



---

## Europe, America and the Atlanticism Approach in Eastern Europe (2008-2018)

---

Mohsen Sharif Khodaei<sup>1</sup>, Mohammad Reza Dehshiri<sup>2\*</sup>, Mohammad Reza Ghaedi<sup>3</sup>,  
Arsalan Ghorbani Sheikhneshin<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of International Relations, Kish International Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kish Island, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Department of Political Science, School of International Relations, Tehran, Iran

<sup>3</sup>Department of Political Science, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

<sup>4</sup>Department of International Relations, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

---

Received: 10 Feb 2020

; Accepted: 20 Dec 2020

---

### Abstract:

The end of the Cold War, with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, marked a major shift in the international system and a shift in global powers, including the United States and Europe. Britain's and Poland's cooperation with the United States in Iraq's war has deepened the rift between Eastern and Western Europe in the absence of more EU members. The 2008 global financial crisis has slowed the process of reform in the eastern continent. The referendum on Britain's withdrawal from the European Union and the victory of Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election strengthened populist parties and increased the Atlantic approach to Eastern European foreign policy. The research method, the collection of information by library study and research findings, shows that the adoption of an Atlantic-oriented approach to Eastern European countries has caused a split in Europe.

**Keywords:** Atlanticism, Europeanism, Populism, Eastern Europe

---

### Introduction

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the transfer of power in Central and Eastern European countries, and in the early years of the third millennium, they were able to choose the model of the European Union and join European structures. In the first wave of developments in 2004, eight Central and

Eastern European countries, including Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, along with several other countries in the region, all of which were part of the former Soviet Union or its satellites, joined the European Union (Hellmeyer, 2014, p. 16)

The emerging countries expected conver-

---

\*Corresponding Author's Email: m.dehshiri@sir.ac.ir

gence with the European Union and accession to political, economic, and social structures to improve the foundations of their economies and to integrate advanced and developed Western societies. Europe's economic problems caused by the 2008 global financial crisis, putting additional pressure on new members (P. Ramet, 2010, p. 67). Surprised Eastern Europe, While the European Union was unable to prevent the influx of foreign migrants into Europe, differences between politicians in the east and west of the continent became apparent, leading to a different approach in Eastern Europe. (Askari, 2017, p. 80)

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to major changes in the structure of the international system in various dimensions, as well as changes in the approach of actors at home and abroad during the transition period. While the order of the bipolar system collapsed during the Cold War and no new order was replaced, the process of competition between the former traditional powers, led by the United States and emerging powers at the head of the European Union, concepts such as nation-state, interdependence, Unilateralism and multilateralism, globalization, as well as the multiplicity of actors and forces influencing global equations, not only on the mental perceptions of international relations and relations between powers and states. It affected, but also affected the way of conceptualization in the evolution of its structures, processes and processes (Naghizadeh, 2012, p. 51).

The end of the bipolar system is not just a new chapter in the transition from one form of bond to another, but we are witnessing semantic as well as structural stereotypes in the foreign policy approach of world powers such as the United States and the European Union and new narratives of the international system. The main target of this transforma-

tion is the former traditional powers and the emerging powers, and the current process includes other actors and, to a large extent, the countries of Eastern Europe.

This study seeks to analyze the developments in Europe and the United States after the end of the Cold War and to provide an analysis of the impact of the Atlantic approach in Eastern European countries between 2008 and 2008, when important developments in Europe and the world took place. Especially in the Eastern European area, no scientific research has been done in Iran, so it is a new research. The research method is to collect information by documentary-library study and its process is descriptive-analytical and chaos theory has been used as a framework for explaining this research.

## **1. Theoretical and conceptual framework**

### **1-1. The theory of chaos in politics**

Chaos has existed and continues to exist in the politics of every country and in every period, but what is meant is the changes that reflect this chaos in the international system (Rozena, 2005, p. 26). The twentieth century has changed and the international system needs a new formulation in this regard chaos leads to the fact that every small change quickly becomes a major evolutionary reference throughout the collection (Alwani, 2008, p. 8).

While Central and Eastern European countries have seen changes at home, they do not necessarily have a uniform process.

### **1-2. Atlanticism**

"Atlanticism," also known as "Transatlanticism," means the coordination and expansion of US influence in the political, economic, and defense spheres in Europe. (Wikipedia) These include the Bretton Woods, the Marshall Plan, and The North Atlantic Treaty

Organization (NATO), which were set up to serve the United States with Europe after World War II, shared political-cultural heritage and economic and strategic requirements have been inspired by the decline of Europe's position in international politics in the post-World War II era and American hegemony over the western part of the ancient continent (Molaei, 2001).

During this period, the United States expanded its political, economic, and military power over Western Europe and saw it as part of its global foreign policy, seeking to shape Western leadership by forming convergence on both sides of the Atlantic. The Europeans also desperately needed this strategic link for economic reconstruction, the danger of confrontation with the Soviet Union, and overcoming the nationalist tendencies of the European nation-states (Juneidi, 2012, p. 177).

The Atlantic Alliance was a kind of unequal and unbalanced solidarity. In the sense that the United States has a geopolitical sphere Dedicated and reduced the field of maneuvering and effort of the Europeans as allies of their region to the field of economy and trade. However, with the gradual strengthening of European economies in the process of European integration since the 1960s and the transformation of the European Union into a powerful hub of the global economy, Western Europe began new efforts to achieve a position commensurate with its emerging position and pursue egalitarian policies with the United States. Which more or less confronts Atlantic relations with a kind of identity crisis (Molaei, 2001, pp. 137-154).

## 2. Europeanism

A number of European governments, following the end of the Cold War, signed a new round of economic and political convergence,

the Maastricht Treaty, in December 1991, which was approved by the United Nations (UN) on November 1, 1993. "It has become known that this is a fundamental step towards European integration. So far, the Western European Union has been recognized as the defense arm of the European Union, which is supposed to be responsible for coordinating multinational forces. The European Union currently has 28 members. (Britain has not yet officially left the union.) It is the largest regional union in the world. (Wikipedia)

## 3. Disruption of transatlantic relations

The North Atlantic Treaty Organizations (NATO) security mission on both sides of the Atlantic is based on a culture based on the principles of democracy, individual and social freedom, and the rule of law against Soviet threats among European partners. World War II, known as the Marshall Plan, was completed and implemented (Khalouzadeh, 2011, p. 17). But later, US President Donald Trump challenged the basic foundations of Atlanticism with her actions, including the discourse of liberal democracy, which was the key to America's victory in the Cold War and in the NATO Treaty (Schwartz, 2019).

### 1-3. The old Europe and the new Europe

With 9/11, US strategy toward the world has changed and new issues have emerged in the field of international relations (Hassel Bach, 2008). Following this incident, the European Union first supported and supported the United States' approach to Afghanistan and other terrorism-related issues. But as Washington's hidden goals became apparent, despite common views on many issues, serious differences between Europe and the United States over important global issues, including terrorism, the Iraq war, weapons of mass destruction, and others, gradually took a differ-

ent approach. Following the US-led war in Iraq, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld first came up with the idea of "old Europe and new Europe" following the non-cooperation of European countries with Washington in this war. Rumsfeld's aggression against ancient Europe (Germany and France) was a reflection of the controversy among the neo-conservatives of the United States over Europe. According to this view, Europe has not been able to understand the motive for US actions (Daalder, 2003).

In fact, the European Union and the United States agreed on the need to eliminate the Iraqi regime and the fall of Saddam Hussein, as well as the establishment of a stable political system in that country, but disagreed on how to achieve these goals. The European Union (EU) has stated opposition to using force or imposing sanctions on Iraq and emphasizing political and legal solutions, while the United States used military and unilateral means to downplay the role of the United Nations in the developments in Iraq. Regional and international actors emphasized, while the United States strongly opposed the presence of opponents of the war in the reconstruction of the country (Molaei, 2001).

### **2-3. Split in the idea of Atlanticism**

The Marshall Plan, based on the idea of Atlanticism, was formed on the basis of a series of liberal values and US assistance to the bankrupt economies of war-torn Western European countries at the end of World War II. As the day progressed, aid from the United States to Europe gradually declined. The formation of the European Economic Community (ECC) in 1957, known as the Common Market, posed a serious question to Atlanticism that Europe pursued independently of American interests in pursuit of its own interests. In 1966, France decided to with-

draw from the NATO military command structure and supported the independence of its nuclear program. The Bretton Woods financial system collapsed by the United States in the 1970s, ending one of the major post-war institutions seeking to establish order among members on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean (Zanganeh, 2012).

## **4. Disruption of European-American relations**

Trump and his European allies disagree on three main issues: The areas of contention in US-European relations include: NATO and European defense policy, trade war, and unilateralism versus multilateralism.

### **4-1. Nato and European Defense Policy**

During Trump's first two years in the White House, NATO's European allies have been repeatedly criticized and severely reprimanded by the President of the United States for failing to provide members with adequate defense funding. At the NATO summit in Brussels in July 2018, Trump's criticism of European leaders was very harsh. At the meeting, Trump noted the US efforts and NATO's role in Russia's deterrence in Eastern Europe to European leaders and criticized Europe's defense and security policy (Euro news, 2018) Trump's sudden decision to withdraw US troops from Syria, according to Europeans, further destabilizes the Middle East and thus jeopardizes European Security Most NATO forces are present. Syria and Afghanistan have been the main sources of migration to Europe and the transfer of insecurity to the continent in recent years. (Carnegie, 2019)

### **4-2. Transatlantic trade war**

In 2018, Trump strongly promoted his supportive economic program, which led to new

tariffs against steel and aluminum producers in Europe. However, after months of informal consultations following an agreement between Donald Trump and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in July of that year, EU and US trade officials agreed that formal talks would begin to reduce trade tariffs between the two sides. However, differences over issues such as access to the agricultural market remain a major obstacle. The White House officials also decided to impose tariffs on imports of European cars, as the talks have not yet left the agenda they got (DeutscheWelle, 2019).

The Trump administration continues to emphasize the balance of bilateral trade and the repeated threats to impose sanctions on European companies that are currently part of the Russian-German gas pipeline project called "Nord Stream 2," which has further upset the United States. Trade relations with powerful countries have become European.

The \$ 11 billion project extends 1222 kilometers from the Baltic Sea to Russia's gas fields to Germany and routes land routes in Ukraine, Poland and Belarus (ISNA, 2009). As part of the US government's efforts to put pressure on Europe, the White House has also actively blocked European countries from cooperating with Chinese technology companies, including Huawei, which has been accused by the United States of collaborating with the Chinese government. This could lead to further tensions between several European countries and Washington, which is currently cooperating with the Chinese company in the infrastructure of communication networks (IRNA, 2019).

#### **4-3. Differences in unilateralism and multilateralism**

Two years after Trump took office at the White House, there has been a clear rift be-

tween Washington and Europe over the role and approach of multilateralism and unilateralism, and these differences were reflected in US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's statement in Brussels in December 2018. He strongly criticized the use of the term "multilateralism" against "national sovereignty" by union officials, calling its term obsolete (Euro news, 2018). With further disagreements between Washington and Brussels over international agreements, including climate change in Paris, withdrawal from the nuclear deal with Iran (Barjam), as well as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the White House's efforts to withdraw from the WTO (World Trade Organization) and other international institutions, the peak point of This conflict was formed with Europe.

#### **5. The spread of populism in Eastern Europe**

With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communist regimes, many Central and Eastern European countries decided to join the European Union, and a number of them joined the Union in the first wave in 2004. Many observers say it has returned. To Europe is a sign of the victory of democracy and the legitimacy of the rule of law over totalitarianism in these countries, and they belonged to a group of democratic and liberal governments of free societies. The form and nature of free democracy were encountered in this part of the world (Guardian, 2019).

The origins of populism in Eastern Europe are linked to the spread of liberal globalization in the late 1920s and early third millennium. Other countries on a global scale have been justified and implemented by liberal parties within the European Union and the European Union. The global economic crisis of 2008 was even more pronounced in Europe, affecting the growth and development

of Eastern European societies. The consequences of this have led to widespread protests and street protests in some European societies. Many deprived sections of Eastern societies have felt that their governments do not want to improve their situation, and that the traditional pro-neo-liberal economy party only promises empty promises before anything else. Elections are enough to deceive the people. This frustrated the deprived and middle strata of society compared to traditional parties and statesmen who had neglected to improve their living conditions, and as a result, people turned to more extreme right-wing and populist parties (Hosseinizadeh et al., 2019, p. 102).

On the other hand, the trend of expanding migration to Europe in the years leading up to 2015, especially in the south and center of Europe, concerns about unemployment in, due to the presence of refugees in those countries, the difference between various forms of such communities, including some cultural norms of Muslim immigrants. In contrast to the values in the host countries, it was confronted with xenophobia and Islamophobia by extreme right-wing and populist parties in Eastern Europe (Dehshiri, Ghasemi, 2017, p. 63).

### **6. Atlanticism in Eastern Europe**

Populism is the result of crises, and at the same time as the economic crisis, then the refugee crisis and the identity crisis, far-right parties in Eastern Europe have been able to consolidate their position in the power structure with different populist tendencies among governments in the region.

Populist parties in Central and Eastern Europe place great emphasis on preserving national identity and strongly oppose the globalization and diminishing approach of their societies. The populist parties see the presence of foreign immigrants, especially Islam-

ists in Eastern Europe, as a serious threat to security and job opportunities. The populist party in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic inherits a legacy of communist and socialist ideas that are attributed to authoritarian political ideas.

An example of this approach can be seen, especially in the treatment of immigrants by populist parties in their victory and coming to power between 2010 and 2018 in Central and Eastern European countries. By taking the initiative and taking advantage of the conditions of the society, they magnified the inefficiency and corruption of the traditional rulers and parties, and by challenging their performance, they were able to win the elections and establish their position in the power structure.

Events such as the referendum on Britain's exit (Brexit) from the European Union and Donald Trump's victory in the 2016 US presidential election as accelerating factors and foreign variables influenced by the butterfly effect of chaos theory on the intensification and spread of populism among Eastern European Countries. Trump's victory has been an inspiration to populist parties and far-right movements in Europe, especially in the east of the continent.

The European Union has decided to expand its alliance with the Eastern Partnership countries in order to prevent possible Russian influence in the region at the end of the Cold War. But the outbreak of ethnic and religious crises in the Balkans, which coincided with the break-up of Yugoslavia, has had a significant impact on serious problems in the European Union. If the US intervention on the other side of the Atlantic had not been to contain the crisis, its scope might have spread to other countries in the region (Blobaum, 2015).

The participation of some Eastern European governments, including Poland, in the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, along with the United States, has led to divisions among union members. Unlike previous presidents, new Central and Eastern European leaders have sought to bring their foreign policy approach closer to that of Washington, and have even competed with each other for this purpose. Donald Trump's presence at the White House is at its peak in this regard, the following factors have played a role in its acceleration and expansion:

1. The frustration of Eastern European countries with the discriminatory approach of new and old members of the union by the powerful European leaders in Brussels.
2. Distrust of the Union's financial and economic policies, especially the European currency (Euro), which has played a significant role in exacerbating the crisis in some Central European countries.
3. The failure of the European Union to form a common and democratic identity based on a series of liberal values among the peoples of Eastern Europe.
4. Economic inequality between Eastern and Western European countries, with the presentation of the "two-speed Europe" project by the powerful countries of the Union against the new members in the eastern part of the continent.
5. The unbalanced expansion of the union, with the hasty acceptance of new members from countries abandoned by the former communist system, without which most of them have acquired the necessary components to join the union and become members of the union as necessary and politically expedient.
6. The impact of the 2008 financial and global crisis on the European economy, including among the countries of the Eastern Continent, which slowed down the process of reform and development in those countries.
7. The wave of illegal immigration from the Middle East and North Africa to the countries of southern and central Europe, which led to Brussels' quota plan for members, has drawn opposition from Eastern European heads of state, with Hungary even suing the European Court.
8. The agreement of some Central and Eastern European countries with the United States on the deployment of missile defense systems in those countries, including Poland and Romania, and Warsaw's proposal for a permanent US military presence in Poland called "Fort Trump" and the signing of a defense agreement between the United States and Hungary, Facilitating the deployment of US forces on that country's soil are examples that have been carried out without coordination with Brussels and have caused discord. (Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, 2019).
9. Emphasis on the rule of law and the non-interference of governments in judicial affairs by Brussels, which has led to disagreements between Poland, Hungary

and the Czech Republic with the European Union.

10. The opposition of the governments of Eastern Europe to the application of strict policies and economic austerity by Brussels, which has led to a reaction from those countries.

### Conclusion

With the events of September 11, 2001, the United States' strategy toward the world has changed dramatically, and a new perspective on international relations has emerged. American neoconservatives have been able to advance their central policies, such as unilateralism, pre-emptive warfare, the change of authoritarian and undemocratic regimes, using the international and horrific atmosphere created by this terrorist incident in the world, and an exceptional opportunity to expand hegemony. And provide American unilateralism.

Following the US military invasion of Iraq in 2003, the idea of an "old Europe and a new Europe" was put forward by the White House, and some European states in the West and East of the continent, which were more

in line with US positions, supported Washington.

With Trump in the White House, relations on both sides of the Atlantic have been severely strained. Trump is the first president of the United States since World War II to seriously question and criticize liberal order and its values. Trump and his European allies have deep disagreements over three key issues, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the trade war and the protection of American products, as well as the confrontation between unilateralism and a multilateralism approaches.

On the other hand, populist parties and right currents in Central and Eastern Europe have openly taken a different stance against discrimination and discrimination policies in the face of phenomena such as globalization, migration, single currency, unrestricted free trade and the two-speed European approach. And the inequality that has led to public distrust in Eastern Europe has been widely criticized. Phenomena that have played a role in pursuing and adopting an Atlantic approach to the foreign policy of Eastern European governments and dividing in the Union.

پژوهشگاه علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرهنگی  
پرتال جامع علوم انسانی

## References

- Alwani, Seyed Mehdi and Danaeifard, Hossein, (2008). "Decision Making from the Perspective of Chaos Theory", *Periodical Development*, Volume 5, Number (21)
- Askari, Hassan, (2017). "Right-wing populists, heels Achilles for the European Union", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Journal of Events and Analysis*, No. 304
- Blobaum, Robert, (2015). **Atlanticism in Vice grade**, United States, Academic Research in West Virginia University
- Brookings institution**, (2004). October 24, Speech of George W. Bush. US President
- Daalder, Ivo H., (2003). "The End of Atlanticism", *Survival*, vol. 45, No. 2, PP. 147-166. **The international institute for strategic studies**
- Dehshiri, Mohammad Reza, and Ghasemi Ruhlollah, (2017). "Extreme Right Uprising and Its Impact on the Future of Muslims in Europe", Tehran, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **Center for International Education and Research**
- Hellmeyer, Monika, (2014). "The impact of the central and eastern European EU member states on The EU's foreign Policy (2004-2013)", **The London school of economics and Political Science**
- Hosseinizadeh and et al., (2018). "Right Polonius in Western Europe and the United States and the Forms of its Formation", **Quarterly Journal of International Policy Approaches**, Volume 10, Number 511
- How liberalism became, (2019). "The god that failed in Eastern Europe", **The Guardian**, 24 October
- Juneidi, Reza, (2012). "European Union Global Governance", **Tehran, European Book 11**, Abrar Moaser
- Khalouzadeh, Saeed, (2011). **European Union**, Tehran, Samt Publications
- McFaul, and Stoner, (2010). **After the Collapse of Communism**, UK, Cambridge University Press
- Molaei, Ebadullah, (2001). "The Perspective of European-American Relations in the World after 9/11", Vol. 15, No. (4), PP. 137-154, **Foreign Policy Quarterly**
- NATO Summit in Brussels, (2018). Euro news, June 4, 2018
- P. Ramet, Sabrina, (2010). **Center and southeast European**, UK, Cambridge University Press
- Rozena, James, (2005). "Chaos in World Politics", Translated by Alireza Tayeb, Tehran, Roozaneh Publications
- Schwartz, Madlin, (2019). "The End of Athleticism": Has Trump Killed the Ideology That Won the Cold War?", *United Kingdom, Guardian*
- Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, (2019). "NATO Challenges on the Threshold of Seventy Years", December 27th
- Unilaterally and multilaterally**, (2018). A speech of Pompeo, foreign secretary of the United State in Brussels, December 4, 2018, **Euro news**
- US Huawei Sanctions Plan, (2019). Fifteen, May 2019, **IRNA**
- US-Europe, Trade War**, (2019). February 7, **Deutsche welle**
- Wikipedia, (2009). **Central and Eastern Europe**
- Zanganeh, Hamid, (2012). "European Union Association", Tehran, Book of Europe, Abrar Moaser