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# MILITARY NEUTRALITY AND NON-ALIGNMENT AS SECURITY STRATEGIES OF SMALL STATES: CASE STUDIES OF SERBIA AND SWEDEN

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# VOJNA NEUTRALNOST I NESVRSTANOST KAO STRATEGIJE BEZBEDNOSTI MALIH DRŽAVA: STUDIJE SLUČAJA SRBIJA I ŠVEDSKA

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# MILITARY NEUTRALITY AND NON-ALIGNMENT AS SECURITY STRATEGIES OF SMALL STATES: CASE STUDIES OF SERBIA AND SWEDEN

## Abstract

This dissertation was guided by a main question: How come that the two very different small states, Serbia and Sweden, came to define their security policies in identical terms of military neutrality/non-alignment. The author firstly saw the pitfalls of the available bodies of literature discussing neutrality/non-alignment and small states. The first portion of literature never convincingly elaborated what are the actual security strategies of neutral/non-aligned states, other than a generic assumption that staying outside of military alliances is a war-avoidance technique. The small states scholarship remains largely engaged to define 'smallness' and still fails short to explain when and how 'smallness' actually matters for small states' security strategies. A novel theoretical model was built in the dissertation to include multiple variables, emerging from different theoretical frameworks, to explain why certain small states choose to stay outside of military alliances in the 21$^{st}$ century. That model, offering a middle-range theory generalisation, includes three independent variables: *war experience and historical account of neutrality/non-alignment*, discussed by historical institutionalism; *threat perceptions,* as discussed by neo-realists, and *internal political dynamics,* as applied by the rational choice theory. The three independent variables were then applied on a rich empirical material gained from the two case studies.

Findings point to the strong resonance of the previous historical experience with the choice of military neutrality/non-alignment and to an absence of a causal link between that choice and threat assessments. Internal political dynamics holds a strong explanatory potential in the both cases, though contextually shaped in different manners.

# VOJNA NEUTRALNOST I NESVRSTANOST KAO STRATEGIJE BEZBEDNOSTI MALIH DRŽAVA: STUDIJE SLUČAJA SRBIJA I ŠVEDSKA

## Rezime

Ova disertacija je vođena jednim glavnim pitanjem: kako to da su dve veoma različite male države, Srbija i Švedska, definisale svoje bezbednosne politike na identičan način, kao vojnu neutralnosti/nesvrstanosti. Autorka je najpre utvrdila nedostatke dostupne literature na temu neutralnosti/nesvrstanosti i malih država. Prvi deo literature nikada nije uverljivo objasnio koje su to stvarne strategije bezbednosti neutralnih/nesvrstanih država, izuzev generičke pretpostavke da je nečlanstvo u vojnim savezima način da se izbegne ulazak u rat. Literatura o malom državama je još uvek pretežno zaokupljena naporima da definiše šta je to što određene države definiše kao male, i još uvek ne uspeva da objasni kada je i kako to što su neke države male relevantno za njihove politike bezbednosti. Inovativni teorijski model izgrađen u ovoj disertaciji je uključio različite varijable iz različitih teorijskih okvira kako bi ponudio objašnjenje zašto pojedine male države odlučuju da ostaju van vojnih saveza u 21. veku. Taj model, koji nudi generalizaciju teorije srednjeg dometa, uključuje tri nezavisne varijable: *iskustvo rata i istorijsko iskustvo neutralnosti/nesvrstanosti*, koje objašnjava istorijski institucionalizam; *percepcija pretnji*, onako kako ih diskutuju neo-realisti, i *unutrašnja politička dinamika*, onako kako je analizira teorija racionalnog izbora. Tri nezavisne varijable su potom primenjena na bogat emirijski materijal dobijen iz dve studije slučaja.

Nalazi ukazuju na jaku vezu između prethodnog istorijskog iskustva i izbora vojne neutralnosti/nesvrstanosti i odsustvo kauzalne veze između tog izbora i percepcije pretnji. Unutrašnja politička dinamika ima jak eksplanatorni potencijal u obe studije slučaja, ali ona se zavisno od konteksta značajno drugačije manifestuje.

Ključne reči: vojna neutralnost, vojna nesvrstanost, male države, savezi, Srbija, Švedska istorijsko iskustvo, percepcija pretnji, unutrašnja politička dinamika.

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List of abbreviations:

BIA - Security Information Agency

CEE - Central and Eastern Europe

CFSP - Common Foreign and Security Policy

CSCE - Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe

CSTO - Collective Security Treaty Organisation

DOS - Democratic Opposition of Serbia

DS - Defence Strategy

DS - Democratic Party

DSS - Democratic Party of Serbia

EEC - European Economic Community

EU - European Union

FRY - Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

HDZ - Croatian Democratic Union

ICTY - International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia

IFOR - Implementation Force

IPAP - Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP

JNA -  Yugoslav People's Army

JSO - Special Operations Units

KLA - Kosovo Liberation Army

KFOR - Kosovo Force

LDP – Liberal-Democratic Party

MoD - Ministry of Defence

MoI - Ministry of Interior

NAM - Non-Aligned Movement

NATO – North-Atlantic Treaty Organization

NDH - Independent State of Croatia

 NORDEFCO Nordic Defence Cooperation

NSS - National Security Strategy

OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

PARP - Planning and Review Process

PfP - Partnership for Peace

PM - Prime Minister

SNS - Serbian Progressive Party

SRS - Serbian Radical Party

SPO - Serbian Renewal Movement

SPS - Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS

UN – United Nations

UNSC – Security Council of the United Nations

U.S. - United States of America

USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WEU - Western European Union

# CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The dissertation before you is the result of research guided by one main question: Why is it that two very different small states, Serbia and Sweden, came to define their security policies in identical terms - as military neutrality/non-alignment?[1] The research, thus, was motivated by the differences in the dependant variable, first by the differences in their historical records and the political and economic contexts and geographical positions of the two states, and then by the similarity in the dependent variable – the policy of military non-alignment. The primary motivation of the research was therefore not theoretical. I was not driven by ambition to establish a theory of non-alignment, still missing from the security studies literature which is a gap that needs to be filled. The primary motive was to create a comparative study of two different cases of national security policies that appeared to arrive at the same outcome.

That common outcome, i.e. the policy of military non-alignment, dictated that I review a cluster of literature on neutrality/non-alignment in order to establish whether 21$^{st}$ century military non-alignment actually relies on the premises of military neutrality/non-alignment that had been practiced in the 19$^{th}$ and 20$^{th}$ century. The review presented in Chapter Two of this thesis shows that the lessons learned from neutrality as exercised in the 17$^{th}$, 18$^{th}$ and 19$^{th}$ centuries are less applicable to contemporary policy, but that the Cold War experience of neutrality does bear some resemblance. Although this exercise did not offer a conceptual framework within which to explore military non-alignment, it did point to major variables used by the majority of authors to explain military neutrality/non-alignment, such as: the historical experience of war, threat assessment, regional context and the global positioning of major alliances. That cluster of literature had yet another important indicator to offer, and that was that neutrality/non-alignment was/is the choice of small states. However, that literature cluster did not offer much in terms of elaborating which states ought to be defined as small, and what their smallness implies for their security policies. That is why it was logical to go further and look for these answers in the small states literature. Much like the first cluster of literature, this one also

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[1] Military neutrality and military non-alignment are not necessarily identical policies although the relevant literature is not always strict in making a distinction between the two. However, majority of theoretical premises are equally applicable to the both. Even more so, Serbia defines its policy as military neutrality but the explanation and definition of that policy as offered by Serbian decision-makers actually points to the policy of military non-alignment. After centuries of being military neutral Sweden abandoned that phrase in 1992 and since then defines its security policy as military non-alignment. When I use military neutrality/non-alignment in the text of this thesis it means that the discussion is equally applicable to the both, while the distinctions will be discussed further on it the text of this dissertation.

failed to offer a strong conceptual framework for the analysis of small states' policies. Instead, it pointed to some premises shared by the literature on neutrality/non-alignment and that on small states alike. Based on those shared premises, and owing to the need to theoretically and empirically update both clusters of literature, this enterprise proceeded with the ambitious yet necessary step of creating an eclectic conceptual framework within which it would be possible to analyse military non-alignment as a security strategy in the 21$^{st}$ century and conduct a comparative analysis of two different case studies of militarily non-aligned (small) states. Consequently, the dissertation ended up providing a wider theoretical contribution than was originally planned.

It was reading of neutrality/non-alignment and small states literature that pointed to the limits of realist and traditional understanding of how alignment works and why certain (small) states decide to stay outside of the alliances. As discussed further below, the existing alignment theories do not explain why states decide to remain outside of alliance. First of all, neo-realists who had worked on said theories have essentially not been interested in (small) states that remained on the fringes of the international system refusing to join military alliances. Even more importantly, the alignment theories have remained mainly focused only on military threats, without updating their analyses with a much more complex threat assessment of the 21$^{st}$ century. That is why I decided to ground my conceptual discussion of military non-alignment as a security strategy in the 21$^{st}$ century within an eclectic framework which includes some of the premises found in the literature, including the threat assessment from the alignment theories, but applied to the contemporary security policies.

In addition to threat assessment, the other two independent variables included in the conceptual framework presented in Chapter Three of the thesis are the historical experience of war and/or neutrality and the states' internal political dynamics. The literature on neutrality/non-alignment already pointed to the importance of previous experiences that guide states when differentiating between their friends and enemies, and in deciding which policies had served them well and which had failed them. However, to fully understand the relevance of historical experience for contemporary decision-making, we have to refer to historical institutionalism as the referent framework that is most suitable for theorising previous historical experiences. As for the internal political dynamics, it is mainly absent from the earlier analyses of militarily neutral/non-aligned states. In this thesis, I included it in this analysis based on the explanatory value that interplay between different political actors could have, but also because states' internal politics can be viewed as lenses that shape domestic discourse on what chief security threats are and what a specific state's history is all about.

Once the conceptual framework is presented, it will be applied to two case studies – one dealing with Serbia in Chapter Four and the other on Sweden in Chapter Five. The time frame of the analysis in the two case studies is different and depends on when a specific state had proclaimed its policy of military non-alignment. In the case of Serbia, the threat assessment and internal political dynamics are centred around the year 2006, when Montenegro left the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and when Serbia was in the position to formulate its own security policies as an independent state, and on year 2018, when last parliamentary elections were held and new security doctrines, reinforcing the policy of military non-alignment, were drafted. In the case of Sweden, the analysis focuses on the year 1992, when Carl Bildt formed the non-Socialist Government which rephrased the long-standing Swedish policy of neutrality into a policy of military non-alignment, and the year 2018/beginning of 2019, when last parliamentary elections were held and the policy of military non-alignment was re-confirmed by the new Government. Unlike the threat assessment and internal political dynamics, historical analysis is based on secondary sources and focused on major historical events (wars) that were crucial for the states' process of learning and crafting their alignment or non-alignment policies. There are two major wars that strongly affected how these two states would define their future military policies, the First and the Second World War, but other major events in the two case studies are different since they depend on specific historical trajectories of Serbia and Sweden. Finally, the conclusion, provided in Chapter Six, presents the main findings concerning the conceptual framework which was applied to the material relating to the two case studies.

# CHAPTER 2: Literature review

In the following chapter I will firstly provide literature review on neutrality/non-alignment clustered in three main categories developed alongside criteria of main features respective authors used to discuss neutrality/non-alignment and historical period within which they pursued their research. Each sub-chapter is finished with the concluding remarks relevant for the portion of reading discussed within it. This is followed by the literature review on small states, structured around the few most relevant issues for this cluster of literature: what are small states, how their smallness matters, and what their alignment policies are. At the end of this part, concluding remarks picturing gaps and missing pieces in the literature on small states is provided.

## 2.1 - Review of the Literature on Neutrality and Non-Alignment

There are three main clusters of literature that discuss neutrality/non-alignment. The first one offers historical and legal reviews of the meaning and employment of neutrality/non-alignment in different historical and contextual settings.[2] The dominant feature of this exercise is the view that neutrality was/is a viable option employed to protect states' individual interests, which are defined in terms of protection of one's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The second cluster includes units of available literature that discuss the meaning of neutrality and non-alignment as a security strategy in the Cold War context.[3] Most of the authors see neutrality as a

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[2] Nils Ørvik, *The decline of neutrality 1914-1941: with special reference to the United States and the Northern neutrals*, London, Cass, 1971; Annette Baker Fox, *The power of small states: diplomacy in World War II*, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1959; Wolfgang Danspeckgruber ,'Armed neutrality: Its application and future', in *Securing Europe's future*, Stephen J. Flanagen and Fen Osler Hampson (eds), John F. Kennedy School of Government. Center for Science and International Affairs, 1986: pp. 242-280; Roderick Ogley, *The theory and practice of neutrality in the twentieth century, 1904-1994*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970; Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and small states*, London: Routledge, 1988; Peter Lyon, *Neutralism*, Leicester: Leicester Univ. Press, 1963; John W. Burton, *International relations: a general theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965; Josef Binter, 'The Actual and Potential Role of Neutrality In Search of Peace and Security', *Security Dialogue*, 16 (4), 1985: pp.387-398; H. Neuhold, H. Thalberg (eds), *The European Neutrals in International Affairs*, Wien; Boulder, Col. : Braumüller for the Austrian Inst. for International affairs AIIA Westview Press, 1984.

[3] Harto Hakovirta, *East-West Conflict and European Neutrality*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988; Gunnar Jervas and Bengt Sundelius (eds), *The neutral democracies and the new cold war*, Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1987; Bill McSweeney, „The Politics of Neutrality: Focus on Security for Smaller Nations', *Security Dialogue*, 18(1), 1987: pp.33-46; Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and collaboration: essays on international politics*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins P.

legitimate choice of (small) states. Their choice is viewed as a sign of plurality and democratisation in the conduct of international relations, at the same time providing additional impetus for further democratisation and a break from the Cold War bipolarity. This literature discusses generic postures of neutral and non-aligned states within the bloc division of two super-powers and their possibilities to uphold that position, especially in the light of nuclear armament which significantly changed the nature of conflict and the outlook of any future warfare. The third cluster is composed of relatively scarce literature on neutrality after the Cold War, both on its conceptual development and empirical investigations, exploring the meaning, possibilities and security options of neutral states in the period of cooperative security and high prominence of international security organisations.[4] Most of these works discuss developments of neutrality/non-alignment in parallel with the significant developments that occurred in the European security order, developments of the European Union's (EU) security policies, changes in the conduct of military operations and non-aligned states' participation in NATO operations.


## 2.1.1. Historical and Definitional Discussions on Neutrality/Non-Alignment

The first cluster of the literature discussing neutrality and non-alignment offers historical and legal reviews of the meaning and employment of neutrality/non-alignment in different historical and contextual settings. Neutrality is discussed as a legitimate strategy to protect state's individual interests. How states exercised neutrality/non-alignment was dependent on the international political context and how key categories, such as war and peace, were understood within that specific context. It was also dependent on what states were striving for on the international scene.

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1962; Pertti Joenniemi, 'Models of neutrality; the traditional and modern', *Cooperation and conflict*, XXIII, 1988: pp. 53-67; Kari Möttölä, *The Arctic challenge: Nordic and Canadian approaches to security and cooperation in an emerging international region*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1988; Ann-Sofie Dahl, 'To be or Not to Be Neutral: Swedish Security Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era', in *The National Security of Small States in a Changing World*, E. Inbar and G. Sheffer (eds), London: Frank Cass, 1997: pp. 175-196; Joseph Kruzel, 'The European neutrals, national defense, and international security', *Comparative Strategy*, 8(3), 1989: pp. 297-315.

[4] Ann-Sofie Dahl and Norman Hillmer (eds), *Activism and (non)alignment: the relationship between foreign policy and security doctrine*, Stockholm: Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2002; Jean-Marc Rickli, 'European small states' military policies after the Cold War: from territorial to niche strategies', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 21(3), 2008: pp. 307-325; Anton Bebler, 'The neutral and non- aligned states in the new European security architecture', *European Security*, 1(2), 1992: pp. 133-143; Nils Andrén, 'On the Meaning and Uses of Neutrality', *Cooperation and Conflict*, XXVI, 1991: pp. 67-83; W. Bauwens, A. Clesse and O. Knudsen (eds), *Small states and the security challenge in the new Europe*, London: Brassey, 1996; Pertti Joenniemi, 'Neutrality beyond the Cold War', *Review of International Studies*, 19 (3), 1993: pp. 289-304.

According to the classical definition, neutrality implies that a state seeks security by abstaining from participating in armed conflicts with other states. It is about military security at its core, and it has nothing to do with ideological or political neutrality. Authors attempting to explain the roots and origins of the meaning of neutrality had to disassociate this term from that of non-alignment, which was almost exclusively discussed as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). In his detailed historical overview of neutrality, Nils Ørvik states that it was only after the last half of the 18th century that some of the smaller states were classified as traditionally neutral, and that passivity, or neutrality built on law, was codified no earlier than in the 19th century.[5] Codification brought about rights and duties that came with neutrality – what sort of behaviour neutrals had to adhere to in exchange for the privilege of staying neutral in time of war. Ørvik explains that, once they stated that their primary ambition was security, some of the previously dominant and war-mongering states, such as Sweden, accepted that wars would not be playing much of a role in their future. And the only way to have security was to stay out of wars altogether and be neutral, simultaneously keeping the position of equality with others.

According to Ørvik, there have been three main stages in the development of neutrality: partial neutrality that ceased to exist with the Napoleonic wars; impartial, legal neutrality that ended with the First World War; and neutrality that was developed in the area of collective security and non-belligerency during and following the Second World War. In the third stage of its development neutrality was dependent on military force, economic strength and strategic position of states. In Ørvik's opinion, the time between the Renaissance and the French Revolution was the period when neutrality was closest to a workable solution for states wishing to stay outside of wars. In that period, neutrality rested on three necessary pillars: self-sufficiency, sovereignty and general decency, and stability in international relations with a general respect of treaties, as states had only small and limited armies and there was an overall belief in just wars. According to Ørvik, 19th century neutrality was artificial; it was established in peace-time and was never tested in times of war - at least not prior to the First World War, which put an end to impartial, legal neutrality codified by national laws, when states simply proclaimed that they would stay outside of specific belligerences.

As evident from the historical review of its development, neutrality flourished in times of peace and could survive minor wars; however, it was unable to survive major upsets of the balance of power. Traditional neutrality rests on the assumption of a war between sovereign states, and only when a war is declared it becomes obvious who is on which side. Impartial neutrality also rests on a string of assumptions. Some of them are: respect for international law,

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[5] Ørvik, *The decline of neutrality 1914-1941,* p. 274.

geographically limited wars fought for rational causes, loosely organised international system, reasonable degree of economic and military self-sufficiency, and stable domestic policy of neutral states. Ørvik does not discuss non-alignment within any of the previous categories. But since non-alignment in peace plays the same role as neutrality in war, according to him it is reasonable to apply the same reasoning to non-alignment. He defines it in relation to alliances in the international system – tighter alliance makes it easier to define non-alignment and *vice versa*.[6]

In Wolfgang Danspeckgruber's view, traditional neutrality, either *ad hoc* or permanent, is a military-strategic concept, while non-alignment, referring to the NAM, carries a more socio-economic meaning.[7] As such, neutrality has significantly changed its outlook throughout the history, from the staring position of wartime policy toward a peace-time policy as employed during the Cold War. Therefore, its shapes were different before and after 1945. Prior to 1945, neutrality was seen as a policy declared at a time of war, while during the Cold War neutrals appeared to also have a role in peacetime. During the 1950s neutrality emerged in two new shapes: in the form of NAM, as was the case in Yugoslavia and India, and the status of states that have been neutralised, such as Austria. When opting for neutral standing, instead of entering an alliance, the assumption made by the states was that greater security could be achieved by standing on the sides than by seeking protection from one of the major powers against possible threats and pressures coming from another.

According to Perti Joenniemi, throughout the Cold War neutrality was mainly viewed as a residual category and a foreign policy option for small states on the fringes of the international system, as an individualistic behaviour and a form of abstention.[8] According to him, changes in the models of neutrality reflect changes in the main assumptions and worries of neutrals. It is not a question of mere survival; changes in the concept were influenced also by technological competitiveness and economic performances that neutrals happened to have been facing at the time.[9] In the changing context of the interconnected world, therefore, it is not just about basic security provisions for neutral states. Neutrality has increasingly become rather a strategy of autonomy, sovereignty and identity, and it is the neutrals' ability to influence the events and shape the environment that is at stake. Those are the issues that neutrals are supposed to address in the more recent model of neutrality, instead of discussing mere physical survival. According

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[6] *Ibid*.
[7] Danspeckgruber, 'Armed neutrality: Its application and future', pp. 242-280.
[8] Joenniemi, 'Models of Neutrality: The Traditional and Modern', p. 54.
[9] *Ibid.*

to Joenniemi, neutrals have found themselves in a context where security became a matter of scoring high in terms of usefulness in the international system.[10]

*The Theory and Practice of Neutrality in the Twentieth Century,* written by Roderick Ogley back in 1970, is one of the key works on neutrality in the 20th century.[11] In his book, Ogley explains the difference between neutralised countries (e.g. Belgium) which are not neutral by choice, have no freedom to abandon their neutrality, and are legally bound to preserve it, and countries that are neutral (e.g. Sweden) or non-aligned (e.g. India) by choice. He stresses that neutrality is hard to preserve, especially in time of war, and that it is war that represents a test for the neutrality's feasibility. Still, neutrality is an option and a matter of choice, where even the states with the least favourable conditions do have freedom of choice, regardless of how limited it might be. Ogley makes an interesting remark, similar to Ørvik's, that neutrality can also be a choice of a militarily powerful country – like it happened with Sweden in the 16th and 17th century – which can decide to abandon military ambitions or even abdicate high level politics. In its modern form, he claims, and in the time of prominent military organisations and many niches of activism outside of the military sphere, neutrality and non-alignment as one of its forms do not necessarily imply isolationism.

Another important study is Efraim Karsh's *Neutrality and Small States.* In it, Karsh makes a clear distinction between neutrality and non-alignment (neutralism), since the latter, according to him, lacks the ontological and substantial link with refusal of war as legitimate political instrument.[12] According to Karsh, non-alignment is a political concept that says nothing about war as a policy tool, since in case of war non-aligned states would have to declare whether they are at war or are neutral. Neutral states, on the other side, are often ideologically biased but remain militarily neutral. The author does not insist, as some others do, that it is a choice of small states; instead, he claims, in the same line of argumentation as others, that the success of the policy is dependent on great powers' relations and their assumptions about neutrals. The objective of neutrality, when employed by small states, is to preserve their independence and territorial integrity during wartime.[13] In order for it to be credible, it should be also maintained during peacetime. According to him, permanent neutrality is perpetual non-alignment in peacetime for the purpose of establishing grounds for neutrality in wartime. The author explores the use of neutrality using the example of neutrals during the Second World War. He claims that

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[10] *Ibid*, pp. 53-67.
[11] Ogley, *The theory and practice of neutrality in the twentieth century*.
[12] Karsh, *Neutrality and small states*, p. 7.
[13] *Ibid*, p. 8.

small states have only two options. The first is to join alliances in which they would necessarily be minor partners, relying on the assumptions of the bigger allies of how important the neutrals' independence and security is for them. Their second option is to rely on their own resources and simply be neutral. According to Karsh, the diplomacy behind the decision of a larger and more resourceful state to be neutral is much more complicated, since belligerents are not willing to easily let bigger states remain outside of the alliances.

The work of Peter Lyon concerns primarily non-aligned states. In his terminology, neutralism equals non-alignment, as illustrated by the Cold War experience, and it means disassociation from the Cold War.[14] In general, he writes that chances of pursuing a successful policy of neutrality are always dependent on the character of warfare, and that policies of neutrality have changed together with the changes in warfare. For him, neutrals fall into one of the five categories: neutralised states, traditional neutrals, buffer or former buffer states, isolationists - pioneer neutralists, and new neutralist states (e.g. states that gained independence after 1945). He observes that many small states previously searched for security in the form of isolation, which presumed indifference to world affairs, aloofness, and reluctance to engage in the general affairs of the world. Membership in the UN is what allows today's small states to avoid isolation and gain access to contacts they would otherwise be deprived of regardless of the fact that they are neutral. For them, UN membership is also a symbol of recognition. According to Lyon, non-alignment cannot, in any view, be regarded as a security strategy that allows a small state immunity from attacks that those that are in alliances have.[15] He claims that, during the Cold War, both superpowers viewed neutralism as a step toward Communism. However, new Afro-Asian leaders emerging at the time just assumed it, as a natural expression of their states' sovereignty and independence in international affairs.[16]

John W. Burton explains policies of non-aligned states in his 1965 book, presenting them in the opposition to policies of alliance formation.[17] According to him, both neutrality and war are legitimate options, and alliances are a natural choice in a world in which war happens to be a legitimate policy tool. In his view, non-alignment developed within a system of power rivalry that appeared in the absence of war. In that system, non-aligned states claimed a right to be non-neutral and to participate actively in the world affairs, thus developing a self-interested foreign policy. Alignment is neither imposed nor a consequence of imposition; it is rather a deliberate

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[14] Lyon, *Neutralism*.
[15] *Ibid,* p. 197.
[16] *Ibid,* p. 201.
[17] Burton, *International relations: a general theory*.

response to a set of circumstances in the external environment that occurs when states are propelled to request protection from another power. In the background of alliance formation is an expectation of aggression, and that is a part of the explanation why nations join alliances even in the absence of specific threats.[18] Once there is an expectation of aggression, aggressive policies are likely to follow. Burton claims that alliances have constituted a traditional policy option in Europe, and that they would have appeared even in the absence of the Cold War division. The Cold War, according to him, only helped the emergence of defence alliances.[19] On the other hand, when states join alliances in the absence of an active threat from another country, the reasons for such a choice should be sought in domestic politics. Any government that lacks popular support is unlikely to admit that insecurity originates from internal discontent, and would instead always claim that threats are coming from a foreign power. According to Burton, alliances with military powers are sought by politically backward countries as a defence mechanism against internal change.[20] In many cases, a major power conflict is just a cloak that disguises other reasons for alignment. In any way, he claims, non-aligned states are not isolated, but rather play an active role in international affairs, whereas rivals in a cold war tend to lure them to their respective sides.[21] The influence that they exercise on the two sides is gained through power balancing and bargaining. However, these balancing and bargaining roles are dependent on the great powers' agreement to actually let the neutrals play them. While doing so, Burton claims, the most that neutrals can achieve is to decrease tensions at a particular time or with regard to a particular problem.

For Joenniemi, the concept of neutrality is inherently linked with the concept of sovereignty, and it was originally exercised as the right of a sovereign state to refrain from participating in wars, equal to the other states' right to wage them. Neutrality was also closely interlinked in the 19th century with nation-state building. Since military organisations were among the institutions that were dominant in the process of national state building in Europe, neutrality was often interpreted in military terms. As military institutions are closer to exclusiveness and isolationism than community and integration, it had an impact on neutrality as a concept which was defined in a more isolationistic fashion. Joenniemi agrees with others on the point that neutrals never presented themselves as emancipatory and alternative in the international setting. Instead, they continued to view international relations in rather traditional terms, in an 'us *vs.* them', 'inside *vs.* outside' divide and with an emphasised notion of identities

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[18] *Ibid,* pp. 171-173.
[19] *Ibid,* p. 176.
[20] *Ibid,* p. 183.
[21] *Ibid,* p. 225.

and differences. Further on, the 'us *vs.* them' dichotomy has been supported by isolationism and states' military preparations for future conflicts rather than by neutrals' critical thinking on how to bridge these gaps. Therefore, they were the guardians of *status quo* in the international system rather than promoters of any radical changes.[22]

Neuhold and Thalberg make two main points concerning the meaning and viability of neutrality. The first is that neutrality is a legitimate choice of a state that seeks to protect its sovereignty and independence and contribute to international security. The roles of neutrals are explained in terms of their services, such as mediation and serving as hosts to international conferences and negotiations. Still, their roles are limited and they are definitely not perceived as role models. They can act only if big powers' politics allow room for negotiating international problems, which is when neutrals can act as deal-breakers.[23]

Besides the dominant acceptance of neutrality as a legitimate choice of (mostly) small and less powerful states, there is consensus in the literature, concerning neutrality, that there are many limitations as to how a state should employ that policy. There is also an agreement on neutrals' and non-aligned states' general dependence on big powers politics and the room for manoeuvring they allow. Ulrich Albrecht, Burkhard Auffermann and Pertti Joenniemi explain the continuum of looking at neutrality: neutral states were seen as objects rather than subjects in international relations, while neutrality was a choice for those that were less powerful.[24] According to them, those are states that were not able to influence events. It was far more beneficial for them to be perceived by the great powers as passive observers than actors that might try to break the Cold-War bipolar system by introducing a 'third way'. The authors of this study argue that major powers accepted neutrals as a genuine feature, as a form of an independent foreign policy all its own. While it would be an exaggeration to say that they have become admired or respected, at least they are acknowledged and tolerated.[25]

Works that have discussed the meaning and historical usage of neutrality and non-alignment have sporadically made a link between research on neutrality/non-alignment and research on the security of small states. In their studies, authors usually take neutrality to be a strategy that is employed mostly by small states. W. Bauwens, A. Clesse and O. Knudsen write that it is the security of small states that is at the core of their attention, and that there had been a shift in paradigm, from questioning whether it is better for small states to be in alliance or non-

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[22] Joenniemi, 'Neutrality beyond the Cold War*', pp. 289-304.
[23] Neuhold and Thalberg (eds), *The European Neutrals in International Affairs*.
[24] The Marstrand Study Group, *The Neutrality: The need for Conceptual Revision*.
[25] *Ibid*, p. 4.

aligned, towards a more ambitious concept of security for all.[26] Their book refers to western European small states, with strong economies and administrative systems, which represent legitimate powers within their own borders and are weak only in the military sense of the word. This already points to only rare cases of European neutrals with traditional neutrality. They find three major bodies of literature on small states: legal research on neutrality, political approach on dominance and submission, and rational choice focusing on military security. It is the link between neutrality as a small states' policy that allowed authors to shift their focus from small states to issues of neutrality and non-alignment.

Josef Binter agrees with the point that neutrality is a possible alternative strategy for small states situated in sensitive strategic areas and threatened by war and violence.[27] Much like other authors who are stressing the close links between neutrality and sovereignty, Binter emphasises the link between declaration of neutrality and self-determination. Together with general appraisal of the positive contributions of neutrals, Binter argues that neutrality had loosened up the bipolar structure by relaxing tensions and allowing for the establishment of zones of peace and prosperity.

As Gunnar Jervas and Bengt Sundelius see it, the dilemma is the same for all small states.[28] Their basic choice is twofold: they can either try to accommodate big powers, especially those in their neighbourhood, keep a low profile and try to stay away from their respective confrontations, or join alliances and enjoy the benefits of borrowed security. The second option seems to have been the choice of the majority of small states after the Second World War, which contradicts the basic foreign policy principles of neutrals. According to Jervas and Sundelius, military dissuasion seems to remain the most plausible security strategy of small states, which they attempted to apply in the Second World War. Yet, it is questionable whether they would or would not be able to deter new types of threats.

In her influential book *The Power of Small States* from 1959, Annette Baker Fox presents similar views on limitations posed for small states dependent on great powers' politics.[29] The author explores the Second World War experience of small neutral states (confusingly, she uses the terms 'small' and 'neutral' interchangeably while referring to the same states), with only a few theoretical considerations. One of them is her argument that, when they were confronted with great powers, small states appeared to have more power than it was initially thought. Their

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[26] Bauwens, Clesse and Knudsen (eds), *Small states and the security challenge in the new Europe*.
[27] Binter, 'The Actual and Potential Role of Neutrality', p. 390.
[28] Jervas and Sundelius (eds), *The Neutral Democracies and the New Cold War*.
[29] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States*.

leaders had genuine freedom of choice, and they had choices to make.[30] Most of these choices, however, involved an opportunity to manoeuvre between the great powers' interests persuading them that it would be more reasonable not to apply coercion against small states. Therefore, their power remains limited, circumstantial and dependent on the great powers' rivalry.[31]

It appears from the above that it is the broad historical reading of neutrality as exercised by traditional neutrals and members of the non-aligned movement that prevails in the scholarship on neutrality, which has been premised on an international society of equal, sovereign states. There are a few important features to this cluster of literature. First of all, most of the authors take neutrality/non-alignment to be a legitimate choice of sovereign and autonomous states, equally legitimate as options of alliance membership and war-making.[32] Traditional neutrality has been tied to concepts of sovereignty, national interests and the notion of a war as a legitimate tool. These scholars have not been motivated to search for ideological layers in these positions and have made a general distinction between neutrality as a strategic-military position and the NAM which had a more socio-economic meaning.[33] However, there has been a significant transition in the discussion about the goals and ambitions of states that adopt neutrality/non-aligned policies. Earlier works, such as Ørvik's, view neutral position as shelter provided mostly to small states seeking to escape the costs and uncertainties of war. Most of the authors whose writing is reviewed here hold a rather pessimistic look when it comes to the possibilities of applying strategy of neutrality/non-alignment permanently. Their pessimism is based on the perception that it is the big powers that give the tone to the international setting, and that neutrals/non-aligned can find niche strategies for themselves only if allowed to do so.[34] Joenniemi, however, provides analytical space for much more activism on the side of neutrals and non-aligned, which are seen as able to assert their autonomy and identity by staying outside of military alliances. All of these points are further discussed within the specific political and security context of the Cold War setting.

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[30] *Ibid*, p. 8.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] Binter, 'The Actual and Potential Role of Neutrality'; Neuhold and Thalberg (eds), *The European Neutrals in International Affairs*, Joenniemi, 'Neutrality beyond the Cold War*'*.

[33] Danspeckgruber, 'Armed neutrality: Its application and future'.

[34] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States*; Burton, *International relations: a general theory*; Neuhold and Thalberg (eds), *The European Neutrals in International Affairs*; Karsh, *Neutrality and small states*.

### 2.1.2. Neutrality/Non-Alignment in the Cold War Context

The second cluster in the body of scholarship on neutrality reviewed for the purpose of this dissertation discusses neutrality and non-alignment as security strategies in the context of the Cold War. Most of the works in this group construe neutrality as a legitimate choice of (small) states. Their choice is a sign of a plurality and democratisation in the context of big powers' rivalry. Three main points are made within this group of literature. First, neutrality is seen as an aberration from the established structures of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation as alliances that dominated the post-war security system.[35] As such, neutrality was irritating to both NATO and the USSR. The first saw it as a potential split within its own camp, which the USSR might consequently use, while the latter recognised its ideological incompatibility with the position of both neutrals and non-aligned. Second, the neutrals appeared as major advocates of the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) since it offered them room to manoeuvre within the boundaries set by the major powers. That process allowed them to embrace their traditional roles of mediators and deal-breakers, while in return they managed to move the CSCE beyond its original intent and into a true pan-European forum. And finally, neutrality, unlike the NAM, did not pose any serious challenges to the general bipolar structure of the system. Neutrals found a niche policy for themselves and they did not question the origins of the two powers' rivalry and possibilities to overcome it. As Hakovirta elaborates, it does not mean that neutrals were not aware of the problems and insecurities emerging from that rivalry. Rather, they acknowledged that they were themselves a part of the system whose boundaries were set by the great powers, and that their ability to pursue the policy of neutrality depended on the stability of said system.[36]

Few authors who engaged in the topic of neutrality/non-alignment during the Cold War define it almost exclusively within the framework of severe East-West confrontation. Joseph Kruzel explains that neutrality managed to survive different international settings because each of those settings found a value in the services of neutral states acting as intermediaries and mediators.[37] At the end of the Cold War, he claims, neutrality preserved those essential characteristics and became some of the small states' permanent foreign policy. He makes a distinction between neutrality realists and neutrality idealists, whose opinions differ concerning the issue of whether or not neutrality is a product of external factors of a more indigenous policy that allows for an active foreign policy stand. The two views differ in what they see to be adequate policies of neutral states: should they just attempt to accommodate relations between

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[35] The Marstrand Study Group, *The Neutrality: The need for Conceptual Revision*, p. 8.
[36] Hakovirta, *East-West Conflict*, p. 98.
[37] Kruzel, Joseph. 'The future of European neutrality.'

the super powers, preventing conflict between them (realists), or should they strive to act as agenda setters and a role model for others, thus inspiring movement toward peace policies (idealists)?[38]

Boleslaw A. Boczek defines non-alignment only in relation to Cold War hostilities. He claims that similarity between non-alignment and neutrality ends here, since outside of the big alliances, alongside this division, the non-aligned can conclude different bilateral treaties or enter into regional military pacts with whomever they wish. According to him, non-alignment is an ill-defined political doctrine that can be used flexibly and in accordance with the countries' preferences. He defines both neutrals and the non-aligned as belonging to the group of small states.[39]

Authors who discussed viability of neutrality from the Cold War perspective also questioned whether it would be possible to reconcile the system of collective security and the posture of neutrality. In the first decade of the 20th century, when the international law on neutrality was codified, neutrality was perceived to be a viable and politically respectful option with no moral connotations attached to it. This view survived the end of the First World War, but not the end of the Second World War, due to the failure and refusal of neutrals to pay the price for combating the Nazis. Bill McSweeney points that, after the Second World War, it was the victorious powers that spun the narrative of victory, with the notion of the system of collective security as the only guarantor of peace.[40] That notion was not compatible with neutrality. At the same time, neutrals themselves proved that they did not feel entirely comfortable with the system of collective security in the form of the UN by raising their concerns with the UN mission of promoting peace by military means.[41]

Efraim Karsh also discusses relations between neutrals and the system of collective security. According to him, during the period of the League of Nations, neutrals whole-heartedly believed in the collective system. However, its ineffectiveness in the 1930s demonstrated that it was nothing more than a defence alliance dominated by the most powerful states; consequently, neutrals withdrew from participation in the League's military sanctions. Later on, with the United Nations (UN), one bitter experience with the collective security system already behind

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[38]*Ibid.*

[39] Boleslaw A. Boczek, 'The Conceptual and Legal Framework of Neutrality and Nonalignment in Europe' in: Victor S. Papacosma, and Mark R. Rubin (eds). *Europe's Neutral and Nonaligned States: between NATO and the Warsaw Pact*. Wilmington: SR books, 1988, p. 5-22.

[40] McSweeney, 'The Politics of Neutrality'.

[41] *Ibid*, p. 36.

them, they at least still believed in the advantages of belonging to that club and having more policy tools at their disposal. For them, the General Assembly proved to be the favourable arena.[42]

Most of the authors that write about neutrality and non-alignment during the Cold War define them as strategies highly dependent on external circumstances.[43] However, while discussing the position of neutrals and non-aligned in the Cold War context, most of the authors agree that there is a big difference between the two. Europe's neutrals have actually supported the *status quo* by not questioning the existing system of bipolarity - although they have relaxed it by trying to broaden the scope of issues concerning which it was possible to act multilaterally.[44] That is why neutrals were very much in favour of a forum such as the CSCE, which offered them significant room for active diplomacy. Consequently, those were the neutral states that made the most out of it, and that invested their own credibility and moral stand in the forum's development. Unlike neutrals, NAM questioned the international system, looking for possibilities to transcend the bipolar rivalry and division between the two blocs.[45]

The Yugoslav school of thought was in a line with this argumentation of how NAM actually presented a challenge to the great power politics and offered a platform for small states that voiced their criticism of that politics. While discussing the movement, Yugoslav authors argued that the ideology of non-alignment fitted well Yugoslav Second World War legacies, but they also elaborated the dynamics between the internal and external factors. Ranko Petković writes how Yugoslavia was pressured by both East and West but also by China. The Yugoslav non-alignment, he writes, was a genuine politics born in the fight against those pressures.[46] As Yugoslavia played an important role in the movement, the Yugoslav authors were genuinely interested to offer their contribution to the discussion of the ideological foundation of the movement. Radovan Vukadinović argues how both neutrality and non-alignment are shelter solutions for small and medium states, but that it would be wrong to assume that those are passive policies. While he makes an ambitious to-do list for neutrals and non-aligned in the framework of international relations, he argues that those are actually those states that are most

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[42] Karsh, *Neutrality and small states*, p. 120.

[43] Neuhold and Thalberg, *The European Neutrals in International Affairs,* p. 126.

[44] Joseph Kruzel and Michael H. Haltzel (eds.), *Between the blocs: Problems and prospects for Europe's neutral and non-aligned states*, Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Cambridge University Press, 1989.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] Ranko Petković, 'Spoljna politika Jugoslavije i njeno mesto u pokretu nesvrstanosti', *Politička misao*, XX (4), 1983: pp. 29- 37, p. 30.

interested to reform those relations and therefore might perform an important role.[47] In general, Yugoslav school of international relations for decades, during the Cold War, remained in shadows of non-alignment discussions, mostly searching for explanation of its origins and opportunities in the international arena, before moving to discuss genuine Yugoslav experience of the movement.[48] The typical factors that Yugoslav authors found to explain the NAM were opposition to the power-pressures coming from bigger states, decolonisation, economic under-development and a factor of personalities, very topical for the Yugoslav non-aligned experience.[49]

While the prevalent view was that which posited that neutrality is basically a selfish policy that states employ for the purpose of boosting their national interests, scholars did distinguish between different strategies the neutrals employed to enhance national security. Strategies they employed for the purpose of protecting their national security, meaning their sovereignty and autonomy, were either positive or negative.[50] Positive strategies implied removing the motives of other actors to attack them, while negative were directed at increasing the cost of possible attacks. Among the strategies that were available to neutrals/non-aligned, at the bilateral level states could work on becoming less exposed to different types of threats. On the international level, they could strive to reduce international tensions,[51] hence increasing the level of trust between the actors or increasing the costs of conflict. At the national level, neutrals could adjust their policies, lock their internal debates on human rights, for example, work on economic resilience and prepare for psychological warfare. European neutrals have often tried to gain the trust of potential adversaries rather than threatening to harm them, possibly because the latter was not really plausible.[52]

Regardless of the types of strategic calculations of the European neutrals, researchers saw them mostly as contributors to overall peace and stability in Europe. First of all, as Neuhold and Thalberg argue, they stabilised their respective regions[53] and softened the division between the

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[47] Radovan Vukadinović, 'Male države i politika nesvrstavanja', *Politička misao: časopis za politologiju*, 7 (3-4), 1970: pp. 407-422, p. 416-417.
[48] Milan Igrutinović, 'O shvatanju nesvrstanosti u jugoslovenskoj teoretizaciji međunarodnih odnosa', *Međunarodni problemi*, LXX (2), 2018: pp. 125-146.
[49] *Ibid*, 135-136.
[50] Karsh, *Neutrality and small states*; Jervas and Sundelius (eds), *The Neutral Democracies and the New Cold War*.
[51] Kruzel, 'The European neutrals, national defense, and international security', p. 311.
[52] Jervas and Sundelius, *The neutral democracies and the new cold war*.
[53] Neuhold and Thalberg, *The European Neutrals in International Affairs.*

two powers by acting as buffers between them.[54] However, this does not imply that strategic benefits for the rival powers emerging from the neutrals' contributions were equal. One of the rivals in the Cold War, NATO, enjoyed a greater strategic and military use of neutrality because neutrals, such as Sweden at the time, ideologically identified with the Western side of the conflict and, based on that, could serve as the first line of defence in case of a Soviet attack.[55]

Besides a discussion on concrete strategic and military usefulness of neutrality, the neutrals' position was also questioned from the perspective of morality since they were perceived as free riders benefiting from the system of collective security without actually contributing to it.[56] Neutrals' and non-aligned states' prominence in the international organisations was also viewed as a strategy of small and weak states. According to their critics, they found perfect forums in the UN and the CSCE, where they could act using their formal votes and exercise rhetorical power while not having to compete in the international arena that required 'real' power.[57]

### 2.1.2.a  Viability of Neutrality – Internal and External Conditions

Authors who were interested in neutrality/non-alignment wanted to examine internal and external conditions necessary for a successful policy of neutrality/non-alignment. In doing so, they examined historical accounts of various neutral states, both those that were successful in defending their national security in the two World Wars, which was the hardest test of viability of neutrality in the 20th century, and those that failed to do so. Scholars mostly agreed that neutrality/non-alignment is a genuine policy available to small states as their legitimate foreign and security policy. This refers to all forms and models of neutrality/non-alignment, except for neutrality that is externally imposed in the form of neutralisation, or when neutrality of a state has to be internationally recognised and confirmed by other states. Once the authors agreed that it was a viable state policy, regardless of whether they saw it as an obsolete concept and anachronism inherited from the 19th century or a policy with promising prospects in the multinational setting of the 20th century, they wanted to explore conditions upholding the performance of neutral/non-aligned states.

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[54] Joenniemi, 'Models of neutrality'.
[55] Kruzel and Haltzel (eds.), *Between the blocs: Problems and prospects for Europe's neutral and non-aligned states*.
[56] Kruzel, 'The European neutrals, national defense, and international security', p. 298.
[57] Wolfers, *Discord and collaboration,* p. 224.

The first internal requirement of successful neutrality, as well illustrated by the Second World War experience, is armed neutrality. In other words, successful neutrals, e.g. Sweden and Switzerland, were properly armed, with credible defence forces that did not only serve the purpose of letting potential attackers know that they could be exposing themselves to certain risks but that they would also be facing genuine defence forces able to deter an aggressor at least to some extent. Most authors discussing conditions required for successful neutrality agree on this point. This does not imply that armed neutrals would necessarily end up in a situation where they would actually employ their armed forces. Ogley, for example, explains some of the survival strategies that neutrals employed in the Second World War, among which is also the tactic of offering belligerents plausible reasons not to attack and occupy them. He puts an accent on the diplomatic skills and vision of neutrals who must have been able to see farther than belligerents and have had to persuade them that they would not be offering any exclusive services to their adversaries.[58] The second internal condition is a general internal consensus on the neutrality policy among the key political actors, and general support of it by the majority of the population. Internal conditions also include vast popular support for that option, internal stability and adequate military establishment, but also a sense of special identity (as in the cases of Switzerland, Ireland and Yugoslavia).[59] The third requirement is relative economic independence of a neutral country which is financially able to support the credibility of its independent foreign and defence posture and remain resilient in case of possible economic warfare.

Among the most discussed external conditions supporting the viability of neutrality is the character of the international setting within which states find themselves. Most of the authors find the balance of powers to be the most favourable environment for neutrals. The second external condition is a favourable geographic setting, such as that of Sweden, which can keep a state away from the main zones of conflict. Finally, the third external condition is the credibility of a state's neutral position based on its total foreign policy account.

Most of the authors assume that the balance of power is the most suitable international order within which neutrals can perform their role of mediators and be viewed as acceptable actors in international politics.[60] The diffused balance of power system of the 19th century was an ideal environment for neutrality, which also seemed to flourish in the context of Cold War bipolarity. Within that system, the position of neutrals was dependent on the intensity of the

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[58] Ogley, *The Theory and Practice of Neutrality*.
[59] Papacosma and Rubin (eds), *Europe's Neutral and Nonaligned States,* p. 25.
[60] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States*.

conflict. High intensity would have rigidified the structure, making neutrality less acceptable, while a détente could have made neutrals obsolete. For neutrals, low-intensity conflict is the most desirable option as that is where they can play the role of intermediaries.

The above is further elaborated in the case study of Swedish neutrality. Nils Andrén, for example, discusses neutrality as a legitimate choice that can also be a choice ascribed to a state by its environment.[61] In his account, Swedish neutrality was primarily meant to enhance the security of the country; however, it simultaneously contributed significantly to the Nordic balance and the balance of powers in the rest of Europe. It is heavily dependent on the balance of powers, and it is much easier for a neutral state to maintain that policy when there is stability in this balance than when it is disturbed.[62] In her book from 1997, Ann Sofie Dahl discusses neutrality as one of the options that are at the disposal of small states. She too holds that bipolarity had worked well for the Swedish foreign policy, while the end of the Cold War changed the regional dynamics and lessened the value of Sweden's mediation between the two powers.[63]

Ogley claims that small states can pursue the policy of neutrality with some success only when there is balance of power between the main belligerents.[64] It existed during the First World War and was absent in the Second World War in Scandinavia. The Second World War proved the precariousness of neutrality when small states abandoned it and instead joined military alliances.[65] According to him, there are three main factors upholding the policy of neutrality: 1) credible defence, 2) support of all the major political groups in the country, as internal conditions, and 3) balance of power as a structural, external and also the most important condition.[66]

Baker Fox agrees that balance of power is the most beneficial setting for small neutral states. Analysing the strategies of small states during the Second World War, she emphasises that they were moving to the side of the most dominant power, or at least complying with its demands. The example of Sweden in the Second World War confirms this view. Pressured by

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[61] Nils Andrén, 'Swedish defence: Traditions, perceptions, and policies.' In *Between the Blocs. Problems and Prospects for Europe's Neutral and Nonaligned States* (1989): 175-199.
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] Ann-Sofie Dahl, 'To be or Not to Be Neutral: Swedish Security Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era', pp. 175-196.

[64] Ogley, *The theory and practice of neutrality in the twentieth century*, p. 163.
[65] *Ibid*, p. 171.
[66] *Ibid*, p. 170.

the demands of belligerent Germany, Sweden compromised its neutrality by giving concessions in the form of free passage for troops, for example. However, small states were insignificant in terms of their total ability to disturb the general distribution of power within the system, and have only followed established patterns of behaviour. The lesson learned from the Swedish case study is that even in the presence of a strong balance of power among the greats, a small state must not alienate the power that is the most threatening to its security, no matter how strong its feelings of attachment are to the other side.[67] Besides discussing the balance of power and whether or not neutrals should strive to contribute to it, Baker Fox also generalises conditions in which states were successful in preserving their neutrality. Key among those conditions is that more than one competing power has conflicting demands from the neutrals, that competing powers are in a military balance, that neutrals have scarce resources, that it is geographically difficult to invade them, and that they are distant from the main lines of combat.[68] She claimed that it is also essential that neutrals have self-contained economies, an established history of independence, and that there are more neutrals within the system.[69] These generalisations might be considered an introduction to a possible model or theory of neutrality/non-alignment, which Fox was not attempting to make.

In contrast, Karsh, based on his study of the Second World War, rejects the hypothesis that it is the balance of power that is the most desirable environment for the survival of neutral states. He explores external and internal violations of the policy of neutrality.[70] External violations occur when belligerents attack neutrals and violate their sovereignty and territorial integrity. Internal violations, on the other hand, occur when neutrals themselves agree to compromise their positions in order to avoid being dragged into wars and defeated. Paradoxically, internal violations occurred in the cases of neutrals that have been the most successful in preserving their independence during the Second World War: Sweden, Switzerland and Spain. All three granted significant favours to the most dominant party while they were simultaneously ready to switch sides should the circumstances change. The above three countries survived in the environment dominated by power, while Norway and Belgium found themselves in regions that had an established balance of power and were consequently overrun.

Besides discussing the international context conducive (or not) to neutrality, in the context of the Cold War scholars were also significantly interested in strategic and military

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[67] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States,* p. 125.
[68] *Ibid*, pp. 183-184.
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] Karsh, *Neutrality and small states,* p. 22.

values of neutrals' territories and their armed forces. For example, Kruzel discusses strategic values of neutral states' territories and accounts for their different security postures, from introvert to extrovert policies, depending on whether they have the capacity to project their forces outside of their territories and wage offensive endeavours.[71] He claims that all neutrals' security policies are premised on four main common assumptions: 1) the biggest threat is the possibility of being caught in a big powers' conflict; 2) the enemy would attack with only marginal resources; 3) the neutrals' task is to make such an attack not worth it in terms of manpower and other costs, and 4) neutrals have to be ready to defend themselves on their own. This implied a common attempt of neutral states to compensate their lack of allies by relying on mobilisation of large reserves of militia forces, regardless of the fact that they would be significantly inferior to the potential enemy in terms of technology and other resources. Despite these assumptions, data shows that neutrals traditionally have allocated relatively little money for defence.[72] All Euro-neutrals have accepted the idea of comprehensive defence, meaning integrating civilian, psychological and economical resources toward total defence. Some traditionally neutral states, such as Sweden, sponsored significant research on society's ability to defend itself against foreign psychological and economic pressures.[73]

### 2.1.2.b Great Powers' Position Toward the Neutrals/Non-Aligned

Within this body of literature, authors discuss roles and services of mediators and intermediaries that neutrals perform in the great powers' rivalry. This literature also discusses views and perceptions of the two superpowers on neutrality and their expectations from the neutral states during the Cold War.

In a study from 1988, it is argued that the U.S. did not accept the idea of structural changes to the international system, and that it expected neutrals to recognise and respect boundaries established by the great powers' competition.[74] The U.S. was traditionally interested in the military aspects of neutrality. In its view, without a strong defence, neutrality was just an illusion.[75] According to the study, once the European neutrals adapted to this, they found the

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[71] Kruzel, 'The European neutrals, national defense, and international security'.
[72]*Ibid,* p. 305.
[73] *Ibid,* p. 306.
[74] Ulrich Albrecht, Burkhard Auffermann and Pertti Joenniemi, The Marstrand Study Group, T*he Neutrality: The need for Conceptual Revision*, 1988.
[75] The Marstrand Study Group, p. 34.

Cold War setting quite favourable.[76] Soviets, on the other side, were distrustful and feared that neutrals would simply flock to the Western side, either joining NATO or becoming economically tied to the opposing bloc.[77] With the increased multi-polarity of the international system, neutrals had to demonstrate their usefulness in interaction with others and, by doing so, gain their recognition and approval. Still, their position in the system would occasionally cause concerns to the dominant powers within it.

Arnold Wolfers finds it clear that dangers to the U.S. national security stem from the situation of providing security guarantees to the militarily insignificant states while simultaneously stretching U.S. defence capabilities.[78] This, according to him, could result in turning down the US allies. Furthermore, in his opinion, there are some concrete dangers to the U.S. national security that might be caused by the actions of neutrals. They could come either from neutrals allowing incursion of hostile military powers to positions that are vital to U.S. national defence, or from neutrals demonstrating indifference toward the prerequisites of international equilibrium.[79] His conclusion on the steps that U.S. leadership would have to take if confronted with a non-aligned associated with the opposite bloc is that it would need to take any action necessary to prevent events that would undermine the U.S. national security.[80] In the same book, traditional neutrals are viewed in a somewhat more positive light, as they do not attempt to change the *status quo* in the international affairs and their stand is associated with passivity and non-activity. The non-aligned, on the other hand, according to Wolfers, pose a much greater danger to the U.S. and its efforts directed toward a collective defence system and its own national security. The reason for this is that they may not understand the benefits of the U.S.-sponsored collective defence or might be deluded into Soviet ideological propaganda; also, they associate the West with colonialism, and having been anti-Western from the start they would be naturally inclined to accept Communism easily. Since they are all newly established states with an urge to prove their sovereignty, with leaders who wish to compete successfully with their national rivals, they see active international position as the best strategy to achieve both. Wolfers seems to be provoked by the appeals that the non-aligned made to the U.S. and USSR during the talks on disarmament, and fears that in such a course of events the U.S. might be perceived as an unconstructive actor in the international arena. At the same time, according to him, the neutrals' stands, related to disarmament for example, were more closely associated with those of the

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[76] *Ibid*, p. 35.
[77] *Ibid,* pp. 11, 12.
[78] Wolfers, *Discord and collaboration.*
[79] *Ibid,* p. 227.
[80] *Ibid*.

USSR, and those states were therefore ideologically more in a tune with the anti-Western bloc in the Cold War rivalry.

According to Joenniemi, the United States' traditionally harsh views of neutrality changed over time, since they have recognised some of the positive roles that neutral states play.[81] In particular, the U.S. has come to realise that neutrals created a buffer zone between the East and the West and contributed to discussions on disarmament.[82] Also, the U.S. started to appreciate that neutrals have eased the burden on Allied military resources because in specific regions, such is Scandinavia, they could act as the first line of defence in a potential war instead of NATO forces. A condition for a more accepting view of the neutrals was that they recognise and respect the balance of power established between the major powers as the main structural precondition for international stability. Any derogation from this would not be tolerated. According to Joenniemi, neutrals have somehow been let into the realm of the Western identity and recognised as 'one of us' although not formally members of the alliance.[83] Their neutrality, however, did not imply neutrality in ideological terms or in respect to the issues of human rights, where they were clearly expected to align with the West. According to Joenniemi, the U.S. demonstrated a clear preference for traditional, isolationist and defence-oriented neutrality, while the USSR was inclined to explore whether the position of neutrality had something more to offer to the world scene.[84]

Karsh also contributed to the discussion on the big powers' positions toward neutrals and the non-aligned.[85] According to him, the Soviets did not see any contradictions between neutrality and the neutrals' posture in the UN and other organisations, while the U.S. were far less happy with the entire concept and regarded it as the least harmful choice for the states that chose not to participate in the U.S.-sponsored collective defence system.[86] The development of nuclear weapons, however, posed an enormous challenge for the neutrals' security policies. The question for them was whether to pursue the nuclear option, as debated in some neutral countries in 1960s, or maintain neutrality. It was the USSR that very directly pointed to how inconceivable it would be for neutrals to opt for nuclear weapons. Military preparedness lies at the core of neutrality, and it includes two key elements: neutral states do not have the protection of nuclear weapons and they rely on purely conventional defence. The two dominant blocs, however, have

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[81] Joenniemi, 'Models of neutrality; the traditional and modern'.
[82] *Ibid,* p. 60.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] *Ibid*, p. 63.
[85] Karsh, *Neutrality and small states*.
[86] *Ibid*, pp. 108-133.

changed the meaning of neutrality by making their independent defence postures appear incredible. This was stressed in the nuclear age where total security was not/is not achievable for anyone; thus, the traditional defence autonomy of neutral states, which are without protection of any of the nuclear powers, became unconvincing.[87] This was even more exaggerated by the further development of military technology, when neutrals, together with other small states, became dependent on big powers for the purchase of highly developed technology necessary for their defence.

The cluster of literature discussing neutrality/non-alignment during the Cold War deepened the analysis of the strategic position of neutrals/non-aligned by addressing their concrete military policies in the context of bi-polar rivalry. These works were less interested in the legalistic definitions and how neutrality/non-alignment was historically conceived, but rather investigated security options for states that stay outside of military alliances and their concrete defence policies. Authors that explored neutrality further from its traditional forms were interested in pointing to specific issues, such as compatibility of neutrality with the system of collective security, conditions contributing to neutrality as a security strategy of small states, and the great powers' perception of neutrals as such. This does not mean that their research excluded observation of where neutrals/non-aligned belonged ideologically and value-wise. However, they never ventured beyond the Cold-War structure, and the discussion on neutral/non-aligned states within the new security architecture would not emerge until after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

## 2.1.3. Conceptual Discussion of Neutrality/Non-Alignment after the Cold War

Only a few contributions to the conceptual development of neutrality/non-alignment have been made after the end of the Cold War. Several studies explore the meaning, possibilities and security options of neutral states in the period of cooperative security and the high prominence of international security organisations.[88] Most of them discuss developments of neutrality/non-alignment in parallel with the significant developments of the European security order, developments in the EU security policies and changes in strategic development of NATO operations.

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[87] *Ibid,* pp. 174-190.

[88] Ann-Sofie Dahl and Norman Hillmer (eds), *Activism and (non)alignment*; Jean-Marc Rickli, 'European small states' military policies after the Cold War: from territorial to niche strategies', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 21 (3) 2008: pp. 307-325; Anton Bebler, 'The neutral and non-aligned states in the new European security architecture', *European Security*, 1(2), 1992: pp. 133-143.

Ann-Sofie Dahl's and Norman Hillmer's edited volume from 2002 discusses whether there is room for independent foreign policy within the NATO and how small states participate in the Alliance's decision-making process.[89] The chapter on the Swedish case study written by Dahl explains Swedish neutrality, development and ambivalence toward NATO after the Cold War. As Sweden's most striking feature, she stresses its strong support to the Baltic states' membership in the Alliance while simultaneously resisting applying for it itself.

In the article *European Small States' Military Policies after the Cold War* (2008), Jean-Marc Rickli discusses security and military options of small neutral states and how they must adapt their military forces in order to become credible actors in international peace keeping operations and within the framework of cooperative security.[90] He discusses the post-Cold War period as an exercise of small and neutral states embracing the cooperative security approach. This required a restructuring of their armed forces from large conscript-based armies aimed at territorial defence and dissuasion of potential enemies, to the modern armed forces deployable outside of domestic territories. Such modern armed forces have two possible forms: to be either niche capabilities armed forces or leading/framework nations within the EU or NATO operations. Unlike neutrals and other small states, Rickli writes, even during the Cold War and owing to the threat of Russia, NATO members organised their armed forces to be deployable outside of their territories. The author concludes that nowadays cooperative security is actually the only security option for small states, due to the type of threats the world is facing.[91]

Unlike Rickli, Joenniemi in 1993 was more interested in new meanings and context of policies of neutrality than in concrete military policies of neutral states.[92] He explored the meaning and possibilities of neutrality after the end of the Cold War and the end of the confrontational discourse of us *vs.* them, which was so characteristic of the bipolar era. As Joenniemi writes, in the new discourse which favours inclusion instead of exclusion, neutrality seems to have lost most of its previous credentials, especially because there is now little need for neutrals' services of mediation and conflict restraining since the entire community of nations is working toward the same goal. On both conceptual and policy levels, neutrality is associated with sovereignty, the pursuit of independent foreign and security policy, clear cut state borders and separation of trade from security. During the Cold War a precondition for a policy of neutrality was indeed present, in the form of a language of division and exclusion, but it had

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[89] Dahl and Hillmer (eds), *Activism and (non)alignment*.
[90] Rickli, *'European small states' military policies after the Cold War'*.
[91] *Ibid,* pp. 307-325.
[92] Joenniemi, 'Neutrality beyond the Cold War'.

faded away in the post-Cold War era. According to Joenniemi, in the new epoch the true jeopardy for neutrals is the fact that distance from the centres of European power could render them parochial, objects and victims of events, rather than subjects of world politics. His main point is that alliances and neutrality in the post-Cold War context are not mutually excluding. Neutrals should adapt to the new circumstances by helping other states adjust to each other's security requirements.

Discussing the future of neutrality in 2007, Bebler stated that neutrals will eventually find themselves in many overlapping networks.[93] According to him, the end of the Cold War marked the beginning of the decline of interest in neutrality, resulting in fewer demands for the neutrals' traditional services in the second half of the 1980s and early 1990s. Despite the threat that neutrals could remain on the outskirts of the main sources of economic, technological and scientific power and the overall dynamics of the world, he expects that demand for neutrality will not cease. According to Bebler, neutrals will continue to play a role which significantly exceeds their actual size and population potential.[94]

Joenniemi's writing, back in 1988,[95] on the future of neutrality and how it would be exercised in the future follows a similar line of argumentation.[96] He views the out-dated, classical model of neutrality as being a dichotomy between a state of war and a state of peace, governmental military and non-military behaviour, and political alignment and economic intercourse. Models of neutrality emerging from this concept aspired to a status of non-belligerency and non-participation in war. Classical model relied on international law, self-sufficiency, individualism, and often isolationism. New trends require neutrality that will not address abstention from war but work towards prevention of war. The new role of neutrals, according to him, is not to serve as buffer zones between great powers but to help states adjust to each other's' security requirements and help create a pattern of behaviour in international relations where actors would have nothing to gain by pursuing policies of conflict with others. New models of neutrality should rely on a sense of community in international relations and be constantly in interaction with others. Thus, evolving models of neutrality will reflect the changed nature of international relations by adopting a more evolutionary understanding of international relations, while the old classic neutrality reflected the static understanding of neutrality in

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[93] Bebler, 'The neutral and non-aligned states in the new European security architecture'.
[94] *Ibid*, pp. 133-143.
[95] Since he discusses conceptual development of neutrality outside of the East-West divide this peace is included in this cluster of literature and not in the Cold-War section.
[96] Joenniemi, 'Models of neutrality; the traditional and modern'.

dichotomy between polarisation and depolarisation on the world scene. That is why neutrality of today, according to him, is more a strategy of autonomy and identity than a security strategy and a strategy of survival. Neutrality requires clear understanding of where the possibilities to regulate the use of force in the international relations are, and what space exists for neutrals. According to him, it is not the practice of neutrality that is the issue. It is the conceptual understanding – which is also a constitutive part of neutrality – that has to be liberated from the prevailing, dichotomised discourse in international relations. By transforming that discourse, neutrals set difference and diversity as preconditions for identity-recognition and community-building.[97] The author raises an interesting question of how and under what conditions states can embrace a more dynamic, evolving concept of neutrality instead of the one that is classic and old-fashioned. It usually happens under the pressure of crisis, as it is otherwise safer to adhere to the already explored statist concept. The changes might spur challenges to internal cohesion, established identities, and open up policy issues that are both domestic and foreign.[98]

Nils Andrén points out that conditions required for a successful policy of neutrality are often mistaken with neutrality itself.[99] According to him, those are the forces and factors in the immediate environment that have a decisive impact on a state's decision to opt for the policy of neutrality. That is why it is necessary to consider concrete circumstances in which neutrality has developed, as well as its concrete objectives in peacetime. In tension between the concept of neutrality and the specific cases of neutral states, Andrén poses an interesting question: Is there a stable concept of Swedish neutrality, a doctrine that might serve as a guide for the assessment of its moral consistency, or is it rather a matter of a flexible concept adjusted to the changing circumstances and political needs?[100] While discussing the perpetual problem of credibility of one's neutrality, he states that neutrality *de facto* always caries a peace-related message.[101] This further complicates the issue of establishing what happens to be an acceptable behaviour of neutrals. For him, it is always a question of neutrality 'between whom and for what purpose', which implies that credibility of the neutrals' position has to be assessed within a specific context.[102] In his view, states opt for non-alignment because they want to establish conditions for neutrality in war and create conditions for détente in peace. That is why non-alignment is seen as a peace-time version of neutrality in war. As a consequence, security behaviour of non-aligned

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[97] *Ibid*, pp.66-67.
[98] *Ibid,* p. 62.
[99] Andrén, 'On the Meaning and Uses of Neutrality'.
[100] *Ibid*, pp. 67-83.
[101] *Ibid*, p. 73.
[102] *Ibid.*

states is assessed more or less in accordance with the norms and standards set for neutral states in war.

Michael Cox and Roger Mac Ginty write that it is difficult to achieve conceptual clarity on what constitutes neutrality because it has been used both as a means and as an end, as policy and outcome, and as active and passive policy, on both permanent and *ad hoc* basis.[103] In core, it is a selfish policy of protecting national interests, which essentially emerged as a war-avoidance technique. As wars developed and became more sophisticated, neutrality developed as well.[104] Cox and Mac Ginty hold quite a pessimistic view on the prospects of neutrality in the post-Cold War period. According to them, it had been a policy option that was, in one way or another, accepted by the majority of small states in the 20th century, and to them it seemed like a viable option. Some 20 European states had adopted the policy of neutrality prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. However, it had proven to be an inadequate response to pressing security concerns of both then and today. The authors conclude that today, despite its impressive history and ability to adapt, neutrality is becoming irrelevant.[105]

Only a few authors have been dominantly interested in the concept of neutrality rather than in exploring broader security strategies and military policies of small neutral and non-aligned states. McSweeney, for instance, goes back to the conceptual underdevelopment of neutrality.[106] He notes that scarce literature produced by scholars from neutral states is developed around the historical accounts of their countries, explanations of their defence postures and international recognition of neutrality. Still, he observes, there is nothing on neutrality as a security option, the effects of the end of the Cold War thereon, or the relationship between neutrality and nuclear deterrence, for example. According to him, neutrals themselves made no attempt to change the perceptions imposed on them by the allied states. The allied states, on the other hand, made efforts to promote, justify and legitimise their security policies, while neutrals seem to be shy or embarrassed to do the same.[107] Still, there is a need for conceptual revision of neutrality; the Hague conventions as well as the existing interpretations of it construed it is a

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[103] Cox, M., MacGinty, R. 'Farewell to a Beautiful Idea: The End of Neutrality in the Post-Cold War World', in Bauwens, W., Clesse, A., Knudsen, O. (eds) *Small States and the Security Challenge in the New Europe*, 1996, pp. 122–134.
[104] *Ibid*. This is an interesting remark and could be elaborated further as whether it is a nature of war that boosted development of neutrality and should a conceptual development of neutrality be focused primarily on the changing nature of war.
[105] *Ibid.*
[106] McSweeney, 'The Politics of Neutrality'.
[107] *Ibid,* p. 37.

war-time option, while there is a need to address it as an option during peace. According to McSweeney, political scientists need to address it in terms of needs – not those of the neutrals themselves, but the needs of the international community as such. McSweeney writes that in contrast to traditional neutrality, active neutrality is a viable security option for small states which could serve them better than the arrangement of collective security. At the same time, according to him, it is not in contravention but in accordance with the collective security. Active neutrality still means non-membership in military alliances as a precondition of staying neutral in war time. Traditional neutrality meant isolationism and restraint from joining alliances as a way of making credible the choice of staying neutral in a time of a war. However, today's neutrality cannot be built in isolation and opposition to the system of collective security, and it only makes sense as a part of it. According to McSweeney, neutrals' relations with alliances should be understood as systemic, and not in moral terms, and should be viewed as part of a system in which there is room for both collective security and neutrality.[108] Peace keeping missions, where neutrals have been highly welcomed by the UN, are one example of how the two can go together well.[109] Still, after 40 years of myth-making regarding the benefits of collective security and the irresponsibility of neutrality, it is difficult to assume the existence of international enthusiasm for something that would resemble another legal codification of neutrality or other security options that contrast alliance membership.[110]

Burton also contributes to the conceptualisation of non-alignment.[111] In conceptual terms, he notes that non-alignment points to a universal international system based on communication and interchange between the actors, not to an international system built on alliances and collective security. Non-aligned states do not have the power that is necessary to induce or deter other states. Instead, they have to adjust, while major powers do not have to accept their course of adjustment. According to Burton, Western thinking about international relations has been for a long time shaped by power politics. The non-aligned therefore remain alone, obliged to rely on goal changing and adjustment instead of threats or use of force. This implies devaluation of power in favour of communication as an integrative factor of the international system, which means that interests can be negotiated while an alliance happens to be a symptom of a break-down in communication.[112] In a negative connotation, alliances are regarded as dissociative behaviour, but in a positive connotation they imply associative regional and functional

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[108] *Ibid,* p. 38.
[109] *Ibid,* p. 43.
[110]*Ibid*, p. 44.
[111] Burton, *International relations: a general theory.*
[112]*Ibid,* p. 237.

arrangements. Non-alignment as a policy focuses its attention on the aspect of societal organisation which was never explained in a satisfactory manner by the concept of power.[113] The non-aligned do not accept the use of force or economic pressure as legitimate policy instruments or rights that are created on the ground through possession of superior military or economic power. Non-alignment is a peace-time policy, and it refers to acts and actions of nations involved in rivalry short of war.[114]

Much less effort has been invested into the conceptual development of neutrality as a security strategy. It seems that interest in its conceptual development arose with the significant changes in the European and global security architecture in the second half of the 20th century. This is so because it seemed to go against the conditions that helped to establish neutrality as a war avoidance strategy as seen in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. Although the conditions changed and the majority of old and new neutrals now endorse collective security, some still remain neutral/non-aligned in relation to the military alliances of today.

What this cluster of literature had not challenged is the strong connection, established in earlier scholarship, between research on neutrality/non-alignment and small state security options. That is why the attention now goes to the literature on security policies of small states in order to reveal how those students saw neutrality/non-alignment while discussing the security of small states.

## 2.2. Literature Review on Small States

While reviewing the discussions on why states decide to stay outside of military alliances, I found a strong connection between neutrality/non-alignment and small states research.[115] In fact, there is a strong link between research of these security policies and the small states' security strategies. Neutrality and non-alignment have been discussed mostly as policies available to and used by small states, or, as in the case of the Non-Aligned Movement, of newly emerged states that were not necessarily small in terms of their populations and the size of their territories. However, in the course of their discussions, scholars interested in the topic have failed to make any significant contribution to the development of the concept or theory of

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[113] *Ibid,* pp. 239-240.
[114] *Ibid,* p. 220.
[115] Literature review on small states, pages 26-44, was published as Jelena Radoman, 'Small States in World Politics: State of the Art', *Journal of Regional Security,* 13(2), 2018: pp. 179–200.

non-alignment, and have only sporadically contributed to a broader and conceptually more informed discussion on small states.

While neutrality and non-alignment have been discussed to a certain extent in the 20th century, extensive interest in small states seems to have emerged a bit later. Robert Keohane finds this link to be the reason why small states have not been an object of systemic research for a long time. According to him, it is because the study of non-alignment served as a substitute for in-depth interest in small states.[116] In David Vital's account, if we are to study genuine foreign policy performance of small states, then we should look at those that stayed outside of the formal alignment. He claims that it is exactly the small states that stand alone, especially in most critical situations, that are a limiting case and represent a paradigm of small states studies. According to him, only in such cases would students be able to research the full consequences of their smallness and the limitations of their resources.[117] Having reviewed the small states literature in 1975, Peter R. Baehr found it rudimentary, ascribing this to the insufficiency of the concept of small states as an analytical tool. He found scholars' attempts to define small states to be an inadequate tool for narrowing down the too-broad category of small states, which made the concept inapplicable and the entire study of small states insufficiently grounded.[118]

### 2.2.1. Definitions of 'smallness'

In the discussions on small states much energy had been invested in the problem of defining and setting up the criteria for 'smallness'. However, neither a consensus nor a generally satisfactory definition had been reached. There are two broad categories of attempts to explain what we are actually discussing when studying small states. They can be labelled as *absolute* and *relative* definitions. The first category includes all the attempts to define which states are small and which are not by defining thresholds of material and human power that have to be reached if a state is not to be defined as small. In that respect, Vital proposes a classification of small and big states by defining the upper limits of the definition of small states: 10−15 million inhabitants in case of economically advanced countries, and 20-30 million in case of under-developed countries.

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[116] Robert Keohane, 'Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics', *International Organization*, 23 (2), 1969: pp. 291-310.
[117] David Vital, *The inequality of states: a study of the small power in international relations*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1967.
[118] Peter R. Baehr, 'Review: Small States: A Tool for Analysis', *World Politics*, 27 (3), 1975: pp. 456-466.

The second group of definitions, which is much more interesting, attempts to explain what constitutes 'smallness' by looking at the actor, a state, relative to the other actors in the international arena. Robert L. Rothstein makes a case for this type of definition by claiming that small states are those that – in the opinion of their leaders – are not able to secure their safety on their own.[119] Similar to this, Keohane bases his definition on the claim that small states are those which are incapable of making a significant impact on the international system and whose leaders are aware of this fact. Although critical of Rothstein's attempt to classify states according to their self-perception, Keohane in fact introduces a psychological element into his definition - self-perception. However, he rejects feelings of insecurity as a distinguishing variable, since in the nuclear era insecurity is common to all states, and absolute security is out of reach even for those that are the most powerful. In his opinion, the distinguishing variable is the states' perception of whether they are able to create an impact within the international system, alone or in a group of other states. Accordingly, there are four categories of states, and small states are those whose leaders perceive themselves as fully incapable of affecting the system in any significant manner, either alone or acting in a small group.[120] Tom Long also abandons the size of a state as a guide toward constructing the concept of small states. According to him, instead of focusing on their size we should look into different relations states are found in, and their dynamics. The multifaceted character and disparities of power, he argues, structure relations and influence construction of interests of both strong and weak actors in asymmetrical relations.[121]

Instead of focusing on power dynamics and discussing 'smallness' in terms of capacities and capabilities, constructivists propose looking into the discursive practices of 'smallness', as different interpretations do not necessarily tell the story of the states' 'smallness' in terms of inadequate resources and hampering conditions.[122] According to them, states could embrace different narratives that might present 'smallness' as an advantage or an asset in international relations. This would lead to different policy options becoming available for (those) small states.

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[119] Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and small powers*, New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1968.
[120] Keohane, 'Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics', p. 296.
[121] Tom Long, 'It's not the size, it's the relationship: from 'small states' to asymmetry', *International Politics*, 57, 2017: pp. 144-160.
[122] Christopher S Browning, 'Small, Smart and Salient? Rethinking Identity in the Small States Literature', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19 (4), 2006: pp. 669-684; Benjamin de Carvalho and Iver B. Neumann (eds), *Small States and Status Seeking: Norway's quest for international standing*, London and New York: Routledge, 2015; Christine Ingebritsen, 'Norm Entrepreneurs: Scandinavia's Role in World Politics', *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic international Studies Association*, 37(1), 2002: pp.11-23.

Self-perception and the level of states leaders' ambitions are important elements of the second group of definitions. Volker Krause and J. David Singer adopt a definition which, in their vocabulary, defines small states, e.g. minor powers as states whose diplomatic and material resources are so limited that they have to concentrate their efforts on safeguarding territorial integrity rather than pursuing more far-reaching goals.[123]

Vital also makes a case in this group of definitions by proposing a classification of states into three groups, specifically those of primary, secondary and tertiary powers, where primary powers are those 'that cannot be defeated in war by any other state or coalition of states without exacting comparable costs from its opponents'.[124] Vital does not rely extensively on the size and power of a state as the dominant criteria for describing it as small or large. He rather uses behaviour that a state adopts and power it is able to project toward others. He illustrates this with the example of Czechoslovakia in 1938 which, according to Vital, caved in under a combined pressure of bigger powers and behaved like a small power. But if Czechoslovakian leaders had resisted pressure, or if they had resisted successfully, the argument goes that it certainly would not be perceived as a small power.[125]

Jeanne A. K. Hey makes a clear statement that no consensus on the acceptable definition should not prevent us from discussing 'smallness'. According to her, what obstructed the development of small state foreign policy theory is the fact that students of small states' behaviour researched them within one of the three possible clusters of small states: micro states, small states in the developed world, and small states in the so-called third world. Thus, scholars remained limited to one of the above categories and have reached conclusions that were applicable only to narrow groups of states. Instead of insisting on precise and generally applicable definitions, Hey uses the concept of small states. The concept that she and her associates have opted for is the one that is based on the perception of the state, and the self-perception of the state's leaders and population about their position in the international hierarchy. In other words, if a state's leaders and its population are convinced that they live in a small state, and/or if other states perceive it as a small state, it shall be considered as such.[126]

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[123] Volker Krause and J. David Singer, 'Minor Powers, Alliances, and Armed Conflict: Some Preliminary Patterns', *in Small States and Alliances*, Erich Reiter and Heinz Gärtner (eds), New York: Physica-Verlag Heidelberg, 2001, pp. 15-25, p. 16.
[124] Vital, *The inequality of states*, pp. 15−29, p. 15.
[125] *Ibid*, pp. 15−29, p. 17.
[126] Jeanne A. K. Hey (ed), *Small states in World Politics*: *Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior*, Boulder, London: Lynne Reinner Publishers*, 2003,* pp. 2-4.

The dividing line between the two broad categories of definitions goes along different theoretical premises the authors acquired and applied in their research on small states. The most important implication of this division is whether states that are labelled as small have the capacity to overcome their power deficit – which they do, according to *relative* definitions – or they are permanently locked into a power hierarchy they cannot escape, which, according to *absolute* definitions, implies their dependence on big powers' protection. The most recent work on small states speaks in favour of *relative* definitions and opens up room for re-discussion of power in international relations.

### 2.2.2. Discussions on 'smallness' and power

Small states' scholars unavoidably had to deal with the concept and meaning of power. Authors who introduced relational definitions, by which they have established 'smallness' in relation to 'greatness', first had to introduce variables based on which smallness and greatness would be measured. Authors like Raymond Aron and Hans Mouritzen came up with the distinction between offensive and defensive powers, where the latter category naturally falls within the domain of small states.[127] According to Mouritzen, the former means one's capability to influence the environment, while the latter refers to the ability to avoid being influenced by it.[128] Other authors also discuss the changing nature of the manifestation of power, where the military power has become increasingly concentrated on the side of big states. They, however, seem to be lacking political power since it is becoming widely diffused.[129]

With a group of other authors, Laurent Goetschel analyses small states' security policies assuming that they stem from those states' security identities. Those identities, as presented by Goetschel, are constructed from the states' past historical experiences, and from myths and images that shape small states' leaders' perceptions of the roles their states play in the international system. If small states' security policies are understood in this way, power in its material form has only indirect influence on states' positions in the international system. Small states can adopt different foreign policy options, those that do not necessarily reflect their limited

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[127] Raymond Aron, according to Erling Bjol, 'The Small States in International Politics', in Schou and Brundtland (eds), 1971: pp. 29-39, p. 36; Hans Mouritzen, 'Tension between the Strong, and the Strategies of the Weak', *Journal of Peace Research*, 28 (2), 1991: pp. 217-230.

[128] Mouritzen, 'Tension between the Strong, and the Strategies of the Weak', p. 219.

[129] Amry Vandenbosch, 'The Small States in International Politics and Organization', *The Journal of Politics*, 26 (2), 1964: pp. 293-312.

material base. This way, the power of small states is dependent on their foreign policies in a given international environment.[130]

There are a few important consequences of understanding power as connected primarily with the roles that the states' leaders have ascribed to the states they represent. First, although states' sizes and geographical positions are fixed, they are not necessarily determining the foreign and security policies to be employed, as that choice depends on the states' elites' understanding of their position and opportunities in a given international setting. If this is the case, then the role that a state plays as the identity provider for its citizens (which small states are believed to be in a better position to play, compared to many big states, because of a higher coherence of their policies and their high mobilisation potential), or its recognition as a cultural power, are ways for a small state to overcome its power deficits emerging from purely materialistic parameters. The second important implication is that identities that shape foreign policies are also not fixed, and could be changed with states' redefinition of their international positions, their opportunities, and their objectives in a given environment. If identities, as Goetschel claims, are based on past historical experiences, states' security objectives can be changed in the light of new historical experiences such as war or alignment.[131] Based on their policy choices, small states can, in Goetschel's understanding, challenge their power deficits and act as non-small actors. This understanding challenges the traditional understanding of power, viewed as dependent on geography and size. Instead, power is understood to be multi-dimensional and to consist of economic strength, attractiveness of culture, scientific excellence, etc., but it is even more dependent on a state's ability to join international institutions as places where challenges and problems are dealt with.[132] As a consequence, Heiner Hänggi argues, states that stay outside of international institutions are weaker or smaller in relational terms since they failed in their opportunity to enhance their external sources of power, meaning power coming from the interaction with others.[133]

The approach to defining smallness also reflects understanding of the international system as such. Vital's outdated measurement of the states' power, and their consequent categorisation in clusters of big and small, was relevant for the period in the international history when such a binary division made sense, and when security concerns of small states perfectly

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[130] Laurent Goetschel (ed), *Small States inside and outside the European Union, Interests and Policies*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston, 1998, pp. 13-31.
[131] *Ibid*, 25−31.
[132] Franz von Däniken, 'Is the Notion of Small State still Relevant?', in Goetschel (ed), 1998, pp. 43-49, p. 44.
[133] Heiner Hänggi, 'Small State as a Third State', in Goetschel (ed), 1998, pp. 79-97, p. 85.

reflected their fears caused by such a division. However, in the multidimensional, integrated, globalised and complex agenda of today, such a division does not seem to reflect security concerns of either big or small states. Although criticised for offering a rather narrow definition of what makes a state small, Vital actually includes a rather broad list of elements in his definition of the power discrepancy between the states. Despite the fact that he relied heavily on material discrepancy in terms of size (territory and population), Vital also included elements such as geographic proximity, strategic attractiveness of one's territory, cohesiveness of the population, and internal support provided to government's policies. He defines a state's power as the capacity to either induce others to follow its preferred line of conduct or be able to withstand pressure coming from others.[134] In the case of small states, the power is defined as the second alternative – the ability to withstand pressure or avoid situations where one's weaknesses would be apparent and exploited. Referring to this, Arne Olav Brundtland points that we have to take into account not just a state's power base, but also the object toward which a state is applying its power.[135] In that respect, non-alignment might be perceived as a policy of hiding and escaping the attention of great powers (obviously applicable to the great-powers' rivalry during the Cold War), and its effects should be measured against that objective. Non-alignment, as discussed by small states students, is therefore a legitimate choice of states that is free of any moral content.[136]

An alternative view on how small states overcome their power deficits in relation to big powers, which is without any doubt a hierarchical relation, is analysed and presented in the volume edited by Benjamin de Carvalho and Iver B. Neumann.[137] According to them, small states seek recognition from big powers by claiming their, albeit small, share in maintaining international peace and stability. This might come in the form of mediation in conflicts in which a particular small state has no direct interest in being involved, as was the case with Norway's diplomatic and donor involvement in the Middle East and the Balkans, or taking the lead in niche policies such as climate change, for example. Through their status seeking, small states do not wish to be recognised as big, but as good powers that often 'punch above their weight'. By doing this, according to the editors of the volume, small states do not compete with big powers, but rather with similar small states that often offer services and resources that exceed their power status. Norway, Sweden and Denmark are good examples of such states. They are small but economically powerful, and are often found in the roles of mediators in international crises and contributors to peace-keeping and peace-enforcement operations. Small states do not expect to

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[134] Vital, *The inequality of states*, p. 87, pp. 118−119.
[135] Arne Olav Brundtland, 'Summary of discussion', in Schou and Brundtland (eds), 1971, pp. 195-215, p. 197.
[136] *Ibid*, pp. 195−215, pp. 211−215.
[137] de Carvalho and Neumann (eds), *Small States and Status Seeking*.

be awarded a part of the status of great powers, but they do expect some of their status to be transposed to them. According to their analysis, the purpose of status seeking is the status itself, while how status translates to any other objective – be it greater power or more resources – is left to future studies. Although the content of power is shifting from military to other domains - economic, cultural and even moral,[138] some states such as Norway, for example, successfully use their military capabilities as a status seeking tool. Nina Græger writes that Norway has proved to be able to provide relevant and timely capacities and resources for an operation that was highly relevant to a great power, and has in this way managed to convert its military potential, regardless of how limited it was, into social status.[139] Even in cases when small states do possess significant military resources (an example of this is Finland), they do not necessarily transform them automatically into social status and influence. Græger claims that this is the reason why small states, unlike the bigger powers, are more often engaged in status seeking enterprises: because by doing so they might get to claim influence and a place at the table, which is not something they could simply demand based on the size of their resources and capabilities.

However, although re-thinking and re-writing the concept of power seems to be unavoidably attached to the discussion of 'smallness' and small states' possibilities in the world politics, the framework of discussing smallness in terms of capacities, capabilities and power resources has been challenged only sporadically. Christopher S. Browning adopts a constructivist perspective in his analysis of contemporary small states with the intention to demonstrate that different discursive practices of stating what 'smallness' means, and how it can be interpreted, can imply different policy perspectives for small states.[140] As he demonstrated in the case study of Finland, 'smallness' should not necessarily be interpreted as a hampering factor in the states' pursuit of their national interests. He points out that those states could – and Finland certainly does – tell the story of their 'smallness' in terms other than power and capabilities, thus turning their smallness into a comparative advantage in the international arena. As a consequence, a different narrative of 'smallness' could help build the identity of a smart and innovative power, one that can even claim grounds for a moral stake in international affairs.

Mouritzen dismisses all the attempts to explain the behaviour and policy of small states that rely on their 'smallness' (or weakness) in terms of size. Instead, he established his own

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[138] Janne Haaland Matlary, according to de Carvalho and J. Harold S. Lie, 'A great power performance: Norway, status and the policy of involvement', in De Carvalho and Neumann (eds), 2015, pp. 56-73, p. 65.

[139] Nina Græger, 'From Forces for good to forces for status? Small state military status seeking', in de Carvalho and Neumann (eds), 2015, pp. 86-108, p. 101.

[140] Browning, 'Small, Smart and Salient? Rethinking Identity in the Small States Literature'.

research paradigm, where the main variable in the explanation of the foreign policy behaviour of small states is the constellation of relations in which small states find themselves within their immediate environments. In two basic sets of constellations, symmetric and adaptive acquiescence,[141] states are affected in different ways by structural factors, i.e. relations between the big powers. Consequently, their policy responses to these changes differ.[142]

Clive Archer, Alyson J. K. Bailes and Anders Wivel also define small states by looking at the possibilities available to them within the framework of the international system. According to them, small states are those that cannot 'credibly threaten to leave, alter or destroy institutional structures: one important way in which their strategic challenges and options differ from those of great powers'.[143] Changes in that framework, such as the end of the bi-polar rivalry between the big powers, made room for active manoeuvring on the side of small states previously considered to be mere consumers and passive elements in the international setting. In the more favourable post-Cold War setting, focus on military power and military threats would necessarily limit our viewpoint to the areas where small states have been traditionally the weakest.[144] According to the above authors, small states should instead embrace a wider agenda that allows them to create more networks, find their niche security options, and focus on strengthening their internal societal and political cohesion instead of embracing the big powers' security agendas.

In the introduction to their collection of the most influential works on small states, Iver Neumann and Sieglinde Gstöhl explain the position of 'middle powers' in international relations. This term, in their view, means that some states have achieved 'greatness' only in certain areas, hence stopping short of (according them) the big power status. They thought Sweden was a good example of this term, as it is a state that is unquestionably strong in many respects, such as internal cohesion and sense of self, but whose limited material resources of power will never let it achieve successes in many areas that could lead it to a great power status.[145]

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[141] In the symmetric constellation, a small state, or a weak power in Mouritzen's terminology, is in the roughly similar position to the two competing big powers in the system, while in adaptive acquiescence that relationship is asymmetric, with a small state being unilaterally dependent on its relation with one big power. Mouritzen, 'Tension between the Strong, and the Strategies of the Weak', p. 218.

[142] *Ibid*, pp. 217−230.

[143] C. Archer, A. Bailes and A. Wivel (eds), *Small States and International Security: Europe and beyond*, New York, Routledge, 2014, p. 9.

[144] *Ibid*, p. 7.

[145] Christine Ingebritsen, Iver Neumann, Sieglinde Gstöhl and Jessica Beyer (eds), *Small States in International Relations*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006, p. 8.

In short, the disagreements on possible definitions of small states do not exist just in relation to the two broad categories, as defined above, but also revolve around the understanding of power or the projection of power. The definition of 'smallness' and how power understood in materialistic terms relates to the 'real' power is relevant not only because it reflects the theoretical background of the respective authors. It is relevant also because it points to their understanding of whether a small state is locked into a hierarchy of states according to its power, or the structure of international system is more diffuse opening many possibilities for small states to pursue different policy options. While there is a dominant understanding of power as relying on material elements, such as size of the territory and human and economic resources, there are some attempts within the small states literature that aim to challenge this rather simplistic understanding. Common for those attempts is the intention to connect power with the capacity of projecting one's will in relation to other actors in the international arena. Although that capacity is necessarily linked to the power base, it could not be simply equated with it; instead, scholars also have to take into account various webs within which small states operate. Joining alliances or staying away from them are two starkly different courses of small states' foreign policy action which have been extensively discussed in the literature. It is to this issue that the analysis now turns.

### 2.2.3 Small States Inside and Outside of Alliances

Much attention has been devoted to small states engaged in the alliances and to those that opted to stay outside of formal contractual relations with other states. There is not even an agreement on a precise definition of what alliances are, which some authors find to be a major drawback in the construction of the comprehensive theory of alignment.[146] Heinz Gärtner proposes one plausible definition, according to which 'alliances can be defined as formal associations of states bound by the mutual commitment to use military force against non-member states to defend member states' integrity.'[147] A similar but even looser definition of alliances is offered by Stefan Bergsmann, who defines alliance as 'an explicit agreement among states in the realm of national security in which the partners promise mutual assistance in the form of a substantial contribution of resources in the case of a certain contingency the arising of which is

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[146] Krause and Singer, 'Minor Powers, Alliances, and Armed Conflict: Some Preliminary Patterns'*,* p. 16.

[147] Heinz Gärtner, 'Small States and Alliances', in *Small States and Alliances*, Erich Reiter and Heinz Gärtner (eds), New York: Physica-Verlag Heidelberg, 2001, pp. 1-9, p. 2.

uncertain'.[148] The difference between the two proposed definitions is certainly in the formality attached to the mutual agreement between the states that make a commitment to each other. The second definition narrows the area of cooperation to the issues of national security, which helps with the research of small states' position towards alliance membership from the point of view of their security policies. The second definition also avoids the extensiveness of the term 'integrity' and points directly to the uncertainty of events for the sake of which the alliance is formed. Both authors, however, move away from the classic definitions of alliances previously proposed by George Liska, who equalled alliances and alignments since both represent formal associations between two states against a threat represented by a third, more powerful state.[149] Stephen Walt also makes no distinction between alliances and alignments, keeping the definition clearly in the realm of security cooperation by defining the above as formal or informal agreements on security cooperation between two or more sovereign states.[150]

When exploring causes of alliance making, Stephen Walt identified two main strategies states pursue while forming or joining existing alliances.[151] While updating balance of power theory he constructed balance of threats theory as a more coherent and convincing framework to understand states' behaviour. Within that framework bandwagoning, as he supported with empirical investigation of alliances' formation in the Middle East, is a rare motive and rarely employed cause to form or join alliance. Instead of that, most of the time states pursue strategy of balancing threats that emerge from their immediate surroundings. According to Walt, states form or join alliances in order to balance threats, which emerge from the proximate countries with the offensive capabilities and aggressive intentions. While he was discussing alliance formation at the on regional level in the context of bi-polar rivalry, still the generic hypothesis and their empirical support is valid for alliance making on regional lever irrespective of how bi-polar rivalry might or might not influence alliance-making on the regional level. In that context, Walt claims that big powers' rivalry and alliances formed around it are not the most important concern of regional states. Instead, these states are more preoccupied with the threats coming from rival regional powers and will therefore form alliances based on those premises.

Glenn Snyder was motivated in creating an alliance theory which would provide basis for predictions of the dynamics in alliance making in a multi-polar system.[152] He also explored casus

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[148] Stefan Bergsmann, 'The Concept of Military Alliance', *Small States and Alliances*, Erich Reiter and Heinz Gärtner (eds), New York: Physica-Verlag Heidelberg, 2001, pp. 25-37, p. 26.

[149] George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The limits of Interdependence*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins Press, 1962.

[150] Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1987.

[151] *Ibid*.

[152] Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997, p. 75.

of forming or joining alliances from the neorealist perspective. In the core of his undertaking is cost-benefit analysis states make between different strategic options, out of which staying non-aligned is one possible option. There are four basic variables that, according to his theory, influence states' decisions on their alignment policies. Those are systemic structure, strength differences between states, particular conflicts between them and states' internal politics. Bargaining process in which states engage while discussing options in favour or against alliance membership include calculation between the weight of threats a respective state faces, allies' capacities and will to contribute facing those threats and availability of other options, such as offering concessions to the opponent or staying non-aligned. However, having in mind historical accounts that show that states which are opting for the non-alignment belong to the group of small states, they are at the same time actors that do not attempt to alter international balance of power. Small states that are opting for the non-alignment know that their relative powers are insignificant to pose a balance or counterweight to already established patterns of dominance in the system. He found reasons that are more concrete for why state ally in controlling its allies, making them potentially more restraint in initiating a conflict with the opponents and in ensuring allies' support in a case of a need. Snyder would have agreed with George Liska[153] on the point that motive behind alliance-making is solely increasing one's security over someone else's. These views reflect a zero-sum approach to security where increase in one state's security necessarily comes at the account of adversary's loss.

In contrast to Snyder's conclusion that it is the proximity and intensity of external threats that determine a country's decision to enter alliance or stay non-aligned Reiter, after quantitative testing of his model, claims that states' former alignment experience is crucial for the explanation how states decide whether to enter alliances or to stay non-aligned.[154] Instead of joining the source of threat or joining an alliance opposing the source of the threat, as Walt would suggest, Dan Reiter's main hypothesis is that what small states have learned from their own experience during the formative events (First and Second World Wars) will inform their future alignment policies in a decisive way. Although he does not make a link to it, his conclusion on alignment behaviour of small states is, at least partially, in accordance with Robert Axelrod's work on the choice of a strategy.[155] According to him, states choose strategies based on the learning process or by imitation (which Reiter dismissed as a valid basis for small states' decision making). In Axelrod's view, states choose the most beneficial strategies based on either

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[153] Liska, *Nations in Alliance*.
[154] Dan Reiter, 'Learning, Realism, and Alliances: The Weight of the Shadow of the Past', *World Politics*, 46 (4), 1994: pp. 490-526.
[155] Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York, Basic Books, Inc, 1984.

their own previous experience or experience of other actors, and, as individuals, they do not abandon strategies that have served them well previously.

According to alignment theorists, the typical dilemma of small states to either join an alliance or stay outside any formal contractual relationships with other states is the one between 'entrapment' and 'abandonment'. This is a dilemma that involves two uncomfortable possibilities: the first is fear that, speaking from the position of small states, they would be lured into conflicts they would otherwise be able to avoid and in which they do not have any particular interest to defend. On the other side, if they opt to stay outside of those formal relations, they face jeopardy of being left alone or abandoned.[156] This dilemma, in terms of the security agenda of the 21st century, in which membership in international organisations is a dominant feature, could also be presented as a conflict in the small states' pursuit of influence *vs.* autonomy. As pointed by Goetschel and Baechler, the more influence small states achieve over their bigger counterparts, the less autonomy they have and *vice versa*.[157]

Similarly, Vital claims that full consequences of small states' vulnerabilities, or rather the effects of relying on one's own assets, are shown precisely when small states stay outside of the alliances' protection. Furthermore, those are the only situations, according to Vital, when a state is acting alone and exercising its own foreign policy which could be compared to the foreign policies of big states.[158] At the same time, he is rather pessimistic about the prospects of non-alignment as a viable option for small states. That is because their limited capacities make even the smallest defeats in the foreign policy arena a significant loss that is almost certainly jeopardising the states' vital interests while severely constraining their room for manoeuvre. At the same time, he is not an advocate of small states entering alliances with powerful actors, as in such arrangements they will find themselves to be minor partners dominated by bigger counterparts and forced to make concessions.

In Vital's view, the choice of strategy that a state will eventually pursue depends on two core factors: the assessment of its external environment and base and the total pool of its material and human resources. In addition, the choice of strategy also depends on the character of its leaders (which, according to Vital, is even truer in the case of small states), characteristics of the state's population, and their value orientation.[159] He classifies possible strategies into two broad groups: *active*, aiming to change the position of a small state in its external environment, either

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[156] See also Goetschel (ed), *Small States inside and outside the European Union*, p. 26.
[157] Gunter Baechler, 'Future Relevance and Priorities of Small States', p. 271.
[158] Vital, *The inequality of states*.
[159] *Ibid, p.* 122.

by increasing the state's material and human base or trying to change the imbalance of power in other ways, and *passive*, aiming to preserve the *status quo*. Non-alignment is certainly a defensive strategy. Similarly to scholars who discussed the feasibility of non-aligned states' military postures, Vital also insists on viable deterrence capacities of a state as crucial for its survival. As well as others, he believes that the most plausible strategy of a small state when confronted with the possibility of being attacked by a powerful state is to make the attack as costly as possible, thus making a likely that the oppressor will consider alternatives. While discussing the range of limitations small states face while defining and conducting their foreign policies, such as constraining economic base, administrative and intelligence resources, Vital still finds that small states have some advantages, and they are higher coherence and popular support of their policies. Since small states operate with a narrow scope of resources and face a limited number of problems, they are assumed to be able to achieve higher coherence in their policies as well as higher popular support, since the majority of foreign policy and security challenges they face might pose a challenge to national survival. This has to be updated with data from the present security agenda, where small states do not necessarily face threats to their survival. Contrary to this, they are able to find niche opportunities to exercise their comparative advantages and contribute to international peace.

In contrast to this assessment of alliances and their usefulness for small states, which reflected threats emerging from the Cold War rivalries, Simon W. Duke reassesses their validity in light of the changed post-Cold War security agenda. He claims that in the absence of immediate external threats alliance membership lost its previous relevance for small states. Since most threats – as proved by the political instabilities in the Balkans and Caucasus – emerge from the states' internal weaknesses, membership in alliances does not seem to serve as a valid response to these types of threats, nor is there any interest for the alliances' big member states to engage in such conflicts. Duke points out that the changed nature of security threats now carries a different cost-benefit analysis for small states.[160]

Jean-Marc Rickli discusses security and military options of small neutral states and how they have to adapt their military forces in order to appear as credible actors in the international peace keeping operations and within the framework of cooperative security. In his own account, the author belongs to the fourth generation of students who are interested in the security of small

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[160] Simon W. Duke, 'Small States in European Security', in *Small States and Alliances*, Reiter and Gärtner (eds), New York: Physica-Verlag Heidelberg, 2001, pp. 39-51, p. 50.

states.[161] He discusses the dynamics of relations between states while analysing the power that can be mobilised and exercised – not 'real' material power, as understood by realists. According to him, small states have a choice of either preserving their autonomy, i.e. when they opt for the policy of neutrality, or exercising their influence, and that it is when they become members of alliances and actors in cooperative security. According to Rickli, small states cannot do both at the same time, since only big powers have sufficient resources to do so. He concludes that cooperative security is actually the only security option for small states nowadays, due to the types of threats the world is facing.[162] An input into the debate on the level of autonomy that small states might have as alliance members was given by Ann-Sofie Dahl and Norman Hillmer in 2002. They discuss whether there was room for an independent foreign policy within NATO, and how small states participate in the decision-making in the Alliance.[163] Based on the accounts of Swedish and Finnish neutrality, they elaborate the ambiguities of the neutrals' relations with both NATO and the EU. In both cases, pragmatism prevailed and accommodated these countries' historical legacies with benefits offered by the EU membership and cooperation with NATO.

While there is a consensus that small states are more exposed to constraints coming from the international environment than big ones, there is also an agreement that they show more interest in supporting international norms and multilateral approach to the international problems. This is because the respect for principles in the international fora. is something that can protect them from the aggression of more powerful states. Sporadically, there is an expectation that small states might act as moral arbitrators in the international arena, precisely because they demonstrate high respect of, and attachment to, principles and norms. In other words, since they cannot play power politics they are viewed as those who can act with sound moral judgment in international affairs.

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[161] In Rickli's account, the first generation of small states students adopted a definition based on quantitative criteria (size of population and territory). The second generation looked at small states and their place in the international system. The third generation adopted a psychological definition, where smallness was defined by self-perception of small states' leaders. In this account, he belongs to the fourth generation of small states scholars who define small states according to the power they are able to mobilise and exercise. Rickli, 'European small states' military policies after the Cold War', pp. 308−309.

[162] *Ibid*, 307−325.

[163] Dahl and Hillmer (eds), *Activism and (non)alignment*.

### 2.2.4. How to Study Small States' Security Policies?

The majority of authors who discussed security options that are available to small states undoubtedly found structural reasons to be the dominating explanatory variable for their policy choices, while the appropriate level of analysis is the international system. Vital's work is no exception in this respect. Although he allows some room for factors such as the states' leaders, general national feelings and values attached to it, the dominant factors in his analysis are still the external environment and constraints emerging from it. Although scholars working from the realist and neo-realist perspective agree unanimously that it is the structural reasons that determine small states' foreign policy choices, some of them leave room for a more or less free choice that small states have while operating under structural constraints. In other words, while it is the big powers and their mutual relations that define the international structure and set the tone of international relations (whether conflict-prone or allowing for some form of cooperation), small states still have the luxury of choosing between the few policy options that are available to them and are applicable in a given environment.[164] This might lead to deeper interest into how small states' decision makers actually decide among different policy options, and which factors account for those decisions.

However, several authors argue that small states' domestic politics and internal political dynamics might also account for their behaviour in international affairs. Hence, Miriam Fendius Elman challenges neorealism in its own playground, or at least what neorealist authors claim to be their domain − fitness to explain states' foreign policy behaviour and their security policies.[165] She demonstrates the applicability of institutionalism in explaining domestic institutional reforms which are often tailored to respond to external pressures to which new states are especially exposed. Apart from having been able to demonstrate connections between international pressures and domestic institutional arrangements as one possible line of investigation she, however, has not demonstrated the dominance of the domestic level of analysis in the study of small states' behaviour.

Besides being exposed to external constraints more than big states, small states are also believed to have a lower level of international involvement, while their actions have limited

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[164] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States*; Raimo Väyrynen, 'Small States: Persisting Despite Doubts', in *The National Security of Small States in a Changing World*, Efraim Inbar and Gabriel Sheffer (eds), London: Frank Cass, 1997, pp. 41-77.

[165] Miriam Fendius Elman, 'The Foreign Policies of Small States: Challenging Neorealism in Its Own Backyard', *British Journal of Political Science* 25 (2), 1995: pp. 171-217.

potential to create consequences for other members of the international system.[166] Ulf Lindell and Stefan Persson discuss the disproportional influence that small states demonstrate in international affairs under the label of 'small state power'.[167] What they have found while systemising the discussions on small states in world affairs is that such studies could be grouped into two broad categories. The first encompasses all the discussions that ascribe the performance and security of small states either to the structure of the international system, the state of the system (nature of relations between big powers) and international norms, or the small states' qualities, such are their geographical position, reputation, material and human resources, and specific relations with other states. The second group of studies includes works that investigate small states' tactics and policies, bringing the discussion to the small states' power phenomena. Those policies include non-alignment, the policy of taking advantage of big powers' disputes, or any other specific behaviour that small states employ. The most interesting point that appeared as a result of this exercise is the distinction between the power of small states that came out of their active influence, their purposeful actions, or as a consequence of any of the small states' internal features.

Hey and her associates do not take for granted the dominance of either external pressures or domestic dynamics, but instead conduct an empirical investigation of a number of small states' cases in order to discover the appropriate level of analysis for the study of their foreign policy behaviour. Their research reveals a dominance of structural factors such as the presence of regional hegemons and power dynamics in their respective regions. Only under certain circumstances, and when structural reasons allow it, domestic politics and the roles of individuals emerge as a factor of influence. As it appeared, the latter factor is particularly relevant in a number of less developed small states. Their research supports the general agreement in the literature on small states that they favour acting through international organisations and multilateral fora. This is efficient, however, only in the areas where major powers are willing to act multilaterally.[168] Despite the prominence of factors such as internal political dynamics and impact of states' leaders, the work of Hey and her associates actually confirms the firm dominance of structural factors as resolute definers of small states' foreign

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[166] Ronald Barston, 'The External Relations of Small States', in *Small States in International Relations*, August Schou and Arne Olav Brundtland, (eds), Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971, pp. 39-57, p. 41.

[167] Ulf Lindell and Stefan Persson, 'The Paradox of Weak State Power: A Research and Literature Overview'. *Cooperation and Conflict*, XXI, 1986: pp.79-97.

[168] Jeanne A. K. Hey (ed), *Small states in World Politics, Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior*. Boulder, London: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003, pp. 185−195.

policies. According to their research, domestic politics and personal imprint can make a difference only in the style and manner of conduct of policies that are always predefined by a set of external constrains.

Although the dominant interest in the existing literature has been in the international behaviour of small states, their internal characteristics, at least to a degree that they are relevant for their foreign policy posture, have also been discussed. The authors discussing small states' internal features mostly found weaknesses in the administrative and institutional capacities for formulating and conducting small states' foreign policies. This is followed by the lack of intelligence resources and a narrow span of international issues that can be properly covered, governmental pervasiveness, bigger impact of personalities, and narrow professional autonomy of administration compared to what is found in big states.[169] All of these are specific features of political systems in small states. At the same time, smallness of a state, according to the same group of authors, could have a positive impact on the coherence of policies since they are believed to more often have homogeneous societies, which is a rare feature of bigger states. Smallness also allows states' administrative apparatuses to focus on a smaller number of problems, compared to bigger states whose diplomacy continuously has a wider range of problems to focus on.[170]

Although the dominant level of analysis is global, several authors pointed that smallness has different comparative values if analysed at the regional and global level.[171] While a state can be small in respect to its global ranking, it can also – and simultaneously – act as a big regional power and actually try to transmit the regional power potential to its global position. Furthermore, regional and global levels of analysis are sometimes unavoidably interlinked, where the case in point is the great powers' involvement in regional conflicts. In his review essay, commenting on Howards Wriggins's work on regional politics, Richard Ned Lebow writes that realist theories have difficulty explaining the influence that smaller states, or in his words lesser powers, exercise over great powers, which has been the case in the historical account of the USSR relations with India, Somalia and Vietnam, or the U.S. experience with Pakistan and Iran. Examples of these states exercising disproportional influence over greater powers are, according to Lebow, understandable only if we discuss power in relational terms and in terms of asymmetries. The most important asymmetries, according to him, are resources,

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[169] Paul Sutton, 'Political Aspects', in Colin Clarke and Tony Payne (eds), *Security and Development in Small States*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1987, pp. 3-26.
[170] Bjol, 'The Small States in International Politics', p. 30.
[171] Goetschel (ed), *Small States inside and outside the European Union*, pp. 13−31, p. 27.

interests, justice, alternative policy options, time pressure, reputation and willingness to suffer. Based on these asymmetries in a given context, smaller states can exercise influence over their bigger counterparts that is disproportional to their relative capabilities.[172]

Limited efforts have been invested into a discussion on the types of threats that small states face. This is mostly due to the fact that realists and neo-realists alike see external threats, pictured as either big neighbouring or potentially threatening power, or a clash between two or more big powers, as self-evident dominant threat to the security of small states. Jonathan Alford points out that it is their geographical position that might make small states pray to big powers, but only if the territorial conquest of a small state can provide the threatening power with an advantage in its competition with other big powers. In other words, big powers are not interested in 'hijacking' small states just because they are small and vulnerable if they do not have a strong incentive for such an endeavour.[173]

Insights into the internal fragility of small states and problems emerging from it provided in the collection of essays edited by Efraim Inbar and Gabriel Sheffer in 1997 are more interesting.[174] Conceptually, their approach is developed around ethnic national states and the first question they raise is how struggles, actions and ambitions of these actors affect the international system. The levels of analysis are international and regional security. The authors find that the majority of threats for a small state come from its regional surroundings. The regional setting is at the same time the level at which the consequences of irredentist and secessionist actions of ethnic groups lead to instability, posing the most serious threat to regional security. According to the authors, security challenges of small states did not cease to exist with the end of the great power rivalry. Although they are currently not exposed to dangers emanating from the international system characterised by the clash of great powers, small states however are exposed to hostile ethnic neighbours and regional hegemons. The contributors to this volume find realism to be of limited usefulness in providing an explanation of the behaviour of small states since their leaders do not always necessarily behave in a rational manner.

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[172] Richard Ned Lebow, 'Small States and Big Alliances'. *The American Political Science Review*, 91 (3), 1997: pp. 705-709.

[173] Jonathan Alford, 'Security Dilemmas of Small States'. *The World Today*, 40 (8/9), 1984: pp. 363-369.

[174] Inbar and Sheffer (eds), *The National Security of Small States in a Changing World*.

### 2.2.5 The main points from neutrality/non-alignment and small states studies

There are three major points that emerge as common from the reviews of neutrality/non-alignment and small states literature. First, neutrality/non-alignment is seen as a choice of small states. There is the expectation that in their foreign policy behaviour small states demonstrate features that are common to the majority of states within the same group, and which are different from the behaviour of big states. One of those features is a tension or dilemma attached to the alignment policy and fear that, speaking from the position of small states, they would be lured into conflicts which they would otherwise be able to avoid and in which they do not have any particular interest to defend. On the other hand, if they opt to stay outside of those formal relations, they are in jeopardy of being left alone or abandoned.[175] Therefore, although it is a more common choice of small rather than big states, neutrality/non-alignment brings their own challenges to states that pursue them. Second, neutrals/non-aligned, as small states in general, are vulnerable, more than their bigger counterparts, to insecurities emerging from the structure of the international system and have limited options, and less room for mistakes in mitigating those insecurities.[176] Finally, both neutrals/non-aligned and small states in general are expected to favour multilateral frameworks in the arena of international security and to show more support for international norms and institutions that will protect them from whims and intentions of more powerful states.[177]

The above presented review of the literature on small states shows that emphasis has been placed on: 1) the definition of smallness; 2) conceptual discussion of power in general and power of small states in particular; and 3) opportunities of small states in the current international setting. The authors who viewed the defining criteria of big and small in a purely materialistic sense − size of territory and population − undoubtedly continued to view the structure of the international system as crucial when researching the states' opportunities. In this respect, states are locked in their position of smallness and have a limited manoeuvring space, depending on the nature of the system defined by big powers' relations. More recent research undertaken by constructivists has, however, broken new ground in the study of small states. Small states are here discussed based on the roles they play for their citizens and for the international audience, where they are encountered with numerous new opportunities.

The academic interest in neutrality/non-alignment seems to be fading with the end of the Cold War and diminishing bi-polar tensions. Limited interest is invested into research of how

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[175] Baechler, 'Future Relevance and Priorities of Small States', pp. 267−285.
[176] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States*; Väyrynen, 'Small States: Persisting Despite Doubts', pp. 41−77.
[177] Hey (ed), *Small states in World Politics*.

remaining neutrals and non-aligned states adjust their positions to the demands of a collective security. As for the question of the current state of affairs in the small states' studies, it appears that most of the literature on small states is centred on the issues of their mere existence as a phenomenon of their own, rather than on discussing why and when 'smallness' matters, and which security problems emerge from it. The authors discussing 'smallness' in the materialistic sense of the word – states that have smaller territories, populations and resources they can employ in relational terms measured to big states – obviously found them to be under threat of survival and exposed to many constraints coming from the international setting. While big states are those that give a tone to the international context, be it conflictual or cooperative one, small states are those that suffer consequences of their actions and have limited strategic options available to them. Scholars who studied neutrality as a strategic option usually employed by small states naturally came to discuss their security options in the alignment *vs.* non-alignment choice. Both choices bring their own fears to small states: that they will either fall victim to big powers' politics or remain exposed and alone.

Still, there are few points that were only sporadically referred to in both the literature on neutrality/non-alignment and on small states. The first portion of literature never convincingly elaborated what are the actual security strategies of neutral/non-aligned states. Besides offering a generic assumption that staying outside of military alliances is a war-avoidance technique, which appears rather obsolete in the context of the 21st century and modern security threats, scholars never offered analysis of how that assumption is translated into concrete security and defence policies. In other words, with the knowledge that some (small) states decide to stay unattached to military alliances, claiming it would be feasible and that they would survive staying aloof, we never learn what are the actual security threats those states are facing and if staying military neutral/non-aligned is a remedy for a whole list of possible threats or only for a danger of being dragged into an armed conflict of other states. The same gap is present in the small states literature. According to it, there is nothing novel in the small states' behaviour, as pictured also by alignment theorists and non-alignments students, compared to big states. In those accounts, they seem to behave as utility-maximisers operating on the basis of a clear cost-benefit analysis. This became even more apparent with authors occasionally stating that there is actually no significant difference in the behaviour of big and small states.[178] If that is so, does their

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[178] In his classification of primary, secondary and tertiary powers, Vital claims that tertiary powers are no different in their behaviour from primary powers and that they will not refrain from attempts to change their external environment. However, the difference lies in their ability to do so and the power potential they can employ for their pursuits. David Vital, 'Analysis of Small Power Politics', in *Small States in International Relations*, August Schou and Arne Olav Brundtland, (eds), Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971, pp. 15-29, p. 20.

'smallness' feature as an additional variable, or does it only point to their material limitations? This is the question that was addressed as relevant by few but so far remained unattended. Only with the work of authors that brought in the identity-based politics, which accounts for states as identity-providers for their citizens and performers of specific roles in the international setting, did the discussion on small states open up to the possibility of their overcoming the power hierarchy and the dichotomy of small *vs.* big. The discussion on small states' security policies in the broadened security agenda of the 21st century opened up a question whether 'smallness' is indeed always a hampering factor, or small states might design their security policies in a more favourable fashion compared to their bigger counterparts. The updated research on small states and the main threats that they face today could provide a significantly different account of their future security policies.

Connected with is the question whether it is a mere 'smallness' that directs states to opt for staying outside of military alliances or there are some other factors that are decisive when choosing neutrality/non-alignment as one's security strategy? Several authors discussing small states concluded that smallness was not the dominant feature in the states' political, economic and security endeavours. Smallness, according to them, was just another characteristic in the case studies of explored small states whose policies had to be researched within concrete context settings. No specific 'politics of smallness' was found and no specific set of problems that only small states face was identified.[179] This finding, however, was not incorporated into what we already know about neutrality/non-alignment.

Based on the identified gaps in the two broad clusters of literature presented in the Chapter 2, this thesis aims to offer what appears to be missing in the current knowledge on neutrality/non-alignment as security strategies of small states. Firstly, the presented thesis will offer a comprehensive conceptual framework within which to study neutrality/non-alignment as security strategies in the 21st century. This will fill the identified gap of very scarce conceptual discussions on neutrality/non-alignment as security strategies of small states. The model, to be presented in the Chapter 3, aims to go beyond limitations of dominant theories applied so far to explain alignment policies, realisms and neo-realism, and will offer an eclectic platform suitable to discuss neutrality/non-alignment alongside significant updates within the security studies and

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[179] Clarke and Payne (eds), *Security and Development in Small States*, pp. 225−228. Hey is in line with this when claiming that a small state, Ecuador in her own research, can demonstrate a wide variety of behaviours employed in response to external circumstances. While smallness certainly is one of the factors directing a state's behaviour in each particular case, we cannot take for granted that its influence was applied in the same manner in all research cases. Hey (ed), *Small states in World Politics*, p. 6.

IR theory. Therefore, it will also present an update of alignment literature. Secondly, the thesis will offer in-depth analysis of two different case studies of neutral/non-aligned states which will offer an explanation of what are security strategies of states that abstain from joining military alliances. This will fill out the identified gap in both neutrality/non-alignment and small states literature which operated under a generic assumption that those are policies adopted by the small states without elaboration of what are concrete security strategies of those states, threats they identify and resources they count on to pull out when facing them. Finally, the thesis brings an updated case study account of one long-standing neutral/non-aligned state, Sweden, and one peculiar case of non-alignment, Serbia, therefore enriching the existing literature on both neutrality/non-alignment and small states and possibly reinforcing a novel approach on what seemed to be considered as an outdated topic.

# CHAPTER 3: The Theoretical Model

## 3.1. The Limits of Realist and Traditional Approaches to Military Neutrality/Non-Alignment

While there have been some significant developments in the literature on small states within which realism has been convincingly challenged as an explanatory framework of small states' foreign policy behaviour, the same cannot be said for research on non-alignment as one of the security strategies of small states. Different interpretations of 'smallness' opened up an entire new area of possibilities for small states in the changing security dynamics of the 21st century. Broadly discussed, the problem of definition − which states we are actually discussing when talking about small states[180] − is of marginal interest for this thesis and will not be elaborated upon, apart from clear preference for relational definitions that discuss smallness only in relations between big and small in a given specific context. Authors discussing smallness from this perspective raised the issue of self-perception of smallness[181] and the level of the states' ambition in matters of international security[182] as distinguishing variables when defining small states. According to Long, instead of size, we should look at different relations in which states find themselves, and the dynamics of those relations. That dynamics is influenced by the multifaceted character of power and the disparities of power that structure relations and influence construction of interests of actors in asymmetrical relations, both strong and weak.[183] As discussed above, constructivists claim that states could embrace different narratives that might view 'smallness' as an advantage or an asset in international relations. This would lead to different policy options available to (those) small states.[184]

On the other side, limited interest of today's scholars in theoretical investigation of the meaning and viability of non-alignment is quite understandable. Non-alignment seems to be an obsolete category in international relations and a policy choice of only a limited number of (small) states. However, although it is a rare policy choice today, neutrality/non-alignment provides a fertile ground for both theoretical and empirical investigations. In the theoretical sense, if realists and neorealists fail to offer a comprehensive framework on how to research and

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[180] Rickli, 'European small states' military policies after the Cold War', pp. 308-309.

[181] Rothstein, *Alliances and small powers*; Keohane, 'Lilliputians' Dilemmas', pp. 291-310.

[182] Krause and Singer, 'Minor Powers, Alliances, and Armed Conflict', pp. 15-25.

[183] Long, 'It's not the size, it's the relationship', pp. 144-160.

[184] Browning, 'Small, Smart and Salient? Rethinking Identity in the Small States Literature'; de Carvalho and Neumann (eds), *Small States and Status Seeking*; Ingebritsen, 'Norm Entrepreneurs: Scandinavia's Role in World Politics'.

understand it, one can look for rival theoretical explanations that might be more suitable to explain why states still opt for military non-alignment. In the empirical sense, updated case studies could point to what happened with neutrality/non-alignment in the post-Cold War world, and how states manage to adjust that strategic choice to the comprehensive global agenda.

The framework presented here moves away from realist and neorealist approaches that have dominated scholarship on traditional neutrality and non-alignment as security strategies of (mainly) small states throughout the history of IR. An updated empirical investigation of non-alignment exercised by states in the present international security context necessarily has to go further than the realist and neorealist accent on mere survival as chief security preoccupation of states and the premise that their security policies are dependent on their global power ranking.[185]

Since realism dominated the international security research during the Cold War, it consequently also dominated the view on neutrality and, later, non-alignment (mainly in the form of the non-aligned movement). However, realism and neorealism show only very marginal interest in neutrality and non-alignment because security and foreign policy stands of such states failed to correspond to what this systemic theory of international politics tells us about states' behaviour.[186] Realism and neorealism saw anarchy as the main structural feature of the international system that pushed states to form alliances in order to boost their chances of survival in an anarchic system in which only states' aggregate power (in terms of material resources) matters.[187] In that system, the formation of alliances brings a decrease of uncertainty about other states' intentions, or at least of those states that belong to alliances. Joining an alliance implies a clear identification of friends and enemies and exchange of promises among the alliance members that they will mutually defend each other and protect their common interests.[188] The pursuit of common interests is an obvious reason for states to ally. For authors writing within the realist/neorealist paradigm, states' pursuit of policies of neutrality or non-alignment meant nothing more than a bandwagon strategy of expecting protection from either super-powers or military alliances without taking part in any burden-sharing. In the narrow span of security threats, a threat of military invasion by other country was the dominant threat where states had to calculate how much power (military, territory and human resources) they had at their disposal and whether they would be able to deter the threat on their own or in cooperation with allies. Only recently, close to the end of the Cold War, there have been some modest

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[185] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, New York : McGraw-Hill, Inc, 1979.
[186] Joenniemi, 'Neutrality beyond the Cold War', p. 295.
[187] Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State and War: a Theoretical Analysis*, New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1959.
[188] Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*.

attempts in literature to discuss political and economic consequences which neutrals have to bear as a result of their non-aligned position. But these types of security risks were discussed only in the context of the great powers' rivalry and were therefore pictured only in the shadow of dominant military threats.[189]

A theoretical model of non-alignment cannot be extracted from the alliance-making theory, nor can it be constructed as a mirror reflection of predispositions made in the work of authors that were so far interested in alliance politics. There are two main reasons for this. First, alliance formation theory/theories accept major neorealist assumptions of anarchy as a structural condition influencing states' decisions to pursue balancing or bandwagoning strategies in relation to other states' powers and the assumption of power ranking as the main variable influencing states' security options. [190] This proposition offers no room for exploring commitments that states make in a socially constructed system in which international norms and mutually constitutive expectations, and not just material power, form a basis for states' actions toward each other. The zero-sum view of security is not applicable to the current context of global security whose main features are high density of communication in all policy fields among states and other actors, multinational character of security threats, and emergence of non-state actors that jeopardise the security of more than one state at the same time. In this context, an increase in one state's security does not diminish the safety of others. Improvement of one's security actually requires coordinated efforts and improved security of many other actors within the system. Having said that, I do not reject the entire neorealist hypothesis on how and why states take, or do not take, decisions to enter into alliances or their validity in explaining why certain states choose to stay outside of them.

The hypothesis on states allying in order to more effectively face immanent threats coming from potentially aggressive regional powers is still valid from the constructivist standpoint, which assumes that anarchy in the international setting is only one of the few possible outcomes of a mutually constructed system. Systemic constraints, or rather the perception of systemic constraints as one of the variables of the neorealist approach, influences decisions made by national leaders regarding their alignments policies. The bargaining process, within which states weigh the opportunities and costs of joining an alliance or staying non-aligned, also has a place in the constructivist model of non-alignment, but it has to be elaborated in a socially constructed framework of inter-state relations to enable us to address non-alignment within the 21st security agenda.

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[189] See, for example: Joenniemi, 'Models of neutrality'.
[190] Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*.

Second, even if alliance theory addressed a broader security agenda and diversity of security threats, this would still not constitute sufficient grounds for the creation of a generic model of non-alignment. The fact that some states opted to stay outside of the alliances does not say much about the reasoning behind such strategic choices. According to alliance theory, non-alignment is one of the options in the process of measuring possible benefits and costs of alliance membership. Based on this, the most probable assumption is that states that opted for non-alignment found the alliance option more costly in terms of burden-sharing when compared to protection offered by alliance membership. Still, it tells us nothing about the original threats those states were facing, why alliance membership was not a desirable option for them, how they saw the costs and benefits of staying non-aligned, and finally, how they will face security threats to which they might be exposed.

According to the game theory, which Snyder used for his alignment theory, no state joined a specific alliance convinced it could do better by itself or in some other alliance.[191] This implies that non-aligned states are either self-sufficient in confronting all or most of the security threats they are facing, or that they do not see alliance membership empowering them to confront those threats. Having in mind the multitude and complexity of current security threats, their divergent origins and inter-state reach, this assumption is highly unlikely. If so, the remaining question is: What are the security threats that non-aligned states are facing and why they do not deem alliances necessary or highly attractive in fighting those threats? However, the question is rather do the non-aligned see alliances as suitable for confronting those threats, but also the costs of participation in them as too high. Another important variable to take into account, though it is not of primary importance, is the availability of options when it comes to alliances. Thus, states that opt for non-alignment might not find the existing military alliances attractive in terms of their security needs and threats they are facing, but are not against alignment as such and might consider establishing or joining some future alliance.

Furthermore, alliance theorists, such is Liska, portray alliance-making only and exclusively as a conflict-related enterprise. In other words, alliances are, according to him, made only for the purpose of crusading one's action against something or someone.[192] If alliance-making is understood in this fashion, than a case could be made that states that opted to stay outside of the alliances have no other actors or issues they must or are willing to confront. Again,

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[191] Snyder, *Alliance Politics*.
[192] "When they are sufficiently intense, and security is the chief concern, conflicts are the primary determinants of alignments. Alliances are against, and only derivatively for, someone of something." Liska, *Nations in Alliance*, p. 12.

if reasons for non-alignment are extracted from the reasoning of alliance-making theorists, we end up knowing nothing about non-aligned states' initial assumptions about their own security and their reasons for staying outside of joint collective frameworks for actions made by other states.

The approach to the model of non-alignment presented in this dissertation is that the phenomenon cannot be reduced to states simply falling short of alliance membership. In that case, alignment theories might be sufficient to provide an explanation as to why some states remain outside of the alliances. The approach applied here points out that opting for non-alignment says something more substantial about non-aligned states' security policies, their perceptions of systemic constraints and their own options within those constraints. The option of non-alignment is indicative of security concepts employed in the national security strategies of respective states and cannot simply be mistaken as tactical manoeuvring. Whether this proposition is true or false will be tested in the empirical case studies of Serbia and Sweden.

This model shares with neo-realism its assumptions about systemic constraints in terms of distribution of power among the system units that create the framework within which states make decisions on their alignment policies. It is even more relevant because states that opt for non-alignment generally fall into the category of small states whose strategic options are, as the literature on small states suggests, severely constrained by the structure of the international system. They are said to be states that cannot "credibly threaten to leave, alter or destroy institutional structures: one important way in which their strategic challenges and options differ from those of great powers".[193] Such assumptions are embraced by the threat perception variable, under which investigation looks at what states see as main threats to their national security, where the sources of those threats are, and what available options they have to mitigate them.

The realist and neorealist views are unable to provide a framework for explaining states' opting for military non-alignment in the present context through mixture of both military and non-military threats. While realism is preoccupied with the former, it is unsuitable to explain strategies that states employ to defend themselves from threats that do not necessarily originate from rival national powers but from non-state agents, informal groups, or even nature. While a mixture of threats will continue to be present on the security agenda of today's and tomorrow's military alignment, especially the way neorealism explores it, alignment is a tool that is adequate only for facing the former group of threats. At the same time, non-alignment as a strategic choice is a non-aligned states' statement that concerns only the utility of the existing military alliances,

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[193] Archer, Bailes and Wivel (eds), *Small States and International Security,* p. 9.

which says nothing about how these states would confront non-military threats out of alliances' reach. It is fair to elaborate here that the dominant military alliance of today in relation to which two states chosen as the topics of the case study claim their non-alignment, and that is NATO, is defined as a political-military alliance equipped to face a broader spectrum of military threats and not only threats that are purely of military nature. However, the tool the Alliance uses to confront threats *is* military power, which makes it a traditional military alliance. Furthermore, its distinctive feature is the member states' mutual commitment to defend each other whenever their security is in jeopardy, which is one of the main defining characteristics of military alliances.

Unlike the traditional view of neutrality/non-alignment as an isolationist strategy of small states aimed at hiding from big powers' conflicts and preserving mere survival, today's non-alignment does not necessarily imply any kind of passivity in foreign and security policy. The end of bipolarity created room for active manoeuvring of small states that were previously considered only passive actors in the international setting. Exclusive focus on military power and military threats would necessarily limit our viewpoint to areas where small states traditionally have been the weakest.[194] Small states that willingly embrace the agenda of balancing superior powers (superior in material terms) would also find themselves off-balance in the current context and would inevitably end in an unprivileged position. Rather, they tend to embrace a wider agenda that allows them to establish more networks, find their niche security options, and focus on strengthening their internal societal and political cohesion instead of embracing big powers' security agendas. Approaching non-alignment in the context of a broad security agenda instead of the military-centred realist one which dominated during the Cold War period is one of the contributions offered by this dissertation. It will evaluate security agendas of (small) states opting for non-alignment and relate the option of non-alignment to their broader security policies.

What both classical realists and neo-realists also neglect are the internal features and internal political dynamics within the states as primary units of analysis. In their understanding, pressure and constraints for state actions emerge primarily from the external environment, and that environment works irrespectively of the states' internal characteristics. Social-constructivists, on the other side, find bases and motives for states' foreign policy stands in their identities and ideas about the self and the external environment. This dissertation draws upon the constructivist understanding of how states' identities and interests are constantly negotiated and mutually constructed in communication between the self and the environment. At the same time, the approach adopted in this dissertation emphasises the influence of structural constraints

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[194] *Ibid*, p. 7.

which, contrary to what realists would claim, consist of both material power and ideas on how that power matters and how it might be employed. This, however, does not imply that in the constructivist view there is no room for the logic of rationality or that rationality is necessarily opposed to the logic of ideas and norms. As Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink point, "…instrumental rationality and strategic interaction play a significant role in highly politicised social construction of norms, preferences, identities, and common knowledge by norm entrepreneurs in world politics."[195] In other words, we should not forget the strategic character of social construction, where norms are not just established somewhere out there, but are created in a highly competitive environment with the participation of different political actors with competing agendas. At the same time, the result of actors' strategic calculation cannot only be the norm creation; norm conformance can also come as a result of actors strategically opting to obey the norms. When doing so, actors may find themselves confronted by a choice of different norms among which they might choose which ones they wish to obey, and in doing so they may use the logic of consequences and not necessarily the logic of appropriateness. Their incentives are not necessarily materialistic and utility-maximising, as realists claim. Actors may choose norm conformance for reasons that are other than purely materialistic, and norm compliance can be interpreted as self-interested, depending on how one defines its interest.[196]

The model of non-alignment presented in this thesis does not imply that non-alignment is a game changer in the present context of international relations or that states claiming to be non-aligned intend to introduce significant changes to the system, even if they possessed the power to do so. Instead, unlike traditional neutrals, those states try to achieve a different set of standards that are applicable to them and grounded in their own reasons, but under the dominant influence of international normative settings permissible for their specific policy. In contrast to the traditional view of neutrality, however, that structure is not necessarily characterised in terms of distribution of power. In the view adopted here, both material and ideational factors create frameworks in which states formulate and pursue their security policies.[197] I am not assuming the dominance of either material or ideational factors; instead, I allow for a possibility for both of them to assert pressure and form both constrains and incentives for states to formulate their

[195] Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'Norm Dynamics and Political Change', *International Organization at Fifty*: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, *International Organization,* 1998: pp. 887-917, p. 910, 911.
[196] *Ibid*, pp. 912-915.
[197] Alexander Wendt, 'Constructing International Politics', *International Security*, 20 (1), 1995: pp. 71-81; Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is what States make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization*, 46 (2), 1992: pp. 391-425; Finnemore and Sikkink, 'Norm Dynamics and Political Change', pp. 887-917.

security policies in terms of non-alignment. Realists have pointed out that the distribution of power in the international system creates conditions that are more or less favourable for non-alignment, but have not allowed a possibility that dominant discourse or discourses also create a permissible or less permissible environment for such a policy, first of all at the level of an idea of such a policy. At the same time, non-alignment is not a goal in and of itself but rather an instrument for achieving the security interests of respective states, which are not static but fluent and constructed in relation to both the material and normative structural framework of international relations.

## 3.2. Toward an Eclectic Approach to Small States' Strategy of Neutrality/ Non-Alignment

Based on the pitfalls of dominant theoretical approaches that so far have been employed in the study of neutrality/non-alignment, a novel theoretical model would have to include multiple variables, emerging from different theoretical frameworks, to explain why certain small states choose to stay outside of military alliances in the 21st century. In order to come to essential variables that might lead us to that sort of explanation, we will first have to look at the major premises from available literature on neutrality/non-alignment and small states studies.

As already mentioned above, authors discussing neutrality/non-alignment have been preoccupied with: 1) historical accounts of individual case studies of neutral states; 2) viability of neutrality/non-alignment in different contextual settings; and 3) structure of the international system as the dominant variable. They mostly researched historical developments of individual cases of neutral/non-aligned states. This provided them with rich empirical data on some of the cases, but it offered no room for conceptualisation of neutrality and comparison between different cases. Their main question was: What is the policy, and is it viable in a given international context? They also found international setting to be the appropriate level of analysis for their research. On that level of analysis, big powers' politics is the dominant research factor. What they have not asked is why a certain state opted for such a policy in the first place and what the reasons were for its decision. Authors, such as Baker Fox and Ogley, sporadically referred to neutrality/non-alignment as a sovereign choice of small states, which still have room for choice even if found in a non-amicable setting.[198] Still, neutrality/non-alignment was not confronted with other policy options available to small states, in case of which scholars would necessarily have had to embark on a research of states' domestic politics and how the decision on neutrality was made in the first place. Their biggest legacy is still composed of historical accounts of

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[198] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States;* Ogley, *The theory and practice of neutrality in the twentieth century.*

different cases of neutral states. Although they have not offered material for broader theoretical insights on what makes states opt to stay outside of military alliances, they have pointed out the importance of temporal research on how neutrality in a specific case had been formulated, developed and maintained, or abandoned. These valuable insights should not be neglected and therefore the historical account of one's neutrality/non-alignment, including war experience, is included in the theoretical model presented here.

This brings in insights from the historical institutionalism, which belongs to the group of institutional approaches in social sciences. It focuses on institutions understood in the broader sense of the word – not only on formal organisations, but also on norms, rules and policies that frame and guide human behaviour and actions of political actors. It is historical because it looks at the origins of the institutions, their background and the context of their development in order to be able to understand why and how they shape today's political actions. It has mostly been applied in the research on political revolutions, demise of authoritarian regimes, transitions to democracy, economic institutions and in comparative studies. Authors discussing methodological approaches in the social sciences agree that there are certain advantages that historical institutionalism brings to the research of political phenomena. First of all, it asks big, real-world questions that have slipped off the agenda of behaviourists and other positivists in social sciences, looking for hard data on political behaviour in pursuit of natural-sciences inspired explanations and predictions.[199] By bringing history back, the historical approach provides understanding of the context of events, the roots of current institutions, and the importance of timing and sequence of events. By researching the context of events, Sven Steinmo argues, historical institutionalists allow for explanations that are more accurate than those that would have been obtained had they treated their variables without knowledge of their temporal value.[200]

Sceptical of big theories and rather interested in the explanation of cases, historical institutionalists have adopted a dynamic understanding of history and politics in which history is not a mere sequence of events but rather a dynamic process in which actors are framed by institutions, which – in feedback – they also shape.[201] By doings so, historical institutionalists often come to an understanding of how past choices of political actors have shaped current

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[199] Sven Steinmo,'Historical institutionalism', in *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences A Pluralist Perspective,* Donatella della Porta and Michael Keating (eds), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008, pp. 118-139, pp. 122-123.
[200] *Ibid*, p. 127.
[201] *Ibid*, pp. 131, 133.

outcomes. In their research, actors' ideas matter, and those ideas can be grounded rationally as well as emotionally. Also, authors using historical research to reveal causal processes do not look at variables as separate from each other and instead acknowledge that they are usually interlinked in real-world processes, thus allowing explanations where different causal paths lead to similar outcomes.[202]

Another advantage of this process is that it looks at inter-dynamics between macro and micro processes, and dynamics between institutions and processes instead of looking at one institution or process at a time.[203] Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol argue that historical institutionalism is particularly useful for shedding light on conjunctures where several distinct causal processes meet, creating grounds for a particular event or a change of political course.[204] One example of this is a historical look at particular periods of time when international and domestic processes colluded to create grounds for far-reaching changes, e.g. political revolutions. Attention to slow historical processes, according to them, empowers researchers to discover hypotheses that might have remained hidden had they focused on big events which could serve only as catalysts or triggers. Deeper causes can be found in wider, slow-moving background processes.[205]

Issues of timing and sequence of events, strongly emphasised in the historical institutionalists' research, are captured by the concepts of *path dependence* and *increasing returns*. The concept of *path dependence* captures the importance of choices made in certain periods of history, which are further induced even in the absence of their original causes. This implies that certain courses of action become almost impossible to reverse. Referring to neutrality/non-alignment, this would mean that those policies once adopted reinforce themselves and almost exclude possibility of any other alignment option to the adopted. Thus, relatively small events of conjuncture lead to significant consequences over the course of time.[206] In this notion, the sequence of events matters because earlier events are much more important than those that occurred later. This argument speaks against the possibility of actors learning throughout history and applying utility maximising strategies in their behaviour. According to

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[202] Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol, 'Historical institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science', in *Political Science, the State of Discipline*, Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Milner (eds), Columbia University, Norton, 2002, pp. 693-721, p. 711.
[203] *Ibid*, p. 696.
[204] *Ibid*, pp. 702-703.
[205] *Ibid*, p. 704.
[206] Paul Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', *American Political Science Review*, 94 (2), 2000: pp. 251-267, p. 251.

the path dependence logic, strong *status quo* incentives are built into institutions and government policies once they are established, and there is rather limited room for their adaptation and altering. This is because political actors design institutions and policies to serve them over prolonged periods of time. This is especially relevant for the dynamic and complex field of political life, unlike economics where actors have room to adapt their behaviours based on quick feedbacks received from the market.

The *increasing return* concept was born in the field of economics and was only later applied to politics. According to this concept, once established course of action proves resistant to change because each further step along the same path provides relative benefits for the actors, while altering the course of action proves more expensive with the passage of time.[207] If again referring to neutrality/non-alignment, this means that, for example, those policies make certain demands upon countries defence industries, which become more self-sufficient and resilient, which in turn further boosts countries to stay outside of military alliances.

Both of these concepts correspond with that on which historical institutionalists insist – going back to the research of history of events to reveal critical periods of time when the background of the present policies had been established. Current outcomes do not necessarily emerge from big historical events. Instead, they might have been introduced at a critical point in time when two or more processes met in conjunction and small steps led to significant and far-reaching consequences. It is the task of historical research to trace those processes, their emergence, and their evolution up to the present time.

Historical institutionalism is not necessarily in contradiction with the rational choice approaches. It does not exclude the possibility of rational and utility-maximising actors who act within frameworks of institutional set-ups that define their actions. However, historical institutionalists do not assume that the cause of events lies in the rationality of actors' behaviour and insist on contextual research which will reveal if current institutions were set-up by rational actors or induced by conjuncture of mutually reinforcing processes. Somehow in contrast to this, the both clusters of scholarships reviewed earlier assumed rationality of actors. The actors, discussed either as small or neutral/non-aligned states, are supposed to be rational and follow their own agendas. Their actions are to be explained by the rational choice theory.

The rational choice theory relies on three key premises about political actors' behaviour. Those are: utilitarianism, rationalism and methodological individualism. Utilitarianism and

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[207] *Ibid*, p. 252.

rationalism are closely connected concepts that tell us that political actors are capable of purposeful actions aimed at reaching their respective goals in any given situation. According to these assumptions, actions of all political actors can be summarised as deliberate pursuits of their motives in a given situation, constrained by the behaviour of other actors.[208] Frank Lovett discusses broad criticism addressed at all three of these assumptions, among which the most dominant is the one that says that utilitarian and rationality-based assumptions are basically not interested in explaining what people actually do as long as it can be explained as a mathematical function of the utility function, which is constant and not subject to revision.[209] Methodological individualism subordinates political actions to the acts, preferences and needs of individuals who create political institutions that respond to their utilitarian motives and which are not, in return, constrained by them.[210] Unlike historical institutionalists, rational choice theorists do not assume that institutions could have origins other than to serve a utilitarian purpose of individual actors. They do so by decreasing the transaction costs of their interactions and by framing their behaviours to make them predictable and easily understandable to each other. If institutions are subjected to revision or competition among different institutional set-ups, those that survive are the ones that prove to be most beneficial to the aggregate interests of relevant actors.[211] Subtle reading of these assumptions leads us to the rational choice theory's understanding of humans as beings that are capable of learning and strategic adaptation. According to this theory, people's actions are driven not by impersonal historical forces – which could be one possible finding of the historical institutionalist approach – but by their strategic calculations, which also take into account how others are expected to behave.[212]

The main limitation in theoretical application of historical institutionalism is that it does not offer strong grounds for theorising its findings; namely, it most persuasively contributed to the elaboration of individual case studies whose findings are not necessarily generally applicable to a wider group of cases. The rational choice theory had been exposed to criticism on various grounds. First of all, as an approach that is based on the assumptions of rationality and methodological individualism, it appears as not suitable to explain collective actions of individuals joining and investing their time, interest and resources in a common good. Rational

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[208] Frank Lovett, 'Rational Choice Theory and Explanation', *Rationality and Society*, 18(2), 2006: pp. 237–272, p. 240-241.
[209] *Ibid,* pp. 256-257.
[210] Mark P. Petracca, 'The Rational Choice Approach to Politics: A Challenge to Democratic Theory', *The Review of Politics,* 53 (2), 1991: pp. 289-319, p. 293.
[211] Peter A. Hall, Rosemary C. R. Taylor, 'Political science and the three new institutionalisms', *MPIfG discussion paper*, No. 96/6, Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung, Köln, 1996, p. 13.
[212] *Ibid,* p. 12.

choice theorists would argue that in the background all of those enterprises we can find rational self-interest, which sees collective action as a vehicle of its own promotion. However, not all collective actions can be reduced to this, such as for example voluntarily organisations that provide no, at least no immediate, benefits to their members.

Second, the rational choice theory is unable to explain individual or collective actions guided by a sense of duty, honour or any other socially constructed norm of appropriate behaviour. In his account of why Sweden fought in the Thirty Years War of 1618-1648, Erik Ringmar confronts rationalistic assumptions of decision-making theories with a narrative approach that explains Sweden's dubious decision to enter the war based on its identity. He wrote that the utility maximising assumption necessarily limits the possibility to come to a meaningful explanation of why a certain event occurred or why certain people made the decisions they made. From the rationalist point of view, interests are given exogenously, and the assumption is that there exists a meaningful world where actors simply follow their interests, which, however, leaves scholars without the ability to understand concrete actions and why actors behaved the way they did.[213]

And finally, but equally important, the rational choice theory has been criticised for approaching politics from the perspective of egoistic, self-interested individuals unmotivated to cooperate in pursuit of a common good. Thus, the critique goes, this theory reinforces politics which is in favour of *status quo,* and which is intrinsically confronted with democratic plurality of views and citizens as active political participants.[214] The problem is thus not only that rational choice theorists fail to address a variety of human behaviours, that are not all easily subordinated to the pursuit of material self-gain, but also that their assumptions about human nature reinforce political agendas that in turn promote those exact self-interested and egoistic behaviours.[215]

When it comes to its theoretical ambitions, this thesis is aimed to provide generalisation in the rank of a middle-range theory. According to Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, middle-range theories focus on explaining the subtypes of general phenomena, on a lower level of generalisation compared to broad paradigmatic theories such are realism, liberalism and constructivism.[216] As George and Bennett wrote, middle-range theories are particularly suitable

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[213] Erik Ringmar, *Identity, interest and action*: *A cultural explanation of Sweden's intervention in the Thirty Years War,* Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 39-40.
[214] Petracca, 'The Rational Choice Approach to Politics: A Challenge to Democratic Theory', pp. 289-319.
[215]*Ibid*, p. 303.
[216] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005, p. 64.

to provide theoretical explanations of policy relevant phenomena or problems associated with the conduct of foreign policy.[217] Development of a middle-range theory proves to be the appropriate level of ambition for this dissertation. The theory of military non-alignment, which happens to be at a lower level of generalisations and is applicable to the narrowly defined group of events that operate with the larger number of variables, would be better equipped to come out with policy-relevant guidance compared to the more abstract theories, such as structural realism, which operate with a limited number of variables.[218]

An eclectic model of studying neutrality/non-alignment as a strategic choice of (small) states in the 21$^{st}$ century would have to take into account three independent variables which account for the choice of that strategy. Based on what scholars interested in both empirical and conceptual studies of it found to be the chief signifiers, the historical account and the threat perception decisively shape the choice of neutrality/non-alignment. Although the structural variable has remained dominant in the literature discussed above, new variables have also been introduced. The most important is the internal political variable, which recognises the importance of state's internal features, impact made by its leadership, and conjuncture of domestic and foreign policy processes. Although this variable has not been proven dominant in either of the above discussed bodies of scholarship, it was used as supplementary to the rival structural variable, and as the dominant one only under specific circumstances. More importantly, the introduction of internal political dynamics, as in the model presented here, allows us to look at states as internally plural, instead of monolithic units as assumed by (neo)realists. What states pursue at the international scene and which policies they employ might be decisively dependent on, or at least heavily influenced by, what their internal political actors say and do and how they shape the roles their states should play in relation to others. In the approach developed in this dissertation, these three serve as independent variables defining the choice of neutrality/non-alignment as a dependent variable. Each of these variables might account separately for the end result, but it could also emerge in a conjuncture of two or all three variables. Which variable or variables are decisive for the outcome of a concrete case of neutrality/non-alignment will be discussed based on the empirical investigation of the case studies.

Independent variables:

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[217] *Ibid*, p. 64.
[218] *Ibid*, p. 280.

The first independent variable is *war experience and historical account of neutrality/non-alignment*. Previous war experience is influential in defining potential for non-alignment. War experience, including the balance sheet of war gains and losses a state has suffered throughout history, is helpful in defining friends and enemies based on the state's previous relationships. As elaborated in the alliance theories, it also informs which state's alignment policies were successful in the past and which were not. War experience is informing a state's present strategy based on the account of which of its past security strategies were successful and which were not.

Earlier track-record of neutrality/non-alignment is highly influential when it comes to the present choice of non-aligned option, although it is not decisively important. The choice and practice of military non-alignment is easier for a state with the track record of previous neutrality/non-alignment. Those states have an experience and tradition of applying this sort of strategy, owing to which their public is more prepared to support it and is potentially attached to the image of neutrality/non-alignment. However, it is also possible for a state with no tradition of neutrality to pursue military non-alignment, because it is a strategy that is different from the political and ideological posture of traditional neutrals and therefore does not necessarily need a link to previous conduct.

The second independent variable are *threat perceptions*. States chose to be militarily non-aligned only when they are not confronted by threats from their immediate neighbourhood. This variable is directly linked with the neorealist argument on the importance of geography and proximity in detecting threats a state is facing. Anders Wivel discusses Hans Mouritzen's departure from the neo-realist assumption that those are the structural reasons, on the global level, that determine states' alliance preferences. States are concerned with great powers in their immediate environment more than with those that are structural.[219] The same argument was explored also by Walt, in his empirical investigation of alliance making on regional levels. The existence, strength and urgency of threats are defined in accordance with the states' perceptions. The perception of urgency and intensity of a threat increases with the shrinking proximity between a state and its threatening 'other'. In contrast to what Snyder found to be the most decisive factor in the alliance formation - systemic or structural factors rather than any particular interest or conflict, the model of non-alignment developed here assumes exactly the opposite. In other words, I assume that it is a concern or rather an absence of immediate threat that most decisively allows states to opt for non-alignment. States opt to stay non-aligned because they are not threatened by any immediate or plausible aggressor against which they would join a military

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[219] Anders Wivel, Theory and Prospects for Northern Europe's Small States, *Cooperation and Conflict*, 35 (3), 2000: pp. 331-340.

alliance. Still, they are not excluded from the global or regional security agenda because of the nature of security threats in the 21$^{st}$ century (diffuse origins of threats, cross-border features, non-state actors). States' assumptions about their surroundings, regional and global, are part of the threat perception variable.

And the third independent variable is *internal political dynamics*. Non-alignment is possible in the absence of strong political forces demanding alignment, either because of the perceived political and ideological identification with potential allies or because of the sense of a pressing threat that, in its view, a state cannot face on its own. Alignment politics could even be an asset in internal politics where one political group relies on alliance politics to back its domestic position.[220] However, there are also constraints of domestic terrain that decision-makers have to take into account when making alignment engagements abroad. When making international agreements decision-makers act with a notion that they will face their domestic veto-players and support groups. This is an argument that is in line with Robert D. Putnam's two-level game concept.[221] In the absence of strong alignment rationale within the internal political dynamics and powerful political groups that would endorse the alignment option, non-alignment is indeed a feasible option. The empirical material will demonstrate, however, whether the two selected cases of military non-alignment actually required political proponents of the non-alignment option, or the non-alignment occurred simply in the absence of alignment-promoters.

### 3.3. The Case Studies Method

This dissertation has both theoretical and policy ambitions. On the theoretical level, as elaborated above, it is aimed to provide generalisation in the rank of a middle-range theory. The use of case studies as a method is particularly suitable for this type of theoretical ambition because it offers scholars a tool to investigate how theoretical premises operate in contextual settings. Case studies, according to George and Bennet, offer an opportunity to refine the findings of middle-range theories and possibly broaden or narrow them down by subsequently including additional types or sub-types of cases through exploration of new variables.[222] Variables might be detected from observations of particular cases or types of cases, or deducted from existing theories whose validity the scholar wants to test using a particular case or a group of cases. What is important to stress here is that the two above-mentioned authors have defined

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[220] Also explained in Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p. 133.

[221] Robert D. Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games', *International Organization*, 42 (3), 1988: pp. 427-460.

[222] *Ibid,* p. 124.

the case study method as to include both within-case examination and cross-cases comparison as the best way to draw implications from a single research design which uses case studies as a method.[223]

The ambition to provide a conceptual framework for understanding and explaining why states opt to remain militarily non-aligned is exactly at the level of a middle-range theory. Its generalisation is narrower compared to the generic theoretical framework provided by realism, liberalism and constructivism, whose premises, together with historical institutionalism and rational choice theory, are used by the author. This sort of generalisation is supposed to provide an explanation of the policy outcome – military non-alignment – and link it to its causes without necessarily providing an explanation of the mechanisms through which independent variables have operated in order to result in that particular outcome. The case study method is suitable exactly for providing that causal explanation.

This dissertation adopts a deductive approach, in which a logical structure of possibilities is created before studying the cases. In this dissertation, that logical structure has been made based on the broader body of literature on neutrality/non-alignment, small states, and the theoretical account of alliance-making. The combination of within-case research and cross-cases examination makes this method especially desirable in this particular type of research because it allows an in-depth analysis of two cases, those of Serbia and Sweden, while also leaving room for comparison between these two distinct cases of military non-alignment as well as their comparison with a potential third case or a group of cases.

According to George and Bennett, explanation of a sub-class or certain type of cases, which this dissertation aims to provide, falls under the 'building block' approach to theory building. By providing an explanation of a certain carefully defined sub-class of phenomena, for example European militarily non-aligned states in the 21st century, I provide one element, a block, of a more generic theoretical explanation of phenomena such as military non-alignment or alignment policies in general. What is important is that 'building block' explanation is self-sufficient and independent from the other elements of a more general theory, and that it is theoretically sound irrespective of whether other elements of a more general theory will be put in place or not.[224] This approach to theory building allows room for further work, including comparative work on two or more different sub-classes of cases, searching for an explanation of

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[223] *Ibid,* p. 18.
[224] *Ibid,* p. 78.

either the intervening variables that cause different outcomes across sub-classes of cases or among cases, or for the outcome in a group of cases or among different cases.[225]

In their guidebook on case studies methods, George and Bennett claim that case studies as a method are applicable throughout the scope of different theoretical approaches, from realism to social constructivism and historical institutionalism, and that they are suitable for explaining both material and ideational variables.[226] Not only that case studies as a method can be applied in social sciences' research across different schools of thought, but they also possess other significant advantages. These are obvious also when compared to the statistical analysis and quantitative methods applied on a larger sample of cases. George and Bennett listed four main advantages of the case studies method, which all address the methodological needs of this research of military non-alignment and the development of a new conceptual framework in order to explain it. According to the authors, case studies as a method allow for a high degree of conceptual clarity and development of new hypotheses, especially when researchers are dealing with complex problems in the area of political and social sciences such as democracy, power, interests, etc.[227]

In order to conduct research of those types of phenomena that includes generic knowledge as well as policy relevance, hypothesis and variables should be explored in a specific contextual setting. Only by doing so a researcher can see how conceptual premises actually operate in reality. This cannot be achieved by the use of a statistical method, which by the very logic of dealing with a large sample of available cases, cluster cases belonging to diverse groups. This applies to the case presented here, since military non-alignment is, first and foremost, a conceptually broad category that can apply to different states, or other entities, in different time periods, implying different policies behind the generic label. By narrowing it down to the cases of European militarily non-aligned states in the 21st century, we have come to a more operative category. By exploring the case studies of Serbia and Sweden, this research strives to explore how the variables identified from literature on neutrality and non-alignment and the theories of alliance-making operate in two concrete, albeit very much different, contextual settings that produced the same policy outcome.

Furthermore, according to George and Bennett, case studies as a method are especially suitable to allow exploration of causal mechanisms through which certain variables worked in

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[225] *Ibid,* p. 79.
[226] *Ibid,* p. 9.
[227] *Ibid,* pp. 19-20.

concrete cases, which conditions were present in each case that helped activate said variables, and whether there were any previously unobserved aspects within the causal processes.[228] Insights on independent variables are not necessarily exhausted once a statement is made as to whether a variable had produced the observed outcome or not. A variable might prove to be a necessary condition for a certain outcome to occur, it could be a sufficient condition, but it could also be just a supporting condition. Revelation of causal mechanisms goes beyond the scope of this research of two cases of military non-alignment. It is, however, unavoidable if one wishes to explore conditions under which any of the three leading variables operated in a concrete case and if there are conditions under which variables may or may not lead to military non-alignment as an outcome.

For a causal explanation achieved by this method to be valid, researcher has to have identified crucial variables that capture the essentials of a given phenomenon in a given context. Variables are essential if they go beyond the specificities of a particular case, and if they are applicable to the entire sub-class of cases to which a particular research case belongs.[229] While identifying essential variables that operate throughout a group of cases, some simplification occurs is an unavoidable consequence. What is crucial, however, is whether that simplification jeopardises the validity of the results and their generalisation. This, according to George and Bennett, depends on the skills of the researcher and his/her judgment of what might be a specificity of a given case and not an essential variable that captures the phenomenon and how it operates in a group of cases.[230]

Finally, especially relevant for this research is George and Bennett's remark that case studies have a strong advantage in exploring equifinality as one form of complex causality, which is present when the same outcome is produced by different causal paths, or when different causal mechanisms lead to the same outcome.[231] The same outcome, such as the policy of military non-alignment, might be explained by different explanatory paths that may or may not have one or more variables in common.[232] The open possibility that the same outcome, in the form of a policy of military non-alignment, was produced by different causal mechanisms, with different independent variables leading to the same outcome in these two cases, is strongly desirable in this research. It is important to keep it open because of the deliberate intent to apply

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[228] *Ibid,* p. 21.
[229] *Ibid,* p. 93.
[230] *Ibid,* p. 93.
[231] *Ibid,* p. 10.
[232] *Ibid,* p. 20.

deductive conceptual framework to two distinct cases in which the same policy outcome might have been produced by completely different variables, or by same variables under different conditions. When equifinality is present, as George and Bennett claim, a scholar cannot be content with a discovery of a generic cause that is present in most or all the cases belonging to the same group. Such an explanation would be incomplete and a researcher has to strive for an empirically informed theory that explains different causal paths leading to the same outcome.[233] Also, when developing a theory, scholars should not be led by the assumption that it is their task to discover a single generic cause that is applicable to a number of cases. Instead, they should be aiming to explain different causal patterns that lead to similar outcomes.[234]

As regards limitations of the case studies method, the most obvious one is bias in the selection of cases, which might be chosen in accordance with the scholar's preference toward a particular hypothesis. This challenge is mitigated when a researcher works within a certain theoretical framework that allows him/her to deduct a leading hypothesis which will be tested on the cases. In such a situation, a scholar does select cases based on whether they are crucial, least likely or most likely to produce a theory.[235] Also, according to George and Bennett, researchers can convince their readers that they have avoided bias in the selection of cases by choosing cases that would prove their preferred hypothesis with a high degree of probability by demonstrating that they have taken alternative explanations seriously.[236]

Further limitations come from the possibility to generalise case findings. This might be in a line with the more general critique to which case studies as a method are exposed. That critique describes case studies as a form of historical explanation where achieved knowledge is non-scientific and non-cumulative.[237] Since case studies as a method have developed from historical analyses, they do have the potential of deteriorating into individual stories that do not communicate with each other. This was, among other issues, the problem with literature developed around neutrality and non-alignment, as noted above. Neutrality was discussed mainly in the form of stories of individual cases of neutral/non-aligned countries, with a distinctive absence of an attempt to develop a broader, theoretically relevant understanding of the phenomenon. A way to overcome this potential shortcoming of the case studies method is to use it in the form of structured and focused comparison. In that case, 'structured' implies that

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[233] *Ibid, p*. 161.
[234] *Ibid*, p. 282.
[235] *Ibid,* p. 24.
[236] *Ibid*, p. 91.
[237] *Ibid*, p. 68.

research of different case studies would be guided by a carefully designed research question, which will consequently guide data collection. 'Focused' means that a scholar would look only at certain aspects of cases without attempting to provide their comprehensive historical examination. When a case study is conducted under these premises, a scholar obtains systematic and cumulative data, suitable for building cumulative knowledge and theorising.[238]

George and Bennett also addressed this limitation by claiming that case studies are better at discovering causal necessity or sufficiency than causal weight in a class of cases. In other words, case studies as a method are better at discovering 'whether and how a variable mattered to the outcome than at assessing how much it mattered'.[239] These two authors, who emphasised the advantages of case studies method in social sciences, made it clear that they work better for scholars who are interested in rich and in-depth explanations of particular cases, or carefully defined types of cases, than in theoretical parsimony and revealing the frequency with which concrete causal mechanisms work.[240] Having in mind the ambition of this particular research on military non-alignment, insights that are to be reached through two case studies will provide an explanation as to whether, how, under which conditions and in which mutual interaction the three identified variables worked. Future research projects can apply the same analytical framework to other case studies, with different contextual settings, which would increase the general applicability of hypothesised variables and the explanatory framework of how they work.

## 3.4. The Choice of Serbia and Sweden Case Studies

Case studies of Serbia and Sweden were chosen as the least similar examples of military non-alignment in the European context in the 21st century. Dissimilarities between the two countries are striking in relation to their historical, political and economic backgrounds, but also to their very recent political developments. The year 2000 was a benchmark in Serbian politics; the Milošević regime was forced to step aside and the country exited isolation and international sanctions which were imposed in the 1990s. One of the first tasks on the agenda of new political leaders was the reform of the armed forces and intelligence services, which occurred in the context of triple transition: from a conflict to a post conflict state, from authoritarianism to democracy, and from being a federal unit to becoming a sovereign state. Much less disturbing in the case of Sweden, the year 2000 marked the beginning of military reforms aimed at reducing the number of troops and adapting the forces to the involvement in international operations.

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[238] *Ibid,* p.67.
[239] *Ibid,* p. 25.
[240] *Ibid,* p. 31.

These reforms reflected changes in threat perceptions and Sweden demonstrating more interest in security cooperation within the region and with the European Union (EU) and NATO.

These two states are perceived as playing radically different roles within the framework of European and international security. Sweden, with a track-record of politics of neutrality, nowadays assumes a much more active role in international peacekeeping efforts and is perceived to be a credible NATO partner. Unlike Sweden, Serbia was recently involved in the violent dissolution of former Yugoslavia, was on the receiving edge of a NATO's bombing campaign in 1999. Despite having a high level of cooperation with NATO, the recent memory of war, its close relations with Moscow and democratic backsliding all make it a potential trouble-maker in terms of regional security in the Balkans. In a complex security environment, however, these two distinct actors are both subjected to the socialising influence of the EU (one is a member and the other a candidate state) and NATO with regard to their security policies.

However, despite the significant differences in circumstances that shaped their security policies, the two countries came up with an identical formula to their security policies – military non-alignment – in relation to the most dominant military alliance of today, NATO, as well as any other. The conceptual framework of three intervening variables deducted from different theoretical traditions (realism, historical institutionalism and rational choice) will be tested on the empirical material obtained from these two case studies to find out the causes that determined military non-alignment as the outcome in each of those cases.

Having in mind the theoretical ambition of this dissertation, which is to build a conceptual framework for a study of military non-alignment as a security strategy of small states that explains the absence of variation in the dependent variable across dissimilar cases, the choice of most dissimilar cases brings forth benefits that are both theoretical and empirical. In conceptual terms, testing the correlation between three independent variables in the two case studies is expected to benefit, to a certain degree, the generalisation of that correlation. By avoiding testing the conceptual model on similar cases, the research avoids coming up with a generalised conclusion based on correlations influenced by similar or same contextual factors. Dissimilarities between the cases offer a possibility to test the variables in different contextual settings. In this way, the author intends to avoid bias of choosing similar cases of militarily non-aligned states (Sweden and Finland, for example). By doing this, one is in position to avoid dubious generalisation of results retrieved from one case study only, regardless of which one it might be. Otherwise, the causal explanation would be exposed to criticism of having only context-specific weight.

By using dissimilar cases, I intend first to test the model in different contextual circumstances in order to understand how the correlation of variables works in different regional and political contexts. Second, I aim to explore whether there are any additional, contextual, factors that emerge from the specifics of any of the cases which would account for the choice of military non-alignment more convincingly than any of the three intervening variables. If the results show that contextual factors do not have a strong impact, and that some or all of the intervening variables are accounted as having produced an outcome, then I can claim to have a framework with a higher potential for generalisation, which is also applicable to other cases of the same sub-type. Thus, I will be in the position to reach insights of a higher potential of generalisation, valid for the type of cases that are the topic of this dissertation – European militarily non-aligned states that are in the position to independently define their own security strategies.

Besides their striking dissimilarities, the case studies of Serbia and Sweden also prove to be a suitable choice for this exercise because findings that emerge from the two case studies allow for further generalisation. This is possible because neither of the two cases possesses significant specificities that could imperil comparison with other cases belonging to the same type. First of all, both are independent sovereign states with a full capacity to formulate their own foreign and security strategies. This excludes possible generalisation and comparison with cases representing entities that are either part of a larger state union, such as the Republic of Srpska which is a federal unit of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or are not entirely entitled to create and enforce their own security policies, such as Kosovo which lacks full international recognition and has NATO KFOR forces present on the ground.

Second, both Serbia and Sweden are states that are fully engaged in international organisations dealing with the wider aspects of security – such as the UN, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe – and are members of respective regional initiatives. Even more so, the both states have strong relations with the EU: Sweden being a member state since 1995 and Serbia being a candidate state since 2011, and both are strongly oriented towards the EU's common foreign and security policies. By selecting these two states, we avoid dealing with those whose military non-alignment might be a consequence of their international isolation, as was the case with Albania in the second half of the 20th century. This allows for generalisation of findings across the defined sub-type of cases and comparison with militarily non-aligned sovereign states that belong to other wider regions (African and Asian). As noted by George and Bennet, to be theoretically relevant case studies must allow

drawing wider conclusions, which form the basis for generalisation that goes beyond the cases themselves.[241]

And finally, both Serbia and Sweden belong to the group of small states, in accordance with the criteria of both material capacities (size of territory and population) and power projection capacities (ability to act independently in the realm of international security and to independently safeguard their own security). Although Sweden is a striking example of small, rich and successful states and Serbia is not, the two cases undoubtedly enrich small states literature and offer material for comparative studies. Even more importantly, research of two distinct cases of small states allows for a certain degree of generalisation of research results, thus contributing to theorising on the security strategies of small states. The aspired generalisation of results does not, however, imply that a single cause will explain the outcome in both cases. As elaborated above, premises of equifinality are part of this research's design.

In the empirical part of the investigation that follows, the case studies method allowed for an in-depth research of each of the two cases, with room for detailed elaboration of the three variables and their interaction. Under the historical experience of war what is offered is an analysis of major historical events (wars) that shaped countries' experience with alignment or military neutrality. Since different historical moments defined historical trajectories of Serbia and Sweden, the time-frames of two case studies are different. For Serbia, analysis starts with the experience of Ottoman occupation and liberation wars of 16th century, followed with the First and the Second World War, post-war membership in the non-aligned movement, then violent break-up of former Yugoslavia and finally with the 1999 NATO. In the Swedish case study, analysis takes off with the birth of neutrality in the 17-19th centuries, then followed with the First and the Second World War, and the post-war exercise of military neutrality, up to 1995 and membership in the EU which reshaped and re-phrased Swedish military neutrality into military non-alignment. Similarly to this, the analysis of the internal political dynamics follows the same logic – it is focused on the defining moments when key political actors discussed and negotiated meaning of military neutrality/non-alignment. Those were time-periods when the states introduce, or re-shaped, policies of military neutrality/non-alignment and the last parliamentary elections when those policies were re-negotiated and re-interpreted among major political actors. This logic applied to the two case studies brings us to the analysis of the Serbian internal dynamics in 2007, when the concept of military neutrality was introduced for the first time, and analysis of the last parliamentary elections held in 2016. In the Swedish case study, the analysis is thus focused on the year 1992 when the military neutrality was re-formulated into military

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[241] *Ibid, p*. 110.

non-alignment, and on the last parliamentary elections held in 2018. Similarly to this, analysis of threat perceptions follows the same logic: it sheds light on key documents that revealed what the two states accessed and communicated to be their national security interests and threats. In the Serbian case study this is offered through an analysis of key strategic documents from 2009 and 2018. In the Swedish chapter the Cold War threat analysis is presented and then followed by the analysis of the newest security strategy from 2017.

What follows is the case study of the Serbian politics of military neutrality/non-alignment.

# CHAPTER 4: Serbia Case Study

## 4.1. Historical Experience of War

In the following chapter I will elaborate Serbia's historical experience of war asking following questions: what are the main lessons-learned from war enterprise that different forms of Serbian state were involved in; who were the enemies and who were the allies in major wars fought and are there any links between the lessons-learned and security policies of Serbia in the 21ˢᵗ century. The analysis starts with the episode of the Ottoman rule in the 16ᵗʰ century and moves onwards. The analysis is cantered around liberation wars in 16-18th centuries, then the two world wars, including post-war experience of former Yugoslavia as a prominent member of the NAM. The chapter ends with the explanation of what was Serbia's experience in the violent dissolution of former Yugoslavia which ended up with the painful episode of 1999 bombing. The main findings point to the inseparable links between the war enterprise and state building, that Serbs fought both offensive and defensive wars and that the Serbian armed forces were perceived as an influential actor and tool to achieve political goals. This experience, and narrative around it, ends with the 1999 bombing when Serbia found itself confronted with the old-time allies and had to adjust to a completely novel political and security context. First we turn to the war experience of the 16ᵗʰ -18ᵗʰ centuries.

### 4.1.1. Serbs under the Ottoman Rule and Their Liberation Wars

The experience of liberation wars and process of national unification demonstrated an inseparable link between a state-making and a war-enterprise. This is not to say that the connection between a war-making enterprise and the establishment of a national state was the sole characteristic of the Balkans and its small states at the time. As Charles Tilly argues, transformation of states into national states, as specifically demonstrated on the example of the European state system, is intrinsically linked with war enterprise. According to him, centralisation of coercion within states, preparation for and the ability to convey inter-state wars helped build centralised and bureaucratic national states able to mobilise, finance and sustain large conscript armies.[242]

Before the idea of a Serbian national unification and a statehood of an independent state was even born the areas inhabited by the Serbs were occupied by the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman grip on the Balkan Peninsula caused a historical discontinuity which disassociated pre-

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[242] Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, A.D. 990 – 1992*, Oxford &Cambridge, MA: BasilBlackwell, 1990, pp. 67-84.

modern Serbia from its Western European counterparts. The evolution of social, political and cultural institutions modelled after their Western European counterparts ceased.[243]

The Ottoman rule in the Balkans led to even more dramatic consequences for the social and political fabric of the Balkan tribes. From the 14th century on, war became a normal state of affairs for the societies ruled by the Ottoman Empire and, as Milorad Ekmečić claims, the main reason for its occurrence.[244] Wars constituted an intrinsic part of the maintenance and development of the Ottoman Empire, and nations that were involuntarily included in the Empire could not escape the logic of war enterprise and its consequences. From the mid-sixteenth century on, the great majority of Serbs inhabiting different territories lived under the Ottoman rule. Historical records show mixed testimonies of both their loyalty to the Sultan and their rebellion.[245] The Ottoman Empire ranked non-Muslims according to their religion, churches they belonged to and languages they spoke. The Ottomans introduced an administrative system known as the millet system, which basically relied on self-governance of minorities based on their religious affiliation.[246] Groups living in areas bordering Central Europe played the role of border-protectors and their military services were thus required. According to Ekmečić, the consequences of wars were more damaging to Serbs compared to the other nations because of the higher strategic value of territories they inhabited. The Morava River was the natural transit zone in all the north-south and south-north conquests, while the city of Belgrade, with its concentration of both land forces and river flotillas, was the key strategic point for domination over the Balkans and Central Europe.[247]

Guerrilla war-enterprise was typical for the Balkans and there are historians who find this to be a feature of many wars that had been fought in this part of the world in the distant past.[248] It was typical as a response, but it occurred only sporadically because the Ottoman conquest resulted in paralysing fear among the ordinary people.[249] From the 16th century on, the Ottoman Empire was able to mobilise armed forces that were far more dominant than those of its competing rival powers - Russia, Austria and France, at least in terms of land forces. On seas,

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[243] Milorad Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja: Istorija Srba u Novom Veku (1492-1992),* Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2008, p. 2.

[244] *Ibid,* p. 17.

[245] Sima M. Ćirković, *The Serbs*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004, p. 140.

[246] Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe Under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804,* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977, p. 5.

[247] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 18.

[248] *Ibid,* p. 21.

[249] *Ibid,* p. 20.

however, it could not act dominantly but only in partnership with other forces in possession of strong naval resources.[250] What added to the dominance of the Ottoman forces was determination and pervasiveness of its soldiers who, with their self-discipline and dedication, set fear in their rivals.[251] After they captured Belgrade in 1521, the Ottomans defined Central Europe and countries further up north as their next strategic objective. Based on the sheer numeric advantage of their forces, they marched toward the heart of Europe, driven by prospects of personal enrichment, pillaging and the enthusiasm of conquest.[252]

Within the system that was dependent on war-waging, all adult, capable Muslim male inhabitants were obliged to take up arms and participate in defending the Empire whenever the need would arise. Clear hierarchy between soldiers and non-soldiers was established. Serbs were included in the system, just like they were included in the Habsburg system later on, in Serbs-composed units. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro were also assigned the task of defending the Ottoman Empire's external borderlines. Local inhabitants, organised in tribes in the case of Montenegro, were assigned the defence of border areas. In exchange, they were able to negotiate a special sort of territorial autonomy that went hand in hand with revenue-collecting autonomy.[253] This was the case in both the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian Empires.

Forced migrations of large populations, including ethnic cleansing when one ethnic and religious group moved into the territory of another, were the consequence of the Ottomans' constant war-waging.[254] Belgrade had not been fully settled before the city was liberated in 1806-1807, and there had been some earlier attempts to settle Muslim inhabitants therein.[255] Like other ethnic groups, Serbs were also forced into massive migrations. One of the biggest and best known in the Serbian collective memory is the 17th century migration toward Austria. Serbs took part in the Great Turkish War, fought between 1683 and 1699, and initiated massive uprisings in 1690 upon the invitation from the Habsburg Tsar.[256] Historians do not offer a unanimous answer as to what the Habsburg Tsar actually promised to the Serbs, but they mostly agree that it was some sort of autonomy within the Empire.[257] The Ottomans suffered huge defeats in this undertaking, the best-known being the defeat under the Vienna walls in 1683.

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[250] *Ibid,* p. 21.

[251] *Ibid.*

[252] *Ibid,* p. 22.

[253] Stevan K. Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, Beograd: Clio, 2004, p. 19.

[254] *Ibid,* p. 14.

[255] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 111.

[256] Ćirković, *The Serbs*, pp. 143-144.

[257] *Ibid,* p. 145.

Serbian forces, on the other hand, went all the way to Kosovo, liberating Niš and Prizren in parallel with popular local uprisings. When Turks started returning to the provisionally liberated areas in northern Macedonia, Kosovo Serbs fled those territories and moved toward Austria led by their Patriarch. It is estimated that approximately 100,000 people left their homes on that occasion.[258]

More broadly, the war between the Ottoman Empire on one side and the Habsburg Empire and its allies on the other, and the consequent Ottoman defeat, marked the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire and the opening of the so-called 'Eastern Question' which figured in the final dissolution of the Empire and its transition toward becoming a republic. The 'Eastern Question' implied uncertainties about the future of the Ottoman-controlled territories, and was opened as a result of the clash of the European powers and Russia with Turkey. On a local level, with regard to Serbian statehood, the uprising and the strengthening of the Serbian community in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (from 1867) significantly increased the prospects of the Serbs' further national liberation and unification. Despite great tragedy – and the mass migration undoubtedly was a tragedy – Serbs presented themselves as an ethnic group that demanded and fought for statehood.

The Serbs' uprisings and readiness to fight for liberation and national unification were just some of the elements that coloured their prospects for success. What proved to be a highly significant factor was the background of the great powers' politics. The status of a middle or great power was defined in relation to whether a state could compete with the most dominant rivals on the battlefield. In spite of enormous human losses, Russia won several big victories over Turks in the war of 1737-1739, owing to which it was undeniably recognised as a great power.[259] For Serbs, the above war implied resolute and direct involvement of Russia in the conflicts in south-eastern Europe, which encouraged them and gave them hopes of Russia's support. The Ottomans, however, won this war and Belgrade fell under their rule in 1739. Historians are still discussing whether Austria willingly let Turkey obtain the territories inhabited by Serbs in exchange for its restrictive conduct of territorial conquest of Bosnia.[260] Serbian national liberation and unification, however, was not an issue in this war. Serbs successfully promoted the idea in the next century, when their liberation project will achieve significant success.

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[258] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 44.
[259] *Ibid,* p. 73.
[260] *Ibid,* p. 86-87.

Russia acted as the promoter of the Balkan nations' fight for independence from the Ottoman Empire, but only to the level that suited its own interests of weakening the Ottomans in the Balkans, which disappointed Serbian leaders.[261] Having suffered a defeat in the Crimean War of 1854-1856, Russia had lost its previous influence in the Balkans. After 1870 it was engaged once again, this time through the alliance with its western European counterparts. Their agreement led to the Congress of Berlin in 1878 which was marked by a missed opportunity for the Serbian unification.[262] Serbian historian Ekmečić claims that it was Russia that consistently worked against Serbia's project of independent fight for national liberation, preventing it from finding allies in any of the great powers of the time.[263] It was not only Russia whose great power's politics put restraints on and severely limited the small Balkan nations' quest for liberation. Napoleon's preoccupation with keeping Russia's assets in the Balkans under checks and balances and preventing the Russians from having an asset in the form of an independent Serbian state left the Serbian revolution in 1804-1815 without any allies in Western Europe.

In 1804, the outbreak if the First Serbian uprising was partially caused by the organization of the Ottoman and Habsburg military forces. Serbian units serving under either Ottoman or Habsburg rule eventually achieved the capacity to wage an independent fight against the Ottomans. Volunteer units that fought in the Habsburg-Ottoman war in 1788-1791 were especially relevant for the upcoming Serbian uprising. This war was even more important for the future of national revolutions in the Balkans because it had the character of a Serbian national uprising. Also, new leadership emerged from it, among them political and military leaders of the Serbian uprising of 1804.[264] As a result of the war, Serbs were granted only a small degree of self-governance, far short of full autonomy. In the peace treaty of 1791[265] the Belgrade area (*pašaluk*) was named Serbia for the first time in history. In the view of Serbian historian Ekmečić, the above war can be summarised as a general preparation for the Serbian uprising of 1804-1815, since Serbs acquired the skills of a military organisation – they learned how to organise long-term military troops and maintain their supply, established the core of military leadership, and identified the weaknesses of the Turkish organisation.[266] This was supplemented

[261] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, pp. 44-45.

[262] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,*p. 210.

[263] *Ibid,* p. 273.

[264] *Ibid ,*p. 100.

[265] Up to then, it was unclear which territory Serbia occupies. In the dominant understanding of that time, those were southern territories Ottomans occupied, territory of Kosovo, and parts of Macedonia, Montenegro and Bulgaria. *Ibid,* p. 149.

[266] *Ibid,* p. 101.

by a general mobilisation which, in the same historical period, was always more successful in Serbia than in Western Europe.[267]

Military knowledge of the time had already integrated the experiences gained from the 1756-1763 war and the American Revolutionary War of 1776-1783, based on which the future of warfare belonged to the so-called 'free corps'. Serbian free corps used against the Turks in the 1788-1791 war established preconditions for the First Serbian Uprising of 1804 in both technical and political terms. In technical terms, they established a basis for the military organisation of the uprising. Since they served as coherent national units led by their officers and with the notion of coherence of those who belonged to the same nation and spoke the same language, their political purpose was to boost the sense of national unity.[268] The war of 1788-1791 opened up prospects for the Serbian national project while at the same time demonstrating, at least in the Serbian perception, that their wars can only be fought in a guerrilla manner.[269]

The cornerstones of Serbian statehood were established with the First and Second Serbian Uprisings, in 1804 and 1815 respectively, rendering them some of the most important events in Serbian modern history. Their ideological base was a mixture of liberal ideas inspired by the French Revolution, such as the ideas of natural rights and popular sovereignty, and the revoking of ideas of historical glory represented by symbols of the Nemanjić dynasty.[270] Although they emerged with far-reaching consequences and established grounds for the modern Serbian state, these events were initiated by fairly modest demands for a less harsh Ottoman rule caused by its comparison with earlier, more benign, Austrian governance.[271] However, once initiated, the uprising led to anti-Ottoman fighting. As a result of the First Uprising of 1804, Serbs gained Belgrade in 1806-1807 and their broad autonomy was recognised by the Ottomans. By the end of 1806, Serbia was an independent state; however, there was no possibility of international recognition of its independence in practice. Serbs demanded true independence from all the big powers – Austria, Russia and the Ottoman Turkey – but their legal independence obviously had to be fought for. In parallel with their fight for independence from external powers, Serbs worked on the development on their internal institutions. In 1808, the leader of the uprising, Karađorđe Petrović, was granted the highest authority in the newly developed state, while he on

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[267] *Ibid,* p. 161.

[268] *Ibid,* p. 97.

[269] *Ibid,* p. 98.

[270] Dušan T. Bataković, 'A Balkan-Style French Revolution? The Serbian Uprising in European Perspective', paper presented at the conference *The First Serbian Uprising: Political, Social and Cultural Legacies,* held at Harriman Institute, Columbia University, New York, November 2004.

[271] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, pp. 42-43.

the other hand recognised the Provisional Council as the highest judicial power which he could not bypass when issuing directives and orders.[272] Modern armed forces were established at the same time, with a core of standing forces in each territorial area. General conscription was enforced upon the entire 12-70 years old male population.[273] The Ottoman Sultan declined Serbia the right to organise and maintain military forces mirroring those of the European states. Karađorđe's successor, Serbian Prince Miloš Obrenović, defended that right based on the need to fight internal insurgencies and in 1830 the Sultan finally and formally allowed Serbia to keep a light standing force. The symbolic importance of keeping a standing force, and thus having the prerogative of a sovereign state which controls its territory by military means, was at the time more important than the size of the force itself.[274]

These events established grounds for massive nationalism, which was quite unlike elite nationalism that was prominent theretofore. It was the fight for statehood, independent institutions and defined borders that set the conditions for the education of broader groups of people and the emergence of middle class.[275]

The autonomy got its constitutional shape in the Constitution of in 1830 (*Sretenjski ustav*), modelled after the constitutions of western European states. The executive power was divided between the Prince (*knez*) and the Council (the Government). Besides the Ottoman Empire which had the right to grant or refuse final approval of the act, the great powers of the time – Russia, Austria, France and Great Britain – opposed it, each for its own reasons.[276] The new version of the document, the so-called Turkish Constitution, introduced a strict separation of powers that led to Miloš's abdication from power.[277]

A restrictive version of the autonomy gained as a result of the 1804-1815 uprising was in force until the 1875-1878 uprising, which was the most massive Serbian movement in the 19th century. Nationalistic projects in the Balkans found their inspiration in the successful national unification projects of the Western European states, namely Italy in the 1860s, and Germany in the 1870s. The Balkan people – Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians – had restoration of their medieval empires as leading images based on which they measured their territorial aspirations in modern age. In 1876, a large anti-Ottoman uprising broke out in Bulgaria, leading to Russia's

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[272] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 189.
[273] *Ibid.*
[274] *Ibid,* p. 217.
[275] *Ibid,* p. 142-143.
[276] Ćirković, *The Serbs*, p. 195.
[277] *Ibid,* p. 196.

intervention on the side of its Orthodox kin. The Russian-Turkish war ended in Russian victory and the San Stefano Peace Treaty in March 1878. Thanks to the Russian efforts, the Treaty recognised Bulgaria's maximalist territorial aspirations and granted enlarged territories to Serbia and Montenegro.[278] However, owing to the Western European states' concern with the disturbed balance in the Balkans, the San Stefano Peace Treaty was soon subjected to revision. Aiming to resolve the Balkan issue, Otto von Bismarck invited the then leading diplomats to a conference in Berlin. Decisions made at the Congress of Berlin in July 1878 reversed the battle-field victories of the Balkan people, especially those of Bulgaria, which was restored to its former status of an autonomous principality under the Ottoman rule.[279] Territorially deprived, Serbia, together with Montenegro and Romania, was formally recognised as an independent state.[280] Despite their formal independence, newly independent Balkan states recognised the restrictions imposed on them by great-power politics and, frustrated by the barriers set by the Berlin Congress, continued to fight for their national projects.[281]

The passage picturing Serbs' experience in the 16th-19th centuries' liberation wars is in accordance with the above mentioned Tilly's thesis of how war enterprise was in many ways essential for the establishment of national states. The presented Serbian experience indeed proved that the ability to mobilise and contain respectable armed forces went hand in hand with the centralised and bureaucratic state apparatus. Even more so, the presented historical experience brought a lesson that ability to convey wars is a basic qualification to put forward a political agenda. However, the liberation wars that Serbs fought throughout centuries also taught them a great deal of power politics and prices to be paid for great powers' support. The alignment politics they followed was constantly influenced by the contextual changes in the regional and global environment that were out of their control. These lessons will be further applicable in the Balkans Wars and the two world wars that followed. Therefore, the analysis is continued with the Serbia's war experience in the Balkans Wars.


**4.1.2. Serbia in the Balkan Wars 1912-1913**
An unfinished job of establishing national states in accordance with the Balkan states' territorial pretensions led to the Balkan Wars, fought in 1912-1913. In the First Balkan War, which lasted from October 1912 until the spring of 1913, Greece, Bulgaria, Montenegro and

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[278] Richard C. Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912-1913: Prelude to the First World War*, London: Routledge, 2000, p. 14.
[279] *Ibid,* p. 15.
[280] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 298.
[281] Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912-1913,* p. 15.

Serbia, forming the Balkan Alliance, allied against the Ottoman Turkey. The background for this war was set by the decisions of the Congress of Berlin which failed to satisfy territorial claims of Bulgaria and Serbia regarding parts of today's Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania. They were also motivated by the fear of renewed Turkish initiatives in the Balkans after the Young Turk Revolution in 1904 and the Ottoman weakness demonstrated in the war it fought with Italy in northern Africa in 1911.[282] The Balkan states' alliance was initiated by way of a mutual agreement on political and military cooperation that was signed by these two states in March 1912. In this agreement, Bulgaria and Serbia recognised each other's territorial ambitions toward Macedonia whose significant portion was to be handed over to Bulgaria, and toward Kosovo and parts of Albania which were recognised as Serbia's sphere of interest. This agreement, signed under Russia's supervision, was followed by bilateral agreements signed between all other members of this future war alliance.

War preparations were enthusiastically cheered by Serbian as well as other Balkan states' military forces. According to Richard Hall, military forces of the Balkan states of the time had powerful agendas of their own, and could credibly threaten political regimes in their respective countries. They could do so because they were indispensable tools in the fight for national liberation and unification, receiving significant portions of national budgets.[283] Balkan militaries had established systems of communication, logistics, training and supply in accordance with the Western European states.[284] In spite of obvious numerical disadvantage of the Balkan states compared to the Ottoman Turkey, their advantage was based on the homogeneity of their armed forces, united by the nationalistic ideology and indoctrinated by the myths of their countries' medieval greatness.[285] Their human resources were made up of peasantry, who all spoke the same language unlike the heterogeneous groups within the Ottoman Armed Forces led for the most part by officers with little foreign military training.[286] Mobilisation was not a problem for the Balkan allies on the eve of the war. With the population of about 3 million Serbia managed to mobilise 230,000 troops.[287]

The First Balkan War was the arena of great military success of the Serbian armed forces. Organised in four armies and one brigade, they made their way through Macedonia, expelling Ottomans not only from the northern part of the country and making their way into Kosovo, but

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[282] *Ibid,* p. 26.
[283] *Ibid,* pp. 21-22.
[284] *Ibid,* p. 23.
[285] *Ibid,* p. 23.
[286] *Ibid,* p. 23-24.
[287] *Ibid,* p. 24.

also gaining central Macedonia and other areas that were promised to Bulgaria according to the bilateral pre-war agreement signed between the two states.[288] New disputes between the allies started to emerge when firearms were still hot from the battle, as Serbs were never really happy with the initial agreement they made with Bulgaria concerning their mutual territorial pretensions. In October 1912, Serbian forces defeated numerically superior Ottoman Armed Forces in Kumanovo, which was the decisive battle of the war for Macedonia. This proved to be a great success for the Serbian forces and their Chief of the General Staff, General Radomir Putnik. The Battle of Kumanovo came a bit unexpectedly at the very beginning of the war, and was fought in parts that were much more to the north than the Serbian command expected. It opened the door for Serbs to march toward Kosovo, enter Pristina which had a high symbolic value for the army that cherished memories of medieval glory of the Serbian Nemanjić dynasty and the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, and proceed through northern and central Albania all the way to its Adriatic ports. Besides having to deal with clashing territorial claims in Macedonia with Bulgaria, Serbia was also heavily concerned that its military campaign in Albania. Serbs knew that the fact they had reached the Adriatic ports would cause opposition from great powers, especially Austro-Hungary, which viewed Serbia as a Russian ally that could provide Russia with a path to the Adriatic. At the same time, there was a rivalry with the Montenegrin Petrović dynasty over the territory of Sandžak and certain parts of Kosovo. This stemmed from the fact that both Slavic were states, connected with brotherhood ties having similar pretensions there. There was also a general rivalry between the dynasties as to who would govern the future unified state of Serbia and Montenegro – whether it would be the Serbian Karađorđević or the Montenegrin Petrović dynasty. In the First Balkan War, the Petrović dynasty lost the argument at the battle-field since the Montenegrin army proved to be militarily inferior to Serbs.

Serbian expectations of opposition from great powers concerning their advancement in Albania, mostly from Austria-Hungary and Italy, proved to be justified. Two peace conferences held in London in December 1912 demonstrated the great powers' concern over the fact that Serbian forces had reached all the way to the Adriatic, occupying Kosovo and large parts of Macedonia. An independent Albanian state, with the port of Durres at the time held by Serbian forces, and the town of Shkodra held by Montenegrins, was established to remedy the situation.[289] Supported by Russia, Serbs were compensated by being allowed to keep Gjakove, a

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[288] *Ibid,* p. 55.
[289] *Ibid,* p. 60.

city in Kosovo. Frustrated by these limitations, they were less willing to compromise with Bulgaria over the disputed territories in Macedonia and to follow their March pre-war treaty.[290]

In expectation of Russian support for its territorial claims in Macedonia, Bulgaria initiated the Second Balkan War. It started with the Bulgarian attack on Serbia and was fought for 33 days in June and July 1913. By waging a war after the Greeks and the Serbs had already established a military coalition, Bulgaria opened itself up to attacks from the Romanians, who fought for Dobrudzha, and the Ottomans, who fought for Adrianople. Confronted by all its former allies as well as the Ottomans, Bulgaria was forced to retreat. As a consequence of the war, Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians divided the territory of Macedonia amongst themselves, with Serbia claiming most of it including the most important Vardar watershed area. The Bucharest Treaty also placed the entire territory of Kosovo under Serbia's rule. After the defeat, Bulgaria ceased to be the dominant Balkan power and Serbian competitor for Russian patronage as Russia failed to provide it with support concerning the issue of Macedonia. Instead, Serbia emerged as the most powerful Balkan state and the only channel for the Russian influence in the Balkans.[291]

The Balkan Wars offered numerous lessons on modern warfare; namely, these were modern wars that involved mass armies, trench fighting and the use of artillery. They also demonstrated a strong role the local armed forces played within their respective communities. Serbian armed forces, backed by their victorious demonstration on the battlefield, proved to have their own nationalistic agenda, which was not necessarily in tune with the political one. Historian Sima Ćirković claims that the foundation of Serbian parliamentary democracy was shaken precisely due to these victories. Military circles emerged as a powerful political group advocating an aggressive foreign policy and the efficiency of military rule.[292] According to Hall, Serbia of that time demonstrated a strong division between political and military leadership, which became evident a little later, on the occasion of the Sarajevo assassination of Austrian Archduke Ferdinand in 1914.[293] They were able to exercise pressure on political decision makers, usually in favour of a war, not peace. According to Christopher Clark, these relations were anything but balanced; military circles, especially those that participated in the assassination of King Aleksandar Obrenović and his wife in 1903, grew in political strength and impact on political life. This was partially also because the military was perceived as an

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[290] Ćirković, *The Serbs*, p. 245.
[291] Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912-1913,* p. 95.
[292] Ćirković, *The Serbs*, p. 245.
[293] Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912-1913,* p. 98.

institution that allowed social mobility and offered a prosperous career in an otherwise socially and economically backward Serbia of that time.[294]

The military and political lessons of the Balkan Wars were important because they were a prelude to two world wars that were about to follow. The local protagonists of the Balkan Wars had barely ceased fighting after the Bucharest Treaty, which formally ended the Second Balkan War, when the First World War broke out just nine months later. Serbia was not willing to withdraw its forces from northern Albania, and did so only after the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum and the threat of war in 1913. In the inter-war period, Serbs kept sporadically fighting Albanians in Albania and Kosovo, and Macedonians in Macedonia, while Greeks and Montenegrins simply waited for another opportunity to regain the Albanian territories they were asked to abandon. The opportunity came with the outbreak of the First World War. Similarly, Bulgarians, having lost everything they had gained in the First Balkan War and suffering from the high human and material toll they paid in the wars of 1912-1913, waited for the next opportunity to regain what they deemed was theirs, both ethnically and historically - Macedonia. There is no consensus among the Serbian historians about the Serbian political and military goals in the two Balkan Wars, whether it was a defensive war of liberation or Serbian actions were much more offensive in that campaign. Dubravka Stojanović writes of numerous re-interpretations of Serbia's military actions – its campaign in northern Albania being viewed as the most challenging moment – that had served different ideological and political purposes of political regimes in power.[295]

In spite of atrocities perpetrated against the civilian population, widely reported by foreign journalists and military attachés,[296] the Balkan Wars were an exercise in military cooperation. Serbs fought side by side with Bulgarians in the First Balkan War in Adrianople, with Montenegrins when they attacked Shkodra, and with Greeks and Montenegrins in Macedonia and Albania when they fought against Bulgarians and the Ottomans in the Second Balkan War. However, Hall claims that this cooperation was not translated into military coordination, since each ally had its own strong political agenda, in conflict with those of the others. This resulted in an absence of true coordination, e.g. an attempt to create a unified military command.[297]

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[294] Chrisopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*, 2012, p. 38.

[295] Dubravka Stojanović, 'The Balkan Wars in Serbian History Textbooks (1920–2013)', in *The Balkan Wars from Contemporary Perception to Historic Memory,* Katrin Boeckh, Sabine Rutar (eds), Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016: pp. 275-291.

[296] Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912-1913,* p. 99-101.

[297] *Ibid,* p. 97.

In spite of the notion, widely present in the Serbian present public discourse, that Serbs historically fought mostly defensive wars and were merely driven to armed conflicts by their urgent needs to liberate the state and protect their ethnic fellows, the example of the Balkan Wars demonstrates a somewhat different narrative. In Balkan terms, Serbia was a military power worthy of respect, with a number of troops that was second only to Bulgaria. Its military strength was a tool in the hands of political leaders who had a strong political agenda of territorial expansion in the direction of today's Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania. That tool was used successfully on the battlefield, gaining Serbia territorial compensations, including areas inhabited by non-Serb population which then started to resist Serbian rule. This led to prolonged fighting in spite of formal ceasefires. Much like other participants in the Balkan Wars, Serbia was even more successful in its territorial expansion then the official records show. Its territorial pretensions were limited by the big powers' interventions, due to their concerns over a strong Balkan state which was simultaneously perceived as a Russian ally. Serbian political leaders were well aware of this limitation. The limits posed by the great powers were something that Serbia, just like other Balkan states fighting for their national projects, had to bear in mind. As Stevan Pavlović wrote, the Balkans always had three external capitals – Istanbul, Vienna and Paris[298] – that decisively shaped its regional affairs. In Serbia's history textbooks great powers of the time are listed as enemies in those wars, because they unjustly prevented Serbia from fully gaining from its military victories.[299] Nevertheless, external limitations did not prevent Serbs or other Balkan peoples from pursuing their nationalistic projects by both military and political means. They have accepted the nation-state as a model of political organisation and the only way to achieve a territorially coherent base for their nationalistic projects was to break free from the imperialistic frameworks within which they used to live. In other words, they became Europeans by fighting wars against empires[300] using the symbolic and mobilising power of memories of their own medieval ones. By doing so, they prioritised territorial identification and gathering their ethnic groups within state borders as a precondition for any further political, cultural and economic development. War was hence a precondition for any nationalistic project in the Balkans, and Serbs, as well as their Balkan neighbours, willingly accepted the war-fighting logic of state-making. How that logic served them further in the two world wars that followed will be discussed in the next chapter.

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[298] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 488.
[299] Stojanović, 'The Balkan Wars in Serbian History Textbooks (1920–2013)', p. 286.
[300] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 489.

### 4.1.3. Serbia in the First World War

In this chapter I discuss internal and external circumstances that shaped Serbia's involvement in the First World War and its alignment politics throughout the war. Both military and political aspects of its alignment politics will be presented and finalized with the lessons learned.

Serbian experience in the First World War was anything but that of neutrality or non-alignment. Accused of having triggered the Great War and having actually been used as an excuse to initiate it, Serbia was deprived of the option to remain outside of warfare. Long-term tensions with its mighty northern neighbour, Austria-Hungary, and the irritation that Serbia presented for the double-monarchy led it almost inevitably into some sort of conflict. Irrespective of the enormous disproportion in size, since the smaller actor had only 4.5 million inhabitants and the monarchy had 52 million, they actually found themselves in an economic and political war of sorts even before the real hostilities began. In this chapter I discuss contextual setting of Serbia's participation in the First World War and its alignment politics and lessons learned of that war experience.

Unlike the Balkan Wars, Serbia's military pursuits in the two World Wars were indeed defensive. The First World War was caused by long-term tensions between the blocs of rival powers operating at the global stage, with Austria-Hungary and Germany at the core of one bloc, and Russia and France of the other. Among other areas, their territorial pretensions and economic interests clashed also in the Balkans. In that constellation of power, Serbia was perceived as a Russian satellite and an enabler of its influence in the Balkans. After the Balkan Wars Serbia had almost doubled its territory, gaining 1.5 million new inhabitants whose inclusion in its political system would remain a persistent problem. However, it gained prestige and influence in the regional framework and was on the path of economic, cultural and political development.

In the view of Serbian historiography, it was not a mere coincidence that the Austro-Hungarian Empire used the opportunity of the Sarajevo assassination in June 1914 to ignite a new war by blaming Serbia for causing it. According to Andrej Mitrović, it was a manifestation of decades-long hostility that Austrian and Hungarian monarchs felt toward Serbia.[301] It was caused by Serbia's position as a strong Balkan state that moved away from a subordinate position towards becoming a monarchy and manifested the capacity for more independent political and economic acting. Serbia's confident position after the Balkan Wars threatened to hamper the Empire's economic interests in the region. In 1906, the Empire imposed economic

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[301] Andrej Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu*, Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2015.

sanctions by banning the import of pigs from Serbia, demonstrating its supremacy caused by Serbia's complete economic dependence. Serbia managed to diversify its exports and emerged victorious from the 'Pig War' of 1906-1908.[302] It managed to win the economic war mostly owing to French loans, which marked the turning point of its alignment policies. These loans required that Serbia's military purchases be made in France, causing it to enter the web of France-induced alliances.[303] The Austro-Hungarian monarchy was even more irritated by Serbia's status of a Slavic power with an ability to attract other Slavic people and position itself as the centre of a potential big Slavic union.[304] This was a legitimate matter of concern for the Empire, as millions of Slavic people lived within its borders. On the other side, as Ćirković writes, Serbs, still recovering from the Balkan Wars, had every reason to try to avoid another approaching war.[305]

The structure of the international system at the time, with the two mutually opposing blocs of big powers, made it impossible to contain this conflict to the local level as it had broader international tensions at its core. That structure, and the Serbian subordinate position to Austria-Hungary on the one side, and its dependence on Russia's support on the other, led Serbia to the natural position of a smaller ally in a big powers' coalition, on the side of Russia, France and the UK, and later, after it entered the war, with the U.S.

However, Serbian historians are clear on a position that the start of the Great War came as a result of multiple and complex factors that developed over the years and emerged from specific interests and needs of primarily German and Austro-Hungarian monarchies, having nothing to do with Serbia.[306] In this sense, Serbian historiography is in line with the view that is dominant among the western European historians, who mainly hold German aggressive foreign policy in the years before accountable for the outbreak of the war.[307] Annika Mombauer writes that in order to understand the emergence of the First World War researchers should go back to the politics of Berlin and Vienna, since it was there that the war had been planned and calculated.[308]

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[302] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 258.

[303] Clark, *The Sleepwalkers,* pp. 37-39.

[304] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu*, p. 45.

[305] Ćirković, *The Serbs*, p. 247.

[306] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* p. 39.

[307] Anika Mombauer, *Uzroci Prvog svetskog rata: Sporenja i saglasnost*, Beograd: Clio, 2013, p. 8.

[308] *Ibid,* pp. 16-17. The historiographical consensus that the blame falls mainly on Germany for initiating the large-scale European war by giving Austria-Hungary carte blanche to start a war with Serbia, has not been reached easily.

The event that served as the trigger of the First World War was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Austrian heir to the throne, and his wife in Sarajevo in June 1914. The perpetrator and other culprits, the majority of whom were Serbs from Bosnia, as well as the organisers of other assassinations that were attempted on the same day, were caught and prosecuted. Austria-Hungary claimed that they had connections with the Serbian military and accused Belgrade of organising the assassination. There were, indeed, some still not fully explained connections between the plotters of the Sarajevo assassination and at least one high-ranking Belgrade military officer. He was the Chief of Military Intelligence and belonged to the secret group "Black Hand" composed of prominent military officers opposed to Belgrade's official politics. [309] Some historical accounts of Belgrade's involvement in the Sarajevo assassination claim that it is certain that Serbian Prime Minister and members of the Government must have been informed, at least to a certain degree, of the conspiracy.[310] At the core of this struggle was the matter of supremacy in civil-military relations, which was not present only in Serbia's political life at the time.[311] Some of these military officers were connected with the organisers of the assassination and were believed to have provided them with logistical support. The accusations resulted in the famous ultimatum sent to the Serbian authorities by which the Empire demanded demeaning concessions from the Serbian side. Concessions were created in an expectation that Serbia would reject them, and it was implied that failure to comply would be

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In the inter-war period, Germans indeed barred the economic and, to a certain degree, a moral consequence of those that caused the world war. However, after the Second World War, which undeniably pointed to Germany as the initiator of (yet another) world war, it was important to establish the consensus in the academic and political sphere that the outbreak of the First World War was a conjuncture of multiple factors leading to the unfortunate results and not the consequence of a deliberate German planning. It was important not to point to any kind of possible continuation in the German foreign policy which would portray the state as a permanently aggressive and leading the world into the catastrophe after the catastrophe in order to resolve tensions of its internal and external politics. This was exactly what the Western-German historian Fritz Fischer pointed to with his series of groundbreaking works published in 1960s. The 'Fischer controversy', based on the archival work and the use of the East-German archives, pointed to the continuity of the German politics throughout the two world wars. That firstly caused a passionate discussion and brought Fischer many opponents. A decade later, his thesis has been more or less accepted in the academic community and had entered historical text-books. Fischer claimed that the German decision-makers in 1914 deliberately risked a European war and that they knew that it was unlikely that the Austria-Serbian conflict will be contained as a local war. They saw the Sarajevo assassination as a perfect opportunity to initiate the fulfillment of their long-term expansionistic ambitions. Mombauer, *Uzroci Prvog svetskog rata, p. 111.*

[309] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* p. 35-36.

[310] Clark, *The Sleepwalkers*, p. 53. On the consensus among the western European historians that the Serbian Prime Minister and the other prominent Serbian figures knew about the plot see: Mombauer, *Uzroci Prvog svetskog rata,* note 79, p. 188.

[311] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, pp. 304-305.

considered a declaration of war. Based on clear signals and information from their diplomatic and other sources, Serbs were already prepared for the looming armed conflict. Even before the formal declaration of war came from the Austro-Hungarian side in July 1914, the Government and the military headquarters were moved from Belgrade to Niš, further from the border with the Empire, and full mobilisation was ordered.

At the time, Serbia was one of the smallest states in the world. It had approximately 4.5 million inhabitants, including those that lived in the areas that were newly conquered during the Balkan Wars. It mobilised 500,000 troops in July 1914, but the number grew to 570,000 in August and 707,000 in the autumn of 1915. According to some estimates, only 200,000 of those that were mobilised were fully prepared for the tasks of modern warfare.[312] Together with military preparation, Serbia's war goals and political platform were formulated by the leading political figures, such as the leader of the Serbian Radical Party and Prime Minister Nikola Pašić, and other prominent intellectuals of that time. Serbian understanding of an approaching war was that it would be a defensive war against superior military forces of two colonial powers, Germany and Austria-Hungary, which were fighting for further expansion toward the east. Small Balkan states' fight for national liberation was in the way of the big powers' pursuits. Therefore, in the eyes of Serbian political and intellectual figures, the upcoming war could be justified from the perspective of a small state opposing the oppressive imperialistic endeavours of big powers. This understanding was easily translated into a general support of the citizens, who supported the military campaign as defensive and rightful. Serbs, however, were not an exception in this sense. As Mombauer writes, all the warring sides made preparative efforts to convince their populations that the approaching war will be a defensive one. Otherwise, citizens would not have been easily convinced to take part in what would be the first massive, large-scale, disastrous war enterprise.[313]

However, the defensive war campaign was just one element of Serbian war-planning. As historians found when they read the official statements, communication of political leaders and other material available from that time, in the Serbian understanding, one unified and strong Slavic state instead of many small states that could easily fall prey to big powers and their politics could act as a necessary barrier for further expansions of the two monarchies across the Balkans toward the east.[314] The idea of some sort of future Yugoslavia was given a more precise meaning and definition at the beginning and during the First World War. Serbian war goals and

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[312] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* p. 79. Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 350.

[313] Mombauer, *Uzroci Prvog svetskog rata,* p. 24.

[314] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* p. 82.

corresponding political agenda thus became defensive-offensive, containing both an urgency to defend itself against superior imperialistic powers and the idea of forming a unified south-Slavic state.[315] The establishment of a state that would gather all Serbs, Croats and Slovenians under one roof was proclaimed a war goal in September 1914.[316] That way, Serbia presented itself as an actor in the fight between two opposing historical movements, one imperialistic and the other composed of small nation states fighting for liberation. That is how Serbs understood it, and they proclaimed that they were fighting not only for their own national liberation but also for the independence of other Balkan states.[317] In the official communication to the public, however, only purely defensive motives were stressed.[318]

In the pursuit of these goals, Serbia showed common sense based on a realistic overview of the situation and the interests of both its allies and enemies. Serbs soon understood and formulated that their future and the outcome of the war depended on their capability to act as an autonomous and relevant actor in both war and peace.[319] According to Mitrović, they had no illusions about their allies – Russia, France and the United Kingdom – and their war support. That group of states, in the understanding of then prominent Serbian political leaders, was supporting Serbia and other Balkan states only because their own interests colluded with the small states' fight for independence and against the expansion of two monarchies. Serbia had no illusions about its allies' support and therefore did not feel obliged to comply with their demands. This was especially noticeable with regard to concessions the allies advised Serbia to make to Bulgaria in order to persuade it to enter the war on the side of the Entente powers.[320] While the Entente powers were trying to convince Bulgaria to enter the war as part of some sort of pre-war Balkan Alliance by promising Bulgarians the entire territory of Macedonia, Vienna was trying to convince tiny Montenegro to break its alliance with Serbia, promising significant financial support, the city of Shkodra and parts of Sandžak in exchange.[321] Nevertheless, driven by the sense of brotherhood and unity with Serbia, Montenegrins mobilised their forces, declared war against Austria-Hungary, and remained Serbian allies throughout the war. One seventh of the entire Montenegrin population took part in the war, which was quite a precedent.[322] Besides

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[315] *Ibid,* p. 84.
[316] *Ibid,* p. 118.
[317] *Ibid,* p. 81.
[318] *Ibid,* p. 114.
[319] *Ibid,* p. 83.
[320] *Ibid,* p. 81-82.
[321] *Ibid,* p. 72.
[322] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 356.

Bulgaria and Montenegro, the Central Powers were also encouraging Albanians in Albania and Kosovo to start insurrections against Serbia.

Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia on 12 August 1914. The first battles, decisive for the opening phase of the war, took place not much later. The enemy was defeated in late August at Cer Mountain, marking the first allied victory in the First World War.[323] In December 1914 Serbs won the Kolubara battle, which raised their reputation among the allies and the western public in general, while the military technique they employed during the battle found its way into military textbooks around the world.[324] It was only on the account of its convincing victory on the battlefield that Serbia won the right to be consulted and to influence political decisions and the definition of allied war goals.[325] After these defensive battles, Serbian troops made an offensive strike against Albania in the first half of 1915. Serbian government was motivated to make such a move because of an increasingly complicated political and military situation in Albania itself, and because they feared that Albanians would eventually undertake armed operations against Serbia, supported by Turkish and Austro-Hungarian agents.[326] However, opposed by its allies, Serbs eventually ended up not taking all the Albanian territories they had previously won in the First Balkan War and kept just a few strongholds.

At the beginning of 1915, although at the peak of its military glory Serbia was already experiencing heavy human losses; namely, it had already lost 163,557 of 250,000 of its best troops.[327] In addition, at the end of 1914 and the beginning of 1915, epidemics of diseases, mainly typhus and cholera, had already taken a significant toll. It is estimated that some 400,000 people were infected by them, and approximately 100,000 civilians, 30,000-35,000 soldiers and 30,000 prisoners of war died as a result.[328]

Good military fortune, however, did not last long. In October 1915, joint German, Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian troops attacked Serbia with an army of estimated 800,000 troops supplied with modern equipment and supported by air force.[329] Serbia's defence, consisting of estimated 300,000 troops supported by civilians and many women who took part in the battles, was defeated by the end of the month. While the Serbian army withdrew towards the

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[323] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* p. 91, Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 306.
[324] *Ibid,* p. 96.
[325] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 356.
[326] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* pp. 183-185.
[327] *Ibid,* p. 143.
[328] *Ibid,* p. 154.
[329] *Ibid,* p. 197.

south, accompanied by a massive number of refugees who were fleeing their homes, Serbian Government urged the allies to send immediate military support. However, only a few French and British troops still present in the Balkans were able to join the Serbian forces. Allies showed hesitation in helping Serbia in a more significant way; their transport was hampered by neutral Greece, while Russia was too far to assist. In that situation, Serbian capitulation was expected but never occurred. Instead, in November 1915 the Serbian Government decided to organise a withdrawal of its military forces to Albania so they could regroup and recover. The withdrawal order, issued on 25 November 1915, proved that the Government had no intention of capitulating in spite of the catastrophic state of its armed forces, hunger among the population, and occupied territory.[330] Not all highly ranked officers obeyed the order. Disastrous defeat, hunger and a harsh winter weakened the spirits of the troops and undermined their discipline, owing to which many soldiers and civilians decided to return to their homes in the occupied territories.[331]

Most of the troops, together with members of the Government and Parliament, university professors and students, intellectuals, members of the political parties and civilians, embarked on a journey across Montenegrin and Albanian mountains toward the Albanian ports to wait for evacuation to Crete in Greece. In Serbian literature, this is often referred to as 'the Serbian Golgotha'. They walked in three different directions, some of them for weeks, suffering from wounds and injuries, hunger, cold and sporadic attacks by Albanians, while Montenegrin troops kept fighting, defending them in their retreat. Many died during the withdrawal, while those that reached the Albanian ports did so in a miserable condition. They lacked food, arms and medical support. Italy was in charge of organising supplies for Serbian troops and civilians, but their transport was hampered by Austro-Hungarian maritime operations waged against Italian ships, which only prolonged the suffering of Serbian refugees. They had to wait until late January 1916 to be finally taken to Corfu after much urging from the Serbian Government and the King, who were among the last to be transported to the Greek island by French, British and Italian ships, mostly owing to French urging. In Corfu, under the French command, the allies organised medical support – as diseases were already taking their toll – food and equipment supplies, and Serbian troops and civilians eventually recovered. In total, there were 170,000 Serbian refugees in Corfu, some 140,000 of them soldiers, accompanied by members of the Government, the King and members of the Parliament. The majority of civilian refugees were transferred to France and its colonies, Switzerland, Italy and Great Britain. Only a few were transported to Russia.[332]

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[330] *Ibid,* p. 203-204.
[331] *Ibid,* p. 205.
[332] *Ibid,* p. 219.

The Serbian Government's decision not to declare capitulation although it was forced to flee the country, proved to be highly important for the country's future. Preservation of the core of the armed forces ended up being the factor that made Serbia a relevant actor during the rest of the war. In the minds of Serbian decision makers, the return of its armed forces to the battlefield was a way to demonstrate the continued existence of the Serbian state and its relevance among the allied forces.[333] On this occasion and throughout the war, Serbian political leadership demonstrated a sober approach and political realism when it came to the allies' politics. The allies' incentives to make territorial concessions to Bulgaria at the expense of the Serbian territory immediately at the beginning of the war led Serbian leaders to a rational conclusion concerning the big powers' politics. In their understanding, these politics, regardless of whether they came from allies or opponents, would never show much sensitivity for the interests of their small counterparts. In their understanding, small countries would have to use the power of their weapons and fight for the position of actors instead of being mere objects. And that was how Serbia positioned itself during the war. Its political leadership claimed that a state could be an actor in international relations only if it possessed military forces that were actually able to fight. This view was held, and it proved to be correct, even during the time when Serbian territory was under occupation while its institutional representatives were in exile.

While the armed forces and the highest state representatives were in exile, the country and its population were left at the mercy of the occupation forces – those of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. Although Germany soon declared that it did not intend to establish a separate occupation zone, unlike Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria which both did, it certainly did not refrain from exploiting Serbian resources for its own good. By the end of 1915 it was already clear that the occupation powers in Serbia were opposed to each other over the issues of exploitation of Serbian railways, mines, agricultural products and the weapons factory in Kragujevac.[334] The two occupying forces established their own zones of occupation, under their respective military and administrative authorities, each imposing harsh rules on the domestic population and its economic means which were already exhausted. They used imprisonment, forced labour and execution of both middle-class and peasantry. Most of the executions were committed by Bulgarian forces. Pre-war national and local press was forbidden, as were any form of public gathering, social life and the use of Cyrillic alphabet. Schools were re-introduced,

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[333] *Ibid,* p. 221-222.
[334] *Ibid,* p. 268.

but with a strong indoctrination element, since children were forbidden to refer to their Serbian background or use their Serbian names.[335]

The guerrilla movement began during the occupation, starting in 1916. It consisted mostly of demobilised members of the armed forces, those that have not fled to Greece, or those that the Government sent back to prepare the already demoralised population for the uprising and liberation. Guerrilla groups consisted of 15 to more than 100 men who hid in the mountains and sporadically attacked the occupation forces. Guerrilla warfare, however, had been present in different forms from the very beginning of the war: Serbs and Montenegrins used it to compensate for the numerical inferiority of their forces. Few of these groups were especially persistent and kept escaping the occupiers' attempts to catch them. Together with the civilian population, they were the basis of the general uprising that took place in February 1917 in southern Serbia, only to be quashed by Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian forces. It has been reported that the occupiers had executed close to 20,000 people from the uprising areas in retaliation.[336] However, this did not break the guerrilla movement, nor were its leaders ever caught. Besides constantly performing small actions against the enemy, these groups served also to boost the morale of the exhausted population and keep its faith that a massive liberating operation of the allied forces was approaching Serbia's territory.

The Serbian and allied (mostly French) forces' operation would indeed liberate Serbia, but no earlier than at the end of 1918. They fought at the Thessaloniki frontline from spring 1916 until autumn 1918. In the autumn of 1918, the allied forces undertook a massive operation at the Thessaloniki frontline in which 150,000 Serbian troops played a prominent role.[337] Upon the liberation of the Serbian territory, they crossed the border of Austria-Hungary and waited for the final capitulation of the Central Powers.

As this historical narrative shows, in spite of being a member of an alliance, in the opening phases of the war Serbia had to fight its battles alone. As a consequence, the military glory in 1914 was attributed to Serbia, but equally so was the hard defeat and occupation in 1915. Serbia did, however, rely on allies' support in both occasions. It did not receive it in 1914, but later on the recovery of its military troops and their comeback to the battlefield occurred owing to allied, mostly French, support.

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[335] Ćirković, *The Serbs*, p. 249; Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* p. 297.
[336] Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu,* p. 349.
[337] *Ibid,* p. 446.

In the First World War, the Serbian armed forces fought longer than any other[338] - from the very first to the very last day, and it is estimated that Serbia lost between a 1 and 1.3 million of its citizens.[339] More than half of its mobilised forces died during the war. At the peace conference in Paris in January 1919, Serbia participated as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, representing a tripartite state of 12 million people that emerged from the First World War and was based on military victories of Serbia and its armed forces as the driving factor of the unity of South Slavic peoples. By way of inclusion in the new state, those who were once part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and had fought on its side during the war, were now recognised as members of the winning alliance. The borders of the new state were defined by peace treaties signed with Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria.[340]

As its experience from the First World War shows, Serbia did not in any respect act as a lone wolf in international relations. Although it relied on the power of its own weapons and the enthusiasm of its people, both in the Balkan Wars and the Great War, Serbia followed the general trend in small states' politics looking for the protection and support of big powers. While doing so, Serbian decision makers demonstrated their ability to rationally calculate and understand the great powers' mutual relations and bigger trends in international politics that went beyond local or regional dynamics. What eventually brought Serbia into the Entente coalition was the fact that it had applied the small states usual approach – namely, it sought the great powers' protection – while also acting as their valuable albeit smaller partner. In doing so, Serbia certainly acted in its own interests. Those interests, as demonstrated in the Balkan Wars, went beyond defensive and were aimed at territorial expansion at the expense of not only the declining Ottoman Empire but also the neighbouring states, of which Bulgaria was the strongest rival. As seen in the beginning phase of the First World War, Serbia was yet to give up some of its ambitions, at least those that were related to the occupation of Albanian ports and safeguarding access to the Adriatic Sea. In this endeavour, Serbia did not have the support of any of the great powers, since neither of them wanted a dominant Balkan state. Its political leadership counted on the great powers' opposition, and was aware that they would engage in both defensive and offensive pursuits only to the extent that Serbia did not disturb the balance established among the bigger competitors. All this portrays Serbia as an alliance actor caught in the alliance-making dynamics. Serbs clearly acted in their own interest when they relied on the great powers' support. However, they were aware that great powers' politics, as was the case in the Balkan Wars, or alliance politics, as was the case in the First World War, are not always compatible with

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[338] *Ibid,* p. 472.
[339] *Ibid,* p. 482.
[340] *Ibid,* p. 528.

their own interests. Yet, Serbia survived the First World War not only by the power of its own weapons and persistence of its people, but also owing to the allies' support and the fact it emerged on the victorious side. Again, as the liberation wars and the Balkan wars demonstrated both the value of its own military strength and the external support, the First World War also showed the value of the alignment support which facilitated Serbia's ambitions as long as they were not threatening international politics and established balance of power. The attention now goes to the lessons learned from the Second World War and Serbia's participation in it.


### 4.1.4. Serbia in the Second World War

In the following chapter I will firstly present contextual setting of Serbia's participation in the Second World War and its alignment politics. Then, I will discuss lessons learned from that war enterprise and if they were comparable or different from already elaborated lessons learned from the liberation wars, the Balkan Wars and the First World War.

The interwar history of Serbia in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (renamed as Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929) is the history of political struggles to find a workable framework within which to accommodate power disparities of a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional state built on Serbian war legacies and under Serbian monarchy. Croats, belonging to the other major ethnic group, fought for better representation and political autonomy that would be broader than what they originally had. They achieved it through compromise political solutions which, however, did not last long. The Cvetković-Maček agreement from August 1939 established the *Banovina* of Croatia as an autonomous unit in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and rearranged the structure of government. This was meant to resolve the Croats' dissatisfaction with the monarchy's political arrangement. An approaching war certainly helped the conclusion of the agreement since the Yugoslav Government wanted to come to a political consensus in case the state got drawn into an armed confrontation.[341]

In terms of foreign policy, in the interwar period Yugoslavia entered into agreements with neighbouring countries with the intention of securing its borders and obtaining guarantees of support in case of any future wars. Yugoslavia, Romania and Czechoslovakia formed the Little Entente in 1920-1921, while cross-border cooperation and fight against terrorism were agreed with Bulgaria.[342] At Balkan conferences organised at the initiative of Greece, the Little

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[341] Jozo Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija*, Zagreb: Novi Liber i Europapress holding, 2010, p. 41.
[342] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 385.

Entente was further institutionalised into some form of a regional Balkan union during the period 1929-1938. It was established as a pan-regional economic forum that dealt with the issues of customs and technical and cultural exchange. With Hitler's rise to power, the necessity of securing safe borders propelled political cooperation to the issue of utmost importance, and Yugoslavia, Romania and Greece wanted to institutionalise it. In February 1934, the three countries plus Turkey signed the agreement on mutual support against any form of territorial revision and against war as a political tool (the so called Balkan Entente).[343] Although Bulgaria did not enter the alliance, all member states reached mutual agreements with Bulgaria and Hungary, concerning their territorial aspirations at the expense of other regional states. After the German aggression against Czechoslovakia in 1938, combined with the economic depression and other worrying events that were occurring on the international scene, members of the Balkan Entente were left to deal with external circumstances and great powers' relations each on its own.[344] Yugoslavia was also facing the danger of Italian revisionist ambitions. They were mitigated by the Yugoslav-Italian agreement on friendship and non-aggression signed in March 1937. This agreement reflected not only Yugoslav concern with possible Italian revisionist actions, but also pro-Axis power inclinations shared by Governor Prince Pavle and Prime Minister Milan Stojadinović.[345]

In the 1930s Yugoslavia had friendly relations with Germany. Until 1939, it was economically heavily dependent on trade relations: 50% of its exports went to Germany and it received about the same amount from it in products. At the same time, Yugoslavia's exports, especially food and certain ores, were important to the German market. With the Germans' growing war machinery and the outbreak of the war, Yugoslav economic dependence became even greater. The beginning of the war caused inflation and a shortage of goods, leading to anti-Government protests.[346] The trade agreement concluded between the two countries just before the outbreak of the war stipulated that Yugoslav export to Germany would be compensated with German arms export, which never took place and was used by Hitler as a constant means of pressure on the Yugoslav Government.[347]

At the onset of the Second World War, Serbian population, unlike the Yugoslav Government, was pro-Western oriented and concerned with the rising Nazi power. Serbs had

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[343] *Ibid*, p. 400.

[344] *Ibid*, pp. 401-402.

[345] Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija,* p. 38.

[346] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 451.

[347] Stevan K. Pavlović, *Hitlerov novi antiporedak – Drugi svetski rat u Jugoslaviji*, Beograd: Clio, 2009, pp. 28-29.

strong anti-German sentiments and Nazism could not find fertile ground among the Serbian population. Anti-Semitism and anti-democratic traditions, however, were potentially compatible with local nationalistic traditions.[348] At the beginning of the war, Serbs were caught between strong pro-Allies sentiments and fear of the Axis powers. Serbs immediately found themselves in an unfavourable external setting, as the majority of the neighbouring countries joined the Axis Powers. German attack on Czechoslovakia and Italian on Albania caused shock and fear. Yugoslavia was unprepared for war, lacking military and technical capacities; it therefore declared neutrality in 1939, with no elaboration of what that neutrality implied.[349] At the same time, blackmailed by the arms delivery from Germany, its leadership approached the Soviet Union hoping for help. All this happened in the wake of French capitulation, which in Serbia was received with complete desperation.[350]

Since Germany wanted to stabilise the southern flank before launching an attack against the Soviet Union, in March 1941 Hitler presented the Yugoslav authorities with a direct demand that it joins the Axis bloc. He promised territorial integrity and no demands for direct military collaboration.[351] Hitler had no intention of occupying and politically destroying Yugoslavia, which could have been a useful partner in the European south flank had it accepted a constructive role that was in accordance with German war plans. The political events in Yugoslavia will, however, completely change the role Yugoslavia was intended to play in those plans. Yugoslav authorities represented by governors who acted on behalf of still under-aged King Petar II hesitantly succumbed to the ultimatum, but were immediately – only two days after they placed their signatures on the agreement with Germany – faced with massive popular demonstrations combined with the officers' plot leading to a coup. The organisers of the coup were motivated by the feeling of humiliation and led by traditional pro-Western sentiments, fearing disintegration of Yugoslavia and predicting that Western allies will win the war and that Yugoslavia will be punished for being on the wrong side.[352] Great Britain did not take direct part in the coup. Still, since it advocated strongly against Yugoslavia joining the Axis powers, plotters expected its support in case the coup was successful.[353]

Broad political consensus achieved among the majority of political parties and strong popular demand were both against the signed agreement. The newly formed Government tried to

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[348] *Ibid*, p. 24.
[349] *Ibid,* p. 27.
[350] *Ibid,* p. 28.
[351] *Ibid,* p. 30.
[352] *Ibid,* p. 33.
[353] *Ibid*, p. 34.

remain silent about this, hoping to buy some time as the country was unprepared for war. For Germans, a coup in Yugoslavia implied that the country would become a base for the British air force which would start attacking Germany's south flank just when they were preparing for the attack against the Soviets.[354] To prevent it, Germany attacked Serbia on 6 April 1941, without a formal declaration of war or an ultimatum. Its air force bombed Belgrade heavily for three days, destroying almost 50% of its buildings, cutting major transportation lines and disabling airports. Landline invasion came simultaneously from Austria, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. Yugoslav forces fought only twelve days before they capitulated. The King and members of the Government left the country, instructing provisional state representatives to start negotiating capitulation with Germany, which enforced total capitulation. Two hundred thousand people, among them 12,000 officers, mostly Serbs, were taken war prisoners and transported to camps in Germany and Italy.[355] Territorial occupation followed, imposed by Germans, who claimed control of the Serbian territory, parts of Kosovo and Banat, and part of Vojvodina. Serbia was basically reduced to its 1912 borders. Germans also wanted control of major transit routes and mines. Italy occupied Slovenia and Montenegro, Bulgaria occupied most of Macedonia, and Hungary regained control over Vojvodina which previously belonged to Austria-Hungary. Kosovo and parts of Macedonia fell under Great Albania, under the Italian protectorate. Almost 40% of the Yugoslav territory, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, became the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). Effectively, under German and Italian occupation NDH was ruled by the far-right *Ustasha* regime which soon became known for appalling atrocities committed against Serbs, Jews and other minorities that lived in the territory of pre-war Croatia. This caused a flow of refugees into occupied Serbia, bringing stories of slaughter that only boosted the sense of fury and rebellion.

After the quick and total defeat of its armed forces and the evacuation of the King and the Government into the exile, Serbian population was faced with the terror of foreign occupation. Germany installed a satellite Government under General Milan Nedić, former Minister of Defence and Chief of the General Staff, who lacked any effective administrative, military or any other governing attributes although he was respected by part of the population. Germans' main priority was to establish regular production to support their military industry. Introduction of a domestic Government with national leadership was supposed to maintain peace and order in the occupied Serbia, with the help of Bulgarian forces as the delegated policing authorities in the country. However, Nedić's weak Government, limited in its prerogatives and unable to save the

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[354] Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija,* p. 55.
[355] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 456.

Serbian population from Germans' punishing measures, failed to deliver.[356] Instead, Germans established order through harsh treatment of the civilian population, executions, forced labour and imprisonment. They destroyed the country's old elites and failed to prevent the outbreak of a civil war, creating fertile ground for the future socialist revolution.[357]

Uprisings against the occupation forces occurred not only in Serbia, but throughout Yugoslavia. Behind those uprisings, which were local and separate from each other, were the Serbs who were perceived as the defeated side and were treated as conquered enemies.[358] The main motive for the big uprising in occupied Serbia in 1941 was the horror of the slaughter of civilian Orthodox population in NDH. A massive number of refugees who brought stories of murder and persecution that caused fear and frustration in the Serbian population in occupied Serbia. It is estimated that there were 400,000 refugees and internally displaced people in Serbia in the summer of 1942, which made up more than 11% of its population.[359]

The two biggest and for future political events in Yugoslavia most relevant resistance movements emerged in Serbia were *Partisans* and *Chetniks*. *Partisans* were organised under the umbrella of the Yugoslav Communist Party and its new leader, Josip Broz Tito. They found their inspiration in the Soviet-style socialist revolution and wanted to apply the same model in Yugoslavia. Throughout the war they relied on the expectation that Soviets would break their bilateral agreement with Germans and that it would be they who would dictate the fate of the post-war Europe. Soviets, on the other hand, were careful not to antagonise their European allies and did not encourage Yugoslav Communists to start their own socialist revolution immediately at the beginning of the war. *Chetnicks,* on the other hand, were named after the form of armed rebellion that was typical for Montenegro, Bosnia, Albania and Serbia over a longer historical period. They were led by Dragoljub Draža Mihailović, an officer of the defeated Yugoslav Army who refused to accept capitulation, remained loyal to the King, and prepared for organised military action against the occupation forces. *Chetniks* relied on British support, expecting their help in weapons and ammunition, and were eventually recognised by the Yugoslav Government in exile as legitimate forces representing the King and the Government and fighting under the occupation. They sporadically fought against but also collaborated with Germans and Italians throughout the war, as well as with the marionette Government represented by Milan Nedić at the beginning of the occupation.

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[356] Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija,* p. 74.
[357] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 481.
[358] Pavlović, *Hitlerov novi antiporedak*, p. 273.
[359] Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija,* p. 239.

Both liberation movements started operating simultaneously, in June-July 1941, when they both started organising units.[360] The social base of both movements was the peasantry which, as a result of the socialist revolution that occurred during the Second World War, moved toward the urban areas, changing the pre-war demographic picture of Serbia.[361] Ethnically, both movements were composed mostly of Serbs, at least until the end of 1944.[362] As a matter of fact, it was the Serbs that bore the mark of defeat in the eyes of the enemy, and were thus most motivated to join the forces.[363] Historian Milorad Ekmečić claims that both movements were created from the bottom up, as a result of the spontaneous uprising of the peasantry, and not the other way around.[364] The spontaneous revolt helped establish a vast occupation-free zone in central Serbia where the movements mutually cooperated and had their base camps until December 1941.[365]

From the onset of the war, both movements relied on the expectation of allied assistance –*Chetniks* hoped that the British would land in the Balkans, while *Partisans* expected Soviet support. It seems that the Soviet Union was the more valuable partner, as even when not providing material support it was able to support Yugoslav Communists with a strong moral platform and propaganda tools.[366] After the initial collaboration, open hostility between the two movements and their reliance on different allies reflected concerns about the future political order in Yugoslavia - whether it would be a communist state, established under the Soviet influence, or a monarchy closer to the Western model of parliamentary monarchies. What both movements had in common was belief that Germany will eventually be defeated and that Yugoslavia will be restored. What they wanted was a complete victory, thus positioning themselves as the main force on which the allies will be able to count and which would eventually decide the future Yugoslav politics.

By the end of 1942, while Germany was approaching catastrophe in Stalingrad, guerrilla warfare in Yugoslavia gained even greater importance. Guerrilla units were seen as a potential partner to the Allies, especially because it was possible that they might open the Balkan front. At the same time, Germans feared for their communication lines between Central Europe and their

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[360] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* pp. 463-464.
[361] *Ibid,* p. 450.
[362] *Ibid,* p. 468.
[363] Pavlović, *Hitlerov novi antiporedak,* p. 462.
[364] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* pp. 464-465.
[365] *Ibid,* p. 465.
[366] Pavlović, *Hitlerov novi antiporedak*, p. 153.

large forces stationed in Greece.[367] After the Allies' victory on the eastern front, opening up a front in the Balkans was indeed a plausible option. Germans feared the possible landing of the allied forces, while armed rebels hoped for it. That is why the German wanted to crush them before they found themselves in a position to collude with foreign assistance. To this end, they employed major actions against organised rebels at the beginning of 1943; both movements were militarily defeated but managed to survive. The movements' mutual confrontation grew even stronger as they prepared for foreign assistance, trying to gain a more favourable position compared to the competition.[368] Without France as an active force on the side of the allies, Serbs no longer had a reliable ally among the big powers. At some point, both *Chetniks* and *Partisans* came to the same conclusion: that they were misled by the British intelligence and simply used for its own war goals.[369] Misinterpretation of the allied politics and reliance on the false expectation of their intervention in Yugoslavia, which never took place, proved to be fatal for the *Chetnik* movement, whose war strategy was to wait for collaboration with the Western allies while preserving their forces until an opportunity arises.

From 1943, *Chetniks* were mostly left to their own devices as *Partisans* proved to be the force that was able to re-engage the majority of occupation forces in Yugoslavia, thus distracting them in their attempt to move to the eastern front. The allied landing in Sicily and Italian capitulation in 1943 worked in favour of the *Partisans;* the Entente powers found them to be an alternative and even better domestic ally, compared to *Chetniks* who were unable to deliver what the Allied forces had asked them.[370] The capitulation of Italy also moved the balance of power in *Partisans'* favour since the defeated Italian forces in Yugoslavia left a significant stock of arms and ammunition that was now at their disposal.

In the spring of 1944, Germans launched their last big action against the two opposing movements in Serbia, whose both leaders managed to survive it.[371] Although time worked in favour of the *Partisans*, they were unable to organise a large liberating action against Germans without foreign assistance. That assistance came when the Soviets approached Yugoslav territory. The occupation regime started falling apart at the time when the Soviets were approaching Yugoslav borders, and *Partisans* organised a wide offensive action in the summer of 1944.[372] Tito formally requested Soviet help, fearing that Western allies might also intervene

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[367] Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija,* p. 76.

[368] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 469.

[369] Pavlović, *Hitlerov novi antiporedak*, p. 176.

[370] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 469.

[371] *Ibid*, p. 480.

[372] Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija,* p. 78.

and thus intrude on the Yugoslav territory. With the help of the Soviet Union, *Partisans* liberated Belgrade in October 1944. Soviets also participated in battles that were fought in northern and eastern Serbia, after which *Partisans* were left to liberate the rest of the country and finish the civil war on their own.

Having defeated Germans and *Chetniks* in decisive battles, *Partisans* gained undoubted reputation of the most relevant resistance movement in Yugoslavia. In the summer of 1942, *Partisan* forces recovered after moving to Bosnia, outside of reach of both domestic and outside enemies. They now constituted mobile armed forces that were able to attract fellow Yugoslavs and not just ethnic Serbs.[373] Equally important was the fact that, as they moved throughout the country in an attempt to escape enemies, they promoted the alternative idea of Yugoslavia based on the right of self-determination and equality of its constituting people. They rejected and criticised any form of Serb-dominated federation and were therefore able to attract Croats, Slovenians and Muslims into their ranks. In 1943, they organised their own Government, opposing the Government in exile, and were able to gain international recognition because they successfully acted as a relevant domestic movement the allies would have to count on.

History of the two resistance movements and the outcome of their power struggles is also the story of allies' politics and their meddling into political developments in war-torn Yugoslavia. While the *Partisans* undoubtedly won decisive battles against both Germans and *Chetniks,* and obtained broad citizens' support, allied support could also have just as easily gone to the *Chetniks,* in which case the history of post-war Yugoslavia would have been significantly different. One possible interpretation of the sequence of events that led to the final defeat of one of the movements is that allied support to the *Partisans* was a necessary concession made by Great Britain to the USSR. In this interpretation, *Chetniks* fell as victims of big powers' mutual relations and were finally cut away from any significant material and logistical support.[374] Further implications of this sort of a deal, in which support to Yugoslav *Partisans* was just one element, also involved the agreement that Soviets would be allowed to establish their zone of interest in Eastern Europe at the end of the war.

Based on their war victories and the international recognition they received, Communists emerged as the most dominant political force at the end of the war. After formal ceasefire, they established a transitional Government and organised general elections for the Constitutional Parliament. The right to vote was granted to all men and women above the age of 18 and all who

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[373] Pavlović, *Hitlerov novi antiporedak*, p. 275.
[374] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 489.

fought with the *Partisans* regardless of age; however, certain categories of the population were deprived of this right. In parallel, Communists organised tribunals for 'enemies of the people' and those who had collaborated with the enemy.[375] Their property was confiscated by the state, together with internationally owned assets such as mines and factories. The Yugoslav history of the Second World War began with terror and savage violence in the NDH, and ended with Communist terror exercised against those who had collaborated with the Axis powers, the *Chetniks* and the *Ustasha,* as well as all others who were labelled as 'enemies of the people'. In such an atmosphere, with severely limited freedom of the media, strong pressure and almost no opposition, the Communists won the first post-war elections with more than 90% of the votes. The newly elected constitutional Parliament abolished monarchy and introduced the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia suffered enormous human and material losses in the Second World War. In total, they were greater than those of almost any other state that took part in the war, second only to USSR and Poland.[376] Official post-war state estimates, which were formally submitted to the international commission in charge of war reparations, reported 1,706,000 casualties in total, with Serbs having suffered the most.[377] According to a more moderate estimate, the total number of Yugoslav casualties was somewhere between 900,000 and 1,150,000.[378] Those numbers, and especially the number of Serbs, Jews and other non-Croats killed in the NDH concentration camp Jasenovac, is still subject to controversies.[379]

At the end of the war, Yugoslav industrial capacities – those that German occupation forces insisted on preserving – were destroyed, and there was a lack of qualified labour force due to the fact that many people died or left for Germany during the war. The transport system was severely affected by sabotage, war operations, and finally by the allied bombing that took place in 1944 in support of domestic resistance forces.[380] Pavlović claims that foundations for the revolution and the later establishment of a Communist regime can be found in German and Italian occupation. According to him, occupation forces had no systemic solutions or manpower

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[375] Pavlović, *Istorija Balkana: 1804-1945*, p. 481.
[376] Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, okupacija i kolaboracija,* p. 831.
[377] *Ibid,* p. 812.
[378] Pavlović, *Hitlerov novi antiporedak*, p. 9.
[379] *Ibid,* p. 813.
[380] *Ibid*, p. 269.

to manage the occupied territories, and were unable to prevent civil war. That created a state of chaos, a growing inflation and a shortage of food that led to public discontent.[381]

Although Yugoslavia was at the periphery of the most important war operations, the main events, especially at the eastern front, reflected heavily on the developments in the country. The two resistance movements, with competing political platforms and ideological grounds, relied on external allies and adapted their strategies to the expectation of their intervention. Both movements negotiated with the occupation forces, though only *Chetniks* sporadically collaborated both with them and with the provisional Government. They had a vision of a restoration of the pre-war regime and expected the defeat of Axis powers. Their waiting tactics and inability to attract larger non-Serb groups limited them, and they eventually lost the competition with the more useful domestic ally for the Allies. *Partisans*, on the other hand, were able to do all that *Chetniks* were not: they offered an ideological platform that did not resemble pre-war Yugoslavia and was appealing to a broad social group of underprivileged peasantry. What also worked in their favour was their collaboration and ideological identification with the Soviet Union, which Western allies had to take into account. Based on the *Partisans'* war victories and the fact that, albeit with Soviet military help, they had liberated most of the country on their own, Yugoslavia deserved a respectful place in the victorious post-war coalition.

The end of the Second World War also marked the death of pre-war Yugoslavia conceived after the First World War. The first joint state of the South Slavic peoples had been perceived as Serb-dominated as it was the Serbs who had occupied the most important positions in the Government, state administration and the armed forces. Therefore, the quick defeat of the Yugoslav forces in 1941 was perceived as a Serbian defeat. The second Yugoslavia, born in 1945, was designed as a union of different ethnic and religious groups with different levels of political development. The bonding glue of that union was the principle of 'brotherhood and unity'. The mechanism of 'ethnic key', according to which there was to be a balance in the allocation of the key posts in the state administration and the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) among the key ethnic groups in accordance with their numerical strength, was one of the tools to mitigate disparities that were present in the newly born state.[382]

The lessons learned from this war enterprise were very much in accordance with the war experience of the First World War. Serbia and its armed forces were (rightfully) perceived as

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[381] *Ibid*, p. 272.
[382] Richard J. Crampton, *The Balkans Since the Second World War*, London and New York, Routledge, 2014, p. 123.

main pillars of the common state and the military defeat and political capitulation at the beginning of the war were mostly subscribed to Serbs. However, the nature of the *Partisan* resistance movement which emerged as victorious at the end of the war brought more unity and ethnic cohesion among composing parts of the country. Although Serbia remained to be perceived as the mightiest actor in the union, in both the military and political terms, that perception was softened by the ethnic diversity of the *Partisan* movement. More importantly, the Second World War, as the First World War, was also a direct example of an alignment politics since the Yugoslav/Serbian forces acted jointly with the Allies. As during the Balkan Wars and the First World War, the dynamics of that alignment politics was highly dependent on the contextual setting and international politics that Serbia could not influence significantly. That dynamics, however, influenced the outcome of the internal rivalry between the two guerrilla movements in former Yugoslavia and finally determined the nature of the regime that will continue to shape Serbian and Yugoslav politics in decades to come. Serbian and Yugoslav security policies in the post-war period will remain highly sensitive to the dynamics in the international relations. The alignment with the Allies established through the Second World War will be modified by the innovative project of the Non-Aligned Movement. How the global dynamics influenced both internal and external politics of Serbia and Yugoslavia in the post-war period will be discussed in the following chapter.

### 4.1.5. Serbia in Post-War Yugoslavia

In this chapter I will present discussion on the Yugoslav post-war politics and how it shaped its security policies. Most of the attention is devoted to the Yugoslav participation in the NAM and whether that movement had anything to do with the military neutrality/non-alignment discussed in this thesis.

Politics in post-war Yugoslavia was marked by the profound dominance of the communist regime and their later mythologised victory in the liberation war of 1941-1945. Every aspect of domestic and foreign political life – economic, cultural or educational – was made to cherish that myth while the war-torn country was struggling to reconstruct its economic and political life. In the economic sphere, Yugoslavia, while applying rapid industrialisation and collectivisation of agricultural production, gradually embarked upon its own socialist model of self-management. Self-managed socialism was a Yugoslav version of the s`ocialist model, developed after the split with Stalin and officially introduced by legislative changes in 1950. The model implied a prominent role of workers' councils in the administration of the management processes, which ostensibly led to the democratisation of the production process while actually

causing lack of professional management and loss of productive time. In the end, this resulted in state subsidies given to support big industries that employed an enormous number of people but could not survive market competition.

At the foreign policy level, Yugoslavia maintained close relations with the Soviet Union until Tito's split with Stalin in 1948. The Yugoslav Communist Party was accused of abandoning Soviet socialist postulates in the domestic economic, social and political life, although the real cause for the rift was Stalin's growing suspicion of Tito's foreign policy course and his close ties with British policy makers.[383] Yugoslavia was perceived to be a defector from the communist camp, which did not tolerate dissonance from the mainstream line dictated by the Soviet Union. Tito's charisma threatened to jeopardise the unity of the monolith communist camp and inspire other potential rebels. Yugoslavia was in constant jeopardy of a Soviet military attack, which could be launched as punishment and to demonstrate to the members of the Warsaw Pact that disobedience comes at a cost. In the Cold War context, the above was quite a plausible scenario. At the same time, the U.S. was open to accepting a communist state, which could serve as an asset in the Cold War against the Soviets.[384]

In those circumstances, in November 1952, Belgrade hosted negotiations between the American, French and British delegates on one side, and Yugoslav military and political representatives on the other. Yugoslav representatives presented the gloomy scenario of a quick Soviet attack, in which case Yugoslav forces would be defeated in a month's time.[385] The negotiations resulted in a package of economic and military assistance from the three participating states at the peak of Cold War hostilities and during the Korean War. Yugoslavia had already, since 1949, been a recipient of U.S. assistance in food and economic help to its Armed Forces, and had been included in the U.S. of foreign assistance programme – the Marshall Plan.[386] The background reason for this, at least in part, was that Yugoslavia was perceived to hold a vital strategic position for the defence of NATO's southern flank. The other outcome of the talks held in 1952 was an agreement between Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey that led to the conclusion of the Balkan Pact, a military alliance between these three states formed in 1954. The alliance was perceived as a supplement to NATO, and Yugoslavia was consequently indirectly included in the Western defence system. The threat coming from the Soviet side ended with Stalin's death in 1953 and was followed by a normalisation of relations,

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[383] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 534.
[384] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 118.
[385] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 534.
[386] *Ibid,* p. 536.

Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade and his apology to the Yugoslav authorities. With the normalisation of relations with the Soviet Union and the deterioration of Greek-Turkish relations over the issue of Cyprus, the Balkan Pact effectively ceased to exist.

The 1950s were also marked by the birth of a trademark element of the Yugoslav Cold War foreign and security policy – the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement, with Yugoslavia as one of its founders and leaders. This movement emerged as a response to the bipolar structure in international relations of the time, where two blocs of states competed against each other on political, military, economic and ideological grounds. The Movement represented a form of small states' cooperation that sought to find an autonomous voice on the international scene. At certain point the expectations of the Movement grew so strong that its members thought they might even be able to challenge and weaken the alliance system.[387] The first conference of the Non-Aligned Movement was organised in Belgrade in 1961 (although it was not the founding conference, nor was the Movement established in Belgrade).[388] The end of the Second World War brought independence to many African and Asian states with little or no experience of independent statehood. They formed the Movement to avoid being dragged into yet another great powers' confrontation and to express their opposition to all forms of colonialism and imperialism that had kept them subordinated for centuries. It was basically a loose coalition of states that agreed to cooperate on political and economic grounds. Its members decided to be ideologically neutral in relation to the two blocs' confrontation, but their position was significantly different than that of militarily neutral states. They decided on a new approach in the conduct of international relations, questioning the very essence of conflict and war and asking for peaceful coexistence, cooperation and respect for independence among the states.[389]

Although the history and the purpose of the Movement might seem straightforward, there are significant disagreements regarding its emergence and achievements, as well as the intentions of participating states. Dragan Bogetić, who had devoted his entire scientific career to the research of the Movement, writes that confusion arises because, when trying to elaborate the Movement, we are actually discussing its three different shapes. Those are: non-alignment as a doctrine, non-alignment as a state's foreign policy platform, and the NAM as a broad

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[387] Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 320.

[388] Jelena Subotić and Srđan Vučetić, 'Performing solidarity: whiteness and status-seeking in the non-aligned world', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, DOI 10.1057/s41268-017-0112-2.

[389] Teaching Contemporary Southeast European History – Source Books for History Teachers, 'Declaration of the Heads of States or Government of Non-Aligned Countries', Volume 1, Cold War, Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South-Eastern Europe, Thessaloniki, 2016, p. 90.

international movement.[390] Since the point of this dissertation is to research the causal link between military neutrality/non-alignment and Serbia's historical experience, it is primarily interested in the type of foreign and security policy employed by the Yugoslav leadership at the time and the lessons that were learned from the experience. However, there is no consensus among the scholars who study this issue on how Yugoslav authorities crafted the country's involvement in the Movement and which role they played in the coalition of mostly African and Asian post-colonial states. The first of the popular myths about the NAM and Yugoslav participation in it that were challenged by researchers is that non-alignment was Tito's idea and that Yugoslavia somehow introduced it to like-minded Asian and African states. What historians do agree about is that it was the Tito-Stalin split in 1948 that pushed Yugoslavia to seek an alternative form of foreign policy, outside of the two alliances, albeit with strong Soviet ideological impact.[391] Novel research agrees that non-alignment was not Tito's fresh foreign-policy idea, but rather a proposal of the then Yugoslav ambassador to India that Yugoslavia should try to establish closer relations with Third World countries, especially those already practicing non-alignment, namely India and Burma.[392] Rinna Kullaa claims that this happened because the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs was granted significant resources to establish a wider network of contacts after the country's expulsion from the Soviet bloc in 1948. It was that institution, she agrees, that came forward with the proposal of some form of neutral politics as a solution to the Yugoslav security dilemma.[393]

A closer look into the dynamics of the Movement shows that the founding nations' leaders had different concepts regarding the Movement's politics and doctrine. The main questions were: a) should it be a movement that keeps equidistance from the two opposing blocs or one that claims ideological sympathies with the camp of Socialist countries; and b) should it be a regional, African-Asian coalition, or could European Yugoslavia also participate? Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was the turning point for the Yugoslav leaders to fully embrace the politics of equidistance, which they strongly opposed earlier.[394] A military

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[390] Dragan Bogetić, 'Jugoslavija i nesvrstanost: prilog prevazilaženju predrasuda i stereotipa', *ANNALES · Ser. hist. Sociol,* 24(4) 2014: pp. 615-624, p. 616.

[391] *Ibid*, p. 620.

[392] *Ibid*, p. 616.

[393] She claims that the MFA provided an independent political analysis advocating Finnish model of neutralism, but that the idea was abandoned in 1958 in favor of the NAM when it became clear that there would be no closer rapprochement with the Soviet communists after all. Rinna Kullaa, *From the Tito-Stalin split to Yugoslavia's Finnish connection: neutralism before non-alignment, 1948-1958*. Doctoral Thesis, Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, 2008, p. 25.

[394] Bogetić, 'Jugoslavija i nesvrstanost: prilog prevazilaženju predrasuda i stereotipa', p. 620.

intervention in the country's neighbourhood, in Hungary in 1956, was an enormous shock that kept them aware of the constant military threat from the USSR and showed them the limitations of their interpretation of East-West relations and their expected deterioration of military-political blocs.[395] From that moment on, Yugoslavia remained on the course of strict distance from both blocs until the break-up of the Yugoslav federation.

There are various discussions on what Yugoslavia gained from its participation in the NAM. As one of the founders and the only European member state next to Cyprus, Yugoslavia gained more from participating in the Movement in terms of diplomatic prominence, cultural and economic exchange than its membership in it had any significant consequences for its foreign and security posture.[396] It certainly boosted its international profile, giving Yugoslavia a prominent place in world affairs and allowing it to distance itself even more from the Soviet Union and its satellites.[397] By siding with the countries that challenged the international political and economic order, and with which it did not have much in common especially regarding their colonial experience and submission under the white-supremacy flag, Yugoslavia's international profile was more significant than its size and power status would have otherwise allowed. According to some, this policy could be labelled as status-seeking on the part of Yugoslavia, whose leaders understood that by exercising solidarity and not addressing the issue of race and discrimination within the Movement they could be rewarded internationally with a positive recognition of the regime and its Socialist model.[398] The status achieved, however, was of a limited utility in the 1980s and the 1990s when firstly the economic and political crisis hit Yugoslavia, which then collapsed violently and abruptly. The next chapter is devoted to the historical heritage of the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s and Serbia's participation in it.

### 4.1.6. Dissolution of Yugoslavia and the Wars of the 1990s

In this chapter I will firstly present conditions that led to internal crisis of the Yugoslav federation in the 1980s. Those conditions made a basis for a violent conflict with many repercussions for the future Serbian security policies. Involvement in the wars primarily on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo had many consequences both for the future Serbia's security policies and organization of the Serbian military and police forces. Even

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[395] Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World,* p. 285.

[396] Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja,* p. 533.

[397] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 120.

[398] Subotić and Vučetić, 'Performing solidarity: whiteness and status-seeking in the non-aligned world'.

more importantly, wars fought on the territory of former Yugoslavia brought Serbs in a smaller federation with Montenegro, which will finally be faced with the painful episode of 1999 NATO intervention.

The background for bloodshed that would take place in the Balkans in the 1990s was set up at least a decade earlier, when Yugoslavia faced economic difficulties that made discrepancies between the constitutional republics even more obvious. Economic conditions that became apparent in the 1980s, which brought high inflation rates, unemployment, shortage of goods and a fall of the standard of living, came as a consequence of events in the 1970s, when Yugoslavia had to take many foreign loans in order to be able to deal with the effects of the 1973 oil crisis on the Yugoslav economy. This economic climate led to increasingly loud voices from the economically more prosperous republics in the north, Slovenia and Croatia, which demanded less centralised governance in the federation. Their leadership was growingly concerned with the distribution of federal funds and the fact that large sums were being devoted to the poorer parts of Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia. They claimed that the federal economic policy favoured Serbia's interests, driving the northern republics away from their vital economic partners in Central Europe.[399]

Economic nationalism was fuelled by ethnic nationalism which the republics' elites found to be a convenient ideological base to replace socialism and its already exhausted mantra of self-management and 'brotherhood and unity' as the glue for ethnic and religious differences. Nationalism was the new fertile ground for their political projects. In Serbia, this new twist in the ideological grounds of party politics was applied by Slobodan Milošević, who rose to power in 1987 as head of the Serbian Communist Party. It could be argued that the rise of militant nationalism in Yugoslav republics was the reaction to the Milošević's platform which others found frightening.[400] In the case of Slovenia, it was mostly the feeling of economic supremacy and stronger ties with Central Europe that fuelled its request for first a wider autonomy and later full independence. In the cases of Croatia and Serbia, whose nationalisms seemed to have fuelled each other – which can also be said for today's state of affairs between the two – relations were even more complex due to heavy legacies of the Second World War and atrocities performed against the Serbian population in the NDH. Much like it does today, the Second World War loomed over the relations of Serbs and Croats in the form of an unfinished business, and they are still far from reaching a consensus on what exactly happened back then. Besides this, Serbia also had the problem of Kosovo. After 1968, when protests were mitigated by constitutional

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[399] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* pp. 130-131.
[400] *Ibid,* p. 152.

guarantees of greater autonomy for Kosovo, another round of demonstrations organised by Kosovo Albanians took place in 1981. They began as student protests, but they quickly spread, involving a request that Kosovo be granted the status of republic. The protest ended violently, by use of military force. Coupled with permanent exile of Serbs from Kosovo, it only further propelled Serbian nationalism. Serbs found an additional reason to feel threatened and in an unfavourable position, since the arrangement of Yugoslavia was perceived to be working against their national interests.[401]

The first Yugoslav republic to initiate the disintegration process was Slovenia. The core of the dispute between Slovenia and Serbia was the nature of the federation. Slovenian demands were leaning more toward a liberal, decentralised federal union, while Serbia, under Milošević, opted for stronger federal authorities under Serbian dominance. These different voices of the Slovenian and Serbian leadership clashed also over the issue of Kosovo. While Serbian authorities decided to deal with the crisis in a confrontational manner, by using military force, Slovenians insisted on a human rights approach. This was in tune with the proposal of the Slovenian delegation to the Yugoslav Communist Party to adopt a liberal reformist package. It was denied, and Slovenians left the institution. Slovenian inclination toward the status of sovereignty, albeit within a federation, was obvious from the constitutional amendments made by the Slovenian authorities in 1989, which led to the exercise of sovereign rights at the level of the republic.

As time went by, they prepared corresponding legislative changes, issued a formal declaration of independence, opened foreign diplomatic missions and finally conducted an independence referendum. At the referendum, the independence option was favoured by 94.6% of the total turnout of 93.5% of the republic's body of voters.[402] The deadline set by the referendum for a consensus to be reached regarding a new federal arrangement expired in June 1991, after which Slovenia, simultaneously with Croatia, proclaimed independence. This was followed by a 10-day long war during which the JNA tried to take the border posts and the airport in Ljubljana. It was opposed by the Slovenian Territorial Defence, but even more by defeatism within its own ranks. Cadets and officers of mixed origin, some of whom were Slovenes, were confused by the situation of being supposed to shoot at their fellow citizens. With mediation by the European Community, this turmoil effectively came to an end once the JNA troops withdrew and Slovenian independence was recognised. Serbia did not have much to

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[401] *Ibid,* pp. 148-150.
[402] *Ibid,* p. 248.

oppose as there was no significant Serbian minority living in Slovenia, and the first stage of the Yugoslav dissolution ended quickly.

Events in Croatia were unfolding in parallel with the worrying trends in Slovenia. In the spring of 1990, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) emerged as the dominant political force after the first multi-party elections. It exploited nationalistic narratives and the growing resentment that was present in the Serbian-Croatian relations, which from the other side was driven by Milošević and his Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS). This outcome was quite common also in the 1990 elections of other Yugoslav republics. Nationalist parties won in Slovenia, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as well, with the exception of Serbia and Montenegro where ex-communists won support, albeit also playing the nationalistic card.[403] Together with Slovenes, Croats demanded a re-definition of the federal arrangement, seeking anything from wider autonomy to full independence. Unlike Slovenia, Croatia had a significant Serbian minority population, which constituted about 14% of the overall number of its inhabitants (580,000), enjoyed the status of a constitutional nation, and held a number of significant offices in politics, the police and intelligence agencies.[404] This was changed by the amendments Croatia introduced to its Constitution in July 1990, which stripped Serbs of their previous rights and degraded them to the status of national minority. These events echoed the World War Two *Ustasa* atrocities in the NDH which made Serbian population even more uncomfortable and in search for protection. Serbs were afraid of their future position in an independent Croatia, without their earlier status and the attachment to Serbia within the federal framework. They answered by declaring autonomous areas, where they opposed policing performed by the Croatian forces. They organised their own paramilitary forces and were supported by the JNA when Croats sent troops to disarm them.[405]

Once Croatia seceded in June 1991, things escalated into a war that lasted until 1995. The main stage of war operations included areas inhabited by Serbs, while the most important events, which took place at the beginning of the war, were the siege and shelling of Dubrovnik and the occupation of Vukovar, a port at the Danube River, and atrocities committed after the occupation. These events turned the competition for international sympathies in Croats' favour.[406] After the initial advantage of Serbs, helped by the JNA, the advantage moved to the

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[403] Teaching Contemporary Southeast European History – Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, Wars, Divisions, Integration (1990-2008), Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South-Eastern Europe, Thessaloniki, 2016, p. 17.
[404] *Ibid*, p. 38.
[405] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* pp. 243-244.
[406] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 38.

Croatian side; they used it to regain Knin, the centre of the autonomous Serbian province, and to launch Operation Storm in August 1995, during which some 200,000 Croatian Serbs were expelled from their homes and turned into refugees looking for safety in Serbia. After this biggest refugee flow in Europe since the end of the Second World War,[407] Croatia became ethnically almost homogenous. The Operation Storm is nowadays celebrated in Croatia as a big triumph and military victory of what they call the Homeland War, while on the Serbian side it is remembered as an action of ethnic cleansing. The war for Croatian independence is believed to have taken the lives of 13,233 persons on the Croatian side. Also, 1,149 persons went missing and 33,043 were wounded. The number of Serbian victims is estimated at around 7,000, while hundreds of thousands of persons were forced to leave their homes.[408] Peace was achieved with the help of international mediation and Milošević's pressure on Slavonian Serbs to accept the terms. According to the Erdut Agreement, remaining Serb-controlled territories were peacefully reintegrated into Croatia under the supervision of the UN mission after January 1996.

The most complicated situation, which consequently turned into the bloodiest of all Yugoslav conflicts, was that in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Composed of three major ethnic groups – with 43% Muslims, 31% Serbs and 17% Croats – this republic was ethnically mixed in a way that hardly made it sustainable in case of dissolution of Yugoslavia. There were several possible solutions. The first was a unitary independent state, in which Muslims would be the largest group and which was opposed by Serbs and Croats since these two groups did not want to lose formal connections with their fellow citizens in Serbia and Croatia. Jose Cutileiro's decentralisation plan from March 1992, under the EU and UN auspices, was rejected by Bosniak leader Alija Izetbegović, fuelling the separatist tendencies of both Serbs and Croats.[409] The Vance-Owen plan from the beginning of 1993 aimed at establishing ethnically clear units, i.e. cantons; each of the ethnic groups would have its own units, where they would be the dominant group, while Sarajevo would be declared an open city.[410] Bosnia and Herzegovina proclaimed independence in March 1992, which led it into the bloodiest conflict in Europe since the end of the Second World War. In the two months that followed, the three ethnic groups engaged in an armed conflict that also involved Serbian forces from Serbia proper. In April 1992, an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognised by the European Community and the U.S.

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[407] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 266.
[408] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 38.
[409] *Ibid*, p. 39.
[410] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 260.

Following the declaration of independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnian Serbs declared their own independence in areas where they were the majority. From summer 1992, their territorial units were known as the Republic of Srpska. They started arming themselves in 1991, supported by the Serbian Ministry of Interior.[411] Although all three ethnic groups were getting militarily organised, Bosnian Serbs had the advantage of inheriting large stockpiles of weaponry from the JNA's units in Slovenia, western Croatia and Macedonia, as well as those that remained after its withdrawal from Bosnia.[412] The Army of the Republic of Srpska was mainly formed from JNA units, financed by Yugoslavia, and led by former JNA General Ratko Mladić.[413] This made their position superior to that of two others ethnic groups, allowing them to gain military control of almost 70% of the territory in 1993. Having established military control on the ground, and being mainly interested in securing the safety of corridors that connected various parts they controlled and their territorial links with Serbia, Bosnian Serbs could not be persuaded to accept the Vance-Owen plan, not even under the pressure of Milošević's and the threat of international bombing campaign against their military positions.

Significant changes in the political background and military balance took place after February 1994. The Bosnian-Croatian federation was established under U.S. patronage, bringing a ceasefire between these two groups. An international embargo on the supply of weapons to the warring sides, which effectively mostly harmed the Muslims, was silently broken and the U.S. turned a blind eye to arms that were being delivered to Bosnian Muslims.[414] In 1994 NATO started its bombing campaign, authorised by the UN, against the positions of Bosnian Serbs who, despite Yugoslav pressure to do otherwise, rejected yet another plan for the internal political organisation of Bosnia between a Muslim-Croatian federation on one side and Bosnian Serbs on the other. In the situation when the international community was heavily involved, and NATO launched the campaign without direct threats to the security of any of its members, the UN's credibility was significantly weakened by the UN personnel hostage crisis in May 1995. It was resolved by Milošević's urging instead of the authority of the UN, damaged by its inability to protect the safe zones around Sarajevo which Bosnians Serbs kept under siege for a total of three years.[415]

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[411] *Ibid,* p. 254.
[412] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 39.
[413] *Ibid*.
[414] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 263.
[415] *Ibid,* p. 265.

The vicious circle of ethnic cleansings and atrocities committed by all three warring sides was profoundly marked by the massacre of approximately 8,000 Muslim boys and men committed in the protected zone of Srebrenica by the Army of the Republic of Srpska in July 1995.[416] This event, recognised by the International Court of Justice in The Hague and the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) as genocide, showed complete collapse of the UN protection system established in certain zones, the so-called safe areas. These were recognised by UN resolutions, and NATO was given a mandate to protect them by all means.[417] Not only that Srebrenica proved to be a failure of the UN-NATO double key system, it also increased the international isolation of Bosnian Serbs, leading to extended diplomatic pressure and finally the Dayton Peace Conference. Peace talks held in November 1995 resulted in the political arrangement of independent Bosnia and Herzegovina, composed of the Muslim-Croat federation on 51% of the territory and the Republic of Srpska covering 49%. The arrangement led to a complicated political and administrative state apparatus which has so far proved incapable of remedying the consequences of war and moving the state toward citizens-serving mechanisms. 60,000 international forces were deployed under NATO command to enforce what had been agreed in Dayton. Notwithstanding the ineffectiveness of the established political framework, the Dayton Peace Agreement marked the end of a war that took more than 100,000 human lives[418] and produced more than 2.2 million refugees. It is estimated that some 50,000 people had been tortured, that 20,000 women had been raped, and that 715 concentration camps had been scattered throughout the country.[419] Based on all the above, the UN Security Council established the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in May 1993.

As military force and wars are inseparably linked with statehood in the Balkans,[420] maintaining their own military forces to pursue and safeguard their independent statehood projects remained a high priority on the agenda of all the newly-established states. By doing so,

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[416] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 40.

[417] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 262.

[418] 200,000 victims, according to Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 268.

[419] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 40.

[420] Charles Tilly's thesis from his 'Coercion Capital and European States, AD 990-1990 1990' makes connection between transformation of state system before national states towards the model of national states' system and how that transformation was correlated with the monopoly on coercive force within borders and ability to wage inter-state wars. My claim in this thesis is that military force was essentially linked with the establishment of any kind of the statehood in the Balkans since the Balkan ethnic groups had to fight their way towards the statehood against the external enemy, as a precondition for any kind of an independent entity.

they relied heavily on the external support of big powers. For that reason, regional security dynamics became inseparable from external influence.[421]

The rump Yugoslav federation, now consisting of just Serbia and Montenegro, enjoyed only a few years of relative stability before a new crisis and a war in Kosovo broke out. The prelude to it was set by the introduction of a new Serbian Constitution in 1990, by which its provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina, were stripped off autonomy that was granted to them by the 1974 Constitution. This did not go without public protests on the Kosovars' side. The Kosovo Assembly proclaimed Kosovo an independent republic within Yugoslavia and went on to adopt the new Kosovo Constitution.[422] Unofficial Kosovo elections held in May 1992 were won by Ibrahim Rugova, who became the first President of the self-proclaimed Republic of Kosovo. His philosophy was the one of passive resistance, as he understood that an open confrontation with the Serbian regime would have been suicidal under the existing circumstances. Belgrade, on the other hand, could ill afford yet another armed conflict.[423] Rugova was mainly accepted and tolerated by Belgrade, as was the system of parallel institutions he set up in Kosovo in the 1990s. His request for peaceful resistance resonated with the Kosovo Albanians. It was in 1997, when the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was formed, that Rugova started losing the political battle against the KLA's political leader, Hashim Thaci.[424]

The KLA apparently grew from only 200 members in November 1997 to 12,000 in May 1998,[425] and supposedly to 25,000 just prior to the 1999 NATO intervention.[426] Its weapons supply came mainly through illegal channels from Albania, and it is believed to have been financed by organised crime, drug trafficking and prostitution.[427] The KLA started with large-scale insurrections in 1998. Serbia responded to them by deploying additional police, military and paramilitary forces.[428] Their actions against the terrorists – since the Serbian authorities considered the KLA a terrorist organisation – included burning villages and prosecuting entire families, which resulted in mass refugee flows in Kosovo. This, and the fear that the conflict

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[421] Miroslav Hadžić, 'Srpski krug vojskom', *Potraga za bezbednošću: Slučaj Srbija*, Beograd: Dangraf i Centar za civilno-vojne odnose, 2004, p. 12.
[422] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* pp. 240-241.
[423] *Ibid,* p. 270.
[424] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 66.
[425] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 271-72.
[426] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 67.
[427] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* p. 271; Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 67.
[428] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 67.

might spill over into Macedonia, triggered a grave concern of the international community and involvement of the UN, NATO and the OSCE. As early as May 1998, NATO announced that it would deploy troops alongside the Albania-Kosovo border and started discussing the possibility of air-strikes against Yugoslav positions.[429]

The threat of more prominent NATO involvement seemed to bear some results, at least until January 1999 and the Račak case. The clash of Serbian police forces and the KLA in that village caused the death of 40 Albanians. The Serbian side claimed that they belonged to the KLA and were killed in combat, while the Albanians maintained that they were unarmed civilians. Forensic reports commissioned by international organisations never reached a consensus on what actually happened there.[430] However, this case undoubtedly speeded up the development of the crisis that first led to the failed Rambouillet peace conference and then to the NATO bombing campaign in 1999.

### 4.1.7. The 1999 NATO Bombing Campaign against FR Yugoslavia[431]

In the following chapter I present in-depth analysis of NATO intervention against FR Yugoslavia in 1999. The intervention left many short-term and far-reaching consequences for Serbia's future security policies, which all will be presented and elaborated. It also had the most decisive impact on Serbia's politics of military neutrality.

The peace talks in Rambouillet failed because the Yugoslav delegation refused what seemed to be an unacceptable solution to the Kosovo problem due to violation of state sovereignty. That was the formal trigger for the NATO bombing campaign, which started on 24 March 1999 and ended 78 days later, on 10 June, with the withdrawal of Serbian military and police forces from Kosovo. The campaign, which was not approved by the UN Security Council, included 2.300 airstrikes. Their targets were airports, transport routes, bridges and residential and industrial facilities that were believed to be of military value. Schools, medical institutions and media centres were also targeted and damaged.[432] Serbia still raises arguments concerning the

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[429] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* pp. 272-273.

[430] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 69.

[431] Parts of this and following sub-chapters were published as Jelena Radoman, *Serbia and NATO: From enemies to (almost) partners*, Belgrade Centre for Security policy, Working paper, 2012. Available at: http://www.bezbednost.org/All-publications/4641/Serbia-and-NATO-From-enemies-to-almost.shtml (Accessed on: 16 August 2018).

[432] Source Books for History Teachers, Volume 2, p. 72.

dubious legality of the campaign, insisting that it had hit targets of questionable military relevance and invoking NATO's use of cluster bombs and depleted uranium, which are (falsely) believed to have caused an increase in instances of cancer and other diseases in Kosovo and Serbia. There is no consensus on the Serbian side regarding the number of casualties.[433] Under the pressure of bombs and international diplomatic initiatives, Milošević agreed to withdraw Yugoslav and Serbian troops from the province. The withdrawal was followed by the signing of the Kumanovo Agreement and the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244, which paved the way for a self-governed Kosovo. Based on these two documents, Kosovo was placed under the provisional international military and civilian authority of NATO, the UN and later the EU.[434]

The NATO bombing campaign against the FRY in 1999 was certainly the most important event that influenced Serbia's relations with the Alliance, as well as its short- and long-term security policies. Serbia's security policies in 1999/2000 were influenced by the bombing in two ways. First, the bombing itself served to demonstrate a changed global security agenda which Serbia had to take into account and adjust to it. Although the intervention took place ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War between two superpowers and their military alliances, during which tremendous changes occurred both in Europe and around the world, Serbia still had not adjusted to them by 1999. The main reason for this is that Serbia was first involved in the Yugoslav wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and later in the crisis with Kosovo. Yugoslavia was forced to deal with wars that were linked to issues of territory and national identities, which prevented it from dealing with transitional issues such as democratisation, new institutional set-up and economic recovery. This stands in contrast to the ex-Warsaw Pact members in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) who, immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact in 1989, readily embraced the agenda of the EU and NATO membership as their indisputable priorities. At the same time, Serbia's political agenda consisted of issues relating to nationalism, national identity and wars connected thereto.[435] This led to Serbia's security discourse during the 1990s being fashioned more in accordance with the 'hard security' discourse and traditional threats, with an emphasis put on military power as the main asset, and wars and armed aggression as main threats to state security.

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[433] *Ibid.*

[434] Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War,* pp. 275-276.

[435] Dušan Pavlović, S. Antonić, *Konsolidacija demokratskih ustanova u Srbiji*, Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2007, pp. 229 – 236.

There was no room within this discourse for concepts such as human rights or a cooperative security, as strongly promoted by the EU and NATO after the Cold War.[436]

Second, the 1999 intervention indirectly influenced changes in Serbia's foreign and security policies by becoming an issue that was relevant for the 2000 elections, which Milošević lost and which subsequently led to the democratic changes of October 2000. NATO intervention temporarily halted the dominance of the 'Kosovo issue' in the Serbian political discourse and reinforced a new agenda for the 2000 elections. The trend of decreasing the importance of Kosovo as the September 2000 elections approached was ever more evident. This meant that the election would be lost by political forces that tried to gain voters' support by reinforcing nationalistic sentiments. Milošević used this strategy and lost the elections.[437]

In the long run, the 1999 intervention influenced Serbia's security policies in three ways. First, it marked the peak of the isolation experienced by Serbia and the FRY in the 1990s, during which the FRY was exposed to economic sanctions, expelled from international organisations and broke diplomatic relations with most EU and NATO member states. The military action NATO conducted against the FRY certainly represented the highest level of isolation Serbia experienced in recent history, leading to its being labelled the 'pariah' state of Europe. Serbia's 'exclusion' was that much worse because it happened in the context of the 1990s, when both the EU and NATO embraced the agenda of abandoning Cold-War division and were engaging with former adversaries from the CEE.

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[436] Unlike the security discourse dominant in Serbia in the 1990s, NATO's 1999 operation was rationalized in the West by the logic of humanitarian intervention which belongs to a completely different security discourse and which acknowledges a different set of security objectives and threats. The logic of humanitarian intervention implies that the mass violations of human rights perpetrated by one state could be grounds for a foreign intervention aimed at preventing further violations, even within the realm of a sovereign state. This is in accordance with the human security concept which, unlike the narrow security approach that assumes state territory and its sovereignty as indisputable, acknowledges humans and their rights as valid objects of security. It is also in accordance with the broad security agenda that has been incorporated in the EU Security Strategy from 2003, as well as in all NATO's post-Cold War Strategic Concepts. This agenda, unlike the traditional one prevalent during the Cold War, recognizes 'soft' security threats, such as organized crime, corruption, state fragility and human rights violations as valid threats to human, national and global security and tries to address them through a modified set of security policies compared to those that were employed during the Cold War. NATO's 1999 intervention against the FRY was a strong demonstration of the Alliance acting in accordance with this broad agenda, which found its place in the Alliance's 1999 Strategic Concept adopted in April 1999. It was also a strong demonstration to Serbian elites of the limits of the concept of sovereignty and territorial integrity which this intervention bypassed by acting in accordance with the logic of humanitarian interventionism.

[437] Dušan Pavlović, *Akteri i modeli: ogled o politici u Srbiji pod Miloševićem*, Beograd: Samizdat B92, 2001, p. 223.

Second, the 1999 bombing also marked the defeat of the FRY's Armed Forces by a vastly superior enemy, which led to the Kumanovo Agreement according to which the FRY's Armed Forces withdrew from Kosovo, leaving room for international peacekeeping forces and a mandate to govern the province in line with the UNSC Resolution 1244. Consequently, NATO troops were installed in the region, where they remain today as supreme guarantors of peace and stability in the province. Since its 1999 intervention and the establishment of military presence in the province, the Alliance has been acting as an external factor in the Western Balkan regional security dynamics and still remains to be a relevant actor. The presence of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Kosovo and their mandate to safeguard peace and stability in the province are facts that both the National Security Strategy and the Defence Strategy, adopted by the Serbian Parliament in October 2009, refer to as something that has to be taken into account when drafting security and defence policies.

The third long-term consequence of the 1999 intervention is that it has defined the Serbian public's perception of the Alliance ever since, leading also, albeit not explicitly, to the proclamation of military neutrality in 2007. The prevailing negative image of the Alliance amongst the Serbs – and not only Serbs living in the Republic of Serbia, but also those living in the Republic of Srpska and Montenegro – can be explained primarily by the 1995 and 1999 interventions that were conducted in the region. The consistent ratio of more than fifty percent of the Serbian population that would say 'no' in a referendum on Serbia's membership in the Alliance, and less than 30 percent of those who would say 'yes', coupled with a trend of rapid decline of 'yes' votes,[438] is one of the factors Serbian decision makers take into serious account when discussing Serbian policy with regard to the Alliance. The prevailing negative image of NATO among the Serbian public has frequently served as an excuse for the state leadership to artificially remove the possibility of joining NATO from the agenda and not speak clearly on the issue. Proclamation of military neutrality was a perfect tool that served the purpose. Public opinion polls are indeed limiting the Serbian establishment's room to manoeuvre as they indicate that any establishment willing to promote the idea of Serbian membership in the Alliance would be risking negative voter response during elections.

The decade-long violent dissolution of Yugoslavia, which ended with the NATO intervention, crushed the myth of JNA both as the uniting factor of former Yugoslavia and 'the

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[438] 'Stavovi građana o spoljnoj politici Srbije', Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku, March 2017. Available at: http://www.bezbednost.org/upload/document/stavovi_graana_o_spoljnoj_politici_srbije.pdf (Accessed on 27 May 2018).

world's fifth armed force' that used to be present in popular belief.[439] That armed force, which collapsed with the secession of one Yugoslav republic after another, was built on Serbian war heritage and its tradition of civil-military relations that was transmitted from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia after the First World War to the Communist Yugoslavia established after the Second World War.[440] The war heritage of JNA was further transmitted to the Army of the Yugoslav federation established by Serbia and Montenegro. It included a history of war defeats and political and military abuses of the armed forces, together with the notion of the army's exceptionalism. It was that belief in a previously exclusive force that suddenly got caught in the civil war and defeated by a superior enemy that led to the weakening of personal and collective ethics of its members, which further led to the criminalisation of some of its compartments.[441]

### 4.1.8. The Current State of Affairs between Serbia and NATO

In the following chapter Serbia-NATO relations after the 1999 intervention will be discussed. That discussion is centred around many aspects of that cooperation on the operational level and the dominant narrative on NATO as presented in the key strategic documents Serbia adopted after the intervention. The analysis of the current state of affairs in that cooperation is important since the military neutrality/non-alignment, as discussed earlier in this dissertation, is a politics featured around existing military alliances. How Serbia communicates and conducts its military neutrality will in many aspects depend on both the narrative and operational cooperation with the existing military alliances, out of which NATO is the most dominant one.

Today, Serbia is the Western Balkan country that is least interested in joining NATO, despite recent improvements in its relations with the Alliance. Unlike its regional neighbours, Serbia never declared any interest in membership despite the fact that it has been participating in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme since December 2006. The opening of the Serbian mission at the NATO headquarters in Brussels in September 2010 came after two years of deadlock, during which Serbian leaders kept declaring that the opening of the mission was a priority in its relations with NATO while simultaneously failing to open the office. Serbian political leadership does not offer a clear message as to whether Serbia should at all strive for NATO membership in the future or has chosen an alternative security project in the form of permanent military neutrality.

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[439] Hadžić, 'Srpski krug vojskom', pp. 1-5, p. 1.
[440] *Ibid*, p. 3.
[441] *Ibid,* p. 72-73.

Serbia declared military neutrality in a parliamentary Resolution of December 2007, which was adopted just before the expected unilateral declaration of Kosovo independence on 17 February 2008. The Resolution stipulates that Serbia is militarily neutral in relation to the existing military alliances unless otherwise decided in a future referendum. [442] Which adjustments, if any, the above proclamation implies for Serbia's foreign and security policies, remained untouched and unexplained by the parliamentary Resolution as well as any subsequent security-related documents. The National Security and Defence strategies, both adopted in 2009, fail to even mention military neutrality.[443] That situation proved to be highly beneficial for all the Governments that were in power in Serbia since 2007. Serbia's decision makers, regardless of their political and ideological backgrounds and official political programmes presented when assuming office, have used this policy as an empty shell which they, in accordance with their political needs, have accommodated the range of conflicting security policies – from that of closer military cooperation with Russia to even closer partnership relations with NATO short of membership.

Simple reading of the above document shows that it was introduced precisely with the intention of removing the issue of possible application to NATO membership from the foreseeable future. Indeed, whenever confronted with the question of whether they are considering possible NATO membership, Serbian political and military leaders refer to this Resolution as a document introduced by the Parliament that prevents such a possibility. However, the policy of military neutrality in relation to existing military alliances introduced by the Resolution has not been clearly defined either by the Resolution or any subsequent document. The National Security Strategy and the Defence Strategy from 2009 neglected to clarify both Serbia's ambition toward the Alliance and its concept of military neutrality based on which Serbia's security policy will be fashioned. The adoption of these documents has not helped to clearly define Serbia's strategic orientation or the *modus operandi* of cooperation with

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[442] Rezolucija NS RS o zaštiti suvereniteta, teritorijalnog integriteta i ustavnog poretka Republike Srbije. Available at:
http://www.parlament.gov.rs/akti/ostala-akta/doneta-akta/usazivu-od-14-februara-2007.1040.html (Accessed on: 8 February 2017).
[443] Strategija nacionalne bezbednosti Republike Srbije, October 2009. Available at:
http://www.mod.gov.rs/multimedia/file/staticki_sadrzaj/dokumenta/strategije/Strategija%20nacionalne%20bezbednosti%20Republike%20Srbije.pdf(Accessed on: 14 February 2017).
Strategija odbrane Republike Srbije, October 2009.
Available at:
http://www.mod.gov.rs/multimedia/file/staticki_sadrzaj/dokumenta/strategije/Strategija%20odbrane%20Republike%20Srbije.pdf(Accessed on: 14 February 2017).

today's most prominent political–military organisation. Drafts of new National Security and Defence Strategies, which were sent to the Parliament for the adoption in the autumn of 2019, was supposed to incorporate the concept of military neutrality into the corresponding concept of total defence. Draft documents from 2018 indeed do refer to neutrality, but remain vague in their explanations of it, as well as the explanation of Serbia's ambition regarding its relations with NATO. Neither draft of these new documents provided a much-needed elaboration of what military neutrality in Serbian case actually implies, and how it corresponds with the main threats to Serbian national security.[444]

The memory of the NATO intervention of 1999 has been the strongest and most direct factor in determining Serbia's current exceptional status in terms of its relations with the Alliance. As explained above, unlike all its regional neighbours, Serbia has not officially declared any ambition to join the Alliance. However, it had significantly deepened and institutionalised its cooperation with NATO since it joined the PfP program in 2006, and it participates in the Integrity Building Programme and the Planning and Review Process (PARP). Serbia opened its military mission at NATO HQ in Brussels back in 2010, while a NATO Military Liaison Office in Belgrade was established even earlier. Serbia summed up its current cooperation with NATO with the adoption of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) in 2015 and the Parliamentary approval of the agreement on logistical cooperation and status of NATO forces in the territory of Serbia in 2016.[445]

Serbia's developed military cooperation with NATO is balanced by political-military cooperation with Russia. Military-technical cooperation between Serbia and Russia has been given prominence since 2013, the time of signing of the Declaration on Strategic Partnership between the two countries. This was followed by the Agreement on Defence Cooperation for a period of fifteen years. Three joint military exercises have been organised in 2014, 2015 and 2016, while Vladimir Putin attended the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Belgrade in the Second World Word and the military parade that was organised on that occasion. All of this

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[444] Draft text of the National Security Strategy, Ministry of Defence, 2017, available at: http://www.mod.gov.rs/multimedia/file/staticki_sadrzaj/javna%20rasprava/strategije/Nacrt%20Strategije%20nacionalne%20bezbednosti.pdf (Accessed: 29 May 2018).
Draft text of the National Defence Strategy, Ministry of Defence, 2017, available at:http://www.mod.gov.rs/multimedia/file/staticki_sadrzaj/javna%20rasprava/strategije/Nacrt%20Strategije%20odbrane.pdf (Accessed: 29 May 2018).
[445] On Serbia-NATO military cooperation:
http://www.mod.gov.rs/eng/4358/partnerstvo-za-mir-4358 (Accessed on: 9 February 2017).

raised the interest of the western media and policy groups who commented on Russia's renewed strong influence on Serbian politics.[446]

While Serbian decision-makers try to keep cooperation with NATO low-profile so as not to irritate the Serbian population (in the latest polls, 47% of the citizens said that they were against any kind of cooperation with that organisation),[447] political and military cooperation with Russia is given high prominence in Serbian media. This is in line with how Serbian citizens perceive Russia and Serbian-Russian relations. Polls from 2017 indicate that 48% see the current level of cooperation as satisfactory, while 23% want the two countries to establish a political alliance.[448] Therefore, political authorities could have both foreign policy and domestic policy in mind when giving high prominence to cooperation with Russia. It is given because of Russia's support over the Kosovo issue in the UN Security Council. It is believed that without the Russian and Chinese veto the project of Kosovo independence would advance much faster, and that Kosovo would be soon given a seat in the UN. On the other side, high regards paid to Serbian-Russian relations are used to ameliorate citizens' perceptions of the country's increasingly stronger pro-Western agenda. Having in mind that the voting support for the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) comes from diverse spheres of population, including those with conservative and pro-Russian viewpoints, cooperation with Russia is seen as a concession to them.

### 4.1.9. Historical experience translated to lessons learned about military alignment and/or military neutrality/non-alignment

What does the trajectory of the broad historical experience from the 14th century onward tell us about the origins of Serbia's military non-alignment? What is the impact of that experience and how, if at all, did it influence Serbia's current security policy? And finally, was it actually those lessons, learned from the formative events from Serbia's military history that pushed it to proclaim abstention from all existing military alliances in 2007?

My first finding from the historical narrative is that the history of Serbian statehood is inseparably linked with the ability to convey military force. Only with the ability to employ military force in pursuit of their both defensive and offensive goals were Serbian ethnic groups

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[446] European Council on Foreign Relations, 'Return to instability: How migration and great power politics threaten the Western Balkans', Francisco de Borja Lasheras, with Vessela Tcherneva and Fredrik Wesslau, March 2016, available at: http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/return_to_instability_6045(accessed on: 14 December 2019).

[447] Stavovi građana o spoljnoj politici Srbije', Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku, March 2017, p. 27.

[448] *Ibid*, p. 21.

able first to establish independence from the Ottoman Empire and then build sovereignty including all its prerogatives. Their history under the Ottoman Empire was a constant negotiation with the Ottomans over the level of autonomy, and a struggle to find big powers' support for their endeavours against them. When the autonomy and then the full statehood was won, the great powers' politics remained decisively important for the location of the borders of their state and whether they would be allowed to claim a great power status in regional terms. That was the lesson of the two Balkan Wars, when Serbia's territory was significantly enlarged after its military victories in the field and the great powers' consent on the future borders in the Balkans. Besides being caught in the great power politics, it was also an experience of utility-driven alliance making and remaking, where allies were made and unmade depending on the changing political context and priorities. This was a lesson learned starting from the liberation wars, the Balkans Wars and then the two world wars. In that dynamics, through the historical passage presented, Serbs were not necessarily victims of great power politics but were very often skilled users of great powers' friendship and animosities to their own benefit. The limitations of small state's politics were readily understood and applied while their military and political aspirations were adjusted to the opposition coming from the great powers. At the same time, the necessity of having powerful armed forces in order to reach political agendas and to have a say in power politics at the regional level was embraced together with the establishment of an independent state. The utility of strong and applicable armed forces as a powerful argument in a military and political domain was consequently applied from the liberations wars onwards.

The experience of two world wars was also one of allied military warfare, where Serbia in the First World War, and Yugoslavia in the Second, were not allowed much room to think about their alliance or neutrality preferences and were pushed to join alliances owing to the global and regional power-setting and historical and political links with the alliance members. However, although pushed to alliance-making due to a complex set of contextual factors, Serbs learned to use alliances to the maximum of their possibilities in order to achieve both military and political gains.

The period from the end of the Second World War to 1991 was the longest period of peace. During that time, Yugoslavia, and Serbia within it, found alternative niche politics, i.e. the Non-Aligned Movement, also under the pressure of external circumstances upon which they did not have much impact. Expelled from the Communist camp, they searched for alternative politics and found a perfect vehicle in what some other states were already practising in a setting that was completely different from their own. As already elaborated above the NAM was an ideological and political platform that gave former Yugoslavia much room on the international scene. However, it did not actually prove to be an experience of the military neutrality/non-

alignment. While a prominent member of that movement, Yugoslavia was active in alliance-making and negotiations that brought its security policies in line with NATO member states' policies.

The historical account from the 1990s onward is one of internal turmoil that brought Serbia in conflict with the most powerful alliance of today. The historical trajectory up to that point was one of alliance making and coalition building, in the NAM as well. Alliance making and coalition building was done with careful consideration of what the international setting and decisive actors on the international scene would allow Serbia to do, or what course it would be propelled to pursue owing to the power of external circumstances. What, then, went wrong in 1999? At that point Serbia's leaders miscalculated the tone of the international setting and what the most important actors on the changing international scene would allow it to pursue. They actually applied the reasoning acquired from their historical narrative – applicability of military force in defence of national interests and a calculation of what is and what is not allowed in the international context. That was reasoning learned from a broad historical experience especially utilised during the Balkan Wars and the two world wars. However, this time the setting within which they tried to apply those lessons learned was dramatically changed compared to previous occasions when the same reasoning was well applicable. Thus, their historical experience may have been applicable, but the context was dramatically changed. The new calculation, of what to do in the changed context and after the obvious defeat over Kosovo, propelled Serbia's leaders to make adjustments in their standing. These adjustments will be traced here through what they defined as (new) national interests and what threatened them. That it is why we now turn to the analysis of threat perceptions.

**4.2. THREAT PERCEPTIONS**
Before moving to the analysis of threat perceptions as defined by the two groups of strategic documents introduced in 2009 and 2018, it is desirable to provide a background context within which those documents were adopted as well as that of security sector legacies which Serbian policy-makers have to take into account. As the strategic documents introduced in 2009 were the first of that kind that Serbia adopted as a sovereign state, and the first to be adopted after the wars of the 1990s and the NATO bombing, they had to make a reference to the previous decade's events. They were also expected to refer to the heavy burden of the armed forces' abuse for political gains and their war crime account.

The experiences of conflicts in former Yugoslavia and Slobodan Milosevic's authoritarian rule had profoundly marked the Serbian security sector, imposing difficult and specific reform tasks for statesmen who were willing to embark upon the process of their reform. Serbian armed forces, police and intelligence services are burdened with a history of conflict engagement, political abuse and war crimes charges. The establishment of civilian control over security organisations was one of the urgent assignments for the Serbian democratic government after October 2000. The main rationale behind that task was an urgent need of new political elite to break the strong connections that have been established between the members of the old Milošević political elite and the top echelons of security personnel, and to subordinate security structures to new civilian leaders. Unfortunately, state's new civilian leaders gathered in a broad coalition named Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) which failed to seize the opportunity to implement a thorough and far-reaching reform of the Serbian security sector. Civilian control over armed forces and intelligence in post-Milošević governments was characterised by profound partition of that control and a situation where both politicians and key figures in the security sector sought allies to protect their particular interests, which could have been threatened by any deeper reform attempts.[449] The negotiated nature of exit from the authoritarian Milošević regime, where members of the DOS coalition were pressured into pacts with parts of the security sector, resulted in abolition for some of its elements. This further hindered the reform of the security sector by creating 'reserved domains' as safe heaven areas of immunity where regular political processes did not apply.[450]

Although the general observation is that the new government had succeeded in establishing civilian control over the security sector, which could be viewed as the most successful element of SSR in Serbia after 2000,[451] particular elements of the sector demonstrated firm resistance to any attempts to subordinate it to civilian leaders. This is predominantly true for Serbian civilian and military intelligence agencies. The striking proof of this came to the Serbian public and its political establishment in March 2003, when Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić was shot dead in front of the entrance of the Serbian Government building. Commander, Deputy Commander and several members of the Special Operations Units (JSO), at the time a militarised

[449] Timothy Edmunds, *Security sector reform in transforming societies: Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro,* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007, p. 97.

[450] Filip Ejdus, 'Muddling through a rocky road: security sector reforms in Serbia', Security Sector Reform: Global Case Studies, Róbert Ondrejcsák (ed), Bratislava: Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs, 2016, pp. 42-64, p. 50.

[451] Filip Ejdus, 'Democratic Security Sector Governance in Serbia', Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF), PRIF-Reports No. 94, 2010, p. 3.

formation of the Security Information Agency (BIA), were charged and in May 2007 sentenced to prison for organising and executing the assassination of the Prime Minister. This was not the only case of their involvement in most serious criminal acts.[452] Rade Bulatović, new Director of BIA appointed in 2004,[453] was already arrested during the police operation 'Sabre' which took place after Đinđić's assassination, together with then Chief of Military Intelligence Service Aco Tomić. They were arrested under suspicion that they had been involved in the conspiracy leading to the Prime Minister's assassination. These and other affairs that involved members of the intelligence services raised suspicions about the effective civilian control over them. These agencies were believed to be the main decision makers in the Serbian political life instead of just providers of information to those who were supposed to make those decisions, i.e. the Parliament and the Government.[454]

At the same time, the Parliament's control via its Committee on Defence and Security remained passive and limited to mere acceptance of annual reports provided by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and security agencies. Still, although they seemed to threaten the normalisation and democratisation of political life in Serbia, security actors, and especially intelligence agencies after 2000, remained very attractive to Serbian politicians. The best illustration of the enormous significance Serbian politicians are giving to the control over this sector is the fact that one of the most disputable issues, which threatened to jeopardise the possibility of a compromise during the negotiations on the formation of the previous Serbian Government in 2007, was actually control over the police and the BIA. This also approves the existence of deep partification of that control. The political party that, at the time, had an authority to appoint the director of the service was in fact gaining control over an important state task such as arrest of fugitives charged with war crimes before the ICTY.[455] However, as Timothy Edmunds writes, this inclination of civilian authorities to take control of the intelligence sector is not a one-side intention. As he claims, both civilian actors and parts of the intelligence services seek alliances with each other, as was demonstrated in a case study of intelligence

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[452] They are also held responsible for the other political assassination and attempts of assassination in Serbia, kidnapping and involvement in the war crimes.

[453] He occupied a post of BIA's director during next four years, till July 2008.

[454] There is even assumption that the 2000 political changes in Serbia were negotiated between old security sector actors and the new political elite. Edmunds, *SSR in Transforming Societies*, p. 91.

[455] The proof of the claim that their arrest really depends on the political will of political party having control over service is the fact that previous BIA's Director, Rade Bulatovic, had not arrested Radovan Karadzic, charged with the genocide and war crimes by ICTY in Hague, during whole four years period which he spent serving as service's director. After formation of a new government in July 2008 the BIA's establishment was changed since the other political party gained control of the service. Karadzic was arrested four days after the new director was appointed.

reform in post-Milošević Serbia. Civilians want an exclusive access to intelligence resources, while secret services are propelled to seek civilian protectors in light of organisational reforms and funding cuts that threaten their interests.[456]

The perception of civilian control over the armed forces is now better. Civilian supremacy is successfully personified in a civilian Minister of Defence and the effective subordination of General Staff to the Minister. The Parliament's most powerful mechanism of control over the armed forces is the process of adoption of the military budget and monitoring of its implementation, which has been made relatively transparent. The process of reorganising the armed forces in Serbia can be viewed as the most successful part of the Serbian military reform. As part of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, Serbia had a security sector that operated within a complicated and often imprecise chain of command which had to be subjected to compromises between the political elites of both republics. The Strategy of Defence and the White Book on Defence, which outlined plans for the reorganisation of the armed forces, were adopted in 2004 and 2005 respectively. The Ministry of Defence came up with a clear plan of military reorganisation called Strategic Defence Review. This document, adopted by the MoD in June 2006, offered guidance for the organisational changes and provided a vision of the Serbian armed forces in 2015.

Initial documents for the reform of the Serbian intelligence were introduced in 2002 and were the first legal acts that arranged the functioning of any Serbian intelligence agency since the end of the Second World War.[457] Organisational changes are however far less transparent and comprehensive when it comes to the Serbian intelligence sector. First of all, there is no reliable evidence that any profound attempt to reorganise those services has ever been made. The process of lustration, by which the services' members who could have faced accusations of having abused and violated human rights would be removed from the posts, never actually took place in Serbia. In 2018, only one minor parliamentary party, the Serbian Renewal Movement, publicly appealed for a lustration, but the prospects of it ever happening in Serbia are not looking particularly promising. Although there have been numerous appeals to open the services' secret files kept about Serbian citizens, Serbia still does not have an act that would provide legal grounds for it. At the same time, there are concerns that most of the secret files have been

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[456] Timothy Edmunds, 'Intelligence Agencies and Democratisation: Continuity and Change in Serbia after Milošević', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60 (1), 2008: pp. 25-48.

[457] Bogoljub Milosavljević, 'Reforme obaveštajno-bezbednosnih službi: slučaj Srbije', in Janković, Pavle (ed.) *Prva škola reforme sektora bezbednosti- zbornik predavanja*, Beograd: Centar za proučavanje odbrane i bezbednosti, G17 Institut, 2003, p. 97.

destroyed.[458] The secret services have been successful in rejecting all civil-society's attempts to obtain an insight into how they actually operate, whether or not there have been any significant changes to the structure of their employees, and how many people are still being followed or subjected to electronic surveillance.

The reform of the Serbian armed forces has been under the impact of the Serbia-NATO military cooperation. Before joining the NATO PfP programme in December 2006, the necessity of downsizing and modernising Serbian troops was largely justified by the reasons of interoperability and compatibility with NATO standards, which are highly appreciated and accepted as the best in the world.[459] After joining the PfP, NATO standards, such as state budget percentage devoted to defence matters and the service's professional requirements have become an objective (in Serbia) against which success of the Serbian Armed Forces reform is measured. NATO's leverage over the applicant states is implemented via its Membership Action Plan (MAP) criteria, which serve as guidance for reforms. In Serbia, NATO was particularly prominent in the process of military reform via the Defence Reform Group which, in period 2006-2008, gathered representatives of the Serbian MoD and NATO officials who worked together on a number of issues that were relevant for the military reform.[460]

In spite of this ambivalence in Serbia–NATO relations, Serbia shares with the Alliance a security discourse dominated by the rhetoric of 'inclusion'. Serbia's security policies as articulated by its political and military leaders are in accordance with the NATO discourse. Besides this, Serbian political establishment is not denying either the role of NATO as the main global security actor or supremacy in terms of capacity. The Serbian political establishment has declared NATO military presence in Kosovo in the form of KFOR to be the best guarantee of Kosovo Serbs' protection and safety. Serbia has not yet discussed the possibility of participating in NATO-led peace operations, although the wording of the act that governs the involvement of the Serbian Armed Forces in multinational operations allows it in the case of operations conducted under the UNSC mandate.

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[458] Insajder, 'Rukopisi ne gore' ('Hand-writings do not burn') Available at: https://insajder.net/sr/sajt/rukopisi/ (Accessed on: 25 December 2018).

[459] Chief of General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces, Zdravko Ponoš, interview to 'Blic' daily, 13 February 2008.

[460] Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Defence, http://www.mod.gov.rs/cir/4358/partnerstvo-za-mir-4358 (accessed on: 25 December 2018).

The following chapters will discuss the assessment of Serbia's security sector and national security threats and interests as provided in the key strategic documents. The attention firstly goes to the strategic documents from 2009.


### 4.2.1 Threat Perceptions According to Strategic Documents of 2009

The National Security Strategy (NSS) and the Defence Strategy (DS) from 2009 were the first documents of such kind adopted by Serbia as a sovereign state. The NSS is the umbrella document which is supposed to reveal security concepts that have been adopted by Serbia's decision makers, the values that should be protected, the threats jeopardising those values, and security policies that will be employed to protect the values and fight against threats. Since it is an umbrella document that outlines security policies of the state, it is taken here as the reference point to the officially adopted security concept of the Republic of Serbia.

Much criticism has been addressed to the MoD as the leading actor in the process of their design, on the account of the document's inconsistency, and the fact that it failed to offer a coherent list of security threats and clarify Serbia's future relations with NATO.[461] The NSS recognised a confluence of security threats which, besides direct military aggression or war, stem from the state's weakness and its economic, social and demographic backgrounds. It noted the broadening of the security agenda from dominantly military spheres to non-military areas, such as energy and environmental, societal and human security.[462] Writers of the document also noted, in an optimistic tone, that increasing inter-dependence among states is making traditional military threats less likely.[463] Despite a long list of global security threats, from ethnic and religious wars, terrorism and organised crime to climate change and scarcity of resources, the document in general brings an optimistic tone and faith in international cooperation and growing inter-dependence among states. The Strategy also recognised the inability of any single state to handle the heterogeneous list of security threats on its own, and that a common security approach and cooperation with other security actors on the regional and global level is thus essential.[464] The White Book on Defence, adopted in 2010, confirmed the view that in a multi-polar world states more often tend to replace self-reliance in defence matters with security alignment.[465]

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[461] Report from public discussion on strategic documents: http://www.bezbednost.org/BCSP-News/4451/CCMR-organised-round-table-on-the-draft-of.shtml (Accessed on: 25 December 2018).
[462] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, 2009, p. 4.
[463] Defence Strategy, 2009, p. 4.
[464] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, 2009, pp. 3-5.
[465] Bela knjiga odbrane, 2010, p. 12.

However, both 2009 strategic documents also referred to the tendency of meddling in states' internal affairs through the practice of interventionism and recognition of illegitimate states against the rights of sovereign states.[466] This was an obvious reference to Kosovo secession, which, further on in the document, was stressed as the chief security threat to Serbian national interests.

The tone of the document is less optimistic when it comes to the regional security context, which according to the writers of the Serbian NSS, is burdened by the remains of conflicts past, the unresolved problem of refugees, ethnic and religious extremism and organised crime, as well as a geopolitical factor that makes this region prone to external involvement. The UN was explicitly mentioned as an actor with positive leverage since it provides mandate for multinational civil and military presence in the region.[467] NATO, the EU and the OSCE were recognised as actors with an impact on European security that are currently in the process of adapting to the changing circumstances.[468]

As regards threats to Serbia's national security, the document offers an incoherent list of 22 security challenges, risks and threats. They are listed ranging from armed aggression, which is defined as not very likely, attempts of secession, Kosovo secession, armed rebellion, terrorism, all the way to problems relating to refugees, climate change and spread of diseases. However, based on the amount of space devoted to it and the context of the document, the secession of Kosovo and security threats emerging from the Kosovo province were selected as the threat number one. One year later, the White Book on Defence confirmed this assessment.[469] Of the total of 22 threats, at least half of them emerge from Serbia's internal political, economic and societal conditions (such are corruption and problems connected with economic development), five are purely external (such as the possibility of an armed aggression and intelligence activities of foreign actors) while the rest are of mixed origin, emerging from conjunctures of internal and external factors (organised crime and unresolved border issues among the regional states). The Strategy stressed the necessity of security cooperation since Serbia alone is not able to cope with security threats on a regional and global level such as terrorism, organised crime and human trafficking. The only departure from this broad understanding of security is the listing of 'separatism' threatening to violate state territorial integrity as a primary security threat, while the self-proclaimed Kosovo independence is stipulated as the main factor that could bring

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[466] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, 2009, p. 5. Defence Strategy, p. 4.

[467] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, 2009, p. 7.

[468] Defence Strategy, 2009, p. 5.

[469] Bela knjiga odbrane, 2010, p.12-13.

destabilisation to the region of the Western Balkans. Still, the 'Kosovo factor' failed to bring a state-centric and militaristic approach to the Strategy, which was written with a strong emphasis on security cooperation and contains a broad list of security threats other than separatism.

Key national interests were defined without a strong reference to Serbia contributing to regional and global security. This will be given much more prominent place in the 2018 documents. The 2009 NSS, when compared to the 2018 NSS, was more of an inward looking document, with much emphasis placed on state's internal security and the functioning of its judicial and policing systems.[470] As already stated, the NSS was perceived as an umbrella document which would serve as a reference point for a foreign policy strategy, developmental strategy and other strategies. Therefore, much space was given to areas not directly related to defence and narrow definition of security, such are social, economic and human and minority rights policies.

In general, these documents were introduced in the period when Serbian civilian and military leaders embraced, at least rhetorically, a more cooperative and inclusive stance in security issues. Regional security cooperation was marked as one of the most important elements of the Serbian Government's security policy at the time. Besides participation in multinational operations, this included military cooperation with neighbouring states and defence cooperation as a confidence-building tool, for the sake of reparation of previously shaken relations. The NSS explained that Serbia does not perceive any other state or alliance as an enemy actor, and that it is willing to cooperate with members of the EU and NATO. The EU was assigned a more prominent role with a statement that Serbia would adjust its position to the positions of the EU in the most important issues of regional, European and global security.[471] However, this was a promise that Serbia, as the future demonstrated, did not keep, consequently facing EU criticism for not complying with its foreign policy decisions, especially in relation to Russia. The 2009 document contains only a shy reference to NATO, with regard to Serbia's participation in the PfP programme connected to the efforts invested into regional stability. The document also reminds its readers that all other regional states are already participating in the same programme.[472] The other reference to NATO was made with regard to efforts that Serbia invested in making its defence system inter-operational with the NATO PfP programme.[473] Unlike the documents introduced in 2018, the 2009 strategies does mention the NATO bombing

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[470] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, 2009, pp. 24-25.
[471] *Ibid*, p. 16.
[472] *Ibid*, p. 16.
[473] *Ibid*, p. 23.

campaign, but only as one of the factors present in the complex background of Serbian national security.[474]

It is striking that military neutrality was not even once mentioned in these documents, although they were adopted almost two years since the policy was introduced. It is possible that writers of the 2009 strategic documents intentionally wanted to avoid the issue in case the neutrality policy becomes abandoned in the foreseeable future. This was one of the strongest points of criticism coming from the academia and think-tanks in Serbia.[475] Not only that key strategic documents defining state policies failed to grasp the meaning of military neutrality that was previously ill-defined, they also made no reference to what that policy implies for the state's future security alignment policies. Only one reference was made in this regard, in the statement that Serbia will take into account the changing strategic environment and its own interests and decide about its future security integrations based on them.[476]

Both the 2009 Defence Strategy and the 2010 White Book on Defence found the conceptual basis of defence policy in the concept of total defence. However, neither document went any further than referring to this concept as 'an integral engagement of all defence actors and resources'.[477] On the other hand, both documents went on to stress that this concept does not exclude security cooperation with other states and organisations for the purpose of improving national security.[478] The concept of total defence implies reliance on one's own defence capacities and, of course, does not prevent a state from cooperating with others. But its introduction is confusing in the context of documents that stress inter-dependence in the modern world where no single state could face security threats on its own. Total defence would require a more elaborate list of security threats faced by Serbia and an explanation as to whether the state's defence capacities allow it to face them on its own or in an alliance with other actors.

When it comes to Serbia's contribution to the international peace and security, 2009 documents, compared to the Strategies of 2018, were modest in describing those aspirations. The 2009 Defence Strategy stated in a very restrictive way that Serbia would send its troops to international missions authorised by the UN, according to relevant parliamentary decisions and

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[474] Ibid, p. 8.
[475] Report from public discussion on strategic documents: http://www.bezbednost.org/BCSP-News/4451/CCMR-organised-round-table-on-the-draft-of.shtml (Accessed on: 25 December 2018).
[476] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, 2009, p. 17.
[477] Defence Strategy, 2009, p. 13. Bela knjiga odbrane, 2010, p. 15.
[478] *Ibid.*

assessments of Serbia's national interests. [479] Descriptions of Serbia's participation within European security and defence policies and NATO PfP programme are far more restrictive and limited compared to the formulations from 2018 since Serbia's possible involvement in joint peace missions is mainly defined as contribution to its own security. [480]

One possible explanation for this is that 2009 was still a time of uncertainties for the Serbian state, both regarding the internal processes of security sector reform and foreign strategic orientation. In 2009, Serbia was still strategically adjusting both to the status of independent state, after Montenegro dissolved the federal union in 2006, and to the Kosovo independence from 2008 which was soon recognised by most Western states. Serbian decision-makers found themselves in a situation where for the first time they had to strategically position Serbia as an independent state, but in an extremely unfavourable position and under pressing yet changing circumstances. Military neutrality was obviously not taken seriously at the time and was therefore not included in the documents which, in any case, did not offer any persuasive statements of what the state's future foreign and security policy orientation would be. Their main achievement at the time was that they summarised how official Belgrade perceives the changing security landscape at the global, European and regional level, and provided a list of security threats that jeopardise Serbia's national security. However, that description was vague, while the list of security threats included everything from terrorism and climate change to corruption and spread of diseases. Yet, in the absence of a foreign policy strategy, this was a point of reference for Serbia's viewpoints concerning the most pressing foreign policy and security issues. Very modest approach taken in regards to state's participation in multinational operations and European security policies in general, as well as cooperation with NATO, was also a consequence of Serbia's shaken foreign policy position once most of its foreign policy partners, the majority of EU and NATO members states, recognised the independence of Kosovo. Serbian politicians could not know what the outcome of that process would be and whether they would find themselves under even stronger pressure to reconcile with the Kosovo separation. This uncertain position transformed into a much firmer stance in 2018, when Serbia's decision-makers, belonging to different political groups, obviously found military neutrality to be a safe base that will still offer a lot of manoeuvring space in foreign-policy positioning.

According to the threat assessment alone, as provided in those three documents, it would have made more sense for Serbia to have opted for military alignment. This is because chief security threats such as possibilities of armed aggression or terrorism, apart from the Kosovo

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[479] Defence Strategy, 2009, p. 11.
[480] *Ibid*, p. 12.

issue as the dominant threat, happen to be military threats emerging from external conditions and are caused by other actors: states, alliances or non-state actors. Despite the fact that those who wrote the strategies stated that most threats are of non-military nature and that there is a growing number of threats emerging from political, economic and societal factors, main threats are perceived to come from the traditional arena of military threats caused by enemy actors that have not been named in advance. Furthermore, the tone of the strategy was adjusted to the demands of cooperative security and demonstrated respect for the multinational actors and their role in global security, the UN in the first place, followed by the EU, NATO and OSCE. The same tone, albeit a bit more pessimistic one, prevailed in the analysis of the regional setting, where the tone of cooperation and the role of international actors were also stressed. The only reason why, as the end result, an unspecified and indecisive approach toward security integrations prevailed is the Kosovo issue, and the fact that 'the enemy' side actually consisted of the same actors with whom Serbia, in one scenario, should align – the EU and NATO member states. This was not the first time that concrete security policies were decided in a struggle between two very broad narratives that go far beyond the issues of security cooperation. Those two narratives are centred around basic identity issues in Serbian politics. One of them aspires to belong to a broader Western liberal and democratic community of states and promotes civil-democratic values, while the other revolves around national liberation and the protection of the independent statehood project.[481] Had the promoters of the first narrative won, and those were mainly centre-left and liberal political parties, Serbia would have moved from the discourse of NATO as the enemy side that bombed the country in 1999, and a door would have been opened to steady military cooperation. However, the promoters of the second narrative, belonging to centre-right and right political parties, succeeded in connecting the NATO bombing with the traditional narrative of Serbia – that of a small state fighting for its national project and exposed to the injustice of big powers. When the second narrative won the argument, NATO was marked as traditional enemy and the door to cooperation and potential membership was shut. The following chapter will address if the same or a changed narrative was present in the draft strategic documents prepared in 2018 and sent for the adoption in 2019.

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[481] Zorana Brozović, 'Who are we? Development of the discourse on NATO in Serbian parliaments as a manifestation of a battle between opposing strategic cultures', *Western Balkans Security Observer* 5 (18), 2010: pp. 53-68.

### 4.2.2. Threat Perceptions According to the Draft Strategic Documents of 2018

The assessment of regional and global strategic environment provided in the draft of the National Security Strategy that was made public in 2018 does not differ much from the corresponding part of the 2009 document. It stresses that the state of affairs in regional security has improved significantly in comparison with the period of ex-Yugoslav wars, but that an open conflict remains a possibility due to many problematic issues among the regional states and their own inadequacies. The declaration of Kosovo independence is listed as the main issue, together with open territorial and historical disputes among the regional states. The poor state of regional economies and the involvement of foreign actors were also noted as conflict-driving factors. The states' common ambition of EU membership was seen as a positive factor pushing them toward tighter mutual cooperation. The global context, as in the 2009 document, was pictured as progressively complex, with interconnected processes that made isolation and individual planning of one's security policies obsolete. As for common security threats, the Strategy provided a list of generic threats present in today's global arena, from regional and local conflicts, terrorism, organised crime and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to migrations, climate changes and conflicts over scarce resources. A group of prominent Serbian civil-society organisations and think-tanks gathered at the National Convention for the EU summarised their joint comments on both draft strategies. Besides commenting on generally incoherent and sporadically contradictory strategic documents, drafts of the national security and defence strategy, they have also noted that they failed to mention the most pressing events that have influenced the context of European security: the war in Ukraine and Montenegro's admission to NATO, in the Balkan context.[482]

While cooperative security has been the driving logic behind both Serbia's security policies and the overall global security discourse after the Cold War, authors of this document sporadically use language that belongs to the rather opposite security discourse when referring to 'great powers' working to spread their 'spheres of interest' and the threats emerging from their interference in the internal affairs of other states. However, they stress that it is in Serbia's interest to develop particularly strong relations with the U.S., Russia and China. This is the usual group of 'big powers' to which Serbia's foreign policy documents refer as the most relevant for the region, and for Serbia itself.

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[482] Komentari na nacrte strategija nacionalne bezbednosti i odbrane, Nacionalni konvent o EU, Radna grupa za poglavlja 30 i 31, p. 6, 2. Available at: http://eukonvent.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Komentari-na-nacrte-Strategije-nacionalne-bezbednosti-i-nacioalne-odbrane.pdf (Accessed on: 20 July 2018).

Serbian CSOs and think-tanks also noted that the document failed to bring forward the definition of cooperative security or how Serbia will participate in it, [483] and that it was inconsistent in the sequence of great powers with which Serbia is keen to develop stronger cooperation. [484] Their criticism was also directed at how Serbia's national interests were presented in the document. After the most common and obvious national interests, such as protection of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, comes 'protection of internal stability and security' without any reference to freedom, democracy or human rights. [485] This concern is justified since it comes in light of deteriorating media freedoms and a worsening political climate in the country for which opposition political forces and the majority of civil society organisations blame the governing parties. However, in further elaboration on how to protect national interests, protection of human and minority rights and support for the rule of law and democratic institutions were included in the document. [486] As was the case with the previous document of the same type, civil-society organisations, academia and think-tanks were not invited to participate in the process of its adoption. This was one of the criticisms that came from independent CSOs and think-tanks. [487]

When it comes to concrete security risks and threats that Serbia is allegedly facing, the list is no more coherent and elaborate than it was nine years ago. Various different forms of security threats (17 in total) were listed, ranging from possible armed aggression to demographic difficulties and natural and technological hazards. Intelligence activities of 'foreign actors' that continuously jeopardise the stability of Serbia's domestic institutions were listed, without any further explanation, among the primary threats. However, the secession of Kosovo and Metohija and the ensuing actions of Pristina authorities aimed to gain international recognition and diminish the presence of international forces in the territory of province were once again stressed as a chief security threat to Serbia's national interests. The secession and the current state of security affairs in the province was both explicitly labelled as the chief security threat for Serbia[488] and implicitly referred to as such through the tone of the document and the amount of text devoted to it. Without much elaboration, it has been taken as self-evident that secession, or an attempt of it, presents a situation of deteriorating national security. Furthermore, international recognition of Kosovo was designated to hamper regional security and burden bilateral relations

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[483] *Ibid,* p. 4.

[484] *Ibid*, p. 8.

[485] *Ibid*, p. 10.

[486] National Security Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 18-19.

[487] Komentari na nacrte strategija nacionalne bezbednosti i odbrane, p. 2.

[488] Obralozenje Nacrta strategije nacionalne bezbednosti, 2017, p. 3.

with states that have recognised it. The role of international actors, the UN and NATO, in securing peace and stability in the province had been acknowledged, and Serbia's intention to maintain good cooperation with those institutions was underlined. The documents, however, provided more elaborate explanations of the current state of security affairs in the province. According to the draft of the NSS, the province demonstrates a lack of respect for the rule of law, and the safety of Serbs who are living there is in jeopardy. It is also believed to be a fertile ground for religious extremism, terrorism, organised crime and corruption, human trafficking and illicit trafficking in arms and drugs.[489]

The threat assessment provided in the NSS only partially corresponds to what citizens perceive as major threats to national security. According to the 2017 opinion poll, most Serbian citizens see corruption, criminal activities and bad governance as major internal threats. At the same time, at least half of the representative sample is not convinced that the state is seriously working on resolving corruption and organised crime.[490] When it comes to external threats, the one third of the population sees 'great powers' politics towards Serbia' as the main threat. Terrorism is second on the list, perceived as a threat by only 15% of the respondents, while the majority of them, simultaneously, do not believe that terrorist attacks would occur in Serbia.[491] According to the same research, the majority of Serbian citizens accepts dichotomy of 'friends and enemies' when it comes to regional matters, since more than 60% of them responded to such categorisation of regional states, while 30% of the respondents said that they do not think in terms of those categories. Among those who do think in such terms, 40% found Serbia to be surrounded by more enemies than friends.[492] This type of research shows frameworks within which Serbian authorities are allowed to manoeuvre when proposing solutions to their voters. For example, political rhetoric which points to how Serbia and its citizens are threatened by many enemies and pressured by 'great powers' will resonate well with the public which, according to the research, agrees with that assessment. This is indicates Serbia's political leadership what to say in order to mobilize political support. Only 6% of those voters, according to the research, believe that Serbia's national security can be enhanced by alignment with, or patronage of, big powers.[493]

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[489] National Security Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 9.
[490] 'Stavovi građana o spoljnoj politici Srbije', Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku, pp. 7-11.
[491] *Ibid*, pp. 14-15.
[492] *Ibid*, p. 20.
[493] *Ibid*, p. 12.

The draft of the National Defence Strategy shortened the list of the main security threats to which Serbia is presumably exposed. As defined by this document, the eight primary security threats are: armed aggression (which is deemed unlikely), Kosovo secession, separatist tendencies, armed rebellion, terrorism, ethnic and religious extremism, natural and man-made disasters and cyber threats.[494] What is striking, in the explanation of the sources of these threats and the possibility of their emergence, is that at least three of them (Kosovo secession, armed rebellion, ethnic and religious extremism) are internally located and emerging from Serbia's domestic features, including the main one – Kosovo secession. Only one (armed aggression) is defined as purely externally driven, while the remaining four have mixed origins - they are, or could be, both internal and external.

Military neutrality was included in the document as one of the main principles of national security politics, together with the European foreign-policy orientation.[495] It was been explained as a mechanism for combating the threat of armed aggression[496] and one of three main interests the defence policy should achieve.[497] The policy of military neutrality is explained only as abstention from both membership in military-political alliances and ambition to pursue it in the future.[498] The draft Defence Strategy makes an attempt to link it to Serbia's core values and interests, making it appear less of a random choice than something that grows naturally from what Serbia is and what it otherwise promotes in the long-term perspective.[499] However, neither of the two documents explains what those values that are inherent to Serbia's national interests are, or how military neutrality corresponds to them.

Although not overly elaborate about the value grounds for military neutrality, both documents stress that it does not prevent Serbia's cooperation with military alliances. Therefore, it is linked to Serbia's cooperation with NATO, through the PfP, which is emphasised as a tool aimed to enhance regional, European and global security.[500] Although the draft of the NSS is coherently referring to Serbia's support for the international law and principles of peaceful resolution of conflicts, there is no link between the policy of military neutrality and these broader principles of foreign and security policies. Reading of the document leaves one with the impression that support for the international law is highlighted mainly to underline Serbia's

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[494] National Defence Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 8.
[495] Obrazloženje Nacrta strategije nacionalne bezbednosti, 2017, p. 1.
[496] National Defence Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 8.
[497] *Ibid*, p. 11.
[498] National Security Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 25.
[499] *Ibid*, p. 11.
[500] *Ibid*, p. 25.

argument that Kosovo secession is in contravention of it. That is why the authors of the documents highlight that Serbia would particularly demonstrate support for norms that regulate membership in international organisations.[501] Besides those international norms, the document particularly refers to international regulation of arms control, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, transparency of security policies and non-involvement in internal domains of sovereign states.[502] These norms are closer to what traditional neutrals and the non-aligned had as part of their agenda and advocated in the international arena.

Unlike the rather passive support for the international law, Serbia claims readiness to more actively support international peace and security by participating in civil and military missions under the UN, the EU and the OSCE auspices as an important element of its foreign policy position.[503] In the text of the draft Defence Strategy, contribution to international and regional peace and security is listed as the third out of four top defence priorities. Participation in international peace-keeping is one of the ways for Serbia to contribute to that goal. Although Serbia's legislation does not prohibit sending troops to NATO missions, such an endeavour is expected to raise controversies and cause dissatisfaction among the Serbian population. Contributing to UN and EU operations, on the other hand, is not viewed as controversial possibly also because former Yugoslavia had participated in international peace operations conducted under the UN flag since 1956.[504] The act that governs the engagement of Serbian Armed Forces in multinational operations, unlike the previous one, does not include a restriction that members of the Serbian Armed Forces can be sent to missions only under the UN mandate. In other words, it leaves room for the possibility of engagement within peacekeeping missions under a NATO or EU flag. Therefore, it can be construed as 'flag-waving' and a safe way to reclaim the international position of peace-contributor instead of trouble-maker. The other two ways to demonstrate participation in the international agenda are, according to the same document, involvement in the arms control and anti-proliferation efforts, and assistance and mediation in the peaceful resolution of international conflicts and crises.[505] The above two forms of participation in the international agenda are typical for the position of neutral states. As evident from the historical records of Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium and Finland, they offered their good services and found niche issues to make a mark globally. Those issues have often been disarmament, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

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[501] *Ibid*, p. 24.
[502] *Ibid*, p. 24.
[503] *Ibid*, p. 28.
[504] Bela knjiga odbrane, 2010, p. 141.
[505] National Defence Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 17.

Compared to those of 2009, the 2018 draft documents provide a much more resolute approach to the international security cooperation short of security integration in the form of alignment. This change is evident from the fact that active contribution in bilateral and multilateral forums for the purpose of contributing to international peace and stability was listed as national interest number four, of six, in the draft of the NSS. The same formulation was not used in the 2009 documents, nor was international cooperation explicitly listed as a national interest. The increased importance of international cooperation in 2018 is also evident from the amount of the text devoted to it, and the tone that highlights Serbia's readiness to participate and contribute to common security on the regional, European and global level. The draft of the NSS offered a list of concrete channels through which the above contribution would be provided. The most important are: respect for international legal norms, obviously important to the Serbian side in the dispute over the legality of the Kosovo secession, participation in the work of international organisations, and participation in military and civilian multinational operations.[506]

Contribution to EU and UN missions goes hand-in-hand with Serbia's ambition of joining the EU, which is underlined in the Strategy. Unlike membership in NATO and other military alliances, membership in the EU is defined as Serbia's national interest and 'strategic orientation'.[507] Although some of the criticism coming from independent think-tanks concerning the content of the Strategy says that it is not straightforward enough with the recognition of the fact that EU integrations are contributing to the country's security, the Strategy actually does make a connection between the EU integrations and Serbia's national security interests. It recognises that the integration process and the fulfilment of the EU standards in the negotiation chapters addressing security, justice and rule of law and human rights contribute to the overall national security and defence interests, readying the country for membership. However, the document also brings forth the notion of Serbia's willingness to contribute to the EU's common foreign, security and defence policy and align its own policies with those of the EU.[508] The notion of Serbia's need to align its security and foreign policies with those of the EU is especially relevant having in mind extensive criticism that was recently addressed to Serbia concerning the low percentage of foreign-policy compliance with EU positions. From the EU's perspective, Serbia's refusal to comply with the sanctions it imposed against Russia after the annexation of Crimea and the war in Ukraine is especially troubling. Serbia acknowledged the criticism, but did not necessarily send a strong message that the situation would be significantly modified, especially in relation to Russia. Independent CSOs and think-tanks reminded of the

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[506] *Ibid*, p. 23.
[507] *Ibid*, p. 26.
[508] *Ibid*, p. 27.

explicit criticism that came from the EU, pointing that Serbia should revise its strategic documents in 2018 to bring its strategic orientation in line with the EU security strategy.[509]

One of the forms of participation in the EU security strategy that was stressed in the draft of Serbia's Defence Strategy is participation in the EU concept of battle groups.[510] Serbia joined the Balkans Battlegroup HELBROC, headed by Greece, in 2016 and its contribution is expected to start in 2020.[511] The draft of the Strategy was explicit in defending this position by raising the argument of other militarily neutral states that although not members of either EU or NATO, participate in those groups. Thus, the writers of the document found Serbia's participation in them to be beneficial for its pro-European defence agenda and simultaneously in accordance with the status of a state that is militarily neutral.[512]

Besides NATO and the EU, the document also mentions the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO). As was the case with the NATO reference, the document mentioned Serbia's already established cooperation with this political-military organisation, saying that it was established as a contribution to global stability and security, that it is in line with the policy of military neutrality and that it will be further improved.[513] Apparently, the same weight had been given to Serbia's cooperation with NATO and the CSTO to leave the impression of the country's balanced cooperative approach to different security organisations, without favouring one or the other depending on where their sponsorship comes from. Observers of Eurasian integrations and Serbia's involvement in them think it unlikely that said involvement will be deepened in the near future.[514]

While mostly trying not to compromise Serbia's military neutrality and to bring it into tune with cooperation with military alliances, the Strategy, just like the 2009 document, introduced the concept of total defence which naturally goes together with military neutrality.[515] The total defence concept is not unfamiliar to Serbia, since the former Yugoslavia had been organising its own national defence from the 1960s on in accordance with the general people's

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[509] Komentari na nacrte strategija nacionalne bezbednosti i odbrane, p. 17.

[510] National Defence Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 18.

[511] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Serbia, http://www.mod.gov.rs/eng/11510/doprinos-evrointegracijama-srbije-11510 (accessed: 27 December 2018).

[512] National Defence Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 18.

[513] National Security Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 26.

[514] Mina Zirojević Fatić, Dragan Đukanović, Dejan Gajić, 'Security of Balkans and Serbia in the Context of Eurasian Security Integrations', *The Review of International Affairs*, LXIII, 1446, 2012: pp. 70-83, p. 81.

[515] National Security Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 16.

defence concept. According to it, a decentralised defence planning included military, police and civilian assets. As a result, military training had been included in the educational system, while administration and enterprises also had their own duties related to the preparation for resistance. That way, the concept of a 'nation in arms' encompassed all the spheres of public life.[516]

However, the drafts of Serbian strategic documents did not elaborate how the concept of total defence would be implemented in the case of Serbia. The only other reference in the document referring to total defence is found in the section dedicated to the educational system, which states that Serbia will look for a suitable model of preparing its population for how to act when defending the country and in emergency situations.[517] As discussed above, this is not entirely novel for the Serbian educational system and the educational systems of former Yugoslav republics. Its re-introduction, supposedly within the system of total defence, would however impose much more serious and far-reaching legislative and organisational changes, defining the roles of different actors in defence and emergency situations.

The draft of the Defence Strategy was direct in pointing out that the proclamation of military neutrality preludes reliance on state's own defence assets,[518] which, however, does not exclude security cooperation with military alliances and political organisations with a security component. This, according to the Strategy, is to be done by supporting Serbia's own military industry, the efficiency of its military forces, and an economically sustainable system of defence.[519] Conceptually, this system relies on total defence and it seems to meaningfully fit into the defence planning. The formulation used in the document to explain which concept of defence planning Serbia will use is: 'integral usage of available actors and defence resources'.[520] Although not labelled as such, this concept points to what total defence aims at: the usage of all available societal and state resources in defence. The document recognises that Serbia would have to make legislative and organisational changes if the defence system is to be adapted to the requirements of this model, which is yet to be fully developed.[521] Additional adaptation would require educating the citizens, while autonomous defence would also demand further

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[516] Tomislav Dulić and Roland Kostić, 'Yugoslavs in Arms: Guerrilla Tradition, Total Defence and the Ethnic Security Dilemma', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 62 (7), The Yugoslav Communist Legacy, 2010: pp. 1051-1072, p. 1063.

[517] National Security Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 30.

[518] Obrazlozenje Nacrta Strategije odbrane, 2017, p. 2.

[519] *Ibid*, p. 3.

[520] National Defence Strategy, draft, 2017, p. 20.

[521] *Ibid*, p. 20.

development of the defence industry and economic system into those that will be able to support investments in the defence system and modernisation of the Serbian Armed Forces.[522]

Documents that announced Serbia's security policies in the foreseeable future recognised the complexity of multi-faceted threats coming from diverse state and non-state actors. The impression is that the state, however, is getting ready for conventional armed attacks as the main externally-driven threat, and internal rebellions as threats that are 'domestically grown'. Although the draft NSS points out that those are non-military threats that are prevalent in the context of the 21st century, the total defence concept is suitable for deterring more conventional threats such as armed aggressions which are deemed (against Serbia) not very likely today. Again, a military threat was named as the top security threat, and the implementation of total defence in practice goes hand-in-hand with such a threat. Although military threats imply that a country would seek alignment as appropriate shelter, total defence tells us that the decision makers want the country to rely on its own resources. Total defence is indeed also applicable in confronting threats other than a military-type aggression that would require the engagement of all available societal and state resources. However, when one reads the new strategic documents it is not clear what other threats would require a response in the form of total defence. Since the secession of Kosovo secession was named as the main threat, as was both explicitly written and contextually understood, the impression is that the state is in pursuit of an adequate response to that threat. In that case, Serbia would be facing not only rebellion of the disloyal Albanian minority living in 'its southern province'. It would also be facing the consensual agreement of the majority of international actors, both multilateral and bilateral, who recognised Kosovo's independence and who would not support any actions that Serbia would take to regain its sovereignty over the province. Having found itself in a political blockade, Serbia discovered an exit in proclaiming military neutrality, since joining any existing military alliance would not solve this pressing issue. Furthermore, Serbia's main enemies, i.e. the real or perceived "sponsors" of Kosovo's independence, are the cornerstones of one military alliance – members of NATO, while joining a Russia-sponsored alliance would inevitably lead to strained relations both in the regional setting and globally. Serbia is obviously not ready to go this far and is rather opting to keep a low-profile in what is for the time being a frozen conflict. Being neutral in global terms looks like the easiest way out of this situation, while in defence terms the state is ready to build its capacities knowing that this issue will inevitably appear on the agenda in the future. At the same time, insisting on total defence and building its own defence capacities could

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[522] *Ibid*, p. 20.

be a strong signal to any possible further secessionist movements, which have been recognised as a potential threat in the foreseeable future.

Serbian decision makers made some changes in the 2018 documents, as compared to those from 2009. They did it not only by making a reference to military neutrality and giving much more space to the international cooperation, but rather through a more decisive tone and higher self-confidence in the Serbian position. New strategic documents show adjustment to the position of military neutrality, at least at the rhetorical level and for the purpose of communicating Serbia's kind-of-specific position in the international arena. Since one of primary purposes of strategic documents is to communicate state's official viewpoints on the most pressing and relevant developments in the outside world, writers of the Serbian documents used the opportunity to demonstrate at least superficial adjustment to the position of neutrality and to embrace a wider agenda that traditionally belonged to neutral states. That is why more references were made to the control of arms trade, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, transparency of security policies and respect for the international law. Those are the issues that were strongly advocated by traditional neutrals, which Serbia thought would easy to accommodate with its version of military neutrality.

In parallel with this, the much stronger commitment to participation in the maintenance of regional and global security is supposed to send a message that this military neutrality will not be an isolationist policy with no attachments to what is going on in the outside word. Isolationist policy would not be possible also due to Serbia's ambition to join the EU, which had been proclaimed as one of its top national interests. The 2018 strategies do not neglect the fact that EU integration also includes a security dimension. Neither do those from 2009. While claiming Serbia's high level of readiness to participate in the EU's security and defence agenda, the Government of Serbia, however, subtly avoided mentioning military alignment. This is somehow close to the arguments that were used in the Swedish debate prior to the topic of the referendum on EU accession and how the decision would impact Swedish neutrality, although a similar debate has never been opened in Serbia. What explains the above, much more resolute stance of 2018, is that Serbian policy makers, of different political options, became accustomed to the position of military neutrality and now know how to use it in the dynamic regional and international setting. In parallel with that, they are using all available conceptual and policy opportunities to avoid dealing with tough issues like the Russian annexation of Crimea, for example. The time-span of nine years provided enough evidence that this was a viable foreign policy option – rather than a security policy – which leaves room for security cooperation with different sides of the global political spectrum: the EU, NATO, Russia and other bilateral partners including the United States.

The tone of Belgrade's presentation on key matters in the regional and global setting changed, but the threat assessment provided in 2018 did not, certainly not significantly, compared to the assessment of 2009. The formulations about an inter-connected world and the inseparability of national security policies were kept, and the list of security threats contained in the 2018 documents is almost identical to that from 2009, albeit a bit shorter. The list of key foreign policy actors, the EU, NATO, the US, Russia and China also stayed the same. The independence of Kosovo remained the most pressing issue for Serbia's national security. That problem is elaborated in phrases that are almost identical: it represents a grave violation of Serbia's territorial integrity and sovereignty and a breach of international legal norms. The security situation in the province is described as threatening, mostly to Serbs who live there but also to the stability of the Preševo valley in southern Serbia, which borders Kosovo and is inhabited mostly by Albanians. Some new developments regarding this issue, such as the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina were mentioned, but the core problem remained the same, as well as the fact that most regional states, except Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the most relevant international actors have recognised Kosovo's proclaimed independence. The tone is somehow in contradiction to Serbia's obviously compromising approach to the Kosovo issue which has been applied since 2011, when the process of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina started under the EU auspices.[523]

This cemented the threat assessment provided back in 2009 even further. It happened notwithstanding some significant shifts that took place on the international scene such as was war in Ukraine and further worsening of EU-Russia and US-Russia relations. There have been also some relatively significant developments at the regional level – Croatia became an EU member state in 2013 and Montenegro joined NATO in 2017 – but they were not acknowledged

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[523] Spyros Economides and James Ker-Lindsay, 'Pre-Accession Europeanization': The Case of Serbia and Kosovo*', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 53 (5), 2015: pp. 1027–1044, p. 1027. The note on the compromising approach remains in spite of the two authors' conclusion that Belgrade adopted that approach based on a materialistic self-interest, hoping for faster EU accession process that would result in economic benefits, rather than a result of EU-driven normative change in the Serbian leadership. Economides and Ker-Lindsay, pp.1038-1039. The alternative account of why Serbia agreed to the policy change towards Kosovo issue by signing an agreement in April 2013 is provided by Jelena Subotić. Her explanation of Serbian policy change refers to the need to preserve some of the basic tropes of Serbian statehood narrative, such are sacrifice and great powers' injustice, which were protected for the sake of ontological security and identity threads in Serbian politics. She claims that the involvement in dialogue with Kosovo challenged only some elements of the basic Serbian narrative while it allowed its overall endurance and further function in the Serbian policy-making. Jelena Subotić, 'Narrative, Ontological Security, and Foreign Policy Change', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 12, 2016: pp. 610–627.

at all, and they did not affect the threat assessment. Of course, the worsening of the relations of Western Europe and the U.S. with Russia only underlined the significance of Serbia's alignment choice. The admittance of Montenegro into the NATO alliance was a signal that Serbia might be under even greater pressure to make decisions concerning its future security policies as it would find itself in a different security environment. However, none of this had any effect on what official Belgrade perceives as the major issue for Serbia's national security, and that is Kosovo and the fact that its independence is backed by Western Europe and the US.

### 4.2.3. Do threat assessments correspond to the theoretical argument?
Threat assessment provided in the Serbian documents only partially proved the theoretical arguments presented by the neorealists whose contribution to the alignment theories I discussed in the conceptual chapter of this dissertation.

According to the neorealist account of how states decide whether to pursue military alignment or stay neutral, Serbia should have looked first for threats coming from its immediate neighbourhood, and only then assessed the structure of the international system and its own position in relation to great powers that determine the tone and nature of the global setting. This logic was indeed acknowledged in its strategic documents, which referred to 'great powers' and their 'spheres of influence', and, although not explicitly stated, the notion of structural reasons that determine national security policies is present in the documents. Neo-realists, who demonstrated a high level of interest in the research of military alignment, also claimed that states tend to look at the factor of proximity of threatening powers. Threatening behaviour gains in intensity with the shrinking of distance between state A and threatening power B, and that is why geography matters when states decide whether they need to enter military alliances or can cope with threatening powers, if any, on their own. Consequently, regional setting has greater impact on states' threat assessment that distant great-power politics at the global level. This assumption was applied to the model of military non-alignment developed in this dissertation. Accordingly, when assessing the origin of possible threats, Serbia should not have looked at the global setting and what threatens international security and should have considered its immediate regional setting instead.

As a result of a threat assessment exercise, Serbian decision-makers found that the main threat, i.e. issues around the Kosovo secession, came from the inside, as Kosovo is treated as part of Serbian territory, but that it also included a strong regional component since the majority of the neighbouring states had recognised, which was taken as a factor that could worsen regional

relations.[524] The problem also has a broader European and global aspect, because of the number of other states that had recognised Kosovo's independence. At the global level, there are a number of other implications of the secession of Kosovo that trigger Serbia's attempts to prevent further derogation of its remaining authorities in the province. Serbia does this by attempting to prevent Kosovo's membership in international organisations, primarily in the UN, in spite of the signed Brussels agreement which stipulates that Kosovo would apply for the EU membership; by trying to protect Serbia's economic interests in the province and keep leverage on political representation of the Serbian minority living there. The threatening actors here are the Kosovo Albanian political elite and potentially all the members of the Albanian minority living there and are claiming their right to self-determination. The neo-realist analysis would equal Serbia's opportunities in this situation to its military strength compared to the other actors involved, that is, the Kosovo Albanians. But it would also point to the allies of the involved actors. Serbia is obviously superior in the military sense, which it proved when it used its military and police forces to suppress Albanian rebellions in the 1980s and 1990s. Serbia has Russia as its ally, albeit at the political and economic level, and Russia is ready to back the Serbian position in the UN Security Council, thus preventing the admittance of Kosovo into the club of sovereign states. No military support had been asked for, and had never been given, nor are there any political signals that Russia would be willing to support Serbia militarily in any potential new war over Kosovo. The Albanian side is politically supported by the US and the majority of NATO and EU member states which recognised Kosovo's independence and established formal diplomatic relations with Pristina. The Albanian minority was supported militarily by NATO, which launched the military campaign of 1999 to stop Serbia's military intervention and which keeps its KFOR mission there to maintain the stability of still fragile peace and security. In this situation, Serbia finds itself confronted by much superior military and political forces. It is not only the power of NATO's aircraft that had defeated Serbs in 1999 and forced them to withdraw from the province; it was also the political, if not legal, legitimacy the intervention obtained under the logic of humanitarian interventionism and human rights protection.

Paradoxically, one of the two possible alignments that were available to Serbia in 2009 and 2018 was the NATO alliance – the same alliance that 20 years ago was Serbia's enemy and is currently safeguarding Kosovo's independence and protecting Kosovo Serbs. The only other alternative available to Serbia is Russia's military sponsorship in the form of CSTO. Russia has so far offered no guarantees of direct military support, except in the form of economic cooperation and trade in specialized aircraft required by Serbia. So far there have been no signals

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[524] National Security Strategy, draft, 2017, p.7.

that Belgrade aspires to seek any form of deeper military cooperation with Russia, other than occasional military exercises and trade, while cooperation with NATO is at a high level short of aspiration of membership.

The neo-realist account of threat assessment is helpful here only because it provides the background picture of structural factors at the regional level and can help map available alignment alternatives. But it falls short of explaining why in a situation of a geographically close threatening power, weak in relative terms but supported by a strong alliance, Serbia is failing to pursue alternative military alignments and is instead opting to remain outside of the alliances with an apparent ambition to hold on to that decision. This is also puzzling having in mind that Serbia's strategic documents mention the notion of inter-connected security policies and promote its strong ambition to contribute to the global and regional agenda. Apart from the Kosovo issue, the remaining threats are located both internally such as further secessionist attempts, corruption, economic underdevelopment, and externally such as the possibility of an armed aggression, terrorism, organised crime and similar threats, with no identification of any enemy state or organisation. The logic of an interconnected world and mutually reinforcing security policies would lead a state closer to the alignment, at least for the sake of combating the second group of perceived threats. The fact that Serbia opted for non-alignment does not suggest that the neo-realist account of threat assessment is completely obsolete in this analysis. It does not mean that a state has not conducted an analysis alongside its premises, but rather that there are some other factors involved that have pushed it toward non-alignment as a safer option. The account of Serbia's internal political dynamics might offer additional information on how the decision was made and why it was sustained over a prolonged period of time.


## 4.3. INTERNAL POLITICAL DYNAMICS

In the following chapter I will firstly present the main political actors on the Serbian political scene, before proceeding to discuss internal political dynamics in 2007, when the parliamentary declaration which introduced military neutrality for the first time was adopted, and the same dynamics in 2016 when the last parliamentary elections were held.

Internal political dynamics hold a strong explanatory potential in the Serbian case study of military neutrality/non-alignment. As already elaborated above, Serbia introduced this policy in December 2007, by way of a parliamentary resolution. The timing corresponded with the expectation of the official proclamation of Kosovo independence, which was issued in February 2008. The resolution's statement on military neutrality seemed to have come unexpectedly and

without solid explanatory grounds. Since Serbian decision makers from 2007 onward did not make any attempts to define its precise meaning, causes and implications, it allows them to use its vague and imprecise meaning for the purpose of manoeuvring in security related decision making. By avoiding clearer statements on the meaning of neutrality and the future security policies, Serbian ruling political parties create space for the manipulation of their constituents who are almost equally pro-Russian and pro-Western. The link between the interests of domestic political elites and the policy of neutrality points to the domestic political scene as the area in which one should look for explanations as to why Serbia suddenly proclaimed itself as militarily neutral back in 2007, and why it continues to hold on to that decision. Before we move to the analysis of internal political dynamics between the year 2007, when military neutrality was introduced for the first time, and the year 2018, when it was confirmed by the new strategic documents, a background analysis on the origins and ideological roots of the main political parties in Serbia is in order.

Serbian political scene is dominated by centrist parties, with right-centrist and left-centrist affiliation. Translated to the Serbian political scene, the left-right division does not resonate strongly with the voters' socio-economic preferences and rather has a cultural meaning.[525] Therefore, the words 'right-wing' and 'left-wing' in the description of the parties' affiliation have distorted the meaning in the Serbian political vocabulary. They are not associated with political parties' standpoints with regard to economic policies, where left-wing would advocate state's protectionism and stronger market regulation while right-wing would promote a liberal economic platform and associated market freedoms. In the case of Serbian political scene, these terms are used to annotate parties' ideological grounds in terms of their stands regarding core issues that have separated the Serbian political body for decades, that is, nationalism *vs.* a more Europeanised/globalised perspective. Under the Milošević rule, the left-right division absorbed the pro-authoritarian *vs.* opposition division, while since the year 2000 that division has been centred around the voters' attitudes toward both the Communist rule and the Milošević regime and their satisfaction with democratic processes after 2000.[526] Consequently, in Serbian political discourse the term 'right-wing' marks political groups with a profound nationalistic agenda and conservative approach to human rights issues, irrespective of their economic agenda which could be either liberal or leftist. An example of this is the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS),

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[525] Bojan Todosijević, 'Left-Right Ideology: Its Meaning and Effects on Party Preferences in Serbia', *Социолошки преглед*, L (2), 2016: pp. 161–178, pp. 172-173.
[526] Willy Jou, 'Political cleavages in Serbia: changes and continuities in structuring left–right orientations', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies,* 10 (2), 2010: pp. 187–206, p. 201.

which dominated the Serbian political scene in the 1990s.[527] The term 'leftist' marks those political groups that have a liberal perspective towards human rights and political and economic integrations, and which are ideologically grounded in the sense of cosmopolitanism and Serbia's political, ideological and cultural belonging to Europe, in the political sense. This agenda could be coupled with diverse economic agendas, either conservative or liberal. The example of a leftist centre party is the Democratic Party (DS) which dominated the Serbian political scene in the period 2000-2012. The most enduring and power-winning parties in Serbia are centrist and catch-all political groups that managed to capture the broadest spectrum of Serbia's voting body. Among them was the SPS, then the DS, while nowadays it is the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS).

The main actors in Serbian political life emerged with the first multi-party elections in the 1980s. The SPS was founded in 1990, and Milošević was elected its president from the onset. It inherited its Communist background from the Serbian Communist Party. Examples of Communist successor parties could be found in most Central and East European states during their transition periods. Nowadays, it is portrayed as a modern leftist party that advocates market economy in parallel with social justice and protection of workers' rights.[528] Having been in power throughout the 1990s, its track-record is inextricably linked with the hard-line nationalistic position, wars in former Yugoslavia and Serbia's involvement in them, international isolation and political and economic sanctions that the country (Serbia and Montenegro at the time) was exposed to as a result. Despite its devastating impact on the country's international profile in the 1990s, the SPS managed to restore its political potential and today it is the second strongest party in the country and the smaller partner within the government coalitions after 2000 (except in the period between 2001 and 2004). Although it has Serbia's membership in the EU on its party agenda, the SPS and its present leader Ivica Dačić are believed by many domestic and international observers to be proponents of Russian influence in Serbia's domestic and foreign policies and closer ties with its Slavic 'big brother'.[529] These closer ties come in different form, from reliance on Russia's support in the UN Security Council regarding the Kosovo issue, to massive economic concessions granted to Russian state-sponsored firms. Under the SPS Minister Petar Škundrić and with obvious support from the party, in December 2008 Serbia sold 51% of the its oil and gas company to Russian state-controlled Gazprom Neft. The deal was

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[527] It is, despite its conservative and nationalistic vocabulary, still persistently associated with the left-wing political core. Todosijević, 'Left-Right Ideology: Its Meaning and Effects on Party Preferences in Serbia', p. 174.

[528] SPS web platform, available at: http://www.sps.org.rs/istorija/ (Accessed on: 20 June 2018).

[529] Radio Slobodna Evropa, *'Da li je Dačić najveći jastreb srpske politike?',* 11. September 2016. Available at: https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/ivica-dacic-retorika-/27980104.html (Accessed on: 16 august 2019).

controversial,[530] and as a result of it, Serbia handed over its self-reliance in the energy sector to a Russian company.[531] Although the connection was never confirmed publicly, the timing of the gas deal corresponded with the Russia's backing of Serbian position concerning the Kosovo issue in the UNSC. That fuelled a suspicion of a political trade-off that Serbia was allegedly pressured to make to ensure Russia's continued support in the political matter that, to Serbia, was of the highest national interest.

As regards security integrations, the SPS remains attached to the policy of military non-alignment and is explicitly against any possibility of Serbia making a move to join NATO. For example, during the last parliamentary electoral campaign in 2016, most of the references made by the SPS members in regards to NATO concerned the bombing of 1999 since the election campaign corresponded with the 17th anniversary of the bombing campaign.[532] They were most explicit in the condemnation of NATO intervention, which seemed to come quite naturally for a party that was in charge of state's internal and external policies in the 1990s. From the positions of party leader and Minister of Foreign affairs, Ivica Dačić did not shy away from articulating his party's position in favour of the policy of military neutrality and against potential NATO membership, simultaneously claiming that Serbia was willing to continue its cooperation with the Alliance.[533] However, whenever confronted with requests for a more elaborated account of Serbia's future security policies, Dačić tends to seek shelter in references to the NATO 1999 campaign and its consequences, without providing any alternative suggestions in regards to Serbia's security interests.[534]

The Democratic Party (DS) has a long history dating back to 1919. It was an influential actor in the period between two World Wars, participating in governments and then moving to the opposition. They withdrew from the party scene during the Second World War and German occupation, participating in the work of the Government in exile. Its members also participated in the work of Intermediary Government up to the 1945 elections, which they boycotted on the account of Communist propaganda and irregularities.[535] Its work was formally re-established in

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[530] Jelena Subotić, 'Europe is a State of Mind: Identity and Europeanization in the Balkans', *International Studies Quarterly*, 55, 2011: pp. 309–330, p. 322.

[531] This, however, was not a sole responsibility of the SPS and could not be done without consensus between the DS and the SPS that at the time formed the Government. Boris Tadić, from the DS, was a president when the agreements with Russia were signed.

[532] Žarko Obradović, NATO bombing anniversary, Central news 2, RTS, 24 March 2016.

[533] Ivica Dačić, appeareance at News, TV B92, 1 April 2016.

[534] *Ibid.*

[535] On the party history: DS web platform http://www.ds.org.rs/o-stranci (accessed on 22 June 2018).

1989 when a group of intellectuals gathered around the idea of its political revival. During the 1990s, the DS was profiled as an opposition group advocating for peaceful solutions to the conflicts of former Yugoslavia and internal democratisation of the country. Its members stood in opposition to the Milošević regime, which lacked any international credibility but held strong in the internal political struggle. The DS soon established itself as the cornerstone of the joint opposition forces, which gained their first victory against the regime by winning the local elections in major Serbian cities in 1996. In 1997, due to the dissolution of the opposition bloc, the Democratic Party boycotted parliamentary elections and became a political force outside of the Parliament. The opposition parties gathered again in 1999, on the eve of the upcoming presidential elections of September 2000, which finally led to radical changes on the Serbian political scene. Milošević lost the elections but refused to step down. Massive popular demonstrations followed, leading to the revolution of 5 October 2000 when Milošević was overthrown.

The year 2000 marked a watershed in Serbian politics: the Milošević regime was forced to step aside and the country returned to major international organisations, finding its way out of the isolation and international sanctions to which it was exposed during the 1990s. One of the first tasks on the agenda of new political leaders was re-introduction of the new state, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to international organisations, the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, and the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations. Post-2000 political elites seemed to wholeheartedly embrace the agenda of EU integration because the process corresponded with their value-oriented agenda of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.[536] Among many others, one of the urgent tasks was the reform of the armed forces, police and the intelligence services. In the period 2001-2004 and 2008-2012, the Democratic Party remained the cornerstone of each Government that was formed, thus decisively shaping Serbia's foreign and internal policies, with the exception of 2004-2007 period. Politically, during that time it survived major challenges such as the arrest and extradition of former President Milošević to The Hague Tribunal in June 2001, disintegration of the state union with Montenegro in June 2006, and Kosovo's declaration independence in February 2008. However, the major event that marked the heritage of this party and defined the political future of Serbia was the assassination of the DS's

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[536] Denisa Kostovicova, 'Post-socialist identity, territoriality and European integration: Serbia's return to Europe after Milošević', *GeoJournal,* 61**,** 2004: pp. 23–30, p. 24. Kostovicova further argues that the EU integrations in post-Milošević Serbia served as a remedy for its unsolved territory and disputed sovereignty, mainly in Kosovo, resulting in Serbia's politics still being deeply territorial in modern rather than in post-modern terms. Kostovicova, p. 26, 28.

leader and Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić in March 2003. The assassination, perpetrated by the members of special police forces, indicated strong links between organised crime and state's legitimate armed forces. It also demonstrated the true strength of opposition to any major attempts to change Serbia's foreign policy course and internal political dynamics. Until this day, Đinđić has been remembered both in Serbia and the West as a dynamic and progressive leader who attempted to consolidate and modernise state internal affairs and speed up rapprochement between Serbia and the West.

The DS shaped Serbia's politics until the year 2012, when they lost parliamentary and presidential elections to the newly-born Serbian Progressive Party. At the time of writing of this thesis (March 2019), this once dominant political force is a minor actor in a fragmented opposition, heavily marginalised in terms of voters' support and the number of seats in the Parliament. Their reputation and legacy of this, once leading, political actor was transferred to minor opposition groups or coalitions of opposition groups (such as the Alliance for Serbia) that attempt to present themselves as the centre of oppositional gathering against the current regime. The DS's political and media space remains severely limited. Their representatives are not proponents of any provocative or alternative stands in the domain of foreign policy. The party that bears the strongest trademark of the EU integration agenda is not outspoken when it comes to Serbia's relations with NATO or any other security integration processes. This was quite clear in the parliamentary elections of 2016. It was obvious that political parties tended to avoid making explicit statements in favour or against politics of military neutrality, more intensive cooperation with NATO and possible membership in that military-political alliance. This was true for both the DS and the group of parties that emerged from it, such as the coalition formed around the Social-Democratic Party led by Boris Tadić, former President of DS and Serbia. The coalition also included the Liberal-Democratic Party led by Čedomir Jovanović, which also originally emerged from the Democratic Party and which was expected to speak in favour of cooperation with NATO with more courage. The farthest they went in this sense was to say that the issue of NATO membership happened to be an artificial issue created by far-right parties, and that they were in favour of a public discussion on the topic of potential NATO membership.[537] At the same tone, military neutrality was almost not referred to at all. Rare reference was made by Tadić himself. He said that he favoured the 'Austrian type of neutrality', or active neutrality, without further elaborating what it implied.[538]

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[537] Žarko Korać, public discussion in Niš, RTS, Central news, 23 March 2016; Čedomir Jovanović, TV show Upitnik, RTS, 22 March 2016.
[538] Boris Tadić, TV show 'Oko', Radio-Television Serbia, 4 April 2016.

Undoubtedly, the most dominant political force in Serbia today is the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS). It was established in 2008 by prominent members of the Serbian Radical Party (SRS). The SRS is known for its racist and warmongering track-record, best represented by its leader Vojislav Šešelj who was found guilty of war crimes before the ICTY. After 2000, the SRS remained on nationalistic positions and was strongly opposed to the EU conditionality politics and cooperation with the ICTY.[539] Although they had emerged as the strongest party after the 2000 elections, they were unable to form the government and have thus remained in opposition. They remained marginalised because of their chauvinistic nationalism, but they enjoyed the steady support of a core group of far-right, conservative and nationalistic voters. As a result of that support they managed to win the majority of seats in the parliamentary elections in 2003 and 2007, but were unable to form a Government in either of those years because of their very low coalition potential. After the schism in 2008, they were never again in a position to claim any significant voters' support or place in Government.

SNS that emerged from SRS managed, at least on the surface, to overcome the former party's rigid anti-Europeanism and nationalism and embrace more popular and demand-driven pro-EU politics. This clearly helped them expand beyond their core voters' support and form a party that would be a catch-all political force with a very loose identity base. They formed the Government in 2012 and achieved a landslide victory in parliamentary (2014 and 2016) and presidential elections (2012 and 2017). By positioning themselves as a pro-EU political force, yet having an aura of nationalism and vigorous protection of Serbian national interests, they indeed managed to gain the support of vast groups of voters from very different and mutually excluding backgrounds: from pro-Russian, 'patriotic' and conservative voters to citizens who are liberal-oriented and pro-EU. Because of the support it receives from such a diverse body, SNS has to be careful with regard to their foreign policy moves so as to avoid alienating any major group of voters. Its pro-EU agenda is accepted as a logical and undisputed continuation of the DS-led foreign policy course; however, SNS cannot risk alienating any of their supporters by suddenly choosing Serbia's integration in NATO. By tilting its foreign policy course more directly in accordance with Russia's pressure, they would not only alienate some of their supporters but, more importantly, lose all credibility in the eyes of the EU and Western counterparts, where the regime finds its international legitimacy and financial support. Therefore, the act of balancing in the foreign policy arena is accompanied by delicate balancing between diverse groups that constitute their internal support base. Even before gaining a seat in the Government, SNS declared itself to be in favour of military neutrality, as the best option for

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[539] Aleksandra Dragojlov, *Serbian Compliance Patterns towards EU Integration under the Progressive Party: An Exercise in Statecraft*, Doctoral Thesis, Cardiff University, 2018, p. 9.

Serbia in its current security environment. However, it has opted for military neutrality that includes strong national military forces, based on both a professional army and 'intensive military training of the rest of society' which would thus be able to deter any possible attack.[540] The ruling party's balancing between foreign and domestic-policy on this matter is not the only example of the multi-level game in which it engaged in order to gain and remain in power. The strategy of SNS that stemmed from the extreme-right positions of the former Radical Party and then moved toward the EU accession agenda can be explained by pragmatic nationalism, where EU integration was viewed only as a rational mechanism for the achievement of long-standing national goals.[541] Applied to the Kosovo issue, the strategy allowed Progressives to do the bare minimum to satisfy EU criteria and at the same time convince the domestic audience that the regime was successful in defending the national interests in maintaining sovereignty over Kosovo.[542]

Military neutrality and capacities of the Serbian armed forces to deter and respond to any possible attack were also the topic for of centre-right and right political forces in the 2016 election campaign. The right-wing camp and far-right political groups that operate on the Serbian political scene are composed of mainly marginalised and weak political forces: the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), the Serbian Movement 'Dveri', and the SRS. All three are represented in the Parliament. During the 2016 election campaign, all three extensively used the issue of EU and NATO integration as a dividing line between them, representing patriotic forces, and the opposing political groups striving to lead Serbia into the 'EU-NATO-US camp'.[543] These three groups intentionally simplified the EU and NATO accessions, reducing them to the level of US-sponsored initiatives under strong American hegemony.[544] By doing so, they played the card of steady anti-Americanism that appealed to the most conservative Serbian voters. The DSS and Movement Dveri, who ran a joint pre-election campaign in 2016, are both explicitly against both the EU and NATO membership.[545]

Parties' statements concerning the security arrangement Serbia ought to pursue depend on their ideological and political preferences. According to Bojan Todosijević, political cleavages in Serbia are defined around perspectives of nation-building *via* economic

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[540] White Book, the Serbian Progressive Party's programe, pp. 40-41, available at: https://www.sns.org.rs/sites/default/files/bela-knjiga.pdf (Accessed on: 26 June 2018).

[541] Dragojlov, *Serbian Compliance Patterns towards EU Integration under the Progressive Party*, p. 13.

[542] *Ibid,* p. 165.

[543] The Democratic Party of Serbia, public rally, TV Happy, 16 April 2016.

[544] The Democratic Party of Serbia, public rally, TV Happy, 15 April 2016.

[545] The DSS-Dveri public rally, Radio-Television Vojvodina, central news 1, 1 April 2016.

redistribution and nationalism.[546] The main ideological cleavages, alienation–egalitarianism and pro-Communist nationalism, demonstrated persistence throughout the 1990s and 2000s; according to his results, they are weakly correlated with socio-economic variables and positively correlated with party preferences.[547] Leftist parties with stronger pro-Western and pro-liberal preferences advocate Serbia's alignment with the EU, which does not necessarily imply alignment with NATO. Out of 32 political parties with seats in the Serbian Parliament in 2018, only two – the LDP and the Serbian Renewal Movement – openly advocate Serbia's alignment with NATO. The Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO) comes from the right side of the political spectrum. Albeit the party is marginal on the Serbian political scene, its leader, who cherishes *Chetnicks*' Second World War legacies, openly advocates the necessity of Serbia joining NATO. By doing so, the argument goes, Serbia would be given security guarantees and, even more importantly, it would receive confirmation of its pro-European ideological background.[548] Since the above party represents a rather marginal political force that joined the SNS-led pre-election coalition, it is assumed that they do not have much to lose in terms of electoral support and that they can therefore speak openly about NATO membership or cooperation with the Alliance.

Reluctance of the Serbian political parties to state their viewpoints with regard to cooperation with NATO comes in a package with their unwillingness to discuss Serbia's future security policies. They have all demonstrated a lack of vision of what policies Serbia should pursue and who its natural allies are. Until the end of the 2016 election campaign, they remained mute on all the issues that had to do with the state's security policies, alliance politics and military neutrality, and on most of the issues related to the security sector governance.

### 4.3.1. Internal Political Dynamics in 2007

As already discussed, in the case of Serbia military neutrality was proclaimed in the form of a parliamentary resolution in December 2007. The document was not presented as a new security strategy. The resolution entitled 'Parliamentary Resolution on the Protection of Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity and Constitutional Order of the Republic of Serbia' stated the following: "The national Parliament proclaims military neutrality of the Republic of Serbia in relation to the existing military alliances until a possible referendum where the final decision

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[546] Bojan Todosijević, 'The Structure of Political Attitudes in Hungary and Serbia', *East European Politics and Societies,* 22 (4), 2008: pp. 879-900, p. 894.
[547] *Ibid*, p. 895.
[548] Serbian Renewal Movement, Srbija i NATO. Available at:
https://www.spo.rs/doc/sabor2016/sabor2016_srbija_i_nato.pdf (Accessed on: 4 January 2019).

would be made in this regard."[549] The adoption of the Resolution was not followed by the elaboration of what the decision implies for the Serbian Armed Forces in terms of their readiness, capacities and equipment. Two strategic documents adopted in 2009 did not recognise neutrality as one of the basic principles of the Serbian security policy. The vagueness of the document left the policy of neutrality open for interpretations. In return, it proved suitable to accommodate different and apparently mutually inconsistent policies such as those of simultaneous military cooperation with NATO and Russia.

The internal political context within which the declaration was adopted was set by the results of January 2007 parliamentary elections. The top three competitors were: the SRS, which won the majority of the total number of parliamentary seats – 81, the DS, which won 64, and the DSS in coalition with one smaller party, which won 47 seats. Other significant actors were G17+[550] with 19 mandates, SPS with 16, and LDP with 15. The Government that was formed in May that year had Koštunica from DSS as Prime Minister. This was a continuation of cohabitation in the Serbian political scene, where the Government was led by Prime Minister from DSS while President was from DS. President Tadić won his first five-year office by beating SRS candidate Nikolić in the presidential elections in June 2004. The pretext for strained relations between DS and DSS, which dominated Serbian politics, was set up much earlier, back in 2000. Ever since then, the two political forces clashed over crucial issues in Serbian politics: speed of transition to a fully democratic society and security sector reform; extradition of Serbian political, military and police figures wanted by the ICTY, and balance between faster EU integrations and the preservation of Kosovo within the Serbian borders. The demand for compromise between these two ideologically different parties, one backed by a rather conservative and nationalistic body of voters and the other attracting those that were more reform-demanding, younger and held more liberal views, shaped the internal political dynamics.

Striking examples of the tensions between them became apparent through a number of high-profile cases such as the removal of Milošević-appointed chief of the intelligence agency Radomir Marković, whom Koštunica protected from legal prosecution. Deep political cleavage was obvious also when Milošević was arrested, upon Đinđić's Government's decision, which

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[549] Available at:
http://www.parlament.gov.rs/akti/ostala-akta/doneta-akta/u-sazivu-od-14-februara-2007.1040.html (Accessed on: 27 June 2018).

[550] Originally established as an expert group, they secured places in the first post-Milosevic government in 2000, and then established themselves as a political party in 2002. They kept their expert profile and were decisively influencing Serbia's economic policies through 2000s. "Razvojni put G17+: Alhemija ispred politike". Available at: https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=960462 (Accessed on: 28 November 2019).

was an event to which President Koštunica objected calling it an illegal and humiliating act. The most striking example was the alleged coup attempted by the JSO in 2001, the unit whose members would be convicted for assassinating Prime Minister Đinđić two years later. President Koštunica abolished them of any suspicion of attempted coup. At the time, DS was an advocate of much faster and much more resolute European integration process, which demanded significant reforms of the state administration. Deputy Prime Minister of the Serbian Government, a member of the DS, signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU and the provisional trade agreement in April 2008 despite Prime Minister Koštunica's disapproval.[551]

DS advocated a bit softer approach which would allow Serbia to move away from the 'Kosovo myth' that threatened to keep the state locked in a permanent state of subtle, if not open, conflict with others besides just Kosovo Albanians.[552] To avoid losing their voters' support, they could never propose anything as radical as recognition of Kosovo independence, advocated by the most-liberal LDP. They did, however, propose a sort of compromise that would not prevent state's sovereignty over the province while still allowing Serbia to move forward with its ambitious EU agenda. The problem was that the party never managed to articulate concrete policies through which these two could be brought in balance. It remained unclear what the DS would opt for if confronted with the choice of EU membership dependent on the loss of Kosovo. That was one of the weakest points of their 2008 election campaign, which later continued to be reflected in the ambiguities of their foreign policy making.

Such clashes over fundamental issues might have decided Serbia's political future. In the next round of parliamentary elections, held in May 2008, Serbian citizens showed whom they trusted more. The DS-led coalition won 102 seats in the Parliament, SRS won 78, the DSS-led coalition 30, the SPS-led coalition 20, and LDP 13.

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[551] The signing of the SAA was dependent on Serbia's fully implemented cooperation with the ICTY and the caveat of that cooperation was a part of the deal in 2008. In 2008 the EU was preparing yet another trade-off with Serbia. In an exchange for faster EU integration agenda Serbia, as it was previously conditioned to fully comply with the ICTY demands, was now expected to embrace a compromising approach towards Kosovo which had already proclaimed independence at the beginning of the year. Signing of the SAA in 2008 was made as a boost for pro-reformist forces on the Serbian political scene, DS, at the expense of hard-liners, Koštunica-led DSS and Serbian Radical party. Jelena Subotić, 'Explaining Difficult States: The Problems of Europeanization in Serbia', *East European Politics and Societies*, 24 (4), 2010: pp. 595-616, p. 607.

[552] Boris Tadić, Interview, weekly Vreme, 6 March 2008. Available at:
https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=595565 (Accessed on: 17 August 2019).

In the highly competitive internal political struggle, with the consequences of the war of the 1990s, sanctions and isolation still present and the Kosovo issue threatening to escalate yet again, most important foreign policy decisions had to be weighed against possible domestic consequences. In other words, major foreign policy moves such as introduction of military neutrality were caused by domestic rather than international factors. Filip Ejdus made an argument that the policy of military non-alignment was born in 2007 out of internal political dynamics among the main political parties in Serbia. [553] He argues that it was both the expectation of Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence, supported by the US and the Western European states, and the need of the Democratic Party of Serbia to position itself internally that accounted for the Serbian Declaration of December 2007. Ejdus raises the argument of how a particular political actor, the DSS, used memory politics and evoked the collective trauma of the 1999 NATO bombing to secure support for its own political platform and the policy of military neutrality.[554] Igor Novaković uses a similar argument, claiming that it was only after 2006 and the Ahtisaari Plan for Kosovo, which referred to NATO as the supervisory authority of independent Kosovo, that the issue of Serbia's Euro-Atlantic integration started to appear increasingly problematic because it got connected with the Kosovo issue.[555] Up to that point, according to him, Serbian and Yugoslav authorities were open to a certain level of cooperation with the Alliance, but then they assumed a revanchist stance toward NATO, cementing Serbia's position as a permanent outsider to the Alliance.[556]

This discourse of Serbs as people who were punished for defending their sovereignty over their 'sacred land' of Kosovo in 1999 has been very much present in the DSS' narrative of Serbia's foreign policy relations from the early 2000s to this day. The party also strongly relies on legalistic arguments, according to which the 1999 intervention undoubtedly went against international norms that protect states' territorial integrity and prohibit the use of force against

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[553] Filip Ejdus, 'Serbia's Military Neutrality: Origins, effects and challenges', *Croatian International Relations Review 20 (71), 2014*: pp. 43-69.

[554] The DSS, represented by its political leader Vojislav Koštunica, made a link between the bombing campaign, which is anyhow fresh and present in the minds of Serbian population, and a necessity of staying outside of the military alliances, meaning NATO. Not only they used the memory of 1999, but evoked even more distant, albeit historically very powerful memory of the Kosovo battle from 1389 as the decisive defeat of the Serbian forces after which the Ottomans undertook their occupation campaign which lasted for centuries. By doing so, DSS raised collective fears and national pride of saying 'no' and taking a stand against the dominant enemy, this time portrayed as NATO and the U.S. as the main driving forces behind it. *Ibid.*

[555] Igor Novaković, *Neutrality in Europe in the XXI century and the Case of Serbia*, Belgrade: ISAC Fund, 2012, p. 10.

[556] *Ibid*, p. 10-11.

sovereign states. At the same time, DSS promotes an uncompromising stand toward Kosovo as an inseparable part of Serbian territory which the state cannot give up unless Serbian people decide otherwise.[557] This narrative led to the party's rigid stance in policy-making, especially in regards to the Kosovo problem and EU integration, and soon after the year 2000 it became apparent that the two issues are both inseparable and in collision. This implied that, on its path toward the status of EU candidate, Serbia would have to reach some sort of compromise over the issue of Kosovo. DSS remained consistent in its view that Serbia should immediately reject any political agreement that compromises the state's sovereignty over Kosovo. They remained consistent in this regard to this day.

The background of political competition between the main opposing political actors is more complex than a mere struggle over who would be in the driver's seat of Serbia's future. Behind these very different views on available policy options, the two broad blocs that operate on the domestic scene represent a more fundamental identity cleavage that is present in Serbian society. Underneath the failed Europeanisation of Serbia, Jelena Subotić finds identity divergence between a strong local identity and the vision of the EU that was never truly adopted either by the majority of Serbian population or its political elites.[558] According to her, the idea of Europe was powerfully underplayed by the alternative identity narrative of Serbs as victims and the affinity with Russia, while the EU was perceived as a punisher and a bully.[559] The EU strategy, which was perceived as to have put co-operation with the ICTY and a more cooperative tone on the issue of Kosovo as conditions required for the EU accession process to progress, did little to cause greater acceptance of the idea of the EU in Serbia. According to Subotić, it only led to further instrumentalisation of the EU accession by the local political elites.[560] As an Orthodox country that was politically and culturally associated with Western Europe, Serbia shares distinctive treads of both cultural spheres, eastern and western. Ejdus also makes an argument that the choice of concrete foreign policy strategies lies in the function of confirming one's identity. In a country with competing identity platforms, therefore, the pursuit of military neutrality might have a function that is in favour of one or the other. According to him, in the case of Serbia the pursuit of policy of military neutrality cannot be explained as a rational choice of its decision makers, not even when followed by their outline of a cost-benefit analysis proving

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[557] DSS, Program stranke, available at: http://www.dss.rs/program-stranke/#1454951037935-4e28565b-a6a8 (Accessed on: 4 January 2019).

[558] Subotić, 'Europe is a State of Mind', p. 320.

[559] *Ibid*, p. 323, 326.

[560] Subotić, 'Explaining Difficult States', p. 612.

that it falls under rational politics.[561] Ejdus notes that it was rather a decision that was made at the time when decision makers wanted to avoid difficulties emerging from the two conflicting narratives of Serbia's identity, one Western, pro-European, and the other Eastern, pro-Russian. Caught in the situation that involved conflicting yet equally powerful identities, Serbia opted for avoidance, a technique known in social psychology and used when an actor wants to avoid tensions emerging from an identity conflict by opting for selective exposure to information.[562]

Regardless of whether we pursue the rational-choice explanatory framework of political action or think within the framework of politics as a function of confirming one's identity, it is undisputable that the choice of military neutrality had to be backed by certain political actors on the Serbian domestic political scene. Having in mind the turbulent context within which it was made, and which was going to become even more difficult due to the expected announcement of Kosovo independence in two months' time, the choice was not necessarily serving the interests of only one political actor, DSS. In 2007, the decision on military neutrality served the interests of two dominant political actors, both DS and DSS, by providing a solution to one of the most difficult issues concerning which they had to compromise if they wanted to continue cohabitating in power – the question of the country's strategic orientation. That orientation, leading to closer cooperation with either NATO or with Russia, would actually imply much deeper choices, made on the basis of identity or in favour of certain policy choices between EU integrations and the protection of Kosovo. Closer cooperation with NATO – and the Resolution was adopted a year after Serbia joined the NATO PfP programme in 2006 – would imply an abolition of that alliance for its 1999 bombing and a compromising attitude with regard to Kosovo. The choice in favour of closer cooperation with Russia, on the other hand, would imply Serbia's strong-hand over the Kosovo issue and future confrontation with the West, represented by the EU and NATO member states and the U.S. That choice was too fundamental for either of the political actors that represented different versions of Serbia's future to deal with at that critical moment, and it was thus simply postponed by choosing a neutral stance, i.e. the policy of military neutrality.

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[561] Filip Ejdus, 'Beyond National Interests: Identity Conflict and Serbia's Neutrality toward the Crisis in Ukraine'. *Südosteuropa*, 62 (3), 2014: pp. 348-362.

[562] Ejdus, 'Beyond National Interest', p. 349, 362. The ambiguities of such a situation, according to Ejdus, were powerfully demonstrated in the case of war in Ukraine and Russian annexation of Crimea. Coupled with loyalty to Russia, and saying that it is dependent on Russian support over Kosovo issue, Serbia failed to demonstrate its support for the norm of inviolability of territorial integrity and sovereignty in Ukraine, while claiming that the norm was harshly violated with the Kosovo secession. Saying that its neutral to the conflict in Ukraine, Serbia pretends to have invented a mechanism how to deal with this and other uncomfortable situations emerging from the conflicting identities and unresolved tension between them.

It is important to notice here that yet another domestic process was under way in 2007. It involved reaching an internal consensus between DS and former Milošević's party, SPS, after the signing of the formal declaration of reconciliation in October 2008. Unlike DS and DSS – who indeed had different visions of Serbia's political future, compounded by their ingrained views on the identity basis of modern Serbia – SPS and DS represented political actors who were on the opposing sides in the crucial periods of country's modern history. Notwithstanding their different origins and ideological bases – one emerging from the Communist party and the other established as a liberal party in opposition to the Communist rule, the strongest dividing line between them was drawn in recent history, on 5 October 2000. SPS represented the ruling machinery from the 1990s, while DS was the main opposition force behind the events that took place on the 5 October overthrowing Milošević and his regime. The Declaration of Reconciliation was an attempt to close the ideological gap between the two and make their cooperation within the Government more natural and acceptable. Therefore, 2007 and 2008 were marked by attempts to find a middle ground on the domestic scene and a consensual basis for common ground in foreign policy between diverse political actors with very different political histories. The policy of military neutrality fit those attempts as it promised not to open the difficult, fundamental issues of Serbia's political future and allowed different political parties to stay within their respective political and ideological frameworks.

Once established, regardless of whether driven by collective memories, i.e. the myth of Serbs who are always on the right side of history, or a rational calculation of concrete political gains, military neutrality entered a public discourse and was used to remove the unpleasant, though hypothetical, issue of NATO membership from the agenda. This remained the case in spite of the significant changes that began to take place on the Serbian political scene in 2008.

### 4.3.2. Internal Political Dynamics in 2018

The power structure in Serbian politics of 2018 was set up based on the results of the 2016 elections. The undisputable winner of the elections was the ruling SNS. Together with its coalition partners, it secured 131 of the 250 seats in the Serbian Parliament. With partners, DS won just 16, while the former Milošević's party, SPS, had 29. SRS won 22 seats and DSS-Dveri together secured 13 seats. The dominance of SNS was secured earlier, in the elections of 2014; party leaders Tomislav Nikolić and Aleksandar Vučić elected Presidents in 2012 and 2017 (respectively), and all this only further cemented their prevalence in shaping Serbia's domestic and foreign policies. Just like in 2014, the Government was formed by SNS, SPS and a number of their minor political allies.

Staring from 2012, the dominance of SNS as a result of the parliamentary and presidential elections was translated into total control of the majority of local municipalities, state-owned companies and media. This resulted in the marginalisation of their political opponents who found themselves without access to budget resources and the mainstream media, which have been under the strict control of the ruling party since 2012. What is even more devastating for the opposition is that they have lost the authenticity of their pro-EU and reform agenda, which SNS successfully hijacked in 2012. DS, LDP and other parties emerging from a similar pro-European caucus of voters' support now have a dilemma of either supporting the Government's agenda in the majority of issues or opposing it and thus losing the connection with their own original platform. Serbian opposition parties built their credibility on being in favour of EU integration and on their cooperative stance regarding Kosovo and regional politics, which is nowadays promoted by the undisputed leader of SNS, President Vučić. Going beyond that agenda and opting strongly, for example, in favour of NATO membership or Serbia recognising Kosovo would be too risky a move for them, and the opposition parties, somehow lost in this situation, do not dare provoke their remaining supporters any further.

Despite the multiple-party composition of the Government, the tone of the discussion concerning Serbia's security policies in general, and military neutrality specifically, is undoubtedly set by the SNS. Although security policies and the policy of neutrality do not feature high on the daily political agenda, the party leader and ministers of defence and foreign affairs are occasionally forced to comment on them. This happens mostly at the time of military exercises that Serbia organises with a number of its partners – from bilateral exercises with the Russian Federation or the US armed forces, to participation in NATO exercises. On all such occasions state officials declare support for the policy of neutrality, which is, as they explain, complementary with Serbia's participation in joint military preparations with diverse security actors. Multiple references to military neutrality were also made during the 2016 election campaign. During the campaign, SNS leader and at the time Acting Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić was explicit in stating that Serbia was maintaining its neutrality[563] and that it will not opt for NATO membership because it goes against the will of the people. Reference to the popular will and the persuasive majority of Serbian citizens against any form of cooperation with NATO was the standard exit strategy of SNS representatives when asked about the possibility of NATO membership, during and after the election campaign. The Progressives had a broad group of smaller parties in their pre-election coalition and it was striking that they allowed diverse voices,

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[563] Aleksandar Vučić, 'Srbija ljubomorno čuva vojnu neutralnost', Radio Free Europe, 24 February 2016, available at: https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/27571353.html (Accessed on: 26 June 2018).

either pro-EU or pro-Russian, to be heard.[564] This could be explained as a strategic move to attract even the broadest groups of voters, those who identify themselves with opposite identity narratives in the Serbian politics.

The policy of neutrality was introduced by political parties that nowadays have insignificant influence in shaping the country's security policies: DS[565] and DSS[566]. However, the policy was not only maintained but also further reinforced by the now leading actor, SNS. The reason why this happened is that the above policy in a meantime proved useful for achieving both internal and external political goals. Internally, as it helped DS reach a wide circle of supporters that came from diverse ideological and political backgrounds, it proved to serve the same purpose for SNS. This was possible because both parties are, irrespective of their differences, catch-all parties, aimed at receiving support from broadest groups of voters. Also, they both relied on their coalition potential, which allowed them to receive support in Government-making from the Russia-oriented SPS[567] and the minority parties. In both of these ventures, the best strategy was not to alienate groups of potential voters or other parties that might become sensitive if, for example, the course of the action took the direction that was either clearly pro-NATO or led to a Russia sponsored alliance. The course of action was simply translated to the foreign-policy area, where no direct alignment in favour of one or the other could go unnoticed and without reflections in the domestic arena.

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[564] Ana Stanković, Katarina Ćuković, Tijana Vuksanović, 'Programska platforma liste Aleksandar Vučić – Srbija pobeđuje na parlamentarnim izborima 2016. Godine', *Stranke i javne politike: izbori u Srbij i 2016. godine*, Gordana Pilipović, Zoran Stojiljković (eds), Beograd: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, *2017:* pp. 101-125, p. 119.

[565] The DS-Nova stranka coalition did not make many foreign-policy references in 2016 campaign, besides stating that the EU accession should remain foreign-policy priority number one. Maja Bursać, 'Programska platforma liste Za pravednu Srbiju – Demokratska stranka na parlamentarnim izborima 2016. Godine', in Pilipović, Stojiljković, *2017:* 183-197, p. 189. As stated above, they refrained from speaking in favor of NATO membership, probably because they did not want to alienate any of small portion of their voters.

[566] In the 2016 election campaign DSS's representatives were direct in their anti-EU accession agenda and advocated closer politico-security cooperation with Russia. Dušan Radovanović, 'Programska platforma liste Dveri – DSS – Sanda Rašković Ivić – Boško Obradović na parlamentarnim izborima 2016. godine', in Pilipović, Stojiljković, *2017: pp.* 197-213, p. 203.

[567] During the 2016 election campaign SPS featured open anti-NATO accession standpoint and clearly advocated closer politico-economic cooperation with Russia. NATO 1999 bombing campaign was explicitly linked with Kosovo independence project. According to SPS's representatives in the campaign the Alliance is identified as symbol of American imperialism. Luka Petrović, 'Programska platforma liste Ivica Dačić – SPS, JS –Dragan Marković Palma na parlamentarnim izborima 2016. godine', in Pilipović, Stojiljković, 2017: *pp.* 125-145, p. 137.

The leading party is understandably cautious when discussing security alignment of any kind because the available alliances, whether sponsored by the U.S. or Russia, correspond to the ideological cleavages present in the Serbian society. This fact has been recognised by all the political actors who use the East-West ideological division[568] to position themselves in terms of voters' support. The far-right political parties also use this division to project themselves as 'patriotic' in contrast to any other option that favours possible NATO integration. Those are far-right and right-centrist political groups that set being in favour or against security cooperation with NATO or Russia as the dividing line on the Serbian political scene as that between 'patriots' and 'traitors'. Notwithstanding this discourse, stronger opting in favour of one or other security alliance brings far-reaching ideological and political consequences in domestic and international scene. Domestically, SNS would alienate a significant part of its constituency, which is believed to have originally voted for SRS and to have strong pro-Russian sentiments. Internationally, if it opted in favour of closer NATO and EU security alignment, Serbia would lose the benefits of Russia's patronage on the international scene. On the other side, if it opted more strongly in favour of a security alignment with Russia, consequences would potentially come in the form of lost economic support currently received from the EU and its members bilaterally.

As more obvious opting in favour of either security option would imperil the leading party's broad manoeuvring space in the domestic arena, cooperation with NATO is not strongly promoted through the media and therefore goes mostly unnoticed by the Serbian public. If pressured to explain it, representatives of the both ruling parties, SNS and SPS, would justify it by Serbia's willingness to develop good relations with the Alliance. Additional justification comes from NATO's KFOR forces responsible for the safety of the Serbian minority living in southern Kosovo and for the protection of Serbian vast and rich cultural and historical heritage, most of all its Orthodox monasteries and churches including priests who live in them. The logic of such military cooperation, as well as that with Russia, is said to be in accordance with the position of a state that is militarily neutral.

On the other side, Euro-sceptical political parties, such is DSS, and parties that ask that Serbia's EU integration be abandoned, such as SRS and minor parties at the extreme right end of the political spectrum, such as the Serbian Movement Dveri, managed to add a demand for

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[568] Marko Kovačević discusses how the traditional dichotomy of East-West divide was re-used in 1990s during the dissolution of former Yugoslavia by Balkans small states in their pursuit of small state agency in the changing international context. Marko Kovačević, 'What place for East and West? Discourses, reality and foreign and security policies of post-Yugoslav small states', *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 2016, 1(1), 2016: pp. 110-131.

political and security cooperation and partnership with Russia to the already existing concept of military neutrality. They rightfully understood the narrative of the Declaration from 2007 as a move away from cooperation with NATO, which this document indeed meant to imply at the moment, but not as a rejection of cooperation and possible integration within other military alliances. As some of their representatives made it explicit in their statements from the 2016 election campaign, Serbia should seek closer security cooperation with Russian.[569] Again, the vacuum that was created by failure to define the meaning and implications of military neutrality back in 2007 made it possible for different political actors to interpret them according to their own political and ideological preferences.

The picture becomes even more complicated with the perceived dynamics of the Kosovo issue. Serbs and Kosovo Albanians have been negotiating since 2011, within the framework of the Brussels dialogue under the EU patronage. Gëzim Visoka and John Doyle argue that in this case the EU applied the neo-functional approach to peace-making by deconstructing highly political contentious issues into smaller technical agreements, which later spilled-over into other technical agreements and essentially some level of political consensus.[570] The negotiations have been aimed at bringing results in concrete areas such are policing and judicial affairs, energy supply, control of state-owned companies etc., without prejudice to the final status of Kosovo and without pressure on Serbia to recognise its independence. The agreements reached in the period of March 2011-February 2012 resolved less sensitive but still highly important issues such as certification of Kosovo university diplomas in Serbia, cadastre books and mutual recognition of ID cards and driving licenses, before moving to more sensitive problems of border management and Kosovo regional representation.[571] A stronger breakthrough was brought by the April 2013 agreement, which dealt with the status of Serbian northern municipalities and their integration into Kosovo police and judiciary structures.[572] It came to a stalemate, as Serbia sees it, because of Pristina's refusal to establish the Association of Serbian Municipalities, which was ascribed certain powers independent from the Kosovo government. Kosovo negotiators, however, are faced with opposition when they raise the argument that the agreement legitimises

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[569] Boško Obradović, „Vreme je za prave ljude i novu politiku", Svedok, 21 April 2016.

[570] Gëzim Visoka and John Doyle, 'Neo-Functional Peace: The European Union Way of Resolving Conflicts', *Journal of Common Market Studies,* 54 (4), 2016: pp. 862–877, p. 870.

[571] Florian Bieber, 'The Serbia-Kosovo Agreements: An EU Success Story', *Review of Central and East European Law*, 40, 2015: pp. 285-319, pp. 300-303.

[572] *Ibid*, p. 306.

a partition of Kosovo in contravention to the Kosovo Constitution, legalises parallel structures, and opens up a path for a Kosovo-style 'Republic of Srpska'.[573]

The year 2018 showed inclinations of both Serbian and Kosovo leaders toward some sort of final resolution to the problem, which would imply either exchange of territories between Serbia and Kosovo or demarcation of borders between the two. Whatever developments may occur in the future, they will certainly disturb the state of affairs established by the Kumanovo Agreement in 1999. They will also have implications not only for the Serbian-Albanian relations but also for wider regional affairs, especially having in mind the fragile composition of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rhetoric of the Republic of Srpska's leadership which causes suspicions of an aim for secession and some form of union with Serbia.

Whatever these developments may be, they would disturb not only foreign but also internal balance of power. In Serbia, Kosovo politics is constantly featured highly in internal political discourse and different political actors severely clash over it. The winners in the internal political competition would be actors who would succeed in securing international support for their Kosovo politics and who would be able to convince Serbian citizens that they are doing their best under the given circumstances to protect Serbian national interests. The alignment politics is an indicator of whose support Serbia and its internal political actors expect regarding the Kosovo issue. It is also an indicator of what Serbia's future alignment politics might look like, depending on how the issue of Kosovo is resolved. If, in what currently seems like the least likely scenario, Kosovo is returned under Serbia's full sovereignty, Serbia might opt for NATO accession because it would provide a guarantee against further secessions. Such a decision seems likely because, in that improbable scenario, Kosovo would be reintegrated into the Serbian state system with the support of NATO member states. In a more likely scenario, Serbia and Kosovo will remain in a frozen conflict for years to come and Serbia's non-alignment policy will continue to serve the function of foreign-political "sitting on multiple chairs". In those circumstances, actors that provide an international support over Kosovo might gain leverage on Serbia's future security politics, as it is broadly claimed to be the case in Serbian-Russian relations. Internal political actors successful both in securing international support and staying in power domestically[574] will be in a position to decide on the future of the position of neutrality, and if it could be tilted toward any particular security actor in the future.

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[573] Adem Beha, 'Disputes over the 15-point agreement on normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia', *Nationalities Papers*, 43 (1), 2015: pp. 102–121, p. 103.
[574] Position of decision-makers who while striking international arrangements have to keep an eye on their domestic constituencies bearing in mind their domestic position is in a line with the two-level game concept endorsed by

According to theoretical assumptions on how alignment policy works to the benefit of domestic political actors, neutrality/non-alignment is possible only in the absence of strong domestic actors that advocate alignment regardless of the reasons. As discussed above, in the case of Serbia there are few political actors that pledge alignment with NATO, namely LDP and SPO, and several (SRS, Dveri, DSS, and one that does so implicitly – SPS) that advocate alignment or tighter security cooperation with Russia. However, none of these actors has the potential to significantly, let alone decisively, influence Serbia's domestic and foreign policy. The only party that is close to that position is SPS, the weaker partner in the governing coalition, which is also far from being able to decisively shape Serbia's alignment policy. This is because of their politically subordinate position to SNS, which would be able to form the Government even without SPS's participation.

Therefore, as regards internal political dynamics, the first condition required for neutrality/non-alignment, and that is absence of relevant political actors advocating for alignment, is present. The second condition is that there are no political actors whose internal domestic positions are supported by any alliances or the alignment rationale. Since there are no (significant) political actors with alignment goals in their political programmes, no one is obliged to achieve alignment as part of political agenda. On the contrary, as evident from the programme of the most influential political actor in Serbia since 2012, SNS, their ambition is in fact to maintain military neutrality.[575] The two conditions have therefore created space required for a neutrality/non-alignment option, but what would actually make this a viable option for Serbia would be the rational calculation of the most influential political actors. They have created the neutrality option as a suitable tool to avoid dealing with tough, fundamental issues that involve both ideological differences and issues of Serbia's political future, which allowed them to win political support of a variety of groups within the complex and divided Serbian body of voters.

Robert D. Putnam. According to him, domestic position of a central negotiator might be a bargaining factor which works in favor or against one's position in international negotiations. Lamenting on one's domestic constraints might be a bargaining advantage when a negotiator makes an excuse of not accepting international arrangement because it would not be accepted at home. This is the advantage that autocrats cannot evoke since they have a relative autonomy from domestic pressures. Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games', p. 440, 449.

[575] Srpska napredna stranka, 'Bela knjiga – Programom do promena', 2011, p. 40.

### 4.3.3. Three independent variables as applied on the Serbian case study

The independent variables that emerged from an available literature on neutrality/non-alignment and small states, historical experience, threat perception and internal political dynamics, which are conceptually discussed through the lenses of different theoretical traditions (historical institutionalism, neo-realism and rational choice theory) showed an interesting interplay when applied on the Serbian case study. First of all, historical experience does show a strong explanatory potential but in favour of alliance-making. Most of the lengthy narrative on Serbian historical experience speaks in favour of the utility of a military power and alignment politics. The Serbs have historically been successful in applying military force for the sake of achieving political programs, be they autonomy, independence, acquiring of new territories or defence of independence and sovereignty, and were successful in alliance-making while doing so. This narrative ends with the NATO bombing campaign which happened in the drastically different context when lessons learned from the previous period were not applicable any more.

The threat assessment rationale proves to be only partially applicable to explain why Serbia holds on the policy of military neutrality/non-alignment. The main threats, according to the Serbian strategic documents, are found internally and regionally, while the most apparent alliance option –NATO, is not attractive since it is simultaneously perceived as an actor which contributes to the further insecurity by supporting Kosovo independence. At the same time, Serbia fails to reach out to the rival alignment option, and that is Russia-sponsored CSTO. Instead, Belgrade opts to choose military neutral/non-aligned option remaining outside of any security guarantees provided by an alliance membership.

The variable with the strongest explanatory potential is the internal political dynamics. The Serbian case study proves assumptions made under the internal political dynamics rationale, and that is that neutrality is possible in the absence of political actors with strong alignment agendas. Contrary to that, the Serbian case study demonstrates a presence of the strongest political actors, the SNS party, with a strong ideological and pragmatic preference for the neutrality option. In spite of a historical rationale which would speak in favour of the neutrality option, and with threat assessments that point to highly inter-connected security threats internationally, the SNS, owing to the dominant position in terms of voters support, is keen to bypass ideological cleavages in the Serbian society by refusing to make a clear foreign-policy and security-policy course That is done by the maintenance of neutrality/non-alignment option elaborated not as an isolationistic policy but as a highly cooperative and inclusive one.

# CHAPTER 5: Sweden case study

In the following chapter I will present the analysis of the Swedish case study against the three independent variables: historical experience of war and/or military neutrality/non-alignment, threat perceptions and internal political dynamics. The historical experience, as was the case with the Serbian case study, is centered on the main historical events that directed Swedish security policies towards either alignment or non-alignment. What Swedish decision-makers established to be the main threats for the national security has been analysed, firstly, based on the defence planning documents and subsequent analysis of the Cold War period and then based on the newest national security strategy adopted in 2017. Internal political dynamics and its impact on the policy of military neutrality/non-alignment have been assessed in two time-periods. The first one is the year of 1992 when the military neutrality was renamed into the policy of military non-alignment as Sweden started serious discussion of the EU accession. The second instance when the analysis of the internal political dynamics impacts policy of military non-alignment is the end of 2018/beginning of 2019 when the last parliamentary elections were held and the new Swedish government was elected. The chapter is concluded with the discussion on the explanatory power of each of the three independent variables in the Swedish case study. The attention firstly goes to the analysis of what the historical experience of war and/or military neutrality/non-alignment tells us about the Swedish contemporary policy of military non-alignment.

## 5.1. Historical Record – Sweden

In the following chapter I present an analysis of a Swedish historical record starting from 17th century onwards. The analysis is focused on major historical events that defined Swedish security policies towards military neutrality/non-alignment, starting from the birth of neutrality in the interpretation of various Swedish authors and challenges that followed for that policy before the First World War. Similar to the Serbian case study, the two world wars present a major focus of the analysis in the Swedish case study since they posted both opportunities and challenges for either alignment or neutrality/non-alignment policies. The interwar period and Swedish participation in the League of Nations deserved a special attention since it was a telling case of a neutral country accommodating security cooperation in the system of collective security. The post-war period and politics of active neutrality also saw military neutral Sweden participating in the system of collective security together with being highly visible on the international scene. The debate on the EU accession and subsequent accession in 1995, together

with developed cooperation with NATO, required adjustments on the neutrality course. First of all let me present the discussion of how Swedish neutrality was born in the first place.

### 5.1.1 Birth of Neutrality: 17-19th Century

In search of a point in time when Sweden established itself as a neutral state, one comes across a divergence of opinions and historical material. In the well-quoted work entitled *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* Krister Wahlbäck goes back to 1830s, when King Karl Johan actually formulated the Swedish policy of neutrality. He finds Karl Johan's conduct of Swedish foreign policy in the period 1812-1814 to be the birthplace of the country's later position of neutrality. It was back then, in 1834, when the first formal declaration of neutrality was issued that it was clearly elaborated and presented to foreign countries on the occasion of a war that was expected to start between Britain and Russia.[576] Swedish King Charles John issued a declaration of 'strict and independent neutrality', having in mind the proximity of Russia, Sweden's dependence on British imports, and the fear that potential war would turn the Baltic Sea into a battlefield. The impartiality of neutrality meant that war ships of both sides would have unlimited and equal access to Swedish harbours. In his memorandum to the governments of the two powers, Swedish monarch set his intention to elaborate 'a formal explanation of my system of strict and independent neutrality.' This 'system' meant Swedish (as well as Norwegian, since the two were in a state union at the time) ambition to stay outside of a potential conflict between the two powers. At the same time, the Swedish monarch reminded his foreign counterparts of Sweden's isolated geographical position and the fact that it had abandoned any intentions to retrieve territories lost in previous wars.[577] Wahlbäck does not argue that Sweden had not abstained from numerous wars even before 1834 and that it had been an active member of the league of armed neutrals aimed at protecting the trade of neutral states during major wars fought on the European soil. What he claims is that it was in 1834 that policy of neutrality was formulated for the first time, as an ambition of two Scandinavian states – Sweden and Norway – to stay outside of belligerencies.[578]

In his study *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden* Mikael af Malmborg goes even further back in history to make a point that it might be hard to establish whether Sweden was indeed neutral in the 17th century. He supports his claim by elaborating how the concept of war,

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[576] Krister Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, Uppsala: Swedish Institute, 1986, pp. 7-8.
[577] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 8.
[578] *Ibid*, p. 11.

employment of manpower in war time and the use of state territory during war was significantly different compared to today. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, key dichotomies within which it makes sense to discuss neutrality – such as war and peace, public and private, and national and international – were not established in the way they are recognisable today.[579] At the same time, 17<sup>th</sup> century is rich in examples of how states used neutrality to enhance protection of their interests, if necessary by military means. Sweden and Denmark, for example, created a union of neutrals by signing treaties in 1679, 1689 and 1691, aimed to protect their maritime trade in the North Sea from Anglo-Dutch wars against France. They agreed to provide each other assistance if their ships were attacked or captured, and to establish joint convoys to protect their trade. Neutrality was also used by belligerents who were not capable of providing support or forcing smaller states to support them and have therefore used such proclamations as a mere tool for the protection of their own interests. Sweden was no exception to this practice in the way it used neutrality.[580]

The Great Northern War (1700-1721) was fought between Sweden and Russia as the main opponents. During the war, Sweden's relations with Denmark deteriorated because of Swedish attempts to re-introduce a neutrality agreement, which was rejected by Denmark. As an outcome of the war, Sweden lost its great power status and most of its overseas territories whereas Russia was established as a great European power. Malmborg claims that two distinct political and security options emerged in Swedish politics as a result of this war, and that the choice between the two of them forms the basis of Swedish contemporary security policy. One option was represented by political parties that sought revenge on Russia and demanded further territorial expansion. The other option saw grounds for expansion in internal political, cultural and economic developments, which had their external parallel in a policy of balance and moderation. According to Malmborg, despite different possible interpretations of its merits, the Age of Liberty (1720-1772) that ensued was a period in Swedish history during which its citizens became accustomed to the idea that the path to glory and well-being could be reached through internal political, social, cultural and economic development. Different possible interpretations account for the consequences that occurred in the political, administrative, cultural and economic spheres. Negative views involve the fact that this period created room for foreign involvement in Swedish domestic politics, and for the corruption of the administration. Positive views put an accent on grounds for constitutional reforms and the 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in parliamentarism, foreign and defence policy, as well as economic development,

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[579] Mikael af Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden*, New York: Palgrave, 2001, p. 29.
[580] *Ibid*, pp. 30-31.

agricultural reforms and industrialisation.[581] As a consequence, the 18th century Sweden, according to Malmborg, was torn between two ideas – the old imperial idea and the idea of Sweden adjusting to a small state position and inward oriented development.[582] The acceptance of the role of a small state was finally cemented during the Congress of Vienna in 1814. Despite King Charles John's incentive to ensure the country the position of a great power, Swedish representatives at the Congress took a stand that Sweden was satisfied by the fact that it had safeguarded its national interests by acquiring Norway.[583]

Crucial events that led to neutrality were caused by the Napoleonic wars in Europe and Swedish involvement in them. Sweden entered the war that had already engaged all major European states, on the side of Russia and England yet against France. The motives for such a decision might be found in the protection of maritime interests in relation to the Great Britain which Sweden could not afford to jeopardise, or in Sweden's concern for the balance of power in Europe which was greatly disturbed due to Napoleon's war campaign. Malmborg, however, finds the roots of that decision in the royal's strong ideological opposition to Bonaparte. Gustav IV Adolf, Crown Prince of Sweden, had strong sentiments against Bonaparte and was willing to enter the war in spite of lack of popular support. Therefore, Sweden abandoned its eleven year long policy of neutrality (1792-1803) due to strong royal preferences which over-rode the incentives for internal development and peace that will come to dominate Swedish politics in the following years.[584] Sweden participated in the war without significant losses or great involvement until 1807, when Russia decided to make a rapprochement with France and break its partnership with England. According to the Tilsit Agreement signed between France and Russia, Russia was given a free hand in Finland. Consequently, it occupied Finland in 1808 and the war of 1808-1809 was the last war fought between Sweden and Russia. Based on the Peace of Fredrikshamn of 1809 Sweden surrendered Finland, Åland and the county of Västerbotten, losing more than one-third of its territory and one-quarter of population.[585]

In a coup in March 1809, Gustav IV was dethroned and blamed for the disastrous politics and its consequences. Sweden had lost Finland, with which it had made an unfavourable state union due to geographic distance between the two. What remained under Sweden's rule was Pomerania, a German territory which served as a Swedish territorial connection with the

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[581] *Ibid*, pp. 34-36.
[582] *Ibid*, p. 44.
[583] *Ibid*, p. 74.
[584] *Ibid*, p. 68-69.
[585] *Ibid,* p. 70.

continental Europe. The idea circulated among the Swedish elite and royals that Pomerania should be exchanged for the support of Swedish unification with Norway. In geographical terms, this would have helped create a more solid and defendable territory of Swedish-Norway union occupying the Scandinavian Peninsula. This indeed would happen as a consequence of both France occupying Pomerania in January 1812 and Sweden joining Anglo-Russian alliance, which provided support for Sweden's acquisition of Norway in accordance with the 'policy of 1812'. Therefore, the loss of Finland and German territories was compensated with the gain of Norway in accordance with the Kiel Treaty from 1814 and following a brief war campaign against Denmark. Denmark, which sided with France, was forced to cede Norway to Sweden. The defeat and ensuing territorial losses cancelled any further expansionist claims and moderated Sweden's ambitions to fit the realm of medium or small power capacities.[586]

As a consequence of these war enterprises, its varying degree of war luck and choice of allies, Sweden gained a land mass that was geographically more coherent and established defendable and more consistent frontiers. This went in a line with the general trends in European politics of establishing national states whose borders put limitations to foreign meddling in their respective affairs. Along with more coherent national frontiers, Sweden established a basis for peaceful and internally oriented politics. Malmborg explains the foundations of Swedish durable policy of neutrality as having been set by both power politics and a personal imprint of the royal figure, Charles John, who, unlike his predecessors had no revenge ambitions toward Russia and saw Sweden's real source of power in its internal dynamics instead of war-enterprise and further territorial expansion. Still, it was royal politics rather than a process of democratisation that made the above choice the basis for Sweden's consequent policy of neutrality.[587]

John Logue finds developments in the Swedish 19th century security politics and the durability of neutrality which was set at the beginning of the century reflective of Swedish realistic calculations of the changed balance of military strength on the battlefield.[588] The strength of Swedish Armed Forces at the time, mainly owing to its conscription system, enabled it to balance Russian military might at the beginning of the 19th century. Later on, with the changes in the balance of forces on the ground, the attitude of Swedish monarchs towards war campaigns also changed. However, it was not only the external factor, in the form of a changing

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[586] The acceptance of medium or small power status did not come easily and without setbacks, especially in mind of Karl Johan who found it challenging to abandon position of a big power leader and occasionally was tempted to get Sweden involved in international affairs from the position of taking sides in big powers' disputes. Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 11.

[587] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* pp. 68-74.

[588] John Logue, 'Sweden', in *Europe's Neutral and Non-Aligned States*, Papacosmo, Rubin (eds), pp. 71-102, p.77.

balance of power and the rise of a mighty eastern neighbour, that caused Sweden to assume a more cautious stand toward war campaigns. In the 19th century a shift also occurred in the internal balance of powers within the Swedish politics; namely, the Government seemed to have removed the issue of peace and war from the exclusive authority of the monarch. The establishment of a two-house Parliament with a growing representation, although without universal suffrage which will be introduced only after the First World War, imposed even further checks and balances on monarch's prerogatives in the conduct of foreign and security policy. Opposition to further military campaigns became especially efficient with the growing representation of the Liberals and Social Democrats who were persistently opposed to increased military spending, a tool that was in the hands of the Conservatives. Defence policy and the issue of military spending were the last points of consensus in the Swedish society at the time.[589]

The policy of 1812 also meant leaving behind revenge ambitions toward Russia because of the loss of Finland. Such notions would later be cherished only by liberal elite groups gathered around the idea of the united Scandinavia project. In the 1940s, 50s and 60s members of those circles came up with the idea of Scandinavia united under a liberal constitutional order. They were ready to risk a war to defend Denmark against Prussia and were seeking an opportunity to regain Finland from Russia, if necessary through war.[590] Sporadic incentives to enter either a war or an alliance due to the ambition of establishing Sweden as one of European liberal powers of the 19th century, in opposition to the reactionary forces of Russia and Prussia, remained a part of the Swedish domestic discourse. However, neutrality emerged *ad hoc* as the best solution for Sweden. Malmborg claims that the birth of that policy came as a reaction to the external shock caused by war defeat in 1808-1809 and consequent territorial losses. He argues that neutrality was a circumstantial choice rather than a deliberate policy that emerged from any features specific to the Swedish identity.[591]

Just like the first declaration of neutrality which was issued in 1834, the second, issued in 1853, also came as a result of Anglo-Russian tensions, this time over Russia's territorial expansion on the account on the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans which led to the Crimean War. On this occasion, Swedish neutrality was effectively pro-English and pro-French as well as anti-Russian, since Sweden was concerned with possible Russian dominance on the Baltic Sea. Also, Sweden's King Oscar I used this opportunity to explore Russia's weakness and regain Finland and Åland. He secured the support of the Scandinavianist movement for that kind of endeavour.

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[589] *Ibid*, pp. 78-79.
[590] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 93.
[591] *Ibid*, p. 84-85.

More importantly, he entered into negotiations with Western powers to obtain their support for the attempt to regain Finland in exchange for Sweden's promise not to sell any of its territories to Russia, as such a sale could lead to Russia's dominance in the Baltic Sea. However, the Paris Treaty from 1856 that ended the Crimean War prevented Sweden actually from entering the war. Regardless, as Wahlbäck claims, Sweden reaped some benefits from this treaty, as it obliged Russia not to rebuild the fortification of the Åland Islands which was highly relevant for Stockholm.[592]

This was not the only case of Swedish political and potentially military activism in this time period. King Charles XV promised military support to Denmark on the eve of the Schleswig-Holstein crisis in 1863-64, seeing it as a potential path to the unification of Scandinavia.[593] However, the King's wish did not gain support from the Cabinet and the Parliament, as they were concerned with the poor state of Swedish Armed Forces and the threat from Russia if Sweden should get involved in the conflict. Denmark's loss of Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia marked the end of dreams related to the Scandinavianism project. Malmborg however views the event as a healthy turning point for both Sweden and Denmark, since this defeat led both countries to more stable national borders and removed the source of tension from Scandinavia.[594]

The new power balance established in Europe after the German unification in 1870-1871 challenged both the position of Sweden and the prospects of Scandinavian unification. Until then, Sweden and especially its liberal elite relied on Anglo-French support, which was vital for the liberal Scandinavianism project.[595] After 1871, Sweden was confronted with two major powers dominating the Baltic Sea – Germany and Russia. For Germanophile circles in Sweden, which were gaining prominence, reorientation to Germany and its support seemed to be the natural option. Moreover, as Malmborg claims, what seems to have been a logical geopolitical reorientation in light of the changed circumstances of power balance was also accompanied by a growing influence of the German language and culture in Sweden as well as other German-neighbouring small states. He stated that the geographical closeness and the appeal of German cultural and other achievements raised sympathies among the Swedish population toward Germany that had never been there with regards to France.[596] Sweden oscillated between

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[592] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 16.

[593] *Ibid*, pp. 17-18.

[594] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 96.

[595] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 18.

[596] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* pp. 97-98.

neutrality and alliance plans with Germany. Its foreign policy was further strained by the new composition of the Parliament, whose bi-cameral structure, with the lower chamber representing peasantry which was not inclined toward any sort of involvement in power politics, posed strains on the ambitions of liberal elites and conservative aristocracy.[597] On the eve of the worsening relations between Britain and Russia, Sweden issued its third (1878) and then fourth declaration (1885) of neutrality. The first was rather pro-British while the second was in effect pro-Russian, depending on the circumstances and the real power of the belligerents.[598]

With its roots established in the 18th century, when the neutrality pacts were formed to protect maritime interests of states around the Baltic Sea, the 19th century demonstrated the utilitarian usage of neutrality. It was hardly established as a normative guide for Swedish foreign policy but rather served as a tool to navigate the position of Sweden in the altering circumstances of the international arena. As much as neutrality had been influenced by external circumstances, internal political dynamics also shaped the conduct of foreign and security policies leading to the position of neutrality. However, once established and proclaimed, the neutrality policy in return also influenced state politics by limiting possible policy options in very concrete cases such as the case of Norwegian secession. This historical overview is also illustrative of how development of neutrality as a war-time policy was dependent on the choices that Swedish monarchs and political elite at the time had before them. The essential choice involved, on the one side, the pursuit of old-time war-waging politics through which Sweden might be able to attempt to regain lost territories, and the great power status which inevitably had to be achieved through a conflict with the mighty eastern neighbour – Russia. The other option was to make more inward-oriented efforts aimed at modernisation and development of industry. This choice also implied a dilemma between the pursuit of status of a great, medium, or rather small power, and the policies suitable for a state within the relevant power category. Regardless of whether the choice in favour of the second option was based on the rational consideration of Sweden's deteriorating military and other material capacities, mainly in relation to Russia, or because of the grand vision of its leaders, the neutrality policy emerged as a natural choice of the state that had decided to withdraw from war enterprise and big powers' game.

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[597] *Ibid,* p. 97; Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 18.
[598] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p.98.

## 5.1.2. Challenges to Neutrality in the 19/20th Centuries

Once born and established policy of military neutrality was not without many challenges, resulting both from external circumstances but also from different actors in the Swedish political life. Here I discuss major challenges for the Swedish military neutrality before the First World War.

In forthcoming years, the pan-Scandinavian project was presented in the form of proposals and ideas about joint Scandinavian neutrality, such as the proposal from 1899. However, Scandinavian states developed different versions and attitudes toward neutrality and its relation with armed defence. Although the Danish peace movement thought that neutrality and defence were incompatible, the idea of armed neutrality, or neutrality supported by credible defence, gained strong popular support and was endorsed by political elites in Sweden.[599] In Norway, however, Scandinavianism never generated much of support. Instead, by giving strong prerogatives to the Parliament, Norwegians wanted to apply checks and balances to what they saw as potential Swedish activism. The policy of neutrality was thus the uniting element of the Swedish-Norwegian union.[600] It was the consensual foreign policy of the union that seemed to satisfy the ambitions of both component states – it allowed Sweden to maintain strong defence and tilt neutrality in favour of great powers, depending on the circumstances, while to Norway it provided guarantees that Sweden would stay outside of belligerent enterprises.

While relations between the German and Russian Empires seem to be worsening in 1890s, the debate in Sweden was centred around the degree and plausibility of the Russian threat. Malmborg accounts for various usages of the 'Russian menace' at the time. First of all, Russia's ambitions to revoke limitations on the armament of Åland islands and the railway construction in Finland were met with suspicion in Sweden, bolstering fears that Russia would inevitably launch an attack on Scandinavia in order to gain access to the harbours in northern Norway. Around that time, rumours appeared of Russian spies present in Sweden and military preparations that Russia was allegedly making in Finland. Various scholars discussed the plausibility and magnitude of a military threat from the East, some of them dismissing such an intention from the Russian side altogether.[601] Malmborg provides a comment on how fear of Russia was actually used by certain actors in Swedish domestic debate for the purpose of fostering defence reforms and armament.

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[599] *Ibid*, p. 104.
[600] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 19.
[601] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden*, p. 105.

More importantly, the argument of Russian threat on the eve of the First World War was used depending on the security concept and the discussion of national security policy in Sweden. Åselius broadly discussed how the Swedish elite embraced a novel approach to the matters of national security. Instead of thinking in terms of physical survival, such an approach implied the goal of achieving national power through modernisation and industrialisation whose main threat would be coming from the reactionary Russia.[602] On the other side, Russia was suspicious of Sweden's warm relations with Germany, fearing that it could lead to an eventual alliance between the two. The talks, if not on a possible alliance then on rapprochement and a form of security cooperation, did indeed take place between the representatives of Sweden and Germany. No alliance agreement was reached however, since Sweden was mainly interested in receiving a defence commitment from Germany in case of an attack by Russia. Germany, on the other side, wanted to use the Swedish-German siding to put pressure on Russia's forces in northern Europe.[603] Pro-German forces within Sweden had however propelled domestically a fear of Russia and its possible military attack. The leftist forces, on the other side, feared that a pro-German campaign might lead to Russia actually considering Sweden an enemy and launching an attack against it. Ideas coming from the right wing of the Swedish society, such as the Youth Right, were marginal but persistent in a debate to which camp Sweden should belong to, pro-German or pro-Slavic. While the rightist political forces were pro-German and anti-Russian on the cultural and nationalistic grounds, liberal forces in the Swedish politics were anti-Russian on grounds that were completely different. They deemed tsarist Russia a conservative and anti-modernistic autocratic force that goes against the values of liberal democracy.[604] The labour movement, which had emerged as a significant political force after the 1911 elections, was strongly in favour of neutrality,[605] while the Social Democrats, as parliamentary representatives of the labour movement, advocated ideas of disarmament and international cooperation and were against old-elites' militaristic nationalism.[606]

The challenges for Sweden's inward-looking peaceful politics free of expansionistic ambitions after 1815 occasionally came from both of these camps – the liberal and right-wing political forces. Liberals wanted Sweden to be engaged in the conflicts in Denmark and Norway, while the rightist movement urged alliance with Germany based on pro-German sentiments.

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[602] Åselius, according to Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 106.

[603] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 21.

[604] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 109.

[605] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 21.

[606] Logue, 'Sweden', p. 81.

Fortunately for Swedish neutrality, they both failed.[607] Additional impetus that worked against the state's neutral stance came in 1905, when Norway unilaterally dissolved its union with Sweden. Germany offered Sweden assistance against Norway's rebellion. While conservatives were ready to fight against Norway's quest and advocated for a Swedish strong defence system, Social Democrats applied strong internal political pressure, correlated with the threat of a general strike, which made Swedish Government let go off any ambitions to exercise force upon Norway. Both Agius and Logue find this occasion to be very illustrative of the strong influence that internal political dynamics had exercised upon Swedish security policy, resulting in a peaceful resolution of the state union with Norway. According to Agius, easy dissolution of the state union was a reflection of what Swedish neutrality actually meant. Being neutral toward a conflict in the international arena invoked a certain style of domestic politics and framed standards of appropriate behaviour. Agius' interpretation is that concern for good relations with Norway was a reflection of the original meaning of neutrality as envisaged by Karl Johan.[608] For Logue, this is yet another example of how opportunistic and non-principled neutrality policy was established more as a result of the force of occasions and pressures of both external and internal factors.[609]

### 5.1.3. Sweden in the First World War

This section is devoted to the Swedish experience in the First World War. Already firmly established military neutrality was faced with strong challenges in the major world side conflict which at the same time presented an opportunity for Sweden to confirm its neutral status.

Just before the outbreak of the First World War, Swedish political elites and main political groups were quite divided in their sympathies. While the right side of the political spectrum was pro-German and anti-Russian, the leftist parts of the political spectrum, relying on cultural closeness to Britain and France, were pro-Entente in spite of their high respect for the German labour movement. Russia's entry into the Great War on the side of Britain and France was somehow confusing for the leftist actors. They, however, had enthusiastically supported the Socialist revolution in Russia in 1917. At the eve of the war, Swedish political parties reached a consensus on neutral stand. They all supported neutrality for different reasons – Conservatives wanted to protect the trade, while Liberals and Social Democrats had more genuine, ideological

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[607] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 116.
[608] Christine Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality: challenges to Swedish identity and sovereignty*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006, p. 68.
[609] Logue, 'Sweden', pp. 77-79.

reasons. However, their agreement did not last during the entire Great War due to the parties' divergent stands when it came to the main belligerents, Germany and Russia.

At the very outbreak of the war, in July 1914, Sweden proclaimed neutrality in relation to the war between Austro-Hungary and Serbia. A month later, when Germany declared war on France and Russia, Sweden, together with Norway, issued another declaration of neutrality with regard to all ongoing wars. Sweden did not join Entente's total blockade of German supplies, which was against international norms governing neutrality and was meant to cause heavy harm to the German economy. This resulted in retaliation from the Entente powers, which restricted trade with Sweden, leading to food shortages and inflation. Britain, traditionally dominant in controlling trade routes in the North Sea, made a plan prior to the war to block neutrals' ports in order to prevent German access thereto. This measure was followed by a reduction in trade with Holland and Belgium, but also with Sweden later on, in order to leave them with few resources they might be able to trade with Germany.

Malmborg and Agius claim that Sweden's neutrality in the First World War was in all practical effects pro-German. The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs privately informed its German counterparts that Sweden would be benevolently neutral toward them, while at the same time it assured the other side that it would be practising strict neutrality.[610] Part of the elite saw Russia as Sweden's main security concern and believed that its defeat in the war would be beneficial for Sweden. Therefore, Sweden had a valid interest to accommodate its neutrality in favour of Germany.[611] Russia already had suspicions regarding Sweden's ambitions in the war, believing it would practise neutrality in favour of Germany. Considering strong pro-German sentiments in Sweden, there were grounds for such suspicion. Furthermore, pro-German activists sought concrete Swedish involvement in the war on the German side, which was discussed and negotiated with Berlin. The obvious benefit for Sweden in that case would be the prospects of an independent Finland as a buffer state between Sweden and Russia and re-gaining Åland islands under Swedish control.[612] As these talks failed, Sweden was able to reorient itself toward the victorious side of the Entente, with which its Government concluded a trade agreement in 1918 committing to restrict its trade in iron ore with Germany.

As it was shown later on in the Second World War, trade and control of trade routes were Sweden's major concerns before and during the war. First, in order to restrict goods supply to

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[610] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 69.
[611] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 23.
[612] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 113.

Germany, Great Britain blocked shipping in the North Sea using its maritime supremacy. Sweden was affected by this because its trade was dependant on its connections with Germany which Sweden supplied with certain goods and was dependent on the export of its goods to the German market. However, Great Britain blacklisted Swedish companies that did not abide by their prohibitive rules of trade with Germany. Sweden was able to manoeuvre around this issue until 1916, when restrictions seriously hit Swedish market leading to 1917 parliamentary elections. Elections were won by Liberals and Social-Democrats, whose government was willing to act pragmatically and had accepted Western control of trade routes.[613] In spite of this rocky road to maintaining a neutral position in the First World War, Malmborg makes an overall estimate that Sweden managed better, compared to other neutrals, to position itself in the light of the hostilities. That happened, as he claims, due to its self-sufficiency in most of the fundamental goods such as agriculture and electricity, and a geographical position that did not allow it to be isolated and completely shut out from communication with both belligerent sides.[614]

Not only did Sweden manage to stay outside of the war and avoid major repercussions, with no implications in the change of its borders, it also found itself in a more favourable geostrategic position once the war was over. Two major powers that have traditionally dominated the North Sea region, Germany and Russia, and to whose proximity Sweden had to accommodate its security position, were defeated and weakened as a consequence of hostilities. Baltic states Poland and Finland gained independence, which meant that Sweden was now surrounded by small states instead of great powers.[615] Thus, as a result of the war Sweden found itself in a more favourable geo-strategic situation, with preconditions for successful conduct of neutrality in place.[616]

The experience of the First World War taught Sweden a lesson on utilitarian usage of neutrality tilted to accommodate pressures coming from the most threatening power. During this period there was no consensus among the Swedish elites and political parties as to which power was actually the main source of threat – Russia or Germany. There was also no consensus on the main recipient of Swedish sympathies – Germany, which stood high among the Swedish population and part of Sweden's elite owing to cultural closeness and appreciation of cultural, scientific and other achievements, or the Entente powers, Britain and France, whose liberal stands have dominantly influenced Sweden's politics in previous decades. It was not only that

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[613] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* pp. 25-26.
[614] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 115.
[615] *Ibid*, p. 127.
[616] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 30.

Sweden's manoeuvring through the war was influenced by internal political dynamics, it also had to accommodate pressures coming from belligerents concerning how Sweden would conduct its maritime and trade policies. In spite of both internal and external manoeuvring, neutrality that was proclaimed at the very beginning of the war was successfully maintained. Regardless of whether it was just a pragmatic excuse not to side with any of the warring parties or had deeper ideological and normative grounds, the memory of neutrality that saved Sweden from being dragged into the war that caused extensive human and material losses across Europe was preserved among the Swedes for many years to come.

### 5.1.4. Sweden and the League of Nations

Although those were wars that posted major challenges for military neutral/non-aligned states, peace time was not without its dilemmas for them too. This chapter is devoted to the dilemmas that participation in the League of Nations posted for Swedish neutrality.

In the interwar period, the main dilemma for Sweden's security policy was one between neutrality and attachment to the collective security system. At the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ century, these were obviously incompatible. Although the term "active neutrality" was already coined in the 1920s, neutrality in this period implied an isolationistic policy aimed at keeping the state out of conflicts while exercising trade and economic relations in peace time. On the other side, collective security system in the form of the League of Nations implied a joint enterprise to maintain peace and prevent and punish misconduct in international affairs. It was meant to create a system whose participants would invest their resources and efforts, thus demonstrating willingness and capacity to work toward the goal of sustainable international order. It was the first Liberal-Social Democratic coalition that took the decision of Sweden's entry into the League of Nations. The main figure behind the decision was Hjalmar Branting, leader of the Social Democrats. The entry into this system was seen as a chance to practice internationalism and trust in the international authority. It was also in a line with the changes that occurred within the Social-Democratic Party in the same period of time. At the party congress in 1920, ideas of strong defence and armament were brought in harmony with the idea of international solidarity. While advocating membership in the League of Nations, Social Democrats invested their belief in the disarmament and their legalistic approach to international affairs, which might as well be taken as a reflection of Sweden's weak power base.[617] However, when explaining the above decision Agius accounts for the domestic political scene which had undergone changes in the

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[617] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 129.

interwar period and had evolved into a consensus-based decision making process dominated by the mass parties. Values of internationalism, peace and disarmament, which Sweden wanted to promote outside of its own borders, were thus also a reflection of its domestic politics. Membership in the League was compatible with these developments, and it represented an opportunity for Sweden to transfer its domestic values abroad while still practising a form of neutrality.[618]

The League was created by those who had won the war. Neutrals were invited to take part, but defeated states were not. Hence, the League excluded Germany from the onset and Russia during the entire period of its existence, while the U.S. never joined. Due to this, entering the League, according to Malmborg, meant a clear breach of neutrality standards since it implied siding with one party to the (former) conflict.[619] One third of the Swedish Parliament voted against it. Opposition came from all sides of the political spectrum - conservatives, peasantry and socialists - who opposed membership in the League which in their eyes was just an Entente coalition directed against the Soviet Union. Opposition used the neutrality argument against the decision, while the Government claimed that it was possible to reform the existing framework of the League. An additional reason to oppose the entry was the widespread sentiment in favour of defeated Germany, which was burdened by the harsh conditions of the Versailles Treaty. Sweden undertook lobbying activities to secure an invitation for Germany, including stepping down from its own seat in the League's Council to promote such an invitation. Germany finally joined in 1926. Collective sanctions, both economic and military, against states that violate the norms of international peace were one of the obligations that member states subscribed to by entering into this membership. Interestingly enough, Sweden did not ask to be formally exempted from the duty of participating in enforcing military sanctions against third states based on its track record of neutrality, as did Denmark and Switzerland, but it also did not accept the duty to unconditionally participate in them, claiming that enforcement of military sanctions is primarily a duty of great powers.[620] Curiously enough, in this period Sweden stopped using the term neutrality, while the Social Democratic party leader Branting urged the country to take a more active role in shaping world events instead of applying a more passive policy of neutrality.[621]

The fragility of the system, which was not efficient in imposing sanctions against Italy after it invaded Ethiopia in 1935-36, or Japan even before that for invading Manchuria in 1931,

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[618] Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 70.
[619] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 129.
[620] *Ibid*, pp. 130-131.
[621] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 31.

led neutrals to even greater hesitation concerning the system of collective sanctions. Together with some other developments in Europe, such as consolidation of the Soviet Union and rearmament of Germany after the failed attempt to reach an agreement on disarmament in 1933, neutrals that had previously entered the system of collective security with more or less hesitation now returned to the full practice of neutrality. First, eight states - Sweden among them - declared that they no longer felt obliged by the treaty regulating imposition of economic and military sanctions, while Sweden presented its intention to declare neutrality in any forthcoming wars between the great powers. This was greeted by a part of the domestic political spectrum, Conservatives and Agrarians, who had advocated for the rearmament of Sweden after its unilateral disarmament process in 1925.

Returning to a stricter practice of neutrality could be seen as a step backward, especially by Social-Democrats who invested their ideas in the project and saw it as potentially emancipatory in the international arena. However, while taking into account all the weaknesses and general failure of the idea behind the League of Nations, Sweden was not fully returning to neutrality as an isolationistic policy, nor was the Social-Democrats' government ready to turn its back completely to the idea of collective security. What stood between neutrality and participation in a system of collective security was a form of Nordic cooperation. The idea, which was not entirely new, was again coming from prominent Social Democrats' figures, who wanted the special sense of solidarity among the Nordic states to be transformed into some sort of assistance in case of an attack against any of them, not least because such an attack would present a security concern for Sweden itself.[622] However, no serious outcome in the form of a security cooperation agreement could be reached due to Nordic countries' different security perceptions, similar to what happened later, after the end of the Second World War. They held that chief security threats were coming from the neighbouring great powers, such as Germany in case of Denmark, and Russia in case of Finland, which needed all the forms of security guarantees they could get from the surrounding states. Security cooperation between Sweden and Finland was, however, most probable during this time, especially in regards to the defence of Åland islands. Their defence was primarily Finland's jurisdiction but having in mind their strategic importance for Sweden, closeness to Stockholm and the fact that they lay in the transport route of iron ore from Lapland to Germany, Sweden was interested both in the defence of the area and Finland's Nordic orientation.[623] Norway was the least interested in any form of

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[622] *Ibid*, p. 34-35.
[623] *Ibid*, p. 36-38.

defence cooperation because it deemed itself less exposed to the security concerns of other states.[624]

The accounts of Swedish membership in the League go between moralistic and rational approaches to Swedish neutrality, but after the failed experiment of the League of Nations the accounts of Sweden practising neutrality took a more realistic tone.[625] Involvement in the project was deemed a naïve investment into a structure that was meant to preserve the *status quo* of great powers after the First World War.

Abstention from some of the elements of collective security system presented in a form of the League of Nations did not, however, imply any sort of hiding or passivity in the international arena. Together with other Scandinavian states – mostly neutral, small and concerned with the economic and political pressures imposed on them in light of war preparations and protectionist measures taken by great powers – Sweden took an active approach to the issues of disarmament and protection of free trade. On both of these issues Sweden hoped and asked for the active leadership of the U.S., but that, at the time, was too much for its isolationistic politics.

The account of the Swedish membership in the League of Nations shows a passage from reluctant enthusiasm to great expectations from the U.S. leadership and disappointment with the failed attempt of the collective security system. The disappointment was caused by the fact that the organisation never gathered all the major European states, especially not those that were on the losing side of the First World War, thus resembling a war coalition that continued to play great powers' political games in peacetime. The U.S. never took the lead and, with the emerging prospects of the Second World War, found a shelter in yet another isolationistic position. And finally, the organisation proved inefficient in delivering its purpose – maintaining international peace and security through joint efforts and the sanctioning of those who breached it. However, this episode provided a hint of what would be Sweden's active neutralism in the decades after the Second World War, when the country combined its internal consensual and cooperative political climate, embodied in Social Democrats' ideology, with active international stands promoting justice, humanitarian vision of international society and help for deprived countries of the Third Word. Membership in the League of Nations was the first demonstration of how to combine neutrality as a steady feature of foreign and security policy with the involvement in a collective security enterprise which even included participation in the application of political, economic

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[624] *Ibid*, p. 35.
[625] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 73.

and military sanctions. It is also illustrative of Sweden's future position of a small state which refuses to give legitimacy to great powers' dynamics and advocates frameworks that include powers from the opposing sides, as was the case with the U.S. and the USSR during the Cold War.

### 5.1.5. Sweden in the Second World War

The Second World War brought failure to the majority of states that declared themselves neutral at the beginning of the war. Out of twenty European states that declared their neutrality in September 1939, only five actually managed to remain neutral and avoid being drawn into the war.[626] Sweden was one of them. Its Second World War track record can be taken as an example of dubious neutrality that was maintained at the price of considerable concessions to one belligerent, the Nazi Germany, which cast a long shadow on its neutral position during the War. This chapter discusses contextual setting that shaped Swedish decision-making before and during the war and major implications that war left for its military (and political) neutrality.

On the eve of yet another major conflict, Sweden's population, as well as its political leadership, was very much prepared and strongly in favour of neutrality due to the pace of events that took place in 1930s. The 19th century and the First World War experience had already taught small neutral states that their main concern, besides a possibility of being militarily overridden by any belligerent, should be the economic pressure coming from two or more sides that want all wanted to secure exclusive access to neutrals' resources and prevent their competitors from doing the same. After the disappointment in the system of collective security and with an increasing belief in its own defence, Sweden was mainly preoccupied with securing favourable trade agreements which would ease the pressure coming primarily from Great Britain and Germany while at the same time allowing it access to goods from the West. In 1938, 24% of the Swedish exports went to Great Britain and 18% to Germany. On the eve of the Second World War, Germany attempted to offer an agreement to the states from the Oslo group[627] which would secure access to the raw materials it desperately needed for the military industry. If they give in to German demands, which included a condition that Nordic trade with Great Britain should not harm the trade with Germany, the Oslo states would be given guarantees for their neutrality. At the same time, Great Britain was exercising pressure aimed at prohibiting the Nordic states from

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[626] Ogley, *The theory and practice of neutrality in the twentieth century,* p. 154.
[627] 'Oslo states' stood for Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Luxemburg, Belgium and the Netherlands, known for signing a trade agreement in Oslo in December 1930.

providing Germany with materials it needed for its war industry. Therefore, trade agreements were negotiated in the late 1930s, but not with much faith that great powers would respect international provisions guaranteeing the neutral's rights and protection of their trade, but rather in a more realistic manner taking into account the interests of the main belligerents.

However, after the German blockade of the North Sea, Sweden remained cut off from the major route to the west and was left highly dependent on trade with Germany. Swedish and German economies very interlinked since the 1930s and Swedish export of raw materials before and during the Second World War already gave the country a special place in the German war economy.[628] Their trade in iron ore (in 1939, Sweden met 40% of the German needs, continuing to export to Germany until 1944),[629] came under criticism of the Western Allies. Denmark and Norway were occupied in 1940, and were also critical of Sweden which was seen as contributing to the prolongation of the war by continuing to trade with Germany.

Under a rising pressure from both sides and with no great power to support them, while the talks on their mutual defence cooperation failed, five states (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland and Finland) issued a joint declaration of neutrality in May 1938. When Germany offered a non-aggression treaty in 1939, Sweden, Finland and Norway declined while Denmark accepted.[630] But with the non-aggression treaty signed in 1939 between Germany and Russia the power balance in the region shifted significantly. Prior to the latter agreement the Nordic states assumed that two great powers in mutual opposition would check and balance each other. The new situation, however, meant that they might have given each other a free hand in the region.[631] In parallel to this, domestic political forces pushing for Sweden's renewed defence building were successful in promoting the concept of defence within the state's own borders. In 1940, the *Riksdag* promoted a law on the establishment of the House Guard. These were small conscript-based defence units accompanied by 'Lotta' units, which were called during the war to defend towns and industry facilities. A sense of community arose around them and, along with it, a stronger notion of relying on one's own forces instead of entering military alliances.[632]

Wahlbäck claims that, with the prospect of a new big conflict on the European soil, the Swedish population and main political parties showed enthusiasm for country's neutral

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[628] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 137.
[629] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 78.
[630] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 135.
[631] *Ibid*, p. 135.
[632] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 71.

position.[633] However, that enthusiasm rested on the false assumption that the situation would be identical to that from the First World War – Western allies and the Soviet Union on one side and Germany on the other – and that these forces would keep each other in checks and balances, thus also providing some sort of balance in the Nordic region. The non-aggression treaty between the Soviet Union and Germany from August 1939 proved them wrong, while the latter historical accounts also showed that Nordic countries were indeed right to fear some sort of a secret arrangement by way of which the two powers would give each other free hand in the Nordic region.[634] In spite of having re-armed in the 1930s, Swedish defence capabilities were rather limited.[635] Sweden issued a declaration of neutrality in relation to all hostilities on 1 September 1939, while a joint Scandinavian declaration of neutrality was issued by the governments of Denmark, Sweden and Norway two days later.

Malmborg has identified three occasions, connected or directly related to the Second World War, when Sweden made choices that were not fully in compliance with its neutrality position. The first occurred during the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union in 1939-1940 when, despite its public's strong sentiments in favour of Finland and the historical closeness between the two countries, Sweden did not provide Finland with direct military support and did not allow the passage of Allied forces to assist it. It did, however, help Finland by supplying it with war materials and volunteers (approximately 20,000 Swedish volunteers went to fight alongside the Finns) to the extent that its neutrality or non-belligerent status became incompatible with that form of support. [636]  In reaction to Soviet Union's harsh criticism, Swedish government responded by claiming that this was a local conflict, outside of the great-powers' rivalry in relation to which Sweden was indeed neutral. Sweden's main concern however was to avoid being drawn into the great powers' conflict which would inevitably occur after German retaliation should Sweden allow British assistance to Finland by way of its territory, in which case the Swedish soil would become a battlefield of big powers.[637]

The second and third instance of Sweden's war-time actions are related to concessions made in the form of free passage routes that the Swedish Government approved for German soldiers and Nazi war machinery. After Germany occupied Denmark and Norway in June 1940,

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[633] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 38-39.

[634] *Ibid*, p. 39.

[635] Logue, 'Sweden', p. 83.

[636] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 139, Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 78. Wahlbäck makes a reference to the body of 8,000 men making Swedish volunteer corps. Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 42.

[637] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 41-45.

and Sweden found itself surrounded with German-controlled territories, it had fewer opportunities to negotiate and reject German demands that came in the form of non-negotiable offers.[638] In June 1940 Germany demanded a free passage for soldiers on leave, war materials and ammunition through Sweden to Norway. After Germany attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941 and Finland sided with Germany, a request was made for Sweden to allow a free passage of soldiers from Norway to Finland. Both of these demands stirred disputes in the Swedish political cycles where Socialists where against any concessions potentially made to Germany, with strong criticism expressed by Östen Unden's as the chair of Foreign Affairs Committee in the Swedish Parliament. Pro-German political forces, or forces that feared German war machinery less than a potential war with Russia, had a strong advocate in King Gustav V. He made it clear on both occasions that he was in favour of Germany so as to avoid dragging Sweden into the war.[639] Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson commented about the failure of the policy of neutrality caused by the fact that Sweden could not afford to risk a war, and made a proposal that the Government should officially declare that the agreement on transit routes was a breach of posture of neutrality. The Government, however, never went that far.[640]

Sweden came under even stronger pressure to allow the passage of troops and armament after Germany's attack on Soviet Union in June 1941, when there was a demand for passage of the so-called Engelbrecht Division from Norway to Finland, which had sided with Germany. The Government expected even heavier requests from the German side after the attack on the Soviet Union and expected its neutrality policy to be compromised even more in the future. Deciding on the response to German demands caused the so-called 'Midsummer Crisis' in Sweden, where Social Democrats wanted to reject the demands and non-Socialists were in favour of agreeing with them.

Besides the transit routes, Sweden also hosted German anti-submarine nests and allowed aircraft that (officially) carried only mail to fly over its territory.[641] What Swedish authorities were mostly concerned with was that Hitler would attempt to intervene in their internal affairs in spite of concessions that were already given. In Wahlbäck's account, once the Swedes understood that Hitler had no plans to do so, their neutrality policy gained sustainability.[642] However, Swedish domestic political life suffered pressure at least on one occasion, in relation to

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[638] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 140-141.
[639] *Ibid*, pp. 138-141.
[640] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 49.
[641] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 79.
[642] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 55.

freedom of the press. As press in Sweden was reporting freely on the events connected to the war, and at least some of them had anti-German bias, Germany was afraid that their influence on public opinion might actually propel the Government to join the Western allies. There are records that Swedish Government, due to Germany's concerns, applied various forms of informal pressure on particular media.[643] However, the Swedish population was entirely anti-Nazi, and there were no significant pro-Nazi groups in the country.[644] The press never stopped attacking Nazi Germany and its leaders and the population grew more critical of the Government's stand, especially due to the worsening conditions in occupied Denmark and Norway.[645] Swedish approval of demands for the transport of men and armament resulted in temporary absence of the word 'neutrality' in the public discourse on Swedish foreign policy after June 1941.[646]

After a steady restoration of balance of power in 1942-1943, German's defeat in the battle of Stalingrad against the Red Army, Allies' victories in Northern Africa and the Mediterranean, and the entry of U.S. into the war after the attack on Pearl Harbour, the Allied Forces expected Sweden to exercise its neutrality in a more unbiased way and restrict concessions previously given to Germany. However, Sweden, operating with limited information and estimations of the most probable scenarios, did not feel entirely confident that German's invasion was unlikely. Reports were suggesting that Germany was preparing to launch a preventive war against Sweden, which according to historical records proved to be only partially true.[647] Nevertheless, the Government organised partial mobilisation of the Swedish armed forces in February 1942 and then again in 1943.

The Swedish Government found itself under strong pressure by the Allies, but also under pressure of domestic public and the Social Democratic federation of trade unions that protested in April 1943.[648] Under said pressure, the government reduced the trade with Germany based on the agreement signed with the Allies in September 1943, and kept it at a very low level from then on. They also terminated the agreement on the free passage of troops in July 1943. The Swedish public wanted concessions given to Germany to cease, but the government was more concerned with how their conduct of the policy of neutrality would be judged in the future. They also

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[643] *Ibid*, p. 55.

[644] Ogley, *The theory and practice of neutrality in the twentieth century,* p. 156.

[645] *Ibid*, p. 166.

[646] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 62.

[647] *Ibid*, p. 64.

[648] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 80.

wanted to avoid being viewed as a country that was changing sides to accommodate the developments in the field.[649]

After the Allies' landing in Normandy in June 1944, Germany finally ceased being a military threat for Sweden. The redirection of Sweden's foreign orientation was accompanied by the changes in its armed forces and intelligence structures, with the nomination of pro-Western officials and cooperation with the American and British services.[650] Sweden also invested significant diplomatic efforts into the signing of a separate peace agreement between Finland and the Soviet Union. It was of vital importance for Sweden to have independent Finland, a country on good terms with the Soviet Union, as a neighbour.[651] According to Baker Fox, what essentially saved Sweden from being dragged into the war was the democratic reputation of a country that kept sympathies and links with the Western powers in spite of concessions given to Germany, while Germany on the other side could not expect much more than an unwilling acceptance of their demands.[652] While essentially applying an 'anti-balance of power' strategy, Sweden was successful in persuading the opposing parties that they would not benefit much from forcing it into belligerence, and that they could actually push it to the opposing bloc by applying unreasonable pressure.[653]

Apparently, there was no general consensus over the course of Swedish foreign policy during the war. The general public was ideologically on the side of the Allied forces while the political and business elites were pro-German, owing to the cultural and linguistic closeness between the two countries but also due to false expectation born in the first years of the war that Germany would emerge as a victor.[654] Social Democrats were clearly against concessions in German's favour and were critical of the government's exercise of neutrality. Re-visited from today's perspective, there is consensus that the Swedish policy of neutrality during the Second World War was the most appropriate option for Sweden at the time.[655] However, scholars interested in that period are also clear that it was not just the policy of neutrality that kept

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[649] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 65.
[650] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 142.
[651] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 67.
[652] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States*, p. 144.
[653] *Ibid*, p. 146.
[654] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 81-82.
[655] *Ibid*, p. 81.

Sweden outside of the war, but the combination of political and geo-strategic interests that were beyond its control.[656]

The practical approach to the neutrality that Sweden exercised during the Second World War, compared to the more legalistic approach in the First World War, led to the mixed account of what neutrality actually was – a rational approach of a small state in proximity of great powers involved in a war, or an idealistic posture of a country that strived to promote sustainable peace and reconciliation in international relations? What is certain is that the account of neutrality in the Second World War, compared to that of the First, was far more challenging. This is due to the following facts: Sweden's neutral position was heavily compromised, of which it would be reminded later on in history, it was surrounded by occupied states, and Swedish citizens were plagued by a sense of fear that was much stronger than in the Great War.[657] Regardless, Sweden managed to stay outside of the hostilities in spite of all the pressures, mainly due to the efforts and achievements of its diplomatic network, while the neutrality policy gained broad public support as well as the support of the main political parties represented in the Parliament.

Authors belonging to different theoretical backgrounds have so far provided different accounts of the meaning and usage of Swedish neutrality, from realism to constructivism in International Relations. They have found traces of different accounts of neutrality in the way Sweden had exercised it during the two wars, from both pragmatic and utilitarian to a more utopian and idealistic position. For Swedish public, however, it was not terribly important to be presented with a clear idea of the ideological platforms based on which Sweden exercised this policy. What mattered was the fact that it managed to remain outside of the two world wars with no major human and territorial losses and with an economy that actually improved after the Second World War. Neutrality became intrinsically built into the memory of Swedes, along with mental and material separation from the 'Old Europe'.[658] The experience of war, suffering and aggression outside of Sweden also helped to build an inside *vs.* outside divide, where *folkhem* (society) had to be protected from hostile outside forces.[659] Regardless of the fact that Sweden's experience with the two world wars was linked with somewhat different practices of neutrality, by the end of 1945, as Malmborg claims, neutrality emerged as the national consensus ideology.[660] Popular attachment to neutrality came as a consequence, as some authors argue, of

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[656] *Ibid*, p. 83.
[657] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 72.
[658] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 145.
[659] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* pp. 82-83.
[660] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 146.

the citizens' false interpretation that it was neutrality, and not the skilful diplomacy behind it, that saved the country from wars.[661] This attachment to the 'myth of neutrality' is what caused it to become a constituent element of today's Swedish identity.

Regardless of the interpretation that prevailed, the Second World War taught Swedes a lesson on why to value neutrality policy sustained by military preparedness and flexible politics.[662] This led the country to an economically prosperous area, not the least due to extensive exports to the devastated Europe, but it also provided it with respectful military capacities including an air force that is in Europe second only to British.[663] Victory of democracies in the First World War, along with the Socialist revolution in Russia, had already paved the way for a particular combination of liberalism and social democracy in the form of Swedish 'middle way'.[664] Together with Sweden's successful practice of neutrality in the Second World War, this led to a strong connectivity of the ideas of social-liberal democracy and neutrality, to be anchored later on during the period after the Second World War. Both ideas were held and interpreted in the Social Democrats' program revolving around exactly these two values, and their mutual link, as the cornerstones of their platforms. However, their interpretation of Sweden as an example of the 'middle way' was met with criticism coming from Conservatives and Liberals in the 1950s; namely, they posited that the then current struggle in the international arena was not between two competing economic systems but between democracy and dictatorship, and that Sweden should clearly take the side of the democratic world.[665]

## 5.1.6. Neutrality in the Post-War Period: Active Neutrality and the Swedish Model

This section is devoted to the adjustments that policy of military neutrality experienced in the post-war period. Sweden combined its trademark policy with an active stand on a number of highly political issues on the international agenda which resulted in politics of active neutrality and the Swedish model. Here I also discuss different ideas of defence cooperation that emerged

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[661] Ann-Sofie Dahl, 'Activist Sweden: The last defender of non-alignment', in Dahl, A.-S and Hillmer, N. (eds), *Activism and (non)alignment: the relationship between foreign policy and security doctrine*, Conference papers 31, Stockholm: Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2002, pp. 139-150.

[662] Logue, 'Sweden', p. 85.

[663] *Ibid*, p. 86.

[664] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 143-144.

[665] Jacob Westberg, *Den nationella drömträdgården. Den stora berättelsen om den egna nationen i svenska och brittisk Europadebatt*, Stockholm Studies in Politics 94, Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2003, p. 332.

in the post-war period in order to show that strict military neutrality was not an exclusive course in the Swedish security-related decision making in that period of time.

In the post-war period Sweden remained consistently opposed to the bloc division in the realm of any new system of collective security. Its concern for regional defence cooperation was not perceived as contradictory to this. In May 1948, the Social-Democratic government that had succeeded the national unity government in 1945 emerged with the proposal of joint Scandinavian defence alliance. This proposal was to align the security policies of Sweden, Norway and Denmark, excluding Finland due to its agreement on special relations with the Soviet Union from 1948.[666] Sweden approached Norway and Denmark with this proposal aiming to bring them closer to regional cooperation and at the same time prevent their entry into the Western defence alliance which was in the making. Swedish concern in the latter case was that once Norway and Denmark are in the Western defence alliance, and Finland is bound by the agreement with the Soviet Union, it would be difficult for Sweden to avoid being drawn into the next potential European war.

Since the Second World War had proven that only the policy of armed neutrality was actually successful, and since Sweden emerged from it with protected military capacities, the proposal relied on the prospect of joint armed neutrality with further defence build-up.[667] The Commission, established with the purpose to investigate the modalities of the union, worked in the years 1948-1949 and came up with a concrete form of cooperation. It did not envisage an integrated command but instead proposed close coordination regarding air surveillance, mining, transport and standardisation of military material. As the main threat it identified the Soviet Union launching an attack for the purpose of gaining control of the Scandinavian Peninsula.[668]

What prevented the realisation of this proposal was the same factor that had prevented closer security and defence Scandinavian cooperation earlier. Norway was the strongest in pointing out that, despite geographical and other factors working in favour of such cooperation, Scandinavian countries had different security concerns. Norway was largely concerned that the formation of proposed alliance would not guarantee a donation of military equipment from the U.S. which it deemed necessary, while at the same time it did not believe that Sweden could

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[666] Finland signed Pact of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union in 1948. In included obligation of consultations and mutual military assistance should security of any party come in danger. It was replaced by a new treaty signed in autumn 1991 which did not contain any article of military assistance.
[667] Logue, 'Sweden', p. 87.
[668] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 149.

provide the necessary materials.[669] In Norway's view, Scandinavian security cooperation had to be linked to the emerging security system established by the victor powers from the Second World War under the umbrella of the U.S.'s military support. From the Sweden's point of view, this was not acceptable as the overarching theme of the proposed alliance had to be non-alignment with third parties. Therefore, although this proposal partially represented a departure from the strict policy of neutrality, it also aimed to preserve the trademark of the Swedish posture maintained through two world wars, by forming a neutral regional union.[670]

Not only were the two approached counterparts suspicious of the merits of the proposal, but it also attracted opposition from both great powers which were already working on the formation of antagonistic ideological, political and military blocs. The Soviet Union saw the Swedish proposal as inevitably leading to links with the Western alliance, in one way or another, while the U.S. were even more openly hostile regarding the plan. In a line with the U.S.' general non-benevolent attitude towards neutrality in light of the Cold War hostilities, neutralisation of the region was seen to be undermining its defence efforts and possibly inviting Soviet intervention in the region. American diplomatic apparatus was put into motion to convince regional states to join the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which Iceland, Norway and Denmark did in 1949, and to warn Sweden about any possible security, political and economic risks associated with isolation.[671]

Although this plan failed to materialise, some form of security cooperation remained between the Scandinavian countries and was even put into practice, allegedly on an informal basis where contacts between military personnel assured coordination in time of crisis.[672] Malmborg states that this non-institutionalised regional cooperation was one of the essential pillars of the Swedish security policies in the post-war period and during the Cold War. The other two were commitment to neutrality and involvement in the UN collective security system.[673]

Despite the failure of the idea of a joint defence alliance, closely interlinked security policies of four Nordic countries formed a security regime called the 'Nordic Balance'. Although never given much academic attention, its notion was prominent in policy discussions on Swedish and regional security throughout the Cold War. Nordic Balance meant that Norway's and

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[669] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 104.
[670] Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 78-79.
[671] Agius, *The Social Cconstruction of Swedish Neutrality,* p. 103.
[672] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 149.
[673] *Ibid*, p. 151.

Denmark's membership in the Alliance on the one side, especially bearing in mind their special status and limitations of not having to host nuclear weapons and armed troops in peace time, Finland's (involuntary) siding with the Soviet Union on the other side, and Swedish armed neutrality in the middle, created checks and balances between the Cold War rival powers. The super-powers were not able to expect that tightening of relations with regional states (as the Soviet Union attempted with Finland) or military presence in the region would go without repercussions in the form of reciprocal moves from the other side. In this system of relations Finland's independence and neutrality were sustained by Swedish neutrality, and all four regional states were left to work freely on the development of their socio-economic and political systems. This project could be viewed as an extension of pan-Scandinavianism which was present centuries ago in the region. Logue concludes that Nordic Balance thus rested on three major factors: no competing power saw any interest in increasing its military build-up in the region, nor did Norway as NATO member have an interest in provoking an arms race on its own soil; all regional states were/are stable democracies, with predictable foreign policies and no sudden changes were to be expected abruptly, and finally, the credibility and sustainability of Sweden's neutrality served as a buffer between NATO and the Soviet Union.[674]

The role that Sweden played as a contributor to the regional security setting happens to be only one of the functions its neutrality served during the Cold War. The most typical were services usually subscribed to neutral states, such are bridge-building, mediation and hosting international organisations and negotiations. While these services are easily recognisable in the foreign policies of Switzerland, Austria and Finland, Sweden's position in the Cold War period is strongly associated with the doctrine of active neutrality. Acting from this position, which seemed not to contain any internal inconsistencies, Sweden appeared as a contributor in the ideological arena in terms of pacifist standpoints and ideas that strove to bridge ideological and political differences between the two blocs from a high moral ground. An example of this is the launch of the 'nuclear-free zone' idea, presented by Minister of Foreign Affairs Unden before the United Nations in 1960. The Swedish standpoint was that countries that did not possess nuclear weapons at the time should abstain from acquiring them, provided that nuclear powers stop developing them. This is just one example of many similar initiatives that Sweden took from the position of a small state speaking from a moral high ground and with prospects of offering a vision of peaceful and sustainable international forum supportive of both big and small powers. Acting from that platform, Sweden sporadically employed a critical approach to various conflicted parties. In the period 1976-1982, when non-Socialist governments were in power,

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[674] Logue, 'Sweden', p. 89.

Sweden was especially vocal in criticising others for pursing aggressive policies.[675] Although Sweden used a critical tone toward states whose policies appeared to harm global solidarity and peace more often than other neutral states such as for example Switzerland and Finland, this did not harm its attractiveness as mediator and bridge-builder in the international arena.[676]

Although Sweden was ideologically and politically clearly associated with the camp of Western liberal democracies, to which it was also believed to have contributed in strategic, military and intelligence terms, the idea of a "nuclear free zone" was politically closer to what the Soviet Union appealed to in its arms race with the West than the other way around. The idea was completely contrary to what NATO stood for at the moment due to its predominance in terms of nuclear weapons and disadvantage when it comes to the conventional forces. By being vocal about this idea regardless of what was to become of it, Sweden secured a place in the arena of ideas, portraying itself as a relevant although small actor. The benefits were also clearly presented to both Western and Eastern camps. To Moscow and the Eastern socialist countries, Sweden appeared as a Western country advocating for socialist values and launching some of the ideas that were obviously associated with the Soviet Union' standing in the international arena.[677] The peak of Sweden's active neutrality stand bearing Palme's trademark was his initiative for the establishment of the Independent UN Commission on Disarmament and Security in 1982. His general rhetoric on common security was contrary to the U.S.'s attempt to exclude the Soviet Union from what was actually an acceptable discourse in the international framework. The Soviet Union's new political leadership responded well to the common security idea.[678]

It is important to note that Swedish active neutrality approach in the international arena was based on a firm domestic consensus which was built around the Swedish model and a combination of liberal economy and social democracy in the Swedish political, economic and social life. Aguis believes that the active neutrality stance in the Swedish foreign policy was just a reflection of strong ideas that were deeply socialised in the Swedish society owing to the Social Democrats' post-war political dominance.[679] The Swedish model captured the ideas of solidarity, a welfare state and economic growth, which were promoted further under the umbrella of the Labour Movement and its influence on numerous areas of political and social life, from housing

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[675] Ulf Bjereld, 'Critic or Mediator? Sweden in World Politics, 1945-90', *Journal of Peace Research*, 32 (1), 1995: pp. 23-35, p. 28.
[676] *Ibid*, pp.32-34.
[677] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* pp. 164-169.
[678] *Ibid*, pp. 163-164.
[679] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* pp. 90-94.

to youth policies.[680] Not only did this model address the problem of societal inequalities by rejecting the liberal notion of equal opportunity based on which competition is created among equals, but it also produced a specific set of relational patterns in the Swedish society.[681] As Agius claims, Social Democrats were so dominant in the political sphere because they captured the ideals of Swedish identity and society that people get socialized into, and thus even non-socialist groups were able to relate to them and accept them as valid discourse. This served to create an inclusive social and political culture.[682] However, this was not achieved just by 'preaching the word'. The party's ideological background made it if not pacifist then with a strong anti-militarist standing and an ambivalent relationship toward traditional defence and nationalism. Social Democrats did not have much support from conservative intellectuals and officers' corps, and it is only through the exercise of armed neutrality and the successful handling of issues of national security during the Cold War that Social Democrats reconciled with other actors in the Swedish political life.[683]

When it comes to security policies, the Swedish Model incorporated three main factors: non-participation in military alliances, strong and independent defence, and popular support for neutrality.[684] All three were aimed to establish credible neutrality, which would not provoke suspicion and uncertainty in the great powers and regional states and would allow Sweden an active international role. That active role implied a 'third way' between the East and the West, with credible approach to neutrality. Although active neutrality is mostly associated with Palme's work and vocal international standing, this policy was actually established much earlier by Unden, who was the one to link neutrality with the Social Democrats' reformative, consensual and legalistic traditions based on which it was then transmitted to the international arena.[685]

One of the elements of credible neutrality that should not be forgotten is independent defence industry, which is important for the profile of a credible neutral even when it comes at high financial costs. This was especially true for Sweden, which after the Second World War

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[680] *Ibid*, 92-94.

[681] *Ibid*, p. 97.

[682] *Ibid*, p. 94.

[683] Gunnar Åselius, 'Swedish Strategic Culture after 1945', *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association,* Vol. 40 (1), 2005: pp. 25-44.

[684] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 104.

[685] *Ibid*, p. 105.

came under American sanctions related to the trade in war equipment.[686] During the Cold War, Swedish defence relied on domestic industry for approximately 70% of its inventory.[687]

Although somewhat reluctant about the new form of collective security after its experience with the League of Nations, Sweden embraced the UN membership as the international platform on which to exercise its active neutrality based on the core ideas of solidarity, consensus and reform of international relations. Cautious of the possibility of bloc formations within the UN, Sweden kept a low profile during its first Security Council membership (1957-58) despite the fact that a Swede, Dag Hammarskjöld, acted as Secretary General of the UN in the period 1956-61. The changing and broadening agenda of issues addressed by the UN allowed Sweden to embrace a much more active position in its second Security Council term (1975-76). Issues regarding which Sweden seemed best suited to practice its active neutrality were: peacekeeping, mediation, disarmament and development.[688] Sweden successfully acted on all of these issues, with trademark achievements especially in nuclear disarmament initiatives and conflict mediation.[689] Doing this, Sweden acted from a position of a small state and in solidarity with the weaker actors in the international system, the so-called Third World countries belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement. According to Arne Ruth, the policy of internationalism become an undisputable element of the Swedish national ideology, as equality at home and justice abroad were perceived as mutually supportive and complementary values.[690] The Swedish position was that of high moral ground, allowed to it by its neutral approach and non-participation in the bloc politics. The peaks of that position were achieved during the Palme era, when concern for human rights, international law, conflict resolution and disarmament stood highly on Sweden's agenda.[691] According to some, Sweden claimed the position of a "moral super-power" which aimed to make the world a better place by placing the emphasis on international law, social and economic rights, and small state solidarity.[692] This

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[686] Logue, 'Sweden', p. 94.

[687] Nils Andrén, 'Sweden: Neutrality, Defence and Disarmament', in *The European Neutrals in International Affairs*, Hanspeter Neuhold and Hans Thalberg (eds), p. 199.

[688] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 108.

[689] Andrén, 'Sweden: Neutrality, Defence and Disarmament'.

[690] Arne Ruth, 'The Second New Nation: The Mythology of Modern Sweden', *Daedalus*, 113 (2), Nordic Voices, 1984: pp. 53-96, p. 71.

[691] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 115.

[692] Ann-Sofie Dahl, 'Sweden: Once a Moral Superpower, Always a Moral Superpower?', *International Journal*, Vol. 61 (4), 2006: pp. 895-908, p. 897.

inevitably led Sweden to occasional conflicts with big powers, of which the most prominent was its critical position toward the U.S. during the Vietnam War.[693]

### 5.1.7. The Issue of Neutrality as Sweden Moved Toward EU Membership

In the following chapter I discuss adjustments that politics of military neutrality survived while Sweden embraced accession to the EU. Swedish leaders had to provide the public sound explanation what would be the implications of the accession process to the military neutrality that was already strongly rooted in the narrative of 'Swedishness'. At the same time, they had to accommodate demands of ambitious joint projects in the area of security and defence that the EU was already embracing at the time.

In the post-war period, one of the biggest challenges to Swedish neutrality – in the form of non-alignment policy from 1992 – was caused by the need to address the possibility of Swedish membership in the European Economic Community (EEC). Economically heavily dependent on trade, Sweden addressed the issue primarily from the aspect of its trade and economic relations. While the economic reasons spoke dominantly in favour of potential membership, the main hampering factor was the Swedish neutrality policy to which the country's population had become attached.[694] While the Swedish industry, together with Conservatives and Liberals as the main proponents of membership, worked actively in favour of such a move, the government saw the incompatibility of crucial Swedish stands with the potential European integration developments. This was especially true in regards to the European Monetary Union and Political Cooperation. The assessment that EEC would not approve Swedish abstention from its policies terminated the formal negotiations between Sweden and the EEC in 1971. The above discussion was abandoned for a decade, but the issue of economic integration appeared prominently in Swedish internal politics once again in the 1980s with the establishment of the European Common Market. The policy that lifted the barriers of trade and communication

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[693] Ruth, 'The Second New Nation: The Mythology of Modern Sweden', pp. 72-73.

[694] Hanna Ojanen together with Gunilla Herolf and Rutger Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy: ambiguity at work*, Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CFSP, 6, Helsinki: Ulkopoliittinen instituutti, 2000, pp. 168-170.

between individual European countries was perceived as a move that would be disadvantageous for the Swedish industry.[695]

The debate on the possibility of membership revolved mostly around the economic reasons and neutrality, but foreign and security changes in the external environment also had a significant impact. The most influential external shock of the time was certainly the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. It caused a dramatic change in the structure of the international system, now without a bloc division within which Sweden could play its intermediary or bridge-building role the way it had been doing for decades. It was the uncertainty of not belonging to the new forms of economic and political integrations and the economic disadvantages associated therewith that speeded up the developments in Swedish politics in favour of joining the European integration project.

The debate in the Parliament became quite vigorous in 1990 when members of the Government were confronted with questions of compatibility between the policy of neutrality and possible membership in the EEC, especially in light of the fact that it was developing its own common foreign and security policy. While assuring the Swedish public and political opposition that it was possible for Sweden to keep its long-term policy of neutrality and simultaneously belong to the European community, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sten Andersson was also expressing scepticism that members of the EEC would be moving toward common defence any time soon. However, he stated that it served Sweden's interest to secure its place in the common European framework of cooperation. On that occasion, he said:

> "Preconditions for Swedish membership in the EC must be examined in light of the changes in Europe and developments in the Community. At the same time, even with the new situation in Europe, our policy of neutrality will remain a fundamental factor for our foreign policy and security.
>
> I believe it is probable that we will be able to take the step toward membership in the EC and maintain our neutrality. But, as the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs pointed out in its report on Sweden and Western European Integration, a decision to do so must be based on an overall assessment of the foreign policy and security factors. Developments within the EC are, of course, among these.
>
> In the final analysis, it is a question of our will to contribute to the new European cooperation and of our capability to influence our environment. I consider it natural that we should actively

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[695] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy*, p. 170.

participate in cooperation whenever we can, not least in order to work for our broader goals relating to international solidarity and cooperation… (Minister of Foreign Affairs Sten Andersson, *Riksdag*, on 30 November 1990)".[696]

As part of the economic prevention package, in October 1990 the Government proposed to the Parliament that Sweden apply for EC membership as soon as possible.[697] In December 1990, the Parliament endorsed the application while simultaneously preserving the policy of neutrality. Riksdag's declaration from June 1991 found neutrality and EU membership to be compatible.[698] However, the Swedish application submitted on 1 July 1991 by Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson contained no references to neutrality.[699]

Confronted with the questions of confidence in Swedish neutrality, especially in light of the revealed allegations that Sweden had secret defence agreements with the U.S. during the Cold War, representatives of the Government reassured their opponents, as well as Swedish citizens in general, of the validity of its policy of non-participation in alliances which lies at the core of the policy of neutrality.

"The background of this question appears to be information in the press to the effect that, from 1952, under a secret defence agreement with the United States, Sweden was systematically engaged in double-dealing in pursuit of its policy of neutrality… The agreement with the reported content does not exist and has never existed.

In my view, it would be most unfortunate if this debate were allowed to obscure the essential point, namely that for a long time non-participation in alliances has been and still remains fundamental to our foreign and security policies. Non-participation in alliances is at the very centre of our policy of neutrality. This is true particularly in a period characterised by dramatic changes in the world around us." (Minister for Foreign Affairs Sten Andersson, *Riksdag*, 13 November 1990)[700]

In the same response, Sten Andersson, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, also referred to the changing international environment, to which Swedish neutrality was being adjusted as it was not a static policy. But, although the policy was being adjusted to the dynamics of a changing world, the Minister reminded the audience that it also had a long historical tradition and served

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[696] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1990, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1991, pp. 290-291.

[697] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy*, p. 172.

[698] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 184.

[699] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy*, p. 173.

[700] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1990, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1991, p. 193.

the self-interests of Sweden because it contributed to security and stability in the wider European region.

> "At the same time, it is also important to remember that Sweden's policy of neutrality is not just a product of the cold war. It is based on a long historic tradition and has contributed over a considerable period of time to calm and stability in our part of the world. Even with changed external conditions, this is a policy which remains rooted in a strong Swedish self-interest." (Minister for Foreign Affairs Sten Andersson, *Riksdag*, 13 November 1990)[701]

The same view was still present in 1991, in the Government of Social-Democrats.

> "Our policy of neutrality, underpinned by a strong and all-round defence, will remain the foundation of our security. We will ourselves decide what is compatible with our policy of neutrality. When the world around us undergoes radical changes, the prerequisites for our own peacetime foreign policy will also change." (Statement of Government policy in the 1991 parliamentary debate on foreign affairs, 20 February 1991)[702]

Jakob Gustavsson also argues that those structural reasons were the driving force of Sweden's rapprochement to the EC.[703] In his analysis, those were mainly the changes in the international balance of power caused by the events in Eastern Europe and the USSR, and the domestic economic crisis in Sweden which also had international origins. However, according to him, the factor that explains the timing of the changes that took place in Sweden's foreign policy course is the individual decision-maker, i.e. Prime Minister Carlsson, his personal learning process, and the notion of a crisis that Sweden was facing in the changing environment.[704]

At the same time, although clinging to the neutrality policy Swedish decision makers did not advocate neutrality or non-alignment as a security strategy that ought to be embraced by Central and East European States. While Sweden demonstrated a strong belief in a system of collective security made up of organisations such as the EU as a political community, the CSCE and the UN, its leadership was cautious about the division of states into those that belong to military alliances and those that do not. The following statement supports that concern.

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[701] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1990, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1991, p. 194.

[702] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1991, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1992, p. 14.

[703] Jakob Gustavsson, 'How Should We Study Foreign Policy Change?', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 34(1), 1999: pp. 73-95.

[704] *Ibid*, p. 88-89.

"It is possible that the number of non-aligned states in Europe will increase during the 1990s. Moreover, with the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact this is in fact already happening. But Sweden had chosen its security policy because it is to Sweden's advantage and does not regard non-participation in alliances as a model for the security policy of other states. They must draw up their security policies on the basis of what is advantageous to their own security. It is not the number of non-aligned states that is the most important, but rather to create a European security system which would make military alliances superfluous in the long term." (Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Pierre Schori, Stockholm, 7 June 1990)[705]

The discussion on the character of the union Sweden was joining was quite prominent in the EU membership debate. Sweden's political figures leading the country toward membership were convincing both the public and their political opponents that it was a political and economic union rather than a defence community, as joining a union with strong security and defence prerogatives clearly would have been less appealing to the Swedish public. Nevertheless, discussions on the character of the EU in Sweden did not neglect the fact that there were security motives behind the establishment of the Union. However, while not denying profound security motives behind the establishment of the EU, Swedish decision-makers also asked if the defence community was still essential for the creation of a political union and whether an economic and monetary union would be a sufficient level of ambition for the EU.[706]

This view, however, changed in 1992 when a political shift led to a significantly different position toward both the prospects of Sweden joining the community and the assessment of what that community was about. In response to the interpellation in May 1992 concerning Swedish neutrality and the possibility of joining the EU, Prime Minister Carl Bildt referred to the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs from the same year. The Report pointed to how the shift in the security situation in Europe and the emergence of new security threats changed the position of Sweden in terms of security integration.

"In this new situation, Sweden's security policy is characterised, on the contrary, by active and full involvement in efforts to achieve the goals now shared by all the states of Europe…"

Full participation in European cooperation, at this stage with the CSCE, and the following membership, within the European Union as well, is indeed indispensable if a country is to have

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[705] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1990, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1991, p. 243.
[706] Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Pierre Schori, Stockholm, 7 June 1990, *Ibid*, p. 240.

any influence on the developments and be able to contribute actively to creating a new order of peace and security on our continent." (Prime Minister Carl Bildt, *Riksdag*, 25 May 1992)[707]

In its statement on the Swedish security policy from spring 1992, the same Committee did not endorse the motion proposed by the Leftist Party and some Social Democrats from 1990 about Sweden seeking membership in the EC while retaining its policy of neutrality.[708] The Prime Minister himself endorsed the prospect of Sweden's active security policy by referring to the state's involvement in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and linking it to the new security endeavour undertaken by the EC. While doing so, he also drew attention to dubious moral standards if Sweden was to support - while simultaneously remaining outside of the Union - the European integration of other countries for the purpose of their facilitating peace and prosperity on the European continent, by saying 'What is wrong for us surely cannot be right for others.'[709]

The neutrality policy further evolved in 1992, when it was rephrased as a 'policy of non-alignment in peace, in order to enable the country to remain neutral in time of war'. During the accession negotiations, which were finalised on 1 March 1994 and were led on the side of Sweden by the non-socialist Bildt coalition Government, neutrality as the Swedish security policy was addressed only occasionally. The government assured the public that the country would not compromise its policy of non-participation in military alliances, but it also stressed that the changed circumstances allowed a re-definition of the state's traditional policy which was about to gain a European outlook.[710] This move was interpreted as a strategic shift in the course of Swedish foreign policy. There are views that it was rather a combination of economic necessity and domestic policy that led the country's leadership to apply for membership.[711] Other interpretations stress more profound tensions between the idea of neutrality and that of belonging to the Western security community, which could be viewed as a struggle between two competing narrations of Sweden and Swedes.[712] Agius argues that this struggle came together with the shaking foundations of the Swedish Model that happened during the 1970s. Businesses and conservatives challenged the premises of the Social-Democratic ideological dominance in the Swedish society by insisting on more competition-based economy, more private initiative and

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[707] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy, 1992, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1993, p. 220.

[708] *Ibid*, p. 222.

[709] *Ibid*, p. 223.

[710] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy,* pp. 176-179.

[711] Dahl, 'Sweden and the Baltic Sea Region', p. 143.

[712] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 202.

less reliance on the state.[713] This, in turn, challenged the ideological foundations not only of the Swedish Model but also those of neutrality, since the two were resting on the same ideological grounds. They were not challenged simultaneously in the process of self-identity transformation in relation to the European integration.[714] While strong popular attachment to the position of neutrality was one of the factors that hampered Sweden's membership in the EU even before 1995, it seems that the country had after all managed to invest some of the aspects of that politics into the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy.[715]

### 5.1.8. Sweden and the PfP

The next section is devoted to the analysis of how Sweden accommodated its military neutrality/non-alignment with the participation in the PfP and other forms of extensive cooperation with NATO.

Following the results of referendum held in November 1994, when 52% of voters voted yes and 47% against the membership, Sweden became an EU member state in January 1995. This was followed by the observer status in the Western European Union, prior to which Sweden joined the NATO Partnership for Peace Programme (PfP) and the Planning and Review Process (PARP).[716]

Although Sweden had not pursued membership in NATO, it was not a reluctant partner to the Alliance. It swiftly joined the PfP immediately after it was formed in 1994 and became engaged in a number of activities, cooperating with the Alliance on both 'soft' and 'hard'

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[713] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 138.

[714] *Ibid*, p. 139.

[715] The example of this is Swedish-Finnish Initiative that resulted into the introduction of the Petersberg Tasks into the Amsterdam Treaty which gave a 'demilitarized' outlook to the Treaty. Rieker, 2002, according to Chiara Ruffa, 'Sweden', in H. Biehl et al. (eds.), *Strategic Cultures in Europe,* Schriftenreihe des Zentrums für Militärgeschichte und Sozialwissenschaften der Bundeswehr, DOI 10.1007/978-3-658-01168-0_27, Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden 2013, pp. 343-357, p. 349.

[716] Sweden joined the PfP in May 1994 upon its Parliament's decision supported by all parliamentary parties. The PfP was seen as a tool for operations of the UN and the CSCE and this move has not been seen to compromise Swedish non-alignment nor was it seen as a step towards NATO membership. Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy*, p. 184-185.

issues.[717] In contrast to what might be assumed, Swedish participation in the PfP was not controversial since it seemed to go along with its tradition of participation in collective security through the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the UN.[718] However, what was new in the 1990s compared to the Cold War was that the Swedish Armed Forces actually participated in the conflict resolution aspects of peacekeeping that might have had direct impact on Swedish security. This was the case with the conflict in Bosnia, which caused a massive inflow of refugees into the country at the time when Sweden was participating first in UNPROFOR- and then NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) in the Balkan country following the war.[719] As a result, the tasks of territorial defence and international cooperation were interlinked on the agenda of the Swedish Armed Forces. In contrast to the claims that this represents a radical shift in the direction of the Swedish security policy, these actions might rather be viewed as adaptation to the changes in the environment at the beginning of the 1990s.[720]

Sweden established a diplomatic mission to NATO in 1997 and, one year later, announced – together with Finland – that they were willing to contribute to the Western European Union (WEU) military operations.[721] Participation in NATO-led crisis management operations gradually replaced the original practice of participation in UN missions only.[722] Prominent Swedish involvement in NATO-led operations came in parallel with the enforcement of regional defence cooperation under the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO), created in 2009 as a new form of traditionally close political and defence cooperation among the Nordic states.[723] One of the views on the most recent developments in the Swedish security policy is that cooperation with NATO and the unilateral declaration of solidarity of 2009, besides increasing both the operability of the Swedish Armed Forces and the country's political capital, is aimed at

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[717] Magnus Petersson, 'NATO and the EU 'Neutrals' – Instrumental or Value-Oriented Utility?' In H. Edström, J.H. Matlary and M. Petersson (eds), *NATO: The Power of Partnership*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 112-130.

[718] Pernille Rieker*, Europeanization of National Security Identity: The EU and the changing security identities of the Nordic states*, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 71.

[719] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy*, p. 220.

[720] 'The politics of promotive adaptation' would be a more fitting label, according to: Kjell Engelbrekt, *Security Policy Reorientation in Peripheral Europe, A Perspectivist Approach*, University of Stockholm, 2001, p. 105.

[721] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 171.

[722] Justyna Gotkowska, 'Sitting on the Fence. Swedish Defence Policy and the Baltic Sea Region', Centre for Eastern Studies, No.33, Warsaw, 2013, p. 12.

[723] On the NORDEFCO: http://www.nordefco.org/the-basics-about-nordefco (Accessed on 13 February 2017).

safeguarding NATO's security guarantees should the need arise regardless of the fact that Sweden is not a member of the Alliance.[724]

The above mentioned developments were accompanied by a change in the language used by Sweden's leaders when discussing state's security policies and concrete strategic and legislative changes that have been introduced. Malmborg discusses a sharp difference between the discourse, or absence thereof, on NATO before and after 1989. Prior to 1989, NATO was not discussed in Sweden as a contributor to collective security, which was viewed as the realm of the UN and the CSCE. Opening a debate about NATO implied compromising the position of neutrality and ascribing a collective security value to it. After 1989, however, it became quite common to talk about NATO and the U.S. as guarantors of peace and security in Europe, as well as about their relevance for Swedish security.[725] Still, the CSCE was perceived as the main pan-European forum contributing to the security and stability in Europe and beyond.[726]

As early as in 1999 the Government's Defence Committee was close to proposing that the reference to neutrality in war be abandoned, but a consensus concerning this issue could not be reached.[727] In 2001, Persson's Government announced that it would change the 1992 security doctrine to stress a more cooperative approach to security. The new bill kept the reference to non-alignment but stated that Sweden would not remain neutral in the case of war in its immediate surroundings and an attack on EU member states.[728] In 2003, *Riksdag* introduced a new bill on terrorism in line with the EU legislation.[729] The 1996 Defence Resolution stressed the importance of international employment of Swedish forces.[730] The internationalisation of the Swedish Armed Forces was indeed under way since 1989, when the Swedish Armed Forces International Command was established to recruit and train members of the Swedish Armed Forces for participation in peace-keeping missions.[731]

The Defence Bill, which covers a period of five years (2016-2020), states that Sweden shall enforce its security and defence in solidarity with others, preventing 'war and the rise of threats to Swedish, Nordic, Baltic and European security', supporting UN efforts, assuming

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[724] Gotkowska, 'Sitting on the Fence. Swedish Defence Policy and the Baltic Sea Region', pp. 17-19.
[725] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 173.
[726] *Ibid,* pp. 174-175.
[727] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy*, p. 188.
[728]
[729] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 196.
[730] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-alignment and European security policy,* p. 204.
[731] *Ibid*, p. 206.

responsibilities within the EU membership and developing military capabilities through cooperation with NATO.[732]

Cooperation with NATO has been already raised to a high level, since Sweden holds the status of Enhanced Opportunity Partner. Although concrete intentions and implications of this status remain vague due to the fact that this programme is loosely structured, it nevertheless indicates a wish for closer cooperation.[733] Swedish leaders themselves have offered stronger political messages of their willingness to maintain the operational and political closeness to NATO through Swedish continuous participation in NATO missions. Sweden had contributed to every major NATO intervention after the end of the Cold War that was supported by the UN mandate.[734] Among others, Sweden also contributed to NATO's Libya operation in 2011 by sending its combat air force Gripen jets, and by being the only non-NATO and non-Arab League member to participate in the no-fly zone.[735] Robert Egnell writes that despite Sweden's long neutrality/non-alignment tradition, its political parties – with the exception of Democrats – and the popular opinion were surprisingly united around swift and strong support for Swedish participation in this operation.[736] According to him, one of the factors that caused such a united position favouring Swedish participation in a combat mission, besides the tradition of international peace-keeping and humanitarianism, was the somewhat hawkish mood of Swedish citizens when it comes to promoting democracy and human rights elsewhere.[737] This is in line with the Swedish strategic culture which favours a strong moralistic stand of the obligation to stop crimes against humanity, if necessary also by military force.[738] Nevertheless, participation in NATO operations brings tangible political and operational benefits to Sweden, while the involvement of a traditionally neutral state also boosts the legitimacy of NATO operations. Notwithstanding Sweden's tradition of participating in peace-keeping and peace-enforcement

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[732] Sweden's Defence Policy 2016 to 2020, the Government of Sweden, April 2015, available at: http://www.government.se/49c007/globalassets/government/dokument/forsvarsdepartementet/sweden_defence_poli cy_2016_to_2020 (Accessed on: 15 January 2017).
[733] Ian Anthony and Carrie Weintraub, 'Closing Sweden's Military Security Deficit: the National Debate on NATO Membership', Research Paper No 144, NATO Defence College, March 2018, p. 10.
[734] Robert Egnell, 'The Swedish Experience: Overcoming the Non–NATO-Member Conundrum', in *Precision and Purpose: Airpower in the Libyan Civil War*, edited by Karl P. Mueller, Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2015, pp. 309-339, p. 313.
[735] Fredrik Doeser, 'Sweden's Participation in Operation Unified Protector: Obligations and Interests', *International Peacekeeping*, 21 (5), 2014: pp. 642–657, p. 642.
[736] Egnell, 'The Swedish Experience', pp. 311-315.
[737] *Ibid*, pp. 313-314.
[738] Fredrik Doeser, 'Finland, Sweden and Operation Unified Protector: The impact of strategic culture', *Comparative Strategy*, 35 (4), 2016: pp. 284-297, p. 288.

operations, this decision was also backed by a tangible self-interest security motive. According to Fredrik Doeser, participation in NATO-led operations brings the benefit of improving Sweden's crisis management capacities including the interoperability of its armed forces.[739] As Egnell concludes, the trend of Swedish participation in NATO missions (with the UN mandate), including both moralistic and material motives behind it, is expected to continue.[740]

Sweden did not support the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999. For Malmborg, Sweden's stand on the issue was somewhere between the old-fashioned neutrality, in terms of insisting that each campaign have a UN or OSCE mandate, and the moralistic rhetoric which Sweden employed on that occasion. While opposing the campaign, Swedish leaders also stressed that the country belonged to the Atlantic security community.[741]

Tomas Bertelman's Report from the Inquiry on Sweden's International Defence Cooperation from 2014 points to the limitations of this position, where Sweden finds itself strongly identified with NATO but is left without joint protection guaranteed by the membership.[742] Moreover, as stated in this Report, whose preparation was required by the Ministry of Defence, not only is the current Swedish position not helping the country bridge the gap between its Armed Forces' capabilities and tasks, it is also confusing to its international partners.[743] The Report also points to many limitations of alternative security relations that Sweden is found in, NORDEFCO and the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) being the most direct examples, which still fall short of offering that which only an alliance membership can provide – assurance, commitment and guarantees of mutual assistance against external enemies. According to Bertelman, although the international security cooperation had brought some obvious benefits for the Swedish defence, in terms of capability increase and some

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[739] Doeser, 'Sweden's Participation in Operation Unified Protector', p. 649.

[740] Egnell, 'The Swedish Experience', p. 315.

[741] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* pp. 182-183.

[742] 'International Defence Cooperation. Efficiency, Solidarity, Sovereignty', Report from the Inquiry on Sweden's International Defence Cooperation, Fö 2013:B, Ministry of Defence, Stockholm, 2014. Available at: http://www.government.se/contentassets/5c39a5fe2c2745f18c8e42322af4fbc4/international-defence-cooperation---efficiency-solidarity-sovereignty (Accessed: 20 January 2017).

[743] '…for reasons of solidarity we are prepared to contribute to NATO's preventive activities in our neighbourhood, but for reasons of sovereignty we do not want to accept the aspect of this commitment that other participating countries see as the main motive for such collaboration, i.e. the joint, collective protection. It is a fact that in the world around us this attitude is perceived as puzzling and surprising.' 'International Defence Cooperation. Efficiency, Solidarity, Sovereignty', 2014, p. 70.

savings, its overall effect remains marginal and does not solve the above-mentioned gap between what the Swedish defence forces are required to do and what they actually *can* do.[744]

The historical passage from the 17th century onwards foremost presents a long and complex yet convincing track-record of military neutrality/non-alignment that Sweden exercised in the past centuries. The birth of the policy was deeply influenced by a contextual setting with the impact of both external and internal factors that interplayed and resulted in what seems to be a logical choice for a maritime country aiming to protect the trade and transit routes on which it was dependent. Even more so, neutrality at the time seemed to go hand-in-hand with a more profound choice of a state that gave up its great power status and ambitions and decided to invest into internal developments. Once rooted, neutrality was not easy to defend, especially not against the risks of the two world wars. On the occasion of the both world wars Sweden demonstrated a pragmatic and utilitarian usage of its neutrality which was still successfully defended and saved the country from devastating consequences that other countries experienced. Owing to that, neutrality proved its pragmatic value and all further references to it keep reminding everybody that it is simply a politics that served Sweden well. As discussed above, the peace-time was not without its challenges for the Swedish neutrality, which came mostly in the form of Sweden participating in the systems of collective security, and later on joining the EU. However, flexible and open approach that its decision-makers demonstrated while adapting policy of military neutrality to many cooperative projects in both security and foreign-policy domain proved worthwhile. While negotiating and re-discussing narrative and substance of the neutrality Swedish leaders also demonstrated a sound understanding of a changing environment. In what way and how Sweden discussed challenges coming from the external environment and their impact on their military neutral status is a subject of the next chapter that deals with threat assessments and how they corresponded with the policy of military neutrality/non-alignment.


## 5.2. THREAT PERCEPTIONS

In this section I will analyse viability of the second independent variable, threat perceptions, to explain the case of the Swedish military neutrality/non-alignment. The section starts with the assessment of threat perceptions during the Cold War which are analysed based on the documents on the defence planning. Available documents, analysis and independent reports are taken as a source of information pointing the main threats that the Swedish defence planners counted on and how their perceptions of threats evolved in the changing context of the Cold

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[744] *Ibid*, p. 75.

War. Traditionally, Sweden's threat perceptions mainly included an eastern component. Since the 17th century, the Sweden-Baltic kingdom was built by territorial expansion towards the east and Sweden gained a small state status after being defeated by the rising Russian Empire.[745] Sweden's neutrality was built on a strong sense of proximity of neighbouring great powers, where a potential threat from Russia remained a constant feature in the foreign policy and security analyses of Sweden's surroundings. Although Swedish policy analysts worked on a number of different threats, such as the probability of great-powers' conflict and nuclear war, the country's relations with Russia remained the most challenging and most important relation that had to be addressed during the Cold War. According to the 2004 Report on the Inquiry on Security Policy, which covered the period 1969-1989, in the eyes of Swedish decision-makers the Soviet Union was the only power that could realistically pose a military threat to Sweden.[746] The section then follows with the analysis of the most recent national security documents, adopted in 2017, which bring significantly different narrative of what endangers national security and how military non-alignment corresponds with the urgency to defend against those threats. The section concludes with the summarizing findings on if and how the threat assessments from the Cold War onwards explain why Sweden still upholds policy of military neutrality.

### 5.2.1. Threat Perceptions during the Cold War

During the Cold War, in the perception of the Swedish decision makers the main threats were those emerging from a potential conflict between the super-powers. As it was a common threat perceived by the majority of European states, Swedish leaders too feared that their country might become the terrain of great-powers' military operations. They did not, however, see a high probability of it becoming a direct object of the other powers' aggression, but rather of the USSR which was perceived as the only potential power threatening Sweden's security. They could not hope that the country's somewhat isolated geographical position would save it completely in the case of open hostility between the super-powers, whose potential direct confrontation was believed to have a global and unpredictable reach, especially in light of a potential nuclear war.

Swedish defence planning reflected this assessment. It was guided by the Defence Policy Decisions which provided assessments of the national security, main security threats and strategies to mitigate them, and set blueprints for accompanying military doctrines. The

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[745] Nils Andrén, 'Changing Strategic Perspective in Northern Europe', in Bengt Sundelius (ed), *Foreign Policies of Northern Europe,* Colorado: Westview Press, 1982, pp. 73-103, p.96.
[746] *Peace and Security: Swedish Security Policy 1969-1989*, Report from the Inquiry on Security Policy, Swedish Government Official Reports, Stockholm, 2004, p. 58.

Decisions were adopted by the Parliament, having been prepared by bodies called Defence Policy Committees, composed of representatives of different political parties including those from the opposition. The broad political consensus achieved concerning the main threats the country was facing provided guidelines for the organisation of defence. The 1958 Defence Decision established a ratio in the distribution of the defence budget which remained in effect until the end of the Cold War. In accordance with the Decision, the Army and the Air Force each received a third of the budget, while the Navy received about one sixth.[747] This ratio reflected demands caused by a changing landscape in which Swedish defence had to deter attacks coming from technically superior enemies. It was the Air Force that was perceived as the most suitable to counter-attack and deter an enemy. Consequently, the Air Force was assigned additional tasks, such as some of the former Navy's missions related to defence against invasion, and therefore a significant portion of the budget was reallocated to them.[748] The decision on budget allocation was also a reflection of the dilemma of whether to build larger forces, dependent on massive mobilisation and able to carry out delayed battles across the Swedish territory, or more sophisticatedly equipped smaller forces suitable for performing an early counter-attack. The dilemma of bigger, conscript-based forces with broad participation and democratic legitimacy *versus* 'high-tech defence' composed of smaller, professional and well-equipped forces was resolved by the Defence Decision of 1968, which tipped the scale in favour of 'People's Defence'. The choice reflected the threats assessment and the decision on what sort of defence Sweden should develop – peripheral or deep, each implying a different model of the forces' organisation.[749] The choice in favour of 'People's Defence' remained in effect until the Defence Decisions of 2000-2001 when the dismantling of the Cold War military structure was put into motion.[750]

In the 1960s, Swedish defence planning incorporated the amended threats perceptions. This was caused by the prominence of nuclear weapons in the strategic planning of great powers and the increased possibility of their eventual use. In 1950s there were some voices in Sweden, especially coming from the military establishment, which argued in favour of the acquisition of nuclear weapons. The main argument for Sweden acquiring nuclear weapons, advocated by Social Democrats alongside others, was that they were indispensable for the national security.[751] However, the Swedish defence of that time relied on conventional forces. Giving the already

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[747] Åselius, 'Swedish Strategic Culture after 1945', p. 33.
[748] *Ibid*, p. 33.
[749] *Ibid*, p. 35.
[750] *Ibid*, p. 39.
[751] Andrén, 'Sweden: Neutrality, Defence and Disarmament', p. 187.

strong Air Force nuclear weapons would have resulted in severe budgetary cuts for conventional forces which, as a consequence, could expose Swedish national security to additional threats instead of improving it.[752] Also, it was not only a matter of defence planning. The strongest opposition to the acquisition of nuclear weapons came from pacifist groups gathered around the Social Democratic Party and the women's branch within it. Therefore, the decision on nuclear weapons was the reflection of domestic political dynamics rather than reasons imposed by the international environment.[753] The option of acquiring nuclear weapons seemed to carry with it a high political cost, owing to which Sweden abandoned the idea of nuclear armament in 1968 and instead became one of the most vocal advocates of nuclear disarmament. In the 1960s, the debate on nuclear weapons quieted down as the possibility of a nuclear attack against Sweden seemed unlikely, but it was never completely ignored. Sweden, however, did invest in the nuclear research programme.

The reports of the Defence Policy Committees from the 1970s reflected the notion of decreasing tensions between the super-powers and expectation that both sides might actually aim for closer cooperation. The situation in northern Europe was perceived as stable and advantageous to both sides. Still, the main threats, as defined in the Supreme Commander's directives, were those of military nature. In 1972, they were defined as an attack on Sweden as part of broader operations in Scandinavia and in connection with the Baltic region.[754] However, Defence Policy Committees' reports adopted in 1976 and 1977, besides stressing purely military threats, also took into account the security consequences of international economic relations, with an emphasis on the 1973-1974 Oil Crisis. Security implications of the process of détente were also listed among the threats to be reflected upon. The same trend continued with the work of the Defence Policy Committee in 1978. It reported on threats emerging from environmental problems and the use of natural resources, besides purely military threats that could stem from a confrontation of the two rival blocs.[755]

As we could see, during the Cold War period non-military threats were discussed alongside the military ones, in terms of how vulnerable Sweden was and which tools it should use to confront them. From 1984 on, the Defence Committee stressed the consequences of Swedish participation in the international division of labour in economic terms, as Sweden was producing fewer goods while at the same time it was dependent on import of semi-finished

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[752] Logue, 'Sweden', p. 90-91.
[753] Ann-Sofie Dahl, 'To Be or Not To Be Neutral: Swedish Security Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era', p. 185.
[754] Report from the Inquiry on Security Policy, 2004, p. 70.
[755] *Ibid*, pp. 71-72.

products and export to its trading partners. Economic dependence was perceived as a potential security threat to a country that depended on maintenance of trade during war-time, which was an experience that Sweden already had during the two world wars. The other issue was the threat of falling under the political influence of a dominant trading partner. During the Cold War Sweden's dominant trading partner was the Western Bloc, which – in the atmosphere of bloc division – implied that the country was under its political influence, which in times of crisis could potentially be viewed as a firm political grip. Alongside economic dependence, crucial non-military threats discussed in the political and academic community were the new technological developments and informational systems and their impact on additional international dependence.[756]

However, later reports from the 1980s marked a return to purely military and geostrategic threats that came as a consequence of worsening international relations. The Committee's report from 1987 warned that Swedish military planning should be adapted to include a worst-case scenario which was said to be a surprise attack with only limited warning time.[757] After the Supreme Commander's Operational Plan (OPLAN) entitled "The 85 Complementary Plan", issued in 1989, the attack which would without much warning became the major element of Swedish defence planning. The planners decided to concentrate their efforts on the threat of an attack by highly mobile and flexible forces, instead of a major attack in case of which Sweden would have time to carry out mobilisation.[758] Formal inquiries conducted after the end of the Cold War investigated whether there was indeed real danger of Sweden being militarily attacked in that time-period. The Report on the Swedish Security Policy during the period 1969-1989 brought insight into the research conducted at the Warsaw Pact archives. Neither that research nor Rolf Ekeus's inquiry, commissioned by the Swedish Government, confirmed the existence of any Warsaw Pact's operational plans against Sweden.[759]

Sweden's neutrality policy, and the military planning that went hand in hand with it, also reflected threat perceptions and how the state preferred to be defended against perceived threats. There were three basic assumptions behind Swedish neutrality and military planning during the Cold War. The first one was the 'minimal defence doctrine'. The expectation built into this doctrine was that Sweden or any other regional country would not be the target of an attack coming from a super-power, and that it could only be attacked within a larger war involving

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[756] Andrén, 'Sweden: Neutrality, Defence and Disarmament', p. 191.
[757] Report from the Inquiry on Security Policy, 2004, p. 74.
[758] *Ibid*, p. 78.
[759] *Ibid*, p. 84.

multiple countries and a wider European battlefield. In that scenario, Sweden would be attacked only by limited military force, since the main military enterprise of the warring parties would be focused on their main opponents, and not on small states. The assumption was also that Swedish territory would be of a limited strategic importance to the belligerents, and that they would fight for it only to prevent their opponents from gaining advantage.[760] Under those assumptions, seizure of the Swedish territory would not be of strategic importance to any of the potential belligerents in any future war fought on European soil. In that case, the task of the Swedish defence would be to respond to the isolated attack with all its available resources, rendering the enterprise costly and potentially unrewarding. Since probabilities for facing an isolated attack were perceived to be low, the expectation among the defence planners was that Swedish defence would be alerted to the approaching conflict and that Sweden would therefore have sufficient time to mobilise its forces.[761] This explains why Sweden did not have any large standing forces during that period.

Another element of defence planning, which however was never publicly confirmed, was the expectation of NATO's military assistance in case of a Soviet attack. During the 1969-1989 period, as revealed by the 2004 Report on the Inquiry on Security Policy, the priority in Sweden's policy towards Russia was to uphold the credibility of its policy of neutrality. By convincing their Russian counterpart of the trustworthiness of Swedish neutrality, Swedish security policy-makers expected to avoid becoming a direct target in a potential Cold War conflict. Otherwise – if Russians failed to believe in the reliability of Sweden's neutrality – Sweden would be suspected to ally with NATO in any forthcoming conflict, which would consequently render it a legitimate target. However, the bodies with the mandate to frame security-related policies during the time-period covered by the Report, i.e. Defence Policy Committees, did not imply or state directly that it was the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact that posed a direct military threat to Sweden. Still, as the author of the Report finds, the analysis of historical, political and military conditions, among which accent was placed on the analysis of capacity rather than intentions, guided policy analysts within the Swedish Armed Forces to view Sweden's proximity of Russia as its primary and fundamental security concern.[762] This assessment remained valid until the collapse of the Soviet Union and the transition processes that Russia had to undergo internally.

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[760] Nils Andrén, 'Swedish defence: traditions, perceptions, and policies', in Joseph Kruzel and Michael H. Haltzel (eds.), *Between the blocs: Problems and prospects for Europe's neutral and non-aligned states*, Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 175-199, p. 182.
[761] *Ibid*, p. 183.
[762] *Ibid*, p. 68.

In its study, the Commission set by the Bildt Government in the 1990s revealed that the expectation was that NATO would assist Sweden in a case of an attack.[763] However, the Commission that was given a mandate to investigate the period 1949-1969 found no evidence of formal contacts between Sweden and NATO regarding this matter.[764] The Ekeus report, published in 2004 and covering the period 1969-1989, also found no confirmation that there existed a comprehensive U.S. war plan to provide unilateral support Sweden in case of a Soviet attack,[765] or traces of any form of Sweden's cooperation with NATO.[766] The author of the report came to this finding despite the discovery of the U.S. Guidelines for Policy and Operations from 1962, which are assumed to have remained relevant through the 1970s, according to which the U.S. were willing to intervene in defence of Sweden in case of a Soviet attack. However, the question remains whether the Swedish authorities and defence planners from the Armed Forces knew of this policy, and whether it had actually influenced Sweden's defence planning. The author of the inquiry found no evidence of such knowledge.[767] He also found no traces of preparation for foreign assistance in Sweden's operational planning. He claims this to be the crucial piece of evidence that such cooperation was never planned, as it could not have been put in place without substantial and thorough advance planning.[768]

Although no official statement ever came from the Swedish side to support that there had been official contacts with NATO to secure its assistance in case of an attack on Sweden, the recently opened NATO archives do, however, confirm that there had been many contacts with Swedish military staff. These contacts were also maintained for the purpose of NATO assistance to the Swedish defence.[769] In his 2014 report, Tomas Bertelman reflects that although no formal agreement was ever signed between NATO and Sweden, there had been certain 'shared expectations and common interests in areas that were expected to be crucial in the event of a military attack by the Soviet Union'.[770] He also notes that, despite the absence of formal

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[763] Dahl, 'Activist Sweden', p. 142-143.
[764] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-Alignment and European Security Policy,* p. 165.
[765] Report from the Inquiry on Security Policy, 2004, p. 92.
[766] *Ibid*, p. 127.
[767] *Ibid*, p. 191.
[768] *Ibid*, p. 195.
[769] Dahl, 'To Be or Not To Be Neutral', p. 176.
[770] *International Defence Cooperation, Efficiency, Solidarity, Sovereignty*, Report from the Inquiry on Sweden's International Defence Cooperation, Tomas Bertelman, 2014, p. 28.

verification, there are considerable indications that for the most of the Cold War period the West was prepared to assist with Sweden's defence.[771]

The third element in Swedish defence planning was 'total defence', along with reliance on massive and rapid mobilisation. The concept of total defence implied employment of all available state and societal resources for the purpose of defending the country from an external attack. It was introduced by the Defence Decision of 1963. It implied that defending the country is everyone's responsibility and that everyone should therefore participate in it. Reliance on total defence was designed also to send signals to potential aggressors that an attack on Sweden would be time- and resource-consuming, as it would be met with an immediate counterattack of its Armed Forces and the opposition of the entire society. It can be assumed that it was also a necessary supplement to the Swedish defence planning since the Supreme Commander's assessment from the 1980s pointed to the warning signs of low level of units' combat readiness and after-mobilisation preparedness.[772] One of the causes for such an unsatisfactory state of readiness were budget-cuts imposed on the Armed Forces at the end of the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s, which created dissatisfaction among the Armed Forces and led to an even wider gap between the Armed Forces and the Government (Ministry of Defence) regarding the direction of the Swedish security policy.[773] Total defence was also complementary with the planning of a stay-behind organisation, which was assumed to organise political governance in the country in case of foreign occupation and defeat of the country's regular defence forces. Along with the above, the population was expected to apply active or passive resistance to the occupying force.[774]

The concept of total defence was still present in the 1996 Defence Resolution, which also incorporated non-military threats against which total defence should be used. The Defence Bill covering the period 2016-2020 reinforces the importance of total defence in Sweden's defence planning. The reasoning behind it is that the worsening context of European and global security is once again causing the need for Total Defence. As explained in 2015, the concept implies 'common planning guidelines, from the government to appropriate authorities', encompassing military and civil defence, including 'Home Guard' and voluntary defence organisations.[775] The task of the civil defence is to ensure the functioning of the society and assist the armed forces in

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[771] *Ibid*, p. 28.
[772] Report from the Inquiry on Security Policy, 2004, p. 170.
[773] *Ibid*, p. 193.
[774] *Ibid*, p. 196.
[775] Sweden's Defence Policy from 2016 to 2020.

performing their own tasks in the event of an armed conflict.[776] Therefore, Total Defence requires commitment of the entire society, as the Armed Forces need such support to be able to fulfil their task of defending the country.[777]

Reliance on massive and timely mobilisation required high-quality intelligence data which would provide defence planners with the earliest possible warnings. This was stressed in the Defence Policy Decisions issued throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, while the inquiry on Swedish security in the period 1969-1989 confirmed that the intelligence service was indeed capable of supplying the Swedish Armed Forces with high-quality information.[778] The Defence Bill from 2015 once again stressed the need for strong intelligence capabilities.

Based on these accounts, Swedish decision makers demonstrated a broad understanding of security which, besides territorial defence, also encompasses economical, psychological and other aspects of it. It is therefore possible to assume that the concept of Total Defence was actually the background of this encompassing approach to security. The Swedish population had for decades been taught and prepared to use different means and methods in responding to adversary's actions targeting different segments of their lives, from the economic well-being to territorial occupation. According to Ojanen, that broad understanding of security was one of the reasons why Swedes could relate to the security argument in the discussion on EU membership. Namely, they perceived the EU as a provider of general security to its members, addressing a broad spectrum of security threats. NATO, on the other hand, did not possess that type of attraction.[779]

### 5.2.2. Post-Cold War Threat Perceptions
The end of the Cold War brought profound change to how Swedish political leaders saw threats to the state's security. According to Carl Bildt's article in *Svenska Dagbladet* from 11 August 1992, the end of the Cold War required a new form of policy of neutrality accommodated to new types of security threats and a changed security environment. Bildt argued that Swedish neutrality was a natural choice in the context of global rivalry between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. However, after that threat ceased to exist, he continued, the policy of neutrality had to be adapted to a new context which would bring a different set of security threats.

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[776] *Ibid*, p. 7.

[777] *Ibid*, p. 13.

[778] Report from the Inquiry on Security Policy, 2004, p. 182.

[779] Ojanen, Herolf and Lindahl, *Non-Alignment and European Security Policy*, pp. 181-182.

"While the risk of a devastating major war, overshadowed by the menace of escalation into a nuclear conflict, is no longer with us, we are seeing one conflict after another rising from unresolved national, economic or ecological problems. Not as serious as a great war, but sufficiently devastating to demand solidarity and determination on the part of the other countries of Europe…

In the new situation in Europe, however, it is by involving ourselves in the foreign and security policy cooperation that is emerging, rather than isolating ourselves from it, that we can most efficiently promote peace for ourselves and for the rest of Europe."[780]

The above assessment raised two major points. The first was that Sweden was approaching security from the point of a threat assessment that was the same as the threat assessments carried out by the member states of the EU and NATO. It did not claim that threats that Sweden was facing were in any way different from those that were encountered by the majority of other European states. Sweden was quick to embrace a broader security agenda, which addressed a number of new security threats compared to the narrow view which was mainly limited to military threats. Its leadership stressed the prominence of threats such as environmental and natural disasters, terrorism, and migrations caused by ethnic conflicts. At the same time, Sweden called for strong UN involvement in terms of peace-keeping missions aimed at combating modern threats to international security,[781] while also stressing that the UN should address a broader spectrum of security threats emerging from multiple sources.[782] Second, the content of the article clearly indicated what was already in the pipeline of the government's work, and that was the application for EC membership. However, unlike the initial assessments from 1990 and 1991, when the government first expressed uncertainties that the EC would move towards defence and security integrations and simultaneously claimed that Swedish neutrality was sustainable even in the prospects of the EU membership, the position was now clearly in favour of integration into the European community and the assumption of proper share of the burden. Therefore, a changed threat perception led to, or at least was connected to, the change of the security policy, this time in favour of integration. The EU, as an entity that was embracing a coordinated policy response to emerging security threats, was seen as a desirable community for Sweden to belong. Sweden's leadership rightfully understood that no state alone would be successful in responding to challenges posed by environmental disasters, terrorism, drug

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[780] Article by Prime Minister Carl Bildt in *Svenska Dagbladet*, 11 August 1991), Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993, pp. 222-223.
[781] *Ibid*, p. 96-100.
[782] *Ibid*, p. 101.

trafficking, illegal migration and organised crime, as claimed by the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs.[783]

The changed threat perception led to changes in the defence doctrine which were reflected in the Defence Bill introduced in 1992. In the presentation of how Swedish defence will respond to changing security environment, the Prime Minister elaborated as follows:

> "The primary basis for determining the size of our defence forces should no longer be a major, planned aggression against our country, prepared over an extended period of time and with the aim of gradually taking over our territory. Instead, we should focus on attacks in which the time factor is crucial, which involve limited but high-quality resources, and which will maximally exploit the surprise factor" (Carl Bildt, Stockholm, 7 December 1993).[784]

The changed threat perception further undermined the neutrality policy which, by that time, was already removed from most public statements on Sweden's security policy. State leaders referred to neutrality as an outdated policy and where direct in stating that it was the change of external circumstances that had led to the changes of the policy. The more significant the changes in Sweden's surroundings, both regionally and at the European level, the more profound were the changes that were implemented to the country's policy of neutrality.[785]

Unlike the EU and NATO, the CSCE was an international organisation whose work, or Swedish membership in it, was not challenged by Swedish neutrality. Traditionally, neutral states played an active role within this framework since it was, especially during the Cold War, a perfect venue for them to perform their bridge-building roles. In 1992, while Sweden was preparing for its chairmanship of the organisation, its Ministry of Foreign Affairs especially stressed the relevance of the broad spectrum of security issues that the CSCE had to deal with.[786]

During the 1990s Russia was perceived if not as an actual threat than certainly as a mighty neighbour with whom it was vitally important to maintain good relations and refrain from actions it might perceive as provocative.[787] Together with this came Swedish ambition to achieve

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[783] Margaretha af Ugglas, Brussels, 3 December 1993. Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993, Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994, p. 299.

[784] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993, Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994, p. 136.

[785] Margaretha af Ugglas, Brussels, 3 December 1993. *Ibid*, p. 301-302.

[786] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993, pp. 114-118.

[787] Ann-Sofie Dahl, 'Sweden and the Baltic Sea region – Activism on a New Arena or the End of Free-Riding?' in Olaf F. Knudsen (ed) *Stability and Security in the Baltic Sea Region*, London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999, pp. 140-155, p. 141.

peaceful cohabitation with democratic and economically stable Russia which was expected to be incorporated into European structures.[788] This was clearly articulated in a speech delivered by then Minister of Foreign Affairs.

> "If real security and stability are to be established in this region, Russia cannot be excluded and left to sort out its tremendous transition problems in solitary isolation. Russia must be integrated into European cooperation in a broad sense." (Minister of Foreign Affairs Margaretha af Ugglas, Chatham House, London, 26 November 1992)[789]

Sweden was a careful observer of developments within the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1990s. Swedish leaders straightforwardly called for the inclusion of the Soviet Union in a common security project whose features were beginning to appear with the prominence of the EU. While doing so, they stressed the importance of no state – especially the Soviet Union, which remained mighty and influential – being excluded from that system. In their view, Russia, no matter how weakened, was to remain a powerful neighbour and a military power worthy of respect,[790] and they were concerned with the instability that political and economic reforms in Russia might spur in the post-Soviet space. The remaining Soviet military build-up and troops left in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic region, i.e. in the vicinity of Sweden, were especially stressed in the speeches of both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.[791] In February 1993, Carl Bildt paid a formal visit to Russia at the invitation of President Yeltsin. He was the first Swedish Prime Minister to officially visit Moscow.[792]

However, it is indicative that Sweden still perceived its eastern neighbour as a source of threat against which it applied intelligence and counter-intelligence measures. This is evident, for example, from the question directed at the Minster of Foreign Affairs in the *Riksdag* in March 1991 concerning speculations that Sweden was conducting electronic reconnaissance against the Soviet Union and that it was engaged in intelligence cooperation with the United States. In his response, Sten Andersson did not deny such activities and instead explained that they were complementary with the security policy of a neutral state. In his words:

> "Our policy of neutrality is underpinned, and has to be underpinned, by a strong and comprehensive total defence, in which intelligence activities are of considerable importance. In

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[788] *Ibid*, p. 149.

[789] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993, p. 121.

[790] *Ibid*, p. 33.

[791] *Ibid*, p. 32, 40, 79, 85.

[792] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993, Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994, pp.50-58.

a serious crisis, it is naturally of particular importance for a country with small standing forces to have prior warning of military activities in its vicinity.

Electronic reconnaissance of military activities in our vicinity is both compatible with our policy of neutrality and necessary to guarantee our security. As a non-aligned country, we ourselves must be able to form the most reliable opinion possible about military events in our region." (Minister for Foreign Affairs Sten Andersson, *Riksdag*, 19 March 1991)[793]

This section clearly shows how Sweden was a careful observer of a changing dynamics at the end of the Cold War. Those changes influenced threat assessment that further on demanded adaptation of the policy of military neutrality/non-alignment. The following section elaborates how changes in the Swedish immediate neighbourhood and the relevant threat assessment influenced that same policy.

### 5.2.3. Regional Politics

As explained above, Swedish foreign policies, besides reflecting the country's foreign and security interests, were also situated to contribute to regional stability described by the term 'Nordic Balance'. The region is composed of countries that share a strong consensus on democracy, among which there is a fair equilibrium of power and which are culturally very much alike.[794] Unlike the Balkans, the Nordic region had never experienced a foreign rule, with the exception of Finland which had been ruled by Russia. Consequently, they were allowed to develop their political systems gradually and in tune with their own sensibilities and needs.[795] While during the Cold War Swedish foreign policy was mainly oriented toward the Third World, it experienced a shift at the beginning of the 1990s when the Bildt Government moved the Baltic region to the forefront of Sweden's foreign activism. Although this might have been viewed as revoking the role of a great European power Sweden once played, in the 1990s this policy was instead tuned to provide Sweden with the status of regional leader.[796] Thus, while activism with the Social Democratic outlook embraced mediation, aid and disarmament activities within the UN multilateral approach, activism of the non-socialist forces meant concern for stability in the immediate neighbourhood and support to the Baltic countries' admission to NATO. This support

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[793] Documents on Swedish Foreign policy, 1991, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1992, p. 253-254.
[794] Krister Wahlbäck, 'The Nordic Region in Twentieth Century European Politics', in Bengt Sundelius (ed), *Foreign Policies of Northern Europe*, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982, pp. 9-32, p.12.
[795] *Ibid*, p. 10.
[796] Dahl, 'Sweden and the Baltic Sea region', p. 140.

came with the Prime Minister Persson proclamation that the Baltics was a 'Swedish cause' which was at odds with Sweden's long-term policy of non-commitment to the surrounding world.[797] This new commitment to the region was highlighted in a number of public speeches. One of these was delivered by the Prime Minister Bildt in November 1993, when he said that if the Balts were to be threatened militarily, Swedish neutrality would not necessarily be the self-evident choice.[798] This, however, did not imply that Sweden wanted any sort of an exclusive supremacy in the Baltic region. Rather, the aim of the Swedish regional policy was to secure that its stabilisation efforts in the region be backed by U.S. and NATO support while avoiding the dominance of any one power, either German or Russian, in the region.[799] Whether this region has any significant place in the newest strategic documents will be analysed in the following section that deals with the updated threat assessments from 2017.

### 5.2.4 Threat Perceptions According to the 2017 National Security Strategy

In 2017, Swedish decision makers adopted the National Security Strategy in which they made a clear statement in favour of the broad concept of security as the conceptual premise for their policy making.[800] This conceptual basis allowed them to make strong connections between the national security, conflict prevention and human rights protection, thus stressing Sweden's exposure to diverse and complex security threats emerging from the global environment. The Strategy stressed correlation between the national security and global security landscape.[801] Further on, this led to a strong connection between protecting the Swedish national security and its engagement with a multitude of security actors in preventing and combating a range of security threats.

The 2017 National Security Strategy pictured Sweden's regional and global security setting as increasingly complex and in a state of permanent change. Globalisation is seen as the driving force behind both positive and negative trends. It is believed to have led to greater political, economic and social inter-dependence among states and multinational actors. Globalisation, according to this document, also made states increasingly vulnerable to cross-border threats and threats emerging from previously unknown sources. Sweden, as the document states, is a high-tech country that is well integrated in a global economic order and which draws

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[797] *Ibid*, p. 145.

[798] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993, p. 224.

[799] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden,* p. 179.

[800] National Security Strategy, Government Office of Sweden, Prime Minister's Office, January 2017, pp. 3,6.

[801] *Ibid*, p. 5.

benefits from it. Challenges are seen to be emerging not only from the complexity of threats ranging from armed conflicts to climate change, shortage of resources, uncontrolled migrations and cyber threats, but also from the competition among major powers and the shift of power toward Asia.[802] As for Europe, threats are emerging both from the internal affairs of the EU and those of its member states, in the form of e.g. political and social fragmentation and lack of trust in the rule of law. Externally originating threats are coming mostly from the EU's unstable neighbourhood amplified by wars in Iraq, Yemen, Syria and Libya.

As for its regional surrounding, Sweden found it deteriorating, owing mostly to Russian actions. Its annexation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine are viewed as a clear breach of the established international order guaranteeing the territorial integrity of states, and international norms protecting human rights and democratic conduct of international affairs.[803] While actions in the Crimea might not have direct consequences for Swedish national security, according to Jacob Westberg, the aggression on eastern Ukraine certainly did.[804] The tone of the Strategy leaves an impression that Sweden feels directly threatened by the Russo-Ukrainian war. It contributes to mitigating the risks by actively cooperating with key security actors such as NATO and the OSCE, and by getting involved in relevant regional initiatives in the Baltics.[805] Authors of the document also find the threat of nuclear weapons to be a factor in both regional and global setting. Swedish continuous advocacy for disarmament and non-proliferation is stressed as yet another contribution to reducing threats in its immediate neighbourhood and is in continuity with its hallmark non-alignment policies. Cooperation and information exchange are stressed as key tools of collective security to which Sweden is aspiring.[806]

The conceptual premises of the multi-layered and broad understanding of security were also reflected in what the document brought forth as the main objectives to be protected by the national security policy. According to the Strategy, these are the lives and health of the Swedish population, together with the 'functionality of society' and the 'ability to maintain fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms'.[807] Swedish decision makers put lives and health of Swedish citizens as their primary interests. They are connected with the basic services the society requires in order to be able to function normally, and with the fundamental freedoms of democracy, rule of law, human freedoms and

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[802] *Ibid*, p. 10.
[803] *Ibid*, p. 12.
[804] Interview with Jacob Westberg, Stockholm, 31 January 2018.
[805] National Security Strategy, p. 13.
[806] *Ibid*, p. 6.
[807] *Ibid*, p. 6.

human rights. As regards what it actually means to safeguard citizens' lives and health, it is obvious that the Strategy was conceptually formulated from the perspective of a broad security agenda, bearing in mind different types of threats that emerge from different origins and affect people's well-being. Therefore, according to the document, people should be guaranteed services that provide them with health protection, access to drinking water and food, opportunities to participate in affairs of common interest, as well as other rights exercised in an open and tolerant democratic environment. In support of this, both in peace time and during crisis, Sweden needs a public administration that operates in a predictable and non-discriminatory manner supported by social cohesion and trust. According to Westberg, who had participated in the preparatory phase of drafting the Strategy, the factor of 'institutions and flows' has to be taken into consideration when designing policies to protect the basic values of territorial integrity, political freedom and peace. The chief security concern remains life and health of Swedish citizens. Under the label 'institutions and flows', the authors of the strategic document summarised the impact the international environment has on Swedish national security interests.[808]

After people and their safety, and basic infrastructure services that help them live in safety and within the framework of democratic values, comes protection of freedom and independence of the state itself. Not much emphasis is placed on territorial defence against an external armed aggression, and the accent here is rather on civil contingency planning, as part of total defence, and society's overall preparedness to contribute to the defence of state's independence. Further national interests are defined from the external perspective: first comes investment in regional stability of northern Europe, then cooperation within the EU, and finally promotion of a 'rules-based multilateral world order' on the global level. As for the global level, the document particularly stresses participation in international peace-keeping efforts and development cooperation.

The Swedish strategy from 2017 confirmed the strong role of total defence and the national security priorities. Security efforts are explicitly mentioned as the task of the entire society, including individuals, businesses and civil society, together with the national and local authorities.[809] Credible total defence with a strong emphasis on intelligence capabilities within the police and defence sectors and psychological defence are believed to allow political freedom of action.[810] Psychological defence is a relevant element of total defence due to the high level of sophistication of the so-called *influence operations* that require the response of state's multiple

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[808] Interview with Jacob Westberg, Stockholm, 31 January 2018.
[809] National Security Strategy, p. 3.
[810] *Ibid*, p. 9.

authorities.[811] Re-building of civil defence is viewed as compliant with civil contingency planning and equal to society's resilience to the threat of war and war itself.[812] Civil defence is taken as complimentary to military defence, which should take on its traditional defence responsibilities while the civilian component should "safeguard the civilian population, secure the most essential services and contribute to the Swedish Armed Forces' capabilities in the event of an armed attack or war in our region".[813]

What the total defence actually means and what is required for its successful implementation is elaborated in the report of the Swedish Defence Commission from December 2017. According to the Report, total defence means preparedness for the state of war or hybrid crisis. It encompasses both military and civilian defence and involves responsibilities of central, regional and local authorities, public and private enterprises and individuals. The report elaborated different legislative and organisational changes that have to take place for the efficient implementation of total defence. The Commission reiterated the assessment of the regional and global security environment which was already presented in the National Security Strategy from the beginning of 2017. According to that assessment, a military attack or war-fighting on the Swedish soil is not excluded. Sweden, according to the Commission, shall not remain passive in the case of an attack against another Nordic or EU member state, but it also expects to be assisted in case of such an attack. Therefore, Sweden should be ready to give and receive both military and civilian support.[814] However, while expecting to be assisted in the event of a military attack or other crisis situations, authors of the report estimate that there is a period of time, prior to the arrival of international assistance, during which Swedish military and civilian defence would have to resist on their own and maintain basic societal functions. That time-frame is said to be three months, while Swedish authorities are expected to manage the transition of the Swedish society and Armed Forces to war-like conditions in one week.[815]

Regarding other issues that endanger Swedish national security, military threat is listed in the document as a chief one. An armed attack is not entirely excluded, though, as the document puts it, there is low probability that Sweden would be the sole target of an external armed aggression. However, there is a greater possibility of military power being combined with

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[811] *Ibid*, p. 18.

[812] *Ibid*, p. 9.

[813] *Ibid*, p. 15.

[814] 'Resilience: The total defence concept and the development of civil defence 2021-2025', The Swedish Defence Commission, December 2017, available at: https://www.government.se/press-releases/2017/12/swedish-defence-commission-presents-report-on-total-defence-concept-and-civil-defence/ (Accessed on: 16 November 2018).

[815] 'Resilience', The Swedish Defence Commission, December 2017.

information warfare and other mechanisms of hybrid warfare. The Swedish National Strategy does not underestimate military preparedness and relevance of the country's military defence, and holds it crucial for preventive and deterring function. The basic function of military defence is the ability to repel an armed attack. However, the Strategy emphasises collective efforts to maintain peace and security, praising the efficiency of military defence. The document reasserts that Sweden is not a member of any military alliance, but still confirms its readiness to assist other Nordic or EU member states in case of an attack, as it expects the same form of assistance in return.[816] Still, the autonomy and credibility of domestic war-fighting capacities, in the Swedish case of combat aircraft and submarine capacities, is not underestimated.[817] The decision makers are hereby implying that the country might be in a position to employ its own defence capacities and that these should be maintained to the best of the state's ability. Other threats, as listed in the document, encompass a broad set of diverse challenges emerging from different sources: from cyber security, terrorism and violent extremist and organised crime, to health issues, threats jeopardising the energy supply and transport infrastructure, and climate change.

Assessed from the perspective of military non-alignment, the 2017 National Security Strategy is not entirely in line with that position. Let us first discuss the points where the document *is* consistent with military non-alignment. It straightforwardly, albeit modestly, reminds readers that Sweden is outside of military alliances and that it is a policy that had served Sweden well. Together with that notion, the document states that Swedish security cooperation is dynamic, especially with NATO and, bilaterally, Finland. Insisting that Sweden must maintain its independent defence capacities, employing both military and non-military resources, is in accordance with the position of a militarily non-aligned country that must rely on its own sources and be prepared to defend itself on its own, at least for a while.

Where the document seems to abandon that position is when it stresses the enormous interdependence of the Swedish national security and impetus it receives from its outside environment, both regional and global. The document confirms that Sweden cannot and will not stay isolated to developments in the outside world, and that it is ready to cooperate extensively with a multitude of international actors, all the way to military assistance. This sort of guarantee, however not one-sided as in this case, is usually given in military alliances formed with the purpose of mutual guarantees given by alliance members to each other. The impression is that Sweden is not trying to untangle its security policy from the rest of the EU and NATO member states. On the contrary, it confirms strong exposure to multinational and cross-border threats of

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[816] National Security Strategy, p. 17.
[817] *Ibid*, p. 18.

complex origins, which are to be dealt with within the international frameworks of the EU, NATO, the OSCE and the regional security network. The present level of Swedish engagement is allowing it to be engaged to the level of not compromising strict military non-alignment while still reaping the benefits of international security cooperation. The only threat where Sweden is palpably lacking a guarantee of international support is that of a military attack, which its strategic documents do not entirely exclude. This is why it offers unilateral declarations of solidarity and promises assistance in case of attacks on other countries, hoping they would reciprocate and ease the uncertainty of the militarily non-aligned position. In other words, Sweden has found shelter from a number of security threats in its current level of international involvement, but not from the chief one – the threat from a military attack. As for that one, it is still searching for alternative guarantees of international assistance, falling short of military alignment.

The chapter that is devoted to the analysis of relation between the threat assessments and military neutrality/non-alignment finds a strong link between the two. First of all, it shows that Swedish defence planning was sensitive and easily adaptable to the impetus coming from the external environment, starting from the tremendous impact of the end of the Cold War, changing regional dynamics in the Baltics and former Soviet Union, to security integrations in form of common EU security and defence policies. The Cold War threat assessment, as evident from the available defence documents, demonstrates that those were not only military threats that were taken into account and that the defence system and the population were prepared to face a broad spectrum of threats, including those of economic and ecological origins. In both cases, no matter if those were only military or non-military threats, the defence planning took into consideration that Sweden pursues policy of military neutrality/non-alignment. That fact was further embedded into defence planning by referencing to total defence and civil defence. Latter assessments show even greater sensitivity to developments in the external environment by taking into consideration stronger international connectivity in terms of security where Sweden could not afford to stay isolated. However, as resulting from the research, the threat assessment was subordinated to the fact of military neutrality/non-alignment in a way that it was not a threat assessment guiding defence planners and decision-makers towards the decision of military neutrality/non-alignment but it was the other way around. The threat assessment actually only took into consideration already established policy and adapted security politics and defence planning towards the factual situation of Sweden being outside of military alliances. In other words, Swedish military neutrality/non-alignment is older than any of the presented threat assessments. How strong is the link between policy of military neutrality/non-alignment and internal political dynamics will be discussed in the following chapter.

## 5. 3. INTERNAL POLITICAL DYNAMICS

Neutrality, and its decades-long cornerstone position in Sweden's security policy, was strongly interlinked with Social Democrats' ideology and politics. Although, as discussed above, neutrality as a Swedish foreign and security policy has deeper roots which go back to the 18th century, it gained recognisable value in discourse both at home and abroad only after it was blended with the Social Democrats' value matrix. As genuine representatives of the interests of Swedish labourers, Social Democrats were from the onset oriented against war and heavy defence and armament programmes. On the other side of political spectrum in the 1920s and 1930s there was the Conservative Party, representing aristocratic elements of the society genuinely in favour of a strong military build-up. The fact that Sweden managed to stay outside of the First World War owing to its proclaimed neutrality, at least according to the popular interpretation of what had saved the country from the war, was enough to convince both sides of its values. After the First World War and the failure of the League of Nations, more isolationist stands prevailed in Sweden accompanied with by defence building in the 1930s. At the same time, far-reaching developments occurred in the country's economic, cultural and societal life. After their return to power in 1932, Social Democrats, supported by the Agrarians, paved the way for the economic policy of what came to be known as the 'Swedish Model'. The economic programme that brought the Social Democrats back to power – where they remained as the dominant party, with short interruptions, until the present day – was labelled the 'middle-way'. It accommodated socialist incentives with the institutions of liberal capitalism.[818] That economic platform, founded on a broad consensus between the state, corporations and trade unions, also incorporated values such as care for the society, especially its weakest members, support for a decent standard of living for all, and social rights.[819] This is found to be coherent with the values attached to the neutral stance in the international relations: disarmament, environmental protection, human rights protection and mediation in conflict resolution. Furthermore, as Agius explains it in her work on the origins of Swedish neutrality, Social Democrats were tremendously successful in offering their own interpretation of the Swedish nation and society which became strongly incorporated into the Swedish identity. That link, within which interpretation of neutral Sweden also has its own place, provides an explanation of such a long history of Social Democrats being a ruling party in Swedish politics. Their economic model incorporated ideas of *folkhem* as a society that protects its own members, while the task of the

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[818] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 73.
[819] *Ibid,* pp. 73-74.

state is to protect the society as such. The notion of 'People's Home' captured the idea of consensual politics, universalism, democracy and solidarity.[820]

The notion of a 'good Swede' was also established based on these ideals, and the term 'good Swede' was very often interpreted as 'neutral Swede'.[821] Mobilisation of popular support that was achieved with the metaphor of *folkhem* was a particularly successful enterprise of Per Albin Hansson, who, according to Jacob Westberg, captured the meaning of it and used it as a tool in identity politics. According to Westberg, he defined *folkhem* as transferring close and supporting ties that exist within a family to the national level. On that level, such links, as Hansson interpreted, imply elimination of class differences, introduction of social care, and a role of workers in managing the economy.[822] In 1938 the 'Basic Agreement' was adopted regulating relations between the government, labour and industry, and establishing consensual relations between the labour and the industry.[823]

The Moderate Party comes second to Social-Democrats in the political competition. The party was established back in 1904 as the Conservative Party, and had taken its present name in 1969. It is profiled as a conservative party with liberal economic agenda, advocating a market economy, lower taxes and a lesser role of the government in the economy.[824] They participated in the first post-Second World War non-socialist Government in 1976-1978 and 1979-81, in 1991-94 when the party's leader Carl Bildt served as Prime Minister, and in the period 2006-2014 in two consecutive non-socialist Governments. Topics that dominate their agenda as at 2018 are: unemployment, better integration policies for immigrants, safety and healthcare.[825] In the 2018 elections the Moderate Party competed as a member of the Alliance, the coalition to which they belong together with the Christian Democrats, the Centre Party and the Liberals.

The Centre Party was formed in 1910 as the Farmers' League. They have changed their name and adopted a broader political platform, moving from only agricultural issues to a wider ecological agenda and a broader group of voters in the 1950s.[826] Issues that dominate their

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[820] *Ibid*, pp. 75-76.
[821] Dahl, 'Sweden: Once a Moral Superpower, Always a Moral Superpower?', p. 907.
[822] Westberg, *Den nationella drömträdgården. Den stora berättelsen om den egna nationen i svenska och brittisk Europadebatt*, p. 330.
[823] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 77.
[824] https://www.britannica.com/topic/Moderate-Party (accessed: 24 November 2018).
[825] https://moderaterna.se/sites/default/files/page_attachments/2018-06/folder_A5_va%CC%8Arkampanj_2018_uppslag_ENG.pdf (Accessed on: 24 November 2018).
[826] Radio Sweden, The Centre Party – Centerpartiet, https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=2054&artikel=5933041 (Accessed on: 26 November 2018).

agenda today are: economy, ecology and integrations. They are clearly in favour of Sweden moving decisively towards NATO membership, a more robust EU defence policy and security cooperation in the Nordic region.[827] On the other hand, security affairs and defence cooperation do not feature highly on the agenda of the Christian-Democrats, who are also a member of the mentioned Alliance group of political parties. They were established in the 1960s as a conservative response to the liberalisation of the society and its perceived decadence. Issues that still dominate their agenda are family and societal policies, support for elders, and other life-style policies.[828] The fourth member of the Alliance, the Liberal Party, has received 5.4% support in the September elections, and is the seventh smallest party in Sweden.[829] Topics that this party nominated as its top priority for 2018 elections were education and integration.[830] It is also known for its support to Sweden's NATO membership and investment in nuclear power.[831]

### 5.3.1. Internal Political Dynamics in 1992

The Government was formed in the autumn of 1991 and it comprised the Moderates, the Liberal Party, the Centre Party and the Christian Democratic Party. The first task the new Government assigned itself was to bring Sweden into the EC. One year later, in his statement made at the opening of the Parliament, then Prime Minister Bildt clearly made it known that it was of Sweden's vital interest to pursue full membership in the EC. Otherwise, he claimed, Sweden would be excluded from policies which are vital to its interests, among which security and foreign policy were at the top of the list.[832] During their short term in office – which lasted until the 1994 general election, when the Social Democrats won having received the highest amount of support since the 1970s[833] – the Moderates managed to introduce a new, alternative set of ideas to Swedes and normalise the discourse on European integration which was by then taken over by Social Democrats. As Agius points, Swedes were not convinced by new ideas the

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[827] The Centre Party, https://www.centerpartiet.se/var-politik/politik-a-o/forsvar/forsvar--och-sakerhetssamarbeten (Accessed on: 26 November 2018).

[828] Radio Sweden, The Christian Democrats – Kristdemokraterna, https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=2054&artikel=5933054 (accessed: 26 November 2018).

[829] Radio Sweden, https://sverigesradio.se/sida/gruppsida.aspx?programid=2054&grupp=20894&artikel=7092245 (Accessed on: 26 November 2018).

[830] The Liberal Party, https://www.liberalerna.se/wp-content/uploads/liberalerna_en.pdf (Accessed on: 26 November 2018).

[831] Political Parties in Sweden, https://sweden.se/society/political-parties-in-sweden/ (Accessed on: 26 November 2018).

[832] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1993, p. 10.

[833] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 159.

conservatives introduced into the public discourse, demonstrating a strong attachment to the ideological foundations set by the Social Democrats which became even stronger when it was confronted by neo-liberal and conservative stands. However, the Moderates changed the course of both Sweden in relation to the EU and that of the country itself, and that change no future government could ignore.[834]

Departures that the Bildt Government made from the Social Democrats' traditions were gradual but significant. The Moderates, led by Bildt at the time, were aware of the value of neutrality to the Swedish population, but they were also aware that was a rhetorical tool in the hands of Social Democrats, who used it to dominate public debate.[835] Therefore, their intent was to strip neutrality of the heavy ideological meaning it acquired during the forty years of Social Democrats' dominance. This was not the only motive behind the departures they made in Sweden's foreign policy. According to Margaretha af Ugglas, Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1991-1994, the Moderate Party was in favour of European integration since the 1960s, with the rhetoric that referred mostly to the importance of cooperative security and Sweden's involvement in collective security arrangements such as the CSCE.[836] Changes that the Party introduced were evident first in the commitment that Sweden made to the Baltic states when Bildt said that Sweden could not stay neutral if they were to be threatened, which was made into a point of criticism.

> "For some years past, after decades of national silence – for which we all share a debt of national guilt – there has been a strong and broad Swedish involvement in the development of freedom and democracy in the three Baltic states.
>
> In the past, it was often natural for us to give small states in remote parts of the world assistance and support. Today, it is clear that we must also help and support countries that are very close to us." (Prime Minister Carl Bildt, Stockholm, 7 December 1993)[837]

Bildt's Government also changed the pattern of voting that Sweden followed in the UN General Assembly voting in favour of the Third World countries. That trend declined causing an increase in Sweden's voting that was in coherence with the foreign policy positions of the EU. Also, the tradition of international recognition of new states strictly in line with the international

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[834] *Ibid*, p. 160-161.
[835] *Ibid*, p. 154.
[836] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1993, pp. 60-65.
[837] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1994, p. 130.

legal norms changed with the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia in 1992.[838] When confronted with questions concerning the course of Sweden's foreign and security policies and the compatibility of neutrality with the process of European integration, Bildt first reminded his political opponents that Sweden, unlike some other states, had never proclaimed permanent neutrality. He also reminded of different historical periods in which Sweden allowed itself not to label its security standing using the word 'neutrality'. This indeed was the case in the 1920s, when Sweden gave the League of Nations a try, thus refusing to limit itself, according to Bildt, to fixed formulas in a changing security environment. According to his speech from January 1992, the beginning of the 1990s was yet another period of uncertainty as to how developments would pan out and which shape European integrations would finally take.

> "We should act the same way today. Now that the Cold War is at an end, the security policy situation in Europe is radically changing, just as it was after the two World Wars.
>
> We do not know what Europe's future security order will look like, but we want to participate in building it up. We cannot, therefore, restrict ourselves to fixed formulas, particularly not to formulas which were established in circumstances that are completely different from those that apply today, or those that developments may well rapidly leave behind…
>
> We do not know what the future holds. There is no reason for us to close any doors or to limit our options unnecessarily as regards future." (Prime Minister Carl Bildt, *Riksdag*, 15 January 1992)[839]

In the same speech, much like in the speech of Bildt's Minister of Foreign Affairs one month later, it was however stressed that non-participation in alliances remains to be the core of Swedish security policy, together with the maintenance of capacities adequate for independent defence of territorial integrity. As Bildt pointed out:

> "The core of our security policy is still non-participation in military alliances, with its obligation to maintain an adequate independent defence capability to enable us to remain neutral in the event of a war in our immediate vicinity. Sweden is not defended by anyone else and our defence is for Sweden only.

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[838] Agius, *The social construction of Swedish neutrality,* p. 156.
[839] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1993, p. 24-25.

There is nothing in today's European process that releases us from our responsibility to independently protect our extensive air, sea and land territory." (Prime Minister Carl Bildt, *Riksdag*, 15 January 1992)[840]

However, in Bildt's speech presented a month later, in February 1992, neither neutrality nor non-alignment was mentioned as a core principle of Sweden's security policy. Instead, involvement in European security cooperation and defence reforms aimed to respond to a changing security environment were named as pillars of Sweden's security policy.[841]

One year later, confronted with yet another question on Sweden's policy of neutrality, the Prime Minister reduced its value even further. To that end, he mentioned changed circumstances and Sweden's ambition to participate strongly in the emerging foreign and security cooperation among the European states.

"We agree that we are in a phase in which the security realities of Europe are changing very markedly, and that this also give rise to significant changes in our own security policy doctrine. It means that we are now actively seeking to enter into foreign and security policy cooperation with a view to building an order of security and peace throughout Europe as a whole, through the CSCE and hopefully in future through the European Union.

At the same time, we are retaining our policy of non-participation in military alliances, which enables us to remain neutral in the event of a conflict in our immediate vicinity should we wish to do so. It cannot be taken for granted that neutrality will be an automatic response to any and every conflict, even in our own region. Let me just remind you that Sweden could never contemplate remaining indifferent should there be a threat to the survival of the Baltic states. But we retain neutrality as a security policy option, and non-participation in military alliances is important if this is to be made possible." (Prime Minister Carl Bildt, *Riksdag*, 12 January 1993)[842]

The relative value of non-alignment, used as a mechanism that would allow Sweden an option to stay neutral in any forthcoming war, was underlined in other state officials' statements during the same period of time.

"Sweden no longer pursues a policy of neutrality. Our non-participation in military alliances still stands. The aim is that we should be able to remain neutral in the event of war in our immediate

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[840] *Ibid*, p. 25.
[841] *Ibid*, p. 38.
[842] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1994, p. 220.
[842] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1992, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1993, p. 25.

vicinity. But this is an option, not an absolute goal in every conceivable situation." (Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Lars-Åke Nilsson, Stockholm, 22 February 1993)[843]

The above formulation of non-participation in military alliances continued to reflect Sweden's foreign and security policies until the latest foreign policy statement from 2019,[844] in which the policy is, once again, said to come in combination with active diplomacy, defence cooperation and strengthening of domestic defence capacities.[845]


## 5.3.2. Internal Political Dynamics in 2018/2019

After the general elections of September 2018, Sweden was faced with a dead-lock situation related to the formation of new government which is not typical for this country. The system of *negative parliamentarianism* means that a proposal of new government does not need to receive the majority of votes in favour – it simply needs not to receive the majority of MPs' votes against. However, this did not help speed up the process in 2018.  Two broad party coalitions emerged from the two blocs, one on the left side of the political spectrum which is the red-green coalition and the other on the right side which is the centre-right Alliance, with the difference of only one vote in favour of the former. The Swedish electoral system limits the number of times the Parliament can vote on a proposal for the formation of government to four. This served as an incentive for political parties to cooperate and speculate on a number of possible coalitions after the elections. Since neither pre-election coalition was able to secure the majority of votes without the support (i.e. without the absence of negative votes) of a member of the opposite bloc, a number of possible scenarios emerged. Speculations on cross-bloc cooperation after the September elections caused turmoil in the pre-election party blocs. For example, on the right side of the spectrum a consensus was reached before the elections concerning the Moderates' leader as the candidate for Prime Minister. But once he was officially endorsed, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party said they would vote against him. The changes in the party dynamics were not caused by disagreements over future policies, let alone the neutrality/non-alignment policy. Observers of the Swedish domestic political scene attributed the main disagreements in the process of negotiation to the issue of how to handle a relevant political

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[843] Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993, Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1994, p. 225.

[844] Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström's Statement of Government Policy, Government of Sweden, February 2019. Available at:
https://www.government.se/49132e/globalassets/government/dokument/utrikesdepartementet/statement-of-foreign-policy-2019, (Accessed on: 10 March 2019).

[845] *Ibid.*

force in the form of Swedish Democrats.[846] In the four months of turmoil that preceded the election of the new government in January 2019, several possible coalition options were brought to the table. Both Social Democrats' and Centre Party's leaders were given mandates to conduct consultations with other political parties with the prospect of forming a new government. Those attempts failed, leaving only two more attempts as allowed by the Swedish legislation before the government is established.

Neutrality/non-alignment, or foreign and security policies in general, did not feature highly in the political parties' portfolios during the election campaign. The main topics of the Swedish 2018 elections were integration and inclusion, including welfare policies, family care and education, retirement, followed by migrations and how to deal with them, and finally by jobs and the economic well-being of the society. In terms of security issues, the accent was placed on internal security and how to fight crime and foreign-originating crime, where the majority of the parties opted for increasing the number of police officers as a direct remedy.[847] A simplified account of the last Swedish elections could show that they were all about immigration, but a more elaborate account points also to healthcare, education, equality, law and order, care for the elderly and the Swedish economy as primary issues that were discussed by political competitors.[848] Although national security issues were not highly visible on their agendas, political parties did make their claims for or against maintaining the position of military neutrality by making a reference as to whether they were for or against cooperation with NATO. The Centre Party, the Moderate Party and the Liberals were explicitly in favour of NATO membership, while the Social-Democrats, the Green Party and the Left Party were explicitly against it. The Greens and the Left Party were especially against any possibility of Sweden entering the Alliance and were demanding an end to the country's collaboration with it (the Left Party). However, if we compare the strength of these two threads – migrations and security integration – there is no doubt whatsoever that migrations and their security implications for Swedish national security were by far dominant in the last electoral cycle. The dominance of this thread was also perceived as an entry point of powerful Russian interference in the last Swedish

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[846] 'Sweden in Focus: How did the political situation get to where it is today?', The Local Sweden. Available at: https://www.thelocal.se/20181113/sweden-in-focus-how-did-the-political-situation-get-to-where-it-is-today?utm_source=sinews (Accessed on: 9 March 2019).

[847] 'The Local's guide to the Swedish parties' election promises', The Local Sweden. Available at: https://www.thelocal.se/20180905/the-locals-guide-to-the-swedish-parties-election-promises (Accessed on: 12 March 2019).

[848] 'Sweden's general election: What on earth is going on?', The Local Sweden, available at: https://www.thelocal.se/20180914/swedens-general-election-what-on-earth-is-going-on-sinews (Accessed on: 1 April 2019).

elections through fake news and other disinformation campaigns. Since 2017, the Swedish government started to alert journalists and citizens that these activities were on the rise compared to the 2014 elections.[849] However, research pointed out that it was not just migrations that offered fertile ground for the Russian influence, but also Sweden's close partnership with NATO and the possibility of it joining the Alliance in near future.[850] Therefore, Sweden's alliance policy did resonate through the 2018 elections, though not in a very direct fashion and certainly not in a way that might have proven decisive for their outcome.

The new Government, formed at the beginning of 2019, gathers the same political parties as the previous one – the Social Democrats as the major actor, and the Green Party as their smaller partner but with a parliamentary backing of the Centre and Liberal Parties which previously belonged to the centre-right bloc. As it was not a dominant topic in the pre-election campaign, Sweden's alliance policy was not the subject of inter-party negotiations prior to the government formation. Observers believe that the new PM Löfven has given major concessions to his centre-right supporters, but that these were mainly in the domain of tax and employment policies. Although the new minority government is supported in the Parliament by two political forces that are explicitly in favour of NATO membership, no major steps are expected toward changing Sweden's neutrality policy. This is because, first of all, two constitutive governing parties are still those that are explicitly against the option of NATO membership. As discussed earlier, the preference for neutrality runs deeply in the Social Democrats' ideological framework with which the party managed to dominate the internal discourse and define what 'Swedishness' actually means and what makes a 'good Swede'. Within that discourse, neutrality - in its present form of military non-alignment - is one of the elements that define what Sweden is and what Swedes stand for in the international arena. Similarly, anti-militant policies are genuine to the leftist and environmentalist parties such as the Green Party. Therefore, without any major disruptions in the governing structures, and with other major factors such as threat perceptions stable, no major changes in the Swedish foreign policy dynamics seems to be on the horizon.

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[849] 'Sweden — Preparing for the Wolf, not Crying Wolf: Anticipating and Tracking Influence Operations in Advance of Sweden's 2018 General Elections', Kristine Berzina, German Marshal Fund of the United States, September 2018, available at: http://www.gmfus.org/blog/2018/09/07/sweden-preparing-wolf-not-crying-wolf-anticipating-and-tracking-influence?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2018-09-12%20world%20wire (Accessed on: 8 April 2019).
[850] *Ibid.*

### 5.3.3 Three independent variables as applied on the Swedish case study

As in the Serbian case study, the three independent variables, historical experience, threat perceptions and internal political dynamics, have been applied on the material acquired under the Swedish case study. However, unlike the Serbian case study, the other case study tells a different story.

First of all, historical experience speaks strongly and coherently in favour of the military neutrality/non-alignment. The historical passage of 17th century onwards demonstrates how once born from an interplay of internal and external circumstances, military neutrality/non-alignment was defended and applied in all further contextual settings, in the war-time and peace-time respectfully. The usage of neutrality sporadically showed a lot of pragmatism and some concessions made, especially during the two world wars that posted major challenges for that policy. However, irrespective of that, military neutrality/non-alignment in the Swedish case undoubtedly did the major purpose saving the country and its citizens of wars and its sufferings. This is what Swedish decision-makers keep reminding both domestic and external audience, even when it seems that Sweden moves away from that policy towards more cooperative security initiatives, such are CFSP and the PfP.

The account of threat assessments presented here does show a strong link with the neutrality/non-alignment but not necessarily in a causal relationship. Both the available defence planning documents from the Cold War period and the newest strategic documents from 2017 do take neutrality/non-alignment as a residual category which is taken into account together with the set of factors influencing the defence planning. In other words, those were not threat perceptions that led to the conclusion that Sweden should embrace military neutrality/non-alignment as its security policy, but that policy was already there and dictated with what resources, how and when Sweden would defend against (mostly) the external threats. In that relation, it would have to be a tremendous change of the external and internal circumstances, leading to a completely novel account of security threats, which would require re-definition of the already firmly rooted policy of military neutrality/non-alignment.

And finally, the internal political dynamics also shows some explanatory power related to the choice of that policy. That relation is mostly visible in the political capital that the Social-Democrats have invested and earned owing to the connection between their ideological platform and the military neutrality/non-alignment course. However, as seen in the time-periods when they were not in power, the attachment to that policy, due to its historically proven value, is too strong for alternative political forces to change it. This proves that project of military

neutrality/non-alignment goes beyond particular political actors and is not subjected to internal political negotiations.

# CHAPTER 6: Conclusion

This dissertation has one central question: which factors explain why certain small states embrace military neutrality/non-alignment as their security strategy in the 21$^{st}$ century. Reviewed literature on neutrality/non-alignment and on security policies of small states, as well as alignment theories, failed to provide a conceptual framework within which a plausible explanation for the above question could be found. Still, the reviewed literature pointed to three main variables that the relevant authors seemed to discuss the most. It was my reading of the reviewed literature that led me to the variables of previous historical experience, threat perceptions and internal political dynamics. Here I discussed their applicability to explain choices of military neutrality/non-alignment small states within the frameworks of different theoretical traditions: historical institutionalism, neo-realism and rational choice theory. It was the subject of this thesis to apply those three variables on the two very distinct case studies of military neutral/non-aligned small states, Serbia and Sweden, in order to assess their explanatory potential in addressing why those two small states embraced very similar security politics. It is important to stress that the ambition of this thesis was not to do a comparative study of Serbian and Swedish security policies. Instead of that, I searched for a more generic explanation, possibly applicable to other case studies of military neutral/non-aligned small states, using rich material acquired from those two very different case studies. Serbian and Swedish cases have been selected not because of their similarities, but because of their differences. If the conceptual framework acquired here could address very different cases then it has a potential for an even wider applicability. Here I present my main findings, discussing findings from the two case studies, and the relation between this research and broader bodies of scholars' work reviewed in this thesis, drawing main conclusions and pointing to the issues that still remain unaddressed.

Let me start with what the results of the research on historical experience or war and/or neutrality/non-alignment. The analysis of the historical trajectory of war and/or neutrality experience proved inevitable in the construction of a conceptual framework of how to study military neutrality/non-alignment, and was valuable in the explanation of both case studies. First, as assumed under the learning hypothesis, the two case studies indeed proved that both Serbia and Sweden had learned certain lessons during the analysed historical time-span, and that both have applied them in the drafting of their future security policies. For Serbia, those concerned the utility of a self-organised and applicable military force owing to which Serbs secured firstly autonomy and then independence, acquiring even bigger territories during the major wars. For Sweden, they had to do with the utility of the small state status, and military neutrality that had helped keep the country outside of major warfare.

In the case of Serbia, harsh punishment came in 1999, for the wrongful assumption that old methods were equally applicable to a fundamentally changed context. After 2000, newly learned lesson was adopted and translated into a new threat assessment, which led Serbian authorities to avoid siding with either of the two major opposing military sides, NATO or Russia. In this case, the utility of historical experience up to 1999 remained limited to events that followed. The new learning process, based on the post-1999 trajectory, led to new lessons that were incorporated in subsequent policies. As discussed above, Serbia's historical (military) experience is one of both military and political alignment, and was acquired through crucial war-related struggles: the Balkan Wars and the two world wars. Membership in the Non-Aligned Movement did not have an important security-related learning potential, as the former Yugoslavia mostly took advantage only from its political and symbolic utility, and it was never fully translated into its security policy. However, the historical alignment background, although dominant, proved to be obsolete since 1999, when primarily Serbia, which made up Yugoslavia together with Montenegro, was attacked by an alliance composed (mostly) of its former allies. That historical experience resulted in the accumulation of knowledge about new actors who needed to be reckoned with, new threats, and ways to deal with them. New lesson-learning also corresponded with the new reality – one of Serbia that is since 2006 independent and in a position to formulate new security doctrines as an independent state. In this new environment, the decision of military non-alignment was born despite not having a solid base in the country's previous historical course, since the context was new and links with the previous processes were broken.

The case of Sweden also shows the utility of lesson-learning, but with a different trajectory and with different results. In this case, the choice of neutrality corresponded with the Swedish choice to abandon the pursuit of a great power status and to willingly accept the position of a small or medium-sized state. Starting from that point, military neutrality, which had only recently been translated into non-alignment, was consistently applied and sustained, irrespective of the challenges presented by the two world wars. The main lesson learned from that process is that neutrality is a possible and sustainable policy which, when supported by political and economic needs, can keep a state out of conflict. With the incorporation of the neutrality policy into a Social-Democratic Party political platform, the connection between that policy and 'Swedishness', as an identity-politics thread, grew strong over time. This facilitated its sustainability and help with its translation into a compound foreign policy together with humanitarianism, human rights protection and foreign aid. Unlike Serbia, whose history-learning process abruptly ceased because it became obsolete, lessons learned by Swedes are still applicable in the new, post-Cold War setting. Their model of military neutrality was adapted to

the EU integration process; it refrained from military non-alignment and was simultaneously supplemented with extensive bilateral and multinational security cooperation. Lessons learned by Sweden proved to be applicable over a longer period of time and showed only the need to introduce adaptation to otherwise sustainable politics. Not only that a historical background of centuries-long neutrality/non-alignment supports further maintenance of that policy, it also sets obstacles to any attempts to abandon it, as evident from all the relevant state's foreign and security documents. Each of these documents acknowledges the values of historical lessons learned, and claims their further support. These processes have been explained by concepts of path dependence and increasing returns.

Based on the above, my conclusion is that in the Serbian case study majority of previous historical experience speaks against politics of military neutrality/non-alignment and it is only a portion of experience acquired from 1999 onwards that tells Serbia that there are no available alliance options guaranteeing them protection from major security threats. This does not imply non-applicability of historical experience variable but that there should be a careful analysis of which segments of that experience tell their stories stronger than others and therefore hold a stronger explanatory potential for states' alignment policies. The Swedish case study is much more straightforward in the sense since the historical experience remain consistent and speak in favour of neutrality option coherently.

When discussing applicability of threat assessment variable, it is important to repeat that the model presented here, following Mouritzen, adopted neo-realist premises of structural reasons at the regional level as decisive for states' threat assessments. The assumption is that states with no plausible threats emerging from their immediate environments might opt for military non-alignment because they feel no urgency to join military alliances that would provide them with the benefits of big powers' protection. The two case studies' empirical data show that both countries devoted more attention, at least in their respective strategic documents, to the analysis of the international security environment than to the inquiry of their immediate surroundings. Both Serbia and Sweden find international security to be increasingly problematic, with a multitude of new threats that both find themselves exposed to. Their lists are not identical, but the nature of the threats they have identified points to factors that are emerging from a highly interconnected world, while the sources of the threats are both state and non-state actors. Both countries have invested efforts to convince their respective audiences that, although opting for military neutrality/non-alignment, they are constructive contributors to the international cooperative efforts and that it is not their intention to play the role of 'lonely wolf' in any respect. Sweden had been more direct in pointing to a concrete spoiler of the international scene, which it finds to be Russia, while Serbia has not identified any concrete states that would be

either threatening to international security of directly threatening to its own. However, there is one significant difference between the two case studies and their threat assessments. The Swedish documents start with a statement of Sweden being military neutral/non-aligned and then the assessment of the environment, threats and means and methods how to deal with those threats is subordinated to the fact that the country is and will stay outside of guaranteed allied protection. The link between threat assessment and military neutrality in the Serbian documents is somehow different and those are rather perceived threats, independence of Kosovo and states that recognize it, that point country to embrace neutrality then the other way around. Based on the above, my conclusion is that although the both cases demonstrate a strong link between threat assessments and neutrality/non-alignment that link is not causal, and threat perceptions do not hold a power to explain why states choose to remain outside of alliances. In a consequence, we cannot make assumptions of threats a state is facing based on the fact that a certain state is military neutral/non-aligned since the threat assessment was not a primary factor leading a state to refrain from joining military alliances.

How then political actors, those that are in the position to decide on states' security policies, use both historical experience of alignment/non-alignment and threat assessment when deciding on alignment policies? That was explained in the internal political dynamics section. First of all, the variable of internal political dynamics started with the assumption of rational actors who would use both ideological and material meanings of the alignment/non-alignment rationale for the advancement of their own positions. Empirical research indeed reveals evidence of political parties acting to promote their particular political agendas by embracing individualism in their actions and behaviour under the logic of rational choice theory. Both Serbian and Swedish case studies showed examples of strategic calculations of electoral winners. In the case of Serbia it was the SNS, which avoided promoting any resolute alignment politics in order not to alienate any group from its vast spectrum of supporters, while in the case of Sweden it was the Social Democrats, who never disputed the military non-alignment option with which they have been so strongly politically identified. Their political opponents act equally rationally, strategically either using the alignment/non-alignment option in their programmes and election campaigns or equally strategically avoiding referring to it if that would imperil their chances with the voters, as in the case of Serbia.

The two cases, however, demonstrate how political actors use military non-alignment rationale in different ways. In the Serbian case study, military non-alignment happens to be an avoidance technique owing to which political parties are not obliged to address fundamental issues of where Serbia belongs strategically, politically and symbolically. This avoidance has concrete material implications; based on it, political parties – of which the most successful aim

for broadest electoral support – claim votes from different and ideologically very distant political groups. As the Serbian case demonstrates, only smaller parties belonging either to the left or the right side of the political spectrum can afford to state their preference for either NATO or CSTO engagement. When using military non-alignment as a rhetorical strategy to avoid dealing with the alignment options, representatives of the SNS (just like those of DS and DSS before them) do not make any references either to the Serbian historical experience and the mechanism of learning who one's friends and foes are, or to the threat assessment provided in the strategic documents. In the absence of any politically significant alignment, proponents of non-alignment thus emerged with a plausible option. But it was not formally endorsed, or sustained, until the appearance of political actors who found a place for military neutrality within their rational calculations.

The Swedish case study, on the other hand, shows political actors' commitment to military non-alignment based on its historical utility. This, as stated above, does not imply that parties do not have their utilitarian reasons for doing so. The concept of military neutrality as implemented in Sweden had been strongly linked with the ideology and political principles of Social Democrats, who equally successfully applied it in different spheres of the Swedish social and political life and transmitted it to the Swedish foreign policy making. In contrast to the Serbian case study, Swedish incentives to negotiate their non-alignment position either domestically or internationally are much weaker. Domestically, the Swedish society, businesses and armed forces – if we take them as potential sources of alignment demands – had been accustomed to the position of non-alignment owing to a centuries-long tradition, and do not seem to challenge it on any grounds. Internationally, Sweden holds the position of a small yet successful state that politically and ideologically clearly belongs to the West. Consequently, possible alignment options for Sweden come in only one form, and that is NATO membership. Sweden had already achieved a high level of both political and operational identification with the Alliance, owing to its enhanced partnership status and involvement in NATO multinational operations. Therefore, there are no uncertainties as to where any future alignment politics might take Sweden, and the two-level game of its leadership appears much simpler in comparison with that of Serbia.

Apart from looking at the explanatory potential of the three different variables employed here, it is also important to reflect on their mutual interlinks. First of all, the strongest resonance had been identified between the historical experience and the threat assessment. The pressure of previous or current wars the states found themselves in was decisive not only for the immediate but also for the future definitions of what threatens the states mostly. Sweden was traditionally confronted with the mighty eastern neighbour, compared to whom its smallness featured as one

of the defining elements in security-related decision-making, and that component could be traced historically throughout security and defence related documents. As explained above, Serbian learning process brought valid lessons up to 1999 when it was abruptly changed and historical events led to dramatically changed threat assessment from 2000 onwards. The question is who agents of interpretations were that translated previous historical experiences into threat assessment. In my analysis the role of political elites is not strong in this sense. The interpretation of previous historical events, which in any case would not speak in favour of non-alignment, does not resonate strongly in the discourse of the Serbian political elites analysed in this thesis. It is rather historiography and literature in the case of Serbia where the strongest interpretations of the past historical experiences are found and which influenced myth-making of Serbs as warriors, but that analysis stays beyond the scope of this dissertation. The interpretation of track-record of wars, or rather neutrality/non-alignment track-record, is somewhat stronger in the Swedish case study. The Swedish political elites invested more efforts to explain to the public why neutrality/non-alignment option still works well for the state and society but political actors were pressured to do so in a light of challenging political developments, such was the EU accession. The Swedish political actors did not have to invest efforts in persuading the public why that option is attractive or should be maintained since the track-record speaks in favour of it. They only had to provide explanation that the political actions would not disturb already established patterns. Therefore, the weakest link is detected among the internal political dynamics and historical experience which seems to have a power to speak on its own without a need for internal interlocutors to explain it.

Finally, how conclusions of this theses contribute to the broader literature on neutrality/non-alignment and small states? First of all, this dissertation confirms historical institutionalism as a valid theoretical approach for understanding trajectories of past historical experiences and conjunctions in time when specific historical experiences met other variables, e.g. supporting internal political dynamics, allowing neutrality/non-alignment as an outcome of those conjunctions. The thesis thus communicates well with the portion of the literature which discusses specific case studies in depth and assesses validity of past historical experiences. It also communicates well with the work of those authors who discus neutrality/non-alignment as a legitimate choice of (small) states that they employed in order to protect their vital national interests defined in terms of protection of sovereignty and independence. Following up on that, this dissertation also speaks in favour of a modest number of works discussing conceptual development of neutrality/non-alignment in the 21$^{st}$ century and how that strategy fits collective security agreements and cooperative security. As was elaborated above, neither Sweden nor Serbia claim military non-alignment to be an isolationistic policy and there is a lot of emphasis in

their respective security strategies on global security threats and international efforts to tackle them. Cases of the two states and how they framed their non-alignment policies together with active participation are also cases of states defining their national security policies beyond mere survival, which is a point previously raised by few scholars discussing conceptual developments of those policies.

This dissertation, however, communicates the least with the vast body discussing neutrality/non-alignment as security policies during the Cold War. The reason for this is that that literature viewed those strategies as applicable during the specific geo-political setting and the authors discussing it were mainly interested to see if the international setting is permissible for neutrality/non-alignment option. That body of literature barely contributed any conceptual discussion which would go beyond a specific historical setting. At the same time, that is exactly where this thesis makes a novel contribution to the existing body of knowledge. By moving away from mere discussion of individual case studies and looking for a conceptual explanation of why certain small states decide to stay outside of military alliances, this thesis builds on the recognized shortcoming of neutrality/non-alignment and small states literature. Bu doing so, it gave further researchers, be they interested in a further conceptual or case studies research, a ground to start with. This is not to say that further research will not point out additional variables relevant for particular case studies. However, even those variables should be assessed in relation to what the existing research confirmed to be the three main variables.

Besides providing a broader explanatory framework which communicates with premises of different theoretical traditions, this thesis also brings in-depth analysis of two distinct cases of military neutral/non-aligned small states whose security policies are discussed within the framework of an updated security agenda in the 21st century. Thus, compared to the already outdated body of literature which mainly discussed security policies of small states as a method of their survival during the Cold War, the offered analysis puts forward picture of small states that choose to stay outside of military alliances but still address number of security threats of different origins. Both Serbia and Sweden in the presented analysis look further than a mere survival and that is why those case studies are more complex compared to the existing body of literature.

As for the small states literature, it proved to be dynamic and to attract interest of those authors who want to know whether and how state smallness matters. This dissertation proved that those are two small states, Serbia and Sweden, which are small in their own self-perception, whose choice of non-alignment is only sporadically connected to their smallness. It gives the biggest contribution to the portion of research on small states and alliances since the two cases

discussed here provide additional material on where small states see alliances useful but not necessary enough to want to join them. However, to what degree the choice of non-alignment depends on their smallness and how smallness impact security-related decision-making remains an unfinished business of this thesis as of the broader literature on small states. That is the first possible line of any further research, either on military neutral/non-aligned or small states in general. The second possible avenue for scholars interested in topics, besides exploring possible additional explanatory factors as mentioned above, is further research on dynamics between threat assessments and military neutrality/non-alignment. As this dissertation confirmed, the link between the two is the weakest of all three researched variables. The conclusion of my research points that by knowing a military neutral/non-aligned status of a certain state we still know a little of broad spectrum of threats a state is facing. Further research might encompassing a larger sample of case studies might shed more light on this. And finally, as strongly indicated by the Serbian case study, further attention should be given to the assessment how diverse historical experience resonates with the particular choice of security policy as in the case of military neutral/non-aligned states. Follow-up research, possibly connecting with the literature on external shocks, might point to the decisive historical periods that have power to change the course of small states' security policies.

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**Изјава о ауторству**


Име и презиме аутора __Jelena Radoman_____ _____

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**Изјављујем**

да је докторска дисертација под насловом

Military Neutrality and Non-Alignment as Security Strategies of Small States: Case Studies of Serbia and Sweden


- резултат сопственог истраживачког рада;

- да дисертација у целини ни у деловима није била предложена за стицање друге дипломе према студијским програмима других високошколских установа;

- да су резултати коректно наведени и

- да нисам кршио/ла ауторска права и користио/ла интелектуалну својину других лица.


                                                  **Потпис аутора**

У Београду, _16/12/2019_____

                                                  Jelena Radoman

**Изјава о истоветности штампане и електронске верзије докторског рада**


Име и презиме аутора Jelena Radoman_____

Број индекса          52/2013_____

Студијски програм  doktorske međunarodne i evropske studije

_____

Наслов рада __ Military Neutrality and Non-Alignment as Security Strategies of Small States: Case Studies of Serbia and Sweden


_____

Ментор Filip Ejdus, Håkan Edström_____


Изјављујем да је штампана верзија мог докторског рада истоветна електронској верзији коју сам предао/ла ради похрањена у **Дигиталном репозиторијуму Универзитета у Београду.**

Дозвољавам да се објаве моји лични подаци везани за добијање академског назива доктора наука, као што су име и презиме, година и место рођења и датум одбране рада.

Ови лични подаци могу се објавити на мрежним страницама дигиталне библиотеке, у електронском каталогу и у публикацијама Универзитета у Београду.


**Потпис аутора**

У Београду, ____16/12/2019__

Jelena Radoman

# Изјава о коришћењу

Овлашћујем Универзитетску библиотеку „Светозар Марковић“ да у Дигитални репозиторијум Универзитета у Београду унесе моју докторску дисертацију под насловом:

Military Neutrality and Non-Alignment as Security Strategies of Small States: Case Studies of Serbia and Sweden

која је моје ауторско дело.

Дисертацију са свим прилозима предао/ла сам у електронском формату погодном за трајно архивирање.

Моју докторску дисертацију похрањену у Дигиталном репозиторијуму Универзитета у Београду и доступну у отвореном приступу могу да користе сви који поштују одредбе садржане у одабраном типу лиценце Креативне заједнице (Creative Commons) за коју сам се одлучио/ла.

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**Потпис аутора**

У Београду, ___16/12/2019_____          Jelena Radoman