Vasile Ciorici

RUSSIA'S CHALLENGE TO LIBERAL ORDER: EUROPEAN FAR-RIGHT PARTIES.

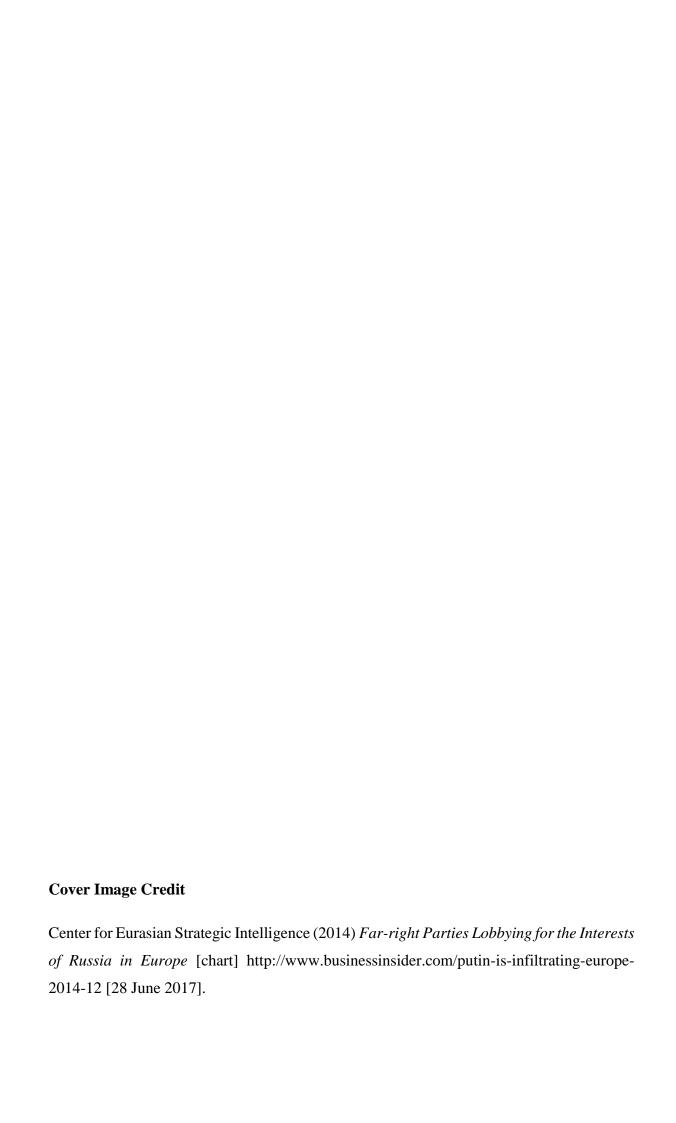· U C ·

UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA

Vasile Ciorici

RUSSIA'S CHALLENGE TO LIBERAL ORDER: EUROPEAN FAR-RIGHT PARTIES.

Master's degree dissertation in **International Relations**, with the specialization of Peace and Security Studies presented to the Faculty of Economy of the University of Coimbra to obtain a Master Degree.

Supervisor: Prof. Doctor Licínia Maria dos Santos Simão.

Coimbra, 2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FOR FUNDING

ABSTRACT

The referendum in Crimea (Ukraine), in March 2014, shows that many representatives of far-right political parties were invited by the Russian government to participate as electoral observers of this referendum, as well as, the acknowledgment of the far-right party *Front Nacional* in France which received financial assistance from Moscow. We could see that Russian connections with these parties have become stronger and more evident. Considering the last electoral success of these parties in European and national elections, furthermore, taking into account that one of Russia's idea of soft power is weaponizing money, culture, and ideas incorporated in the support of far-right parties in Europe. Therefore, this represented serious challenges to the European Union and to the liberal order. Bearing in mind that the liberal order is the main pillar of today's Western society we structured our dissertation around the question: How is the European liberal order affected by Russia's support for European far-right political parties? Using English School lenses to better understand the concepts of international order, society, values, standards of morality and behavior, we analyzed at how the European liberal order is constituted. Then we looked at how the far-right parties in Europe became a challenge to the European liberal order. Also, we considered how Russia was able to connect and support these parties, and which instruments and narratives it was used to achieve this connection. Questioning whether the Russian strategy to connect with far-right parties helped their empowerment in today's international context of tension and fear or not, and why many far-right parties of Europe looked for support from Russia, we analyzed how in the end these Kremlin-far-right parties' connections impacted the European liberal order. The Kremlin's challenge to the European liberal order through these parties appeared to have several goals: to protect its own internal political system from the export of Western democracy and its liberal values; to protect and keep a zone of influence in Europe, and if possible, an installment of a new international order where Moscow would play an important role.

Key-words: Kremlin, Far-Right Parties, Liberal Order, Traditional Values, International Society.

RESUMO

O referendo da Crimeia (Ucrânia), em março de 2014, mostra que vários representantes dos partidos políticos de extrema direita foram convidados pelo governo russo para participar como observadores eleitorais deste referendo, assim como o reconhecimento de que o partido político de extrema direita *Front Nacional* na França, recebeu assistência financeira de Moscou. Nós conseguimos ver que as conexões russas com esses partidos têm se tornado mais fortes e mais evidentes. Considerando o último sucesso eleitoral destes partidos nas eleições europeias e nacionais, além disso, tendo em conta uma das ideias russas de que o poder de persuasão está transformando em armas o dinheiro, a cultura e as ideias incorporadas no suporte dos partidos de extrema direita na Europa. Isso representou sérios desafios para a União Europeia e para a ordem liberal. Por conseguinte, tendo em vista a ordem liberal como o principal pilar da atual sociedade ocidental, nós estruturamos nossa tese em torno da questão: Como a ordem liberal europeia foi afetada pelo suporte russo aos partidos políticos europeus de extrema direita? Por meio das lentes da Escola Inglesa, para uma melhor compreensão dos conceitos da ordem, da sociedade, dos valores, dos padrões de moral e dos comportamentos internacionais, nós analisamos como a ordem liberal europeia está constituída. A partir de então nós olhamos como os partidos políticos de extrema direita na Europa se tornaram um desafio para a ordem liberal europeia. Também consideramos como a Rússia foi capaz de conectar e apoiar esses partidos e quais instrumentos e narrativas foram usados para atingir essa meta. Questionando se a estratégia russa de conectar os partidos de extrema direita ajudou o empoderamento deles no atual contexto internacional de tensão e medo ou não, e porquê muitos partidos de extrema direita da Europa buscaram suporte da Rússia, nós analisamos como que, no final, essas conexões entre Kremlin e os partidos políticos de extrema direita impactaram a ordem liberal europeia. O desafio de Kremlin à ordem liberal europeia, por meio destes partidos, revelou apresentar diversos objetivos. Estes objetivos almejavam proteger o sistema político interno da exportação da democracia ocidental e seus valores liberais, assim como proteger e manter uma zona de influência na Europa, baseado no desenvolvimento de um sistema político similar ao da Rússia, na qual era mais iliberal e pró-Russo e legitimaria as políticas russas na ordem internacional, e, se possível, a instalação de uma nova ordem internacional onde Moscou executaria um papel importante.

Palavras-chave: Kremlin; Partidos de extrema direita; ordem liberal; valores tradicionais; sociedade internacional.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ENF: The Europe of Nations and Freedoms.

EP: European Parliament.

EU: European Union.

FN: *Front Nacional.*

FPO: Freedom Party of Austria.

FRP: Far-Right Parties.

KGB: Soviet secret services.

LN: *Lega Nord.*

MEP: Member of European Parliament.

NATO: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

RT: Russia Today.

UR: United Russia.

US: United States of America.

USSR: Soviet Union.

WW: World War.

INTRODUCTION

In our research, we investigate how Russia challenges the European liberal order through its connections to far-right political parties in the European Union. Russian connections to these parties have become more evident, namely following the referendum in Crimea, in March 2014, when many representatives of these political parties were invited by the Russian government to participate as electoral observers of this referendum. In the same year, the far-right party *Front Nacional* (FN)*,* in France acknowledged that it had received financial assistance from Moscow, and there were many other meetings in Moscow between Russian officials and European far-right parties' leaders (Shekhovtsov, 2015).

Therefore, on the one hand, we have the Western liberal order in general and the European liberal order in particular, while, on the other hand, we have Kremlin as one of the driving forces that challenge this order. However, Moscow's contestation of the European liberal order is particularly important because Russian politics matter to Europe. And that happens dues its proximity to it and the impacts on it, and because Russia uses its soft power tools to influence and to help illiberal political parties in Europe to achieve its foreign policy goals.

In 2012 in an article titled "Russia and the Changing World", the Russian president publicly mentioned for the first time the idea of Russia's soft power (Putin, 2012). The idea of soft power in Kremlin's view is a set of instruments and methods to achieve foreign policy goals without using military power but using information and other levels of influence. Some authors (Pomerantsev and Weiss, 2014) characterized this Russian strategy as the weaponization of information, money, culture, and ideas, in an attempt to challenge the European liberal order. The continuing distortion of information is used as a weapon to make debate and critical thinking difficult, whereas the weapons of money, culture and ideas incorporated in the support of far-right parties in Europe serve as "tools to divide and rule, incite, corrupt and co-opt" the European Union (EU) (*ibidem*: 18).

We consider that this challenge represents a threat to liberal democracy especially regarding the protection of individual values in Europe. Russia itself denies some individual freedoms and values, for example the Russian law against so-called gay propaganda, the anti-blasphemy law in response to the Pussy Riot trial, the Internet restriction bill in the name of child protection, the ban on obscene language in the cinema, books and music and others (Laruelle, 2016: 291). These all prove that Russian policies are very tight and restricted in

terms of individual freedoms and values. So, considering the Russian internal policies and its views on the global liberal order, which in its conceptualization is a form of United States' (US) hegemony, we address the connection between the Kremlin and the far-right parties (FRP) of Europe, perceiving them as an additional Russian instrument challenging the liberal order in Europe, with a particular impact on individual freedoms and values.

In this dissertation, firstly, we deal with the development of the Western liberal order, to identify its main pillars and see how this order has been transformed into its practices and institutions (Held, 2006). At the same time, we look at how this order has been challenged. From its inception, it was challenged by, for example, the Soviet Union or by the "The Third World" (Broad, 1998), whereas today, in a post-Cold War period, we seem to have a gradual destruction of this order from inside. This is achieved by new internal agents challenging it and other problems that contribute to this internal disassemble (Carter, 2005; Art, 2011, 2013), while the popular demands for far-right parties are the warning signs of a system that is in decline (Krekó *et al.,* 2016).

However, in our research, we want to focus on the work of external actors that use internal agents to undermine the European liberal order. One external dimension of the undermining liberal order, we argue, is the Russian contestation of this order through its relations with the European far-right parties. The Kremlin's challenge to the European liberal order through these parties appears to have several goals. These include to protect its own internal political system from the export of Western democracy and its liberal values, as well as to protect and keep a zone of influence in Europe, based on the development of a political system similar Russia's, a more illiberal and pro-Russian one, and which would legitimize Russia's policies in the international order (Laruelle *et al.,* 2015; Laruelle, 2016). In these cases, the far-right parties of Europe have been a good strategy over the last years.

Consequently, along this dissertation we are looking at these two internal and external dimensions of liberal orders, where internally we have both the European community with its democratic institutions and fundamental principles of liberalism and human rights but where at a state level we have far-right parties in many European countries that are contesting these institutions and principles. Meanwhile externally, using the principle of "divide and rule", Russia tries to make the best of this internal European struggle to keep the liberal order (immigration, economic crisis, lack of solidarity, corruption, etc.), with a big agenda to destabilize the European project, and if possible, an instalment of a new international order where Moscow would play an important role.

In the internal dimension, we address these contradictions inside the EU that explain the rise of FRP, as in the last national and European elections these political parties received more votes and therefore more political power inside Europe. Their political ideology is considered extreme right nationalist and xenophobic (Carter, 2005; Halasz, 2009), and opposed to the EU principles of multiculturalism and tolerance. We look at FRP's appearance in liberal democratic countries, considering the fact that FRP is the indicators of a weakened order in Europe.

Conducting our research using far-right political parties of Europe is driven by the fact that the EU's political balance began to switch in favor of these parties. The *Jobbik* party in Hungary received 14.8% of the votes, in the 2009 European parliamentary elections, while in the Hungarian parliamentary election of the same year it received 20,5%. *Front National*, in France, received almost 5 million votes in the 2014 European Parliament (EP) elections, has been the most voted party in France with 24.86% of the votes and 24 of France's 74 seats in the EP (*Political Capital Institute*, 2014). At the same time, these two political parties, while getting more political power, had intensified their connections with the Kremlin. In 2014, just before the EP elections, Marine Le Pen traveled to Moscow and met with the Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dimity Rogozin (Servettaz, 2014). Following that meeting, Marine Le Pen admitted that her party received a €9 million loan from the First Czech-Russian Bank (*BBC Monitoring European*, 2014).

Research Puzzle.

Considering the facts above and looking at the liberal order as the main pillar of today´s Western society we structure our thesis around the question: <u>How is the European liberal order affected by Russia's support for European far-right political parties?</u>

To answer this question, we want to clarify first how the European liberal order is constituted. Then we look at how the FRP in Europe became a challenge to the European liberal order in the first place. Then we want to look at how Russia was able to connect and support these parties, through what instruments and narratives, and how these new policies are relevant for its strategy of undermining the liberal order. Consequently, questioning whether the Russian strategy to connect with far-right parties helps their empowerment in today's international context of tension and fear, and why many far-right parties of Europe look for support in Russia, we want to see how in end these Kremlin-FRP connections impact the liberal order in Europe.

Therefore, in our dissertation, we explain why these political parties got so strong and what danger they eventually represent for the liberal principles the European society stands for. In doing that, we also analyze how Russia was able to connect and use these connections with far-right parties and their later success as an additional tool in its strategy of undermining the liberal order in Europe.

Theoretical framework

While conducting our research, we are going to use the English School of International Relations Theory. This helps us to better understand the concepts that we are using in this dissertation, as our level of analysis moves beyond the international system onto international society, with shared norms and rules at an international level. Although we are more interested in the state level where the far-right parties make more sense, we argue that their actions have transnational effects and consequences for the whole regional European and international society.

Although, in our thesis, we are using many concepts from political science (explaining the electoral support for FRP), using the English School lenses to look at these challenges to liberal order gives us a better understanding of these relations. This theoretical approach has as a central concept, the idea of International Society, which according to Buzan (1993) equals to international order. This international order exists in an anarchical society and has common values and norms that play a big role in the creation and preservation of international society (order), existing in parallel to the states self-interests and power (Sterling-Folker, 2006: 305).

So, even if we start with the definition of liberal democratic order, our dissertation goes into a deeper analysis of the construction of an international liberal society in the European context. This society is constituted by thick rules and norms and has different extreme political parties challenging the liberal democratic state.

Therefore, we address the Kremlin's challenge to the common liberal values in today's European thick international society, and where FRP represent additional tools in this process. For that reason, using English School perspective gives us a better understating of the interaction between Russia and far-right and how they together could shape the current European dense international society and its liberal order.

Methodology

Conducting this research around the questions mentioned above, this dissertation attempts to bring a new way of understanding these connections, to look at them from the perspective of a Western liberal order, how it could impact it, to recognize the nature of Russian relationships with the far-right from Eastern and Western Europe. Russian financial and political support to FRP as an instrument in confronting the liberal order in Europe, may lead to the empowerment of far-right political parties in Europe, and considering their nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric and their declared political agenda, according to authors like (Laruelle, 2015) this represents a real threat to several dimensions. First to EU institutions, to Liberalism in terms of moral values, to Individualistic values, and to the "loose consensus" of parliamentary democracy (Laruelle, 2015: 4).

Having in mind a variant of a famous statement that "Those who do not know history's mistakes are doomed to repeat them" and remembering that we had the World War II and Holocaust after the empowerment of far-right in Europe, the research builds on many other researchers (Laruelle, 2015; Shekhovtsov, 2015; Juhász *et al.*, 2015) on this matter, and sheds light onto a central European challenge

Hence to investigate this we are going to analyze the literature on Russian's connections with the far-right of Europe developed by specialists in the area such as Anton Shekhovtsov (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017), Laruelle Marlene (2015, 2016), Juhász *et al.,* (2015), Klapsis (2015), Krekó *et al.,* (2015) to study their point of view on these connections, how they see these relations and how they explain these relationships. It will analyze the Kremlin's and far-right's political leader's declarations, visits and their meetings on forums and conferences organized between them, their speeches, received loans, and other visits that had happen, in order to prove that there is an ongoing direct relationship between them and that the connections are real and are currently happening, as well as to prove that there are a mutual respect and recognition.

Finally, it will address the connection between Russia and two particular FRP, one from Western Europe and one from Eastern Europe. We chose *Jobbik* in Hungary because it serves as an example of how Russia connects with a far-right party in East Europe, a region known before for its anti-Russian sentiments that has a communist past and that after the Cold-War supported liberalism. At the same time, *Jobbik* is an extreme right wing party with open xenophobic (anti-Roma) rhetoric and with an opposing ideology to liberal democracy

(Halasz, 2009; Varga, 2014), and which today is the largest far-right party in Eastern Europe and the third biggest in Hungary. Per some authors (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016; Korkut, and Akçali, 2015) *Jobbik*'s success puts pressure on and influences the democratic Hungarian government that started to coopt some of *Jobbik's* policies

The second is *Front Nacional*, the biggest far-right party in the Western Europe, in a Western country that is known for its historical fight for liberalism. Therefore, we could have a perspective from both different sides of Europe that still connect with Kremlin. FN is an interesting case because first, France is one of the biggest powers of Europe and it has a huge influence on the internal balance of the EU, also FN's leader, Marine Le Pen was a strong candidate for the French presidency in the 2017 (*Independent*, 2017). Second, Marine Le Pen in recent years tried to change her party's rhetoric and program and even refused to enter into an alliance and be associated with *Jobbik* accusing the party to be anti-Semitism, therefore, trying in this way to present herself and the party, before the upcoming French parliamentary elections, in a new and less radical way (Laruelle *et al.,* 2015).

These two cases give us illustrative examples of how two political parties from two countries that have different historical backgrounds, in today's political context of Europe, impact the liberal order in Europe on the same level. France, a country that historically fought for democracy and liberalism, and Hungary, a newer member of the EU with a communist past, but which has also fought for democracy very recently. In this way, we try to have a perspective of how the Russian relations with the far-right in Europe develop and adapt to different parts of Europe and their different FRP, whether is a newer member of the EU with the extreme far-right party of *Jobbik* or is an old member of the EU that had long traditions of democracy with a more moderate far-right FN of Le Pen.

The cases offer us the tools to see how Russia is capable of getting to these political parties even though they differ from country to country and how it instrumentalizes these relations with different far-right parties in different parts of Europe to undermine liberal order, while at the same time trying to offer its alternatives.

The structure of the dissertation.

In the first Chapter, which is the theoretical one, we deal with the liberal tradition and its incorporation into the political systems of the European countries today. Firstly, looking at how this liberal system evolved while there were other ideas and concepts (communism) available to structure a society. Secondly, analyzing the liberal system as it is

today with capitalism being a fundamental element of this system taking into account that after the economic crisis of 2008, it stopped bringing economic benefits, making the liberal society more vulnerable to FRP's policies.

Starting from the point of liberal order in Europe, in this chapter, we are analyzing how the international system beyond Europe influences the liberal structure. While at the same time researching how the West's liberal order influences the international order in its way, intervening in the name of democracy in the European neighborhood, which is a zone of Russian interests.

This Chapter starts with a literature review presenting the works developed on key concepts (political ideology, Western values, liberal democracy, moral values...etc.), comparing different approaches and clarifying why we chose specific concepts and definitions. Then we described the chosen theoretical perspective of the English School and how it applies to our research problematic and in which way it is helpful to answer our research question.

In the second Chapter, we look at the development of the FRP in Europe and their connections to Russia, we start by looking at their historical legacies, and how they initially started as a "silent counter-revolution'' and then turned to be Eurosceptic and have an anti-liberal agenda. Continuing with Eastern Europe, where we refer to the FRP that first appeared there as a "post-communism syndrome" but after the economic crisis of 2008 succeeded politically and got into the mainstream.

In the second part of the Chapter, we look at how Russia gradually turned to conservatism traditionalism and therefore, created a bridge that connected it with the far-right of Europe. We start with Russia's struggle after the Cold-War to integrate into the liberal society and become a liberal democratic state. We then move on to explore the Kremlin's new ideological postures that went from political centrism in the early 2000s to conservatism-traditionalism after 2012 that today is the current Russian ideology position.

In the last part of the Chapter, we research how this relationship between Russia and FRP happened. Here we examine the ideological and geopolitical aspects of theses relations as well as the instruments of connections between the FRP and the Kremlin. We give examples of conferences, forums, and elections that were organized in Russia and elsewhere, where both parts met and reinforced these connections. Finishing with the

examination of a cooperation agreement between FRP and Russia's ruling party United Russia, which we believe represents a new higher step in this Russia-FRP relationship.

In the third Chapter, we analyzed the two case studies: The *Jobbik* far-right party in Hungary and the *Front Nacional* far-right party in France.

We found the *Jobbik* case particularly interesting, apart from being a far-right party of a new member of EU in Eastern Europe, because of its particular communist history. In Hungarian society, the sentiments towards Russia were not the friendliest, and usually, they were for the European values and had pro-European views like most other East European countries that had suffered from communism before. Therefore, using English school lenses, we analyzed first how the party ascended to power and arrived to be a serious challenge to the liberal order. Then we addressed the means used by the Kremlin to connect and "weaponize" *Jobbik* and how these connections were translated later in the party agenda of encouraging Moscow's alternatives to liberal order and transforming it into a natural supporter of Kremlin's foreign policy and a promoter of Moscow's interests inside the European Union. Hence, examining the later effects of these policies of support, coming from Kremlin that *Jobbik* received in recent years, on liberal order. One relevant example that we gave in this Chapter is the party's pro-Russian position in the Ukrainian crisis and the recognition of Crimea's annexation by Russia, as well as its pressure on Hungarian ruling party FIDEZ that started to co-opt many of *Jobbik*'s policies.

Through the second case study of *Front National*, we address similar questions, as this French party had the same ideological links and different connections with Moscow. Considering the amounts of seats that the party won in the European Parliament 2014 election and the success in the first round of the 2017 French presidential elections, this case study attests to the Russian financial and political support for FN, where the outcome of EU elections resulted in pro-Russian forces inside the European Parliament at the time of a deep crisis in the European Union.

We start the analysis with FN's electoral successes and challenges to liberal order, looking then at how the Kremlin was able to connect and support FN, and what are the impacts of these policies on support on the liberal order in general. Since France is one a founding of the EU, with a strong commitment to the principles of liberty, fraternity, equality, Russia's ability to connect with this country, through Le Pen's party, and to turn it into an ally against the EU institutions and EU liberal values is remarkable.

The dissertation finishes with a general conclusion where we answer our research question and the sub questions, and where we argue that Russia's connections with FRP are aimed at changing the shared liberal practices and expectations in liberal order which in turn, represent the "civilized" standards of behavior in the international society.

CHAPTER 1. FROM LIBERAL TO ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY ORDER IN EUROPE.

1.1. The Western world and liberal democratic order.

The current Western liberal democratic order has its roots back in World War (WW) II, after the defeat of fascism by the "Allies" and the establishment of a new international liberal order, particularly strong and dense in Europe. The English School theory gives us a simple definition of international order and according to Bull (1977: 8) international order is "a pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states, or international society". In Sousa's (2008: 139) words, the contemporary international order as a set of norms and rules used to reach international stability through the balance of power and security of the international system. We opted for this definition as it argues that the international order is composed of multiple factors: political, diplomatic, strategic and ideological ones, the latest serving as propaganda and a system of values. Therefore, in a liberal democratic order, we have this common system of values, once defined by liberal democracy itself.

At the onset of this dissertation, we close firstly to research the challenges that the post-WWII liberal order has faced, as well as to have a general overlook at the origins and evolution of liberal democracy and its impact on the international order. Among the central concepts of this dissertation is the concept of democracy. Therefore, we chose to look at Held's (2006) work "Model of Democracy" because the author in this work uses critical analyses on democracy, brings light to the development of liberal democracy since WWII where he discusses the "stability, the political crisis and the polarizations of political ideals" (Held, 2006: 185), continuing with "democracy after the Soviet communism" (Held, 2006: 217) and how "democracy is placed in the nation State and global system" (Held, 2006: 290).

The author argues in the referred study, that democracy is the only alternative form of government, which could reach the fundamental values or goods of a society that are "[…] rightful authority, political equality, liberty, moral self-development, the common interest, a fair moral compromise, binding decisions that take everyone's interests into account, social utility, the satisfaction of wants and efficient decisions" (Held, 2006: 3).

The period after WWII was the time for such great aspirations and goals as it is characterized by authors like Held (2006: 185) as the period of "great hope", the decade where there was "a faith in authority and legitimacy". After all the WWII destructions,

economic, political and social recovery brought prosperity to society, meanwhile the fight of different movements for social justice and rights that was taking place, altogether conducted to a prolonged welfare state (Broad: 1998). There was a time for "new politics" committed to social and economic reform while respecting the constitutional state and representative government (Held, 2006: 185).

Agreeing with Buzan (1993: 332) that "International Society is a synonym for order", in the West, an order of liberal democratic regimes was that kind of international society that could provide the basis for these "new politics". By liberal democratic regime we mean a democratic system based on parliamentarians and where the constitution effectively limits the power of elected government and this government has to fulfil the legal rights of the citizens (Parrott, 2000: 74), and it is allied with a structure of free market in the area of economic production (Sousa, 2008: 61).

Even if we agree with Robert Dahl (2000: 3) that "democracy has meant different things to different people at a different time and places", the idea is that democracy *per se* could not be interpreted just as a single and unique set of institutions because there are many types of democracy. Their diverse practices and their specific forms are shaped by the countries' socio-economic conditions as well as its established state structure and policy practices (Schmitter and Karl, 1991: 103). However, Schmitter and Karl (1991: 103) in their famous essay "What democracy is…and is not" would argue that "What distinguishes democratic rulers from nondemocratic ones are the norms that condition how the former come to power and the practices that hold them accountable for their actions".

Therefore, in a liberal democratic society, the liberal characteristics are a set of mechanisms of checks and balances, which are established to ensure citizens' freedoms and to protect them from the State. Its democratic character is based on regular, competitive elections conducted through the universal vote and political equality. More of a political postulate, liberal democracy in the West represents a type of a political regime (the main examples are the US and the EU regimes) rather than a principle. In its indirect and representative form, liberal democracy is based on regular elections, which operate through party pluralism, tolerance of different perspectives and tolerance of difference and opposition political parties with their different social beliefs (Sousa, 2008: 61).

1.2. The liberal order

The liberal democratic order was established in the West after WWII but it did not become truly international until the end of Cold War. The unexpected collapse of the Soviet system and the disappearance of the biggest challenges to this liberal order led many authors and politicians in West to consider that it was possible that the liberal democratic order had finally prevailed over other orders and become truly international (Held, 2006: 217). Authors like Heilbroner (1989) rushed to declare the West's "triumph of capitalism". Meanwhile, others went even further in their studies about liberal democratic victory over communism, namely Francis Fukuyama, in his famous essay on "the end of history". Fukuyama arrived at this conclusion as he believed that the ideological conflict was finished and liberalism was the ultimate victorious ideology (Fukuyama, 1989).

To prove his argument, he states that there was a remarkable consensus, which developed in the whole world about the fact that liberal democracy being the only legitimate and viable form of government (Fukuyama, 1989/90: 22). In his enthusiasm, he declared that the main rivals of liberalism, which were fascism and communism, had failed or were failing while other contemporary challenges such as Islamic religious movements or nationalist movements like the ones existing in East Europe then, could not seriously provide an alternative to liberalism as their belief was based on incomplete ideologies (*ibidem*: 23).

These systems did not have "universal significance". The only feasible system left was the liberal one, where liberal democracy and market principles of economic organization establish a progress of "truly world-historical significance" (*ibidem*: 23). With this, it was presumed that there will not be another great alternative to liberalism and the age of capitalism will last forever (Broad, 1998) and with the first Golf War going on and its success, the United States President Bush went on to declare a New World Order (Broad and Lori, 1992).

But there was criticism about Fukuyama's conviction on the liberal democracy victory over communism, as Fukuyama's arguments did not include the debates going on about liberalism, which ideologically, is a much-contested terrain and it could not be treated as a unity (Held, 2006: 223). Other elements that Fukuyama ignored was that there are pressures and even contradictions between the two elements (liberal and democratic) of liberal democracy. While the liberal element stands for individual rights or "frontier of

freedoms", the democratic one is concerned with the individual collective action and public accountability. These two dilemmas were often solved in different directions (*ibidem*: 223).

The idea that liberalism has defeated communism is strongly questioned by Callinicos (1991: 108-109). The author argues that what we consider liberal democratic order today, in fact, is a capitalist order, while the communist order was nothing more than a form of Stalinism, which represented an authoritarian distortion of Marxist socialism. So, what prevailed over the Stalinist order was capitalism and not a liberal democracy. This is because of liberal democracy, argues Callinicos (1991: 109), which has broken several promises that were pillars of this order. What liberal order promised and failed to deliver was: first, political participation, as many people do not vote in elections (as an example); second, government accountability; and third, freedom to protest and reform, which failed to be delivered because political institutions were eroded and displaced by unelected centers of power, considering the expanded role that bureaucratic authorities had, while the constant flight of the capital overseas represented a permanent threat to social reforms.

Although we do not ignore these debates about what liberal democracy is and its internal problems, in our dissertation we presume that, after the end of Cold War, the disputable and controversial liberal democratic order prevailed, based on liberal values. These became the predominant one in today´s international system and are characterized by those who govern are thus bound by the preferences of encompassing majorities. Free and fair elections, the freedom of assembly, association, the press as well as the protection of fundamental rights are institutional principles. After the end of the Cold War, these principles seemed to become accepted as a canon of universal values of the legitimate rule (Faust, 2013).

To better understand how an international system appears and is structured, we refer to English School theory and its main authors. Bull (1977) used the term **international system** while explaining the definition of international order. He specified in his analyses that international system or so-called **system of states** "is formed when two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on one another's decisions, to cause them to behave - at least in some measure - as parts of a whole*"* (Bull, 1977: 9).

Buzan (1993) addressed the development of the international system as a project established in the modern world, as a result of European power bringing together people and political communities into regular contact with each other. Therefore, the existence of an

international system rests on the units' existence (states or independent political communities) that are significantly interacting between them and are arranged or structured according to some ordering principles. Among these interactions, we can include trade, diplomacy, war, migration and the movement of ideas (Buzan, 1993: 231).

For these interactions to be peaceful (a condition for prosperity and security) the societies that interacted in the international system had to be liberal (Doyle, 1986: 1156). Even though liberal states could fight with non-liberal ones, the war between liberal states is very improbable. In the eighteen century, Kant named the European liberal society as a "pacific federation or union" among the liberal societies. These ideas were used in the twentieth century, under US President Reagan giving birth to predictions of liberal pacifism. The US government saw this condition as the fundamental bond to connect and cement alliances with liberal powers, namely in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the Japanese alliance (*ibidem*: 1156).

The liberal order prevailed in the 1990s and reestablished confidence in the supremacy of Western values in the international society (Held, 2006: 219). Watson (in Buzan, 1993: 335) argued that "the regulating rules and institutions of a system usually and perhaps inexorably, develop to the point where the members become conscious of common values and the system becomes an international society" or a "society of states" as first described by Bull (1977). Bull argued that this concept of society is possible because in a group of states, they "recognize certain common interests and perhaps some common values and they regard themselves as bound by certain rules in their dealing with one another" (Bull, 1977: 13). Therefore, the international society in the post-Cold War era had common liberal values, whereas the liberal democratic form of government provided that common identity and "we-ness" that Buzan (1993: 335) stresses that it is central to the concept of society.

These common liberal values in the post-Cold War international society are also metaphorically considered by some authors to be a standard of "civilization" that reflected the liberal norms of Wests' civilization (Tucker, 1977: 9; Stivachtis, 2010). To be part of the international society in post-Cold War order, a state had to be "civilized" this means that it had to obey to basic rights of life, dignity, and property, and freedom of travel, commerce, and religion, especially that of foreign nationals; it must consist of an organized political bureaucracy with the means to run state machinery efficiently and the capacity to organize for self-defense; it must subscribe to generally accepted international law, including the laws of war, while maintaining a domestic system of courts, codes, and published laws, which

guarantee legal justice for all within its jurisdiction, whether they are foreigners or native citizens; it must maintain permanently functioning avenues for diplomatic intercourse; and it must conform to the accepted norms and practices of the established "civilized" international society (Stivachtis, 2010: 11).

Any other states that were not "civilized" yet, ought to follow the West's model of a modern state and conform to liberal democratic standards. In order to assure this goal, institutions of liberal order like The Council of Europe were armed with mechanisms of public shaming the states that do not conform to the standards of liberal democracy (*ibidem*: 23). Therefore, Article 3 of the Council of Europe Charter specifies these standards and that all Member States should *"[…]* accept the principles of rule of law, enjoyed by all persons within state's jurisdiction of human rights, strive to enforce and safeguard the European Council's ideas and principles, and facilitate economic and social progress" (in Stivachtis, 2010: 23).

Bull (1977: 17) explained this behavior in international society in the way that great powers (the West) play a predominant role in shaping international society and they see themselves as its custodians that treat other independent states as subordinate to the preservations of the system as a whole. This means that, as the Cold War ended, countries in East Europe that were outside the liber order had to adjust to the new standards of international society. This process of socialization of a non-member of a society implies:

> […] its acceptance of the rules, norms, and practices that the international society considers to be 'civilized' standards of behavior. As a result, candidate states which cannot or are unwilling to fulfill the required standards are 'named' and 'shamed', and receive characterizations such as 'backward', 'rogue'" (Stivachtis, 2010: 6).

1.3. The European liberal order and Russia.

Although the liberal democratic order today faces many challenges and pressures from inside and outside, in the 1990s it seemed untroubled (Held, 2006: ix). The Eastern European countries emerging from the Soviet bloc recognized these liberal democratic values as universal and were interested in integrating into the European liberal institutions. Stivachtis (1998: 194) explains that behavior as a normal path shaped by the logic of anarchy, which determines the available options to the states when they follow their interests. The

collapse of Soviet Union left the ex-USSR Republics, including Russia, with no viable alternative.

The European organizations were the only alternative to achieve political objectives for these countries at that moment. This was a win-win situation for the West's international order since the regional European international society would increase the territorial space where its political, economic and social order applies and its values promoted, with the inclusion of these countries (Stivachtis, 2010: 7).

These European organizations were seen in the West as the alternative "security community"[1]extending from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The countries of Eastern Europe were "knocking on the doors of Western alliances". Meanwhile, the European Community with the Maastricht Treaty became the European Union with further strategies to increase integration and promotion of its values into Eastern Europe. The West's liberal order represented at that time the order capable of providing security and prosperity in the world system (Salmin, 1998).

Even for Russia, the country considered to be the successor of the USSR, which had constantly challenged the liberal order of the West, the liberal order of the 1990s was the "normal" path and it was ready to join the Western institutions like the Council of Europe or the World Trade Organization to become a "civilized" state. Initially, the Kremlin did not have major objections to the willingness of countries from the ex-Soviet space to join Western organizations, as Moscow itself was a part in some of them (International Monetary Fund or World Bank). Therefore, when countries like Poland declared their intention to join NATO, the Kremlin declared its respect to this decision and that this would not come in conflict with Russia's interests because it considered NATO an alliance capable of supporting the construction of a new world (Salmin, 1998). But things started to change as it was becoming clear (high suspicions and reservations among the Western states) that Russia, due to its complexity, size, economic and military potential, geopolitical encirclement, could not actually be a Western state. Russia's slow integration into the Western institutions was seen rather as symbolic and theoretically possible, but not desirable on the part of the West (Salmin, 1998; Turner, 2009).

---

[1] *Vide* Karl Deutsch *et al*., eds., (1957) *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, and Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, eds., (1998) *Security Communities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, for more information about this concept.

Consequently, was it possible that Wight (1977: 33) was right when he assumed that the state-system, as in our case the international liberal system, could not accept states that did not have a degree of cultural unity among its members? Indeed, Russia in the 1990s, after it was ruined by the communist regime, was looking for a new identity and a new role in the international system (Blum and Tsygankov, 2009; Turner, 2009). It had a history of being neither liberal nor democratic, but rather it had a great military and economic potential, inherited from the USSR, a veto right in the United Nations Security Council so it still played an important role in keeping the Western liberal order.

Therefore, as Buzan (1993: 334) argues, if "the ruling elites recognize the permanence and importance of the economic and strategic interdependence among their states, they will begin to work out rules for avoiding unwanted conflicts and for facilitating desired exchanges". We must mention here, for example, Russia's admission into the Council of Europe and its acceptance into the "Big Eight" permanent club of leaders of great powers (Group of eight-G8), with market economy and democratic institutions, or the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed between the EU and Russia (Salmin, 1998; Chizhov, 2009). Considering all these decisions, Wight's arguments are at least questionable, as the Western liberal system was willing to accept Russia although after communism its cultural unity with the West was very weak.

The Russian role in the liberal order during the 1990s had a trajectory that started from being a probable insider to being seen as "non-Western" by the end of the decade. This attitude changed as many factors emerged from both sides. On the one hand, the Chechen wars, the corruption scandals, and the deep economic crisis in 1998 that haunted Russia, altogether contributed to the fact that Russia was considered as a second-order player in Europe and in the world of political and economic decisions (Salmin, 1998). On the other hand, the Western critical decisions to expand its institutions eastwards and include countries that were historically and strategically of Russia's dominant interest created tensions between the inner circle of the liberal society and the outside circle, that included now Russia.

The common culture so necessary to include Russia into the European liberal society was and was not existing in the relations with the West. Russia's internal debates on Russian identity as being predominantly European or Asian did not help the already complicated relations with the West. It has a common history with Europe and it fought wars with and along the EU countries but its internal abuses of human rights, its ego of a super

power, and other "Russian ways" of doing things made this cultural bond very thin. Russia's interaction with the Western liberal society resembles the situation described by Buzan (1993), where the states (in our case Russia) are a part of the liberal system, but at the same time are outside the civilization sphere and nevertheless develop close relations with shared culture international societies (Buzan, 1993: 334).

The issues of liberal order in the following years of 2000 were different from the 1990s, while it was expected that the development of common norms, rules, and institutions would ultimately generate a common identity (Buzan, 1993: 336). This did not happen and Russia did not arrive at the point where it would become a liberal democratic power, contrarily, it turned out illiberal.

Illiberal democratic governments are the ones consequently who "hold free elections but do not honor the rule of law and the rights of their citizens" (Charles, 1998; Zakaria, 1997). Zakaria (1997), in his famous article "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", stated that it is not just the democracy by itself which makes states peaceful and benevolent, but only liberal democracy is the answer to this formula. Therefore, if there is not a protection of individual rights and the centralized power is not constrained by constitutional liberalism, the democratically elected government is likely to abuse power, mostly in diverse societies where there may be ethnic rivalry and conflict (Zakaria, 1997; Charles, 1998). Consequently, the authors above concluded that "democratic peace" among democratic governments is possible if these governments develop among preexisting liberal protections of their citizens, which is not Russia's situation.

There were several facts mentioned by Light (2004: 56) that had to happen in order for Russia to revert to being an ideological rival power to Europe, namely by taking a Eurasian identity and turn into a policy of conflict and confrontation with Europe. One of the facts was that, in Light's opinion, Russia did not have a fixed identity and ideology and these depended on whether Russia was included or excluded from Europe's expanding project, including NATO. The other facts were related to the internal political situation in Russia. Therefore, the author continues, exclusion from Europe and internal turmoil could make Russian nationalists claim that Russia has a special mission and this messianism requires an active ideology (*ibidem*: 56).

Then has Russia taken a Eurasian identity that opposes the European one in terms of values? Well, per Tsygankov (2016: 155) the complexity of values appeared because of

ontological insecurity that Moscow was feeling from the West, while it adopted nationalistic policies to protect itself from Western pressures of democratization. Therefore, a democratic state assumes a rotation of power, which did not happen in Putin's Russia. The Russian system looked like a democracy, but in fact, political elites were using elections as a means to legitimize this lack of power rotation called "Electoral Authoritarianism" (Shekhovtsov, 2015: 223).

As a result, to preserve the political power and justify the direction at home and abroad Kremlin has opted for an ideology described by Tsygankov (2016: 155) as "Putin's State Civilization" a type of ideology that positioned Russia as a global defender of conservative values. This is a weapon against the EU and its liberal institutions (Poptcheva, 2016) since because in Article 2 of Treaty of the European Union is specified that:

> The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men prevail (The European Union, 2007).

The challenge to these values coming from outside (Russia) and inside (the far-right parties) jeopardizes the European Union future because EU values are meant to be the foundation for a common European "way of life", helping with integration on the way to a political, not just economic, Union. They provide the base for the growth of a European identity while guaranteeing the legitimacy of the EU as being founded on democratic values (Poptcheva, 2016). So, in the twenty-first century, a new form of confrontation is taking shape that shifted from the Cold War's East-West vertical conflict to horizontal conservative and traditionalist, against liberal, multicultural and transnationalism assessments (Kaylan, 2014).

Russia at the time of this research is almost excluded from the European society, suffers from sanctions imposed by the West after Russia's annexation of Crimean region, which happened, as experts declare, to stop NATO and EU expansion to the East. Moreover, Moscow's regime is characterized by Motyl (2016: 1) "as a popular fully authoritarian political system with a personalistic dictator and a cult of the leader", which are characteristics similar to Fascist regimes.

Nevertheless, Moscow did not completely abandon the Western model of democracy as it provides a high level of legitimacy and with this legitimacy more strength

coming from the fact that they are reasonably democratic (Zakaria, 1997). What we witness nowadays in Putin's Russia, it could be described by as simulation of liberal democracy order, because there are elections and political parties in opposition, there are some free mass media companies, but at the same time there exists a great concentration of power in Kremlin, and this situation does not allow any operational space for opposition, which every day gets weaker and weaker (Shevtsova, 2012). The Kremlin's political power controls the judicial power and all the big national television companies (*ibidem*, 2012). This form of government is described by Zakaria (1997) as the gravest danger that illiberal democracy poses not just to its own people but in general it will discredit liberal democracy itself, forming a shadow on democratic governance.

1.4. Civil society and the liberal order.

Hence as Russian example proves, holding elections is not enough to get to a liberal democratic order and it could empower totalitarian regimes. There is a need for a more complex institutional structure that would depict the liberal order. A structure composed of several pillars, including civil society (Dahrendorf, 2005: 8). Hereafter, we agree with the author Dahrendorf (2005) that civil society represents a set of civic activities and associations that are regulated but not controlled by the State and which are free to express their points of view or even publicly manifests different judgments. An active civil society is expected to contra-balance the anti-liberal inclination of a democratically elected majority through mobilization (*ibidem*, 2005: 8).

In the West's conception (Roginsky and Shortall, 2009) civil society is the last source of individual rights and liberties which must be protected against incursions by the State. It represents that self-regulating space of associations that are devoted to delivering a necessary buffer against the excessive intrusion of the State into the life of the individual and it must dwell in a distinctive space outside the sector of the market and the sector of State (*ibidem*: 482). Therefore, to accomplish these tasks it must be organized and institutionalized to some point and be private, which means it needs to be institutionally separated from the government and the market (nonprofit) and it must be self-governing without any control from an outside force including the state, while the participation in it should be mainly voluntarily (*ibidem*: 475).

Authors like Bunyan (2014) have concluded that civil society is seen as something not yet certain but which develops from "the relations of power between the various

institutional forms and interests contesting the public sphere" and the term of civil society could be understood as a "political process that engages diverse peoples and institutions in solidarity and commitment to a universalizing community based on social justice" (*ibidem*: 551).

Considering this definition of civil society as a source of individual rights and liberties based on social justice, which contests the public sphere, in our research we believe that this essential pillar of liberal order troubles so much Moscow and its authoritarian regime, because it failed to provide its citizens with these rights and liberties as well as welfare and social justice (Evans, 2012). With the start of the "colored revolutions" in the former Soviet space that contested the illiberal inclinations of governments in Georgia and Ukraine, the Kremlin started to limit the public sphere while trying to control the civil society by creating state-sponsored organizations like "*Nashi*" or imposing control on the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Russia (Light, 2004). Russia accused the West of interference in these revolutions to serve its geopolitics interests and, as a response, adapted unofficially a "sovereign democracy" ideology and destroyed the opposition political parties and their demonstrations (Horvath, 2013: 1).

The concern with civil society is also shared by the EU's far-right political parties. They fight against the EU privileged nature of globalization, claiming that financial and political elites, American hegemony, and the rising influence of the European Union abolished the natural fabric of civil society (Zaslove, 2008). The far-right also associate European integration with the powers of globalization and with a significant damage of national sovereignty (*ibidem*, 2008). Although their political power is still limited this does not mean that these parties are irrelevant to the challenge of the liberal order, considering that political mobilization occurs within civil society, outside the dominion of party politics where there are fewer limitations on their actions (Minkenberg, 2003: 151).

Similar to Russia, the success of far-right is in their particular method of organization, arranged around a charismatic and populist leader and built upon a strong organizational presence within civil society (Zaslove, 2008). The same as Kremlin, the far-right stress the themes of nationalism, sovereign democracy and defense of traditional cultures, to counter what is seen by them, as "the excessive individualist focus of the US and the EU elite in Brussels that erodes traditional community structures while tending to reject efforts to operationalize international human rights standards or to insist on conformity with one set of values" (Gvosdev in Krekó *et al.,* 2016: 15).

1.5. The Russia-far-right relations and liberal order.

These concerns with civil society and values from both sides can be understood in the light of their essential purpose to be a source of individual rights and liberties based on liberal democratic values. Although Russia does not openly condemn the idea of democracy itself, it argues that today, the liberal democratic ideology is nothing more than an idealistic idea promoted by the West and uses civil society as a tool to defend its realistic and strategic interests and to guarantee that no other regional blocks arise to challenge and compete with the American global structure (Laruelle, 2015: 3). The Kremlin's rhetoric is not just about Washington's pretending to promote an idealistic idea of liberal democracy and human rights so it could reassure its military, economic and industrial supremacy but also, Kremlin criticizes the liberal idea itself (promoted by the West) regarding the moral values and individualistic values (*ibidem*: 3) that a liberal democratic civil society should defend.

Therefore, this liberalism of moral values and individualistic values that is based on the principles of pluralism and tolerance in the EU and made legal and acceptable new perspectives such as same-sex union, single parent families, among others, and which are more visible and acceptable in Euro-American societies (Barnard and Spencer, 1998: 227), is being judged by the Kremlin as something immoral and shameful that is corrupting the youth. Thus, considering that, Russia has passed the anti-gay propaganda law, in an effort to promote traditional Russian Orthodox Church values over the values of the West (*The Guardian*, 2013).

The far-right criticizes in a similar way the American hegemony and the EU influence in destroying the traditions that define European civilization and the unique qualities of European identity (Zaslove, 2008: 171). So, these counter-values of conventional family and respect for a traditional religious model are recognized by the far-right of Europe as a means to claiming a conservative society that would protect the collective identities and their institutional guarantee such as the family, the town and the region, etc. (Zaslove, 2008). In this sense, Russia represents a perfect example of its similar principles and ethics. The leader of the far-right party *Front Nacional*, Marine Le Pen, openly admires the Kremlin policies as they weight on the idea of an 'Eternal Russia' that has conservative values and morals that are protecting Russian collective identities. These conservative values and morals according to Le Pen, were almost disappearing in France and in Europe (Servettaz, 2014), because the powers of globalization, under the protection of the international liberal order, are destroying the organic economic, social, and cultural structure of the community.

This, in turn, undermines the nation-state and the traditional structure of civil society, all done in the name of the holy profit of the free market principles of liberal order (Zaslove, 2008).

In our opinion, Russia's protection of conservative values represents not just a threat to the liberal democratic order and individual freedoms that Europe has achieved so far, but also, through this rhetoric, Moscow receives admiration and support from European far-right movements and parties. In return, the Kremlin provides them with the political and financial support that may help them get more political power, facts that we discuss in Chapter II and III.

The concern with these relations comes when we define the far-right, which has "a particular ideology, specific organizational structures, and a populist mode of action" (Zaslove, 2008: 170). Dogmatically, the far-right is a nationalist, or in some cases a minority nationalist movement that defends a politics of exclusion, objecting to immigration and multiculturalism (Betz, 2004; Zaslove, 2004; Rydgren, 2005; Minkenberg and Perrineau, 2007: 30–31). For the far-right, cultural and ethnic belonging is combined with a natural and native concept of civil society, founded loosely upon Christian (Catholic) principles, while opposing economic and cultural globalization (Zaslove, 2008: 170). Although we can differentiate the far-right from fascism, many elements of fascism are present in far-right ideologies (Carter, 2005). Accordingly, these political parties which were driven by anti-elitism and economic protectionism, are characterized as xenophobic and promote an aggressive nationalism (Juhász *et al.,* 2014).

Even though the most successful far-right party of Europe, the FN of Marine Le Pen, tries to moderate its oratory to get more votes by appearing more respectable, the far-right parties are still associated with Islamophobia, radical nationalism and racism (Shekhovtsov, 2015). Therefore, we agree with Hutmacher (2012) that far-right parties represent a threat to liberal democracy and to fundamental values of a multicultural and tolerant Europe. Moreover, their xenophobic views and ultra-nationalism ideas could jeopardize the domestic and regional peace (Juhász *et al.,* 2014). Their populist mode of action is used to reestablish the authoritarian and anti-pluralist projects of Europe's past, promoting a vision of a homogeneous, majoritarian and illiberal society that provides some ideological guidelines but not a complete system of thought (Chryssogelos, 2010). They offer some beliefs which could be adapted to many political messages and could serve many different political goals and in fact their ideology is more of a frame for political ideas filled

with specific ideological understandings and according to the political agent's preferences (*ibidem*, 2010).

Accordingly, the far-right ideologies defend the protection of the rights of people from "corrupt, indifferent and separated elites" offering easy solutions to complicated problems, for example pointing at the "guilty elites" or other social groups as responsible for the complex problems (Chryssogelos, 2010). The classical example is when the far-right parties tend to frame the immigration problem by linking immigrants to a host of social and economic problems, together with unemployment (Cochrane and Nevitte, 2014).

Their challenge to liberal order lays on the fact that these political parties try to "update authoritarian, illiberal and anti-pluralist ideologies of the past that have been overcome by the ongoing process of economic and social modernization and diversification" (Chryssogelos, 2010: 269). Nevertheless, the far-right politicians have often been successful in advancing restrictive immigration policies, principally when they have been in government or have supported a minority government (Givens, 2013).

Far-right parties' internal challenge to the liberal democratic order in post-II WW Europe first appeared in the 1980s when they began receiving votes at the national elections. Since then, these political parties were associated many times with fascist movements of the 1930s as they tried to resurrect the disastrous premodern and modern morals that looked irreversibly forgotten under the ashes of the World War II: nationalism, religious traditionalism, racism, and corporatism (Chryssogelos, 2010: 269). Their challenge to the liberal open society of Europe consists in seeing ethnic differences as basic, indisputable and hypothetically destructive features of political life (*ibidem*). They play on the cultural dimension of politics, which comes at the expenses of economic dimension, making them adopt a much stricter position on immigration when compared to other mainstream conservative parties, seeking the votes of citizens that define themselves as nationalists and consider immigration a threat to their country (Art, 2013).

There were different reasons mentioned by Art (2013) why these political parties appeared inside the European liberal order in the first place. It has been argued that their rise came together with the transformation of EU states from ethnically homogenous to multiethnic states. These countries accepted many immigrant workers around the world to fill their domestic labor shortages, and these later led to cultural divisions and raised questions related to national identity of these countries. At the same time, the transformation

and secularization of Europe, together with the economic transition from manufacturing to a service economy, gave rise to the phenomenon of electoral nonalignment of voters, which Art (2013) calls "floating voters". The far-right with its anti-immigrant and populist messages was able to capture most of them (*ibidem*).

What is certain is that from the beginning these political parties were not taken seriously by the mainstream parties and their fringe status did not raise any concern in the Western societies. However, recent national and EU elections have proved that many FRP are getting more and more votes and real political power. Their relations with Russia are seen by specialists in the area, like Laruelle (2015), as tactical alliances because they are sharing the same enemy (EU institutions, NATO, the liberalism of moral and individualistic values, etc.).

In our dissertation, we chose to look at these Far-Right-Russia connections and the challenge they represent to liberal democratic order from English School perspective (Buzan, 1993; Bull, 1977; Wight, 1977) because it focuses on institutionalized practices and shared expectations in international society and the general effects of these practices and expectations are equivalent to a universal structure of international order. Accordingly, liberal practices and expectations in international society equal a structure of liberal order, while the changes in the most fundamental shared practices and expectations are then also potentially changes of relevance to international liberal order (Sterling-Folker, 2006: 313).

Russia's connections with far-right of Europe, besides other purposes, serve as the beginning for new shared practices and expectations less democratic and more illiberal that are changing the structure of liberal order. Because Russia fears its isolation from the West's liberal society, despite pushing the Kremlin to liberal democratization, both Russia and the far-right are trying to change the existing shared liberal values, norms and rules. The English School in its deeper analyzes defends that states and other international actors are disposed, rather than forced, to act based on existing practices and to justify their actions accordingly to that shared values, norms and rules (*ibidem*: 313) and giving the last ones an illiberal form, these would legitimize both far-right and Russia's illiberal attitudes and actions in international order.

CHAPTER II. FAR -RIGHT PARTIES IN EUROPE AND RUSSIA

2.1. Far-right parties' development in Europe.

In this chapter, we present a contextualization of the two challenges of liberal order and the instruments of connection between them. From inside the order, we look at the rise of far-right parties (FRP) in Europe and their challenge to liberalism, while from outside we analyze the factors that make Russia an external challenge of this order, among others challengers. Therefore, we analyze the context in which this connection (far-right-Russia) appeared and how they developed, as well as their impact on the Western liberal order.

2.1.1 Historical legacies.

The Western world of liberal democracy has been challenged and fought against namely by Fascism and Nazism. In his book "Subnational Democracy in the European Union", Loughlin (2001) analyzes "the transformation of the democratic state in Western Europe" and argues that these extreme political ideologies and some other regional ones "despised liberal democracy" and when they got empowered, the whole system of free elections, political parties and other institutions of liberal democratic states were unraveled. Simultaneously, the communist order in the Soviet Union in practice opposed any form of democracy using an authoritarian communist single party rule behind an outlook of formal "democracy" with constitutions and formal civil liberties (Loughlin, 2001: 2).

The contestation of the liberal order in Europe was not coming just from the outside but there was an internal dimension as well. After the WWII we had liberal Western imperial states, such as the French and British, that were in fact pseudo-democratic regimes, giving rise in the 1960s and 1970s to liberation, peace, and student movements that were challenging the existing liberal power structure, while fighting for social rights and equality (Broad, 1998). In the Third World, the nationalist movements were questioning the imperial powers' pro-liberal order as well, contesting their supremacy and pushing openly for a social and developmental agenda. Such contestations and demands made states favor social reform programs in their attempts to stop revolutions in Latin America but, when later mixed with counterinsurgency, these nationalist movements could not change the power structure or bring social equality. At the same time in Africa, the revolutionary movements of the 1970s (Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe) were winning formal independence from the imperial states installing illiberal authoritarian governments which lasted several decades (*ibidem*, 1998).

The economic crisis in the West in the mid-1970s ended the greatness of social welfare state ideas and gave birth to another political model of neoconservative regimes called "the New Right" that saw political and economic life as something which ought to be a matter of individual freedom and initiative, while the free market society was a key objective (Held, 2006: 201). Big companies started to move to Third World countries to make higher profits, encountering lower environmental regulations or almost nonexistent rules on social security benefits. This movement later became known as "globalization" (Broad, 1998).

What happened after this economic crisis of the 1970s is characterized by Broad (1998: 7) as the "end of distributive justice". This period was characterized by intensified attacks by liberal governments and multi-national corporations on the working class, organized labor, social movements and welfare state while blaming technological changes, state indebtedness, and globalization for salaries cuts, privatization, and other deregulations at the state level.

This period of crisis, post-industrialization and the growth of services led to the erosion of the power of unions and with it the connection between workers and their mainstream parties (Social Democrats), making the ties that bonded certain groups to specific political parties very loose (Art, 2011: 9). The secularization of Europe had cut into the base of other mainstream parties like the Christian Democrats, while the mass media, especially the television, made the workers (voters) be less dependent on all types of political party information and pushed instead for party nonalignment in society (*ibidem*: 10).

In this difficult economic, political, and social environment of the 1980s, for the first time, new internal challenges of liberal order and new political parties of far-right emerged in Europe, which benefited from this political nonalignment and accelerated it even more (Art, 2011). In our research, we refer to far-right parties (FRP) as an extensive variety of extreme right-wing political parties and groups such as the extreme far-right party *Jobbik* in Hungary, the extreme right-wing populist Freedom Party of Austria (FPO), the extreme right party of *Ataka,* in Bulgaria, the extreme right party *Front Nacional* (FN) in France and the neo-Nazi political party Golden Dawn in Greece. We chose these examples of far-right parties because they received in the 2014 national elections and European elections a considerable number of votes in their country, ranging from 7,3% ATAKA to 20% or more for FPO or FN (*Political Capital Institute,* 2014).

Their earlier voters at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s in Western Europe were people who were disappointed with the traditional response of parties, both on the left and on the right stream of politics, to the economic and political crisis of this period, characterized by the high level of unemployment, the restructuring of national and global economy, and very low levels of economic growth (Zaslove, 2008). The crisis of the Keynesian socioeconomic model that had been hegemonic in the post-World War II era, brought with it, in the late 1970s, market decline in productivity and the abandonment of the full employment policies of the post-war period (Betz and Immerfall, 1998: 7). In addition, the transformation of the global economy from industry-centered to service oriented (*ibidem*: 7) made the Western society lose their faith in mainstream political parties, institutions, and government in general while creating fertile ground for the rise of new extreme political parties. These were conflicting with the post-material value system, and in their programs, platforms and policy proposals represented a reaction to it, a sort of "silent counter-revolution" (Ignazi, 1992: 6; Pelizzo, 2007: 230).

2.1.2 From "silent counter-revolution" to a Eurosceptic and anti-liberal agenda.

Givens (2013) argues that the initial success of far-right parties, such as *Front Nacional* in the 1980s, also responded to concerns regarding immigration flows into European countries and that far-right parties in the 1980s and 1990s attracted the votes of people who felt vulnerable by modernization and globalization. These parties used immigrants as the scapegoats, for the growth of unemployment and underemployment, while addressing worries that these new immigrants were a danger to cultural homogeneity (Givens, 2013).

Indeed, in the 1980s and 1990s, the leaders of rising far-right parties such as Filip Dewinter of the Flemish Block, Jean-Marie Le Pen of the FN and Pim Fotuyn in the Netherlands used this ideological trope of "ethnopluralism" with the intention of attacking Islam as alien, inadmissible and dangerous to European liberal culture (Kallis, 2015).Their challenge to multiculturalism and immigration policies of liberal democratic governments came as they defended the idea that "cultures are geographically-bound and that citizenship should be restricted to a narrow, culturally-ethnically homogeneous group" (Kallis, 2015: 29).

But their challenge to the liberal order, apart from multiculturalism, appeared later in the 1990s. With their first success in the 1980s, the far-right was partly supporting the neo-liberal economic reforms. They defended the productive classes over what they identified to be the parasitic classes, which were the political and economic elites, unions and state employees. Paradoxically, at the same time, they claimed that a truly free market and the competitive economic system could be constructed, if all other forms of public and private monopolies were opposed (Zaslove, 2008: 173). Therefore, in their view, fewer taxes, privatizations, and a free-market economy would create economic wealth, increase productivity and it would favor the interest of those who produce (*ibidem*: 173).

In its first stages, the far-right parties were supporting the European welfare state and were partially agreeing with neo-liberalism, claiming that the reduction in government-state monopoly would maximize personal freedom and would increase equality of opportunity. However, after becoming the defender of European welfare state also referred as "fair market economy", they also began to object to the advance of international bodies such as the EU into national sovereignty (Zaslove, 2008: 174). Their first objections to the EU and its liberal institutions appeared in the 1990s, rooted in a sovereigntist and nationalist discourse (Zaslove, 2008). They could connect their fear of immigration and multiculturalism to cultural and economic globalization, arguing that the European culture would have to stand firmly against these elites that call for a multicultural, open, liberal society and its tolerant immigration laws and which are looking for profits from bringing immigrants to Europe to work for lower wages, consequently, unemployment is linked to immigration (*ibidem*: 174).

In the 1990s, the FRP started to distance themselves from the neoliberal policies, with the argument that through these policies, the economic power was transferred through privatization of state monopolies, to big, global corporate monopolies, in this way connecting neo-liberalism with large capital, international institutional bodies such as the EU and with the diminishing power of the nation state (*ibidem*: 2008). Far-right leaders like Jean-Marie Le Pen (FN) questioned the globalization and liberal order as some 'new' globalist ideology, which intentions are no more than the establishment of a "new global order" based on the right to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and, with it, the establishment of a "totalitarian democracy" on the "ruins" of the nations and their "liberties, traditions, and particularisms" (Betz and Johnston, 2004: 321).

The far-right skepticism around the EU's project and opposition to liberal order intensified with the EU's enlargement in the 1990s and 2000s. For example, the Austrian far-right Freedom Party opposed Austria's entrance into the European Union in the 1994 referendum, arguing that this would seriously endanger the country national identity and would also help globalization and multiculturalism (Ignazi, 2003: 119). While other far-right parties like *Lega Nord* (LN) in Italy proposed to exit the Euro as this European currency, in their view, limited national sovereignty and did not serve Italian economic interest (*La Repubblica*, 2005). The far-right of France (FN) declared in its program that the EU, as a supra-national entity, represents the end of France's sovereignty (Minkenberg and Perrineau, 2007: 34) and in 2005 it openly fought against the ratification of the new European constitution (*Le Monde,* 2005).

The FRP in Western Europe initially shocked the society in the 1980s and in 1990s and were predicted to disappear like a "flash in the pan" (Givens, 2013). However, using anti-globalization messages, anti-liberal messages and anti-European integration discourses, they gained between 4% until up to 20% or more of the popular vote in Western European countries like Austria, France, Italy, and Belgium (Zaslove, 2008). Meanwhile, in the Eastern part of the EU in the 1990s, other new far- right factions were emerging from obscurity with the fall of communism.

Even if it is agreed that today the unique illiberal characteristics of far-right parties across Europe, from the East to West, is their anti-immigrant message, authoritarianism and populism (Kehrberg, 2015), the rise of far-right from Eastern Europe came from a different historical background and were expected to deal with some dissimilar issues. Whereas far-right parties in Western Europe reacted to the "silent revolution" of 1968 that started the period of intense socio-political and socio-cultural change with a "counter-silent revolution" (Ignazi, 1992), representing the "New protest on the right", the far-right from Eastern Europe appeared because of the post-1989 transformations, where the communist collapse brought with it a crisis of values and authority (Pirro, 2013).

The rise of these parties in this region, according to Pirro (2013), is connected to the post-Cold War process of sociocultural, political and economic change that came at a very high cost for these societies. The fall of the communist curtain incited new dividing lines in these societies on issues like citizenship, ethnicity, the separation of Church from the state, and wealth and resource distribution (Williams, 1999: 43–44). The already existing divisions in social identity of class, region, religion, and ethnicity were not eradicated by the

Communist regime but on the contrary, it rather stimulated them (Whitefield, 2002: 197), making them ripe for mobilization in the new post-communist context.

2.1.3 The "post-communism syndrome" and the success after the economic crisis of 2008.

These post-communist problems were later reflected in the frame of far-right parties' ideologies in Eastern Europe that in addition had to "catch up" with their Western colleagues, particularly in relations to the ideological essence of these parties which are identical to the nativism, authoritarianism, and populism[2], elements shared by all far-right parties across Europe (Pirro, 2013: 604). However, the far-right from Eastern Europe did not appear as a "silent counter-revolution" such the ones in the West. They were more of a "post-communism syndrome" (Pirro, 2013) that could rise because of the disappointments that came with high expectations from the liberal democratic order of the West, and the transformation process from socialism to capitalism that these societies were undergoing. Thus, the far-right parties from Eastern Europe addressed a variety of issues that go beyond the issues of their counterparts in the West, including unemployment, xenophobia or immigration (Beyme, 1998). Their political discourses include both pre-communist issues, such as clericalism[3] and irredentism[4], and post-communism issues like social national economics[5], ethnic minorities, corruption and the EU (Pirro, 2013).

The far-right parties in the East like *Jobbik* in Hungary or *Ataka* in Bulgaria arrived in the political arena much later than their western counterparts, in the mid-2000s. This is explained by the fact that voters shifted to far-right parties after they got disappointed with post-communist mainstream alternatives. Another fact is the high religiousness of this region, and this is a mobilizing factor for the far-right (Ramet, 1999: 14). These parties were offering a different alternative that combined clericalism with emphasis on Christian values, emphasizing national unity, both spiritual and territorial (Pirro, 2013). As one of the authors (Ramet, 1999: 14) argued, far-right activists "often defend their intolerance by appealing to

---

[2] Politics that considers the interests of ordinary people, as opposed to those of a privileged elite (see Collin P.H., 2004. *Dictionary of politics and government*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc: London).

[3] The influence of the churches in politics and society in general.

[4] The policy of trying to get back a region which has been lost to another country, or trying to take over a region which is felt to belong to the country because of similar language or culture (ibdem: 2004).

[5] FRP parties call for a stronger role of the state in the economy, redistribution of wealth and a revision of privatization contracts, that is, renationalization of agricultural, financial and public service sectors (Pirro, 2013: 615).

traditions or to sacred texts, painting themselves as the defenders of 'traditional values' […] against the alleged hordes of liberal progressives and other 'sinners'".

The perception of immigration as a problem was substituted in the East with the problems of ethnic minorities, at least until the 2015 refugee crisis. For the far-right parties of Hungary or Bulgaria, the public enemy remained "within the state and outside the nation" (Mudde, 2007). It was the ethnic minorities like Roma communities or Muslim minorities that were accused of crimes ("Gypsy crime") and divisions in the society and were the main targets for discriminations (Pirro, 2013). The Eastern European far-right parties proposed some radical solutions for these issues, like forced assimilation (Dikov, 2009; *Ataka*, 2005; *Jobbik*, 2010), as for them, their countries should be "single-national, monolithic state[s]" (*Ataka*, 2005) without divisions based on faith, ethnicity or culture.

In the East, populism and anti-elitism that so much characterizes the far-right in the West was supplemented with corruption, as far-right parties separated the "pure people" against "the corrupt elite" (Mudde, 2004: 543). With the collapse of the communist order, many ex-communist leaders regained their influence through communist successor parties (Tismaneanu, 1996) and far-right parties were asserting that these elites and their parties were responsible for the acts of favoritism and corruption in the privatization of national goods (Pirro, 2013).

Another Western far-right characteristic that the parties in the East could benefit from, is their Eurosceptic agenda. Even though before their respective country accessions to the European Union, FRP in Eastern Europe was holding to an inflexible Euro-reject position, with time, they slowly changed their position towards a Eurosceptic one (Pirro, 2013). They could benefit from this agenda because the "inflated expectations concerning EU membership and exhaustion from long-lasting austerity measures" (Smilov and Krastev, 2008: 9) made many voters change to the far- right's side.

Nevertheless, the real breakthrough of FRP across the whole of Europe happened just after the World Economic Crisis of 2008. Economic crisis seems to provide the ideal conditions for the FRP to gain support (Art, 2013), because they present themselves as the alternative to mainstream parties, which are "caught in the system" and their populist anti-system messages attract the votes of those people that are dissatisfied with democracy (Lubbers *et al.,* 2002). The stronger this dissatisfaction, the more profound gets their support for FRP (Kehrber, 2014). At the same time, the economic downturn is the central argument

in explaining the rise of xenophobic sentiments among populations (Cochrane, and Nevitte, 2014). Hence, FRP through their anti-immigration policies could connect the immigrants to a host of domestic social and economic problems including unemployment (*ibidem*, 2014) and attract the votes of many people who, based on their class background, in the past, usually had voted for the mainstream labor parties (Chryssogelos, 2013).

The economic crisis of 2008 denoted important points of further continuity and change in the development of FRP throughout Europe. Their later continuity and success is explained by the fact that, before the 2008 crisis, they were already strongly anti-elitist, Eurosceptic, protectionist and that the crisis served as the perfect opportunity to intensify these themes, with the purpose of capturing a bigger share of the electorate, which, with the crisis, was increasingly disappointed with mainstream politics (Chryssogelos, 2013). The later electoral success of FRP was called, in various media outlets, a "political earthquake" (Parker *et al.,* 2014), meaning "a moment of crisis of such magnitude that the very essence of liberal representative democracy is challenged" (Chryssogelos, 2013:79). In addition, their increasing popularity among voters adds to this concern. In the 2014 elections, some far-right parties acquired a third place in national elections, while in the European Parliament, they got even further with second or even first place (Klapsis, 2014). In this context, it is plausible that this "political earthquake" is profoundly shaking the liberal democratic order.

Even though the FRP success in 2014 European elections was not coming as a very big surprise, because of some of them, like *Front Nacional*, were successful in the past as well, the European Parliament elections of 2014 proved that this phenomenon has a Pan-European dimension (Elgot, 2014). The most eloquent examples of these successes, are the far-right parties like *Front Nacional* in France that went up from 6.34% (2009) to 24.86% (2014), Freedom Party of Austria (FPO) went from 12.71% (2009) to 19.72% (2014), *Jobbik* (Hungary) got 14.67% in 2014, the Danish People's Party (Denmark) with 26.86% (2014) had one of the highest scores, while the extreme far-right Golden Dawn in Greece, that emerged politically just after the crisis, had the most surprising increase from 0,46% in 2009 to 9,39% in 2014 (see Table 2, Klapsis, 2014: 191).

These electoral advances, although important, were still incremental until recent events in Europe, such as the refugee crisis caused by the Syrian war, or the terrorist attacks in France in 2015 that really projected the FRP political speech based on issues like immigration, national sovereignty and Euroscepticism, to the mainstream of political

discourse (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016). Therefore, Europe's rising awareness of a security threat at the time of the terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015 and in Brussels in 2016, has worked for many to justify the far-right's anti-immigrant rhetoric and positions (*ibidem*, 2016).

The success of these parties today is compared to the ones from the 1930s (Klapsis, 2014: 193). Their challenge to the current liberal order is manifested in their promise to overthrow the established political system as they describe the mainstream politicians to be corrupt and decadent (*ibidem*, 2014). FRP have reinvented themselves as protectors of "true" European values against the invasion of both non-European foreigners and the EU elite in Brussels (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016: 71). Using the mass media, especially the social media which gives them the right instruments to attract the attention of the younger listeners, they spread their messages across Europe (Klapsis, 2014). Stereotypes, white and black arguments are all tools used by FRP to address these messages and sound reasonable to the average voter (*ibidem*, 2014). They call for a traditionalist society and sometimes are openly homophobic, rejecting liberal ideas of tolerance and solidarity, while some of them have racist tendencies and are anti-Semitic (*ibidem*, 2014). They point at immigrants as the main roots for all sorts of problems, starting with unemployment and finishing with blaming them for high criminality rate of their countries (*ibidem*, 2014). They reject multiculturalism and argue that there is a threat to European true culture and values coming from the spread of Islam into the Christian Europe that needs to be protected (*ibidem*, 2014). Thus, the refugee crisis of 2015 offered the final and critical scenario for the far-right narrative, making the FRP warnings about "Islamization" of Europe look much more significant (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016), although the fear existed before the crisis, following 9/11 and the global war on terror (Smith, 2015).

The result of the financial crisis and later the refugee crisis reconsolidated the FRP capacity to mobilize the electorate around protectionist themes and, even considerably, permitted them to connect to a new and transformed form of populism that challenges the very basis and legitimacy of representative democracy (Chryssogelos, 2013). Besides being populist, many of these parties (*Jobbik*, *Ataka*, Golden Dawn) are ultra-nationalists and entirely Eurosceptic. In the analysis above we mentioned that they see the EU as a supranational organization that challenges the nation state's power and authority (Klapsis, 2014; Zaslove, 2008; Minkenberg and Perrineau, 2007: 34). Consequently, it could not be a coincidence that most of the FRP in the EU have Russian affinities (Hockenos in Klapsis,

2014) because they perceive the Kremlin as the natural ally against European integration (Klapsis, 2014). At the same time, the Russian government has ascertained close connections with FRP of Europe and even offered an oblique (under-the-table) support to European far-right parties (*ibidem*, 2014).

Authors like Polyakova and Shekhovtsov (2016), who study deeply these connections, went even further in their analyses, concluding that:

> Russian President Vladimir Putin has endorsed and even financed far-right parties such as the *National Front* and allegedly *Jobbik*. And the admiration is mutual: especially in Central and Eastern Europe, the far-right today is openly pro-Russian and anti-American. Far-right leaders maintain close relationships with the Kremlin—traveling to Russia for various celebrations, including Putin's birthday, and even serving as election observers to legitimize fraudulent and unfair balloting, such as the illegal referendum for the annexation of Crimea (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016: 79).

In the third Chapter, we specifically analyze these Russian connections with *National Front* and *Jobbik* but what we want to emphasize here is the fact that these connections are happening as another element of Moscow's bigger strategy of challenging the western liberal order. FRP of Europe serve as the "Trojan horses" used by Kremlin, to create internal problems to the unity of the EU (Klapsis, 2014). The stakes in this geopolitical game are that even if the Kremlin does not see these parties as ruling governments, there is still anticipation that FRP growing influence will put great pressure on EU governments, especially in matters that affect Russia directly, as the EU sanctions after the Crimea annexation or indirectly, like the push for democratization (Orenstein, 2014).

2.2 Russia's inevitable turn to "traditionalism", a bridge connecting with the far-right.

2.2.1 The struggle to become a "civilized" state.

The Kremlin was not always a challenge for liberal order or of the EU's unity. If we look back to the 1980s, when FRP began to appear as internal challenges of liberal democratic regimes, it is worth mentioning that from outside, at that time, the main challenge of the Western liberal order – the USSR – was disappearing. Since the late 1980s, the USSR was getting weaker as the Cold War confrontation was intensifying. The Soviet economy was weak and uncompetitive at the international level and could not support anymore the intensified arms race which implied more and more sophisticated weapon systems and new technologies (Held, 2006: 219). The economic problems, together with struggles for

democracy happening in Eastern Europe after the Gorbachev reform process of *perestroika*, later led to the collapse of communist order (*ibidem*: 219).

With this collapse and with the end of Cold War conflict, the confrontation was substituted with a partnership between the rival blocs of the East and the West. A "new world order" was established, which no longer represented an arrangement between equals but a triumph of Western liberal democratic principles and influence (Lukyanov, 2016). Therefore, the "inside system" of liberal democracy became the "outside system" where the liberal order was to be followed by the entire world (Ikenberry, 2010). Even more, the Western powers started an ambitious plan to bring the rest of the world to this new "outside system", which they considered to be the "right side of the history" (Lukyanov, 2016). The EU and NATO expansion to the East were in part driven by liberal aspirations, to expand the club of democracies that would include the newly post-communist states, at the expenses of Russian sensibilities (Ikenberry, 2010: 516).

In the early 1990s, Russia was the main inheritor of USSR, a superpower, with all its formal attributes but it had to deal with and overcome all the difficulties of a system in decline, heavily depending on financial help from its new Western partners. These partners believed that Russia would essentially be part of a "wider Europe" where organizations like NATO and EU were to be the core of it, including Eastern countries like Russia that were not part of these organizations but which were encouraged to adopt voluntarily the liberal norms and regulations associated with this membership (Lukyanov, 2016).

As a matter of fact, in the years of *perestroika*, Russian population and its elites saw their country as a liberal European country and tried to follow the Western path but the support from the Kremlin was for a short period (Laruelle, 2016). It lasted from the final years of *perestroika*, when Gorbachev claimed that Russia needed to rejoin the "common European home" and to become a "civilized" Western state (Malcolm, 1989), to the mid-1990s, when the internal ideological conflicts between liberals and communists led to the separation of the Russian society and to the edge of a civil war, culminating with the bloody conflict over the Supreme Soviet (Russian Parliament) in 1993 (Laruelle, 2016).

Some authors (Reddaway and Glinsky, 2001) argued that the implementation of a liberal plan in Russia failed because, with Gorbachev's reforms, the corrupt contracts, existing already in the time of the USSR, were further reinforced as some entrepreneurially minded party and government officials along with other commercialized enterprise

managers started to take control of the public properties, by illegal or semi-legal means, while seizing state's revenue for their personal enrichment (Klimina, 2010). Considering these conditions, the implementation of a liberal plan, which was aiming at a radical marketization of the economy and the deliberate weakening of the state, very fast conducted to the obvious stealing of state property and the creation of oligarchic clans that were unimpeded in their operations by any formal state regulations (Kaufmann and Siegelbaum, 1996). Hence, by the late 1990s, Russia was a destabilized and an unaccountable state, which had been totally captured by vested interests and transformed into a political center of the bureaucratic market, of lobbyism and corruption (Klimina, 2010). This kind of state represented an entire failure of the liberal order, undermining the further development of "human rights, responsible government and the welfare state" (Neale, 1991: 470).

This political and economic turmoil affected Russian society very deeply and the failure to solve these crises, made the Russian supporters of liberal order like the Russian prime-minister Egor Gaidar, the father of "shock therapy", to resign in 1994. Two years later, Andrey Kozyrev, the first foreign minister of Russia and a bigger promoter of Russian total alignment with Western geopolitical interests, had stepped down too, partly closing the "path to the West" (Shevtsova, 1999).

2.2.2 Kremlin's new ideological postures, from "centrism to conservatism".

With this distance from the Western model, Kremlin started slowly to be involved in rebuilding a new ideological posture, although from the beginning denying any need for an ideology, arguing that it was operating purely in a pragmatic way (Laruelle, 2016).

One of the experts in Russian ideology and Russian connections with the far-right of Europe, Laruelle (2016: 287) claims that there were three phases, after the distance from the Western model, which Russia went through, to get to "Conservatism" as the official state posture. The first was political centrism, between 1994 and 2004, the second phase is about structuring an ideological state posture, in the years 2004–2012, and finally, the third, still ongoing, is conservatism as the official state posture.

By "centrism", the author means how the Kremlin has positioned itself, rejecting what it saw as the two dangerous extremes: the "liberal" one and the "communist" one. These extremes were both incapable of bringing constructive and lasting solutions to the Russian crisis (Laruelle, 2009). The Kremlin, after the violence over the Supreme Soviet,

tried to avoid the polarization between "liberal" and "communist" and instead, it started to promote Russian national identity, canceling the ideological ban imposed on patriotic themes, thus improving the possibilities of forming a new national ideal (Laurelle,2016).

In one of the most important Russian newspaper at the time (*Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 1996), the Russian president Boris Yeltsin stated that "There were different periods in Russia's 20th-century history – monarchy, totalitarianism, perestroika, and the democratic path of development. Each era had its ideology. We do not have one […]the most important thing for Russia is the search for a national idea, a national ideology". Russia was entering a period of identity crisis and a crisis of its role in the world (Lukyanov, 2016).

There was a return to debates, particularly in the press, about the idea of Russia as a great power (Hill, 1998). Many key figures of Russian politics including Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, former presidential candidate, Governor of Krasnoyarsk Aleksandr Lebed, and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister Evgenii Primakov were advocating the idea that Russia had to uphold its strategic interests in its "near abroad" (ex-USSR republics), but without returning to a Soviet or imperial logic. It should also develop a different posture from the West in the international arena and avoid to retrieve Cold War confrontations (Laurelle, 2016). It needed to restructure itself at home by reaffirming the role of central power but without recreating an ideologically based regime (Laruelle, 2009).

The evolution of these events resulted in Putin's first mandate as the President of Russia. He was able to strengthen and secure the vertical power structure and to reconstruct Russia's image abroad (Laurelle, 2016: 284). Many analysts view the re-embodiment of the new and authoritarian regime in Putin's Russia during the 2000s as an expected consequence of a popular demand for protection, contract enforcement, strong law and order, and stability in general, which for the most of the population is associated with a strong centralized state, a powerful army, and resilient security services and other powerful ministries (Popov, 2007; Goldman, 2008; Klimina, 2010).

The new president, in his first mandate, characterized himself as non-ideological, declaring to be working exclusively in line with technocratic objectives (Hanson, 2003). These first years of Putin's governance were called by analysts as "the Russian honeymoon with the West" (*Strategic Survey*, 2004) but by 2004 the "honeymoon" was almost over for various reasons. One of them is the political and economic transformations of the 2000s. In Russia, there was economic prosperity and political stability under its new strong leader. In

Western Europe, there were policies of expansion to the East, to Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic States, which Russia sees as its exclusive zone of influence. Both trends have created as many problems as it solved, even for the Western liberal order (Salmin, 1998; Rutland, 2012). The process of entering the Western alliances was accelerated for the Eastern European countries, who saw the giant neighbor as being potentially dangerous and unstable (Salmin,1998), and relied on these alliances to guarantee their security (Braun, 2012).

Another reason was that the short economic growth brought internal popularity to the Kremlin regime and it gave enough strength to Moscow, so it could start raising questions about the current liberal international order in which Russia still played a marginal role. In the 1990s, Russia did not have the power and will to challenge the West's hegemonic decision to develop the existing Western security systems, based on NATO and the EU, instead of developing a more inclusive one, a general European system like the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) (Salmin, 1998). However, later by the end of 2007, under Putin's presidency, Russia demanded its new place in the international system (Larson and Shevchenko, 2014).

In the same way, some authors (Ivan Krastev and Mark Leonard, cited in Lukyanov, 2016) have pointed out that, since the beginning of this love and hate relationship between Russia and the West, the Western powers "mistook Moscow's failure to block the post-Cold War order as support for it". This process started long before Putin appeared on the national political stage (Lukyanov, 2016) but with Putin, the Kremlin had the power to fight back and it began structuring an ideological state posture, the second phase in Laruelle's (2016) analysis. This came at a time when the Kremlin realized that its non-ideology position was challenged by the "color revolutions", principally the one in Ukraine in 2004 (Laruelle, 2016).

These revolutions in the former Soviet space marked the return of political contestation and regime change in the name of democracy in the "near abroad" and the Kremlin had to react to them (Laruelle,2012) because they were undercutting the governments that had origins in the Soviet epoch and had strong relations and support in Moscow (Lukyanov, 2016). In the Kremlin's vision, these revolutions emerged because the West believed that they had the right, as moral and political winners of the Cold War, not just to change the international order but also to interfere in the internal order of others and change it in a way that would serve their interests (*ibidem*, 2016).

Moscow, after mass street protests throughout Russia (Myers, 2005) in 2005, understood that inside Russia there was still space for political contestation and it needed to formulate a more consistent ideological position, not just glorifying the President (Laruelle, 2016). It delivered a new concept of democracy called "sovereign democracy" which defined Russia's position on the international stage and the nature of the Kremlin's regime (Okara, 2007), at the same time, starting new, state-controlled media platforms (online portals and news agencies) and state-controlled youth movements like *Nashi* (Light, 2004; Laruelle, 2016). Russia was hoping to change its role in the world by incorporating globalization and forming a specific Russian "brand or voice" which would transform Russia into an attractive power that had a modern economy, supported by these soft-power tools (Laruelle, 2016). It was highlighted the need to not look back at the Soviet experience but instead, to look ahead for a new and great national identity, one that would be identified as a "Second Europe" (Surkov, 2010; Sakwa, 2011).

2.2.3 The "conservatism-traditionalism" as the final Russian ideology position.

The economic crisis which followed in 2008 had put an end to that short economic growth that gave Moscow strength and internal popularity in the 2000s, culminating in 2012 with the first big anti-Putin protest of the *Bolotnaia* movement (*The Guardian*, 2012). It was the beginning of the third phase on the Russian ideological path, that of "Conservatism" (Laruelle, 2016). Kremlin's regime was taken by surprise by these massive protests that brought back liberal voices in Russian society. It seemed that the only system of ideas capable of saving Russia's regime was to appeal to conservatism because it was "based on eternal social and moral values: respect for one's own tradition, trust in the tradition of one's forefathers, and priority given to the interests of society" (German Moro, cited in Laruelle, 2016: 287).

This form of conservatism served very well the Kremlin's internal policies of restraining the pluralities of ideology, especially the liberal one, considered to be an extremist one, threatening the Kremlin autocratic authority (Kagan, 2007). Conservatism in Russia was transformed into the political languages of patriotism, morality and national culture, languages that did not leave any space to criticisms of the state or state structures that would put Russian government at risk (Laruelle, 2016). To promote them, the Kremlin adopted a series of public policies together with budget allocations, investment in the media

and even new forceful law to punish the ones who dare to challenge them, but which all had limited impact on Russian society (*ibidem*: 291).

The patriotism language was translated into policies of reinstatement of big Soviet times historical commemorations, extra-curricular patriotic activities at school, the propaganda of revalorization of the military service, etc. (Nemtsova, 2014). At the same time, the morality language, together with other complementary adjectives like "spiritual", since 2012 had augmented in the President's speeches (Sharafutdinova, 2014: 618). For Putin and the Russian government, morality represents nothing more than the respect for "traditional values". That means a healthy society that needs to fight against alcoholism, constituted only by heterosexual families that should have many children and not recognizing any LGBT rights, a society that should respect the elderly and the existing hierarchies and so on (Laruelle, 2016: 291). Simultaneously, the third language is more about celebrating Russian "culture". A mix of policies that were meant to create a cultural unanimity in Russia, by rewriting its history, celebrating Stalin-Soviet achievements and reducing its obscure past, the integration of Russian Orthodox Church in all state ceremonies (*ibidem*, 2016: 292), and the high-profile meeting of the head of the state with the representatives of the arts and culture (*Ekho Moskvy,* 2011). Together, all these policies were meant to glorify Russia as a great nation and to present its culture as being superior to that of the West (Lipman, 2014).

Therefore, if nowadays the West is mostly associated with liberal order in political and economic life and with liberal moral values of an "open society", then Russia through conservatism could create a status of "other Europe" which does not follow West example of order and development but which represents in fact, the "authentic" European values (Laruelle, 2016: 293) that far-right parties in Europe so many times refer to (Krekó *et al.,*2016: 20). The Kremlin made use of Europe's internal issues on LGBT rights that divided European public opinion and which is the third most commonly indicated ground for discrimination in the EU (Bąkowski, 2013). It helped Moscow to make it official the status of the "alternative Europe" and to declare that it is the savior of Christian values (Laruelle, 2016: 294).

Putin himself in September of 2013 gave a speech at the Valdai Discussion Club that pretty much embodies Russia's new posture. He declared:

> Today we need new strategies to preserve our identity in a rapidly changing world, a world that has become more open, transparent, and interdependent [..]

> For us, questions about who we are and who we want to be are increasingly prominent in our society[…] It is evident that it is impossible to move forward without spiritual, cultural, and national self-determination[...] We can see how many of the Euro-Atlantic countries are rejecting their roots, including the Christian values that constitute the basis of Western civilization. They are denying moral principles and all traditional identities: national, cultural, religious, and even sexual (Putin, 2013)

This new position finally allowed the Kremlin to be that great power that does not receive lessons from the West, but instead, it teaches the West who it is (Laruelle, 2016: 294). This form of conservative position gave meaning to both Russian's domestic and foreign policies. Domestically, because through the policies of patriotism, morality and culture, mentioned above, it could narrow the public freedom, therefore, cementing its power at home. While externally, it portrayed itself as the anti-liberal force that supports the established state regimes against street revolutions and that tries to modify the UN and the EU legislations in the designation of the traditional values and respect for national context (*ibidem*: 294).

Even more, with this new posture, the Kremlin could find new allies (the FRP of Europe) inside the West's liberal order and which would serve the Kremlin as tools to change the current international order and its weak position in it. In this way, through FRP, the Kremlin could explore its traditional agenda and its export of values and to "weaponize" culture and use it against the West and the established liberal order (Krekó *et al.,* 2016). This strategy was already used before in the West when NATO acted in a similar way using a cultural concept[6] like democracy and human right as the new security identity in the post-Cold War period. However, Russia's "weaponization" of culture and values has bigger goals than achieving short geopolitical objectives, instead, it represents "the fight for ideological hegemony against the West" (*ibidem*: 5).

2.3 Russia's new allies, the convenience relationship with the far-right.

2.3.1 Ideological and geopolitical aspects in Russia-far-right relations.

The Russian-FRP alliances were possible because most of the European FRP find Moscow's positions and ideology very familiar to them since it expresses the hardcore of their fundamental beliefs (Klapsis, 2015: 17). They admire Russia as a new strong power

---

[6] Vide, Williams C.M., (2007) *Culture and Security: Symbolic power and the politics of international security*, New York: Routledge, for more information about this concept.

that is ready to defend these beliefs (*ibidem*, 2015: 17). It is what they need, an example of a super power that is anti-Western (American) and anti-liberal, conservative, nationalist, and has a strong leader, who uses if needed, authoritarian measures to accomplish his ambitions (Barbashin and Thoburn, 2014). This Russian admiration and will to follow its example are openly and frequently acclaimed by the far-right leaders. Marine Le Pen from *Front Nacional* sees in Putin a true patriot and a defender of European true values and Russia as the "the Christian heritage of the European civilization" (Polyakova, 2014). Another far-right leader Gabor Vona (*Jobbik*) stated that Europe was a sinking ship, which lost its values and must go back to its roots and "rearrange [its] relationship with other traditional cultures that only existed in the East (Russia) now" (*Jobbik*, 2013). Lorenzo Fontana from FRP *Lega Nord* (Italy) describes Russia as an example in the protection of national identity and family values, while Roberto Fiore from the neo-fascist party New Force (Italy) went even further declaring that Putin's Russia today is "a model civilization" that defends Christian Europe from the threats of international bankers and immigrants (*Political Capital Institute*, 2014).

However, it seems that just the ideological connection would not be enough to establish a strong political relationship between European FRP and Russia (Klapsis, 2015: 25). Behind these strong relations, there is a pivotal geopolitical factor, which is directly connected to the way both sides see the future of EU and NATO (*ibidem*: 25). From Russia's part and its new view of how international order should be remade, the future of Europe lays on a close triangle partnership between Paris-Berlin-Moscow, and the EU should distance itself from the US in favor of its own diplomatic and defense structures, less trans-Atlantic and even anti-NATO, concomitantly, stopping the extension of the EU membership to countries in the "near abroad", Russian zone of big interest (Laruelle, 2015: 3). Moscow seeks this way, to reduce the influence of Europe's supranational and regulatory institutions, while giving priority to a "Europe of nations" where the variety of nation-states would be preserved and the EU finally would not try to export its values and liberal norms to the rest of the world (*ibidem*: 3).

In a similar line, for the FRP, these relations and Russia *per se* serve as the example of how a country could be truly independent and sovereign, disregarding Western liberalism and challenging it (Klapsis, 2015: 25). Hence, because most of the FRP are Eurosceptic and anti-American, they see these close connections with Russia as something necessary in the pathway of reaching gradual disassociation of their countries from Euro-Atlantic institutions. Consequently, Russia appears to be the alternative to the Western democracy as

well as to the EU community and NATO military alliance (*ibidem*: 25). FRP see in Russia a zealous supporter of national sovereignty and a challenge of the idea of a "united Europe" (Polyakova, 2014) that is perceived by FRP as a direct threat to nation states. Hence, they look at Russia as the helper of a process of dissolution of the EU and afterward, Moscow could provide that necessary geopolitical support for the European countries after the collapse of the EU (Klapsis, 2015: 25).

The relationship between the Kremlin and FRP corresponds to the EU's internal weaknesses and contradictions (Laruelle, 2015: 4), and this relationship represents more than just public declarations of admirations of the leaders from both sides. The FRP representatives from all over Europe established close contacts with high-ranking Russian officials (Klapsis, 2015: 37), and this is particularly important especially for small parties or the parties that come from small countries because it gives them the much-needed international recognition (*ibidem*: 33). One author (Klapsis, 2015: 33), who studies these relations, concluded that the FRP already benefit just from the fact that they are discussants with the Kremlin, which increases their credibility at home and improves their image. For them, this is the alternative of not appearing to be the fringe and the outside parties anymore in the political and diplomatic establishment. Instead, the FRP could now claim that they have been taken seriously by one of the most important countries in the world and this is something that could easily be sold in the internal political market and therefore, would bring more votes to FRP in local, national and European elections (Klapsis, 2015: 33).

In many authors views (Laruelle, 2015; Polyakova, 2014; Shekovtsov, 2015; Klapsis, 2015), for the Kremlin, this relationship with FRP represents a "marriage of convenience", a sort of tool and not a "true love". Moscow shifted to a greater alliance with the FRP because it could not find any serious support (except FIDEZ in Hungary) from Western mainstream conservative parties (Laruelle, 2015: 4) as the last ones and other state officials from the West were criticizing Putin's Russia domestic and foreign policies[7] (Shekhovtsov, 2016: 102).

---

[7] "This criticism related, in particular, to (1) the failure of the Russian authorities to investigate the death of imprisoned corporate lawyer Sergei Magnitsky in a Moscow prison in 2009 – the US and EU imposed sanctions related to Magnitsky in 2012; (2) the Kremlin's crackdown on the anti-Putin protests and the polarizing measures employed by the Kremlin to divide the opposition (most importantly, the Pussy Riot show trial and the "anti-LGBT propaganda law"); (3) Putin's support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad whose suppression of the anti-government protests resulted in the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011; and (4) Russian annexation of Crimea and invasion of Eastern Ukraine in 2014" (Shekovtsov, 2016: 102-103).

Therefore, as Laruelle (2015: 4) argues, the Kremlin was left with no choice but to consolidate these connections with FRP and create tactical alliances with them, involving high-level meetings with Russian officials. In this way, these new dangerous relations have become partly "normalized" and lost their subversive and revolutionary character so they would get a public image of respectability (Laruelle, 2015: 4).

2.3.2 Instruments of connections between far-right and Kremlin.

Although we are going to analyze Russia's connections with *Jobbik* and *Front Nacional* in more detail in the next Chapter, here is a brief look at some other FRP across Europe that established close contacts with Kremlin:

a. *Ataka* and Golden Dawn.

The far-right party of *Ataka* in Bulgaria, a country that was called "Russian Trojan horse in the EU" by Russia's ambassador to NATO, has strong ties with the Russian embassy in Sofia (*Novinite.com*, 2011) and there were rumors that it secretly receives funds from Moscow (Orenstein, 2014). Its leader Volen Siderov in 2014 launched his party's campaign for the Euro elections when he was in Moscow. He was honored in Russia, by the Higher Commission of the Russian Duma, with the "Fatherland Star"- a medal for his contribution to the development of relations between Bulgaria and Russia (*Ataka*, 2014). There, he declared:

> As a Bulgarian politician, I am honored to be awarded the Fatherland Star medal…I lead ATAKA ballot and will be the voice of the Bulgarians who think the EU ought to be a structure that needs restructuring or dissolving…if ATAKA party takes office I as a Prime Minister will make sure our relations with Russia are fostered and Bulgaria will leave NATO. I thank you for the high honor and wish success to the Russian Government for fostering the Orthodox values and Statehood of our brother Russia (*Ataka*, 2014).

In the West, these acts were interpreted as a threat to the zone of stability and security. European Commission President at the time, Jose Manuel Barroso stated that between Bulgarian politicians there are some, which are Russian agents (*Novinite.com*, 2014).

The far-right Golden Dawn in Greece upholds contacts with Russia in a very original and different way. In September of 2014 its leader Konstantinos Barbaroussis, embarked the Russian cruiser Moskva, that was visiting the Greek island of Lefkas in the Ionian Sea and he had a discussion with the Capitan of the ship where he emphasized the

fact that his party supports close cooperation between Greece and Russia including cooperation in military affairs, along with the creation of an "Orthodox axis" that, in addition to Greece and Russia, would include Serbia as well (Golden Dawn, 2014; Klapsis,2015: 35). At the same time, Golden Dawn and other FRP were invited to participate in the Russian National Forum in October of 2014, organized by the Intelligent Design Bureau that has close connections with Putin, with a very interesting agenda: "the joint development of a new national doctrine for Russia and Europe, and the creation of a permanent coordination committee for the implementation of national policies adopted by the conference" (*Political Capital Institute*, 2014: 6).

This was not the first time the Greek far-right party had participated in Russian conferences, as in 2013 the Golden Dawn's MP Artemis Mathaiopoulos, already participated together with some other FRP members in another international conference, organized in Moscow, to discuss how to protect traditional values from the LGBT-friendly legislation in Europe (Klapsis, 2014).

b. **Conferences, forums, and elections.**

There were some other conferences and forums that Russia offered in its aim to provide a common ground for interactions of FRP from different countries. For example, the international forum on "The Multi-Child Family and the Future of Humanity" which was hosted at the Kremlin state palace, representing a part of the Russian national program "The Sanctity of Motherhood" (*Orthodox Ethos*, 2014), where members of FPO and FN were able to meet and speak against the LGBT rights in Europe. Even more importantly, at least for Russia, was the conference organized in August 2014 in Yalta (Beckhusen, 2014) under the title "Russia, Ukraine, New Russia: Global Problems and Challenges", which was used as an instrument to show the Kremlin's determination to keep the Crimean region under its control (Klapsis, 2015: 36) and where the participants included members of various far-right parties, the British National Party, *Jobbik* and the *Vlaams Belang* (Belgium), alongside with the senior adviser to Putin, Sergei Glazyev, as well as of Maxim Shevchenko, a member of Putin's human rights council, displaying this way how actively the Kremlin is willing to support these contacts with FRP (Coynas, 2014).

These contacts are very important for Moscow's international credibility too, which has used FRP to legitimize internal elections and external ones, including referendums in the ex-USSR Republics that have pro-Russian separatist's movements (Klapsis, 2015: 37;

Shekhovtsov, 2015a: 230). This is done through the Eurasian Observatory for Democracy and Elections, an organization that is supposedly independent but which has close connections with the Kremlin and is aligned with Russian interests (*ibidem*: 231). This organization often invites members of FRP from Europe to monitor electoral procedures in the separatist Republics to get the needed international credibility and recognition to the ballot results. Although other international monitoring organizations like OSCE or the European Parliament find big violations at these elections or are unable to monitor them, for the Eurasian Observatory for Democracy and Elections and its FRP members, the electoral procedures always occurred correctly and by the democratic standards (Klapsis, 2015: 37; Shekhovtsov, 2015a: 230). For example, the same organization assisted in the Russian struggle to internationally legitimize the Crimea referendum by inviting far-right members from all Europe to monitor the voting procedures and which they declared to be "fair" and "legitimate", although it was held in a Ukrainian region under extreme pressure of Russian armed military (Shekhovtsov, 2014).

c.   Russia's mass media.

Another noteworthy way in which the Kremlin connects with FRP is Russian mass media, which has slowly been monopolized in the hands of Kremlin and is meant to influence the public discourse about Russia, by framing its image abroad and, at the same time, it serves as the instrument to spread illiberal values (Krekó *et al.,* 2016: 16). There are several Russian-controlled TV channels (Russia Today, Russia Beyond Headlines) abroad that try to alter Russia's negative image, presenting it as the savior of "traditional European values" and elevating its President as the "conservative icon" and the "vanguard of the new Conservative International" (Whitmore, 2013). Channels like Russia Today (RT) do not limit themselves to promoting Russia's image but instead, focus on casting the West and US in a negative light (Pomerantsev and Weiss, 2014: 15). In this process, they rely on Western voices, whether they are members of far-left anti-globalists organizations or FRP leaders. RT presents these people as "experts" even though they have close connections with extremist and fringe groups and that would make them unqualified for other mainstream channels (*ibidem*, 2014: 15). For example, the neo-Nazi Manuel Ochsenreiter was presented as a "Middle East analyst", a "German journalist" and "Syrian expert" (Holland, 2014).

Russian media in the last decade appealed to FRP politicians from the *Front National*, *Dansk Folkeparti* (Denmark), *Sverigedemokraterna* (Sweden), *Vlaams Belang* (Belgium) and some other FRP members and let them express their complaints about the

"bureaucratic monster" of the EU, immigration, gay marriages and so on, therefore, sending a clear message that the West is in decline and falling, while Russia is supposed that traditional alternative, strong and stable (Shekhovtsov, 2015a). At the same time, internally demonstrating to Russians that their country is not isolated and is still considered to be part of European civilization by the Europeans themselves (*ibidem*, 2015a).

2.3.3 A new step, the United Russia's cooperation agreement with far-right parties of FPO and LN.

Russian relationship with the FRP took an unprecedented higher step of legitimacy and publicity when it was transformed in an official cooperation agreement between the Russian leading party United Russia (UR) and two European FRP: the Austrian FPO in December of 2016 (*Yedinaya Rossiya.ru*, 2016) and the Italian *Lega Norte* (LN) in March 2017 (*Ria-Novosty.ru*, 2017).

The unexpected open cooperation of Russian ruling party and FPO came as a result of the party's success in the last Austrian presidential elections when its leader Norbert Gerwald Hofer got through the second round of elections having big chances to win (Foster, 2016). The decision to sign the agreement was made just a few days before the Austrian final election day (Shekhovtsov, 2017), which Hofer lost (*BBC News*, 2016). The agreement with the FPO opens more possibilities, especially it provides the development of economic, trade and investment cooperation between the two countries, which could potentially help the party during the 2018 parliamentary electoral campaign (Shekhovtsov, 2017). FPO today is on the top of the opinion polls and has a chance of winning more than 30% of votes in the 2018 parliamentary elections and this for Kremlin means that the FPO, with its openly pro-Russian positions, has a high probability of getting into power (*ibidem*, 2017).

Nevertheless, this formal cooperation agreement is just the tip of an iceberg in the party's connection with Russia, and since 2007 FPO and its leaders established a close partnership with Moscow. The alliance became stronger at the time of Russian-Ukrainian conflict in 2014 when the party openly supported the Crimea annexation by Russia when it sent its observer -Johann Gudenus, to that illegal referendum and later to local Russian elections in St. Petersburg (Krekó *et al.,* 2016). Another interesting fact is that the observer Johann Gudenus was also leading the FPO in Vienna's local parliament between 2010-2015 and later became the most important intermediary between the party and Russia (Krekó *et al.,* 2016: 27).

The second FRP of Europe after FPO to sign another cooperation agreement with Russia's ruling party was the *Lega Nord* (LN) from Italy. Its leader Matteo Salvini and the deputy chairman of the Russian parliament Sergey Zheleznyak signed on the 6th of March 2017, a coordination agreement between the LN and the ruling United Russia, (UR) party (*Ria-Novosty.ru,*2017). This document firstly called by the leaders of LN "a protocol of intentions" (*Ria-Novosty.ru*, 2017a) and later by the Russian media a "coordination agreement" (*Ria-Novosty.ru*, 2017), differs a little from the one signed with FPO, in Shekhovtsov's (2017a) analysis. The expert in FRP-Russian relations argues that this implies that the value of the agreement is higher in the case of the FPO compared to that of the LN, just because LN is not as popular as FPO and is only the fourth party in Italy (Shekhovtsov, 2017a).

This agreement was not the first time the LN and the Kremlin established contact, but at this time it was public and official. Their relationship dates to 2013 when a representative of Russia and an ultranationalist oligarch Konstantin Malofeev and the official representative of the World Congress of Families in Russia, travelled to Turin in December that year and participated, together with a Russian MP from the UR Viktor Zubarev, in the LN's congress that elected Salvini as a new leader of the party (Shekhovtsov, 2017a). After this, LN has been keeping close contacts with Kremlin, first through the Lombardy-Russia Cultural Association. Later its leaders traveled many times to Russia where they met with high Russian officials and politicians, such as the then-chairman of the State Duma Sergey Naryshkin, his deputy and the head of the United Russia in State Duma group Vladimir Vasilyev, the head of the Duma foreign affairs committee Aleksey Pushkov, and Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Meshkov (Shekhovtsov, 2017a). Salvini was even able to meet briefly with Putin when the Russian president attended the Asia-Europe summit in October 2014, after Salvini stated that sanctions against Russia were senseless and are having a damning effect on Italian businesses (*The Local,* 2014). He further declared "I was in Moscow, not to ask for money, as some journalist wrote, but because we have a political vision of Europe that's different from today's, and one that's not passed by Brussels" (Salvini in *The Local*, 2014).

3. Conclusions

The dynamic of these connections between FRP and the Kremlin reflects more the EU's intern instability, insecurity, and the weaknesses of its institutions than a big Russian strategy. Ideology matters less for Kremlin then Russian capacity to influence Europe's politics, and if there are no other means except to cooperate with the FRP, the pragmatic Kremlin will not hesitate to act this way. As the author Shekovtsov (2014a) ingeniously has put it:

> Putin would be ready to dump his partners (FRP) when he no longer needs them to implement his political and economic agenda. The Kremlin's 'ideal version' of the EU is not a homogeneously white, pious, socially conservative union, but more of a corrupt, 'Berlusconized' Europe or, even better, a corrupt, 'Bulgarianized' Europe (Shekovtsov, 2014a).

Nevertheless, even if we consider that this FRP-Russia relationship is just "a marriage of convenience" and not a "true love", these connections, as the last two cases prove, have entered a new phase when Kremlin openly and officially cooperates with these radical parties, hoping that they will get real political power inside Europe and would support Russia's aggressive foreign policies or the spread of its illiberal "traditional" values inside the liberal European society.

This allows Moscow to undermine that historical standard of "civilization", where the non-European communities like Russia had to adapt to European rules, values and ethical standards associated with liberalism (Stivachtis, 2010: 12) and FRP serve as the perfect instrument to do just that. By supporting the FRP in Europe, as we are going to analyze in the next Chapter, Kremlin is able to make the main concepts of European society at least questionable, and therefore not universal, such as respect for human rights (minority protection, islamophobia), rule of law (Hungarian Guard) and liberal economic development (which is not shared by many FRP). FRP's visions on these basic concepts are different, critical and many times challenging, and this suits Kremlin's strategy to undermine liberal order, by attacking with the help of FRP, European shared values, and standards of behavior.

III. CHAPTER. CASE STUDIES: THE POLITICAL PARTY "JOBBIK" IN HUNGARY AND THE POLITICAL PARTY OF *FRONT NACIONAL* IN FRANCE.

Introduction.

From the beginning of our research, we argued that there are political balances inside the EU that had started to switch in favor of far-right parties (FRP), and that while getting more political power, had intensified their connections with the Kremlin and received political and even financial support from Moscow. Considering these facts and their impact on liberal order, we structured our thesis around the following question: How is the European liberal order affected by Russia's support for European far-right political parties?

The research has used the English School as the framework of analysis. This theoretical approach has as a central concept, the idea of International Society and, which according to Buzan (1993), is a synonym of an international order, happening in an anarchical society, where common values and norms, i.e. standards of civilization, play a big role in the creation and preservation of international society. Our argument is that the Kremlin's challenge to the common liberal values in today's European thick international society is reinforced by its cooperation with European FRP, especially on what regards challenging common values in Europe. Using English School perspective gives us a better understating on how the interaction between Russia (Kremlin) and far-right parties was possible, and how these policies could shape the current European dense international society and its values, rules, and norms, as their actions give birth to new anti-liberal international practices and expectations.

Wondering if these Kremlin´s policies of support help the empowerment of FRP in Europe and therefore, serve for Kremlin as instruments in its confrontation with the liberal order, we chose to research the connection between Russia and two specific far-right political parties in Europe: *Jobbik* in Hungary and *Front Nacional* in France.

These FRP are part of old and new member states of EU, hence, they can be used as illustrations of the means available to the Kremlin to challenge the liberal order in the entire Europe and in older and newer members. *Jobbik* serves as an example of how Russia connects with a far-right party in Eastern Europe (Hungary), a region known before for its anti-Soviet sentiments that has a communist past and that after the Cold War supported the liberalism. At the same time, *Jobbik* is an extreme right wing party with open xenophobic

(anti-Roma) rhetoric and with an opposing ideology to the liberal democratic values (Halasz, 2009) and considered the largest far-right party in Eastern Europe nowadays.

Meanwhile, the FN is the largest far-right party in Western Europe and it is an interesting case, since France, besides being one of the oldest member states of the EU, is also one of the biggest powers of the EU and it has a huge influence on the internal balance of the EU. On the other hand, FN's leader Marine Le Pen proved to be a strong candidate in the French presidential elections of 2017, and even though he lost in the second round, he received more than 34% of votes. The success came after Marine Le Pen in recent years tried to moderate her party's rhetoric and program, and even refused to enter into an alliance and be associated with *Jobbik*, accusing the party to be anti-Semitic. Therefore, trying in this way to present herself and the party, before the upcoming parliamentary elections, in a new and less radical way.

Thus, we argue that these two cases offer us the tools to see how Russia is capable of getting to these political parties even though they differ from country to country, and how it uses these relations with different FRP in different parts of Europe to undermine liberal order by attacking its values, rules, and shared practices and at the same time, trying to offer its alternatives.

3.1. THE CASE STUDY OF *JOBBIK*.

Analyzing the first case study, we want to clarify how *Jobbik* became the instrument through which is possible to challenge the liberal order in the first place. Then we want to look at how Kremlin was able to connect and support *Jobbik*, and whether this relationship helps the Kremlin to promote Russian alternatives to the liberal order or not. At the same time, we want to analyze in what way these policies of connecting, support and ultimately use of *Jobbik*, impact the liberal order in EU.

3.1.1. *Jobbik* rises to challenge the liberal order.

Jobbik's ascendance to power and the capacity to be a serious challenge to liberalism, from an English School perspective, firstly is due to the ability and responsibility of the actors in the international society to socially construct alternative orders (Sterlin-Folker, 2006: 308). Since the beginning *Jobbik* tried to construct such an alternative reality, presenting itself as a radical alternative for Hungary. With its establishment in 2003, *Jobbik* placed under its patronage many nationalist groups (the *Jobboldali*, *Ifjusagi Kozosseg*, Right-Wing Student Association), that at that time differed in their tactics and political

orientation, and *Jobbik* operated as an umbrella movement (Petsinis, 2015). Their intention was to get the votes of the people from under-represented social categories in mainstream politics, but at the same time, avoiding to replicate policy principles that had been already advocated by some mainstream right parties like FIDESZ and the left Socialist Party (MSZP). *Jobbik* at the beginning had a multi-level arrangement and not a leader-centered one, like most of the FRP. Its leadership could use this form of organization and address important social issues like crime and corruption, while entrenching the party in the traditional far-right framework of preservation of national values and identity, inside and outside Hungarian frontiers (*ibidem*, 2015).

Despite its adaptability, *Jobbik*'s early years were depicted later by its current leaders as the "dark ages" and a period of survival, because the party had very small support among populations and, until 2006, was still a fringe and unknown party (Varga, 2014). In a documentary film about *Jobbik,* its activists stated that just in 2006 things started to change for them (Szábo and Vona, 2010). It all started with mass protests in Budapest, where thousands of supporters of center-right and far-right political formations participated and clashed with the police in the Hungarian capital streets (Perczel, 2006). This event provided the perfect arena for FRP like *Jobbik* to show that they can organize and coordinate big protests. These protests turned out to be central events for the party because they created the conditions in which the party could connect with larger radical nationalist movements and speak in their behalf (Varga, 2014). They demanded the Socialist government's resignation because in their view, its actions betrayed the people of Hungary and it was no longer legitimate.

When the government refused to resign, *Jobbik* answered with establishing a para-military organization *Magyar Gárda* (Hungarian Guard). The organization declared that it was mobilizing the public around ideas of law and order, self-help in the case of natural disasters, and humanitarian interventions (Varga, 2014). But this para-military organization was more associated at the time with Hungary interwar fascists, because it was using similar black uniforms, flags, and it had anti-Roma and anti-Semitic speeches during its rallies, therefore, many observers saw the organization as a direct threat to democracy and stability in Hungary (Karácsony and Róna, 2011). As we can see, this organization was a pool of well trained and organized militia ready to be used to defend the common "Hungarian cause", which for the organization, was nothing less than to fight against immigrants that supposedly take away Hungarian jobs, to fight the corrupted elite that serve the "Jewish interests" or

other foreign interests, and most important of all, to fight the "Gypsies" (Roma) that in their view, instead of working just profit from the whole welfare security system and steal, but not from honest jobs (Halasz, 2009).

The front-runner of the *Gárda* organization and one of the founding members of the *Jobbik* party, Gabor Vona, became the leader of the party in 2006 and established an alliance with an older far-right party, the Hungarian Truth and Life Party, for the parliamentary elections of that year, but which resulted in an electoral disaster, winning just 2% of votes and no parliamentary seats (Murer, 2015). Nevertheless, a set of scandals connected to the Hungarian government and its ruling party, as well as the financial crisis of 2008, prepared the fruitful ground for *Jobbik* to gain more terrain in the European elections of 2009 (Petsinis, 2015).

On the other hand, there are many authors who claim that the initial rise of the party is due to the fact of growing anti-Roma sentiments in the country (Bartlett et al. 2012; Karácsony and Róna, 2011). They argue that the formation of the Hungarian Guard was essential for the party's success in 2009 elections since, through this organization, *Jobbik* could attract media attention and mobilized the existing anti-Roma sentiments to turn it into an electoral success. As it proves the following *Jobbik* declarations:

> Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik) took in charge as the only party to face one of the underlying problems of Hungarian society, the unsolved situation of the ever-growing gypsy population. It stated what everyone knows but is silenced by 'political correctness'-that phenomenon of 'gypsy crime' is real. It is a unique form of delinquency, different from the crimes of the majority in nature and force (*Jobbik* in Halasz, 2009).

Illogically, to win 14.77% of votes in the elections of the European Parliament, (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016), which is a liberal democratic institution based on the principle of solidarity, pluralism, non-discrimination and tolerance, the party used the Hungarian Guard militia that organized marches to 'protect' Hungarians from 'Gypsy crime'. This is nothing less than *Jobbik's* categorization of the Roma community as criminals, basically linking criminality in Hungary with Roma minority. This strategy was against all the liberal principles that the European Parliament stands for, but in this way *Jobbik* discredited and challenged the institution, jeopardizing its good function.

According to the English School (Buzan, 1993: 329-330), these successes could be achieved because people are generally willing to accept a given reality (Hungarian cause,

Gypsy crime, Jewish interests) and therefore, *Jobbik*'s ideas had rhetorical and political power, which was mobilized to create a new anti-liberal normatively informed social order.

The challenge to the European liberal order – the European international society – grew and continued with the *Jobbik*'s electoral success in the European elections. It secured the party 3 out of 22 Hungarian seats in the EU Parliament, where its members sat next to the other far-right members, so-called non-aligned members of the French far-right *Front National*, Geerts Wilders' Dutch Party for Freedom, Greece's Golden Dawn, and the Italian *Lega Norte*. This allowed *Jobbik* to build several trans-European political alliances and supports, channeling money to allied movements and organizations, and, because of that, the very institution that these nonaligned parties oppose, facilitates their cooperation, and maybe their future development (Murer, 2015). Furthermore, through the EU platform, especially its Parliament, the party was able to find a bigger audience and spread its anti-capitalist, anti-Roma and anti-Semitic views. It did not let the EU Block speak with one voice on issues like violations of human rights or security crisis in Ukraine where it took an open pro-Russian position (*ibidem*, 2015).

Hence, with this success, *Jobbik* became a force, which from inside erodes that set of socio-political institutions of liberal order and that in fact is the framework and mechanisms, through which Western values and interests are promoted and transmitted (Stivachtis, 2010: 15). Meanwhile, the pro-Russian positions raised questions on whether this force is used as an instrument by external actors to undermine those shared rules, norms, and standards of morality that the European society is based on and therefore promotes.

Jobbik's added value as an instrument capable of fighting the liberal order from inside, and became more visible in the 2010 Hungarian parliamentary elections when the party practically doubled its support and became the third largest party in Hungary. It succeeded without relying on the Hungarian Guard that was banned in 2009 by the Hungarian authorities, and it was the main instrument that connected the party to Roma issues (Varga, 2014).

Therefore, to win these elections, *Jobbik* adopted a new strategy in its electoral campaign and came up with a new party program called "Radical Change", a 90-page document, which was summarized by the party leader Gabor Vona in some main ideas: "telling the truth about multinational capital, the EU, the International Monetary Fund, the Israeli land buyouts and about Gipsy crime" (*Jobbik*, 2010). This was characterized by the

journalist Varro Szilvia (in Halasz, 2009: 493), as a political program based on a social policy agenda and covered with racism. It includes elements that are similar to leftists ideas, with a strong and sovereign nation-state that should fight the globalist capital forces and European integration. It also places the focus on the working class rather than money and profit, with higher taxations for the rich and public ownership (Magyari, 2009).

Jobbik's position *vis-a-vis* the institutions of a liberal order made it the right mechanism to challenge the Western order because its achievements since 2009 are due to its ability to consolidate voters' anti-establishment and disappointment with European integration and liberalism. Its leaders always presented the party as being "radical nationalist", and some authors like Varga (2015) argue that *Jobbik* could be seen as a far-right formation that focuses the core of its actions on defending the ethnic Hungarian nation from a list of perceived threatening 'others' (Roma communities, Jewish businessmen), as well as, against the liberal principles that protect these others.

Although in the parliamentary election in 2014 *Jobbik* moderated its image, namely by clearing its public speeches of anti-Roma or anti-Semitic messages and, instead challenging the leading party of FIDESZ, it still embraced further Eurosceptic populism, anti-Westernism (mainly anti-Americanism) and started to have some clear pro-Kremlin visions on domestic and foreign policies (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016). This strategy brought the party more popularity in these elections, and from 16.67% in 2010 it went up to 20.30% in 2014, winning its first individual constituency seat in the Hungarian parliament (*ibidem*, 2016).

The strange facts about this strategy are that, according to a survey conducted in 2014, 48% of *Jobbik*'s supporters would take side with the US, if there was a new Cold War confrontation, and just 27% of them would support Russia (Juhász *et al.,* 2015). So, *Jobbik*'s pro-Kremlin stands were not fueled by an existing demand in Hungarian society to support Russian policies, because although Russia is no longer a communist country, there is a contradiction between *Jobbik*'s pro-Russian and its anti-communist stances, which on the one hand is due the Hungarian society's continuous association of Russia with Hungarian bloody communist past, and on the other hand, due to the fact that the Kremlin currently plays with and builds upon still existing nostalgia for the Soviet Union (Juhász *et al.,* 2015: 20).

3.1.2. Kremlin's ability to connect with and "weaponize" *Jobbik*.

Jobbik's strange turn towards pro-Kremlin visions on domestic and foreign policies, while its voters favor little or at all Russia, suggests there is a strong bond between *Jobbik* and Moscow. To understand this connection better, we need to consider the recent events in international order connected with Russia's aggressive policies and violation of international law by occupying the Crimean Peninsula, as well as its turn to conservatism translated in the protectionism of "Christian values" and the consolidation of "Electoral authoritarianism" in the Kremlin.

These new policies led to new anti-liberal practices and expectations in Russia. Remembering here, that according to English School scholars, the general effects of shared practices and expectations are the equivalent to a universal structure of an international order, and if these new anti-liberal practices and expectations were shared by other actors in the international system, hence, these could lead to a distinct international order, in which Russia would have a central role.

A recent scandal involving *Jobbik*'s leadership helps us understand how, through a slow process, Russia was able to influence the party, in order to make it a pro-Russian actor, which shares the same new Russian practices and expectations, and which contribute to shattering the liberal order.

In the Spring of 2014 the Hungarian Constitutional Protection Office pressed charges at the Chief Prosecutor's Office against *Jobbik* MEP Bela Kovacs, claiming that for many years Kovacs spied on European Union institutions in favor of Russian secret agencies, with which he met on a regular basis (M1 Híradó, 2013). Later in 2015, the European Parliament voted to lift his immunity so he could be prosecuted for these charges (*New York Times*, 2015). Although the consequences of this link are considerable for the EU and its ability to maintain the liberal order, as well as for the EU's ability to carry a coherent foreign policy towards Russia, so far nothing has happened. Kovacs is *Jobbik*'s MEP and has opposed EU sanctions against Russia, aggravated Ukrainian crisis, and disrupted EU's foreign policies (Murer, 2015).

Jobbik promised to hold an internal investigation but nothing was done. One of its leaders, Márton Gyöngyösi (2015), stated in an interview "All we could have done is look into the eyes of Bela Kovacs and ask him whether this is true". Kovacs later publicly declared that neither he nor his Russian wife Svetlana Istosina had ever had any contacts with Russian

secret services. Still, an independent Hungarian online news service *Index* (2014) ran an investigation on Kovacs and his wife and discovered at least implicated connections with Russia. There was evidence that in the past Kovacs' wife might have worked for Soviet secret services (KGB) and that Kovacs has a Russian father, he graduated from a Russian University (MGIMO) in 1986 and later in 1988 went back to live in Russia where he stayed until 2003, and although nobody knows for sure what he did during this time, he came back to Hungary a successful businessman. Later in 2005, he joined *Jobbik* and since then he worked on developing the party's international relations, playing a crucial role in connecting the party with the Kremlin (*Index.hu*, 2014).

For *Jobbik*, these potentially discrediting ties with the Kremlin seemed not to be that important or for some members, important at all. For example, one of *Jobbik*'s members declared that:

> Let's look at his wife. She may have a Japanese husband. So, what? That's a problem for Béla and not for Hungary. She may have worked for the KGB. So…? How does that endanger Hungary? (…) We stand for anti-globalization, we are Eurosceptic, anti-liberal and we believe in Eastern Opening. In that context, Russia doesn't appear to be all that threatening. In other words, if someone 'spies for them' on the EU, all we say is: hip-hip-hurray (Zoltán Lázár in Juhász *et al.,* 2015: 22).

Nevertheless, to better understand why *Jobbik* reacted this way and did not get rid of Kovacs, whose scandal had earned him the nickname of KGBela[8] and damaged *Jobbik*'s reputation of integrity, we need to go back to the party's "dark ages" of 2005 to see the role he played in financing *Jobbik* at that time, and how in 10 years' time the anti-communist far-right party *Jobbik* became an instrument in the Kremlin's hands.

Between 2004 and 2008, *Jobbik* did not have any Parliamentary seats so, it did not receive any public funds. During those years, the party's funds were between 655.000 and 3 million Hungarian florins, which presumably came from private donors and Kovacs was the most important one (Juhász *et al.,* 2015). Although these funds were not a significant amount for most parties, for *Jobbik,* it was a significant shift. According to the memories of party members, in many cases paying utility and phone bills presented serious problems (*ibidem*, 2015), hence, they were crucial for the party's survival in the first years. The information comes from *Jobbik*'s inner circle, that declared that Kovacs was accepted in the party thanks

---

[8] The nickname KGBela makes the allusion to Russia's secret service FSB which in the past was known by the name of KGB.

to his foreign contacts and deep pockets and that the party colleagues, who introduced him back then to *Jobbik*, received and American luxury car as a gift, and there was a time when the major personal donations to the party were coming from Kovacs only (*Index.hu*, 2014a).

The former vice-president of *Jobbik*, Ervin Nagy, remembering Bela Kovacs' first days in *Jobbik*, stated "we thought he (Bela Kovacs) was completely crazy. He talked about all kinds of Russian connections, which we did not like at all, and believed that he was just bluffing, and laughed at him behind his back, […] Now I have to admit I misjudged him and, as it turned out, he really had some contacts" (*Origo.hu*, 2014), when at that time, the Jobbik's concept of foreign policy was strongly anti-Russian and Kovacs assessments were seen as "heretical worldview" (*ibidem*, 2014).

Jobbik's former vice president also remembers that Kovacs was interested in the party before 2005, but just in 2006, under Gabor Vona's leadership, Kovacs, which per many sources contributed with millions to the party's 2006 municipal campaigns, could be part of *Jobbik*'s inner circle, and Vona offered him the party's foreign cabinet (*Origo.hu,* 2014). From this point on, *Jobbik*, the party known for its anti-communist stance and opposing all the reminders of the Communist regime in Hungary and being harshly critical of Russia in its early years, slowly turned its foreign policy agenda into a pro-Russian one (Krekó *et al.,* 2015).

Although we can never know for sure if *Jobbik* was indeed at the beginning single-handedly financed by Bela Kovacs, we can add that in addition to *Jobbik* politicians' statements about this financing, there is an Audit Office report from 2009 which reports that *Jobbik* failed to submit a complete and honest statement on its finance for any year between 2005 and 2008 (Juhász *et al.,* 2015). Meanwhile, a study of Transparency International concluded that *Jobbik* must explain how it financed its 2009 and 2010 campaigns which presumably required much more capital from the one which *Jobbik* officially declared (*Transparency International*, 2012).

Considering the investigation above, we agree with other analysts (Attila Juhász, Lóránt Győri, Péter Krekó, and András Dezső in Juhász *et al.,* 2015) on the fact that *Jobbik* even if wanted to free itself from Kovacs, it could not do so, as the Russian influence on *Jobbik* perhaps reached a level where the party is no longer in position to depose Kovacs from its party positions, and this raises serious questions about *Jobbik*'s integrity and the possibility of *Jobbik* being blackmailed by the Kremlin.

Besides, as we already mentioned that in I Chapter, that states and other actors justify their actions regarding existing shared values, norms and rules. Considering that, it is in Kremlin's interests that *Jobbik* and other pro-Russian FRP grew stronger and become important actors inside liberal order while sharing the same anti-liberal values, norms, and rules that justify and support Moscow's recent policies.

Jobbik's first pro-Russian support happened in the Russian-Georgian armed conflict in 2008 where after some hesitations the party and the media affiliated to it, took the Russian side and defended Kremlin's actions there, presenting it as the war where Russia is standing against a Zionist-Jewish invasion (*Kuruc.info*, 2008). After that, in the same year through Bela Kovacs initiative, efforts, and connections, it was organized the first party's leader trip to Moscow and soon after the *Jobbik* changed its foreign policies to open pro-Russian (Juhász *et al.*, 2015).

3.1.3. Promoting Moscow's alternatives.

Kovacs's efforts to connect *Jobbik* with Kremlin worked because with that trip, the leader Gabor Vona saw economic and political opportunities in the policies of "Eastern opening" (*Political Capital Institute*, 2014), -which is a concept that means that Hungary should look to the Eastern countries like Russia, China, India, instead of West, for policy inspiration and strong economic partnership (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016). Relying on this policy, *Jobbik* considers that Europe's political future now depends on Russian illiberal model of governance and its economic future depends on ties to Russia, Asia, and some other Middle East countries (Laruelle, 2015a).

This turn to East was criticized by left-liberal writers, which warned that this opening to the East also paves the way to an illiberal "Eastern" manner of leadership and governance, therefore, the collaboration with Eastern autocrats would rip Hungary away from its Western partners and turn it illiberal, especially, the rapprochement between Hungary and countries like Russia or China (Korkut and Akçali, 2015). This is even more important, because the concept of "Eastern opening" although, not surprisingly, was introduced in Hungary by *Jobbik*, it was later picked up by the Hungary ruling party FIDEZ that promised and insisted in a turn eastwards, arguing that this represents new raw material opportunities and markets for Hungarian firms (*ibidem*, 2015).

In that trip, Vona delivered a speech in front of members of the Russian ruling party entitled "Is there a Europe without Russia*?*", translated later in party's elections program of

2010, that included a description of the developing and maintaining a good relationship with a "Russia wielding increasing influence", and characterized as something of vitally importance (Juhász *et al.,* 2015).

Another important development in Russia-*Jobbik* relations was a meeting of the National Group of the Hungarian branch of the Hungarian-Russian friendship organization, attended by *Jobbik* and by Russian ambassador in Hungary Alexander Tolkach, where the ambassador declared that *Jobbik* is an important partner for Russia (Zsolt, 2010). Hence, *Jobbik* in the following years of 2011 and 2012 continued to emphasize the importance and the need for the "Eastern opening" (Juhász *et al.,* 2015), while the party economic program in 2014 openly called for an opening to Eastern markets and that Hungarian products should be sold in Russia, China or even Iran, instead of EU markets (Krekó *et al.*, 2015). As well, it advocated in Russian favor in energy policies, where *Jobbik* defended Russian South Stream pipeline plan and not the EU-sponsored Nabucco gas line (*ibidem*, 2015).

Some authors (Petsinis, 2014; Mudde, 2014) are debating whether far-right parties like Jobbik are or are not "*Russian Trojan Horses inside EU*". We could add, that Kremlin's "weaponization" of this party as instruments to fight liberal order was possible because it was already there against the "common values of the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men prevail" (in Poptcheva, 2016: 3) but needed a powerful support, that Kremlin offered at the right time, so it could continue to thrive and undermine these liberal principles.

While for *Jobbik* the connection with Russia, even if it may be a relation of convenience serving just as an instrument, where the party is happy to receive funds while it stands against liberalism, the transatlantic capitalism, the EU Block, and the US, and suggests that politics and values for Europe lie to the East and not to the West, whether this appears to be pro-Russian or anti-EU, all the better for *Jobbik* and its popularity (Murer, 2015).

However, besides the "Eastern opening," there is another important element that connects Russia with *Jobbik* and helps the instrumentalization of the last one, and this is Russian Eurasianism. In an interview with the Russian newspaper *Iarex* in 2014, Gabor Vona declared:

> To my understanding, Eurasianism means that Hungary can serve as a catalyst between Europe and Asia. I realize that the origin of this concept leads to Russia, I'm familiar with Trubetzkoy's work, and I'm also lucky to have met Professor Dugin. Eurasianism has the advantages of preserving the autonomy of

various regions, and of being built on some sort of continental cooperation, in opposition to exploitation by the EU (Vona in *Iarex.ru*, 2014).

Russia was able to connect with *Jobbik* through this ideology mainly because it is nothing more than a Russian version of the European far-right (Laruelle, 2015a). Its main ideologue Alexander Dugin is a neo-fascist that calls for violence, borrowing a whole spectrum of far-right doctrines and mixes them with Third Way theories – a belief in Russia as the Third Continent between Europe and Asia (*ibidem*).This ideology defends the idea that Europe's real nature is to ally with Eurasia to form the Heartland, which would be a continental mass capable of resisting maritime powers like the US or the United Kingdom and their allies on the European Continent, all based on an extreme ideology directly inspired by fascism. More importantly, this ideology is not just anti-European, rather is more anti-Western, anti-Transatlantic, anti-liberal, and it aims at a common destiny of European and Eurasian people (*ibidem*, 2015a). Consequently, many far-right parties including *Jobbik,* share this vision of a united continent with the same enemies (the EU) in their way for Pan-European future, for "white" or "Christian" people, and in which Russia would have a central role (*ibidem*, 2015a).

In the same line of thought we can add that, according to the English School, the international reception and destiny of a given policy – like in our cases the Eastern Opening, or Eurasianism – or a specific step – to connect and support far-right parties - will eventually depend not only on Russian power, its position or even national interests but also and maybe most of all on the extent to which these given policies or steps are in accordance with, or compatible with already established shared values , expectations, rules and institutions (Sterling-Folker, 2006: 314).

Kremlin's alternatives came at a time when European populism was indeed rising and liberal values were questioned. Nevertheless, far-right parties like *Jobbik* help Kremlin prepare that fruitful ground with new anti-liberal values, expectations, and rules suitable for Moscow and that is in accordance and compatible with Russian policies of Eastern Opening and Eurasianism which challenge the liberalism and at the same time offers new alternatives to it.

Indeed if we look at liberal values then, through *Jobbik*, Kremlin is able to depict Russia as the protector of European traditions and true values because in FRP views it opposes the "traitorous" Europe (Krekó *et al.*, 2015). And if we look at liberal norms, then

Russia through *Jobbik*, could introduce new anti-liberal norms in Europe. When in 2013 the party submitted a parliamentary proposal aiming to sanction the Foreign-funded NGO's including the human rights ones, which in *Jobbik*'s view had "spurious activity" and worked for "foreign agents", clearly modeled after the Russian example (Jobbik, 2014; Krekó *et al.,* 2016). Or the party's proposal on "Homosexual propaganda ban" which reminded a lot a similar Russian norm, although *Jobbik* did not admit that the proposal had any inspirations from the Russian law (*Index.hu*, 2012).

Nonetheless, more importantly, especially for Russia, is the newly shared expectations of not respecting the international law which is an essential pillar of liberal order and that prohibits seizure of territory by one country from another. Therefore, *Jobbik* assisted Russia in legitimizing the pseudo-referendums in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, where Kovacs acted as an international observer in the Crimean referendum, while some other members of *Jobbik*, Márton Gyöngyösi monitored the presidential election of the "Donetsk Republic" in Eastern Ukraine and were part of a monitoring group of European far-right politicians (Shekhovtsov, 2014b) that legitimized the election in Donetsk and Luhansk, counties in Eastern Ukraine, with their presence (Juhász *et al.,* 2015). *Jobbik*'s position in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, not unexpectedly, was that West is the aggressor in Ukraine and Russia is only protecting the Russian minority living in the Eastern regions of Ukraine and the Crimea referendum was as exemplary as "holding out the promise of autonomy for the Hungarian and Rusyn population of Trans-Carpathia.", therefore, there was that expectation from *Jobbik* that Hungarian government and diplomats, like the Russian ones did, must advance this cause (Juhász *et al.,* 2015).

3.1.4. The later effects on liberal order.

This is an archetype example of how these newly shared expectations of not obeying the international law impact and challenge the established order and security inside EU. This kind of discourses affected Hungary's relationship with its neighboring EU countries like Romania, where its mass media reacted to *Jobbik* and Dugin meeting and declarations about Hungarian autonomy, wondering whether the Hungarian government agreed with Russia about the Transylvanian Hungarian minority's future as well (*Evenimentul Zilei*, 2013).

But in our opinion, the true importance of *Jobbik* for Kremlin lays on its capacity to influence liberal order by influencing and putting pressure on Hungarian ruling center-

right party of FIDEZ. In 2014 Hungarian parliamentary elections, the public opinion polls suggested that FIDEZ lost many of its voters to *Jobbik*, and in response, the ruling party started to co-opt many of *Jobbik*'s views and policies (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016). One of the examples that we already mentioned, is the concept of "Eastern opening" introduced by *Jobbik* and then adopted by FIDEZ as the core foreign policy of the Hungarian government, translated in Hungary's high-level meeting with China, Russia, Azerbaijan and Turkey (*ibidem*, 2016).

On the other hand, under *Jobbik*'s pressure, the FIDEZ party and its leader the Prime- Minister Victor Orban started to radicalize their rhetoric and became a great threat to liberal democracy in Hungary. In a speech given at one of the Hungarian University in 2014, Orban stated that his goal is to create an "illiberal democracy" country, declaring that Hungary is a "community that needs to be organized, strengthened and developed, and in this sense, the new state that we are building is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state*"* (Orban in Toth, 2014). In his speech, he referred many times to "Christian Hungary", which is a notion that represents a stance against secularism, liberal cosmopolitanism as well as being anti-Semitic (Murer, 2015). Orban highlighted the difference between illiberal "Christian democracy "and liberal democracy, articulating that liberalism and the EU had lost their legitimacy after the 2008 "Western financial crisis", concluding that Hungary's future is to look eastwards at the new "world stars" like Singapore, China, India, Turkey and of course Russia and, nevertheless, Hungary must be "searching for ways to part from Western dogmas, making ourselves independent from them ... we need to state that democracy is not necessarily liberal*"* (Orban in Toth, 2014).

After Orban regained the prime minister position in 2015, he passed several policies that resembled more far-right policies because they were explicitly illiberal or anti-liberal in both economic and political senses of the word (Murer, 2015). Orban's government introduced the idea of the death penalty, which is against EU liberal principles. It initiated "a national consultation" on immigration, denigrating Hungary's immigrants by associating them with terrorism and crime, therefore, playing on existing xenophobic sentiments in the country, it promoted harsh anti-immigrant measures (Polyakova and Shekhovtsov, 2016). Along with the policies, Hungary started to build fences along its borders with Serbia and Croatia, when the refugee crisis was increasing, and indeed these measures drastically decreased the numbers of refugees entering the country, but it also helped, per opinion polls, with the growing of FIDEZ popular support (*ibidem*, 2016).

In recent years, the lines between *Jobbik* and FIDEZ have blurred considerably, especially after *Jobbik*'s victory in last elections and which resulted in FIDEZ party not holding anymore the two-third majority in the parliament, so FIDEZ had to find regular support outside the party circle to pass its legislations (Murer, 2015). According to authors like Scheppele (2015), this support usually comes from *Jobbik*. In many procedural issues the Hungarian government, many times, depends on the cooperation with *Jobbik*, that finally has become that power broker and that serious instrument used by powers like Russia to fight liberal order, and whose political agenda today appears to contribute to the spread of illiberal politics and values across East and Central Europe (Murer, 2015).

Russian's policies to support *Jobbik* are the means by which Kremlin fights the liberal order, attacking from inside, its system of values, shared rules, norms, and standards of morality. Thanks to *Jobbik*'s influence at the EU level and inside Hungary, there are now new illiberal practices and expectations inside the liberal order, that jeopardize the future of the order and its biggest defender, the EU block. *Jobbik*'s actions, political agenda, declarations and views are the exact opposite of what EU with liberal order stands for, challenging almost every values and principles specified in the article 2 of EU Treaty, questioning whether the Union is anymore founded on "respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality", or after "Gypsy crime" could we say that in an EU country like Hungary there is a "respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities".

3.2. THE CASE STUDY OF *FRONT NATIONAL* (FN).

In the case of FN, we are addressing similar questions as in the *Jobbik* ones, of how FN came to be considered a serious challenger to liberal order and how the Kremlin was able to connect with FN and support it. Then we want to analyze how this relationship aids Russia in challenging and promoting its alternatives to liberal order and what are the impacts of these policies of support on the liberal order in general.

3.2.1. FN's electoral successes and challenges to the liberal order.

By gaining more prominence since the 1980s and through its later support by Russia, FN's challenge to the liberal order could be understood through Bull's (1977: 6) argument that challenges to the continued existence of the society of states, in our case the liberal society of the West, have sometimes come from "Sub-state" actors, which operate in

world politics from within a particular state and challenge the privileged position of states in world politics, or their right to enjoy it.

Nevertheless, the Western society did not take seriously this challenge in its initial stages, and when FN got its first seats in the European Parliament in 1984, the *Guardian* predicted that the French voters would soon "toss them out" (Art, 2011: 2). But FN since the begging was a well-organized and well-led political party and, with this first success, it began to build a national organization with permanent offices and a whole host of support associations with a strong party press, a youth wing and policy groups (Hainsworth, 1992: 42), heavily focused on attracting new members (Carter, 2005: 83).

In the next presidential elections, in 1998, FN leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, received 14% of the votes, but the Western media kept ignoring this success and newspapers like the *Economist* reminded its readers that "Europe's post-Hitler experience has been that far-right parties wane almost as quickly as they wax" (in Art, 2011: 2). However, it was not the case of FN, which under Le Pen's leadership the party was assembled back together because before his leadership it was divided into many multiple groups which had very dissimilar ideological tendencies (Carter, 2005: 83). Le Pen's authoritarian style of leadership and his strategy of "divide and rule" proved successful in the next years, although there were many FN's members under the leadership of Bruno Megret that resigned later from the party as they could not agree on the party's future strategy and wanted a more moderate right-wing party (*ibidem*: 84).

Yet the splits in the party affected little FN, which indeed had a slight decline in the late 1990s (Carter, 2005: 132) but which had a spectacular come back in the 2002 Presidential elections and received all the media attention that described it as the "political earthquake" we mentioned in Chapter II.

Even if this 2002 electoral performance, granting them 16.9% of the votes in the first round, it was not dramatically higher than of 1995, with 15%, this time was different. It allowed Le Pen to finish second in the first round of elections, and face Chirac in the second round, which he lost it in the end, gaining just 17,8 % of the votes (Art, 2011: 134). This renaissance of FN has confirmed again in 2004 regional elections, where FN received 15% of the votes and this made, as authors like Art (2011) argue, the other mainstream parties co-opt FN's messages of law and order, immigration, and national identity. A similar process to the one we saw with *Jobbik* and the FIDEZ party in Hungary.

In 2007 presidential elections, it was the first time, Le Pen and the FN had to face politicians like Sarkozy that successfully had built a hardline reputation on crime and national identity (Ivaldi, 2008). This led to party's worst performance since 1974, winning just 10.44% of the vote (Art, 2011: 135). However, the issues such Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism, ongoing immigration flows from within and outside of the EU, as well as fiscal austerity measures, brought back the electoral support for the far-right (Givens, 2013: 140).

Therefore, the next 2012 French presidential elections were a success for FN, when the party leadership was passed to Le Pen's daughter Marine, who ultimately got the third place with nearly 18% of the votes. These votes represented more than just protests against President Sarkozy, instead, they were voting for a candidate who consistently opposed immigration and, especially the growth of Muslim communities in France (Givens, 2013: 140). It proved that immigration continued to be one of the main problems used by far-right parties like FN to gain support and that the fear of Islamic links to terrorism, the ongoing financial crisis and concerns about the future of the EU were helping FN to get more political power (*ibidem*: 140).

To understand FN's return of popularity, we need to look at the party's ideological stand, where immigration and anti-liberalism have a central role. Before Marine's leadership, her father was preoccupied with the French nation's survival and with its identity, which he argued was threatened by the growing cosmopolitanism favored by the liberal order (Carter, 2005: 37). He insisted that a multiplicity of culture and people must be preserved but not in France and he refused the American model of integration of multiculturalism, which he saw as some unrealistic and dangerous options (Marcus, 1995: 106).

These views were reflected in FN's policies where the party argued that the cultures and religions of the immigrants coming from North or black Africa countries are incompatible with the European culture that French people are part of (Carter, 2005: 38). FN tried to avoid "blatantly racist formulations, stressing cultural differences between groups instead of their supposed inferiority" (Mayer, 1998: 17). Immigration became the central political issue of FN. Whether they were addressing other policies like family, health, housing or law and order, they all circled around immigration (Carter, 2005: 30). It became FN's "ideological aspic" (Marcus, 1995: 101).

This "ideological aspic" was against all the liberal principles that a "civilized" state of the liberal international society is based on, namely the "basic rights of life, dignity and freedom of travel and religion, especially that of foreign nationals" and which are "the accepted norms and practices of the established 'civilized' international society" (Stivachtis, 2010: 11).

FN's stress on cultural differences between groups is called by some authors as the "new" racism as it rejects multiculturalism because the mixing of cultures endangers the separate identity of each of the different groups (Mudde, 1995: 211; Carter, 2005: 37).

Authors like Carter (2005: 51, see Table 2.4) had placed FN in the categories of FRP which are "Authoritarian xenophobic parties - radically xenophobic; culturist; demand reform of existing system: less democracy, less pluralism, more state".

The author argues that:

> They do not reject the existing democratic order completely. Yet neither do they accept it. Instead, they are critical of many of the existing institutions and are also suspicious of interest group activity and of the promotion of individual rights and freedoms. These parties call for significant reforms that would strengthen the executive and would weaken the rights and freedoms of organized interests and individuals, and which, together, can be seen to undermine the legitimacy of the existing democratic order. Like members of the first group, parties of this third group are radically xenophobic, as the fight against immigration is central to their ideology. However, they do not embrace classical racism. Their racism is a culturist kind. In the light of the emphasis these parties place on the issue of immigration, and in view of their attitudes towards democracy, pluralism and individual rights, these parties are termed 'authoritarian xenophobic' parties (Carter, 2005: 52).

However, these FN's policies, as we argued above, were against the already established shared liberal values, expectations, rules, and institutions. Therefore, to succeed with these policies, FN had to adapt and make them more compatible with liberal order ones, while looking for other important actors in the International Society for public support of its values and practices.

Marine Le Pen understood this and after her success in 2012 she developed a new strategy for the party's "normalization", that was aiming at "de-demonizing" the party and erasing any polemical aspects in its rhetoric, to be able to enter the political arena and become a party of government (Laruelle *et al*., 2015: 20). This strategy did not imply that FN is really undergoing an internal de-ideologization, although now is more difficult to

recognize it. It just represents FN's capacity to uphold a double discourse, where its radical groups are present but kept mute (*ibidem*: 20).

While in the case of finding the actor for public support, it is easier to identify it, as we follow Marine's declarations already in 2011, when she stated "I can only be concerned when I see that our president (Nicolas Sarkozy), at the instigation of the Americans, is turning his back on Russia. Following the Americans, the French media demonizes Russia." (Marine Le Pen in *Le Point*, 2011). This admiration for Russia (Kremlin) should not come as a surprise because Russia's turn to conservatism that we mentioned in Chapter II, offered an alternative to the liberal society and its values, and where existed similar practice and expectations to FN's ones. Russia's efforts to moderate its own authoritarian drive represent an additional source of inspiration for Marine Le Pen's FN.

An expert on far-right parties, Jean-Yves Camus (in Laruelle *et al.,* 2015: 21) confirmed that FN shares many practices and components of the Russian regime, like its authoritarianism (cult of the strong man), its struggle against American unipolarity and NATO domination, its protection of Christian values and its denial of gay marriage, its criticism of the European Union and its support for a "Europe of Nations", which is a far-right geopolitical alternative to the EU, giving a role to Russia (Laruelle *et al.,* 2015: 21).

Russia and its illiberal practices are in the line with FN's views that, in liberalism, individuals have no history, therefore no future, making them in this way a danger to national communities that are as well threatened by the "Empire" (US and NATO) and its order (Soral, 2011). The social affairs adviser for Marine Le Pen, from 2007 to 2009, Alain Soral (2011), suggested that Russia eventually is the power that can help France and other Western countries to defend against this "Empire", whereas Jean-Marie Le Pen dreamed of a new international European society consisted of "powerful, independent and respected" nations which would include "nations of the northern continent from Brest to Vladivostok".[9]

3.2.2. How Russia was able to connect and support FN.

These views and admirations for Russia made it easy for the Kremlin to connect with FN, and they were important for Moscow as well, especially with the 2014 Ukrainian crisis, where Russia was perceived in the West as a "rogue" state that challenged

---

[9] This idea was first formulated in his program for the 2007 presidential elections (Laruelle *et al*., 2015: 21)

international law. The Kremlin was looking for other actors of the International Society that would support its actions.

Nevertheless, the first links between Russia (certain Russian politicians) and FN happen long before 2014. It was in the early 1990s, and through Russian emigrants in France, that was established a contact between Vladimir Zhirinovsky, chairman of the misleadingly named far-right party, called Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia, and Eduard Limonov, the future leader of the National-Bolshevik Party, who met with Jean-Marie Le Pen (Umland, 2006).

Russian politicians at that time were interested in implementing in Russia some of the ideas of their Western far-right partners, but at the same time, they understood that those ideas clashed with the Russian regime back then (Shekhovtov, 2016). Then these parties in the early 1990s were too weak and removed from Russian state power to either associate with it or act on its behalf (*ibidem*, 2016). However, these meetings proved beneficial for Zhirinovsky, as afterwards, FN provided logistical support for its party including computers and fax machines, in short supply in Moscow at that time (Shekhovtsov, 2014c).

In that meeting with Le Pen, Zhirinovsky suggested creating the International Centre of Right-wing Parties in Moscow and invited Le Pen to Russia's capital, which Le Pen indeed visited in 1996, but the project was never implemented although Le Pen "confined himself to commending the project" (Shekhovtov, 2014c). On the one hand, this did not happen, because for the Russian politicians the enemy at the time was inside Russia, so the connections with FN could only serve to strengthen their own positions at home, rather than instrumentalise the FRP of Europe against the perceived external enemies of the Russian state (Shekhovtov, 2016). On the other hand, at that time, the Kremlin was not interested in these contacts, because it had already established relations with mainstream parties and politicians of the West (*ibidem*, 2016), which wrongly believed that Russia would eventually integrate into the liberal international society and become a "civilized" state.

However, this situation changed when by the 2010 Russian authorities started to deploy a new strategy of influence abroad, especially in Europe, aiming at establishing a "voice of Russia", which would be noticeable and distinctive in the international arena and which would confirm Russia's recovering status of a superpower (Laruelle, *et al.,* 2015: 24). Bull argued that "ideas matter to the extent that they are taken up and acted upon by powerful states" (in Hurrell, 2002: xiii). Therefore, FN's ideas which did not or perhaps could not

matter before started to matter now when they were shared by a big power like Russia. Even before 2010, Russian ethnic-nationalist politicians like Dimitri Rogozin sought inspiration from FN's discourse about the dangers coming from non-European immigrants and interpreted the 2005 Paris riots as the revolt of "Arabs" against "Whites" (Jurczynszyn, 2012).

This share of ideas and practices by Russia opened that space which attracted parties like FN, as they could not identify themselves with that "civilized" state of a liberal society. According to Bull, this is constituted "through diverse political practices built around shared, inter-subjective understandings – that is, understandings that exist between and amongst actors" (in Hurrell, 2002: xiii). Therefore, FN's and Russia's similar understanding of how the future of international society should be, motivated it to connect with Kremlin although we argue, that is still difficult to understand to what extent these connections are of mutual admirations or are matter of convenience as Marine Le Pen called for an "advanced strategic alliance" with Russia, incorporated in a continental European alliance running from Paris to Berlin to Moscow (Turchi, 2014).

These connections between Russia and FN were reinforced and cemented through many trips to Moscow that high-ranking leaders of FN made in recent years. Marion Maréchal – Marine Le Pen's niece and FN's MP, traveled to Russia in 2012, and after that, Bruno Gollnisch, the executive vice-president of the FN went there in May 2013. Most importantly, Marine Le Pen and FN's vice-president Louis Aliot, both went to Moscow in June 2013 and later again in 2014 where they were received at a high political level by the head of the Duma's Committee on Foreign Affairs, Aleksei Pushkov, the president of the Duma, Sergei Naryshkin and the deputy prime minister, Dmitri Rogozin (Kanevskaya, 2014).

Some authors like Shekhovtov (2017b) argue that Marine Le Pen wanted to meet with the Russian head politicians already in 2011, but no high-ranking officials invited her to Kremlin. Shekhovtov claims that Moscow was waiting for the outcome of the 2012 presidential elections in France, and did not want to damage the relations with either of the candidates, and it was just after President Hollande criticized Putin for his support to Assad in June 2012, that Moscow decided to play rough in France and build strong relations with the FN, in order to destabilize social peace in the country (*ibidem*, 2017b). This makes it quite clear, the instrumental nature of the Kremlin's approach to FN.

Whatever the motives, the relations between the Kremlin and FN grew stronger, as the Russian ambassador to France, Alexander Orlov's regular meetings with Marine Le Pen and other FN leaders suggests (Laurelle, *et al.,* 2015: 25) The first time Le Pen and Orlov were seen together publicly was in 2014, when Le Pen and her niece Marion were invited by the ambassador to celebrate Russia's National Day (Jauvert, 2014).

Authors like Laurelle (2015a: 36) argue that there are several Russophile figures that surround the president of FN and increase the party's orientations towards the Kremlin. They are FN international advisor and European deputy Aymeric Chauprade, who is close to the pro-Kremlin Russian oligarch Konstantin Malofeev, or Xavier Moreau, a former student of France's foremost military academy and who directs a Moscow-based consulting company, and who seems to have a role in forming contracts between FN-friendly business circles and their Russian counterparts. As well Fabrice Sorlin, who is the head of a fundamentalist movement, and leads the France-Europe Russia Alliance[10]. Still, at the official level, it is more probable that Dmitri Rogozin's party *Rodina* has a key role as intermediary between FN and the Russian administration (Laurelle *et al*., 2015: 25).

These Kremlin's connections with FN, as authors argue, (Laurelle, 2015a; Shekhovtov, 2016) are primarily ideological, where both sides are seeking alliances against the mainstream and identify themselves as the outsiders that are challenging the "center" which they often name the "system" (Laurelle, 2015a: 37), and that in fact is the liberal order. However, in November 2014 it was discovered by the French media *Mediapart*, that Kremlin appeared to go further than just providing ideological support to strengthen these connections, and provided as well financial assistance to FN. The party received that year a €9 million loan from the First Czech-Russian Bank, that is close to Alexander Babakov, Putin's advisor on cooperation with Russian organizations overseas (Turchi, 2014). Another €2 million loan was a personal one, to the old leader of FN Jean-Marie Le Pen, and which came from Veronisa Holdings company that is owned by Yuri Kudimov, a Russian banker and a former KGB agent (*ibidem*, 2014). The investigation by *Mediapart* revealed that these loans are only the tip of the iceberg of a Russian credit, worth around €40 million to finance the 2017 presidential campaign of Marine Le Pen (Rettman, 2014). She admitted the €9 million loan but denied the additional €31 million, explaining that her party was forced to look for loans abroad as the French Banks refused to lend money to far-right parties, and

---

[10] All these elements have been investigated by the Mediapart journalist Marine Turchi, who specialized in following the Front National. See her tweets at **https: //twitter.com/marineturchi** (in Laurelle, 2015a: 63)

indeed many financial experts could not call this operation illegal or detect any wrongdoing in that (Laurelle *et al.,* 2015: 32).

Later in 2016, FN failed to acquire another loan from a Russian bank as the First Czech-Russian Bank went bankrupt in 2016. In fact, FN started having problems with the Russian Deposit Insurance Agency that managed contracts of that bankrupt bank and which threatened to recover the loan from the FN through legal action. Since the Deposit Insurance Agency is a state-controlled institution, therefore, its position *vis-à-vis* the FN perhaps was coordinated with the Russian state authorities (Shekhovtov, 2017b).

This could be explained on the one hand by Russia's precarious economic situation since 2014, mainly the result of dropping oil prices and aggravated by the effects of sanctions and weakening economic fundamentals, severely reducing Russia's ability to sustain its new allies (Laurelle, 2015a: 38). On the other hand, it is possible that the Kremlin adopted a wait-and-see strategy towards the political development in France, where the Republican party decided to support Francois Filon who is known for his pro-Russian positions on domestic and international politics. But when Filon started to lose popularity because of the "Penelopegate" scandal, Marine Le Pen was invited again to Moscow to meet with Putin (Shekhovtov, 2017b).

3.2.3. The impacts of these policies on support on liberal order.

English School scholars argue that Great Powers like Russia should not be simply studied in terms of the degree to which they can impose order on weaker states or within their sphere of influence, but rather in terms of the extent to which their role and their managerial functions are perceived as legitimate by other states (Hurrell, 2002: ix). Hence, when Russia imposed its order in Ukraine in 2014 and challenged the West's capacity to maintain the liberal order and compliance with its international norms, and in response, the EU imposed sanctions on Russia, FN although representing just a Sub-State actor, turned to legitimize this behavior. As Marine Le Pen declared "Mr. Putin is a patriot. He is attached to the sovereignty of his people. He is aware that we defend common values. These are the values of European civilization." (Marine Le Pen in *Le Figaro*, 2014).

Moscow's actions of FN support must be understood through the lenses of social concepts such as prestige, authority, and legitimacy. When in 2014 Russia troops occupied the Crimea peninsula, the question of legitimacy became a central issue for the Kremlin, and FN played a central role in supporting this, against the established practice of liberal order

of respecting the territorial integrity of other states. One of FN's observers to the Crimea referendum, Chauprade, declared that this referendum was not only valid but that it had a 'double legitimacy' (*Russian Today,*2014): on the one hand, it was historically legitimate as it was an expression of the free will of the Russians of the region, and on the other, it was politically legitimate as its result reflected a democratic choice (Morice, 2014), therefore, ignoring UN General Assembly resolution that called upon states not to recognize changes in status of Crimea region.[11] FN together with other FRP not only prevented the European society from condemning with one voice Russia's actions of occupying this Ukrainian territory but therefore, played a role in legitimizing it while accusing the pro-liberal Ukrainian revolution of Maidan of being "illegitimate" (Klapsis, 2015: 44).

When the revolution began, FN criticized the EU of a bad influence on it, arguing that it "threw oil in the fire" by proposing an economic partnership with a country where nearly half of its population looks towards Russia (*Sputniknews.com,* 2014). FN also favored a federalization of Ukraine, which would give a large autonomy to the Russian-speaking regions, in this way supporting Russia's solutions to solve the conflict (Laurelle *et al.,* 2015: 22). However, the main importance for the Kremlin, was the recognition of the Crimea annexation and perhaps the Russian loans for FN in part were a compensation for that. In March 2015, the hacker group *Anonymous International* published thousands of Russian internal governmental documents, and it was revealed that among them were some text messages coming from Russian officials thanking Marine Le Pen for taking side with Russia on the annexation of Crimea and therefore, it was stipulated in one of the messages, that it was important to somehow compensate and demonstrate the respect for the French (FN) (*b0ltai.org*, 2015).

Considering this, it is still difficult to understand to which extent the cooperation between Kremlin and FN depends on the importance of the sense of community and sharing of "true European values" that Marine Le Pen refers to. However, the rationalist models of cooperation might explain that this cooperation is possible because the FRP and Russia have come to believe that they form part of a shared project or community, one that protects

---

[11] By a recorded vote of 100 in favor to 11 against, with 58 abstentions, the Assembly adopted a resolution titled "Territorial integrity of Ukraine", calling on States, international organizations and specialized agencies not to recognize any change in the status of Crimea or the Black Sea port city of Sevastopol, and to refrain from actions or dealings that might be interpreted as such (see the UN resolution at **https: //www.un.org/press/en/2014/ga11493.doc.htm**).

Christian moral and "authentic" European values, and there is common interest to fight the liberal "system" that can be furthered by cooperative behavior (Hurrell, 2002: xi).

This cooperative behavior and Russian support to FN impact and undermine the durability of the liberal international society which depends on a sense of legitimacy which in turn must reflect the interest and values of all members of this society (Hurrell 2002: xviii). By supporting FN, Kremlin helps this sub-state actor to challenge the legitimacy of this society where FN's values and interests are not reflected, and whose views of a new nationalistic order make it the right tool for Moscow to undermine the West's capability to maintain a liberal democratic order.

Besides recognizing legitimate Kremlin's action in Ukraine, FN serves as important instrument of influence inside the liberal order, as it has a whole network of influence inside the EU's far-right parties and it was able to form pan-European alliances in Western and Eastern Europe alike (Laruelle, *et al.,* 2015: 28). Already in 2009, FN together with *Jobbik* founded the Alliance of European National Movements (*Eubusiness.com*, 2009), but later in 2013 as part of "de-demonization" process, FN joined the far-right European Alliance for Freedom (*The Telegraph*, 2013). Although it excluded *Jobbik* and Golden Dawn, before the 2014 European Parliament elections, the FN had the support of FRP like the Dutch Party for Freedom, the Flemish *Vlaams Belang*, the Freedom Party of Austria, the Sweden Democrats, the Slovak National Party and the Italian *Lega Nord*, with most of them strongly committed to support Kremlin on the international arena (Laurelle *et al.,* 2015: 28).

In 2015 FN formed a new group within the EU parliament called "The Europe of Nations and Freedoms" (ENF), an alliance that contained 37 members of 7 FRP of different nationalities across Europe, including the Dutch, Belgian, Austrian, Polish and Italian ones. This new formation gave FN new powers regarding funds (€20 million), speaking time, proposing more amendments at plenaries, additional seats in committees. Through these procedures this group has a stronger, although still limited, political impact by having the ability to influence policy decisions on many levels, especially the ones regarding Russian interests (Krekó *et al.,* 2015a).

A study done by the specialists in Russia-FRP connections proved this through examining the votes of the group on six Russia-related decisions. These include votes on the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine, a resolution criticizing Russia for its aggression in Eastern Ukraine, a resolution condemning the murder of Kremlin critic Boris

Nemtsov, and others. Per study data, in 93% of cases, the ENF members voted "no" in Russia-related decisions, which essentially suited Russian interests and led specialists to conclude that there is a pro-Kremlin coalition in the EU parliament involving the anti-EU and far-right parties (Krekó *et al.,* 2015a).

However, because today Euroscepticism is largely spread in the EU, the FN and its groups serve as influential partners for the Kremlin. The discouragement in European integration brought out by a set of "no" votes, and considering the Eurobarometer survey from 2014 where 37% of EU citizens were pessimistic about the future of EU project, this could become a "push factor" for EU voters, driving them away from a united Europe and towards Russia (Krekó *et al.,* 2015a). Moreover, it aids Moscow in promoting its regime's ideology and interests more effectively, and one of the latest examples of this tendency is public opinion in Greece. A 2015 Gallup poll indicated higher approval of the Russian leadership than of the European leadership, proving that Russia at least for Greeks, started to be an attractive counterpoint to Europe, helping this way to increase its disruptive influence in Europe (*ibidem*, 2015).

It may be the case that FN and other FRP vote pro-Russian in the European Parliament while sharing similar "true" values of Europe with Russia. However, in the end, as Bull had argued, even when the values are universally shared they will tend to further the interests of particular states (Hurrell, 2002: viii), and Russia is certainly the case. It is in its interests that FN and other FRP challenge the European Society shared rules, norms, and understanding as they shape the game of power politics, the nature, and identity of the actors and the purpose for which force can be used (*ibidem*: viii). Therefore, supporting FN means shaping EU's nature and identity similar to Russian regime and changing the liberal norms into illiberal ones, thus helping Moscow justify and legitimize its recent aggressive foreign policies in today's international society.

However, the instrumentalization of FRP like FN or *Jobbik* and the empowerment of the latter might turn to be a serious challenge to Moscow itself, as it plays a double game of supporting far-right outside the country, while inside Russia it oppresses the nationalist movements that are disloyal to the Kremlin. Putin urged the Russian nationalists to remember that the Russian Federation was in fact formed specifically as a multiethnic and multi-confessional country and that any nationalism in Russia might destroy the Russian "genetic code" (Shekhovtsov, 2017b).

Still, Moscow continues to provide support for FN, *Jobbik* and other FRP in Europe, because it understands that nationalist parties are a great danger for the social and political unity of States and, with their help, the Kremlin weakens the EU and jeopardizes the social peace in European liberal society. And as Shekhovtsov (2017b) had argued that if they would eventually come to power in EU's states, this would compromise EU's unity and it would make these states more vulnerable to corrupt practices of Russia's alternative order, contributing to social inequality inside the EU and most of all damage the EU's position and prestige in the international arena as the liberal "normative power".

CONCLUSIONS

The objective of our study in this dissertation was to research the challenge to the European liberal order (believed to be in decline) coming from Russia and its connections with FRP of Europe that in recent years received more votes and therefore, the more political power inside the EU. The importance of our research was based the on the fact that these parties, supported by a great power like Russia, mobilized and used xenophobia, discrimination, and fear as natural components of dealing with different problems like the issues of a large community and the loss of identity that were haunting the EU in general and their countries in particular. Therefore, we considered them to be a real threat to stability and security inside the EU, as the connections with Russia strength FRP even more and this relationship helped both sides to legitimize their actions in the international order.

This relatively new relationship between Russia and FRP became more visible after Russia's annexation of Crimea where the many FRP members participated as observers in the Crimea pseudo-referendum which they declare legit and fair. The FN's acknowledgment of receiving financial assistance from Moscow and the many other meetings that happened in Moscow between Russian officials and European far-right parties' leaders proved the ongoing relationship between Kremlin and FRP was getting stronger. Considering this new relationship and looking at the liberal order as the main pillar of today´s Western society, we structured our thesis around the question: how is the European liberal order affected by Russia's support for European far-right political parties?

However, to answer our main question, we looked at how the FRP in Europe became a challenge to the European liberal order in the first place. Then we looked at how Russia was able to connect and support these parties, through what instruments and narratives, and how these new policies were relevant for its strategy of undermining the liberal order. Subsequently, we questioned whether the Russian strategy to connect with far-right parties helped their empowerment in today's international context of tension and fear, and why many far-right parties of Europe looked for support in Russia, as we wanted to see how in end these Kremlin-FRP connections impacted the liberal order in Europe.

We started from the idea that Russian financial and political support to FRP was an additional instrument in confronting the liberal order in Europe but this could lead to the empowerment of far-right political parties in Europe and considering their nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric and their declared political agenda, this represented a real threat to

several dimensions. First to EU institutions, to liberalism in terms of moral values, to individualistic values, and to the "loose consensus" of parliamentary democracy. Therefore, in order to answer the research question and to explore these assumptions, we divided our dissertation into three parts.

In the first chapter, we identified our theoretical framework and we used English School lenses, as this helped us to better understand the concepts that we used along the research, and because our level of analysis moved beyond the international system onto international society, with shared norms and rules at an international level. Although our research was focused more on the state level where the far-right parties made more sense, we argued that their actions had transnational effects and consequences for the whole regional European and international society.

There we concluded that Russia's challenge to the European liberal order through FRP came after Western liberal democratic order with the end of Cold War, established that pattern of activity of states which sustains today the elementary goals of the international society and these activities were based on a fundamental liberal system of values. For these values to be protected there was a need for liberal democracies to be in power as this form of governance is based on regular elections operating through party pluralism, tolerance of different perspectives and of different opponent political parties with their different social beliefs and this government must fulfil the legal rights of the citizens and where the constitution effectively limits its power,

Nevertheless, not all the actors in the international system, including later Russia and the far-right, accepted these patterns of activity and its fundamental values. Firstly, we concluded that the West's form of liberal democracy is a debatable ideology where its two elements liberal and democratic sometimes contradict each other, secondly, democracy throughout history meant different things to different people at a different time and places (Dahl, 2000).

However, even if the "end of history" did not happen, we saw that the Western liberal model prevailed and its values after the Cold-War were considered supreme in the international society. These values were the basis that created new standards of behavior for the states in an international society that were seen as correct and just or "civilized", establishing a "civilized" -modern international society that would shame other states which would not conform to these new standards of behavior.

This was true for all the actors including the ones that before challenged the liberal order but which with the collapse of communism remained with no viable alternatives. Therefore, looking to achieve political objectives, these actors (states) were looking to integrate into the Western "civilized" society adopting its standards of behavior, considered now even by them to be the normal path of a modern country. This implied that East European states had to join the Western organization that presented themselves as capable to construct a new international order, but not all the new states, like Russia, were truly wanted to be part of the West. Although Russia shared in some extend a common culture and history with the West, it was left outside the "civilization" sphere and it was considered a second player in the new international order. At the same time, it was pressured to democratize and to adopt Western standards of behavior but which had an opposite impact and instead it turned Kremlin to illiberalism or so-called "Electoral Authoritarianism" (Shekhovtsov, 2015).

This form of government simulated the liberal democratic one, as it held elections but there was not a real rotation of power. This form gave Kremlin high level of legitimacy in the international arena because it pretended to play by the shared democratic rules of the international society and at the same time discrediting this form of governance which was undesirable for Moscow.

It was undesirable because liberal democracy has mechanisms, like the mobilization of civil society, that would contra-balance the anti-liberal inclination of a democratically elected majority and is a source of individual right and liberties based on social justice, and which could, in the end, jeopardize Kremlin ability to remain in power. The "colored revolution" was a prove to that, so, Kremlin imposed control on civil society at home and accused the West of using the civil society to assist its geopolitical interests and not respecting the national sovereignty of the states.

The FRP in Europe as well blamed the West and the EU with damaging the national sovereignty of their countries. Their concern with the civil society was that the American hegemony and the EU influence destroyed the traditions that define European civilization and the unique qualities of European identity. These Eurosceptic and anti-American visions as well as conservatism and respect for "traditional values" made the relationships between Moscow and FRP possible as they shared the same enemy (EU, liberalism, NATO) and shared similar conservative ideologies.

Therefore, in the next chapter, in one hand we looked at why the FRP appeared and rose in European liberal societies and how they arrived to be considered a challenge to liberal order. In the other hand, we analyzed how Russia came to its current position of the conservatism- traditionalism defender that challenges liberalism and that the same time connected with FRP in Europe.

There we concluded that FRP in the Western Europe initially appeared in 1980 as a reaction to the transformations of Western societies that were passing through an economic and political crisis at that time, characterized by the high level of unemployment, the restructuring of the national and global economy from industry-centered to service oriented. These factors made Western societies to lose their faith in their mainstream political parties, institutions, and government and started to give their votes to FRP that attracted the people who felt vulnerable by this modernization and globalization. FRP also responded to concerns regarding immigration flows into European countries in the 1980s and questioned the globalization and liberal order as some 'new' globalist ideology, that wanted the establishment of a "new global order" based on the right to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. While the FRP in the Eastern Europe appeared as a post-communist syndrome and could rise because of the disappointments that came with high expectations from the liberal democratic order of the West, and the transformation process from socialism to capitalism, that these societies were undergoing there.

In the end, we concluded that FRP common characteristics across the whole Europe was that they have reinvented themselves as protectors of "true" European values against the invasion of both non-European foreigners and the EU elite in Brussels.Their challenge to the current liberal order was manifested in their promise to overthrow the established political system as they described the mainstream politicians to be corrupt and decadent.

It was this rhetoric as protectors of "true" European values that connected them to Kremlin in the first place. The admiration and the interests were mutual. FRP perceived the Kremlin as the natural ally against European integration and a protector of "true" European values, while Kremlin hoped that FRP growing influence was going to put pressure on EU governments, especially in matters that affected Russia directly, as the EU sanctions after the Crimea annexation or indirectly, like the push for democratization.

We argued that Russia gradually arrived in the position to challenge the liberal order through FRP. With the end of Cold War, it did not have an ideology and it tried to adopt the

liberal model but the political and economic turmoil in the 1990s, and the failure to solve these crises by the Russian liberal elites, made it distance itself from the liberal model which it believed to be dangerous and extreme. After the distance from the Western model, Russia ideology had three phases, starting with political centrism, between 1994 and 2004, then the second phase was about structuring an ideological state posture, in the years 2004–2012, and finally, the third, still ongoing, is conservatism as the official state posture.

The conservatism position gave meaning to Russian's domestic and foreign policies because through the conservatism policies (patriotism, morality, and culture) it could narrow the public freedom and cement its power at home. While externally, it portrayed itself as the anti-liberal force that supports the established state regimes against street revolutions and that tries to modify the UN and the EU legislations in the designation of the traditional values and respect for national context.

These positions made possible the alliances with the FRP because they saw Moscow's positions and ideology very familiar to them since they expressed the hardcore of their fundamental beliefs. Russia *per se* served as the example of how a country could be truly independent and sovereign, disregarding Western liberalism and challenging it.

Consequently, in the third chapter, we researched the connection between Russia and two specific FRP in Europe: *Jobbik* in Hungary and *Front Nacional* in France. We used these parties as illustrations of the means available to the Kremlin to challenge the liberal order in the entire Europe and in older and newer members of EU.

When analyzing the connections with *Jobbik* we deduced that Kremlin's "weaponization" of this party as instruments to fight liberal order was possible because *Jobbik* was already against the "common values of the Member States" (Gypsy crime) but needed a powerful support, that Kremlin offered at the right time, so it could continue to thrive and undermine the liberal principles while at the same time suggesting that politics and values for Europe lie to the East (Russia) and not to the West. Then the support offered to *Jobbik*'s was due to its influence at the EU level and inside Hungary. That gave birth to new illiberal practices and expectations inside the liberal order, which jeopardized the future of the order and its biggest defender, the EU block.

In the case of *Front Nacional* (FN), we concluded that it was a relation partly of convenience and partly ideological. The support for FN impacted and undermined the durability of the liberal international society which depends on a sense of legitimacy which

in turn needs to reflect the interest and values of all members of this society, including FN's, but where its values and interests were not reflected. FN's views of a new nationalistic order made it the right tool for Moscow to undermine the West's capability to maintain a liberal democratic order. The Kremlin's support to FN, was about shaping EU's nature and identity similar to the Russian regime and changing the liberal norms into illiberal ones, therefore, helping Moscow justify and legitimize its recent aggressive foreign policies in today's international society.

Hence, the final conclusions on this dissertation is that:

1) The Kremlin relations with FRP impact the Western capacity to maintain a European liberal order as most of these parties recognized the Crimean referendum and its annexation to Russia. These newly shared expectations of not obeying the international law impact and challenge the established order and security inside EU.

2) Russian support to FRP influences the liberal order because these parties put pressure on the ruling mainstream parties that in response coopt many FRP's anti-liberal views and policies that later lead to new illiberal practices and expectations inside the liberal order and that undermines the future of the order.

3) The relationship between Kremlin and FRP, that formed political alliances inside the EU, impacted the parties to vote "no" in Russia-related decisions, which essentially suited Russian interests, forming a pro-Kremlin coalition in the EU. The discouragement in European integration brought out by a set of "no" votes could become a "push factor" for EU voters, driving them away from a united Europe and towards Russia. In this way, Russia becomes an attractive counterpoint to Europe, and which helps to increase Kremlin's disruptive influence in Europe.

Consequently, the shared values, norms and rules among the states create standards of behavior and morality in the international society. States are expected to perform accordingly to these standards and which today are based on the liberal model. The complies with this model was the requirement for the states to be accepted in post-Cold-War international society, which was armed with different instruments to punish those that challenged its rule and norms.

Inside a liberal order, the states are expected to be democratic and liberal but Bull (1977: 16) argued that challenges to the continued existence of the international society have sometimes come from a particular dominant state, and today we can conclude that this

dominant state is Russia. The liberal international society today, challenged through Russia's support for the FN, *Jobbik* and other FRP, still proves strong, although populist and Eurosceptic parties are still rising in Europe. FN's latest success in 2017 presidential elections that its leader called "historic, massive result" (*Independent*, 2017) for FN, with 33.9 % in the second round, are proving that FN was very close to fulfil the purpose of the Kremlin support and come to represent the entire France, which could have been the greatest support for Kremlin so far.

There are still other elections to come and the threat from parties like FN or *Jobbik* did not go away, and Kremlin will still have a chance to change the *"acceptance of the rules, norms, and practices that the international society considers to be 'civilized' standards of behavior"* (Stivachtis, 2010: 6) in order to not be anymore 'named' and 'shamed', and receive such a characterization as 'backward' or 'rogue ', and instead it would be that recognized central player in international order.

Finally, we can add that this research was limited in time and space by the demand of a master degree dissertation and this framework did not let us go in deeper analysis of our used concepts of international society, liberal democracy, far-right parties or Russian ideologies. We took one instrument (the FRP) in Russia's "tool box" to challenge the West liberal order and even here we narrowed down, looking at just several FRP across Europe. Nevertheless, we hope that our contribution with this dissertation would serve as a platform for future analysis and research studies of this new complicated and complex connections between Russia and FRP of Europe.

REFERENCE LIST

Art, D. (2011) *Inside the Radical Right -The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Art, D. (2013) "Rise of the Radical Right: Implications for European Politics" *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 19 (2), pp.127-137.

Ataka, (2005) "20 Точки на Партия АТАКА [20 Principles of the Ataka Party]" www.ataka.bg/index.php?option5com_content&task5view&id513&Itemid551 [26th of June, 2017].

Ataka (2014) "ATAKA Launched its Election Campaign in Moscow" http: //www.ataka.bg/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=330&Itemid=26 [26th of June, 2017].

b0ltai.org (2015) "СМС переписка из Управления внутренней политики АП РФ 2011- 2014 гг [SMS texts conversations from the Center of Domestic Policies AP RF]" http: //b0ltay.blogspot.hu/2015/03/2011-2014.html. [26th of June, 2017].

Bąkowski, P. (27 November, 2013) "The European Union and rights of LGBT people" *Briefing European Parliamentary Research Service,* http: //www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2013/130695/LDM_BRI(2013)1 30695_REV1_EN.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Barbashin, A.; Thoburn, H. (2014) "Putin's Brain: Alexander Dugin and the Philosophy behind Putin's Invasion of Crimea" *Foreign Affairs.* https: //www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-03-31/putins-brain[26th of June, 2017].

Barnard, A.; Spencer, J. (1998) *Encyclopedia of social and cultural anthropology*. London: Routledge, pp 227.

Bartlett, J.; Birdwell, J.; Krekó, P.; Benfield, J.; Gyori,G. (2012) "Populism in Europe: Hungary" *Open Society Foundations*. London: Demos, https: //www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/Populism%2520in%2520Europe%25 20-%2520Hungary.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

BBC News (5th of December, 2016) "Austria far-right candidate Norbert Hofer defeated in presidential poll" http: //www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38202669 [26th of June, 2017].

BBC Monitoring European (2014) "French daily sees National Front's Russian loan as 'monumental blunder'" http: //search.proquest.com/docview/1630423504?accountid=39703[26th of June, 2017].

Beckhusen, R. (31st of August, 2014) "As Russia Invades Ukraine, the Kremlin's Far-right Allies Meet in Yalta" *Medium*, https: //medium.com/war-is-boring/as-russia-invades-ukraine-the-kremlins-far-right-allies-meet-in-yalta-94a30929c35[26th of June, 2017].

Betz, H.G.; Immerfall, S. (1998) The New Politics of the Right. Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in established Democracies. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp.7.

Betz, H.G. (2004) "Exclusionary populism in Western Europe in the 1990s and beyond: a threat to democracy and civil rights?" *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Identities, Conflict and Cohesion Program Paper.* 9, pp. ii-15.

Betz, H.G.; Johnston, C. (2004) "Against the current — stemming the tide: the nostalgic ideology of the contemporary radical populist right" *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 9(3), pp.321.

Beyme, K. (1988) *Right-wing Extremism in Western Europe*. London: Frank Cass.

Blum, D. W.; Tsygankov, A. P. (2009) "Russia and globalization: identity, security, and society in an era of change" *International Studies Review*. 11(2), pp. 391.

Braun, A. (2012) "Resetting Russian–Eastern European relations for the 21st century" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 45, pp. 389–400.

Broad, D.; Lori F. (1992) *The New World Order and the Third World*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Broad, D. (1998) "New World Order versus just World Order" *Social Justice*. 25(2), pp 6-15.

Bull, H. (1977) *The Anarchical Society- A Study of Order in World Politics.* (3rd eds.) New York: Palgrave.

Bunyan, P. (2014) "Re-conceptualizing Civil Society: Towards a Radical Understanding" *International Society for Third-Sector Research and The Johns Hopkins University 2013/Voluntas.* E-journal, 25, pp. 538–552. DOI 10.1007/s11266-013-9352-y.

Buzan, B. (1993) "From International System to International Society: Structural Realism and Regime Theory meet the English School" *International Organization*. 47 (3), pp. 327-352.

Callinicos, A. (1991) "Liberalism, Marxism and Democracy: a response to Davis Held" *Theory and Society*. 22, pp 108-109.

Carter, E. (2005) *The extreme right in Western Europe, Success or failure?* New York: Manchester University Press.

Charles, A.K. (1998) "Democracy first" *Foreign Affairs.* 77(3), pp. 122-125.

Chizhov, V. (2009) "Russia and the European Union: forming a strategic partnership" *International affairs*. 55(6), pp. 47-52.

Chryssogelos, A. S. (2010) "Undermining the west from within: European populists, the US and Russia" *European View*, 9, pp.267–277. DOI 10.1007/s12290-010-0135-1.

Chryssogelos, A. S. (2013) "The evolution of the 'populist potential' in European politics: from new right radicalism to antisystem populism" *European View*. 12, pp.75–83. DOI 10.1007/s12290-013-0249-3.

Cochrane, C.; Nevitte, N. (2014) "Scapegoating: Unemployment, far-right parties and anti-immigrant sentiment" *Comparative European Politics*, 12(1), pp. 1-32. http //dx.doi.org/10.1057/cep.2012.28.

Coynas, H. (2014) "Russian Fascist Ideologue Dugin: Why Stop with Donetsk and Luhansk?" *The Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group.* http: //khpg.org/en/index.php?id=1409512010 [26th of June, 2017].

Dahl, R. A. (2000) *On Democracy*. Yale: University Press, pp. 3.

Dahrendorf, R. (23rd of November, 2005) "Realizar Eleições Não Chega" *Publico*. pp.8.

Dikov, I. (26th of June, 2009) "Bulgaria Nationalist "Ataka'' Party Leader Siderov: I Can't Be Follower of Hitler" *Novinte, Sofia News Agency*, http://www.novinite.com/articles/105072/Bulgaria+Nationalist+%22Ataka%22+Party+Leader+Siderov%3A+I+Can%27t+Be+Follower+of+Hitler [26th of June, 2017].

Doyle, W. M. (1986) "Liberalism and World Politics" *The American Political Science Review.* 80 (4), pp. 1151-1169.

Ekho Moskvy (28th of September, 2011) "Vstrecha Vladimira Putina s literatorami.[Vladimir Putin meets with men of letters]" http://echo.msk.ru/blog/echomsk/816060-echo [26th of June, 2017].

Elgot, J. (2014) "European elections: 9 scariest far-right parties now in the European Parliament" *Huffington Post*, http: //www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/05/26/far-right-europeelection_n_5391873.html [26th of June, 2017].

European Union (13th of December, 2007) *Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*. 2008/C 115/01. http://www.refworld.org/docid/4b17a07e2.html [26th of June, 2017].

Eubusiness.com (2009) "Far-right European parties forge alliance", http: //www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/politics-parties.13f [26th of June, 2017].

Evans, A.B. Jr. (2012) "Introduction: Civil society in contemporary Russia" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies,* 45, pp 217–218.

Evenimentul Zilei (28th of August, 2013) "Vona în Harghita; provocare ungurească sau rusească? [Vona in Harghita; Hungarian or Russian provocation?]", http://www.evz.ro/vona-in-harghita-provocare-ungureasca-sau-ruseasca-1054600.html [26th of June, 2017].

Faust, J. (14th of January, 2013) "Liberal democracy as universal value" *The Current Column, German Development Institute*, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/158622/German-Development-Institute_Faust_14.01.2013.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Foster, A. (3rd of December, 2016) "Who will win the Austrian presidential election 2016? Latest polls, odds and predictions/ NORBERT Hofer will become the EU's first far-right head of state if he wins the presidential election tomorrow". *Express,* http: //www.express.co.uk/news/politics/735682/Austrian-presidential-election-2016-who-win-Norbert-Hofer-latest-polls-odds-predictions [26th of June, 2017].

Fukuyama, F. (1989) "The End of History ?" *The National Interest*. Summer 1989.

Fukuyama, F. (1989/90) "A reply to my critics" *National Interest*. 18, pp. 22-23.

Givens, T. E. (2013) "The Radical Right and Immigration in an Era of Economic Crisis" *Brown Journal of World Affairs.* 19 (11), pp. 139-149.

Golden Dawn (30th of September, 2014) "Συνάντηση Αντιπροσωπείας Χρυσής Αυγής με Ρώσους Αξιωματούχους στηνΛευκάδα – Φωτορεπορτάζ, Βίντεο' [Golden Dawn Representatives Meet with Russian Officials at Lefkas– Photos, Video] ",http: //www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/enimerosi/view/sunanthsh-antiproswpeias-chrushs-aughs-me-rwsous-ajiwmatouchous-sthn-leukad [26th of June, 2017].

Goldman, M. (2008) *Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hainsworth, P. (1992) "The Extreme Right in Post-War France: The Emergence and Success of the Front National", *in* Paul Hainsworth (eds.), *The Extreme Right in Europe and the USA*. London: Pinter. pp. 42.

Halasz, K. (2009) "The Rise of the Radical Right in Europe and the Case of Hungary: 'Gypsy crime' defines national identity?" *Development*. 52(4), pp.490–494. DOI: 10.1057/dev.2009.63.

Hanson, S. (2003) "Instrumental democracy: the end of ideology and the decline of Russian political parties" *in* Hesli,V.; Reisinger, W. (eds.) *Elections, Parties, and the Future of Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 163–85.

Heilbroner, R. (1989) "The Triumph of Capitalism" *The New Yorker.* 64, pp. 98-109.

Held, D. (2006) *Models of Democracy.* Polity Press: Cambridge. pp x-8; 185-230; 290-311.

Hill, F. (1998) *In Search of Great Russia: Elites, Ideas, Power, the State, and the Pre-Revolutionary Past in the New Russia, 1991–1996*. Doctoral dissertation. Cambridge: Harvard University.

Holland, A. (2014) "RT's Manuel Ochsenreiter" *The Interpreter*, http://www.interpretermag.com/rts-manuel-ochsenreiter [26th of June, 2017].

Horvath, R. (2014) *Putin's 'preventive counter-revolution' : post-Soviet authoritarianism and the spectre of Velvet Revolution*. London: Routledge, pp.1-10.

Hurrell, A. (2002) *"Foreword to the Third Edition by Andrew Hurrell" in* Bull H., 1977, *The Anarchical Society- A Study of Order in World Politics*. Palgrave: New York, pp. vii-xxiii.

Hutmacher, H.A. (11th October, 2012) "How to tackle the far-right? -Delusions and new proposals" *Political Capital Research and Conference Summary*, http://www.riskandforecast.com/post/in-depth-analysis/how-to-tackle-the-far-right-delusions-and-new-proposals_788.html [26th of June, 2017].

Iarex.ru (22nd of January, 2014) "Лидер партии 'Йоббик – За лучшую Венгрию' Габор Вона о евроатлантизме, России, Грузии, русинах, Трансильвании и Сербии [Party's leader 'Jobbik– Movement for a better Hungary' Gabor Vona about Euroatlantism, Russia, Georgia, rusynas, Transilvania and Serbia]",http://www.iarex.ru/interviews/44688.html [26th of June, 2017].

Ignazi, P. (1992) "The silent counter-revolution: hypotheses on the emergence of the extreme rightwing parties in Europe" *European Journal of Political Research.* 22, pp.6.

Ignazi, P. (2003) *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe*. New York: Oxford, pp.119.

Ikenberry, G.J. (2010) "The Liberal International Order and its Discontents" *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 38 (3), pp. 509–521, DOI: 10.1177/0305829810366477.

Independent (8th of May, 2017) "French election results: The case for saying Marine Le Pen actually came third", http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/french-election-results-2017-marine-le-pen-third-spoiled-ballots-abstentions-emmanuel-macron-a7723711.html [26th of June, 2017].

Index.hu (11th of April, 2012) "The homophobia displayed by *Jobbik* usually concerns the ban of the LGBT pride parade in Budapest", http: //index.hu/belfold/2012/04/11/oroszorszagbol_szerez_otleteket_a_jobbik/ [26th of June, 2017].

Index.hu (28th of September, 2014) "A glorious match made in Russia", http: //index.hu/belfold/2014/09/28/a_glorious_match_made_in_russia/ [26th of June, 2017].

Index.hu (15th of May, 2014a) "Kágébéla lehet a Jobbik veszte,[Kagebela can lose Jobbik]", http: //index.hu/belfold/2014/05/15/kagebela_lehet_a_jobbik_veszte/ [26th of June, 2017].

Ivaldi, G. (2008) "What Unites Right-Wing Populists in Western Europe? Re-examining Grievance Mobilization Models in Seven Successful Cases" *Comparative Political Studies.* 41(1), pp 3-23.

Jasay, A. (2003) "Liberalism, Loose or Strict" *Liberales Institut,* http: //www.libinst.ch/?i=liberalism-loose-or-strict--en [26th of June, 2017].

Jauvert, V. (2014) "Poutine et le FN : révélations sur les réseaux russes des Le Pen" *L'obs,* http: //tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/politique/20141024.OBS3131/poutine-et-le-fn-revelations-sur-les-reseaux-russes-des-le-pen.html [26th of June, 2017].

Jobbik (2010) "Radical Change", http://www.jobbik.com/sites/default/files/Jobbik-RADICALCHANGE2010.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Jobbik (2010a) "Vona: Orbánt csak akkor tapsolták meg, amikor a Jobbik programjából emelt átrészeket [Vona: Orbán won applause only when he took over parts of the Jobbik program]", http: //kuruc.info/r/35/54714/ [26th of June, 2017].

Jobbik (2013) "Gábor Vona: Euro-Atlanticism Must be Replaced by Eurasianism", http: //www.jobbik.com/g%C3%A1bor_vona_euro-atlanticism_must_be_replaced_eurasianism [26th of June, 2017].

Jobbik (2014) "Kimondjuk. Megoldjuk. A Jobbik országgyűlési választási programja a nemzet felemelkedéséért [Saying. We solve. Jobbik parliamentary election program of the rise of nation]", https: //jobbik.hu/sites/default/files/cikkcsatolmany/kimondjukmegoldjuk2014_netre.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Juhász, A.; Krekó, P.; Molnár, C. (2014) "Right-Wing Extremism back: by Popular Demand [English translation by Alex Kuli]", *Political Capital Institute,* http://www.riskandforecast.com/post/france/back-by-popular-demand_411.html [26th of June, 2017].

 Juhász, A.; Győri, L.; Krekó, P.; Dezső, A. (2015) "I am Eurasian": The Kremlin connections of the Hungarian far-right" *Political Capital Institute,* http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/PC_SDI_Boll_study_IamEurasian.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Jurczynszyn, L. (2012) "Russian Radical Nationalist Interpretation of the French Riots of November 2005", *in* Laruelle, M. (eds.) *Russian Nationalism, Foreign Policy and Identity Debates in Putin's Russia* . Stuttgart: Verlag, pp. 139-151.

Kagan, R. (2007) "End of Dreams, Return of History" *Policy Review*, 144, pp.17-44.

Kallis, A. (2015) "Islamophobia in Europe: The Radical Right and the Mainstream" *Insight Turkey.* 17(4)*,* pp. 27-37.

Kanevskaya, N. (2014) "How the Kremlin wields its soft power in France" *RFE/RL*,https: //www.rferl.org/a/russia-soft-power-france/25433946.html [26th of June, 2017].

Karácsony, G.; Róna. D. (2011) "The Secret of Jobbik. Reasons Behind the Rise of the Hungarian Radical Right" *Journal of East European and Asian Studies.* 2(1), pp.61–92.

Kaufmann, D.; Siegelbaum, P. (1996) "Privatization and Corruption in Transition Economies" *Journal of International Affairs*. 50(29), pp. 419-58.

Kaylan, M. (2014) "Kremlin Values: Putin's Strategic Conservatism" *World Affairs Journal,* http: //www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/kremlin-values-putin%E2%80%99s-strategic-conservatism [26th of June, 2017].

Kehrberg, J. E. (2015) "The demand side of support for radical right parties" *Comparative European Politics*. 13, pp.553–576. Doi: 10.1057/cep.2014.6.

Klapsis, A. (2014) "Economic crisis and political extremism in Europe: from the 1930s to the present" *European View*, 13, pp.189–198. DOI 10.1007/s12290-014-0315-5.

Klapsis, A. (2015) "An Unholy Alliance, The European Far-right and Putin's Russia" *Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies*, https: //www.martenscentre.eu/publications/far-right-political-parties-in-europe-and-putins-russia [26th of June, 2017].

Klimina, A. (2010) "On the Risks of Introducing a Liberal Plan in a Traditionally Autocratic Society: The Case of Russia" *Journal of Economic Issues; Abingdon*. 44(2), pp. 513-521.

Korkut, U.; Akçali, E. (2015) "Deciphering Eurasianism in Hungary: Narratives, Networks, and Lifestyles", *in* Laruelle, M. (eds.) *Eurasianism and the European far-right: reshaping the Europe-Russia relationship.* Lanham: Lexington Books, pp.175-193.

Krekó, P.; Győri, L.; Juhász, A. (2015) "Russia's Far-Right Friends in Europe-Hungary" *Russian analytical digest*. 167, pp 5-8.

Krekó, P.; Macaulay, M.; Molnár, C.; Győri, L. (2015a) "Europe's New Pro-Putin Coalition: the Parties of 'No'". *Institute of Modern Russia,* https: //imrussia.org/en/analysis/world/2368-europes-new-pro-putin-coalition-the-parties-of-no [26th of June, 2017].

Krekó, P.; Győri, L.; Dunajeva, J.; Janda, J.; Kundra, O.; Mesežnikov, O.; Mesík, J.; Szylar, M.; Shekhovtsov, A. (2016) "The Weaponization of Culture: Kremlin's traditional agenda and the export of values to Central Europe" *Political Capital Institute,* http: //www.politicalcapital.hu/wpcontent/uploads/PC_reactionary_values_CEE_20160727.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Kuruc.info (23rd of September, 2008) "David Duke: Cionista zsidó maffia az orosz-grúz konfliktus mögött [David Duke: Zionist Jewish mafia behind the Russian-Georgian conflict]", https: //kuruc.info/r/39/28493/ [26th of June, 2017].

La Repubblica (19th of June, 2005) "Lega, da Pontida assalto all'Europa", http://www.repubblica.it/2005/f/sezioni/politica/pontidabossi/pontidabossi/pontidabossi.html [26th of June, 2017].

Larson, D.W.; Shevchenko, A. (2014) "Russia says no: Power, status, and emotions in foreign policy" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 47, pp 269-279.

Laruelle, M. (2009) *In the Name of the Nation: Nationalism and Politics in Contemporary Russia*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Laruelle, M. (2012) *Russian Nationalism, Foreign Policy and Identity Debates in Putin's Russia: New Ideological Patterns after the Orange Revolution*. Stuttgart: Verlag.

Laruelle, M. (2015) "Russia's Bedfellowing Policy and the European Far-right" *Russian Analytical Digest*.167, Washington DC.

Laruelle, M. (2015a) *Eurasianism and the European Far-right Reshaping the Europe–Russia Relationship*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Laruelle, M.; Győri, L.; Krekó, P.; Haller, D.; Reichstadt, R. (2015) "'From Paris to Vladivostok', The Kremlin connections of the French far-right" *Political Capital Institute,* http: //www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/PC_Study_Russian_Influence_France_ENG.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Laruelle, M. (2016) "Russia as an anti-liberal European civilization" *in* Pål Kolstø and Helge Blakkisrud (eds) *The new Russian Nationalism Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–15*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Le Figaro (18th of May, 2014) "Marine Le Pen fait l'éloge de Vladimir Poutine 'le patriote", http: //www.lefigaro.fr/politique/le-scan/citations/2014/05/18/25002-20140518ARTFIG00118-marine-le-pen-fait-l-eloge-de-vladimir-poutine-le-patriote.php [26th of June, 2017].

Le Monde (1st of May, 2005) "Le traditionnel defile du FN place´ sous le signe du rejet la Constitution europe´enne", http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/3138.html [26th of June, 2017].

Le Point (13th of October, 2015) "Marine Le Pen dit 'admirer' Vladimir Poutine", http: //www.lepoint.fr/politique/election-presidentielle-2012/marine-le-pen-dit-admirer-vladimir-poutine-13-10-2011-1384085_324.php [26th of June, 2017].

Light, M. (2004) "In search of an identity: Russian foreign policy and the end of ideology", *in* Rick Fawn (eds.) *Ideology and national identity in Post-Communist foreign policies*. London: Frank Cass Publishers, pp.56.

Lipman, M. (24th of May, 2014) "Meet the second-rate academic who is Vladimir Putin's culture cop" *New Republic*, http: //www.newrepublic.com/article/117896/vladimir-medinsky-russias-culture-minister-putin-toady [26th of June, 2017].

Loughlin, J. (2001) *Subnational democracy in the European Union, Challenges and Opportunities*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. ix-36.

Lubbers, M.; Gijsberts, M.; Scheepers, P. (2002) "Extreme right-wing voting in Western Europe" *European Journal of Political Research*. 41(3), pp.345–378.

Lukyanov, F. (2016) "Putin's Foreign Policy: The Quest to Restore Russia's Rightful Place" *Foreign Affairs*. 95(3), pp. 30-37.

M1 Híradó (20th of May, 2013) "Németh: Egyértelmű, kik állnak Kovács Béla mögött [Németh: Clearly, those who are behind Kovács Béla]", http: //www.hirado.hu/2014/05/19/nemeth-egyertelmu-kik-allnak-kovacs-bela-mogott/ [26th of June, 2017].

Magyari, P. (15th of June, 2009) "Erosen balos part a Jobbik [We strongly leftist party Jobbik]", *Index, hu,* http: //index.hu/belfold/2009/06/15/jobbik/ [26th of June, 2017].

Malcolm, N. (1989) "The "Common European Home" and Soviet European policy *International Affairs.* 65(4), pp. 659–76.

Marcus, J. (1995) *The National Front and French Politics: The Resistible Rise of Jean-Marie Le Pen*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp.101; pp.106.

Márton Gyöngyösi (30th of March, 2015) in an interview for *444.hu*. Available at: https: //444.hu/2015/03/30/jobbik-kulpol-gyongyosi/ [26th of June, 2017].

Mayer, N. (1998) "The French Front National" *in* Hans-Georg Betz; Stefan Immerfall (eds.), *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*. New York: St Martin's Press, pp. 17.

Minkenberg, M. (2003) "The West European radical right as a collective actor: modeling the impact of cultural and structural variables on party formation and movement mobilization" *Comparative European Politics.* 1(2) pp.151.

Minkenberg, M.; Perrineau, P. (2007) "The radical right in the European Elections: 2004" *International Political Science Review*. 28(29), pp. 29–55.

Morice, F. (21st of March, 2014) "French Far-right Politician Endorses Crimea Vote" *Euobserver.com,* http: //euobserver.com/eu-elections/123556 [26th of June, 2017].

Motyl, A.J. (2016) "Putin's Russia as a fascist political system" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies.*49, pp. 25-36.

Mudde, C. (1995) "Right-Wing Extremism Analyzed: A Comparative Analysis of the Ideologies of Three Alleged Right-Wing Extremist Parties (NPD, NDP, CP'86)" *European Journal of Political Research*. 27(2), pp. 211.

Mudde, C. (2004) "The Populist Zeitgeist" *Government and Opposition*. 39(3), pp. 543.

Mudde, C. (2007) *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mudde, C. (2014) "Russia's Trojan horse" *Open Democracy*, https://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/cas-mudde/russia%27s-trojan-horse [26th of June, 2017].

Murer, J. S. (2015) "The Rise of Jobbik, Populism, and the Symbolic Politics of Illiberalism in Contemporary Hungary" *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs.* 24(2), pp. 79-III.

Myers, S. L. (15th of January, 2005) "Putin Reforms Greeted by Street Protests" *The New York Times,* http: //www.nytimes.com/2005/01/16/world/europe/putin-reforms-greeted-by-street-protests.html?_r=0 [26th of June, 2017].

Neale, W. C. (1991) "Society, State, and Market: A Polanyian View of Current Change and Turmoil in Eastern Europe" *Journal of Economic Issues*. 25(2), pp 470.

Nemtsova, A. (2014) "Russia's new vigilantes: how anti-immigrant passions are shaping Russia's political scene" *Foreign Policy*, http: //foreignpolicy.com/2013/03/04/russias-new-vigilantes [26th of June, 2017].

New York Times (14th of October, 2015) "Hungary: European Parliament Lifts Immunity for Spy Suspect" https: //www.nytimes.com/2015/10/15/world/europe/hungary-european-parliament-lifts-immunity-for-spy-suspect.html [26th of June, 2017].

Nezavisimaia gazeta (13th of June, 1996) "Eltsin o 'natsionalnoi idee [Eltsin on the 'national idea']", pp. 1.

Novinite.com (17th of May, 2011) "WikiLeaks: Bulgaria's Ataka Party Becoming Increasingly Anti-American", http: //www.novinite.com/articles/128343/WikiLeaks%3A+Bulgaria's+Ataka+Party+Becoming +Increasingly+Anti-American [26th of June, 2017].

Novinite.com (7th of April, 2014) "EC President Advises Caution about Bulgaria's Gas Links with Russia", http: //www.novinite.com/articles/159597/EC+President+Advises+Caution+about+Bulgaria%2 7s+Gas+Links+with+Russia#sthash.HJzEGGAc.dpuf [26th of June, 2017].

Okara, A. (2007) "Sovereign democracy: a new Russian idea or a PR project?" *Russia in Global Affairs*. 5(3), pp. 8–20, http: //eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_9123 [26th of June, 2017].

Orenstein, M. A. (2014) "Putin's WESTERN allies. Why Europe's far-right is on the Kremlin's side" *Foreign Affairs*, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-03-25/putins-western-allies [26th of June, 2017].

Origo.hu (23rd of May, 2014) "*Élvezte a titokzatosságot a Jobbik utazó fantomja*, [He enjoyed the mystery of Phantom of Jobbik traveler]" , http: //www.origo.hu/itthon/20140522-kovacs-bela-palyafutasa-a-jobbikban.html [26th of June, 2017].

Orthodox Ethos (10 of September, 2014) "An International Forum on 'The Multi-child Family and the Future of Humanity' began at the State Kremlin Palace", http://orthodoxethos.com/?p=69 [26th of June, 2017].

Parker, G.; Stacey, K.; Carnegy, H.; Fontanella-Khan, J. (2014) "UKIP and Front National lead populist earthquake" *Financial Times*, https://www.ft.com/content/aad578e8-e463-11e3-a73a-00144feabdc0#axzz3Xm5Df9Z5 [26th of June, 2017].

Parrott, B. (2000) "A Democratização e os Militares Russos", *NeD*. 94, pp.74.

Pelizzo, R. (2007) "The Cartel Party and the Rise of the New Extreme Right" *Comparative European Politics.* 5, pp.226–242. DOI: 10.1057/palgrave.cep.6110096.

Perczel, L. (19th of September, 2006) "Riots in Hungary: Hungary Prepares for Renewed Unrest" *Spiegel Online,* http://www.spiegel.de/international/riots-in-hungary-hungary-prepares-for-renewed-unrest-a-437991.html [26th of June, 2017].

Petsinis, V. (2014) "Random friends or asymmetric Trojan horses?" *Open Democracy*, https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/vassilis-petsinis/random-friends-or-asymmetric-%E2%80%98trojan-horses%E2%80%99-analysis-of-far-ri [26th of June, 2017].

Petsinis, V. (2015) "The 'New' Far-right in Hungary: A Political Psychologist's Perspective" *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*. 23(2), pp. 272-287. DOI: 10.1080/14782804.2015.1026316.

Pirro, A.L.P. (2013) "Populist Radical Right Parties in Central and Eastern Europe: The Different Context and Issues of the Prophets of the Patria" *Government and Opposition.* 49(4), pp. 599–628. DOI: 10.1017/gov.2013.32.

Political Capital Institute (14th of March, 2014) "The Russian Connection: The Spread of Pro-Russian Policies on the European Far-right", http://www.riskandforecast.com/post/in-depth-analysis/the-russian-connection_803.html [26th of June, 2017].

Polyakova, A.; Shekhovtsov, A. (2016) "On the rise, Europe's fringe right" *World Affairs*. pp.70-80.

Polyakova, A. (2014) "Strange Bedfellows: Putin and Europe's Far-right" *World Affairs Journal,* http: //www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/strange-bedfellows-putin-and-europe%E2%80%99s-far-right [26th of June, 2017].

Pomerantsev, P.; Weiss, M. (2014) "The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money" *The Interpreter,* http: //www.interpretermag.com/the-menace-of-unreality-how-the-kremlin-weaponizes-information-culture-and-money/ [26th of June, 2017].

Popov, V. (2007) "Russia Redux" *New Left Review.* 44(2), pp. 37-52.

Poptcheva, E.M. (2016) "Understanding the EU Rule of Law mechanism" *European Parliamentary Research Service/ Briefing,* http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI(2016)5 73922 [26th of June, 2017].

Putin, V. (27th of February, 2012) "Russia and the changing world" *Russia Today*, https: //www.rt.com/politics/official-word/putin-russia-changing-world-263/ [26th of June, 2017].

Putin, V. (19th of October, 2013) "Zasedanie mezhdunarodnogo diskussionogo kluba 'Valdai' [Meeting of the international discussion club 'Valdai']", *Kremlin.ru*, http: //kremlin.ru/transcripts/19243 [26th of June, 2017].

Ramet, S. P. (1999) "Defining the Radical Right: Values and Behaviors of Organized Intolerance in Post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe" *in* Ramet, S.P. (eds.), *The Radical Right in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989*.University Park: Penn State Press, pp. 14.

Reddaway, P.; Glinsky, D. (2001) *Tragedy of Russia's Reforms: Market Bolshevism Against Democracy.* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

Rettman, A. (27th of November, 2014) "Mediapart: National Front's Kremlin loan is worth €40mi" *Euobserver.com,* https: //euobserver.com/foreign/126693 [26th of June, 2017].

Ria-Novosty.ru (5th of March, 2017) "Лидер итальянской 'Лиги Севера' подпишет в Москве соглашение с ЕР [Italian leader from '*Liga Nord*' is going to sign in Moscow an agreement with ER]" https: //ria.ru/politics/20170305/1489325843.html [26th of June, 2017].

Ria-Novosty.ru (6th of March, 2017a) "ЕР заключила договор о взаимодействии с итальянской партией 'Лига Севера' [ER signed a coordination agreement with the Italian party '*Lega Nord*'], https: //ria.ru/politics/20170306/1489367218.html [26th of June, 2017].

Roginsky, S.; Shortall, S.; (2009) "Civil society as a contested field of meanings" *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. 29, pp. 473-487. Available at: www.emeraldinsight.com/0144-333X.htm [26th of June, 2017].

Russia Today (16th of March, 2014) "Crimean 'referendum at gunpoint' is a myth – intl observers", https: //www.rt.com/news/international-observers-crimea-referendum-190/ [26th of June, 2017].

Rutland, P. (2012) "Still out in the cold? Russia's place in a globalizing world" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 45, pp 343–354.

Rydgren, J. (2005) "Is extreme right-wing populism contagious? Explaining the emergence of a new party family" *European Journal of Political Research*. 44(3), pp. 413–437.

Sakwa, R. (7th of April, 2011) "Surkov: dark prince of the Kremlin" *openDemocracy*, www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/richard-sakwa/surkov-dark-prince-of-kremlin [26th of June, 2017].

Salmin, A. M. (1998) "Russia, Europe, and the New World Order". English translation by M.E. Sharpe, Inc., translated from the Russian text 1999 by *Polis* [*Politicheskie issledovaniia*], "Rossiia, Evropa, i novyi mirovoi poriadok" *Polis*. 1999, 2, pp. 10-31.

Scheppele, K. L. (23rd of June, 2015) "Hungary without Two Thirds". *New York Times blog*, http: //krugman.blogs.nytimes.com [26th of June, 2017].

 Schmitter, P. C.; Karl, T. L. (1991) "What democracy is...and is not" *Journal of Democracy*. 2(3), pp. 103-110.

Servettaz, E. (2014) "Putin's Far-Right Friends in Europe" *The Institute of Modern Russia*, http: //imrussia.org/en/russia-and-the-world/645-putins-far-right-friends-in-europe [26th of June, 2017].

Sharafutdinova, G. (2014) "The Pussy Riot affair and Putin's démarche from sovereign democracy to sovereign morality" *Nationalities Papers*. 42(4), pp. 615–21.

Shekhovtsov, A. (2014) "Pro-Russian extremists observe the illegitimate Crimean "referendum" *Anton Shekhovtsov's blog*, http: //anton-shekhovtsov.blogspot.pt/2014/03/pro-russian-extremists-observe.html [26th of June, 2017].

Shekhovtsov, A. (2014a) "The Kremlin's marriage of convenience with the European far-right*" openDemocracy*, https: //www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/anton-shekhovtsov/kremlin%E2%80%99s-marriage-of-convenience-with-european-far-right.

Shekhovtsov, A. (2014b) "Fake monitors "observe" fake elections in the Donbass" *Anton Shekhovtsov's blog*, http: //anton-shekhovtsov.blogspot.pt/2014/11/fake-monitors-observe-fake-elections-in.html?m=1 [26th of June, 2017].

Shekhovtsov, A. (2014c) "Vladimir Zhirinovsky's contacts with the European far-right in the Yeltsin era" *Anton Shekhovtsov's blog*, https: //anton-shekhovtsov.blogspot.pt/2014/10/vladimir-zhirinovskys-contacts-with.html [26th of June, 2017].

Shekhovtsov, A. (2015) "Far-Right Election Observation Monitors in the Service of the Kremlin's Foreign Policy" *in* Laruelle, M. (eds.) *Eurasianism and the European Far-right Reshaping the Europe–Russia Relationship.* Lanham: Lexington Books. pp.223-245.

Shekhovtsov, A. (2015a) "The Russian mass media and the Western far-right" *Center for European Policy Analysis,* http: //cepa.org/index/?id=eba793e023010aea3cb4338d2a123a74 [26th of June, 2017].

Shekhovtsov, A. (2016) "Moskau und die Rechten, Wie radikale Gruppierungen Unterstützung von Moskau erhalten [Moscow and the Right, How radical groups received support from Moscow]" *Die Politische Meinung*. 53, pp. 99-103.

Shekhovtsov, A. (2017) "Moscow and the far-right in France and Austria From Plan A to Plan B (and back?)" *Eurozine*, http: //www.eurozine.com/from-plan-a-to-plan-b-and-back/ [26th of June, 2017].

Shekhovtsov, A. (2017a) "The Italian far-right Lega Nord builds closer ties with Moscow" *Anton Shekhovtsov's blog*, http: //anton-shekhovtsov.blogspot.pt/2017/03/the-italian-far-right-lega-nord-builds.html [26th of June, 2017]

Shekhovtsov, A. (2017b) "Marine Le Pen Is No Patriot of France" *Anton Shekhovtsov's blog*, https: //anton-shekhovtsov.blogspot.pt/2017/04/marine-le-pen-is-no-patriot-of-france.html#more [26th of June, 2017].

Shevtsova, L. (1999) *Yeltsin's Russia: Myths and Reality*. Moscow: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Shevtsova, L. (2012) "Russia under Putin: Titanic looking for its iceberg? *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 45, pp 209-216.

Smilov, D.; Krastev, I. (2008) "The Rise of Populism in Eastern Europe: Policy Paper" *in* Meseznikov, G.; Gyarfasova O.; Smilov, D. (eds.) *Populist Politics and Liberal Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe*. Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, pp.9.

Smith, C. (2013) "Anti-Islamic Sentiment and Media Framing during the 9/11 Decade" *Journal of Religion and Society*. 15, pp.1-15.

Soral, A. (2011) *Comprendre l'Empire. Demain la gouvernance mondiale ou la revolte des Nations?* Paris: Éditions Blanche.

Sousa, F. (2008) *Dicionário de relações internacionais*. (2nd. eds.). Porto: Afrontamento: CEPESE-Centro de Estudos da População Economia e Sociedade. pp. 139.

Sputniknews.com, (6th of January, 2014)
"L'Europe responsable de la crise en Ukraine (Marine Le Pen)", https: //fr.sputniknews.com/actualite/201406011022854181-leurope-est-responsable-de-la-crise-en-ukraine-marine-le-pen/ [26th of June, 2017].

Sterling-Folker, J. (2006) "The English School Approaches" *in* Sterling-Folker J.(eds.) *Making sense of international relations theory*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp.303-327.

Stivachtis, Y. S. (2010) "Civilizing' the Post-Soviet/Socialist Space: An English School Approach to State Socialization in Europe: The Cases of NATO and the Council of Europe" *Perspectives.* 18(2) pp. 5-32.

Strategic Survey (2004) "Russia and the West: The end of the honeymoon".104 (1), pp.116-129.

Surkov, V. (2010) *Texts 1997–2010*. Moscow: Publishing House 'Europe'.

Szábo, G.; Vona, G. (2010) "A Jobbik Nemzedék [The Jobbik Generation]", a 2010 documentary film. Available at: http: //www.youtube.com/watch?v=R30fmLzFslY [26th of December, 2016].

The Guardian (6th of May, 2012) "Vladimir Putin's return to presidency preceded by violent protests in Moscow", https: //www.theguardian.com/world/2012/may/06/vladimir-putin-presidency-violent-protests-moscow   [26th of June, 2017].

The Guardian (30th of June, 2013) "Russia passes anti-gay-law", https: //www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/30/russia-passes-anti-gay-law [26th of June, 2017].

The Local (10th of December, 2014) "'Those who play war with Putin are idiots': Salvini", https: //www.thelocal.it/20141210/those-who-play-war-with-putin-are-idiots-salvini [26th of June, 2017].

The Telegraph (23rd of October, 2013) "France's FN to team up with other far-right parties for European elections", http: //www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/10400740/Frances-FN-to-team-up-with-other-far-Right-parties-for-European-elections.html [26th of June, 2017].

Tismaneanu, V. (1996) "The Leninist Debris or Waiting for Peron" *East European Politics and Societies*. 10(3), pp.504–35.

Toth, C. (24th of June, 2014) "Full text of Viktor Orban's speech at Buile Tusnad (Tusnáfürdo) of 26 June" *Budapest Beacon*, http: //budapestbeacon.com [26th of June, 2017].

Transparency International, (2012) "Korrupciós kockázatok Magyarországon 2011, [Corruption Risks in Hungary 2011]", https://transparency.hu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Korrupci%C3%B3s-kock%C3%A1zatok-Magyarorsz%C3%A1gon-2011-Nemzeti-Integrit%C3%A1s-Tanulm%C3%A1ny.pdf [26th of June, 2017].

Tsygankov, A. (2016) "Crafting the State-Civilization Vladimir Putin's Turn to Distinct Values" *Problems of Post-Communism*. E-journal 63(3), pp.146-158. http: //dx.doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2015.1113884.

Tucker, R. (1977) *The Inequality of Nations.* New York: Basic Books. pp. 9.

Turchi, M., (19th of February, 2014) "Les reseaux russes de Marine Le Pen" *Mediapart*, https: //www.mediapart.fr/journal/france/190214/les-reseaux-russes-de-marine-le-pen [26th of June, 2017].

Turner, S. (2009) "Russia, China and a multipolar world order: The danger in the undefined" *Asian Perspective*. 33(1) pp. 159-184.

Umland, A. (2006) "Zhirinovsky in the First Russian Republic: A Chronology of Events 1991-1993" *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*. 19(2), pp. 193-241.

Varga, M. (2014) "Hungary's 'anti-capitalist' far-right: Jobbik and the Hungarian Guard" *Nationalities Papers*. 42(5), pp 791-807. DOI: 10.1080/00905992.2014.926316.

Whitefield, S. (2002) "Political Cleavages and Post-Communist Politics" *Annual Review of Political Science*. 5(1), pp.197.

Whitmore, B. (20th of December, 2013) "Vladimir Putin, Conservative Icon, The Russian president is positioning himself as the world's leading defender of traditional values" *The Atlantic Daily,* https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/12/vladimir-putin-conservative-icon/282572/ [26th of June, 2017].

Wight, M. (1977) "Systems of States" *London School of Economics and Political Science*. Leicester: University Press. pp. 33.

Williams, C. (1999) "Problems of Transition and the Rise of the Radical Right" *in* Ramet, S.P. (eds*.) The Radical Right in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989.*University Park: Penn State Press, pp.43-44.

Yedinaya Rossiya.ru (19th of December, 2016) "'Единая Россия' подписала соглашение о сотрудничестве с Австрийской партией свободы [Yedinaya Rossiya signed a cooperation agreement with Austrian Freedom Party]" http: //er.ru/news/149954/ [26th of June, 2017].

Zakaria, F. (1997) *"The rise of illiberal democracy" Foreign Affairs.* 76(6), pp. 22-43.

Zaslove, A. (2004) "The dark side of European politics: unmasking the radical right" *Journal of European Integration.* 26(1), pp. 61–81.

Zaslove, A. (2008) "Exclusion, Community, and a Populist Political Economy: The Radical Right as an Anti-Globalization Movement" *Comparative European Politics.* 6, pp.169-189.

Zsolt, N. (2010) "The Russian ambassador commended the Jobbik" *Jobbik,* http: //nemethzsolt.jobbik.hu/az_orosz_nagyk%C3%B6vet_elismer%C5%91en_nyilatkozott_jo bbikr%C3%B3l [26th of *June*, 2017].