	31.1	38.0	38.7	39.2	40.7	40.7	≥
5	Fighting Poverty & Social Exclusion	At least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion	116.1	117.9	116.9	111.9	111.9	96.2

Employment

Employment is an essential part for participation and citizenship within the EU. Paid employment is a cornerstone for individual empowerment, adequate living standards, social inclusion, and political participation. In 2014–2015, Eurostat conducted a mid-term review of Europe 2020. It was stated that Europe 2020 was viable and important, and had to continue to be the framework for European growth, employability, and prosperity. Focusing on increasing the employment rate in the 20–64 age group, improvements were made, but progress did not reach the 2020 target of 75% employment rate. In 2015, the employment rate increased to 70% (Eurostat b). Eurostat indicated that there was higher unemployment rate for people aged 20–29 and people aged 55–64, for citizens with limited education, and for migrants to the EU, as well as an existing gender employment gap. In addition, Eurostat also addressed major imbalances in employment rates between EU member states, with a north-south division where Greece had an employment rate of 59.2% compared to 82.6% in Sweden (Eurostat a, 24; Eurostat b, 8–9, 27, 30; Gros, Roth 32–43). In 2019, there was an increase in employment to 73.9% of the population aged 20 to 64. The figure of 2019 was the highest since 2002, but with a 1.1% remaining gap to the target of 75%. The gender gap remained, leaving women with lower unemployment rate compared to men, although the gender gap had decreased (Eurostat a). Other obstacles included a growing unemployment rate among people aged 55–64, higher unemployment rate among people born outside the EU, and, finally, a demographic change in Europe with a smaller share of working age population, supporting a greater share of older people (Eurostat a, 8).

Research and development

Research and development is also an essential area to provide for a knowledge-based, competitive, and sustainable economy. It is crucial for the promotion of new types of products and services, and for efficient use of resources. When exploring progress made on research and development (R&D), and the objective to increase gross domestic expenditure on R&D, Eurostat identified a minor increase as percentage of GDP from 2008 and forward. In 2008, R&D expenditure was 1.85% of GDP and increased to 2.03% in 2014. With the Europe 2020 stated objective of 3% of GDP, the level reached in 2014 was 0.97% below the identified objective (Eurostat b, 57). In a global comparison, the EU was significantly behind the USA, Japan, China, and South Korea regarding R&D. There were also regional variations within the EU with regions in Germany, the UK, Austria, France, Belgium, and the Nordic countries with the highest levels of spending on R&D, while much lower

in eastern and southern states such as Croatia and Romania (Gros, Roth 2012, 9–10, 14–16; Eurostat b, 59–61). In 2019, the R&D expenditure had increased slightly from 2017 going from 2.08% to 2.11%. Such limited growth remained a concern within the EU with a percentage of expenditure stagnating around 2% of GDP over the last years. The target of 3% of GDP remained in distance, requiring increased levels of combined public and private R&D investments. It has been the business enterprise sector that remained the largest performing sector on R&D with about 66% of overall expenditure, to be compared to the higher education sector on 22.1% and the government sector at 11.2% (Eurostat a, 10, 36).

Climate change and energy

The Commission has also focused on a green economy with energy efficiency to halt climate change. Estimations of 2014 on greenhouse gas emissions showed a decline in the EU by 22.1% compared to emission levels in 1990. In 2008–2009, the emission level dropped sharply by 7.2%, indicating a decline in the overall economic growth due to economic recession, but also due to a transformation into a greener European economy (Eurostat b 85). This has mostly been due to structural changes from a manufacturing-based economy to a service-oriented one, reduction in the use of coal in favour of gas, and overall reductions of emissions in all sectors except transportation and aviation (Eurostat b, 83–85). In a comparison between EU member states, Luxembourg, Denmark, Greece, Belgium, Finland, and Cyprus scored best on reduction of emission per capita between 2005 and 2015, with poor practice seen in eastern EU member states. In 2015, 16 out of 28 member states reached their national objectives (Eurostat b, 89–90). In addition, the share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption increased between 2008 and 2014 from 11% to 16% due to biofuels and renewable waste, hydropower, and wind and solar energy. All EU member states increased their levels of renewable energy, and 10 member states met their national objectives (Eurostat b, 96).

By 2018, emissions of greenhouse gases within the EU had dropped by 23.2% compared to 1990, symbolising a mission completed in reducing greenhouse emissions by 20%. Concerning the share of renewable energy, in gross final energy consumption, the EU reached 18% in 2018, leaving Europe 2% below the renewable energy target of 20%. In addition, the EU also faced the demand to reduce energy consumption of 4.4% to meet target of increasing energy efficiency by 20% (Eurostat a). At the end of the period of Europe 2020, the EU could acknowledge a decline in emissions of greenhouse gases. Another positive development was the increase of renewable energy in energy consumption reaching 17.5% in 2017, which was twice as much compared to the year 2004. However, the positive change has not been enough to meet the renewable energy target of 20% with a gap of

2.5%. Progress was also seen on renewable electricity consumption and energy consumption for heating and cooling, but falling short on meeting the overall targets of 2020; about 3.3% gap on energy consumption and 5% energy efficiency (Eurostat a, 10).

Education

Education has been an essential area of Europe 2020 in providing for a smart economy and a long-lasting social model of inclusion and participation. On education and early leavers from education and training in the 18–24 age range, Eurostat indicated in 2008 a level of 14.7% and in 2015 – 11%, consistently closing on the Europe 2020 objective of 10%. On tertiary education attainment in the 30–34 age group, Eurostat also identified a consistent increase from 2008 to 2015 from 31.1% to 38.7%, almost reaching the Europe 2020 objective of 40% (Eurostat 2017, 109). In 2016, 15 EU member states reached their national objectives and 17 states reached the EU objective of 10% (Eurostat b, 112). In 2019, progress continued with falling figures on the share of early leavers from education and training with 10.3%, coming very close to the final target of below 10%. Progress was seen on the share of 30 to 34 year-olds completing tertiary education reaching, with 41.6% in 2019, the Europe 2020 objective of 40%. In 2018, 17 member states reached the EU target of 10% on early leavers (Eurostat a, 60). At the end of Europe 2020, the EU could acknowledge a positive development in education. This is very important, since limited education has major impact on chances to enter the labour market (Eurostat b, 10).

Poverty and social exclusion

The reduction of poverty and social exclusion is important to promote individuals health, livelihood, and well-being, but also for societal equality and integration. Focusing on people at the risk of poverty and/or social exclusion, the economic crisis had a severe impact, leaving an increased number of people at risk (Gros, Roth 56–62); from 118 million people in 2010 to 124 million in 2012. After a few years of crisis, a decline left 122 million Europeans at risk in 2014. That is, however, almost one in four people in the EU and 25 million people too many to reach the Europe 2020 objective. In the Eurostat analysis of 2017, about 118.8 million people were affected, showing a decline in the number of people at risk (Eurostat b, 133). The Europe 2020 target, however, set out an ambition to decrease the number by 20 million people compared to the year 2008 (Eurostat b, 11). The risk of poverty and social exclusion embedded several related challenges in monetary poverty, material deprivation, and low work intensity. There was great variation within Europe, with

most challenges in southern and eastern member states. The most negative trend was identified in Greece, Cyprus, and Spain (Eurostat b, 136–137). People's risk of poverty and social exclusion in EU member states was higher for women, the young, less-educated people, and the unemployed. Migrants constituted another group at risk (Eurostat b, 143). At the end of Europe 2020, it is possible to see how monetary poverty is the most important type of poverty, with about 16.9% of EU citizens, 85.3 million people, living at the risk of poverty after social changes. Another type of poverty has been low work intensity, influencing 9.5%, about 35.3 million people, followed by poverty in terms of social exclusion and severe material deprivation, with 6.6% of the EU population, about 33.1 million people. The types of poverty have foremost challenged young people, people with disabilities, single households, people with low educational levels, people born outside the EU, and people living in rural areas (Eurostat a, 11, 73–75). There is still a way to go to reach the 2020 target of lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Conclusion

This study has dealt with the European Commission Communication Europe 2020, which was a direct result of the global economic crisis in 2007–2008. The aim has been to explore the role of the Commission as potential political entrepreneur to turn such crisis into a window of opportunity. There are previous studies exploring when and how the European Commission could act to promote the European good. Some studies have also identified major European crises as possible windows of opportunity for the European Commission to act beyond traditional routines and procedures to become political entrepreneurial.

The agenda-setting power of the Commission provides the potential for political entrepreneurship. The Commission addressed the economic crisis as an existential threat to European prosperity and called for major reforms on smart, sustainable, and socially-inclusive growth. It also called for European leadership of new, bold, innovative, and ambitious ideas (political entrepreneurship). First, this study theoretically develops the concept of political entrepreneurship based on decades of studies on entrepreneurship in the economics, but here focusing on how political actors may become entrepreneurial in the political sector to address serious social, economic, and potential political crisis. Second, by adding new theoretical insights to the conceptualisation of entrepreneurship, this study also shows how the European Commission initiative in the Europe 2020 strategy to large extent promoted member states to not only accept the strategy's targets, but also to be able to achieve them, but with a major challenge in not meeting the objective of increasing combined public/private investment in R&D and fighting back poverty and social exclusion. The immediate response and broad range of promoted policies

by the European Commission within the complex system of EU governance shows signs of political entrepreneurship by addressing the importance of a fundamental transformation into a smarter, more sustainable, and inclusive Europe. The role of political actors, such as the European Commission, should therefore not be underestimated and especially not so in times when EU member states are facing a serious crisis and becoming more inward-looking to solve domestic challenges.

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The interview on *Today's Ukraine* with Professor Dmytro Drozdovskyi, conducted by Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney on 28th of March, 2022

Dr. Dmytro Drozdovskyi (PhD) is an academic fellow of the Department of Foreign and Slavic Literatures of the Shevchenko Institute of literature of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; he is a managing editor-in-chief of the *VSESVIT* magazine of world literature and translations, a member of the Bulgarian branch of the EESE, a participant of the ICLA congresses, as well as the author of several academic publications in the journals from Scopus and Web of Sciences databases (2019–2021).

Ukraine is a part of me; maybe this is the most expected answer.

Nevertheless, in fact, speaking frankly, I cannot imagine my life without my country. It is a world of my friends and colleagues, of different social and academic bonds, responsibilities, goals, and expectations. My parents live in the United States, they have been staying there for a long time and they got the news about the possible war just a few weeks before this catastrophe broke up. They begged me to come to their home, but I refused. It was not possible for me even to think that I can stay in some other place when my country is in a danger because of the inadequate actions of a dictator [Putin]. When the war began, my European

friends from Poland and the UK (you know this for sure) asked me to go to the USA in order to be safe. But this is not for me. I should stay here trying to do all that I can to help my friends who are now fighting for Ukraine's freedom. And I work each day as a member of the Information Defence of Ukraine. We will not have a Victory Day if we all go abroad thinking only about our lives, which is of course natural. Mothers do need to save the lives of their children. I trust that we all need to unite our efforts here and give powerful feedback to these inadequate war actions. The dictator understands the power, that is why it was so important to unite the military forces of Ukraine with our world partners.

I do not believe in the nuclear winter, but I still consider that only with the world army we could stop the monster.

Where were you when the invasion started?

I was in the theatre "Suzirja" in Kyiv with my colleagues from that magnificent Kyiv theatre. We had the feeling that February 23rd could be a special day for the dictator who still has an intention to renew the Soviet Empire. This is a day of the Soviet army.

Speaking frankly, my friends from the government sent me the news that the war would start the following day. I did not want to share this information, only sent a message to my friend Taras Kremin, who is the State Language Protection Commissioner, from the theatre in the evening. He could take all possible actions to support the institutions that can be attacked first as they are a part of the Ukrainian linguistic identity, and for Putin the concept of the Russian language in Ukraine is very important.

Moreover, my old friend who left the country on February 23rd and after whom the sky "closed" for civilian flights in Boryspil airport also informed me about the war invasion. However, that was my conscious decision to stay in my country supporting my friends in any way I can.

How do you survive this turbulent time in Kyiv? What does a day look like over here?

I wake up at 4–5 a.m. every day. Thank you, God, for the new morning. If it is possible to sleep, of course, as sometimes we hear sirens all night long and we hear the sounds of shelling and artillery. Then it is not possible to sleep. But each morning I wake up with a feeling of gratefulness for the Forced Army of Ukraine. They made it possible to sleep. There is a block post close to my house on one of the central motorways in Kyiv Podil, so I hear everything that is around when there are attacks and counterattacks. After that, I take care of my job at the Information Defence of Ukraine and this takes up to 3 hours. Then I go to my editorial office of the international journal *Vsesvit* that I run. One person who is a concierge there works in our business centre. On behalf of the *Vsesvit* journal, Yurii Mykytenko,

my colleague, and I prepared a petition for world cultural institutions: <https://www.vsesvit-journal.com/news/zvernennya-zhurnalu-vsesvit-do-kulturnyh-instytutysij-i-perekladachiv-svitu/>, asking for support of the Ukrainian defence activities.

Our petition has been supported by many European partners, and it was highly criticised by the Russian readers on our Facebook. The discussion was hot, and some pro-Russian European agents stated that this is not human.

What did they mean by this expression “inhuman”? Is killing people by Russian soldiers and converting money from culture into weapons human?

Since our Centre concierge needs food, I feel also responsible for doing the shopping for her. After that, I sit at the computer and share the daily news with my world colleagues, trying to persuade them to think in the categories of the new world that cannot be the same as what it was before the war. This war will change the world drastically, and we will have a new political, social, and cultural reality. Unfortunately, it is not possible to work in the evening as we live in a regime that does not allow switching on lights in the nighttime. It means that I have limited access to the computer at that time.

It is important to have friends' support – just a conversation is relieving and important. It allows me to “anchor” somehow in a different reality, and these conversations filled with wholehearted support make me stronger in a psychological sense.

I also communicate with my colleagues from various Ukrainian regions and I frequently attend meetings with my friends and colleagues in Kyiv. It also helps me mentally to survive. It is important not to feel alone and lonely in such moments of crisis.

Some of my friends initially left Kyiv, but they returned only 2–3 weeks later. Contacts with other people are crucial for survival, it is so difficult to live in the city that is under incessant enemy army attacks. Each evening one has the premonition that this evening can be the last of one's life. It was so difficult to have the feeling that I would be dead, that I would not wake up and admire the world in the morning. With time I accepted this idea, and it helped me to move ahead easier.

Could you describe your days in the city? Days of an average citizen?

Here I would like to add that now we need to think of how to buy food. There was not much food at all for some days in my Podil district at the beginning of the war. The nearest bank offices closed, so I had to go to different bank offices near Saksahanskogo Street, and this usually takes time – about 2 hours going there and back. I have a time problem with the organisation of my daily routine, since I work for the Information Defence of Ukraine. I can leave home just at about 2 p.m., while the bank office works until 4 p.m. In addition, there is no transportation in the district where I live, as the underground stations operate mainly as shelters

for civilians, and they are filled with women, children, and elderly people. For example, it is not possible to enter or exit the underground at such stations as the Kontraktova Ploscha and the Maidan Nezhahezhnosti – really important stations for transportation in the city. Any average citizen worries, of course, about food and water, and that is why many people left Kyiv. I still remember the panic of the first days of the war, when the nightmare began. In fact, it is an unforgettable experience to write academic papers while hearing the rockets and bombs outside. Just this interview is being prepared at the time of the curfew in Kyiv when we are not allowed to leave our homes and we hear these awful rockets outside. People have now united all their efforts to survive. This is the most important task.

In what way are valuable historic monuments, buildings, and artefacts preserved?

We heard some horrible news in the first days of the war that Mariia Pryimachneko's pictures were destroyed. However, later we got the information that some of them were in safe places.

On March 21st, I was passing by a museum located near the Taras Shevchenko park and I saw that the museum building was surrounded by the militaries. Their duty was to guard the building with historical artefacts. On the other hand, on the way to my editorial office, walking along the Andriivskiy uzviz, I saw many historical monuments exposed to the damaging effects of the war. They are so vulnerable – they can be as easily destroyed by the rockets as the business centre in the Podil district was on March 20th.

What institutions, if any, are still in operation in Kyiv? Is it important that they fulfil their functions under the shelling of the city?

We have in operation mainly the institutions that support the basic needs of the citizens. Some supermarkets are open, while the majority of small shops are closed. Restaurants and cafes are closed, open markets are closed. A lot of pharmacies are closed, which greatly complicates the lives of people who urgently need medications. We have now about eight offices of my bank in the city open from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m. However, most banks in Kyiv are closed. The printing house where we print the *Vsesvit* journal is closed, too. Some colleagues from our office had to leave Kyiv and they are in the Ivano-Frankivsk region.

Do you hold any discussions with your colleagues from Russia about the war?

We openly presented our positions on the website (<https://www.vsesvit-journal.com/news/zvernennya-zhurnalu-vsesvit-do-kulturnyh-institutsij-i-perekladachiv-svitu/>), but decided to terminate our contacts with Russia, the country that is responsible for deaths in Ukraine. After all, people are killed not by President Putin but by Russian soldiers who are afraid of saying “No” to the dictator. We have heard one fundamental support from a Russian academic, but she has advocated such support

with Ukrainian values over decades. Some Russian readers of our petition have responded aggressively, showing that they do not share any forms of the “cancel Russian culture” motto. Maybe they are too strong for them. Consequently, we do not know what their reaction is to the deaths of innocent civilians in Ukraine each day. I still believe that Russian people could have organised a riot in the tradition of the Russian history and should attempt to terminate Putin’s dictatorship even though he has powerful weapons in his hand. After all, it was possible to eradicate successfully the Soviet regime some time ago. And Putin should be put on trial and punished as a world criminal. Russian people should stop this monster, and the deaths in Ukraine severely blemished their human integrity and morality.

Has the war produced a lot of significant symbolic moments? Which one is the most important for you and why?

I am proud of my government and my President, who behaves in a very praiseworthy way. I especially adore his speeches which he delivered at international meetings in European and American Parliaments. These speeches gave me an understanding of the new reality which we face in rebuilding Ukraine. I trust that Ukraine is changing the world, it is changing the contemporary world history. Ukraine has introduced a brand new understanding of peace and world identity. It is a great pity to see that NATO as a world-leading organisation has not agreed to close the sky above Ukraine, since the Third World War may break out at any time. This New World War started on February 24th and still may initiate a *New World* with its centre in Ukraine.

What is your attitude to the various ways of moral support that people from all over the world show to Ukraine?

I am deeply grateful to all academic institutions that sent their letters of support, among others the ESSE (the European Association of the English Studies) and its members in Bulgaria (I am a member of its ESSE branch), the University of Lodz and Professor Wicher, who wrote an inspiring letter. I am grateful to all world institutions and academics who supported the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and sent their letters of support to Prof. Zahorodnii, the President of the NAS of Ukraine Academy, and to Prof. Mykola Zhulynskiy, the head of the Shevchenko Institute of Literature, where I am employed. The international appreciation of the new concepts based on empathy, solidarity, “unity of the hearts” (as the Polish people say) is extremely important.

The fight and its intensity varies all over Ukraine. What is the difference between the reactions to the military actions in bigger towns and in villages?

I cannot answer this question as I am staying in Kyiv all the time and I see brave and courageous people here who every day are ready to meet the enemy and counterattack the invaders. My friend, an actor and the former Minister

of Culture of Ukraine, Yevhen Nyshchuk, is a good example of what I mean; every day he visits the hot spots near Kyiv, saving people's lives and defending Ukraine.

Is the response to the war of the Western world enough? Why yes or why not?

The world supports Ukraine. They support peace and human lives. Billions of euros and dollars come to Ukraine and we need much more assistance to rebuild the country after our victory. Yet, it is important to understand that Putin can be stopped only with physical power – only violent power will lead to complete victory. The sanctions are very important, and we appreciate them, but we need weapons to save our lives. A lot of lives could have been saved if on the first days of the war the NATO “birds” [planes] destroyed the Kremlin bunker. Now, Putin is blackmailing the world with the possibility of a nuclear attack. Ukrainians believe that the EU should accelerate all the bureaucratic procedures to make Ukraine a part of the EU immediately. After all, we are in this extraordinary situation. Ukraine now is saving Europe from the tyrant and Ukrainian people sacrifice their lives to save the world. The world must understand this and change its policy for Ukraine's sake. My compatriots, not only civilians but also militaries, die daily, because the sky is not closed. We are fighting against a monster, a colossal python ready to draw blood from his own soldiers, whose bodies are lying scattered all over the Ukrainian soil. And these soldiers, mainly young men, die for the wrong reason. They do not even know what they lose their lives for. And we should remember that world peace can cease in a second if the Russian bombs and rockets are dropped upon the USA or the NATO countries. It is not an exaggeration that now Ukraine is fighting for world peace. At this point, it is Ukraine that is paying with the lives of its people to stop the war. That is for the time being.

Кілька штрихів до сучасної української лірики під обстрілами

Юрій Ковалів (Yurii Kovaliv)

Several Remarks on Contemporary Ukrainian Lyrical Poetry under Fire Attacks

Abstract

In the paper, the author, referring to the real situation in the contemporary poetry during the new round of the Russian-Ukrainian war refutes the famous Cicero's saying "*Inter arma, silent Musae*" (En. "When arms speak, Muses are silent"). After February 24th, a powerful rise of the mobile genre happened due to the emergence of the psychotype of the passionate, who, nourished by historical and ethnomental memory, motivates historically-justified resistance to the Moscow aggressor, defending his home, family, land, and human and national dignity. He became the main lyrical hero of the contemporary Ukrainian poetry, among the authors of which there are many soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukrainian, Territorial Defence troops, hospitalers, volunteers, as well as exiles and eyewitnesses of the national

verge of life and death due to heroic actions and suffering. The primary importance is given to the resistive energy of the Word, which can be journalistically appealing and formulaically rhetorical. However, it is deeper and more important when it focuses on understanding the specific features of military reality, personally experienced by each author, which often acquire convincing generalisations, philosophical meditations, which in poetic form comprehend the passionate ontology of the inalienable Ukrainian people with the intention to eliminate the destructive forces of Moscow. The author states that it does not matter which verse forms are chosen – faceted quatrains or flexible verlibriums. In the paper, the author has highlighted the panorama of the contemporary Ukrainian poetry, analysing its specific genre and style features, clarifying the creative potential of the poetic word in the harsh circumstances of the war, a new thoroughly filled page of Ukrainian literature. The poetry in Ukraine in the situation of the Russian-Ukrainian war, refuting Cicero's aphorism, acquired a new paradigm of senses and expectations. Immersed in the objective specifics of everyday life at the front, suffering, trials on the border of life and death, it testified to a new psychotype of the lyrical hero, analogous to his real prototype, who, defending his home, his family, his land, and human and national dignity, is motivated to resist the Moscow aggressor. The panorama of contemporary Ukrainian lyrics in its genre and stylistic diversity highlighted in the article gives reason to assert not only the inexhaustible creative potential of the most mobile genre-genre variety, but also a thoroughly filling new page of Ukrainian literature. The lyrical poetry on war discussed in this article is a part of the new cultural narrative of Ukraine that is oriented to re-think and reinforce the concepts of war and connected with this concept notions, e.g. pain, human catastrophe, human powers, dignity, human values, democracy, etc. The new narrative models and stylistic peculiarities of the contemporary Ukrainian lyrical texts have been analysed and systematised in this paper.

Keywords: war, invasion, passionate, resistance, suffering, subject specificity, meditation, metaphor

Kilka słów o współczesnej ukraińskiej poezji lirycznej w huku wojennym

Abstrakt

Nawiązując do aktualnej sytuacji w poezji współczesnej podczas kolejnych działań wojennych pomiędzy Rosją a Ukrainą, autor obala słynne powiedzenie Cycerona „*Inter arma, silent Musae*” (łac.: Pośród szczerku broni, milczą muzy). W dobie po 24 lutego na sile przybrał gatunek mobilny ze względu na pojawienie się psychotypu zapaleńca, w którym pamięć historyczna i etniczna dają asumpt do historycznie uzasadnionego oporu wobec moskiewskiego agresora, obrony domu, rodziny, ziemi, godności ludzkiej i narodowej. Taki żarliwiec stał się głównym bohaterem lirycznym we współczesnej poezji ukraińskiej, której wielu twórców rekrutuje się spośród żołnierzy Sił Zbrojnych Ukrainy, oddziałów Obrony Terytorialnej, sanitariuszy, ochotników, a także uchodźców i naocznych świadków bohaterskich czynów i cierpień na granicy życia i śmierci, dokonywanych i doznawanych w imieniu narodu. Pierwszorzędne znaczenie przypisuje się sile oporu Słowa, które może być atrakcyjne zarówno pod względem publicystycznym, jak i retorycznym. Ten środek wyrazu zyskuje jednak na głębi i znaczeniu, jeśli zostaje zaprzęgnięty na potrzeby zrozumienia konkretnych realiów wojskowych, osobiście doświadczanych przez poszczególnych autorów. Często przybiera formę przekonujących uogólnień, filozoficznych medytacji w szacie poezji, tworzących podwaliny namiętnej ontologii niezłomnego narodu ukraińskiego, usilnie dążącego do unicestwienia niszczycielskich sił Moskwy. Autor stwierdza, że bez znaczenia jest wybór rodzaju wiersza – czy to akcentowanego czterowiersza, czy giętkiego wiersza wolnego. W artykule autor przedstawia panoramę współczesnej poezji ukraińskiej, analizując jej specyficzne cechy gatunkowe i stylistyczne, poszukując korzeni twórczego potencjału słowa poetyckiego w trudzie wojennym. Jest to nowa, choć po brzegi zapisana, strona literatury ukraińskiej. W ogniu wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej poezja ukraińska uosabia nowy paradygmat sensów i oczekiwań, obalając aforyzm Cycerona. Osadzona w obiektywnych realiach frontowej codzienności, cierpienia, zmagania na granicy życia i śmierci twórczość zaświadcza o istnieniu nowego psychotypu bohatera lirycznego, odpowiadającego swemu fizycznemu pierwowzorowi, który staje do walki w obronie domu, rodziny, ziemi, godności ludzkiej i narodowej przeciwko moskiewskiemu agresorowi. Ukazana w artykule panorama współczesnej liryki ukraińskiej w jej różnorodności gatunkowej i stylistycznej daje podstawy,

by wnioskować nie tylko o nieprzebranym potencjale twórczym najbardziej mobilnego gatunku – czy wręcz odmiany gatunkowej, lecz również o tym, że nowo wykształcony nurt literatury ukraińskiej zdążył przybrać dojrzałą formę. Omawiana w artykule wojenna poezja liryczna wpisuje się w nową narrację kulturową Ukrainy, ukierunkowaną na przewartościowanie i ugruntowanie koncepcji wojny i związanych z nią pojęć, takich jak ból, tragedia ludzka, możliwości człowieka, godność, ludzkie wartości, demokracja itp. W artykule poddano analizie i usystematyzowano nowe modele narracyjne i specyfikę stylistyczną współczesnych ukraińskich tekstów lirycznych.

Słowa kluczowe: wojna, inwazja, namiętność, opór, cierpienie, specyfika podmiotu, medytacja, metafora

МУЗИ НЕ МОВЧАТЬ

Після прильоту
музи кричать під завалами,
а їх не чуť, бо тут
немає місця поезії
(так кажуть).
Останні фото на камері —
не метафори.
Повідомлення
бездомно мовчать
крізь голос, бо як
долетіти крізь прірву,
вирву,
без голосу, без пам'яті,
без зв'язку...
Поезія
є.
Інна Гончар

Одна з аксіом Цицерона «*Inter arma silent Musae*» (лат.: серед брязкоту зброї музи мовчать) неодноразово спростовувалась українською лірикою легіонерів УСС, повстанців під час Другої світової війни, нині — під час нового витка російсько-української війни. Чимало поетів зі зброєю в руках захищають людську й національну гідність, чимало з них пережило пекло московської окупації. Їх активізація засвідчена багатьма акціями на кшталт проєктів «Поезія вільних», антологій «Поезія без укриття» тощо. Серед них в Інституті літератури ім. Тараса Шевченка НАН України відбувся літературно-мистецький форум «Музи не мовчать» (20–25 червня м. р.), а в

його складі — вечір поезії (24 червня). Вірші деяких авторів стали піснями: «Штаб» І. Астапенка (музика В. Купрієнка), «Ти біжиш» (музика Василя Живосила Лютого) Д. Луняки, «Звідки я...» Юлії Бережко-Камінської (музика В. Морозова). Акад. Р. Радишевський сам пише пісні. Сучасна лірика як наймобільніше жанрово-родове утворення миттю відгукується на динаміку життя в його трагічних зламах. Вона істотно змінилася після 24 лютого, що зафіксували у своїх віршах Олена Герасим'юк («Я ще не торкнулась паперу, а ти...»), Юля Гупалюк («до війни я могла гуляти Києвом вночі і читати вірші разом із друзями»), Світлана Дідух-Романенко («Іноді я забуваю дні народження друзів і родичів...»), Інна Ковальчук («заполоч нині доволі груба...») та ін. То був рубіж, переступивши який, українці стали іншими. Лишивши постколоніальні комплекси, живлячись джерелами пробудженої етногенетичної пам'яті, вони в російсько-українській війні, котра набула жорсткіших характеристик порівняно з попереднім періодом 2014–2022 рр., мотивовано протистоять розпаношеному московському рашизму, перейнятому наміром ліквідувати Україну, її велику культурну й етноментальну інфраструктуру, знищити людське життя, цілий світ. Лірика б'є у тривожні дзвони, сприймається неспростовним документом героїчного чину, народного болю, засудженням садизму московських завойовників, котрі «люблять убитих, / Жити не вміючи без війни» (І. Павлюк), тому «споконвічна жорстока гра» (Наталка Фурса) зазнає істотних корективів.

Резистансний спротив матеріалізується через енергію вистражданого Слова у волю повноцінної української онтології. Воно найчастіше буває закличним, формульно риторичним, однак видається важливішим тоді, коли осмислює трагедію на межі життя і смерті, в імперативах «бути» тут-і-тепер, тут-і-завжди всупереч танатосним інтенціям. І немає значення, в які віршові форми його влило — у грановані катрени чи в розкуті верлібри. Важливо, що в ньому сконцентрована шорстка конкретика воєнної дійсності, переконливіша не в закликах, а в предметній фактурі, як гостомельська кухонна шафка, котра дивом зберіглася серед руїн після немилосердних обстрілів, символізуючи Україну: «Як ти, країно-шафко, / над прірвою? Оніміла» (Тетяна Маленька). Довкілля постає таким, яким воно є, тропачна багатозначність, не втрачаючи конотативних властивостей, збагачується предметними реаліями, в яких усталені образи набувають особливої значущості, коли людська кров, здавен римована з «любов'ю», закодована в займеннику з великої літери «Вона», «витікає / із швидкістю Лети», аби «пролита за рідну землю», зробити її «іще святішою» (А. Кичинський). Тому виправдана ідеалізація воїнів, трактованих «янголами міст», котрі в предметній фактурі військових буднів «будують свої бліндажі / впрілі й задимлені, берці в землі та піску / святять у храмах лопати, рушниці й ножі», коли переходять у вічність (Ганна Клименко Синьоок). Мало

чим відрізняючись від них, Ісус Христос не може стояти осторонь від українського збройного резистансу. Воскреснувши, він, маючи неабиякий добробатський досвід, «взуває берці, / воду бере, у фляжку. / Іконка Марії за смертником. / Боекомплект, “ерпеес» і підсумок... / Шариться по кишенях і прикидає — / годний чи ні на рожки від гранат. / Бороду заспокоює-гладить і відмовляється / від налокитників, броніка панцирного — / без нього бігає з чотирнадцятого». Виразно промальований портрет Сина Божого у виконанні Ірини Зелененької зображає характерний психотип українського воїна, який поєднує в собі земні і небесні риси.

Кожна промовиста деталь воєнної дійсності (Інна Ковальчук: «Уросли протитанкові їжаки / у кульбабовий килим»), унаочнюючи сувору правду в місткій метафорі (Наталка Фурса: «В рукавичку дитячу сховався світ, / і на неї полює крилате пекло»), переконує більше, ніж віршові декларації. Замальовка з перевернутим рожевим дитячим візком, в якому крутиться оте ліве задне колесо / що завжди потрапляло в якісь ямки на тротуарі / воно крутиться і ніяк не може зупинитися» (Марія Микицей), шокує «кінематографічним» натяком на трагедію вигнання, сприймається уособленням тотального горя. Конкретика воєнних монохромних краєвидів в інтерпретації В. Клічака, прорисована шорсткою предметністю металобрухту з вороняччям, «подертих кулями беріз», втечею орків, які «заміновані лишають / В полях машини. // Так. Аби», вражає ніби індиферентним пуантом, в якому розкрита підступна психіка рашиста.

Чим далі затягується війна, тим помітніше люди призвичаюються до її буднів з патрулями й поминаннями загиблих, трагедії стають типовими, тому делікатний ліричний герой В. Клічака слушно не крає душу свого друга про втрату дружини й розтрощений будинок: «Куди тепер йому ? В які світи ? / І більше не питаю. Бо навіщо. / Дай Боже йому сили далі йти...». Всі жертви війни єднає зрозуміле без слів спільне лихо, яке переживає лірична героїня Наталі Дзюбенко-Мейс під час поховання загиблого воїна, над яким «закам'яніла мати на обочі» свіжої могили, під мелодію пісні «Пливе кача». Танатосна безодня, переконана поетка, не може поглинути життя, яке виборює хвора дівчинка в бомбосховищі «під обстрілами хижих батарей», прагне будь-що закінчити малюнок, хай потім його вихопить вітер, лишивши «згорьовану» дитину із затиснутим в руці чорним олівцем. Такі неореалістичні поезії переконливі психологічною достовірністю в будь-яких конкретних замальовках, надто при зображенні дітей. Найбільш незахищені, часто лишаючись віч-на-віч з чорним лихом, вони знаходять повноту життя, «пишуть на дошці вправи, / приклади і задачі. / Бігають на перерві, / Б'ються, але ніколи / не плачуть», навіть ще не усвідомлюють себе «обікраденими», лише вночі «просять тихенько Бога, / хай би хоча б на трішки / просто приснився // тато», якого вони вже ніколи не побачать (Ніна

Гнатюк). Тому важливе безпосереднє дитяче сприйняття цієї катастрофи, проінтерпретоване у вірші «мамо не йдімо ізнов до підвалу...» наймолодшої поетки форуму, другокурсниці Київського національного університету ім. Тараса Шевченка Дарії Гавій, яка з погляду дівчинки й братика Михасика не визнає дискомфортного, неприродного укриття: «обіцяю сидітиму наче мишка / мамо лишімося спати вдома». Ніхто не може вийти за межі всеохопної війни (Дарина Гладун: «кутаємося у покривало війни / сидимо на війнній дієті / на сніданок у нас війна / війна на обід на вечерю / війна ллеться нам із очей»), тому Ніна Ковальчук гірко іронізує: «війна і все тут! / такі тепер часи, що воен розвелось...». Виживання в її лиховісному бомбосховищі під прицілом смерті перетворюється на випробування, на актуалізацію волю до життя — попри все: «Ковдра зморшками сходить, як тридцятирічна вдова, / Замість пір'я з подушок густа проростає трава. / Проростаєш і ти у цей світ, ти повільно встаєш, / Ти набої із серця виймаєш і знов подаєш» (Юлія Шевель).

Життєва конкретика зумовлює філософічні медитації. Вони в художній формі осмислюють пасіонарну онтологію невгнутої української людини, якою вона стала після 24 лютого, відчувши в собі голос предків, усвідомлюючи священне право на самозахист, на свободу, на ліквідацію деструктивних сил московщини. Тому ліричний герой — переважно alter ego автора в критичних ситуаціях, коли руйнівні хвилі війни витискають життя в позасвіття, коли «молитва кров'ю писана на стінах» (Ліна Ланська), знаходить в собі стоїчну волю, тверде переконання, що «Виростить залізне покоління / зорана снарядами земля» (Лана Перлулайнен). З'явився психотип, наділений рисами героїки чину, репрезентований й поетами — госпітальєркою Оленою Герасим'юк, воїнами Б. Гуменюком, І. Астапенком, Д. Лунякою, О. Хоменком, С. Пантюком, С. Татчиним, Д. Лазуткіним та ін., волонтерами Тетяною Череп-Прероганич, І. Павлюком, Д. Дроздовським та ін.

Мабуть, найповніше світовідчуття своїх сучасників сформулювала Олена Герасим'юк: «Я стою на сцені, / якої вже не існує, яка / вже не сцена — могила, / під нею / поховано заживо тисячі / чоловіків, жінок та їхніх дітей — / і мертвих, і живих, і навіть ненароджених». Вона «пише невидимі вірші / для вбитих моїх читачів» на згарищі Маріупольського драматичного театру, котре символізує травмовану Україну, дивиться з потойбіччя «оркестрової ями» на вцілілий «безпечний» світ, спростовує уявлення, що поезія це — «розвага», «іграшка, якою можна гратись навіть тоді, / коли вона вже лежить у крові на площі / розбомбленій посеред вокзалу». Розщеплений часопростір не поглинуто деструктивним хаосом, тому що лишився його епіцентр, репрезентований поеткою, її незнищеним духом. Олена Герасим'юк увиразнює мужню, шорстку тональність, властиву збірці «Тюремна пісня».

Аналогічна тенденція спостерігається і в доробку І. Астапенка — тероборонівця. Його лірика, відходячи від яскравих імпресійних рефлексій попередніх творчих пошуків, набуває неореалістичних ознак суворо прописаного, графічного малюнка, епізодів напружених сюжетних ліній, котрі завершуються пуантом, увиразненням предметної фактури. Можливо, на такому віршуванні позначився досвід прозаїка. Неквапні медитації, властиві ідіостилю поета, завершуються несподіваним пуантом, вкладаються в стислі синтаксичні формулювання, близькі до телеграфного стилю, де речення, починаючись з малої літери (прийом, поширений і на власні імена), закінчуючись переважно крапкою, концентрують завершену думку в кожному висловленні. Така манера письма сприймається смисловими квантами в загальній композиції тієї чи тієї поезії. Добре знамі І. Астапенку психотипи ТрО лаконічно, в найістотніших рисах, без пафосного героїзму змальовані у вірші «Штаб». Портрети сані, андрюші, івана постають крізь призму внутрішньої фокалізації ліричного героя, наділеного функцією наратора. Кожен з них лаконічно поданий в обставинах воєнних буднів, конкретизований в істотних, притаманних лише цьому, а не іншому персонажу характеристиках й пережитих життєвих драмах звичайних людей, змушених стати військовими. Серед них більшою симпатією оповідача наділений саня, який «ніколи не бачив моря. ніколи в житті. уявіть! / у киеві був тільки раз». Його образ виходить за межі фронтового локусу в простір майбутнього, коли в уяві оповідача п'ятеро живих героїв гуляють «мирним морським містечком. і спробуй нам хто завадь. / і саня уперше в житті своєму стрибає в солону гладь». Композиційне обрамлення (пропасодосис) увиразнює сюжетну й логічну цілісність вірша. Такий прийом спостерігається і в інших творах І. Астапенка, як у медитації «Дерева кращі за нас», побудованій на парадоксі протиставлення різних форм життя — людського, схильного до нищення подібних собі, й природного, в якому «не буває воєн». Його поезії сильні відсутністю формульних закликів й дидактичних акцентувань, вдумливими презентаціями суворої предметної персоніфікації: «зеленими коридорами в країну іде весна. / іде в камуфляжній формі. з гвинтівкою на плечі. / пускає в ранкове небо птахів ворухкі ключі».

Вдаючись до полеміки, І. Астапенко без викличних інтонацій ставить під сумнів гедоністичний вислів «істина в вині», невідповідний воєнним реаліям «істини у війні», утверджуваним через тавтологію тотальної, справжньої дійсності: «усе крім війни не існує усе війна. / навіть сама війна теж пішла на війну / смерть їй у спину кричить: “я тебе дожену”». Тут вже не до гри слів. Тут йдеться не так про мілітарну чи танатосну семантику, радше про неминучий процес жорстоких випробувань через страждання і смерть, про полемічний дискурс без публіцистичного поліску, спрямований проти індиферентного ставлення до трагедії, коли «діти що стали янголами не встигли стати

людьми» тоді, коли навіть вищі сили не годні збагнути глибини тотального горя. В такому разі І. Астапенко вдається до латентного сарказму: «бог дістав із полички «Україну в огні». / трохи читав та й кинув. що йому той вогонь. / що йому Україна? справ є і так либонь. / що йому небо над нами? що під тим небом ми?». І справа не інтертекстуальних алюзіях на кіноповість О. Довженка, які вказують на постійні людські катастрофи як жорстокі випробування на шляху до істини, якої ще ніхто не дійшов, на уроки, яких ніхто до ладу не засвоїв. Бог, очевидно, дає людям таку можливість, котру вони не можуть відразу усвідомити. Водночас І. Астапенко, не приховуючи претензій до Нього, першорядне значення надає визначальному для українця архетипу матері: «телефонуєш мамі а потім богу: / “я вже на полі бою”, / мама ковтає слину й сльозу вечірню / бог знов мовчить — українську він ще не вивчив».

Невгнутому ліричному героєві (alter ego автора), наділеному характером стоїка, позбавленому амбіцій, доводиться розмовляти з Ним на різних мовах, покладатися на себе у знаходженні адекватної відповіді на безжальні виклики дійсності, чесно дивитися в очі смерті не тільки на полі бою («Винний/винна», «За», «Вечеря», «Шестеро»), апелювати до незнищених етноментальних цінностей, коли мати декодує предметні реалії війни на благословенний Господом родинний лексикон («БМП — розшифровує воїн — «бойова машина піхоти» / БМП — розшифровує мати — // “Боже // Милостивий // Поможі»). Комунікативне поле з Ним віднаходиться через спільну, зокрема українську мову, її визначальні коди: «мати стоїть серед хати. тримає іконку в долоні. / отче, за кого воюєш? скажи: «паляниця»». І. Астапенко поступово у своїх поезіях підводить вірогідного читача до думки про справедливу війну, ґрунтовану на захисті себе, своєї родини, рідної землі, відмінну від війни агресора, котра не має жодних виправдань.

Беземоційна констатація суворих буднів ЗСУ, властива шорстким маскулінним верлібрам оунівця, ветерана російсько-української війни з 2014 р. Б. Гуменюка, вражає суворою правдою фронтового життя на постійній межі зі смертю («Заповіт»). Шукаючи адекватну відповідь дистанційованому від бойових буднів, ймовірному співбесіднику («що тобі сказати?»), він, аби було зрозуміліше, неквапно перераховує її конкретні прояви («ходили вчора в розвідку / принесли на берцях мозок нашого ротного / плита на грудях мого побратима вигнулася всередину / і перетворилася на тюльпан / [...] приводимо до ладу зброю і амуніцію»), не приховує вояцького захоплення гарматами, котрі викликає асоціації з класичною музикою: «мовби щось із Шуберта / це так красиво працює наша арта». Б. Гуменюк трактує переживання «смертельно красивої жінки» з приводу загибелі її чоловіка під Черніговом як закономірне явище під час війни, котре неминуче «перейде в занудну / хвору на ПТСР [посттравматичний стресовий розлад — Ю. К.] осінь / і ти нічим не може їй зарадити». Усвідомлюючи, що смерть

на війні байдужа до особливостей статі, він, далекий від патріархальних чи матриархальних уявлень, вважає неприродною загибель жінок, болісно переживає, «Як в цілковитій тиші над домовиною / Схлипують душі ненароджених дітей».

Своєрідну бойову й творчу ініціацію переживає нині Д. Луняка — ще магістрант КНУ ім. Тараса Шевченка, який пройшов вишкіл у ЗСУ (повітряні сили): «Знову тривога. Вдягаю розгрузку, / Зверху на неї — старий АК. / Світ до щілини стискається вузько / Звуком північного літака. / Мчу в укриття, хоч насправді — пофіг: / Кому судилося, той живе...». Він за кілька місяців помітно змужнів порівняно з передвоєнними романтичними візіями. Динаміка атаки в його інтерпретації розгортається в експресивну проєкцію («Ти біжиш. // І біжить під тобою Земля»), в простір без меж під чорним небом, котре «від крові відводить погляд». Ліричний герой в динамічному пориві ототожнений з імперативом вояка, переповненого відповідальністю за життя: «Не спиняйся — перекочуйся, бігай, стріляй, / Тобі зараз не можна померти». Його живить антейський дух до останнього подиху: «І шепоче Земля: «Коли ти упадеш, / Я завжди буду поряд»». Поволі простір лірики Д. Луняка заповнює конкретика воєнних буднів, коли навіть любов може бути «двохсота», тому ліричний герой, усвідомлюючи нестерпність цієї трагедії, не знаходить жодної відповіді («Більше не питай»). Він на крихкій межі життя і смерті приречений розмовляти з тим, хто сьогодні має «побачитися із Богом», але земна бесіда поки що триває: «Сідай сюди. Посидьмо на дорогу. / Твоя скінчилась, а моя — ще ні». Душа, лишаючись незнищеною субстанцією, «в смертельнім бою [...] на межі забуття» «кордонів не знає», дарма що «Деся позаду воронки. // Попереду — блокпости».

На антитезі вітального (високе небо, свята софія) й танатосного («там за рікою / вже просто москва / як і смерть / слово із літер шести») світів, між якими пролягає прірва, побудований ліричний сюжет верлібра «Для духів ранкового лісу...» фронтовика О. Хоменка, переконаного в неминучій справедливості, адже Дніпро «буде довіку дніпром / а не стіксом». Автор, усуваючи часопросторову дистанцію, мислить історичними категоріями, спостерігаючи за мандрями кападокійця Василія Великого й Діонісія Ареопагіта стероризованою Бучею, «ще коли там не було ні кореспондентів ні зарубіжних делегацій», й розбитим «обстрілами мостом через сіверський донець». Не потрапивши в добробати, бо «дуже-дуже старі», вони мусять зникати до побуту виживання у викопаних землянках, аби осягнути трагедію крізь призму сакральних текстів, вичитувати в них нові «божественні імена».

Воєнна дійсність стосується окупаційних реалій так само, як і фронтових, іноді набуває парадоксальних особливостей (Лана Перлулайнен: «Ця воєнна весна з солов'їними співами між / завиванням сирен, із надсадним вишневим цвітінням...»), шокує кричущими невідповідностями (Галина Яструбецька:

«половина саду цвіте / половина ще догорає»), болючими розривами теренів України, котрі по-різному переживають спільну долю, бо не лишилося в ній клаптика землі, не стероризованого рашистськими обстрілами.

Конкретизується не просто безкомпромісне змагання життя і смерті. Щонекрок «в дзеркалі дивиться смерть твоїми очима» (Катерина Годік), тому найменша фальш — неприпустима, коли «Люди ходили по воду — і не поверталися. / Людей забирали на допити — люди не поверталися. / Люди зважувались на евакуацію — // і теж ані виїжджали, ані поверталися. / Місто вмирало мовчки. Без жодних плачів або галасу» (Ольга Слоньовська). Мовиться не про фатальні пастки, а про безжальну закономірність війни, котра потребує ненастанних жертв. Приречені виживати під бомбардуваннями, в ситуації «відсутньої присутності» бомбосховищ, вони часто покладаються на себе, на власну силу волі, нічого не просячи навзаєм (Юлія Шевель: «не давай мені більше нічого — я в собі більше ніч не втримаю»). Тут — не до гордині, бо вітальний інстинкт мотивує адекватну людську поведінку за небезпечних обставин, без зайвих пояснень. «Звідки я — не питаєте — пручається слово, / В горлі коле: / Ні проковтнути, // Ні викашляти, ні сплюнути, як отруту», — констатує Юлія Бережко-Камінська. Не зловживаючи евфемізмами, розгортаючи моторошну картину руїни, де «що не двір — то братська могила», вона називає пекельний локус — Буча. Це сторозтерзане місто (як і Гостомель, Ірпінь, Бородянка, Маріуполь) стало ключовим образом сучасної лірики, з ним ототожнюють себе поети, як, наприклад, Ольга Ляснюк, вбачають у ньому стражденний образ України: «ні сліз, ні слів / замінила й отерпла / я сьогодні / Буча / розстріляна з зав'язаними / назад себе руками / замотаним обличчям / зав'язаним життям». Випалене рашистами місто повторює містерію Ісуса Христа, який, на припущення Ярослави Муравицької, «народився в Бучі», «в бомбосховищі / (Біля нього не було надпису “Діти”)».

Біль і розпука не вкладаються у правильні синтаксиси, потребують іншу структуру висловлення. Сповнене болем спазматичне мовлення Юлії Бережко-Камінської мотивує дольник з неспівірними ритмічними групами напруженого ліричного сюжету. Душевна перенапруга спонукає й до поліметричних форм, коли ямб невимушено переходить в оказіональний амфібрахій й дактиль, наближаючись до говірного вірша («Наші ночі тхнули підвалами, / Ми сиділи мишами тихими. / Як шукатимуть під завалами — / Головне, аби іще дихали — / Просто дихали...»), аби найповніше на стислій віршовій площі відтворити, здавалось би, безвихідну ситуацію («Доме, зведений на любові, ти / Не зрадиш жодною стінкою! / Стоймо ми, хоч збожеволіти / Можна інколи»), але не втраченою надією: «Залишився щоб світ зсередини — / Хоч зсередини...». Такі поезії, близькі до молитви, щільно врастають в лиховісні пейзажі з блокпостами, «селами невеселими»,

згарищами, в'юнкими сиренами, викликають враження відчуженого, невпізаного простору («Господи, чи в Україні ми?»), породжують в надрах травмованої свідомості болюче питання: «Жити далі / Як...». Вітальна сила всупереч найнесприятливішим обставинам виявляється нездоланною, як у вірші «Мию волосся, а надо мною — гради свистять...». Лірична героїня на тлі реального, власне апокаліпсичного пейзажу, не досяжного, мабуть, сюрреалістичним візіям, знаходить в собі волю життя, підкріплену пам'яттю поколінь, котра «травами пахне — любистком і розторопшею», водночас усвідомлює себе іншою в іншому світі: «А довкола — місто вогнем захлинається зопалу. / Та коли затихає — / Бодай на трохі — / Бачу — стоїть весна / Сива геть, // Як і я, // Наче — з попелу...».

Наділена кассандрівським хистом Дарина Гладун, також бучанка, яка пережила окупаційне позасвіття, напередодні нового витка російсько-української війни написала переповнений гіркою іронією верлібр «Війна не почнеться завтра». Поклавши в його основу безвідповідальне політичне запевнення, котре обеззброювало Україну перед рашистським «твістом», поетка передбачила жажливі наслідки такої недбалості: «беремо пам'ять про наших мерців із собою в евакуацію / залишаючи книжки записники і фотоальбоми радянських часів / на милість снарядів і мародерів». У віршах «без [дому]», «на смерть російського солдата» показано без апеляції до засобів сатири варварську ментальність деградованого московського зайди. Поезії Дарини Гладун сприймаються як ліричний датований щоденник пережитих випробувань і страждань в окупованому місті. Спочатку то були лаконічні сентенції травмованої душі, шокованої втратою природного екзистенціювання («навіть думки про / мир / тепер / така розкіш»), шорсткі, графічні замальовки зруйнованого національного космосу в конкретно буденних формах: «жінки і діти виносили із будинків найцінніше / сіль у власних очах / кров у власних тілах».

Під час суспільних катастроф звичні поняття втрачають природну дефініціативність, тому поетка вживає їх в іронічному сенсі несумісностей, котрі навіть не вкладаються в оксиморон. Метафора «амбасадори війни» ставить під сумнів поширене уявлення про офіційного представника соціальної структури чи, за сучасним мовленням, певного бренду, виповнюється чорним гумором. Семантичний монстр «війна» набуває безальтернативно тотального значення, поглинає довкілля («кутаємося у покривало війни / сидимо на военній дієті / на сніданок у нас війна / війна на обід на вечерю війна ллється нам із очей»), силкується ототожнити себе із свідомістю («переносимо війну у наших головах»), екзистенційними засновками буття, починаючи з емпіричної конкретики («радіоєфіри тепер які лиш війна-війна / вмикаємо телевізор --- війна-війна»). Ліричний сюжет відтворює наростання спротиву деструктивним маніпуляціям:

«намагаємося виговорити війну / вичавити війну вимити з себе війну / та війна не залишає жодного з наших тіл / у глибинах ротів не закінчуються слова». Верлібри Дарини Гладун, ґрунтовані на інтонаційно-синтаксичній сумірності, мають різні композиційні градації, можуть, як у вірші «люди під мостом», складатися з наґвинчування однотипних, щоразу ледь змінюваних конструкцій-антитез, за якими вбачається алюзія на Шевченків вислів «Той буде, той руйнує», посилення на зруйнований міст на Ірпені. Перерахування будівників й руйнівників обіграно на числі «чотирнадцять», аби зосередитися на одиничному лиходієві, який затято «руйнує//руйнує //руйнує//руйнує//руйнує цей міст». Йдеться не тільки про конкретну споруду, й а про символ обіграного зв'язку між світами живих та мертвих, унаочнений пуантом верлібра: «і вже / двадцять шоста людина під мостом / двадцять сьома людина під мостом / двадцять восьма людина під мостом / у вдовиному роті пісок».

Іноді неримований, нерівнонаголошений вірш невимушено переходить в ритмічну прозу з фонічно організованим текстом, з послідовністю чергування звукових елементів й синтаксичних павз, іноді означених властивими їй близькому до летризму ідіостилію позалітеральними знаками, наділеними латентною семантикою, що властиво циклу «сорок восьма ніч». Предметна конкретика окупованого локусу інтерферована масштабними геополітичними проєкціями, подана без публіцистичної риторики в медитаціях й сновидіннях ліричної героїні, стривоженої долею світу, як власною: «доношую за чужими людьми країну місто квартиру ліжко подушку й ковдру / можливість гуляти парком не дивлячись постійно під ноги не озираючись через плече / але Польща не в безпеці / Литва не в безпеці / Німеччина не в безпеці».

Війна як соціальна епідемія тут-і-тепер, за твердженням Дарини Гладун, має бути подолана бодай у сподіваннях, відійти в історію важкою, особисто пережитою сторінкою: «не знайшовши на мапі захищених територій / перечікую війну / --- / у минулому». Для Юлії Гупалюк вона триває з 2014 р., коли її рідну Луганщину окупувала москва, замаскована під маріонеткову ЛНР. Відтоді юна поетка вчиться «жити на мапі бездомно», пам'ятаючи, що «клаптик чорнозему і мої терикони / тривко засіли у голос чужої трави». Відтоді, раніше від інших поетів, почалося її вигнання до Києва без фінального завершення: «де притулюся тепер / до спеки і чорного сонця / коли вороги обірвали нитки?..». Вона подумки повертається до невіддільної від себе стероризованої батьківщини, бачить себе у трагічних видіннях: «терикони хрестами / лягають на сонце — / в мене венами обсипається / смертна чорна земля. / все ж таки / то була я». Шеретована попереднім досвідом, Юля Гупалюк після 24 лютого не має наміру рушати в нову невідому дорогу: «я вже тут лишилася — / місто [Київ — Ю. К.] — / валізи завітрені сплять / мовчать своїм розсипом літер». Їй відомо, що «у кожній війні своя

біблія — / кривава лежить на збитих / колінах». Довкілля перетворюється на метафору готичного роману, відповідного абсурдній дійсності («розтин зірок на столі / у темряві / замість ножів — обвуглений / час»), але не втрачає реальних обрисів новітньої есхатології зі сподіванням на спасіння: «дощ вириває із мене небо / в'яже мотузкою / ближче до серця / “господи отче наш...”». Прикута до мотивів війни поетка непокоїться невідповідністю художніх засобів відтворення її глибинної сутності, тому звертається до вищої сили: «навчи мене писати про війну». Одного вміння інтерпретувати її, не фальшуючи, — мало. Тут потрібна істотніша мета як воля розв'язання трагічної дійсності: «дай мені віру / налиту у келих захриплих рим / вип'ю її під навісом втоми — / хвилі ударні вже висять у петлі / нашої перемоги».

Ускладнена тропіка драматичних верлібрів Юлі Гупалюк відображає тягар, що гнітить її травмовану душу. Він помітний і в різножанровій ліриці Світлани Дідух-Романенко, в основу якої покладено власний досвід біженки з Борисполя, яка стала іншою, перейшовши під вранішні вибухи рубіж 24 лютого 2022 р.: «Тепер я знаю: так звучить смерть. / Не прощу!». Суворі ініціація війною формує новий психотип невгнутої особистості («Ти ніколи, мала, / Ти не будеш боятися, чуєш? / Ти вже бачила зло і за межами зла»), переконаної, що «за згвалтовані душі, спотворені долі і лиця, / пробачати, мала, — тепер не українська чеснота». Для Світлани Дідух-Романенко першорядним стає вміння відкрито сприймати деструктивну дійсність, якою вона є: «Ця війна дає нам повний ефект присутності» в найпарадоксальніших проявах життя й правди його художнього осягнення її масштабності, коли «на екрані вишні, що цвітуть на вулицях Бучі, / Цвітуть і пахнуть чорним димом над “Азовсталлю”».

Переживання часопросторової й семантичної дезорієнтації типові для лірики й інших біженців, яким не може зарадити навіть Бог, хіба що не стримує сліз при спогляданні втікачів у засвіти (Ліна Ланська: «Тремка прозора ніч, голосить повня...»). Невитравним у спустошеній душі лишається антейське чуття, котре не дозволяє розпорозитися на чужині, бо міцно тримається «за цю землю і сади / за чорнобривці і стожари / за своїх мертвих поетів / за дитячий сміх / знову боронячи їх і себе / до останньої стеблини звіробою» (Марія Микицей). Розрив з рідною домівкою, родинним космосом у фабулі вимушеного переселення Світлани Дідух Романенко не вкладається в прагматичну пораду «Вивозьте лише найцінніше!». Відповідь обрана одна, мотивована українським менталітетом: «І ми вивезли наших дітей. / Втім, всі діти тепер наші». Опинившись на чужих роздоріжжях, розмірковуючи над «митною декларацією війни», лірична героїня (alter ego авторкині) не годна збагнути, «як вивезти 603 548 км² любові, / Якщо не вивезла навіть одну білу сукню?». Поетка точніша, ніж С. Жадан, який за цим же мотивом у вірші «Візьми лише найважливіше. Візьми листи» інструктує біженку, що

варто взяти чи не взяти на чужину, каталогізує різні ситуації на чужині, аби завершити свої міркування, мовляв, серед катаклізмів «навіть часу не стає / шукати в них щоранку ім'я своє». Натомість Світлана Дідух-Романенко переконана, що в її «любові витримка воїна / І ім'я // на літеру // У», тобто Україна. Куди б поетку не закинула недоля, вона щоночі запалюватиме «свічку тим, / Хто вперто йде // Крізь темінь невідому / ДОДОМУ». Цей мотив повернення визначальний для лірики вигнанства (Ольга Ольхова: «радосте мого дому, // домашня моя радосте, / дочекайся мене — хай хоча б стелею неба // і стінами дива // вцілілих бучанських крон»), часто зазнає ускладнень. Анна Кот, страждаючи від того, що знайдено ключ од відсутнього Дому, від того, що доводиться прокидатися в чужій оселі, занепокоєна дезорієнтацією в часопросторі: «Я не знаю, чи буде мені куди повернутись / І за що зачепитись. Де нині моє // Коріння?» («Дивна історія трапилась: я знайшла ключ»). Попри те архетип Дому, навіть втрачений, лишається непорушним, як і архетип землі, якій «нема куди відступати», тому вона тримає коріння дерев і трави: метафора апріорного буття в інтерпретації Лани Перлулайнен змінюється лише в людському існуванні, котре часто набуває трагічного сенсу: «Страшно: нема КУДИ повертатись, / страшніше: нема КОМУ...».

Світлана Дідух-Романенко при осмисленні національної трагедії усвідомлює не лише об'єктивні, а й суб'єктивні її причини («вбий у собі м[оска]ля, / Бо хороший м[оска]ль — тільки мертвий»), потребу повернення нарешті до етногенетичної пам'яті як запоруки відновлення національної ідентичності. У такому разі поезія набуває мілітарної семантики, матеріалізується в безкомпромісну зброю: «А слова... Ними я всіх своїх пом'яну, / До десятих колін ворогів прокляну. / То і буде моя поезія». Переоцінка аксіологічної шкали взаєлежнена від вольового чину. Євангелійні моральні імперативи спростовуються вимогами резистансного спротиву: «Той, хто вміє любити, / Вміє й ненавидіти. / Якщо вдарили по одній щоці — / Зламай руку. / Спали вщент, / Напиши попелом: «Не прощу!» / Новий час — нові заповіді». Вони стосуються й найвищих почуттів, в яких зізнається авторкиня, тверда у своїх переконаннях в універсальності любові, в якій сконцентровано «виживання в роду». Тетяна Маленька при неприйнятті євангелійної сентенції на межі життя і смерті зважується полемізувати з Богом: «Ворога возлюби? / Який згвалтував твою хату?! / Звільни нас, Боже, й прости / цю кобру в мені ядучу. / Стогнуть дніпровські мости. / І помстою віють кручі». Аналогійними настроями перейнята лірика Лани Перлулайнен, спрямована на перегляд молитви «Отче наш»: «Господи / можеш / не прощати мені мої гріхи / як і я / не прощаю винуватцям нашим». Схожий мотив властивий однойменним верлібрам Олени Герасим'юк й Ірини Зелененької. Йдеться про історично виправданий самозахист, коли Авель всупереч біблійній версії зважується не лише протистояти Каїну, а й долати

його (Тетяна Яровицина: «Каїн-XXII»). За версією Наталі Фурси, люди — сильніші від Бога, паралізованого обвальними воєнними небезпеками («Він не може ні уперед, ні вбік, ані назад, — / бо кляп... бо скотч... бо арта... бо у зграї — / сталеві крила... а любов — не щит»), лише здатного «людську лють благословить — / що не прощає й щік не підставляє». Галина Яструбецька пропонує компромісний варіант цієї дискусії, відповідний збройному спротиву українців рашистському агресору: «Бог нас вчив: «Не убий!» — / але ми перепросимо Бога, / Бо тепер тільки смерть // ворогів / забезпечує мир».

Війна потребує точності у людських стосунках, іншого типу виражених взаємин, які випробовують високі поняття в критичних ситуаціях, тому, як радить Катерина Бабкіна, «поки це все не скінчиться — не кажи мені про любов. / Краще, допоки зблиски нічні змінює передранкова синь / взагалі нічого не кажи мені, відпочинь» («Не питай мене як я — спитай мене щось просте»). Натомість в інтерпретації Тетяни Череп-Прероганич сердечні почуття при делікатних евфемізмах під час коротких зустрічей з коханим чоловіком під час війни стають сильнішими, глибшими («Я не встигла тобі сказати, / Що довіку буду любити»), спілкування з ним в період вимушеної розлуки триває постійно подумки і в листах. Найсвітліше почуття, властиве людям незалежно від віку, присутнє в несподіваних конотаціях, інакше, ніж в мирний час. Воно, зазнавши досвіду війни, змінює свою семантику, позбавлену ігрових нюансів: «Що ми знали колись про любов? Боже мій, як болить / це дівчатко у льосі, налякане наглою тишею, / що накрило собою улюблену ляльку в останню мить... / Лялька вижила» (Лана Перлулайнен). Смісловий хіазм у несподіваному віршовому пуанті шокує жорстокою правдою війни.

Погляд з різних семантичних інстанцій на постать єдиного в своїй сутності Бога, за версією І. Андрусика, зумовлює різні змісти, надто під час війни. Приліт ракети, наділеної двозначним призначенням, здатен явити в небі «нове сиве пасмо / у волоссі Бога», але для ліричного героя може обернутися катастрофою, на яку він із сумом натякає: «Самого Бога побачу / але хтозна / чи Бог тоді / побачить мене» («Коли пролітає ракета»). Відносність відмінних божественних і людських величин зумовлює щоразу відмінні комунікативні поля при спільній національній трагедії, де не просто знайти відповідь, «хто тебе забере / з міста що не помре», «хто тебе обійме / в місті де бог помер», «хто тебе запита / знятого із хреста / чи вкладає Україну / тобі тиша у вуста». Попри те ліричний герой, апелюючи до Бога з великої, а не з малої літери, не чувається покинутим разом з іншими людьми («вас обох / тільки й рятує Бог»). Як такої релігійної лірики в просторі сучасної поезії періоду російсько-української війни не спостерігається, натомість трапляється адаптація теологічних жанрів до воєнної дійсності, опрощення сакрального мовлення, як у стилізованому вірші «Отче наш!» Олени Герасим'юк. Апелюючи до травестованих можливостей барокової традиції,

вона, сумніваючись у Його всеможності, веде бесіду з Ним — «Богом України суверенної» як рівна з рівним, вимагає, аби не сталося нових трагедій на кшталт Іловайська, просить у Нього елементарні речі, потрібні для війська. Ірина Зелененька адресує аналогічну молитву «Азовсталі», пов'язуючи її ключові слова з героїчними й трагічними реаліями ЗСУ.

Чимало авторів шукає прихистку в Господа, який поповнює небесних ангелів «юними воїнами», «з крилами обвугленими за плечима / у Маріуполі, Слов'янську, Ізюмі», з іменами вписаними «в довгі реєстри білим по білому», як вишиванка на «чисту Покрову». Звертаючись до Його милосердя, доводячи Йому, що це «не наша війна», бо «ми орати і сіяти йшли», Тетяна Маленька переживає емоційний зрив від невігойного болю, від розуміння абсурду руйнації: «Волаєш: — І Отче, і Син, / скільки ще Бородянок і Буч, / і ридань, і руїн йому [рашисту — Ю. К.] треба?!». Зло має бути покаране. Суд мусить бути справедливим. Поетка не погоджується, коли лиходіїв ставлять в один ряд з добродіями, коли «На Таємній Вечері / апостоли, зрадник, злочинці». Задля справедливості Мати Божа вкотре ступає на стероризовану українську землю: «...І піде Марія по водах / до міста в облозі [очевидно, Маріуполь — Ю. К.]. / По водах солоних, як море, / до міста, що в кров / розбите й димами стікає, / і там на порозі / постане з дитятком, / загорнутим в віру й любов».

Війна точиться в усіх закутках України, яка поєднує в собі мирну основу життя з героїчним чином, з вірою в оновлення понівеченої землі: «із мечем і сапою сьогодні стоїть Україна, / крізь чужинське сміття кожен день / проростає трава» (Інна Ковальчук). Немає жодної родини, не пошрамованої неминучою трагедією, котру стоїчно переживає героїня з вірша «У неї свій другий фронт...» Тетяни Маленької. На плечах простої типової жінки «батько старий у візку, / мати, що майже не чує, / кіт, собака, город, / виття сирен, а між ними / пташок щебіт», а головне — «син під тюльпанами там / на цвинтарі, що за містом / біля блокпосту», якого вона потай, зважаючи на окупацію, має провідати. Прикінцева строфа, виходячи за межі графічного окресленого психологічного портрету й локусу, набуває узагальненого сенсу, насиченої метафори всеукраїнського резистансу: «...І випіка Азов-сталь / рану глибоку повторну. / І неба крихкий кришталь / тюльпаном згортається чорним». Тетяна Маленька невимушено поєднує конкретне й загальне в єдину екзистенційну структуру фронтового й позафронтового буття: «Коли ти чистиш шкаралупку / з великодньої крашанки, / згадай закривавлені руки / матерів, які притискають / мертвих дітей Маріуполя». Випробування війною треба пережити, очиститися нею, стоїчно сприймаючи її і себе в ній: «Переживи страх, / день і тиждень, і рік. / Дому розбитий дах. / Сирени нічної крик. / Війну цю переживи. / І незворотність втрат». Свій вітальний імператив поетка формулює без зцонайменшого дидактизму й декларативних жестів. Вона промовляє голосом нашого українського сьогодні.

Іноді поети звертаються до інтертектуальних фабул, котрі викликають опосередковані асоціації з воєнними подіями. Для Ольги Башкирової такою стала замаскована під казку, подана в жанровому означенні алегоричної «балади в ритмі рок-і-рол» історія типового для багатьох віків короля, перейнятого патологічною ідеєю завоювати світ, приреченого на поразку й неславу в піснях трубадурів. Паралелі з мілітарною козацькою минувиною і сучасністю властиві віршам В. Гапгара («Весняний ранок — срібно-сіра даль...», «І знов степами пронеслась орда...») перестають в реалії російсько-української війни («Буча. Недавно...», «Війна»). Вічні образи адаптуються до нових історичних ситуацій. Коли «характерник козачий» Мамай із «семиструнною шаблюкою», в інтерпретації І. Павлюка, лишається собою в пасмугах відчуження, то античні сирени «вже не ті», що за часів Одиссея, дарма, що в них «схожі пісні», котрі, зливаючись із соборними дзвонами, віщують на сучасній мові: «Корабель ворогів піде на...». В деяких поезіях спостерігається опосередковане воєнне відлуння. Анна Багряна проводить асоціації з явищами природи й демілітаризацією світу: «весняна гроза — / так Господь розміновує небо».

Ліриці в переважній більшості після 24-го лютого властиве не споглядання національної трагедії, а пошуки чесної відповіді на невблаганні виклики жорстокої дійсності. Інна Гончар, як і чимало її сучасників, ставлячи питання «Що можу знати я про ВІЙНУ?», з'ясовує її різні прояви, починаючи з чистого семіотичного аркуша: «Нічого». Однак щомиті даються взнаки суворі реалії: «вона в мене сиплеться / мегатоннами інформаційного сміття», «Каже: “Ну ти ж письменниця, / мусиш писати про мене”», «Стежить за мною з кожної камери. / Стоїть у дверях. / Визирає з мого вікна» і т. п. Всюдиприсутність війни вимагає спільного з нею комунікативного поля з циркуляцією ідей, адекватного декодування: «Якою мовою / говорити з війною?», коли постійно виникають труднощі спілкування. Невмолима опонентка, нехтуючи збіжністю горизонтів розуміння, «ламає хребти словам, / вигинає смисли їм так, / що букви стираються, / а ті, що вціліли, — / мокрицями по щілинах — / в сінях свідомості / пліснявіє насіння слів». Вона потребує чіткої мови без маніпуляцій, відповідної реаліям, яких не уникнути. Лірична героїня, не доходячи остаточного висновку, усвідомлює: «Вимкни транслятор. / Ти можеш знати / про війну все. / Або нічого». Нонфінальний цикл «Війна» залучає читачів до спільного пошуку сподіваної відповіді.

Елегантна верліброва структура поезій Інни Гончар виповнюється метафорою думки, котра не дає спокою допитливому розуму. Він апелює до пасіонарного чину захисників України мотивованого активізацією генетично збереженої історичної й етноментальної пам'яті, фіксованої багатьма символами й логограмами, до яких звертається поетка, запевняючи, що «ми не розлюбили слово / в часи найбільшої темряви, / бо досі чуємо звуки

/ з найглибшого дна Почайни / просто посеред міста». Легендарна річка, права притока Дніпра, на якій колись діяло капище бога мистецтв і худоби Велеса, а згодом відбулося ймовірне хрищення Русі за князя Володимира, нині забетонувана під плитами цивілізації, не зникла, як і наша мова, котра протистоїть деструктивним силам «в часи найбільшої темряви». Поетка активізує й інші логограми. Архетип степу, здавен безпосередньо причетний до характеротворення українця, зшито в метафору історичних фрагментів, між якими пролягає віковична тяглість, пробуджуючи героїчний чин: «виходьте / кожна Баба і кожен Дід / виходьте / кожна і кожен Воїн / усі, хто Є, / виходьте / Святославове плем'я / стає до бою». Магією спротиву володіє рідинний оберіг лялька-мотанка, здатна стати месницею, «переслідувати убивць / аж до вузла / на їхній шії». Цей мотив в мережаному вірші «Ранок. Півонії. Мотанки-ляльки» Тетяни Маленької набуває трагічної тональності: «Чорно-кривава війни вишиванка. / Стомлені пучки. Ти донька чи бранка / ньєнки-вітчизни». Магічний родовий талісман у час жорстоких випробувань потребує етнічної ідентифікації, усвідомлення якої не дозволить розгорнутися кривавій трагедії «дійти до Маланки», тобто до Щедрого вечора.

До етногенетичної пам'яті звертаються й інші поети. Схильна до летризму Людмила Коваленко оперує метафорою «криниці роду», апелює до незнищеної крові Оріїв як запоруки солярного явлення через засіяну ЯРину «ка-то-ва-ної» Бучі, початку нового життя з новими цінностями, і тоді «Світ неоговтаний / Нас пізнає месією». Очевидно, завдяки архетипам можна з'ясувати сутність війни, щоб знешкодити її, невловну в поняттях, але прояснювану крізь призму тропів. Для Ірини Зелененької таким ключем стала метафора криниці, в якій сконцентровано не лише логограми святості, чистоти й високої духовності, а й спадкоємності поколінь і традицій: «витягнеш воду. / Зазирнеш і побачишся з тими, кого вже нема. / Трохи облич у криниці, трохи на небі, / трохи в долонях, трохи на зорях...». Водночас у тій воді вичитується й сучасність «у Херсоні, Дніпрі, в Маріку, на Азовсталі... / Темряком із тобою на відео, сіга прикурена: / ховає незголену втому, червоні очі».

На жаль, сакральна знакова система, пов'язана текстом конкретних реалій, втратила свої звичні структури в прагматичних алгоритмах цивілізації, зазнала трагічного смислового зміщення в текстуальних розривах війни, тому важко ідентифікувати «смертельний салют» й Христові стигми» (Надія Гаврилук: «Цей ранок — відкрита рана...»). Ольга Ольхова не приховує іронічний погляд на тотальну десеміацію понять, чим зловживає космополітична «математика — / цариця наук і воєн», нехтуючи конкретними людськими долями і стражданнями, маніпулюючи кілометрами фронту, кількістю крилатих ракет, «двохсотих» й «трьохсотих»,

донищуючи числами недовинищене життя, загнане в «трьохзначне число, / що за ним написано “діти”», в дробі окупованої «1/5 землі рідної», пошматованої ними «території». Поетка, не приховуючи антипатії до цієї «цариці», сподівається, що її панування не вічне, має твердий намір після війни «знову займатися лише своєю гуманітаркою / хоча навіть це слово математика війни вкрала собі...».

В період постійних небезпек звичні явища набувають іншого змісту, іншої семантичної й реальної перспективи: «Не фільм, не сон. Зацвітають вишні. / Заграви мігять квітневі будні. / В прицілі часу — чиясь усмішка, / чиясь надія, чиясь майбутне. / Шибки з хрестами — Господні пазли» (Лана Перлулайнен). «Люта весна нерання» самозаперечується в добу соціальних катастроф, коли «Виють по всьому світу / березень і війна» й «Котиться писанка чорна травневим зелом — / наче граната, уже без чеки і без серця» (Наталка Фурса). Констатуючи такі зміни, що стали характерними атрибутами воєнних буднів, Лана Перлулайнен простежує їхню трансформацію і в сакральних явищах, котрі мало чим відрізняються від жорстоких реалій, адже містерія Ісуса Христа неспіввідносна із стражданнями земних людей, котрі «не воскреснуть ні на третій, ні на дев'ятий, ні на сороковий. / І ті, кого вони не народили, / від інших не народяться». Виявляючи параною вилюдження життєвого простору, поетка доходить висновку, фіксованого моторошною метафорою: «Обтяті / біля коріння родові дерева / уже не розгалужаться. Ніколи». В такому разі серед ліриків цілком вмотивовані настрої розпачу: «Кажуть, в бога є плани на тих, що лишились живі, / Тож збирай у рюкзак вогнепальні свої й ножові. / Бо майбутнє твоє — без дверей, зі скривавлених стін. / ти лиш тінь // ти лиш тінь // ти лиш тінь» (Юлія Шевель).

Вихід має бути. «коли / слова при / кипіли / до смерти — / не оддерти», від поета вимагається абсолютизованої відповідальності задля «Життя на кону», на чому наголошує прихильниця лєтризму Галина Яструбецька, схильна на мінімальній віршовій площі подати максимум значень й емоцій, виявити глибинну семантику підсвідомого. Семантичне навантаження в її експресивних верлібрах накладається на окремі, графічно виокремлені лексеми, зокрема сполучники, на знаки орфографії, застосовані не за вимогами правопису, а за потребами прихованих смислових конотацій, на фонічні й візуальні особливості поетичного мовлення, завдяки чому увиразнюється метафора резистансного сенсотворення. Галина Яструбецька знаходить сподівану відповідь, якою переймається сучасна лірика, на невблаганні виклики воєнної дійсності з потрощеним часопростором. Навіть бог, споглядаючи руїну «крізь прострелене небо», шокований нею, втратою адекватних алгоритмів світоладу, коли вже «зайві / боже / петрові ключі — / рай нарозхрист», очевидно, для прийому такої кількості загиблих душ, що їх не витримують строго регламентовані структури. Здається, ні в

кого із сучасних поетів не трапляється слово «очищення», акцентоване у вірші «У цієї весни...» Галини Яструбецької, написане в особливий спосіб з «порушенням» граматичних вимог, компенсованих акцентуванням його внутрішньої смислової самодостатності: «О!ЧИЩЕННЯ». Йдеться не про чистилище як локус, де, за католицькою версією, душі грішників позбавляються невикуплених за життя гріхів, тому трактоване в сенсі милості, а не покарання. Префікс «О!» з наголосом сприймається вигукком подиву перед неминучим відновленням, відродженням в новій якості через випробування війною, її заперечення задля вітального світоутвердження. Процедура поновлення людини в людині не проста, вистраждана в такій формі, що не завжди вербалізована, часто фіксована в емоційній сугестії («і виеш / ви?е?шшшш»), котра опредметнюється. У такому разі префікс «ви» сприймається особовим займенником, а суфікс «є» дієсловом, однак не в чіткій визначеності, тому слова з подвійним значенням унаочнені знаком питання. Звернення до ймовірного, ще не визначеного в собі реципієнта, розпорошеного в потоках шиплячих, потребує смислового й предметного увиразнення на шляху самоцінної особистості. Її символізують євангелійний Юрій Змієборець, рілля і зерно, в якому сфокусовано українська тяглість з минулого в майбутнє через повноцінне світотвірне слово, проінтерпретоване в місткій метафорі воєнного й сподіваного поствоєнного буття («підриваються слова / як сіячі / на мінах / серед поля), приреченого на очищення «вогнем / і / волею».

Креативне поетичне Слово за умов російсько-української війни, спростовуючи афоризм Цицерона, набуло нової змістовності. Заглиблене в предметну конкретику фронтових буднів, страждань, випробувань на межі життя і смерті, воно засвідчило новий психотип ліричного героя, аналогічний його реальному прототипу, який, боронячи свій дім, свою родину, свою землю, людську й національну гідність, мотивовано чинить резистансний спротив московському агресору. Висвітлена в статті панорама сучасної української лірики в її жанрово-стильовому розмаїтті дає підстави стверджувати не тільки про невичерпний творчий потенціал наймобільнішого жанрово-родового різновиду, а й про нову ґрунтовно заповнювану сторінку української літератури.

