Security, Culture and Identity in Serbia[1]

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Abstract

This article assesses the impact of ideational factors, such as culture and identity on foreign, security and defence policy of Serbia. This is done through poststructuralist theoretical framework and concept of strategic culture. The main argument presented in the article is that Serbian strategic culture can be conceptualized as a tension between two divergent discourses, national-liberational and civic-democratic. The competition and the stalemate between the two discourses creates a strategic schizophrenia, reactive foreign policy and complete political paralysis of the use of Serbian military forces.

Key words: Serbia, security, strategy, culture, identity, discourse

Introduction

How does political culture and sense of national identity in Serbia affect its foreign, security and defence policy? This question is important for both practical and theoretical reasons. Firstly, from the policy perspective, the question of national identity often resonates in security discourse of decision makers. Think for instance of a sentence made by Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica that „in order to survive, a nation needs to know its interest, and has to have a strong sense of national identity".[2] In other words, securing something requires it firstly to be differentiated and identified. Secondly, although a good number of books and articles have been written on Serbia's foreign, defence and security policy, none of them approached the subject from the social-constructivist point of view that takes into account not only material interests and capabilities but also ideational factors such as culture and identity.

In order to answer the question asked above, this paper relied on poststructural security studies, especially the securitization theo-

[2] Kosta Čavoški, "Treći put Vojislava Koštunice", *Ogledalo*, 31.08.2007. Available at: http://www.nspm.org.yu/komentari2005/2005_cavoski_kostunica1.htm

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ry developed within the Copenhagen School of Security Studies and literature on political and strategic culture.[3] The methods that will be used are ideal-type descriptions and discourse analysis. Although this study focuses on the period following the democratic changes in October 2000, it will also cast light on more distant past given that culture and identity are foundationally linked with history.

The essay constructed two ideal type descriptions of culture and identity in Serbia: *national-liberational* and *civic-democratic* model. Although these two models are socially constructed through public discourse, they nevertheless simultaneously act as 'sedimented structures' and ideational constraints on foreign, security and defence policy and decision making. Arguably, these two models have existed in Serbia, in one form or the other, at least since the outset of Serbian modern state in 1878. Sometimes the civic- democratic narratives shaped the agenda; much more often the national-liberational ones did so. Currently, the two discourses are equally powerful and radicalized, which creates a situation of stalemate. The central argument of this paper is that this situation negatively affects foreign, security and defence policy: foreign policy is reactive; security policy and strategic orientation are schizophrenic, while defence policy is completely paralysed.

The argument will unfold in the following fashion. Firstly, we will lay out a poststructural theoretical framework and define the main concepts of identity, security and culture with a special emphasis on the concept of strategic culture. Then, we will broadly discuss identity and political and strategic culture in Serbia. Finally, we will analyse how culture and identity affect foreign, security and defence policies of contemporary Serbia.

1. Theoretical and methodological framework

The theoretical approach that will be used in this paper is poststructuralist conceptualization of identity and security, and especially the securitization theory developed within the Copenhagen School of Security Studies. This approach is adopted because, in contrast to other approaches in security studies, it emphases the importance of identity for the understanding of security issues.[4] Poststructuralism (often labelled postmodernism) argues that security policy is always constitutive to identity. As David Campbell puts it, "for just as foreign policy works to constitute identity in whose name it operates, security functions to instantiate the subjectivity it purports to serve" (Campbell 1992). In the following chap-

[3] On poststructuralism in security studies see Campbell, David (1992) Hansen, Lene (2006). On the Copenhagen school in security studies see: Buzan, Barry et al. (1998). On the impact of culture and identity on foreign policy see: Hudson, Valerie (1997). On the concept of strategic culture see: Johnston (1995).

[4] Realism (power); Neorealism (survival); Liberal-institutionalism (international cooperation); Marxism (class struggle); Democratic peace theory (democratic governance)

ter, we will outline poststructuralist conceptualization of identity, security and strategic culture.

According to this approach, identity can be defined as discursive construction of Other through articulating a difference (Diez 2004). In such a process of rendering identity is always constructed against the difference of an Other. David Campbell calls this 'radical interdependence' of political identities. (Campbell 1992, Diez 2004) According to this author, it is through discourses on foreign and security policy that the process of identity construction and reproduction is taking place. It should be added that poststructuralism aims at deessentializing the notion of identity by arguing that it is always contested by alternative identities against which it has to be defended.

Poststructuralist security studies distinguish three forms of identity construction: *spatial*, *temporal* and *ethical* (Hansen 2006: 46). Spatial identity articulates difference across geographical borders thus reiterating the delineation of space into the 'inside' and the 'outside'. The best example of this is a national identity in the context of a modern nation state. This form of Othering is the most antagonistic one because it is based on a principle of territorial exclusion. By clustering together geography, power and identity, spatial identification organizes international political space along the lines of 'friends' and 'enemies' (Schmitt 1996). The second conception is temporal identity. It is constructed through articulation of difference across time. Temporal Othering is a self-reflective discursive practice that locates the danger not *outside* of the Self but *within* it.[5] The third conception of identity is Ethical. It is discursively constructed sense of Self's responsibility toward the Other. When foreign policy discourse invokes an explicit international responsibility, for instance to stop genocide, a discursive move is undertaken to move foreign policy out of the realm of national interest to the realm of higher grounds (Hansen 2006).

Security is broadly defined as a pursuit of freedom from threat. Following Derridian assumption that reality cannot be known outside discourse which matters for what it does more than for what it says, the Copenhagen School posist that security discourse should be studied as "a subject in its own right and not as an indicator of something else" (Buzan et al 1998:176; Derrida 1998:158; Wæver 2001: 26-27). According to the Copenhagen School, security can be seen as a speech act about existential threats and emergency measures. The 'speech act' or the 'securitizing move' is done by 'securitizing actor' (e.g. President) who claims that a certain object (e.g. terrorism) is an 'existential threat' (e.g. threat to national survival)

[5] The most common example for such a construction of „Other" is European identity that was defined, after the end of the WW2, not in contrast to some geographical „Others"(e.g. Turkey, Russia etc.), as it had been the case earlier in history, but in contrast to its own European past, characterised by balance of power, interstate wars and finally the Holocaust (see Wćver 1998, Buzan and Weaver 2003). Some common themes of such a temporal Othering are development, transformation, change and civilizing process. One of the examples often present in European history is an imperial construction of inferior Other who in time, through military conquest, modernization, development and enlargement process may become a part of the civilized Self. For further explanation see: Hansen 2006.

to a certain 'referent object' (e.g. state) and proposes taking 'extraordinary measures' (e.g. pre-emptive strike) to counter that threat. If, by means of such an argument, the securitizing actor manages to legitimize the measures, which would not be possible had the discourse not taken the form of existential threats, priorities and extraordinary measures, then we are witnessing a case of 'securitization'. In short, security threats are not analyzed as something objective but as something that is perceived as such and acted against with extraordinary (security) measures. As Wæver puts it, "it is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one" (Wæver , Ole 2004: p.13). Particularly useful for this analysis will be the concept of *societal security* developed also within the Copenhagen School (Buzan, Barry et al, 1998: 119-140). Societal security has identity as its central referent object. As Buzan puts it, "societal insecurity exists when communities of whatever kind define a development or potentiality as a threat to their survival as a community" (Buzan 1998: 119).[6]

In short, poststructuralists assume that the question of identity lies at the heart of security. Given that nations are 'imagined communities', national identity depends on the existence of stable and threatening Others.[7] Security discourse serves to designate those threatening Others, reproduce the imagined borders and stabilize the sense of Self (Campbell 1992). Thus, the perpetuation of security discourse is an existential necessity for the survival of collective identities.

Now that we have delineated concepts of security and identity, it is still left to see what we mean under the concepts of culture, political culture and strategic culture. Culture can very generally be defined as a collective construction of social reality (Sackmann 1991). In other definition, culture is a shared system of meaning that shapes the values and preferences of a collective of individuals (Hudson 1997). Political culture consists of assumptions about the political world (Elkins and Simeon 1979). It is a *product* of and, at the same time, an *interpretation* of history which provides us with axiomatic beliefs of who we are, where we come from and what we value (Hudson 1997).These axiomatic beliefs, which are usually implicit and taken for granted, shape the political and historical understanding of a political community. They are so fundamental that they cannot be further reduced but instead constitute the basic premises that organize all other knowledge about a given political community. The elements which are the most relevant in construction of axiomatic beliefs are: the existence of heroic history, the founding of a state, colonizing or colonized experience and other

[6] Quoted from Buzan 1998: 119. According to authors, societal security issues are migration, horizontal competition such as for example overriding linguistic and cultural influence and vertical competition, integration or secession political projects. ibid: 121.

[7] For nations as imagined communities see Anderson, Benedict (1983)

turning points and formative events in the history of a political community.

Strategic culture is a part of political culture consisting of axiomatic beliefs about the usefulness and appropriateness of the use of military force in international relations. According to Alastair Iahn Johnston, strategic culture is an integrated system of symbols which act to establish pervasive and long lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by cloaking these conceptions in such an aura of factuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious (Johnston 1995). From a post-structuralist perspective, strategic culture is a product of discursive construction about one's country's geopolitical position, military history, international relations, strategic identity, military technology and the aspects of its civil-military relations. It comprises of two core assumptions: first, the assumption about the orderliness of the strategic environment, that is, about the nature of the adversary and the threat it poses, and, second, the assumption about the efficacy of the use of force, about the ability to control outcomes and to eliminate threats, and the conditions under which applied force is useful. Political and strategic culture shape national security interests in a twofold manner (Katzenstein, 1996). They regulate interests through defining the rules of the game and by dictating which moves are allowed and which are not. Also, political and strategic cultures create and reproduce collective identities thus constituting interests.

Before we proceed to the case study of Serbia, several methodological caveats should be made. Firstly, we disagree that any nation has some sort of essential identity and culture. It is important to stress that both culture and identity are social constructs. In other words, although they can be analyzed as 'sedimented structures', they constantly evolve under the impact of important new events and through discursive constructions and transformations conducted by political elites. The opposing identities and cultures do not exist out there in the 'objective world' and we should not attempt to reify them. Instead of that, in this paper, they will be considered as layers of narratives and images, interpretations of different historical experiences and particular societal 'software' that is utilized by different actors in the political arena as a discursive tool of self-legitimization. Secondly, culture (as well as identity) is never a uniform and stable set of beliefs shared by the whole population of a given community or its politico-military elites in one given point in time. Although the dominant narratives shape the 'logic of

appropriateness' in political and strategic matters, they also represent the discursive and symbolic context and arena for political competition between alternative meanings and interpretations. In other words, at any point of time, beside a dominant political and strategic culture there can be several alternative discourses against which the dominant one is to be defended. Finally, of what use are the concepts of identity and culture for social sciences, whether it is Foreign Policy Analysis, International Relations, Security Studies or any other academic discipline? As already shown by Max Weber (2001) on the example of Protestantism and capitalism, the study of culture can be a very useful tool for explanation of institutional development. In addition to that, the concepts of culture and identity can also be used to explain particular decisions and policies of political agents and outcomes they produce. In this latter case, these concepts can be a very slippery ground and should be always used with the utmost care. More concretely, if used for analysis of particular decisions, policies and outcomes, cultural explanation should always be a second-order explanation and a supplementary account, after rationalist explanations had been ruled out (Hudson 1997). For example, if we try to explain a particular foreign policy decision, such as Serbian government's decision not to fully comply with Austro-Hungarian ultimatum from July 1914, a rationalist analysis should first be employed to find out explanations based on material interests and 'logic of consequences'. Only if the rationalist and materialist explanation does not suffice, the constructivist explanations based on the 'logic of appropriateness' using concepts of culture and identity should be brought into the equation. Arguably, the decision of the Serbian government to defy demands of much mightier Austria-Hungary can hardly be explained by rational choice and national interest. In order to understand such decision which led to death of 20 % of population, occupation and disappearance of the independent Serbian state from the political map for 90 years[8] and its, culture, identity and ideology prevalent in Serbia at the time have to be also taken into account.[9]

2. Overview of literature about political culture in Serbia

The aim of this chapter is to present and critically assess a part of the existing literature in this field. It is important to stress that while the academic literature on political culture in Serbia is very modest (Jovanović 1964; Golubović 1995; Matić 1993, 1998, 2000; Podunavac 1998), to the best knowledge of the author of this paper, there has not been any work done on the strategic culture of

[8] In 1918, Serbia was succeeded by the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929), Democratic Federal Yugoslavia (1943), Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (1946), Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1963), Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992), State Union Serbia and Montenegro (2003) and finally again Republic of Serbia (2006).

[9] Push factors that led to war at the international (system) level explain why the war happened. Yet, they cannot explain why a small state went to total war with Great Powers against all odds.

Serbia. Regarding political culture, despite all of its shortcomings, the work of Milan Matić represents the most comprehensive analysis written by any Serbian political scientist. As such, it will occupy the most important place in this chapter and will inspire our explanation on how culture impacts foreign, security and defence policy of the Republic of Serbia.

Matić depicts Yugoslav and Serbian political culture as a tension between two groups of principles, one deriving from tradition and the other deriving from modern age. He argued that profound political divisions of Yugoslav (1993) and Serbian society (1998, 2000) at the time of the writing had deep cultural roots. He analyzes this deep political and cultural split within the Serbian society with the following words:

> Apart from the old antinomies of traditonalism and modernization, liberalism, East and West, today we can discern in political parties, among the leadership and within inteligentsia, rifts between Serbness and Yugoslavness, collectivism and citizenzship, national and globalist, patriotism and populism (1998:328).

What's more, according to him, "Serbs are crucified between different, even not joinable patterns of national and state identification" (1998: 327). The first pattern is what he labels differently as: *national-libertarian culture* (1993: 838), *mythic-libertarian culture* (1993: 839) or *radical popular and ethno-nationalist culture* (1998: 332), while on the other side is *civilizing-social culture* (1993: 839), *democratic political culture* (1993: 839), *liberal*, *progressive*, *modernizing* (1998: 332) and *civilizational-participatory culture* (1998: 306). The terminological inconsistency reflects the lack of conceptual clarity in his work. To add to the confusion, Matić often values differently these two opposing political cultures. For example, in his earlier works (1993), he criticized the national-liberational culture as an impediment to the development of civil-society and he glorifies the civic-democratic culture. In his work from 1998, Matić sits in the middle of the fence and is more careful to take sides or give normative evaluations on these conflicting models in terms of which one is desirable and which one is not. Although national unity and resistance are based on the national-libertarian cultural model, Matić holds that, by the "logics of general civilizational changes and progress, this model is doomed to disappear as an element of social integration"(1998: 308). Finally, in the text from 2000, Matić tried to overcome the gap between the two cultures by arguing that, in Serbia, there is only one *democratic-assamblitory*

culture which combines elements of the two previously divided and opposed two models (2000: 105). This culture is unique but ambivalent at the same time because it contains so many contradictory features such as collectivism and individualism, libertarianism and submissiveness, heroism and inertia, unison and division, hospitability and distrust. In short, although Matić's argument often suffers from essentialism, incoherence, and terminological imprecision, he remains to be, to our knowledge, the only political scientist in Serbia who has extensively dealt with the issue of political culture in Serbia.

Apart from a political science approach, a wide array of authors has tried to grasp the cultural model in Serbia from an anthropological and psychological perspective (to name just a few: Jovanović 1964, Cvijić 1987, Jerotić 2004). They often point out the aforementioned cultural rift between globalists and nationalists, modernity and tradition, between the West and the East, between individualism and collectivism and many other dyadic pairs. For example, Serbian psychiatrist Vladeta Jerotić argues that "it seems that Serbian Byzantinian remains confused in front of the ever important question: to which Kingdom should I adhere, heavenly or earthly, Eastern or Western?" (Jerotić 2004).

To sum up, there is a silent consensus about the dividing rift in the Serbian Society. However, as we have seen, there is no consensus on how to define the major dividing line.[10] In spite of the increasing interest in this issue, the literature on political culture in Serbia has been quite modest both in terms of quality and quantity. In addition to that, the strategic culture of Serbia has not been touched upon at all. This essay aims to bridge this gap. For this purpose, we will construct two discursive ideal types of Serbian strategic culture. The first type we labelled *civic-democratic* strategic culture and the other we called *national-liberational* strategic model.

3. Civic-democratic strategic culture

Civic-democratic strategic culture can be seen as a product of a relatively short period in Serbian history, during which its society was either predominantly oriented towards emancipation from internal (rather than external) political dominance and/or had democratic governance.[11] The number of years in which Serbian society was oriented towards the internal rather than external emancipation is very difficult to calculate in an exact fashion. However, it could be argued that social and internal emancipation significantly commenced with the liberation of Serbia from the Ottoman impe-

[10] Some recent views: Trianon vs Euroatlantic identity (Marković 2006), Sea vs Ground principles (Vukašinović 2006), Innovators vs Traditionalists (Dimitrijević 2007) etc.

[11] Internal emancipation in this context encompasses struggle for individual and social rights, or liberal-democratic values.

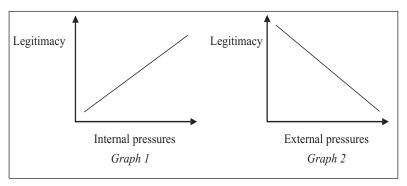[12] The main difficulty concerns the definition of democracy.

[13] Parliamentary Monarchy lasted 26 years and 18 months (January 1889 - April 1893; June 1903 - October 1915; December 1918 - January 1929). Parliamentary democratic republic lasts since October 2000. All together, Serbia had 33 years of democracy in 2007.

[14] In Serbian 'Sretenjski Ustav'. This Constitution was very liberal and due to Austro-Russian pressure lasted for only several weeks.

[15] In Serbian 'Namesnički Ustav'. This Constitution introduced National Assembly and universal suffrage for males of full age. It never took effect due to resistance of great powers (Marković 2004).

[16] Although it is still too early to tell whether this event can seriously impact the civic-democratic political and strategic culture, there are some indications that its effects are already observable. For example, in the aftermath of the assassination the Democratic Bloc softened its human rights agenda in favor of internal security issues. Whether such a preference will become long term or even permanent one remains to be seen. For more on this issue see: Ejdus (2007).

rial rule and acquisition of what Jackson calls *external sovereignty* (Jackson 1993) or the recognition of Serbia as an independent state at the Congress in Berlin held in 1878. The task of counting how many years Serbia was ruled as a democracy is easier to calculate, although it does not lack methodological challenges.[12]

According to a Serbian historian Slobodan Marković, in the course of the last 200 years, Serbia spent as a democracy only about 30 years, or 15% of the time (Marković 2004).[13] Regarding the formative historical moments for the development of civic-democratic strategic culture we can single out very few events as following: the adoption of liberal Candlemas Constitution[14] (1835), the adoption of Regents Constitution (1869)[15], student protest 1968, anti Milošević demonstrations on March 9th 1990, demonstrations against election fraud in 1996-1997, and October 5th 2000, the popular uprising against fraud of presidential elections held on September 27th 2000, which put an end to the decade long authoritarian rule of Slobodan Milošević. We could possibly include, as a formative moment for the construction of civic-democratic strategic culture, the assassination of the first democratic Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić in March 2003.[16] The main axiomatic belief of this strategic culture is that Europe and the West in general represent unequivocally cultural, political and civilizational homeland (or destination) of Serbia. Therefore, European political heritage of individualism, democracy, liberalism, rule of law, human rights, reluctance to the use of force, etc. is a 'package' of values and norms that should be adopted and respected. The national identity projected by this strategic culture is a civic and temporal. The fashion in which the civic national identity is being created, reproduced and redefined through contemporary security policies will be discussed in latter chapters when we discuss political elites. Accordingly, through the civic-democratic lens, regarding its post-Cold War national interests, Serbia is no different than other Western Balkan countries. Given its turbulent history, small size and impossibility to stand alone in a difficult geopolitical position, this cultural model pushes Serbia towards internal social emancipation and international economic, political and security integration, together with its Balkan neighbours, onto the path of European, Euro-Atlantic and global integration.

Finally, it is important to stress the conditions under which civic-democratic discourse resonates well in Serbian society. Given that it rests on the modern process of internal and social emancipation, rather than the external one, this discourse positively correlates with the existence of internal pressures and negatively correlates with the existence of external ones. In other words, the

stronger is the pressure of state and political elites over civil-society (e.g. election fraud) the stronger will be the resonance and legitimacy of civic-democratic discourse. Conversely, the bigger pressures from the external environment become(e.g. NATO military intervention against FRY in 1999) the weaker will be the strength of civic-democratic arguments (graphs 1 and 2).

Legitimacy

Internal pressures
Graph 1

Legitimacy

External pressures
Graph 2

Graphs 1 and 2 Correlation between legitimacy of civic-democratic discourse and the existence of internal and external pressures.

4. National-liberational strategic culture

National-liberational strategic culture has deeper historical, symbolical and even psychological roots in Serbia. It is a product of a half a millennium long struggle of the Serbian people for emancipation from the foreign conquerors and empires that encroached upon the territory of South East Europe. Those powers are the Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire, German Third Reich and finally EU and US hegemony. The formative moments in the creation and reproduction of the national-liberational cultural model are the rise of the Serbian state during Emperor Dušan and the Serbian Church during St. Sava; defeat in the Kosovo Battle against the Ottomans in 1389; demise of the medieval Serbian despotate in 1459; the first Serbian uprising in 1804; wars for national liberation (two Balkan wars and the First World War) 1912-1918; people's rejection of the Tripartite pact in 1941; resistance and conflict with Stalin in 1948; and, finally, the defiance of and military conflict with NATO in 1999. The main driver and motivation of the national-liberational strategic culture is the external emancipation. Matić argues that instead of internal controversies, as it was the case in England, peoples of the Balkans have throughout history faced a wave after wave of foreign conquerors and enemies that endangered their survival.

The first motive of this political culture was to tolerate internal enemies and poor leaders in order to gain unity in the face of the external threat. In its system of values, national identity and heroic deeds always come before peaceful, civilizational and democratic compromises in the interest of progress (Translated from Serbian by author from Matić 1993: 839).

The conception of national identity that is projected through this cultural lens is ethnic and spatial rather than civic and temporal. How such an identity is reproduced trough contemporary security policies will be discussed in latter chapters. In constructing Serbian national identity, the so called Patriotic Bloc and its discourse draw heavily on the medieval mythology designed and preserved throughout the centuries mainly by the Serbian Orthodox Church.[17] As Vladimir Tismaneanu argues, those myths revolve around several major motifs: the Golden Age, the ideal of the Warrior and the notions of victim hood, martyrdom, treason, conspiracy, salvation and charismatic saviours (1998: 9). The psychological features of national-liberational strategic culture are defiance as opposed to cooperation and mythical reasoning as opposed to rational cost-benefit reasoning.[18]

A prominent interwar intellectual, Slobodan Jovanović, summed up psychological features of the dominant Dinarian mentality with the following words:

Dinarian ideology, its disobedience, its spite for the world and its disdain of death was good for the heroic age of dangers. The age of troubles demands more realism and self-criticism. [...] The Dinarian type has bravery but also has over-estimation and over-emphasizing of the Self which makes him inflexible and inadaptable. Therefore, he has a tendency to interpret all of his failures as a sign of a greater injustice, even for the deeds he is solely responsible. (Translated from Serbian by author from Jovanović 1964: 39). [19]

Regarding its assumptions about the orderliness of the strategic environment, national liberational strategic culture is highly sceptical towards external powers and the international arena in general.

The national-liberational strategic culture is built on three axiomatic beliefs. The first one, which we will for the purpose of this paper call *independence and defiance*, is that great powers seek to choke the national independence of Serbia, which stands in the way of their interests. Therefore the national independence from

[17] In the 1990s, during the early years of political quasi-pluralism in Serbia, the split was between the Milosevic's regime on the one side and the democratic opposition on the other. After the regime change and events of 5th of October 2000, the opposition got the name the Democratic Bloc while the parties from Milošević Regime (SPS and SRS mainly) started calling themselves the Patriotic Bloc.

[18] Think of recent Serbian Radical Party slogan *Defiance, Freedom, Šešelj!*

[19] The Dinarian mountain range stretches from Slovenia over Croatia, Bosnia and Hertzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia. The famous geographer and anthropologist Jovan Cvijić, while examining the Balkan peninsula developed a psychological type of Dinarian people, Cvijić (1987).

the great powers is priceless and should be pursued at any cost regardless of the consequences.[20] From this is derived a specific national-liberational understanding of death. Given that national freedom and independence has no price, human sacrifice is relativized if made in defence of independence. The first modern military commander and leader of the first Serbian uprising against the Ottoman Empire (1804), Karađorđe, shared the belief that it is better to die and even sacrifice one's own children, if needed in the defence of liberty. That is why he sees defensive war as an 'honourable evil' (Đorđević 2000: 44). Such beliefs resonated in a letter he wrote.

> When justice is ostracized from the world, we would rather die than live and we prefer death over life. It's better to die than to be enslaved, in chains, hopeless that freedom will ever arrive. Our life is a burden to us and if we and our descendants are doomed to eternal slavery, we prefer to sacrifice our own children than to leave them to the mercy of our enemies (Translated from Serbian by author from Đorđević 2000: 38).

A good example of independence and defiance discourse can be found as well in writing of the Saint Vladika Nikolaj Velimirović.[21] Thus, he argued that the "our struggle against the nations who follow the watchword that might is right fills the whole of our history" (Velimirović 1916: 36). Because of its suspicion towards anything that comes from the international environment, national-liberational culture is a fertile ground for conspiracy theories. In addition to the above described axiomatic belief of independence and defiance, the added value of these theories is that enemies of Serbia don't act always through overt military political and economic pressures but often through secret organizations and covert actions as well. Conspiracy theories often name the Trilateral commission, Bilderberg group, Council for Foreign Relations, Committee 300, free masonry etc (for an excellent overview see: Byford 2006). These theories were evoked both by communist, socialists and by rightwing and clerical elites throughout the 20th century. However, they were especially intensified during the 1990s and culminated during the NATO campaign against the SRJ in 1999.

The second axiomatic belief can be labelled as the idea of *self-importance*.[22] According to Matić, the idea of *self-importance* is a quintessence of Serbian political culture and can be formulated as "To be and to stay yourself where you are" (Matić 1998, 2000: 27-30). Even though it may sound like a common ground for all col-

[20] Turkish word *inat (defiance)*, which expresses this behavior, is widespread in Serbian language and culture.

[21] During the 1990s, Vladika Nikolaj was not only amnestied for anti-semitic ideas and sympathies for Adolf Hitler but beatificated by the Serban Orthodox Church in 2003. Today he is glorified as the second biggest personality of the Serbian Orthodox Church after St. Sava. For an excellent study on the process of rehabiltaton of this controversial person see: Byford Jovan (2005).

[22] In Serbian: samobitnost.

lective identities, due to the constant threats to their collective distinctiveness, the dynamic of societal securitization in Serbia and in the Western Balkans is particularly strong (Buzan et al. 1998, Buzan and Wćver , 2003: 377-395). Such self-understanding was created as a result of the historical fact that since the beginnings of their existence in the Balkans, detached and far away from their Slav motherland in the North East of the European continent, Serbs had to defend themselves from the encroachments of neighbouring great powers 'all unacceptable as their masters'. Given that they built a 'house at the middle of the road', that is to say at the crossroads of different and alien religions, civilizations and empires, as Matić argues, Serbs developed a distinct, peculiar and powerfully enrooted collective identity under constant siege of great powers and their smaller Balkan proxies (Matić 2000: 28).

The third axiomatic belief, for the purpose of this paper labelled *civilizational-ambivalence,* assumes that the East and the West represent two fundamentally different worlds in a permanent collision and that Serbia should remain neutral. This idea insists on the "ultimacy of an alleged civilizational and spiritual gap between the East and the West" (Gaćeša 2006:75). In the same vein, one of the biggest Serbian statesmen of all time, Nikola Pašić, wrote that "West and East represent two enemies, two antinomies, two cultures" (Byford 2006: 63). The Serbian Orthodox Church played a particularly important role here, not because it sees Serbia as the East or the West but because the Serbia's and Church's alleged special position between the two worlds depends on the actual distinction between them. The *civilizational-ambivalence* dates from a letter that St. Sava, a founding father of Serbian church, wrote to Irinej back in 1221. In this letter Sava says:

> The East thought that we are the West, and the West thought that we are the East. Some of us incorrectly understood our position in this clash of streams and shouted either that we don't belong to any of the sides or that we are exclusively part of one or the other! I say to you Irinej, we are the Serbs, destined to be the East in the West and the West in the East, and to recognize above us nothing on the earth, but the Heavenly Jerusalem (Translated from Serbian by author from Jerotić 2004: 55). [23]

The graphic expression of *civilizational ambivalence* can be found on Serbia's coat of arms with a two-headed eagle on it.[24] While one eagle looks to the East, its spiritual and historical homeland, its other head looks to the West, its geo-political reality. Since its foundation and especially under Nemanjić dynasty, Serbia embraced spirituality from the East (the Byzantine Empire) but
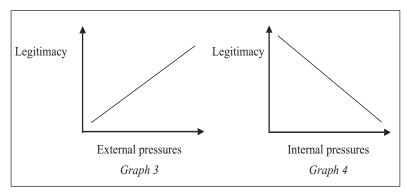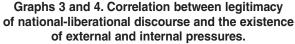
[23] Apart from Matić, Milan Podunavac (1998) also argues that this narrative is central to Serbian political culture.

[24] The double-headed eagle is adopted by several Eastern Euroepan countries from the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire). In the Byzantine heraldry, the heads represented the dual sovereignty of the Emperor (secular/religious) and dominance of the Roman Emperors over both East and West.

materially, technically and economically it looked to the West. Dvorniković argues that "in matters of religion and art Serbia relies on Byzantine Empire while the armament, technical means, miners, financial experts and other things, it supplies from the West" (Dvorniković 1995: 32). Particularly strong anti-western attitudes were spread among the influential orthodox clergy at the turn of 20th century. The two most important persons, whose influence continues today, are Vladika Nikolaj Velimirović and father Justin Popović. Both of them condemned European liberalism, nihilism and socialism and shared apocalyptic visions of the European civilizations.[25] This has remained to be a part of the collective political psyche in Serbia even today. The West is cherished because of its technological achievements but scorned for the "moral and spiritual poverty". This is especially amplified by the support Serbia gets from Russia in order to preserve its spiritual cradle, the Kosovo province, while the EU waves with a 'materialistic carrots of aid, assistance, structural funds and membership'.

Finally, it is worth noting that, since the national-liberational discourse rests on the long tradition of resistance towards the external enemy, the legitimacy and effectiveness of its usage is positively correlated with the existence of external pressures. In other words, the stronger the pressures from the outside of the country are(e.g. for cooperation with ICTY) the stronger will be effect of national-liberational arguments in the public. Conversely, the resonance of national-liberational discourse negatively correlates with the existence of internal pressures (e.g. suppression of civil rights and freedoms) on society. Put differently the appeal of national-liberational discourse will be higher if the external demands are stronger and internal pressures weaker (graphs 3 and 4).

Graphs 3 and 4. Correlation between legitimacy of national-liberational discourse and the existence of external and internal pressures.

[25] From such ideas sprang a Godpraying movement, aimed at saving Serbia from European nihilism, during the interwar period. In Serbian: Bogomoljački pokret.
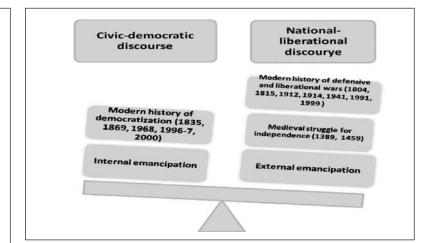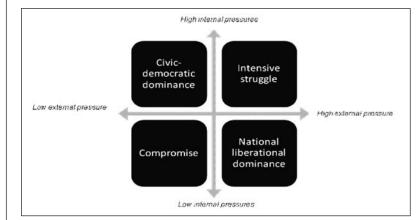
Image 1 The formative moments of the two cultural models

Matrix 1 Outcomes of discursive struggle between civic-democratic and national-liberational culture depending on the level of internal and external pressures

5. Contemporary political parties and cultural rift

Since the collapse of one-party system in the 1990, the political scene in Serbia has been bipolarised into two clustered blocs. This bipolarisation has consolidated following the October 5th 2000 into two political camps between which the political coalition has so far been almost unimaginable. On the one side is the Patriotic Bloc with currently the strongest party in Serbia SRS[26] and much smaller SPS.[27] On the other side stands the so-called Democratic Bloc composed of DS[28], DSS[29] G17 Plus, SPO,[30] LDP[31], NS[32] and some other smaller parties.[33] Arguably, those two

[26] Srpska radikalna stranka: SRS

[27] Socijalistička partija Srbije: SPS

[28] Demokratska stranka: DS

[29] Demokratska stranka Srbije: DSS

[30] Srspki pokret obnove: SPO

[31] Liberalno Demokratska Partija: LDP

[32] Nova Srbija: NS

[33] In the second half of the 2007. and especially in the first few months of 2008, DSS crossed Rubicon and approached to such an extent the national liberational discursive pole that it is almost imposibble to conceive their come back to the old national-democratic position in the foreseeable future without a serious backlash on their legitimacy. According to the latest parliamentary elections held in January 2007, the election results were as following: SRS 28, 7, SPS 5,9 %, DSS-NS 16,7 %, DS 22%, G17 plus 6,8%, LDP 5, 3%. Source http://www.cesid.org/

blocs reflect the basic cultural division discussed earlier in this text on nationalist-liberational and civic-democratic strategic cultures in Serbia. However, although the public discourse often uses the terms *blocs,* it is more sensible to place all the parties, according to their discourse, on the spectrum ranging from civic-democratic on the left to national-liberational on the right.[34]

Such a criteria is a much better tool for understanding the contemporary political scene in Serbia than the traditional left/right classification because it reflects the deep cultural split that transcends socio-economic divisions characteristic for established Western democracies. It is important to note that the bipolarization weakened following the support of SPS government to the minority government in 2003.

LDP	DS	DSS-NS	SRS
G17 plus	SPO	SPS	
Civic democratic		*National-liberational*	

Image 2 Cultural bipolarization of political parties on a spectrum

Generally speaking, when it comes to security and defence policy, the national liberational discourse is by far the most dominant one, especially when external pressures increases.[35] It is not a surprise that the leaders of the Patriotic Bloc do not miss an opportunity to evoke national liberational axiomatic beliefs whenever the discussion on these topics takes off. For example, when expressing their views against sending troops abroad, they often spell out the abovementioned axiomatic beliefs. In that manner, in a recent discussion about the participation of Serbian Armed Forces in international peacekeeping missions, one MP from the Serbian Radical Party stated clearly evoked the narrative of *civilizational ambivalence*:

> Throughout the Serbian history, Serbia had prepared for the defence of its territory. We should hold to the slogan crafted by St. Sava: To be the East to the West and the West to the East, not to meddle into the affairs of great powers, to take care of our business and deal with our problems (Barać 2004).[36]

Although resistance vis-ŕ-vis participation in NATO missions is the greatest issue, for SRS the participation within the

[34] Although the discursive poles are permanent structures, the positioning of actors in it is not. Parties change their discourses and can move on the spectrum, although very slowly.

[35] For example, following the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo in February 2008, and series of international recognitions, this discourse almost totally pervades the public domain and thus silenced the civic-democratic one.

[36] 32nd session of Parliament of Serbia and Montenegro, December 22, 2004.

UN peacekeeping missions is problematic as well. For instance, in a recent parliamentary debate about participation of SAF in UN peace support missions, an MP from SRS stated that the "UN is nothing but a Trojan horse serving NATO, US and powerful Western circles to implement their ideas, their further conquest" (Barać 2006). Another exemplary discourse was made in the Parliament by the leader of the Radicals, Tomislav Nikolić, who spoke along the well-known lines of *self-importance* belief:

> There are no Serbian children for peacekeeping operations outside of Serbian borders. There aren't! And if we do have children, and indeed we made our sons so they can defend the country, we didn't give them birth to defend foreign armies, but he who starts a war, anywhere in the world, he should bring it to an end by himself (Nikolić 2004).

What is surprising is how even the leaders from the Democratic Bloc sometimes adopt the national-liberational discourse when the issue touches upon security and defence. For example, DSS recently adopted a declaration on armed neutrality of Serbia. It was built on the motives of independence and defiance discussed above. For instance, the declaration says:

> Armed neutrality represents expression of honest determination of Serbia against politics of force, threatening peace in the world, aggression and war. […] Abandonment of armed neutrality would oblige Serbia to participate in wars that are not in its interest, limit its independence and freedom of decision making, threaten the lives of its citizens and encumber internal transformation and prosperity of the country.[37]

It is not difficult to see the similarity in the worldview of DSS and SRS about the hostility of external environment and malevolent nature of great powers and military alliance they form.[38] This rapprochement takes place mainly as a result of unsuccessful negotiations on the final status of Kosovo and the following unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo, which in a sense "kosovized" most other political debates including most of the discussions preceding May 11 election campaigns. Therefore, curerrenly the national-liberational discourse is spilling over to the Democratic Bloc as well because the Kosovo issue, which is a symbolic carrier for the National-

[37] Source: www.dss.org.yu Soon after, similar resolution was adopted by the Serbian Parliament declaring military neutrality until citizens decide definitely on a popular referendum upon this issue

[38] Prime minister and leader of DSS Vojislav Koštunica shifted in his discourse even further towards the *national-liberational* pole following the unilateral proclamation of independence of Kosovo on 17 February 2008 and successive international recognitions by major Western states.

liberational national identity in Serbia, is an issue that wins hearts and minds of the Serbian people. To those actors that can adequately use national-liberational axiomatic beliefs and narratives, the Kosovo debate brings political points and legitimacy.

6. Contemporary strategic identities in Serbia

Another very important issue is what kind of strategic identity these two discourses construct and reproduce. The Patriotic Bloc largely remains in the spatial discursive construction of Other. In other words, the main threats to the national security of Serbia, as seen by this bloc, are geographically distinct political communities. Since the beginning of 1990s, the Patriotic Bloc securitized a wide array of issues. The most prominent ones were the neighbouring states and ethnic groups such as the Croats, Bosnian Muslims and Albanians. Relations with Croatia and Bosnia have been to a large degree desecuritized firtly following the Dayton peace agreement in 1995 but even more significantly after the fall of Milošević regime in October 2000. However, two securitized issues continued their resonance after the 2000: the first one is a Bosnian minority in Sandžak, especially the Wahabi groups, while the second one is Albania and its population in Kosovo and South Serbia. Secession of Kosovo and its international recognition is the biggest security problem of contemporary Serbia. The fear of further dividing Serbia (Voivodina, Southern Serbia and Sandžak region) is often and skilfully used by the Patriotic bloc.

Apart from the neighbouring states, the Patriotic Bloc heavily securitized the relationship with the West. Partly due to the St. Sava tradition of suspicions towards the intention of Europe and the West, but more importantly due to the Western interventions against the Milosevic's nationalist regime during the 1990s, the leaders, members and voters of these parties regard the West, and especially the US, as a dangerous enemy of Serbia. Apart from concrete nations that were securitized, the political elites from this bloc securitized more abstract political configurations such as the so-called Green Transversal (Muslims in the Balkans), Neo-liberal globalization, and less visible centres of power, such as Vatican Opus Dei, Free Masonry, Trilateral commission, Bilderberg group, Council for Foreign Relations, Committee 300, etc (for excellent overview see: Byford 2006). In sum, the Patriotic Bloc has modern and to a large extent antagonistic vision of national identity besieged by wide array of threats and enemies generated mainly

outside of the territory of Serbia. It is modern because it is territorially defined, and it is antagonist because of its relation with the Other which is much more based on exclusion and cooperation than on integration and amalgamation.

In contrast, during the rule of the Patriotic Bloc in the 1990s, the Democratic opposition constantly attempted to shift the attention from the external threats to Serbia to the internal arena, to the Milosevic's regime and security sector as the most dangerous source of threat. However, as it always the case, it is very difficult for the opposition to be effective securitizing actor, especially if its designed threat is the state itself(Buzan et. al. 1998: 33). The main political program after the fall of Milošević and the deconstruction of his nationalist regime was to desecuritize the relationship with the region and with the Western oriented international community. The loss of external enemies had to be substituted with a new Other in order for the collective identity of political community to be preserved and its imagined borders reinforced. Arguably, this new Other was not anymore a spatial but a temporal one. In other words, the new democratic political elite presented Serbia and the Balkans from the 1990s as its most radical other.[39] The discourse on how Serbia should never go back to the times of ethnic cleansing, nationalism and war resembled on the post war discourse that has been driving forward European integration since the 1950s (Wćver 1998).

However, an important transformation in identity construction occurred following the assassination of a democratic Prime Minister, Zoran Đinđić, on 12 March 2003. Namely, the Self in the past as the threatening Other was complemented with a new threat, spatially located within the territorial space of Serbia, conspiracy of coalition of organized crime, paramilitary forces, secret service and nationalistic bloc against the democratic *acquis*. Thus the Self from the 1990s materialized into the internal enemy, partly visible (nationalistic political parties) and partly invincible (criminal groups and renegade parts of security sector, the so called 'deep state'). The tipping point of such a securitization occurred during the state of exception proclaimed in the immediate aftermath of the assassination in March 2003.

Also, the Democratic Bloc has engaged into the post-modern discursive construction of Other through the temporal articulation of a different Self from the past as its main threat. However, after the new democratic pro-western regime was shaken by the Đinđić assassination, the discourse shifted to a more spatial realm designing the threats within the territory of Serbia. The only common

[39] However, although such a discursive move was attempted it is difficult to say that it fully succeeded. The clear-cut discursive distancing from the 1990s was never comprehensively undertaken by the Democratic Bloc partly due to a constant activity of the Patriotic Bloc which represented each such a move as a heresy, treason or at best cowardice.

ground between the two blocs, when it comes to security/identity puzzle, is the issue of Kosovo. The unity between the two blocs regarding this issue mend the dividing lines in interpretation of national identity. However, such a position creates an atmosphere of collective cognitive dissonance regarding the reality in Kosovo province and nationalistic euphoria that delays the process of democratization. The issue of Kosovo seems to have capacity to permanently pump new blood into the national *liberational discourse* thus burdening Euro-Atlantic ambitions of Serbia and its Democratic Bloc.

To sum up, the civic-democratic construction of Other and of societal threats can be regarded as a postmodern one due to its temporal rather than spatial basis. Also, it is less antagonistic because, given that it's most radical Other is itself from the past, it creates the conditions for cooperation, integration and possibly amalgamation with territorially distinct Others, especially those created at the pan-European level.

7. Foreign, security and defence policy

Today, it is difficult to argue that Serbia has a clearly defined foreign, security and defence policy. Deep cultural and societal divisions discussed above prevent the state and society to reach national consensus on strategic orientation and foreign, security and defence priorities. So far, however, the least common denominator of all three post-October 2000 democratic governments has been the full integration of Serbia into the EU and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Regarding the former, a discord, however, exists concerning whether the EU membership will still be pursued if the EU members send their civilian mission to the province or even recognize the independence of Kosovo and Metohija.[40] Apart from that, in June 2003 Serbia submitted a formal request to join the PfP program and in November 2006, during the NATO summit in Riga, Serbia was invited to join PfP. Regarding accession to the NATO, until recently, the official foreign policy goal of all three democratic governments was, ambiguously defined, Euro-Atlantic integration. However, since autumn 2007, the government rejected the term Euro-Atlantic integration and clarified its intention only towards European integration, i.e. EU. This happened because of the shift of DSS towards the opposition of accession to NATO because of the Kosovo status negotiations.[41] This moved DSS towards the national-liberational pole of spectrum.

[40] Within the Democratic Bloc, DS, LDP and G17 plus insist that Serbia will seek membership regardless of resolution of Kosovo issue. DSS decided to halt European integration process if the EU doesn't expliocitely recognize territorial integrity and sovereignty of Serbia, including its sovereignty over Kosovo province. In the so called Patriotic Bloc, both SRS and SPS declare themselves as eurosceptics and oppose Serbian membership in the EU.

[41] Their newly adopted party program from October 2007 state that Serbia should permanently remain neutral regarding international military alliances.

Serbia still lacks national consensus on the concept of national security (Stojanović 2007). Serbia lacks Foreign Policy Strategy, National Security Strategy, Strategy of Defence and laws on security and defence have only recently been adopted. There are currently two drafts of National Security Strategy that were separately prepared by teams of advisers of the Prime Minister and the President. One of them should probably be adopted in autumn 2007.[42] After the National Security Strategy, the next paper down the hierarchy of strategic documents is Strategy of Defence, which Serbia also doesn't have. A draft of Strategy of Defence, written in line with the PM's draft of National Security Strategy, was proposed by the MoD in May 2007. According to the draft, the global security environment is characterized as increasingly uncertain and unstable (p.4). Substantially changed approach of Serbia to the international community and Euro-Atlantic integration is said to positively affect Serbia's security (p.5). The document identifies that the biggest security threat to Serbia is the resolution of final status of Kosovo which would not be in line with the international law, UN charter, Helsinki Final Act and the Constitution of Serbia - that is to say, independence. This threat is followed by terrorism, armed uprising or aggression, separatist tendencies, national and religious extremism, organized crime, uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, natural and man caused accidents and high tech cyber crime (p.7).

Strategic Defence Review (SDR), which was adopted by the MoD in June 2006, assessed biggest threats to the security of Serbia and the region in the following order: terrorism; uprising of illegal armed groups; national and religious extremism; organized crime and environmental and industrial catastrophes. The same document stipulated three missions of the SAF: defence of Serbia from military challenges, risks and threats; participation in development and maintenance of peace in the region and in the world, and assistance to civilian authorities in countering non-military threats to the security.

However, the parliamentary procedure for sending Serbian troops abroad is much longer than average time needed for force generation in any international military operation. Hence, SAF participate in only a modest number of peacekeeping missions under the UN mandate around the world. For that purpose, the Centre for Peacekeeping Operations has been recently established within the MoD. Serbia so far participated, with its military observers or medical teams, in the Ivory Coast, East

[42] Although the two documents come from the Democratic Bloc, they substantially differ in wide array of issues. In short, although both strategies project the *civic-democratic* identity of armed forces and society, PM's proposal has certain above mentioned *national-liberational* elements as well. This reflects so far unsuccessful, policy of Kostunica's Democratic Party of Serbia, to overcome division of Serbia into two blocs. (Stojanović, 2007)

Timor, Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi.[43] Approximately 100 people have participated in these activities in the course of the last few years. In the near future, field officers in a medical team will be deployed into Afghanistan and Lebanon. Also, Serbia participates in a number of regional security initiatives such as, for example, the Conference of Defence Ministers of Countries from South East Europe.

In sum, additionally to the weakening of political consensus on the accession to the EU among the Democratic Bloc, Serbia cannot reach political and societal consensus on the most of other foreign, security and defence matters. This is a consequence of the deeper division within Serbian society in relation to the interpretation of collective identity, the recent (Stojanović 2007) but also more distant past (Matić 1993, 1998, 2000) and the future steps to be taken regarding internal and external policies.

Another important issue is the impact of culture and identity on the organization of armed force. Historically, given the prominent place of the armed forces in the liberation wars, it is not surprising to see that *national-liberational* model shaped the organization of armed forces and security and defence policies much more than the civic-democratic *one*. Moreover, it can be argued that the three abovementioned axiomatic beliefs of national-liberational strategic culture are the foundation on which the normative model of the Serbian Armed Force has been built. According to the popular proverb, armed force is 'people's dependence'[44] and a guarantee of its freedom and independence. Its role is the defence of the country and making of liberation wars. Such an army is highly appreciated by the people. The Serbian language has another proverb "A Serb goes to the Army with joy".[45] If war as a means of self-defence and national liberation has a praised role in national-liberational culture, it is not the case with the expeditionary function of the military. Be it a power projection or international peacekeeping missions, sending troops abroad has no moral justification and as such is seen and perceived as illegitimate.

In a contemporary Serbian debate, each cultural model generates its own ideal image of foreign, security and defence policy and Serbian armed forces. Quite expectedly, the national-liberational discourse emphasises the territorial defensive function of the army. For example, it is often heard that Serbia should not participate in the peacekeeping operations as long as it cannot use its forces to regain Kosovo. For that purpose, the armed

[43] Serbian soldiers have never participated in any NATO or EU missions.

[44] In Serbian: narodna uzdanica.

[45] In Serbian: "Rado Srbin ide u vojnike".

forces should be massive and composed mainly by conscripts. Finally, since the people' dependence, its autonomy should be favoured over democratic control. On the other side, civic-democratic discourse favours the democratically controlled light and professional forces designed for peacekeeping and missions abroad.

	Civic-democratic ideal type of armed forces	National-liberational ideal type of armed forces
Size:	Small and light	Large and massive
Functions:	Peacekeeping missions, fighting non military security threats (e.g. terrorism, ecological and industrial disasters etc)	National defence, national liberation
Mode of recruitement:	Professional	Conscript
Loyalty:	Civic community	Ethnic community
Strategic orientation:	Europe and the West (EU and NATO)	Neutrality
Democratic control:	Positive	Negative
Conscentious objection:	Positive	Negative

Table 1 Two ideal types of Serbian armed forces

Conclusion

In this paper we argued that culture and identity make significant impact to the foreign, security and defence policy of Serbia and the organization of its armed forces. The political and strategic culture in Serbia was described as a tension between two opposing discourses: national-liberational and civic-democratic. While the former proscribes the values of independence, defiance and civilizational ambiguity, the latter favours integration, compromise and alliance with the West. In addition, the two cultures construct two different visions of national identity. While the national-liberational discourse shapes national identity mostly in geopolitical terms (spatial identity) the civic-democratic discourses to a large extent use temporal identity definitions. What is more, the two opposing models of identity in Serbia often see each other as the most radical threats. Such a cultural bipolarization creates a strategic culture of *paralysis*. While the Patriotic Bloc sees the utility of military force in a more territorial defensive fashion, the Democratic Bloc perceives the military as an asset for international integration and, under such a light, in a more peacekeeping and far from territory projecting way. This disables the creation of national consensus on the ques-

tion of what is the purpose of the armed force and how it should look like (conscript or professional). Furthermore such a bipolarization creates a strategic schizophrenia. In other words, Serbia's foreign policy looks with one eye to Brussels and with the other to Moscow. Such a strategic schizophrenia concerns not only divergent foreign, security and defence orientations of the country, but more importantly, two divergent ways forward in its internal political transformation - liberal transformation on the one side and illiberal, *ŕ la Putin* transformation, on the other. The apparent contradiction between Serbia's two foreign policy priorities, EU accession and territorial integrity (Kosovo), perpetuates the culture of *ambivalence* vis-ŕ-vis the past, the spiritual, and the East on the one side and the future, the material and the West on the other. Finally, such a bipolarization fuels a completely reactive foreign policy and turns Serbia rather into an object than into a subject of international relations.

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