



**“CAROL I” NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE**

PROCEEDINGS

The 17th International Scientific Conference “STRATEGIES XXI”

STRATEGIC CHANGES IN SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

April 15-16, 2021

Scientific Editors:

Colonel Professor Daniel GHIBA, PhD

Colonel Professor Lucian POPESCU, PhD

Colonel Associate Professor Cosmin OLARIU, PhD

Major Associate Professor Adi MUSTAȚĂ, PhD



VOLUME XVII



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April 15-16, 2021
Bucharest, Romania

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FOREWORD'

Strategies XXI has reached its 17th edition in 2021. Over the years, we have seen topics such as the economic crisis, jihadist terrorism, the wave of immigration or Russia's intervention in Crimea temporarily take over the international public consciousness. In the ever changing flow of events what remained constant has been our determination to serve as an international forum for analysis and debate of major international relations, security, and defense challenges.

The present volume hosts the papers presented in the conference organized on 15-16th of April by the Security and Defence Faculty of "Carol" I National Defence University in Bucharest. Held in a virtual format, the Conference brought together 100+ participants from 9 countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and Turkey) who throughout the 2 days of the event delivered keynote speeches or presented papers. This year we were honoured to have among us Mr. Carol Teodor Peterfi (Nobel Prize Laureate with the OPCW) and Mr. Dirk Dubois (Head of the European Security and Defence College).

COVID-19 has certainly proved to be a major disruptor on almost all domains of human existence and security and defence was no exception. In fact, one could argue that beyond the sanitary crisis, security concerns in the broadest sense of the term, were most prominent. This seemed also to be reflected by the intensity of discussions held during the Conference.

The 43 papers that are published in the Volume cover the following broad topics:

- Theoretical Aspects of Security and International Relations
- Processes and Phenomena of Globalization
- Defence Studies
- Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention
- NATO and EU Policies and Strategies. Intelligence
- Military History, Geopolitics and Geostrategy
- Humanitarian International Law
- Public and Intercultural Communication and Social Security
- Information Systems and Cyber Security

- Management and Leadership in Security and Defence
- Education Sciences and National Security

The diversity of approaches was brought to a single denominator by the request from the scientific committee that every paper deal with an important or potentially important driver of change in the international relations and security domains. Thus, conceptual debates were complemented by papers on diverse subjects such as military history, cybersecurity, digital diplomacy, disinformation, artificial intelligence – just to name a few – to create a multidisciplinary environment in which similar topics are analyzed from as many viewpoints as possible.

This year's Strategies XXI marked some important firsts that are meant to consolidate the Conference's status as one of the most important security and defence event in Central and Eastern Europe. First, we have increased the standards for the double-blind peer-reviewing process and in the same time we have tripled the pool of international experts involved in the process. Second, we have moved to editing the references of the papers according to the Chicago Manual of Style and implemented Digital Object Identifiers for better compatibility with the international flux of knowledge. Third, we have piloted the virtual format which proved to be a success and, from next year on, the Conference will take place in a hybrid format.

This year's Conference would not have been possible without the support of staff from the Faculty of Security and Defence, the Advanced Distributed Learning Department, and the University's Publishing House. Thank you!

To all keynote speakers, authors and moderators who participated in the event we hope it was an enjoyable and useful experience and please join our ranks one again next year!

The Editors

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THE KUHNIAN NOTION OF PARADIGM IN THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEBATE

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Abstract

The paper reviews some of the major IR scholars and how they view the applicability of Kuhn's notion of paradigm in the case of the third IR debate. The starting point is Laipd's idea of positivism versus post-positivism. I argue that pessimism and optimism are interrelated in the debate. Also, for the future, if the IR scientific community wants to contribute to real problem solution, it should not restrict to the narrow notion of Kuhn's paradigm. However, there should be some loose sense of a paradigm as a cumulation of lessons learned. The grand theorizing or bridge-building should be replaced by the idea of lots of "doors" or many mediators linking only certain issues in different approaches. If there is only one bridge, this will not adequately reflect the emerging stage of proliferation of pluralism in the field. The pragmatic tendency is towards eclecticism of the approaches. Elements are interrelated and the border between positivism and relativism is moving.

Keywords: Kuhn; paradigm; debates in International Relations.

INTRODUCTION

I approach this topic as a review of some of the major IR scholars and their contribution to the intellectual history of the discipline. I refrain from arguing whether this is the current debate. However, still it continues to be relevant at the moment.² The issue, taken into consideration, is how they view the applicability of Kuhn's notion of paradigm in the case of the third IR debate. Although, as Goldmann mentions³, there is no clear agreement about the challenger of the mainstream in the debate, my paper takes Laipd's idea of positivism versus post-positivism as a starting point. The debate is generally seen as an opposition between the mainstream (neorealism and neoliberalism) with their rational choice methodology, and relativism or the proliferation of theory-liberating approaches, especially after the end of the Cold war. However, neorealism seems to have received more attacks than neoliberalism⁴. Disagreements in the field are further encouraged because IR, by nature involves political, and consequently power implications.

I argue that pessimism and optimism are interrelated in the debate. Also, for the future, if the IR scientific community wants to contribute to real problem solution, it should not restrict to the narrow notion of Kuhn's paradigm. However, there should be some loose sense of a paradigm as a cumulation of lessons learned, as mentioned by Dogan. This loose sense of paradigm prevents from the extreme version of relativism seen as a cacophony of voices. In Kuhnian language, the current IR

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² Some literature argues that there is a Fourth and even a Fifth Debate. Examples of literature arguing about the Fourth Debate include the following books: Robert Jackson, Georg Sorensen, Jorgen Moller-Introduction to International Relations, Theories and Approaches, Seventh edition, Oxford University Press, UK, 2019 and Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith-International Relations Theories, Discipline and Diversity, Third edition, Oxford University Press, UK, 2013. Examples of literature arguing about a Fifth Debate include: Emilian Kavalski, "The Fifth Debate and the Emergence of Complex International Relations Theory: Notes on the Application of Complexity Theory to the Study of International Life", Pages 435-454, Published online: 04 Sep 2007, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Volume 20, 2007-Issue 3 and Gavin Stewart, "Science Bound? Transcending the Fourth 'Great Debate' in International Relations", Apr.3 2014, <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/04/03/science-bound-transcending-the-fourth-great-debate-in-international-relations/>.

³ See ch.16 in Goodin and Klingemann, pp.401-427.

⁴ It is interesting that realism or modifications of realism have participated in all of the debates. This makes me wonder whether realism is the challenged or the constant challenger.

stage is a transition to maturity where maturity is related to the ideal post-paradigm stage with no debates.

The debate is further complicated by internal disagreements within the camps and by the emerging tendency, especially within the mainstream, to regard constructivism as a mediator or the new middle ground in the debate. However, the whole idea about the construction of a bridge between positivism and post-positivism is questionable when it comes to problem solutions for concrete cases. Rather, this grand theorizing or bridge-building should be replaced by the idea of lots of “doors” or many mediators linking only certain issues in different approaches.

My paper is divided in two parts. The first starts with the differences between natural and social sciences to explain why a fixed notion of paradigm is not possible in social sciences. However, the first part focuses on Kuhn’s two meanings of paradigm and on the current modifications offered by Dogan and Lichbach. The second part’s task is to show how different IR scholars interpret the debate starting from, but without referring to a particular meaning of the Kuhn’s paradigm. The interpretations are divided into optimistic and pessimistic in their view of the future of the debate. May be Kuhn is not so controversial, as some accuse him, because he incorporates positivism and relativism as complementing tendencies. His notion of paradigm may still lead the debate to better understanding, at least till more relevant concepts appear.

My paper may seem to focus more on the interpretation of scholars within the positivist camp but this is because the post-positivist camp is still finding its place or is still being marginalized in the field.

METHODOLOGY-KUHN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Natural Sciences Versus Social Sciences

History of science chronicles the ups and downs of scientific development as a “development-by-accumulation“ (Kuhn 1970, 2). It is integral in its own time and its errors lead to the next stage of development. At any time, there is a scientific community, which strives for maximum coherence and relation to nature or reality. Thus, in any given field, experience teaches and produces the evolution of knowledge.

Anomalies change the existing scientific tradition and lead to new assumptions. This is a process of “shifts of professional commitments”, known as scientific revolutions and they are “the tradition-shattering complements to the tradition-bound activity of normal science” (Kuhn 1970,6). However, the question of importance is whether scientific revolutions in natural sciences are regulated by the same rules as those in social sciences. There are some **differences between natural and social sciences**. The main differences, related to the structure, are that in social sciences the process is slow, changes are not so abrupt, it is sometimes difficult to see changes in the short-range period, there is complementarity through competition. All these imply debate. Debate leads to scientific progress, optimism about the development of knowledge. The result is a conceptual transformation.

Another difference is the idea of progress. In natural science Darwinism influences the interpretation of evolution as progress. However, in social sciences evolution may not have a goal or may not lead to progress. Also, there is circularity in the sense that the questions become part of a theory and thus they are subjected to the same scrutiny when applied to theories in other fields. The circularity is between the “context of discovery” and “ the context of justification” (Kuhn 1970,9).

Kuhn’s Shift from Pessimism to Optimism or the Relativism of Applicable Knowledge

Another characteristics of paradigms, applied to social science, is the shift from pessimism to optimism. Pessimism stems from doubts about scientific progress in the pre-paradigm period because of the multiplicity of competing schools (Kuhn 1970, 163). Optimism stems from the progress in the mature scientific community, working from a single paradigm, even if the contribution is only to an esoteric group. Optimism prevails in the notion that the reception of a common paradigm frees the scientific community from the need to constantly re-examine its first principles and the members of the

community can concentrate upon most esoteric (or specialized) questions of analysis. Relativism stems from the fact that the problem with progress needs a more “refined” (Kuhn 1970, 170) solution. This means that changes in paradigms may not necessarily lead the scientific community closer to the truth.

Kuhn’s Notion of Paradigm

In the postscript added in the second edition of his book, Kuhn clarifies the notion of paradigm. He distinguishes two kinds of paradigms or in other words elaborates and expands the original meaning. The two meanings are closely related to each other and the demarcation between them is not clear. The different interpretations of paradigm emphasize either on the one or the other meaning of paradigm and generally increase the ambiguity of the whole notion. However, Kuhn tries to make the separation between the two meanings relatively clear and his idea is that the first meaning is more narrow, while the second is broader and not confined to scientific community. The difficulty comes from the fact that the differences can be seen only when the two meanings are observed in relation to each other. This resembles the third IR debate in the fact that both sides of the debate should be treated as complementing rather than as negating each other.

The first meaning of paradigm is sociological and related to scientific community. The paradigm is described as a disciplinary matrix (Kuhn 1970, 182) with four components, each of which serves a specific function. The first component consists of symbolic generalizations that provide definitions for the symbols. The second component consists of beliefs in particular models that provide the preferred analogies. The third component consists of values, usually concerning predictions. The fourth element, which is considered the most important, consists of exemplars of concrete problem solutions.

The second meaning of paradigm seems to elaborate on the fourth component of the first meaning and describes paradigms as shared examples. It relates theory to practice or how practice changes theory. Theory is a tool used for the start of analysis of a problem. Theory is a form of “tacit knowledge” (Kuhn 1970, 191⁵), learned by doing science or applying science, rather than by acquiring rules a priori. Knowledge becomes embedded in shared exemplars or shared examples of situations. However, the interpretation of situations differs because of the different individual mental processes. Thus generalizations are relative. Misinterpretation of the same terms or concepts leads to miscommunication or partial communication. This is called incommensurability. Incommensurability prevents the creation of common basis of comparison in respect to the quality of a theory. However, the problem of incommensurability may be approached by the creation of new language. Furthermore, for real understanding to take place, there is a need for a “conversion experience” (Kuhn 1970, 204), called gestalt switch or reprogramming of the mind. In conclusion, the second meaning is deeper and philosophical, the paradigm is a model or exemplar or an ideal that serves as a pattern⁶.

The relation between the two meanings is provided by the community structure. The explanation of the relation starts with focus on the behaviour of the community’s members. The implication is that the ablest scientists, who produce knowledge, belong to several groups simultaneously. The community structure develops in two phases. The pre-paradigm period is characterized by competition for domination between the schools. The second phase or post-paradigm period is characterized by reduction of the number of schools and concentration on esoteric, puzzle-solving work. For the second phase to exist, the first must have taken place because the second phase needs the rules established in the previous phase. In the second phase, the paradigm governs a group of practitioners. The movement to the esoteric stage is called transition to maturity. Applied to science, puzzle-solving ability proves equivocal. Thus it is difficult to say who stands where. As earlier and recent theories are difficult to distinguish, there is no absolute truth but relativism. Thus mixed models are created where “do” approximates “ought”. However, Kuhn is not suggesting an extreme version of relativism with no rules.

⁵ This has been cited by Kuhn from Polanyi.

⁶ *In Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge...*, Kuhn clarifies that he has used history and social-psychology as a basis for the philosophical conclusions (Kuhn 1970, 277).

RESULTS-DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF KUHN'S PARADIGM

The different interpretations further complicate the actual applicability of the notion to the IR theoretical debate, because they do not specify whether their starting point is the first or the second meaning. Terence Ball's interpretation points that the concept of paradigm is an old concept that derives from the Greek *paradeigma* as a pattern or exemplar (Ball 1976, 155 footnote). Diana Crane interprets Kuhn more broadly and, elaborating on him, arrives at the idea of invisible college (Crane 1972, 35) as a communication network that links groups of collaborators. This network is founded in the citations used by scholars. Scientific theories are "mental sets" (Crane 1972, 78) influencing perception. She regards scientific communities as open to the process of cross-fertilization⁷. Shared commitment for the solution of a problem creates orientation paradigms. Dietze accepts the paradigms in a similar way, as "conceptual spectacles" for the scientist (Dietze 2001, 5). However, he stresses more on Kuhn's relativism. Nickles' interpretation is broad because he accepts paradigms as puzzle-solving practices, guided by the exemplary problem solutions (Nickles 2003, 142). He finds a circular relation, which he calls a dilemma, between tradition and innovation. So, according to him Kuhn defines mature science in a circular manner and the difficulty arises because exemplars work only for a trained community of experts.

Some of the most prominent critiques of Kuhn give another meaning to the paradigm. Popper's narrow use of the word indicates a research programme, considered satisfactory by some scientists, to the point that they demand its general acceptance (Popper 1970, 55⁸). Masterman's use indicates that paradigm has to be a concrete picture (Masterman 1970, 76), Lakatos focuses on research programmes, consisting of methodological rules (Lakatos 1970, 179) and Feyerabend focuses on puzzle-solving.

The Transformed Notion of Paradigm

Dogan and Lichbach elaborate on the broader meaning of Kuhn's paradigm⁹. Their ideas are more relevant to the contemporary IR debate and could be considered as a useful modification on Kuhn. Dogan elaborates on the idea that frontiers, generally in Political science, are moving and need not be defined. Heterogeneity is stimulated through exchanges between specialized sub-fields. IR is viewed as a sub-discipline of Political science¹⁰. Specialization, fragmentation and hybridization are the main features of Political science. What Dogan explains as two kinds of specialization, resembles in a way the two meanings of paradigm in Kuhn. The first kind of specialization is within a discipline and is a prerequisite for the second, which takes place at the intersection of mono-disciplinary fields (Dogan 1989, 98). The hybrid fields prove Kuhn's relativity idea because it is not clear who stands where. However, the modification is that the most fruitful work takes place not along disciplinary boundaries but between sectors. In other words the focus is on hybridization rather than interdisciplinarity. Progress proceeds at the intersection of fragmentation into special fields, and specialization by hybridization. This intersection is a recent phenomenon in Political science.

Dogan rejects the use of the word paradigm, as a grand theory in social sciences, because of the lack of theoretical consensus in any discipline. Kuhn would answer to this, that the lack of consensus and confrontation is a sign of the transition to maturation and part of the pre-paradigm period. Dogan argues that there are no paradigms as long as each discipline is fragmented and as long as theories do not reflect the changes in reality. However, Dogan acknowledges that there is "some loose sense of Kuhn's paradigm that fits in social sciences" (Dogan 1989, 106) and this is the existence of a cumulative process of lessons learned. In this sense, grand theories, as the middle-range rational choice, have to be replaced by interdisciplinary methods.

Lichbach would agree with Dogan on the issue that grand or hegemonic theories should be abandoned. He accepts the idea of methodological synthesis of positivism and interpretivism (Lichbach 2003 115). According to him the three research communities or traditions now, are

⁷ Kuhn is an example of this process because he starts his career as a physicist and then focuses on the history of science.

⁸ For Popper, Masterman, Lakatos and Feyerabend I refer to *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*

⁹ A. Chalmers also views Kuhn's paradigms broadly, as structures or frameworks.

¹⁰ According to the appendix: (Dogan 1998, 36) Keohane, Waltz, Holsti and Krasner are the most frequently referenced authors in IR.

rationalists, culturalists and structuralists. Each of them specializes but generally the research programmes thicken over time. The synthesis would be a product of a post-paradigmatic world with no debates. Thus the modification of Lichbach on Kuhn is that the word paradigm exists only when there are debates between the traditions. However, he also agrees that there is a sense of paradigm as a framework, as creating a problem-centered, complementary synergy between the traditions, with respect to a single case. Thus the paradigm creates one understanding of a case and prevents the cacophony of voices. Synthesis is “tripartite coalition” (Lichbach 2003, 131) between modest traditions, acknowledging the relativism of knowledge and facilitating debates. Progress happens when the right tools are applied to the given situation. Thus, the Kuhnian exemplars are used to solve problems (Lichbach 2003, 180). Models become mediators between theories and data. This is close to Kuhn’s paradigm as a collection of models applied to specific problems.¹¹

Nested models synthesize different paradigms. Modelling is an endless trial and error process. Theory criteria should stand between positivism and relativism (Lichbach 2003, 199). The criteria are neither positivistic, nor idealistic but pragmatic because they account for reality¹².

KUHN AND THE THIRD IR DEBATE

General Overview

The first debate happens during the 1920s-30s between idealism and realism. The second debate in the 1950s-60s is about history versus science and the third debate, starting around the 1980s is generally considered to be between positivism and post-positivism¹³. The IR scholars stand differently on the positivism-relativism scale and their actual position is debatable. The debate is provoked by the positivism’s or behaviorism’s failure to reach the absolute objective truth without self-criticism. Many authors writing about the debate refer to Lapid who presents the debate as positivism versus post-positivism or reflexivity. This pessimism-optimism shift becomes a feature of the third debate and post-positivism.

At the same time the debate is also inter-paradigmatic because paradigms evaluate each other. This kind of reflexivity creates a different from the Kuhnian relativism, because in this case the lack of consensus may lead to progress, a sign of maturation. However, pluralism should also be reflective in order to result in communication rather than cacophony of voices.

The Pessimists

The more narrow interpretation of the debate is illustrated by Waltz’s focus on positivism. Waltz is pessimistic because of his realistic assumptions. According to him greater interdependence means more conflict. Thus he sees the debate as a battle of paradigms where problem-solving is discouraged because the sides of the debate talk different languages (Waltz 1998, 372). In fact he admits that he has written the three images¹⁴ because he wanted to facilitate this communication or create the structure for communication across the levels of analysis.

However, his biography proves that diversity in the field exists and that IR imports from other disciplines. He has majored in maths and economic and then turned to political philosophy. Then it is not surprising that he remains influenced by natural sciences. He argues that theory is an instrument (Waltz 1998, 381) and that history, interpretation, philosophy are not a theory but rather an application of it, embedded in society and politics. In other words structural realism is seen as the only theory and the rest as its application. According to him (Waltz 1990), neorealism is the paradigm in IR and this paradigm uses the logic of causality and behaviorism, which are typical for the second IR debate.

¹¹ Lichbach uses the terms research communities, traditions, languages, schools, approaches, paradigms, programs, and frameworks interchangeably.

¹² This very much resembles what Wendt calls scientific realism (appears later in my essay).

¹³ However, as Lapid mentions in the footnote on page 238 of his article, there are variations in the meaning of the debate. For example Keohane restricts its scope as a debate between neorealism and its challengers, while Holsti and Biersteker focus more broadly on the debate within the multi-paradigmatic IR discipline. Still others (mainly constructivists) consider its main feature the knowledge versus power dimension or the opposition of vested interests.

¹⁴ “Man, the State, and War”, Columbia Univ. Press, 1959, or the individual, state and system level.

Skocpol considers interrelations but in a sociological perspective. Sociology is relatively free of metatheory or the desire for classification (Skocpol 1987, 10). Instead the focus is on problem-solution and comparative history. Skocpol argues that metatheories run the risk of creating artificial ideal, typical categorizations that obscure the genuine research tendencies. She relates social and political processes and is pessimistic about any grand-theories. In Kuhnian language, may be, she proves the fact that IR still import from other disciplines and sociology is not a discipline that encourages any fixed paradigms.

The Optimists

Contrary to Waltz, Alker and Biersteker are optimistic and see the debate and knowledge cumulation from an archeological perspective. Their idea is that positivism is still alive mainly in the “parochial and myopic” (Alker, Biersteker 1984, 121) American approach to the discipline. They use a comparative examination of reading-lists in universities to prove this thesis. They believe in synthetic dialectics¹⁵ and the study of historical contexts. Approaches, however, can reach synthesis only if debates involve more tact as opposed to being hegemonic. Thus IR is seen as a global “interdiscipline”¹⁶ (Alker, Biersteker 1984, 122), composed of many approaches at any time and setting. The synthesis is possible under the form of dialectical triad (p.124), which consists of traditional approaches (realism and idealism), dialectical approaches (nationalism and proletarian internationalism) and behavioural approaches (neo-realism and liberal internationalism). Each approach produces paradigm-like research programs and interdisciplinary debates between opposing approaches can generate knowledge. The ambition is a perfect pluralism of traditions. Their suggestion for “international savoir faire” (Alker, Biersteker 1984, 137) resembles Lickbach’s idea for moderate scientific approaches. The conclusion is that humility and openness in the development of a theory facilitate adaptation.

Holsti is optimistic and views the debate more broadly. In response to Lapid’s essay, Holsti’s main concern is about the lack of standards in theoretical pluralism. Thus the main question for scientists becomes how to move from self-reflection, as mirror-image, to self-reflexiveness or self-criticism as a standard for the debate. Theoretical pluralism expresses the “diverging intellectual roots” (Holsti 1989, 256) of the discipline. However, any going to extremes, as either establishment of a hegemonic theory or abandonment of any basis, should be avoided.

According to him, the Kuhnian ideas “fit poorly” (Holsti 1989, 255) in the current discipline transition¹⁷. Holsti explains intellectual progress as a slow-moving process, where the old and new explanatory systems are interconnected. Thus the focus is not on the replacement of paradigms. This is the kind of modification on Kuhn, also mentioned by Lichbach, seeing paradigms as patterns. The reason is that the anomalies between reality and theory in social sciences are not so harsh as in natural sciences. Social sciences are not replaced but modified because some essential truths of the explanatory system remain. He suggests that theoretical innovation cannot be separated from data and may be this data represents for him the essential truth.¹⁸

A consensus is a prerequisite for the developing of a theory. Up to the third debate the consensus has been provided by the classical IR tradition. Now the challenge to this tradition is more normative rather than scientific. Thus paradigms reflect normative positions and value preference and this makes the debate more difficult (Holsti 1985, 132). Currently, Holsti thinks that the States system paradigm is challenged by the other two paradigms: the Global society paradigm (known as English school) and the Neo-Marxist Paradigm (mostly Gramscian school)¹⁹.

Wendt is generally an optimist and is considered as the middle -ground by positivists. His theory is thick because he combines ideas, structure, agency and culture. His ontology is idealistic

¹⁵ This notion of dialectics resembles the Hegelian unity of opposites, or the critical method of synthesis produced by thesis and antithesis.

¹⁶ As the authors admit, this term is borrowed from Dougherty and Pfalzgraff, 1981.

¹⁷ However, in a footnote on page 14 in *The Dividing Discipline*, Holsti admits that Kuhn’s paradigms have a broad meaning, being not only rooted in “rationally analyzable differences, but in trans-rational perceptions or *gestalts*” as well.

¹⁸ He enumerates several sources for theoretical innovation: events, facts, other theories, values and meta-theoretical debates.

¹⁹ The explanation in brackets is mine, not Holsti’s.

and that is where the main difference with positivism comes. According to him, the contemporary IR discourse is influenced by two structural theories, neo-realism and world-system theory, which both he criticizes from a sociologist perspective (Wendt 1987, 335). As a result he suggests the need for a scientific realism²⁰ as the “new orthodoxy” in the philosophy of natural science, usually associated with the Minnesota Center for the Philosophy of Science (Wendt 1987, 336, footnote 4). In Kuhn’s language may be this scientific realism forms for Wendt the loose paradigm for the future debate.

Wendt sees the debate as between empiricists (mainly hard-core realists) and scientific realists. His main critique of empiricists (neo-realists) is that the system should not be treated as given and unproblematic. In other words he argues that empiricists subordinate ontology to epistemology and what exists becomes a function of what can be known experimentally. By contrast, scientific realists agree with abductive²¹ inference or retrodution, or the idea of adapting the assumptions to real world changes. Scientific realism is necessary for making scientific practices rationally intelligible and also for maturation of science. Wendt further suggests the need for a structuration theory as an analytical tool for elaboration on structure because social structures differ from natural structures (Wendt 1987, 355). This new tool implies the mutual construction of agents and structure.

Ferguson and Little are optimistic and consider paradigmaticism as formulating and applying valid evidence procedures. Diversity, especially after the end of the Cold war, is not a sign of fragmentation in the field but rather increases the strength of the field. This diversity, or adoption of eclectic vision encourages dialogue and self-reflection. From Kuhn’s perspective IR are operating in a pre-paradigmatic phase because of the theoretical conflicts²². The problem is in the different interpretation of paradigms. While positivists tend to broaden the theoretical base and assume that paradigms can co-exist and compete, post-positivists assume that paradigms are the main way for pointing at differences and “inherently incommensurable ways of looking at the world“. After all, there is optimism because diversity means diversification, common ground as thickening of the approaches, and overlaps between the approaches that prevent the possibility of a zero-sum game as a final outcome.

Rosenau is also optimistic in his view of paradigm proliferation. He argues that change is pervasive and coexists with continuity. For change to be adequately represented in theories, there is a need for new models of cooperation. In this sense he appreciates the contribution of both Keohane and Oye as a modification of neo-realism²³. According to Rosenau “grandiose” theories have to be evaluated for their sensitivity to change (Rosenau 1986, 856). He suggests that the focus should be not on the micro and macro levels of analysis but rather on micro and macro levels of aggregation. The latter focuses on the world itself, not on the analyst. Thus he includes a normative dimension of the analysis. The criteria, or exemplars in Kuhn’s language, for a grandiose theory are the relations or interactions of micro and macro variables (Rosenau 1986, 852). These relations cannot be taken for granted and that is why the research agenda is stimulated by habit-driven actor approach. The idea is that habit is flexible and adapts to changes in different situations.

The Mixture of the Middle Ground

Krasner is both optimistic and pessimistic. He is pessimistic because he focuses on Kuhn’s incommensurability thesis and thus the lack of communication. Theory incommensurability comes from the relative meanings of terms, the different terms used by the competing approaches and the different dependent variables used by the theories (Krasner 1985, 138). The difficulty stems also from the lack of clear rules for the operationalization of variables in social science²⁴.

²⁰ Scientific realism is not related to IR realism and neorealism.

²¹ Abduction refers to cognition and intuitive notions of causality. The term is coined by Charles Pierce. For him the introduction of unifying conceptions is an important part of abduction. Abduction does not occur in the context of a fixed language, because the formation of new hypotheses goes hand in hand with the development of new theoretical terms as “atom” or “AIDS“. Abductive reasoning is, according to Pierce, the first stage of scientific inquiries and of any interpretive process. Abduction is the process of adopting an explanatory hypothesis and covers two operations: the selection and the formation of plausible hypotheses.

²² The electronic article does not have page numbering.

²³ Rosenau reviews Keohane’s *After Hegemony* and Oye’s *Cooperation under Anarchy* (Rosenau 1986).

²⁴ Krasner disagrees with Bueno de Mesquita’s quantitative research and over-reliance on large number of comparable cases (Krasner 1985: 140).

However, he is slightly optimistic because he thinks that objective criteria or basis of communication can be developed by “inter-subjective agreement on the meaning of variables” (Krasner 1985, 139) achieved by a science with a humble image.

Vasquez is a good example of a shifting of opinion happening in the mainstream. He moves from realism to constructivism and is mostly pessimistic. He argues that the realist paradigm is the dominant one and its challengers degenerate the paradigm’s research program. Vasquez thinks that the IR field needs more rigor in the inter-paradigm debate. Thus he sides more with Lakatos’ idea of hard core. However, he uses Kuhn to explain that, “paradigms do not provide answers but the promise of answers” (Vasquez 1997, 899). Thus the adequacy of the theories generated by a paradigm may be judged only indirectly. In Kuhn’s language, according to Vasquez, there is a consensus in the English-speaking world that the realist paradigm has dominated the IR. Morgenthau’s *Politics among Nations* is considered as an exemplar of the paradigm. Consequently security, peace and war still remain the main themes.

Gradually there has been a shift in Vasquez’s opinion because he is more optimistic about the debate between realism and constructivism. Basically he thinks that the mainstream can be “saved” by the constructivist paradigm or that constructivism “has emerged as an alternative intellectual pillar of mainstream international relations theory” (Vasquez 2004, 1). He moves to the idea that facts are not just there but “come from us” or that there are “multiple worlds” (Vasquez 2004: 3). In Kuhnian language, constructivism and positivism are seen as two approaches that constitute the same scientific community and thus communication between them should be maintained. In other words they form “a loose community of inquiry” (Vasquez 2004, 2). The author wants to achieve overlapping between the approaches but he does not consider any post-positivist approaches. This questions the idea of diversity pluralism or the pluralism between his “loose community” and other communities. However, in this way he provides some kind of a loose framework for knowledge. The problem, however, comes from the fact that when talking about realism Vasquez understands the hard core, while Wendt has something else in mind²⁵.

One of the discussions, related to the IR debate, proves the shift from pessimism to optimism as a tendency (The Forum 2003). The forum is considered by Lapid (The Forum 2003, 129) as a dialogue about the future dialogue or as a meta-theoretical prelude. The opinions of the participants vary. **Hellmann** is sceptical because he argues that there is much monologue and arguing in the discipline. He suggests that the formula is debate rather than dialogue. Although this questions the ideal view of scientific community, still dialogue and synthesis serve as loose guides for the future in the Kuhnian sense. Synthesis remains “an endless journey” (The Forum-Hellmann 2003, 149) or “engaged pluralism” in Lapid’s words. Paradigmatism, if rigorously defined, is a hindrance. Thus dialogues between individual scholars rather than between paradigms are encouraged.

Friedrich Kratochwi agrees with Hellmann on the issue of the monologue of science but is more optimistic about the constructive role of procedural standards of fairness in the debate. The standards for him (or loose paradigms) are represented by “quasi-judicial procedures” (The Forum 2003, 125) that can judge the weight of controversial evidence. Ethical or professional standards prevent the kind of relativistic pluralism of “anything goes”. This is similar to a legal process or problem-solving approach.

Lapid is optimistic about the role of the dialogue as a remedy to knowledge problems. He considers the current stage of the dialogue as a preparatory one, done at a disciplinary level. In other words, this first stage is an exercise for leading a reflexive dialogue and the main task is the participants to define the meanings of concepts or more precisely-give nuanced meanings of concepts. The actual inter-paradigm debate is at the second stage that will be “theory-paradigm level”

²⁵ This may be proves that terms have different meanings for different approaches and the idea of incommensurability. A good example on the difference of emphasis placed upon the concepts (by realists and constructivists) is the theory of world risk society, explained by Ulrich Beck. Realists focus on the adjectives world and risk and consequently the risk is accepted as a part of a global model, without self-reflection. Constructivists, on the other hand, focus on the noun society and consequently are more open to the idea of trans-nationality. Ulrich Beck also coins the term “reflexive modernity” as a theory for society’s self-criticism.

(The Forum 2003, 129). At the second stage the dialogue will need a mediator or many mediators in the form of middle-ground ideas. This is Lapid's loose sense of a paradigm.

Moravcsik's loose paradigm is more close to positivism in a sense that he believes in empirical testing. He suggests that the overreaching assumptions embedded in a given model have to be minimally coherent (The Forum 2003, 132). What is more, theoretical synthesis has to be put to empirical testing just like any theory. However, this synthesis should help the understanding of concrete events as opposed to positivists' strive for universality.

Neumann sides more with post-positivism and starts with questioning the mere assumption that dialogue leads to synthesis in a causal way (The Forum 2003, 137). In other words dialogue may not have a purpose. Participants in the dialogue may not use the proper language or over-rely on reordering old language signs instead of creating new ones. Actually, they disregard the idea that different contexts call for different stylistic modes for enhancing cooperation. As a result monologue and war are not unfortunate scenarios for the future²⁶.

Like Neumann, **Steve Smith** also suggests that dialogue differs from synthesis. However, without a dialogue, ideas "fossilize in a extreme kind of Kuhnian normal science" (The Forum 2003, 141). Smith considers the great debates as times of paradigm crisis in Kuhnian normal science. His opinion is that Kuhn is very imprecise over the meaning of paradigm and this further complicates the debate (Ken Booth and Steve Smith 1995, 15).

For **Harvey and Cobb** (The Forum 2003, 144), synthesis is nuanced and hard to be achieved because the methodological division is multi-layered. The middle ground, in this sense, further increases the division.

On Eclecticism

The forum proves that political science in general and IR in particular is eclectic. This is also the conclusion of Katzenstein, Keohane and Krasner (Katzenstein, Keohane and Krasner 1999, 6) when they consider the post-cold war opening of the discipline. Although this opening challenges realism, there is also a close interaction between comparative and international relations scholars and a degree of complementarity between rationalism and constructivism. Thus, theory follows practice and the main task of a theory is to solve puzzles. An example of this line of thinking is Keohane's modification on realism by liberal institutionalism²⁷. As he suggests, if theories are not connected with experience they may become dogmas.

CONCLUSIONS

The paradox in the debate is that pessimism and optimism reinforce each other. The pragmatic tendency is towards eclecticism of the approaches. Elements are interrelated and the border between positivism and relativism is moving. Situations change, so do combinations of approaches to explain them. There are no universal theories that explain everything. Rather scientists better talk about approaches that form relatively stable syntheses. To encompass the complex reality, combinations should be different because different combinations present the reality from different perspectives. In this respect, one of Kuhn's contributions is that he starts the doubt in positivism, liberates knowledge, and science becomes more problem-driven than theory-driven. However, he also demands for exemplars that regulate the process. Thus in Kuhn's language positivism and relativism cannot be separated. The same argument applies for pessimism and optimism.

Pessimists emphasize on the clash of approaches and lack of communication. Those who are a little more optimistic think that IR needs preparation before the essential debate. Usually this means that some accept the third debate as a preparation for the fourth or main debate between positivism and post-positivism. The optimists believe in the possibility of a synthesis between approaches, a dialogue, cross-fertilization.

²⁶ The author uses Mikhail Bakhtin's explanation of dialogue as an ethical imperative. Bakhtin is a Russian linguist and literary critic whose writings influence structuralism, post-structuralism and social theory in the 20th century.

²⁷ For more on Keohane's opinion see Goodin and Klingemann.... ch.19.

Grand narratives or paradigms are unable to explain all situations because the world is becoming more complex and there is agreement (according to Dogan) on that issue within the IR scientific community. Thus the movement is towards synthesis in the form of dialogue, towards relativism as different approaches or models valid for different situations. The main task in IR is how to move from the stage of pluralism to meaningful pluralism. The former is no more than a reflection of the statement “let’s agree to disagree” and the latter shows the real maturation signs (may be second stage of maturation) – a movement to “let’s agree how to reach an agreement that will solve real problems” and finally may be realize that disagreements or debates should not be the focus of a theory or that debates should not create divisions but unite scientific resources in search of the solution to problems. After all, although there should not be a single grand paradigm, a loose paradigm as a framework is better than no framework at all.

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REALISM, LIBERALISM AND CONSTRUCTIVISM IN THE PURSUIT OF SECURITY

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Abstract

Security is one of the most used and disputed concepts in the field of International Relations. Achieving security has always concerned the world, from those who hunted to ensure their food security, to those who started wars in the name of self-determination. The spotlight highlighted security, especially after the two World Wars, which led to a reconfiguration of the world. The institutionalization of the field of International Relations favored the emergence of different paradigms that aimed to identify and explain the causes of the war and to develop strategies to ensure this good. The purpose of this article is to analyze three of the best-known theories – realism, liberalism and constructivism – and to highlight the methods identified in order to achieve security. The approach will be predominantly descriptive.

Keywords: security; balance of power; democracy; community security.

INTRODUCTION

The field of International Relations is a recent institutionalized one, appearing as an area of independent research in 1919 at the University of Wales. The synchronization of the emergence of this new field of research is not meaningless. The destructiveness of the First World War, labeled as total war, the high number of casualties and the effects generated underlined the importance of analyzing the causes that were at the base of such an event in order to avoid future similar catastrophes. From that moment until now, in the field of International Relations, different theories have emerged that have tried to explain why states start a conflict, what are the most important causes, but also how states can obtain and maintain a high level of security.

At that moment, the liberalist theory that appeared as an alternative to the power policy of the 19th century was best folded on the existing realities. It emerged as a natural effect of the 14 points shaped by US President Woodrow Wilson, the formation of the League of Nations and the commitment that some states have made to collective security. It turned out, not long after the end of the First World War, that the world was not yet ready to join the liberal vision - the Great Depression (1929-1933), the coming to power in Italy of Benito Mussolini, the emergence of Nazism in Germany and the seizure of power by Adolf Hitler, the expansionist desires that still incited some leaders, the inability to make the League of Nations functional and so on.

Almost 20 years later, World War II broke out giving way to a realistic vision, which was based on clear principles, derived from reality and whose arguments could be factually demonstrated (Guzzini 2000, 11). The realistic theory came to explain why the Two World Wars erupted, most of the assumptions being, in fact, a critique of liberal theory. Adherents of this current of thought explain the dynamics of international relations by appealing to the concept of power. The Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War, proxy warfare during the Cold War gave realism a proper ground in which to develop.

But as events at the international level cannot always be anticipated and out of the desire to identify alternatives, towards the middle of the Cold War a theory appears that does not seem to fit

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into the pattern of those so far. In the '80s we witness the drawing of the constructivist theory that comes and appeals to norms, identities and the way in which all these are co-constituted as a result of the interactions between the actors.

All three theories mentioned, but also others that arose in this field of research, tried, among other things, to explain how states can achieve security. Consequently, the aim of this article is to highlight the way in which realism, liberalism and constructivism see the attainment of a state of security. In this approach, for the scientific clarity of the paper, the first part will be intended to define the concept of security, the following three parts being aimed at exposing the strategies of the three theories on security: balance of power (realism), democratic peace theory (liberalism) and security communities (constructivism). The conclusions will be intended at synthesizing the visions of the three theories and highlighting the points of convergence.

THE CONCEPT OF SECURITY – EVOLUTION AND DEFINITION

Most of the time we have problems in defining the concepts we use most often; we know what they mean, we use them in the right contexts, but when it comes to giving a definition of them, it seems we can't find our words. This is also the case with the concept of security, which although it is one of the most used words in the field of International Relations, it is also the most controversial and difficult to define. David Baldwin stated in an article published in 1997 that "understanding the concept of security is a fundamentally different kind of intellectual exercise from specifying the conditions under which security may be achieved. Indeed, conceptual clarification logically precedes the search for the necessary conditions of security, because the identification of such conditions presupposes a concept of security" (Baldwin 1997, 8). Despite these difficulties of definition, the process must be carried out because security is a scarce commodity (Garnett 1996, 10) and extremely important for state and non-state actors.

The concept of security has evolved with the developments that have taken place in the international system, moving from traditional security to the new concept that emerged with the expansion and acquisition of new meanings.

Although it dominates the idea that the concept of security is a recent one, which took shape especially after the two World Wars, the idea of security² is actually older than that. In the literature there is a reference to the precursors of security, among which we can mention Thomas Hobbes, Carl von Clausewitz and Thucydides. These three authors, together with others who have contributed to the extensive study of security, provided a starting point by correlating the concept with the analysis of international relations; according to Kolodziej, studying the ideas formulated by these theorists "will help us to learn how to think about security and quite a bit about what to think about security and why" (Kolodziej 2005, pp. 48-49)³.

The study of security has become more pronounced after the horrors that took place in the two World Wars, states becoming aware of the need to adopt policies to ensure their security. The Cold War period and consequently the study of security was mainly influenced by two theories - realism and neorealism - who saw security as a central element of the state. All this time, the study of security has fluctuated, with periods of growth and decline. If the period between 1955 and 1965 is labeled as the Golden Age (Walt 1991, 212) of security study, the mid-1960s brought a drop in attention to security in the form it had.

The vision that dominated the Cold War period is the traditional one, the emphasis being mainly on military components and the role they play in achieving security. In the anarchic⁴ context that characterized the international system, the state - which was seen as the key player - had to pursue its national interests "defined in terms of power" (Morgenthau 1948). The most appropriate tools, according to realists and neo-realists, to achieve their security objectives in an unsecured world are those in the military spectrum. Distrust in the intentions of states leads actors to resort to violent

² Regarding the writings of the forerunners, a distinction must be made between idea and concept. In the writings of the precursors, we do not identify per se the term security, but ideas that correspond to what later received the name of security.

³ More details about the contributions of these precursors can be found in the cited work of Edward A. Kolodziej.

⁴ Anarchy must be understood as the lack of a central government, of an authority and not as a state of chaos.

means to resolve disputes. Consequently, in this context dominated by the realistic vision, the definitions offered to the concept of security fall within the mentioned parameters. In the first edition of the journal *International Security*, published in 1976, security was described as an element that has a "direct bearing on the structure of the nation state system and the sovereignty of its members, with particular emphasis on the use, threat and control of force" (Carnesale and Nacht 1976, 2). A definition which even if it falls within the framework of the realistic theory brings a new dimension is the one formulated by Arnold Wolfers who distinguishes between subjective and objective security: "security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked" (Wolfers 1952, 485).

The fall of the Iron Curtain, the implosion of the Soviet Union on the background of socio-economic shortcomings, the exit from the communist wing of Central and Eastern European states and the diversification of actors are some of the elements that underlined the complexity of the post-Cold War world. In the newly created context, security strictly understood in military terms could no longer find its place. Threats have begun to diversify, becoming transnational, cross-sectoral and interdependent. It has been noted that developments in one sector have effects in other areas, and the approach to security needs to be integrated. Those who understood these needs led the process of expanding security; the approach attracted new followers, the result being a multidimensional security concept.

The pioneers of the expansion are the representatives of the Copenhagen School, led by Barry Buzan. One of the first works in which the need to expand the study of security was exposed is *Peoples, States and Fear*, which adds four other types of security to the military one - political, societal, economic and environmental (Buzan 2014). In order to understand security, we need to answer a few basic questions: "What is to be protected?" – security reference object; "Against which threats is the object of reference protected?" (Buzan 2014, 26). In this approach, Buzan detaches himself from the traditional perspective and shows that the object of reference is not only the state, but also the international system and the individual and that the threats come from all five sectors mentioned above. Moreover, the new approach sought to establish a set of criteria to distinguish between security issues and those that do not fall within this spectrum (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 5).

Against this background, the expansion of the concept of security was achieved both vertically through the emergence of new forms, such as individual security and human security, and horizontally by including the political, military, economic, societal and environmental sectors. Now, when we talk about security, the military side is no longer the one that dominates, the concept is described as a multidimensional one, the goal being to ensure the well-being and safety of international actors.

REALISM AND THE BALANCE OF POWER

Realism is one of the theories of International Relations that has dedicated its study to identifying methods to ensure the survival of the state and consequently its security. Two papers formed the basis of the development of realistic theory – Hans J. Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations* and *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939* written by Edward. H. Carr. However, Morgenthau's book, described as the leading work of international political theory (Thompson and Clinton 2013, 15), had the greatest influence on the development of realism.

Like other currents of thought, realism has a number of key assumptions and concepts that help us understand the essence of this theory. In a simplified version, realistic theory "is a school of thought that explains international relations in terms of power" (Pevehouse and Goldstein 2017, 38). One of the main assumptions of this theory is that the key player in the international system is the state; adherents of realism do not deny the importance of other actors, such as transnational companies, but consider their role to be limited. The state, that is a rational actor, has a number of national interests which, as we have already mentioned, it defines in terms of power. The concept of power⁵ is a central one in the realistic thesis, the most praised form being the military one. The

⁵ The simplest definition of power is the ability of a state A to cause a state B to do something it would not normally do.

second edifying assumption refers to the international system which is anarchic; proponents of the theory speak of the lack of a central government. This international context allows states to pursue their national interests (Miroiu and Soare 2006, 99). A third assumption refers to human nature which is vitiated, entangled in the struggle for power and unchanging.

Uniting these three main assumptions⁶, we see that states are entering a vicious circle in search of survival. Because one of the aims of the emergence of realism was precisely the attempt to explain why wars are started and how these rational actors can ensure their security, within the realistic theory a strategy was drawn in this regard – the balance of power. This strategy has been praised by various academics in the field of International Relations, with some considering that “no other proposal on international politics has attracted more effort from scholars than the balance of power. It is perhaps as essential in today's thinking as it has been at any time since the Enlightenment” (Brooks and Wohlforth 2008, 7). Being such an important concept, its explanation has crossed the boundaries of realism and neo-realism, coming to be analyzed by other theories⁷.

The central thesis of the balance of power is that states try to survive as independent entities (Paul, Wirtz and Fortmann 2004, 4); if a state is growing, endangering other actors in the international system, other smaller states will see this state as a threat and will seek solutions to balance the power displayed by the first actor. The father of realism, Hans Morgenthau, considers that the balance of power and policies aimed at establishing and maintaining balance are crucial for the stability of the international system (Andersen 2018, 8). He conceptualizes the balance of power as a natural and inevitable extension of the struggle for power, a state of affairs in which power is evenly distributed among nations.

In Morgenthau's conception there are two types of balance of power - the direct opposition model and the competition model - each highlighting a set of functions. The model of direct opposition presupposes the existence of two states or alliances that enter into a direct confrontation: actor X has imperialist aspirations, and actor Y reacts through a strategy of preserving the status quo or through an imperialist policy (Morgenthau 1948, 130). In this case, the balance of power is the direct result of the decision of both actors to follow their policies, noting that the resulting balance is fragile. The second model, that of the competition, involves the appearance of a third actor - Z. State X can pursue an imperialist policy in relation to state Z, and state Y can respond either by adopting a status quo policy or an imperialist one. The strategies of state Z can be: *balancing* the state pursuing an imperialist policy (X), which means that it will ally with state Y, or *alignment* with the source of danger (*bandwagoning*), more precisely with X. The function of the balance of power in this case is the independence of state Z (Morgenthau 1948, 133). In Morgenthau's view, the balance of power has several meanings, but the most commonly used by the is the situation when the weights on both plates of a scale are balanced (Little 2007, 95).

Kenneth Waltz, the representative of neo-realism, praises the balance of power and says it is an independent theory of international politics (Waltz 1979, 167). His theory is animated by the principle of small numbers and assumes that the structure of the international system is defined by a limited number of large powers. Waltz linked the concept of the balance of power with two elements: i) anarchy, in the sense that the appearance of balance is a direct result of the structure of the international system, and ii) the assumption that states are rational actors trying to maintain their position in the international system, balancing with a growing power becoming inevitable (Diez, Bode and Da Costa 2011, 8). In this logic, Waltz's central point is that the anarchic structure constrains the behavior of states (concerned with survival) in such a way as to seek the balance of power; for the author it does not matter if the states are revisionist or status quo, because they will be influenced by the structure of the system to promote policies to seek balance (Little 2007, 193). In anarchic systems, Waltz states that balancing and not aligning is a typical behavior (Waltz 1979, 126).

Between bipolarity and multipolarity, Waltz believes that the most appropriate type of structure that favors the balance of power is bipolarity. With only two great powers, the chances of them misperceiving each other's relative strength are low, as they are able to learn how to interpret each

⁶ The assumptions of realistic theory are not limited to the three set out in this article, but they are most often invoked.

⁷ An example is the analysis made by Hedley Bull, representative of the English School.

other's movements. The Cold War was a favorable period that confirmed most of the assumptions put forward by the followers of realism, whether we are talking about the classical or the structural (neo-realism).

Morgenthau and Waltz are not the only ones who have approached the concept of balance of power, in the field of International Relations being several academics who have dedicated their study to explaining and understanding how balance works at the international level.⁸

Security in the realistic vision is essential for the survival of the main actors - the states, and can be achieved through the use of military instruments. In terms of the balance of power, this strategy creates a favorable framework in which the security of states can be achieved. Depending on the chosen options, the security can be fragile or durable.

DEMOCRATIC PEACE THEORY – A STRATEGY OF LIBERAL THEORY

Liberalism is next to realism, one of the most important theories of International Relations, which from the beginning has turned its attention to how war can be eradicated, and international actors can identify peaceful methods of resolving disputes. Liberalism as a theory of International Relations did not emerge from nothing, but has its roots in the works of Immanuel Kant, John S. Mill, Richard Cobden, Woodrow Wilson and other philosophers and thinkers who elaborated papers that later stood at the basis for outlining the main ideas of the theory which is under analysis in this part. Two examples of ideas that were taken over by liberal theory are those formulated by Kant and Cobden: i) Kant advocates the privilege of democracy as an alternative principle of governance primarily internal, but also external, which later contributed to the formulation of the theory of democratic peace; ii) Cobden talks about economics, arguing that the only policy of peace is free trade that leads to economic prosperity, his ideas being contained in what is called the theory of economic interdependence.

The traumatic experience of the First World War led to the modeling of an alternative of liberal origin to the power policy of the nineteenth century, accused of irrationality (Biro 2006, 82). Like other theories, liberalism starts from a set of key assumptions, some of which are in direct opposition to those of realistic theory. Firstly, the liberals' view of human nature refers to the belief in the perfectibility of the human condition as a result of intellectual capacity and confidence in the possibility of progressive evolution (Biro 2006, 89). Secondly, peace is a state of affairs and not the struggle for power, as the representatives of realism claim. Scott Burchill points out that liberalism sees war as a cancer of the political body, something that belongs to the realm of the abnormal (Burchill 2013, 61). Within the liberal school, various ideas emerged that emphasized how peace can be achieved - from the adoption of democracy as a principle of government and the benefits generated by economic relations, to the establishment of international institutions that have the necessary strength to contribute to the harmonization of state interests. Thirdly, the main actors are no longer the states, but the individuals whose security and well-being must be ensured. It is on this basis that liberals are seen as some of the most ardent supporters and promoters of human rights. Fourthly, the followers of this current of thought believe that the actors can cooperate with each other, even taking a harmonization of interests. Such an approach is supported in particular by the creation of international institutions and bodies that generate a framework conducive to collaboration. Last but not least, a central element of the liberalist thesis is the principle of collective security which assumes that states are aware that the security of one of them concerns them all and are willing to react to any threat. This is also the principle we find in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

As I already mentioned, in liberalism we find several strategies developed to eradicate war as a mean of resolving disputes and to ensure the security of actors - institutional liberalism (emphasizes the importance of international institutions), the theory of economic interdependence (praises the benefits of economic interactions that take place between actors), the theory of democratic peace (directs its attention to the form of government) and so on. In the following I will turn my attention to the theory of democratic peace, being one of the most often invoked, but also criticized theories.

⁸ In order to deepen the subject, I recommend consulting the works elaborated by Hedley Bull and John Mearsheimer.

The leading work that has significantly contributed to the development of the theory of democratic peace is *Perpetual Peace* written by Immanuel Kant. Kant's argument for obtaining perpetual peace is that three definitive articles must be enforced: i) the first article refers to the form of organization of the state that must be a republic; ii) the second article presupposes the creation of a pacifist federation or union, resulting from the will of each state; iii) the third article represents a cosmopolitan law that must be limited to the conditions of general hospitality (Doyle 1986, 1158).

In the twentieth century, the number of researches that talked about the benefits that democracy can generate has increased considerably, becoming a recurring topic of International Relations; it can be identified on the international agenda especially after the Second World War and to the present day. The most representative figures of the twentieth century in the approach to democratic peace are Rudolph Rummel and Michael Doyle. The approaches of the mentioned researchers are in the lines of two versions of democratic peace - the monadic version and the dyadic one. The monadic or general version supports the idea of a general pacifism of democracies, regardless of the nature of the opponents, while the dyadic version (also called relational) refers to a state of peace that exists between democracies, noting that in relation to non-democratic actors they can resort to violent means, including war (Biro, Teza pacifismului democrat 2006, 260).

One of the books written by Rummel in support of the idea that democracies contribute to a state of peace and security is *Power Kills: Democracy as a method of nonviolence*. From the introductory part of the paper, Rummel sets out the main motivation for which he carried out research aimed at reducing war in all its forms: "(...) in the mid-1980s I was shocked to discover that several times more people were killed in democide⁹ by governments than died in warfare. (...) I believe, I can finally offer what appears a most realistic and practical solution to war, democide, and other collective violence" (Rummel 1997, ix).

The paper, written in 1997 and which is the result of years of work, has as its central thesis the idea that the worst types of violence, such as mass murder, are the result of the tyrannical nature of governments that commit such crimes. Thus, the elimination of democide can take place by promoting and strengthening democratic governance (Chenoweth 2017, 101). In support of his thesis, Rummel makes a number of arguments, including that democracy is in a continuous, dynamic flow and encompasses social fields, while authoritarianism is static, rigid, generating social cleavages that push people to resort to violence to survive. He believes that the reduction of violence by democracy is gradual and that although some problems remain, this form of government offers the best response to the needs of a stable society (Chenoweth 2017, 102).

A second contribution that attracted attention thanks to the clearly stated ideas is that of Michael Doyle; his name is directly associated with the theory of democratic peace. Doyle's main idea is that states that adhere to liberal principles enjoy the benefits of a separate peace in relation to states that share the same principles, but are predisposed to start a war against non-liberal states; it follows that his version falls into the dyadic one. In his approach, Doyle took into account three areas that contribute to a high degree to the call for peaceful solutions in relations between democracies – the political/institutional, social and economic. The institutional element is an essential one considering two characteristics of democracy – representation and transparency (Doyle 2012, 215). In addition to the benefits they generate for society, they send a message to external partners that the risk of unforeseen actions is low. Moreover, following broadly the same principles, in this case liberal ones, states can intuit what the other's movements would be. Also, from a political point of view, the election system, the rotation of elites and the division of power can also send signals, making a possible desire to resort to war predictable. In addition, the outbreak of war by a democracy is a more complicated process, due to the bureaucracy and control tools that exist, than in an autocratic society; in short, the existence of the *checks and balance* system decreases the chances of starting a war.

From a social point of view, individuals living in such societies have a wide range of tools at their disposal to control the activities of the chosen ones, from petitions to rallies. Last but not least,

⁹ Democide is defined by Rummel as mass murder that includes four subcategories: terror, genocide, mass murder, and politicide (politically killing a group).

the economic level provides the impetus for increased cooperation between democracies, which are based on the market economy and seek the development of economic relations.

The whirlwind that this theory created attracted, without a doubt, a high number of critics, the contestants demanding clear evidence. They cite those situations when even democracies resorted to war to resolve their disputes, an example being the war between the United States and Spain in 1898. Another criticism concerns the exclusion by supporters of democratic peace of other arguments that could justify the state of security that arises.

In the view of liberalism, security is a state of affairs that can be achieved through cooperation and the harmonization of interests. The main beneficiaries of this condition are individuals. The theory of democratic peace, described as a theory that has the necessary force to ensure the security of actors, is based on the ideas, institutions and mechanisms developed by democracy. Notwithstanding, we must not forget the statement of Doyle and other researchers who specified that the adoption of democracy does not directly produce a state of peace, but increases the level of security and stability.

SECURITY COMMUNITIES – A CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVE

If the two theories can be labeled as traditional, in the 80's, in the field of International Relations, a paradigm emerged that tried to meet the needs of the world at that time – constructivism. The approach managed to overcome the existing barriers and based its argument on norms, language, identity and interaction. We can enumerate Alexander Wendt, Nicholas Onuf, Friedrich Kratochwil as outstanding figures who built their arguments with the help of the stated variables. Onuf is one of the first to use the term constructivism in the field of International Relations, arguing that we live in a "world of our making" (Onuf 2012), while Wendt is famous for the statement "anarchy is what states make of it" (Wendt 1992).

The main question that also arises in the case of constructivist theory is the extent to which it manages to explain the behavior of states in terms of security. Constructivists come up with a new approach in which they believe that the predominant theories are wrong and have the potential to mislead states in developing security policies (Kolodziej 2005, 259).

The starting point of the constructivist paradigm is the interaction between actors which is seen as a determinant of their behavior and identities. Specifically, agencies¹⁰ and structures are co-constituted, meaning that the former produce structures through beliefs, actions, and interactions between them, and the forms created play an important role in shaping identities and interests. Hence the argument that the state is not a given, but is a social construct, which may have different interests depending on the identities at a given time. To better understand this statement, we can think of Germany, which during the Nazis defined its national interests in revisionist terms, somehow encouraged by its relations with other states that rallied to these interests (see Italy), but which, with the transition to a new paradigm and obtaining UN membership, has also changed its national interests. Along the same lines is the assumption that the international system is a social creation as a whole.

A second important point of this paradigm is that material factors mean nothing in the absence of complex social processes that give them meaning (Wendt, *Constructing International Politics* 1995, 73). States decide what they want not only on the ground of material needs, but also on the basis of social interactions, noting that constructivists recognized that power is not absent from international relations (Pevehouse și Goldstein 2017, 92). The most common example is why the US is more concerned with the construction of a nuclear weapon by North Korea, and not by United Kingdom. To answer this dilemma, constructivists come and emphasize the shared common history, common norms, the alliances to which the two actors have been part over time; these variables send a message to the US and the UK, showing them that they are not a threat to each other, which is not the case with North Korea. Thus, the presence of material factors (nuclear weapons), according to the

¹⁰ Agents are international actors.

realists, should have caused the two states to confront each other from positions of power. Instead, the identity of the potential opponent weighed more in relation to the material elements.

This brings us to a third point, namely that of the norms and rules. Norms constitute social identities and give meaning to national interests (Adler, *Constructivism in International Relations: Sources, Contributions and Debates* 2013, 126). Katzenstein pointed out in a 1996 paper that states make security choices and act not only in the context of physical capabilities, but also on the basis of normative agreements. Going beyond the internal framework, Martha Finnemore said that international norms formulated by international organizations, contribute to a significant degree to shaping the interests of the states that adopt them (Finnemore 1996, pp. 5-13).

Last but not least, the constructivists and especially Onuf questioned the importance of language and speech acts. In addition to social interactions, language comes and assigns a certain meaning, depending on the context. In the absence of discourse and language, international reality does not exist and cannot be communicated, Kratochwill emphasizing that speech acts are means of constructing intersubjective meanings (Todorean 2006, 161).

In the process of developing the role of identity, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett have shown that the identities of national groups can transcend borders and lead to the development of security communities. Although this concept is not an eminently constructivist intellectual product, it has been best explained by followers of this paradigm. In their approach, they turned to the vision of Karl Deutsch, who argued that those states that are part of a security community have created not only a stable order, but also a stable peace (Adler și Barnett 1998, 3). In his approach, Deutsch distinguished between amalgamated and pluralistic security communities. While both create reliable expectations for peaceful change, the former exists when states formally unify, and the latter when states retain their sovereignty. To better understand the two examples, we can look at the US which is from the author's point of view an amalgamated security community model, while the European Union falls within the parameters of the second version. The Deutschian vision considers that security communities appear thanks to a high degree of integration, a degree that is achieved with i) obtaining a sense of community, ii) developing practices and institutions and iii) a high level of transactions (Ditrych 2014, 351). Although Deutsch's approach was innovative for the period in which it was treated (1957), when power was the dominant concept, it was unsuccessful.

The idea of security communities came to life with the end of the Cold War, a time when the assumptions postulated by Deutsch 40 years ago seemed again relevant amid changes in global policy. With the end of the Cold War, the discourse of decision-makers has changed, and they are now talking about plans for a more peaceful and stable international order. This was to be expected, with the end of wars almost always spurring comments about the world that is left behind and hopeful speculation (Adler și Barnett, *Security communities in theoretical perspective* 1998, 4).

In this new context, Adler and Barnett decided to revitalize the security communities, focusing on the pluralistic ones. They started with the idea that such a community exists at the international level, that power policy is deeply shaped by it and that those states that live within the international community could develop a pacifist disposition (Adler și Barnett 1998, 3). The pluralistic communities developed by the two are defined as those transnational regions made up of sovereign states whose people maintain reliable expectations of peaceful change (Adler și Barnett 1998, 30).

Adler and Barnett divide the pluralist security communities according to the depth of trust, the nature and the degree of institutionalization of the system of government and whether they are in a formal anarchy or are about to transform it. Depending on these three criteria, loosely and tightly coupled pluralistic security communities may emerge (Adler and Barnett 1998, 30). The working method is organized on three levels, representing the steps taken in creating a security community (Adler and Barnett 1998, pp. 37-45):

1. Against the background of endogenous and exogenous factors, states begin to orient and coordinate with each other. Elements such as an external threat or technological development can drive states to form alliances, thus seeking to reduce fear through security coordination. These meetings and acts of cooperation do not automatically produce trust, but are essential steps in the development of complexes.

2. Once states began to engage in various forms of social interaction, the environment in which they live began to change. From this moment, forms of collective identity and mutual trust can appear, elements necessary for a peaceful development.

3. The dynamic and positive relationships that take place over time become sources of mutual trust and the development of collective identity.

The main contribution generated by the development of security communities is that it has opened up the possibility of thinking in terms of community in the international space (Bellamy 2004, 5).

The inclusion of the security community formula in the discourses of international and regional organizations (see the case of ASEAN) shows the commitment that these institutionalized forms are beginning to have towards the concept presented in this part.

The constructivist paradigm has brought a relatively new vision of security. Obtaining it is a process that includes the interaction between actors and structures, common cultural elements, historical elements, the process of creating norms and assuming them, and so on. One of the constructivist strategies through which this can materialize is security communities. The constant interaction between the actors creates the premises for increasing the relationship and trust, thus decreasing the chances of differences. Therefore, the actors manage to ensure their own security.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this article was that through this supple exposition to be highlighted the ways in which three of the most well-known paradigms of International Relations see the obtaining of security. The main conclusion is that all three are concerned with identifying the causes of the war and developing strategies to ensure the security of international actors. Firstly, when the balance of power appears no state predominates and therefore no large-scale war will take place. The result is a stable international system, even if there are chances of changes in the balance of power (these do not fundamentally affect the balance). Secondly, the theory of democratic peace bases its study on the mechanisms that exist in these societies and that determine a reluctance to adopt war as a tool for resolving disputes. In this sense, there are data that support this theory, in the idea that it fails to completely eradicate the war, but decreases the chances of triggering. Thirdly, the solution proposed by the constructivists emphasizes rules, identities and language seen as essential elements in the formation of security communities. Identifying with other members of the community and the interactions that lead to the creation of a collective identity, increase the chances of peaceful settlement of disputes. In this way, the actors involved in such forms of coexistence would benefit from security.

As we can observe, the security differences between the three lies in the emphasis they placed on various elements; for example, while realism praised the importance of power, liberalism rather highlighted the beneficial effects of respect for human rights, the rule of law, and so on. However, there are also points of convergence - the formation of security communities may be similar up to a point with the theory of institutional liberalism and the variant proposed by Deutsch with the theory of economic interdependence.

The main ideas of realism, liberalism and constructivism were summarized in the table below, in order to give the reader an overview.

Table 1. The main ideas of realism, liberalism and constructivism

Features	Realism	Liberalism	Constructivism
<i>Nature of the international system</i>	Anarchic The struggle for power	Formal anarchy with interdependence Shared norms and international institutions	Socially constructed
<i>Relevant actors</i>	States	Non-state actors (people, international organizations), but also states	States, organizations, people, ideas
<i>Key assumptions</i>	• power is the main concept, with a special	• the well-being of the individual;	• agencies and structures are co-constituted;

Features	Realism	Liberalism	Constructivism
	focus on the military one; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human nature is flawed; • states seek survival; • national interests dominate; • states cannot trust the intentions of other actors; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human nature is perfectible; • collective security; • the importance of international institutions; • harmonization of interests; • cooperation is possible; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the meanings we attribute to the social world result from the interactions of agents; • material factors mean nothing in the absence of complex social processes that give them meaning; • international structures, processes and actors are social products;
Security	It can be obtained by using military instruments	Cooperation and harmonization of interests increase the chances of achieving and maintaining a state of security	Frequent contacts, common cultural elements, good historical relations and norms are relevant for security
Strategies of achieving security	Balance of power	Democratic peace theory	Security communities

It should be mentioned that the stated strategies are not the only ones formulated, but they are some of the most known, studied and applied.

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THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN SECURITY BEFORE THE 1994 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT. INQUIRY INTO ITS EVOLUTION DURING THE COLD WAR

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Abstract

It is usually considered that the concept of human security was introduced by the United Nations Development Programme with the publication in 1994 of the *Human Development Report*. Such a perspective on the emergence of this concept denies its existence during the Cold War and places its point of origin in the aftermath of that confrontation. However, there is also the opinion that human security was a term used during the Cold War, but that the meaning then attached to it lacks any relevancy for the meaning it has in the 1994 *Human Development Report*. This article contributes to the assessment of the viability of these different opinions by first exploring the use of the concept of human security by Niels Bohr in an open letter from 1950, and by Sithu U Thant, in a statement made in 1971, and secondly by comparing the meaning they gave to it with its meaning from the 1994 *Human Development Report*. It is concluded that both Bohr and U Thant operated with a concept of human security narrower in scope than the concept of human security which is to be found in the 1994 *Human Development Report* and, based on this finding, that the evolution of this concept started long before 1994.

Keywords: human security; 1994 Human Development Report; Niels Bohr; Sithu U Thant; Cold War; United Nations Development Programme.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Pakistani economist Mahboub ul Haq, who served as Special Adviser of the UNDP Administrator from 1989 to 1996 and, in this capacity, initiated in 1990 the elaboration of the *Human Development Report*, including that from 1994, is considered to have played the leading role in theorizing human security, various authors equally giving them credit for introducing the term of human security. This article aims at considering the possibility for the term human security to be in use even before the publication of the 1994 *Human Development Report*, more exactly during the Cold War, and thus it calls into question the idea that it is this document which introduced the concept.

What prompted the investigation have been a remark by Diana Amnéus and an assertion by David Bosold. the remark made that human security was already employed in the 1960s in the field of psychology as proved by the publication in 1966 of the book entitled *Human Security: Some Reflections* authored by William Blatz (Amnéus 2013, 6), and the assertion of David Bosold who maintains that the introduction of the concept of human security by UNDP is simply a myth which ignores that this term figured in the open letter to the United Nations written in 1950 by the famous physicist Niels Bohr and in a statement made in 1971 by Sithu U Thant during his tenure as UN Secretary-General (Bosold 2011, 30). However, taking into account that the term human security employed by the UNDP belongs to the vocabulary of international security (Robinson, 2008, 96, 97), only the concept used by Bohr and U Thant is relevant as an antecedent to the concept which figures in the 1994 *Human Development Report*. Despite maintaining that the concept of human security

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existed prior to the 1990s, Bosold does not analyze the meaning attributed to it by Bohr and U Thant because he considers that it has no relevancy for the meaning that UNDP latter attributed to it (Bosold 2011, 30).

Assuming that a critical approach to the genealogy of the concept of human security could advance the understanding of it, the first section of this article briefly reviews opinions in support of the idea that, back in 1994, UNDP introduced the term human security, and its second section examines what human security meant for Bohr and U Thant and also compares the meaning attributed by them to human security with the meaning given to it in the 1994 *Human Development Report*.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE 1994 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT AS THE ORIGIN OF THE TERM HUMAN SECURITY

As authors arguing that the term human security was created in 1994 with the publication of the *Human Development Report* elaborated by the UNDP, one could mention Amitav Acharya, Gerd Oberleitner, Wolfgang Benedek, Georg Frerk, Berma Klein Goldewijk, Caroline Thomas, S. Neil MacFarlane, Yuen Foong Khong, Christine Chinkin, Mary Kaldor and Šárka Waisová.

Amitav Acharya argues that ‘the origin of the concept of human security can be traced to the publication of the Human Development Report of 1994, issued by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 1994)’ (Acharia 2008, 492).

At his turn, Gerd Oberleitner considers that “human security as a distinctive new concept was created and shaped by Mahbub ul-Haq in and around the 1994 UNDP Development Report’ (Oberleitner 2005, 185) and Wolfgang Benedek is of the opinion that ‘the concept of human security (...) in 2014 reached 20 years of age (...) In 1994, with the publication of the Human Development Report, the UNDP started its focus on the human person and launched the concept of human security” (Benedek 2016, 140).

Georg Frerks and Berma Klein Goldewijk maintain that ‘UNDP’s Human Development Report of 1994 catapulted the notion of human security into policy discourse and - looking back - the introduction of the concept can be considered a significant event in the academic and policy world’ (Georg Frerk, Berma Klein Goldewijk 2007, 26).

As for Neil S. MacFarlane and Yuen Foong Khong, they indicated that “the UNDP laid the concept of human security on the table” (MacFarlane, Khong 2006, 162), while Christine Chinkin and Mary Kaldor hold the view that “the story of human security usually starts with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report of 1994” which brought together various elements “under the umbrella of the term human security” (Chinkin, Kaldor 2017, 181).

Finally, Šárka Waisová considers that “The concept arose from the ashes of the Cold War during the debate about the new world order” and was “first presented by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in its 1994 Human Development Report” (Šárka Waisová 2018, 80).

It follows that the idea of identifying the origin of the term human security with the publication of *Human Development Report* for 1994 is a well-established one within the academic field so that proving its inaccuracy entails significant consequences.

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN SECURITY AS DEFINED BY NIELS BOHR, SITHU U THANT, AND THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Niels Bohr's open letter to the United Nations from 1950 is part of his efforts since 1944 to persuade policymakers to take the measures that he considered necessary for avoiding a nuclear arms race and a nuclear war. In early 1944, when Bohr and other physicists worked in the United States to build the first atomic bomb, Bohr realized the profound moral implications of the creation of this weapon and brought them to the attention of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Winston Churchill, during a conversation with him that took place on 16 of May 1944 (Aaserud 2003, 307-309). The same reasons determined Bohr to equally present these implications to the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, on the occasion of a meeting held on 26 of August 1944 and by

means of two memoranda he sent to him on 3 of July 1944, and on 24 of March 1945 (Aaserud 2003, 307-309, Pais 1993, 517).

The reaction of the two politicians was not a favorable one, as they not only refused to follow the proposals put forward by Bohr, but even started to consider him as a potential danger for keeping the atomic bomb secret. This failure did not cause Bohr to renounce but determined him on 17 of May 1948 to address a memorandum to Harry Truman, Roosevelt's successor as President of the United States, an initiative which failed to persuade him to change the US policy on energy and nuclear weapons (S. G. Suvorov 1985, 935- 936).

In this open letter from 1950, Bohr resumed the most important passages from the two memoranda sent to Franklin D. Roosevelt and developed the ideas included therein (Bohr 1950). Bohr pointed out that atomic weapons pose a permanent threat to the existence of human civilization, of common security, of world security and of human security, but argued that this threat could be completely eliminated by establishing an international system for verifying the use of atomic energy to which all states should adhere (Bohr 1950, 6). According to Bohr, such a system involved building a climate of trust between states by ensuring absolutely free access to scientific and technical achievements in the nuclear field given that keeping secrecy about them, albeit considered by states that disposed of nuclear weapons to be indispensable for their own security, was, in fact, a major source of insecurity for them all (Bohr 1950, 4).

Bohr was of the opinion that the negotiations for the establishment of a system for verifying the use of atomic energy should have taken place within the United Nations because one of the objectives assumed by this organization was the cooperation between states in areas of common interest, and the scientific field, in particular that of nuclear energy, was one of these areas (Bohr 1950, 5).

It is to be remarked that Bohr understood by human security the protection of people from the devastating effects of a nuclear war, which means that he conceived human security as the protection of any person against the physical violence represented by this type of interstate armed conflict. Given that he spoke about both international security and human security, one could maintain that he distinguished between the security of states and the security of their population. It follows that, considered from the point of view of the population of a state, the threat to human security that Bohr referred to originated from outside of that state, that is from another state. The fact that Bohr argued that the United Nations had to be entrusted with the coordination of the negotiations for establishing the cooperation and transparency in the nuclear field proves that he assigned to the United Nations a central role in providing human security.

As for the statement by Sithu U Thant, David Bosold cites the following passage: `the massive sums devoted to armaments do not increase international or national or human security or happiness` (Bosold 2011, 30). U Thant expresses here the idea that war is a threat to human security, which means that human security means protection against physical violence, but he indicates a different mean for providing human security, namely the reduction of the nation budgets for armaments. It is to be remarked that the former UN Secretary-General differentiated between international security, national security and human security so that it is possible to maintain that he operated a distinction between the security of states and the security of their population. Considering the population of a given state, it could be said that U Thant refers to a threat to its human security coming from outside that state under the form of an international armed conflict, be it conventional or nuclear.

According to the 1994 *Human Development Report*, human security refers to the security of people from within states, thus going beyond state security (national security), and it is made up from seven dimensions, each of them associated with specific threats (United Nations Development Programme 1994, 24-33). Thus, it was maintained therein that threats could endanger economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security. This document indicates that many of these threats come from within states, some of them having national authorities as their source, while others, such as international wars as a category of armed conflicts distinct from internal wars, are threats which originate from outside states.

International war as a threat to human security is included in the category of personal security where it is classified as a threat from other states (United Nations Development Programme 1994, 30).

CONCLUSIONS

The perspective on human security put forward by Niels Bohr and Sithu U Thant are quite similar given that they connect human security with the population of each state, because they distinguish the security of states from human security, and because they consider international war as a threat to human security.

One could also observe that UNDP, similar to Bohr and U Thant, operate a distinction between human security and state security, linking the former with the population of each state, and treat international war as a threat to human security. However, unlike Bohr and U Thant, UNDP considers international war as just one among many threats to human security so that it broadens the scope of human security.

It follows that the concept of human security used by both Bohr and U Thant was narrow compared to the concept of human security employed in the 1994 Human Development Report but not irrelevant for this one. Consequently, it could be argued that Bohr and U Thant operated with a concept that is part of the evolution of the concept of human security which, consequently, did not start with the 1994 *Human Development Report* but much earlier, this document representing only a landmark in that evolution.

The findings of this article indicate that it is possible to identify other examples of the use of the term human security before the publication of the 1994 Human Development Report, so that further research on its roots has to be undertaken.

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THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THEIR APPROACH TO SECURITY ISSUES

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Abstract

In the 21st century, security is being discussed very often and extensively throughout the world it is one of the highest values in the life of all mankind and in the personal life of every human being. Although there are great historical, cultural and political differences between continents or even between regions we can say that humanity as a whole has experienced many historical stages characterized by concern for safety or even survival was at the top of the imaginary scale of values. Opposite that period of calm and reduced concerns about the security of states or even the whole world used to be, unfortunately, rarer and also shorter. Opinions on security have undergone a rich historical development, which has resulted in a number of established concepts that are commonly used in discussions on this topic. It follows that in the study of international security relations, it is essential that we use the most important terms and at the same time show that the meaning and content of these terms are often explained from different angles. It is therefore very important to examine the various theories of international relations and their approach to security issues.

Keywords: security; international security relations; development; theories.

INTRODUCTION

In international relations, security is defined as a fundamental value and the ultimate goal of any state or multi-state security community. Security as a condition is most often explained as the absence of a threat the highest values of the state or community. The state is safe if the defense of its territory and the values that lie on it, the functioning of its institutions, is ensured and protection of the population (Warren 2019, 50–54). As far as states are concerned, there is talk of an objective and subjective sense of their security. The first of these cases means that the values shared by society are not exposed to any direct threat. And subjective sense means that there is no fear that these shared values could be attacked. They are then derived from these fundamental questions: what dangers could threaten the security of the state and its survival, how could show how to deal with them (Waissová 2004, 78). Each state's efforts to ensure its own security focus on three main goals. The first goal is to eliminate possible threats, whether military or non-military character. The second is to ensure internal order and coherence, which is stronger the clearer the collective nature of the decisions taken. And finally, the third goal it is linked to ensuring the justice and security of citizens. State security can also be defined negatively or positively. According to the negative definition, security is a state under which the state is not exposed to any direct and an urgent threat and the ideas on which it was based are not called into question. We can talk about a positive definition of the security of states or security communities in that where the defense of their territory and of the values situated therein is ensured, when their institutions can function and their population is protected (Buzan, et al. 2009).

Security issues are constantly addressed in all theories of international relations. The most important are realism/neorealism, liberalism/neoliberalism, constructivism and critical theory (Figure1).

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Each of these is the result of an examination of international security relations and a certain perspective. None of them is perfect; none of them has universal validity. The relevance of any of these theories is not absolute, it is always relative. In examining international security relations, it is not possible to prove the truth of one theory and at the same time it is not possible to reject one theory at the expense of another. The theory of international relations is not a direct coherent discourse, it is a dialogue between conflicting paradigms that has been going on for several centuries and which will continue for a long time to come (Sheehan 2005, 201).

In the research we will clarify the liberal-idealistic approach, the realistic school, the constructivist approach, critical theories and radical theories views on international relations. The research focused on indication of shortcomings in the case of realism and liberalism and for a basic assessment in the case of the constructivist approach, critical theory and radical theory. Before ruling any court on the solved scientific problem of international relations and their approach to security issues, we try to determine how it coincides with objects that are already known to us and how they differ from them. For this reason, we used the method of comparison in the research, which is of great importance in clarifying the processes of change, development and dynamics of the researched problem and the regularities of its development. In addition, qualitative methods of information analysis and synthesis were used, which are used at all stages as well as at all stages of scientific research (Snyder, 2017, 117).

LIBERAL-IDEALISTIC APPROACH

He sees the liberal-idealistic approach to international security relations primarily as the result of security cooperation between states that, in their mutual relations, favour friendliness and cooperation over conflicts and wars. Liberalism is based on Kant's theory of democratic peace, in which democratic states prefer peace to war in relations with other democracies, because the basic interest of their people is to secure life and well-being, as opposed to costly and unnecessarily costly violent adventures (Huntzinger 1987, 731).

COMPETING PARADIGMS	REALISM	LIBERALISM	CONSTRUCTIVISM
Main Theoretical Proposition	Self-interested states compete constantly for power or security	Concern for power overridden by economic, political considerations (desire for prosperity, commitment to liberal values)	State behavior shaped by elite beliefs, collective norms, and social identities
Main Units of Analysis	States	States	Individuals (especially elites)
Main Instruments	Economic and especially military power	Varies (international institutions, economic exchange, promotion of democracy)	Ideas and discourse
Modern Theorists	Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz	Michael Doyle, Robert Keohane	Alexander Wendt, John Ruggie

Figure 1. Three main theories of International Relations (Introduction to International Relations Theory & Its Problems, 2012, <https://medium.com/discourse/introduction-to-international-relations-theory-its-problems-500197447a63>)

Two basic methods – collective security and arms control

Karen Mingst states that the liberal idealistic approach favours two basic methods of averting threats between states: collective security and arms and disarmament control

(Mingst, et al. 1998, 172). The first method, that is, collective security, is based on the idea that members of a certain group of states warn against the use of force in their mutual relations and seek to defend any of them that would be attacked by external forces. The highest level of mutual security guarantees is collective defence, which is the basis of NATO, just as it was the basis of the Warsaw Pact, which existed in 1955-1990. It is based on the provision that an attack on one of them will be considered an attack on the others. In this context, equally hard security has recently been used (Nayef 2007).

Three preconditions for collective security

Collective security is based on three basic assumptions. According to the first of them, it is possible to prevent wars by restricting military actions. The second assumption is that it is possible to stop the aggression, because it is possible to easily detect the aggressor and prevent him from carrying out his intentions. And according to the third assumption, the aggressor knows that the international community would punish him for his action. However, the history of international security relations has shown that there are a number of pitfalls in fulfilling these preconditions: it is still not easy to say who an aggressor is, it has often happened that an aggressor has not been punished (Wilson 2014, 11).

Arms control and its basic characteristics

The second method - arms control and disarmament – is based on the assumption that fewer weapons means more security, and expects this assumption to reduce the cost of the security dilemma. Post-war history contains a number of agreements that have contributed to international security relations. However, even arms control cannot overcome the security dilemma, nor has it been possible to prevent an increase in the number of nuclear-armed states (Coe, Vaynman 2020, 342).

Pros and cons of a liberal-idealistic approach

Both basic methods of the liberal-idealistic approach in the study of the threat of war place a decisive emphasis on the collective efforts of the international community. As such, relations between democratic countries, which have very close, if not even the same expectations, approaches to issues of peace and security, are well suited. The more democracy there is in the world, the better for international security cooperation.

However, the liberal-idealistic approach also has two basic pitfalls. The first is relations between democratic states on the one hand and undemocratic or even dictatorial on the other. The second pitfall is the interrelationship between undemocratic and dictatorial states (Huntzinger 1987, 107). The Cold War has shown that the first pitfalls can be addressed by arms control and confidence-building measures. The second pitfall is much more serious — dictatorial states can only cooperate as long as they have common interests and goals. If this is not the case, security cooperation will end and armed conflicts will ensue. The most serious and toughest war between the two dictatorial regimes was the Iraqi-Iranian war in 1980-1988.

REALISTIC SCHOOL

Basic characteristics and the most important authors

The realist school differs from liberalism in that it places significantly less hope into the international community and is all the more focused on the power of individual states and their influence on international politics. According to realists, this is the result of relations between states characterized by congenital inconsistencies. Realists are the main feature of the behaviour of states considers a sustained effort to fulfil their interests. At the top of the hierarchy interests of all states are the vital interests, which are the survival of the state, the preservation of its territorial integrity and political sovereignty. Realists attach great importance to strength and determination states to use it in order to achieve their objectives.

Hans Morgenthau, author of the "Bible of Realism" (Morgenthau 1965), formulated 6 principles of a world of conflicting interests, in which "one must strive to do as little evil as possible than the

realization of absolute good" (Drulák 2003, 57). For an objective and universally valid category he described the national interest and the survival of the state as the absolute interest. This clearly defined what may be the subject of the most serious security threats.

Kenneth N. Waltz, considered the founder of neorealism, concluded that "Each state promotes its own interests, using methods that it considers to be those best. To the extent that there is no consistent and reliable process for reconciling conflicts interests, in which, in conditions of anarchy, similar units necessarily end up, force is one of the tools for achieving external goals. Foreign policy built on such a conception of international relations is neither moral nor immoral, but reflects with a rational response to the world around us".

K. Waltz followed the concept of survival as an absolute interest of every state. He stressed that only those States can survive in the anarchic structure of international relations, which are constantly looking after their security. K. Waltz considers security threats to be one of the key factors in the anarchic structure of international relations. States cooperate if they perceive a threat and evaluate it as a common threat. When such a threat disappears, cooperation also weakens.

According to classical realists, the behaviour of states is a manifestation of innate human inclination to gain power and to maintain and strengthen it. And so they conclude that "In some countries, vital interests may expand and away from interest in survival to advance international influence" (Walt 1998, 84). Realists see international security relations as a constant rivalry between states for power and security. They consider economic and especially military force to be the main tools for achieving security interests. They expected the post-bipolar world to return to open rivalry for power and influence on world politics.

Robert Cooper states that realism is characterized by the idea that "it can be good in the end be bad for the people you serve. Moral goals can also be achieved by that you think in the plane of force and its retention instead of constantly clamping yourself only to what you consider morally good" (Cooper 2005, 25). At the same time, however, he draws attention to the basics the pitfall of realism in the field of security - it is the restriction of power to exclusively military tools. He considers military interventions to spread democracy to be particularly risky and stability. Recognizes that intervention armies can create a favourable external security environment, but points out those intervening armies are not equipped to abroad create constitutional arrangements (Baylis 2011, 234).

Balance of forces as a central category

Realists conclude that conflicts of interest, conflict and war are essential features of international security relations. They believe that peace can only exist on the basis of a balance of power. They do not consider this to be the ideal solution and acknowledge that it is not synonymous with justice. At the same time, however, they view the balance of power as for the only effective protection against egoism, shocks and inclinations to hegemonies. Neorealist "renounce anthropological premises in favour of a systemic imperative: the need to ensure survival in an anarchic environment without a sovereign that would ensure security, means that states must take care of the means to provide them duration" (Morgan 2000, 371).

The balance of power is based on the premise that states strive to ensure their security makes rational and predictable assessments of the costs and benefits of its policies, and there is international balance is ensured. This is considered to be the most important way of ensuring security. The disadvantages of this method are manifested in times of revolutionary change in international security relations.

Basic methods of achieving balance of forces

There are several methods for achieving and maintaining a balance of power in international security relations as a prerequisite for stability. The following are most often mentioned: (Terrif, at al.1999, 56-57)

- a "divide and rule" policy, in which the balancer joins the side of a weaker state, and thus reduce the advantage of a stronger state,
- territorial compensation for war winners,

- the creation of "buffer states" zones,
- building security alliances,
- maintaining spheres of influence,
- intervention,
- diplomatic negotiations,
- dispute settlement through legal and peaceful instruments,
- starting a war as a way to maintain or restore the required balance.

Deterrence

The theory of deterrence is based on the belief that war between states can be averted through the threat of the use of force. The first prerequisite for its effectiveness is the rationality of those who make decisions on behalf of states - they are expected to avoid war. The second assumption is that the weapons forming the deterrent potential have such destructive force that no politician will commit to armed aggression against the country, who owns these weapons. And the third assumption says that war always has an alternative. In other words, the threat must be very serious and credible, and at the same time there are viable non - military solutions to conflicts of interest in security relations between states or coalitions (Mingst, et al.1998, 360).

We can be a textbook example of the fulfilment of all the above assumptions considered the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. The then American President J. F. Kennedy bet on the rationality of his then Soviet Opponent N. S. Khrushchev, relied on the credible deterrent potential of the United States and directed the negotiations to an alternative solution, which was the dismantling of Soviet launchers missiles in Cuba.

Basic shortcomings of realism

Patrick Morgan evaluates them very aptly: (Morgan 2000, 45–47)

- it cannot be shown that international anarchy must have precisely the same consequences as claims realists,
- realists and especially neorealist describe international security relations too much static and cyclic,
- realists overestimate the importance of state preferences in the field of security and do not appreciate the importance of such factors as the effects of currents of opinion within states,
- the liberalization effects of US policy during the cold period remained out of their interest of war.

CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH

A constructivist approach to security issues and security cooperation is characterized, first of all, by doubts that there are solid, unchanging quasi-natural structures in international security relations. It rejects the view, that the conduct of states and other security policy makers would be determined in advance by some laws of an international nature. Constructivists believe that international security relationships are dependent on the interpretation of the actors, and are therefore socially constructed. He views structures in international security relations and the behaviour of states as controllable and variable phenomena. State action can have a greater or lesser effect on international security structures. Based on this, there are more or less significant ones' changes in the international security environment.

The constructivist conception of international security relations is based on two things basic elements. The first is structures that give states and security communities the opportunity to ease international tensions and widen the scope for non-aggressive behaviour. The second element is security policy actors (most often States) – they create and influence the structures and tools of action that are an alternative to rivalry and tendencies to gain dominance. International structures are designed and used to promote positive constitutive and regulatory changes standards of international security relations. Constructivists recommend a safety culture (Katzenstein 1996), which they see as

a set of values, norms and practical measures for theoretical and practical activities in the field of security. They see security culture as a stabilizing structure that is the result of the interaction of security discourses.

CRITICAL THEORY

Critical theory is most often characterized as a guide to strategic action towards an alternative arrangement. Richard Devetak adds that "Critical international theory considers the current order to be full of inequality and injustice on a global scale, and it also bases its leaning on it to an alternative vision of the world order." (Devetak 1996, 151). This approach is also reflected in research international security relations – R. Devetak calls it "critical security studies". These differ from traditional security studies in that, in addition to the basic ones Two more questions ask "what is security?" The first of them express the words "who and against whom is security ensured in the current international order?" The next question is "whose security should we care about?" This defines the key the problem of examining the relationship between inclusiveness and security exclusivity. Criticism is directed against the inclusion of inclusive in a positive way, because internal structures offer order, stability, security and safety. On the other hand, external disorder - in realistic speech it is anarchy - is shattered in threats, risks and dangers.

RADICAL THEORIES (MARXISM AND NEOMARXISM)

Radical theories assess the organization of international security relations as a result of historical development. They attach great importance to the study of economics and social contexts and determinants. The neo-Marxists base their critical views on the current order in many ways on methods and knowledge of international political economy. (IPE – International Political Economy). They draw attention above all economic and social sources of military and non-military security threats. His criticism of the current organization of international security relations are based primarily on the theory of structural power, which focuses on four basic structures: safety, knowledge, production and finance. This theory is very critical of US policy, which it considers to be the dominant player in security relations at the global level.

At the same time, however, it should be noted that the mere connection to the IPE is not a monopoly of the neo-Marxists. We meet him, for example, in the White Paper on the Defence of France of 1994, which, as one of the first doctrinal documents after the end of the Cold War, drew attention to deepening global economic inequality and described it as "Serious risk of destabilization". The Manifesto, for example, drew on some findings from IPE prominent French politicians and experts or Graham Allison, Karl Kaiser and Sergei Karaganov (The Oxford Handbook 2008, 137).

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, schools differ in their approach to security and security threats in a number of areas. Each of them has its strengths and weaknesses. Realism does not explain everything. Liberal theory identifies the tools that states use to achieve shared interests and helps us understand why states differ in their basic preferences. Constructivist theories are best adapted to analyse how identities and interests change over time (Walt 1998, 40). This is compounded by the fact that constructivist theories, as well as some liberals, have more or less detached themselves from the state centrism that is typical of neorealism.

However, all major schools respect two important facts. The first is the determining influence of historical contexts. They must take into account that perceptions of threats and security change as political-power reflections evolve. For example, even before World War II, the United States considered Great Britain a threat because its economic empire blocked the further development of its economy. However, they fundamentally reconsidered their approach in the face of the urgent threat of the fascist powers, which became a threat to the survival of the liberal-economic concept as such.

The second fact, which goes beyond the differences of individual schools, is the time factor in defining the urgency of the security threat. The most urgent security threat is those states or

coalitions of states that are currently at the peak of their strength and know that further developments would already lead to a reduction in their lead and dominance. At such a moment, they are trying to use all available means to unleash a symmetrical, asymmetrical conflict in order to defeat the states that, so to speak, stand in their way as quickly and easily as possible.

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THE SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN CRISIS

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Abstract

The crisis in Ukraine in early 2014 marked a turning point in the history of international relations. A number of specialists in the field of political science have sought to explain the reasons for the occurrence of such events in the 21st century and what implications they may have for the global security system, especially in the regional one. This article analyzes the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on the security of the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: National security; repercussions; Russian-Ukrainian crisis; Republic of Moldova; Russian Federation; Ukraine.

Lately, the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, which started in 2014 and has lasted for more than five years, as concerns of international politics and diplomacy, became an important subject of discussion. The interest of the researchers and decision-makers in the field of international politics, was directed to the relations between the two states - the Russian Federation and Ukraine. This is due to the fact that both the Russian Federation and Ukraine have been for the past years objects of a particular interest, caused by events such as: the actions of the Russian Federation in Eastern Ukraine, the Russian occupation of the Crimean peninsula. The analysis of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis impact on regional security, as well as on the security of the Republic of Moldova particularly - a genuine topic in the speeches of politicians and scientific researchers. For a better understanding of this phenomenon, it is necessary to highlight some aspects that the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis could have on the security of the Republic of Moldova.

Another premise behind the Russian-Ukrainian crisis is Ukraine's support for the Saakashvili regime in Georgia, along with it he has sought to form the CIS "Democratic Choice Community" - or a pro-Western cordon around the Russian Federation. Also, the proximity of Ukraine to NATO, the support of the location of the anti-missile shield in Eastern Europe conditioned the negative reaction from the Russian Federation. While analyzing the events in Ukraine in the light of the geostrategic interests of the Russian Federation and the West World, we understand that Ukraine has become the scene of disputes and confrontations among the geopolitical actors. The EU looks forward to include Ukraine within its sphere of influence. Thus, for Europe, Ukraine is not only a vast territory with a population of 46 million inhabitants, but can serve as a shield in ensuring the security of the neighboring states at its border. The states that will form the sanitary cordon, according to the interests of the EU, must become supporters of the democratic values and become marketplaces for the European goods, respectively. Although the liberalization of Ukrainian markets is in favor of EU trade policy, it can serve as a weapon for the internal market as well.

Although the Association Agreement with the EU is initialled, its implementation is lengthy. The annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation served as a strategic result, which fortifies the

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Russian power in the religious, cultural and historical space and also contributing to the strengthening of Russia's position in the Black Sea area. Likewise, the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Russia represents the picture of the contemporary victory, achieved after 1945, as well as the demonstration that Russian territories can be returned peacefully, within the national consciousness while the confrontation between West and East continues. The territorial annexation of Crimea also represents several negative aspects, which have changed the architecture of the Eastern European space. The rupture of the commercial-economic relations with the West, the destruction of the monetary system, the destabilization of the financial situations of the citizens, caused the transition to the new standards.

Thus, for a better understanding of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis repercussions on the security of the Republic of Moldova, occurs the need to identify the factors that could condition threats and risks for the country's security.

A brand new political impetus "Novorossia" claimed by Russian President V. Putin, who at the press conference on April 17, 2014 stated that Harikov, Donetsk, Lugansk, Kherson, Nikolaev and Odessa are areas that constitute "Novorossia" and historically these areas did not belong to Ukraine. According to President Putin, "Novorossia" was included in the composition of Ukraine by the Bolsheviks as a result of the 1917 revolution. In the summer of 2014, the concept of the "Novorossia" confederation was formulated and was to include the southern and eastern regions of Ukraine: Odessa, Kherson, Nikolaev, Dnepropetrovsk, Zaporozhye, Harikov, Donetsk and Lugansk (see Annex 1). As a result of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, actually only the popular republics of Lugansk and Donetsk were created.

Currently, according to some specialists opinions, the "Novorossia" project can be considered outdated. The failure of this project is due to countermeasures taken by the West in response to the actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine² (*Рада и «закон Савченко»: отмена ошибки?*). Thus, in the opinion of M. Emerson, a British political scientist, specialist in post-Soviet space issues, the countermeasures taken by the West against the Russian Federation were an important step in changing Russia's strategic intentions in the relations with Ukraine³ (*Численность и состав населения Одесской области по итогам Всеукраинской переписи населения 2001 года. Государственный комитет статистики Украины*). Although it is considered failed, it is not excluded that this project will be reactivated by the Russian Federation in the meantime. Thus, in order to determine the impact of a possible reactivation of the "Novorossia" project on the security of the Republic of Moldova, there is a need to examine the conditions and factors that could contribute to a possible extension. For a better understanding of the situation created in the region, it is mandatory to examine the factors that would destabilize the situation and pose threats to regional security.

A first factor that could lead to the reactivation of the "Novorossia" project is the presence of Russian military forces and weapons within the Donbas area. In the Donbas conflict, most of the forces of the Military Tactical Group were formed as a result of merging between the military forces of the brigades positioned in the southern region: 136, 18, 17, 8, 19, 205, 33, 34th motorized brigade, 291st artillery brigade including military base 7. (*Численность и состав населения Одесской области*, p. 68).

Also, in the Donbas area there are located 12 military units, used in order to react operatively in critical situations and in case of threat of strategic objects such as: Ilovaisk, Debalițevo, Donetsk airport. The special units of the General Research Command are present in the Donbas area. 7 subdivisions of the General Research Command of the Russian Federation were detected, which are active for diversionist and research purposes. These forces occupy the administrative buildings, attacking the Ukrainian forces, being integrated under the cover of false documents, they hold high positions of responsibility - from deputy commander to lower commanders and specialists, serving

² *Рада и «закон Савченко»: отмена ошибки?* <https://ru.krymr.com/a/28499518.html>

³ *Численность и состав населения Одесской области по итогам Всеукраинской переписи населения 2001 года. Государственный комитет статистики Украины.* <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/rus/results/general/nationality/odessa/>

contemporary technique and armament⁴ (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, p.68).

Representatives of 4 units of the naval forces are also identified in the area. The soldiers of the 61st Marine Brigade and the representatives of the 200th Special Purpose Brigade of the Northern Maritime Fleet who, during 2014-2015, were activated in Lugansk. Since 2015, the tactical group 99 of the northern fleet has been present in the Donetsk area. The soldiers of the 810th Marine Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet deployed in the Crimea were observed in 2016 in the direction of Mariupol.

The Rosgvardia National Army was also noticed, thus, 5 subunits were identified - with contracted military personnel with military experience in the North Caucasus. In Donbas are still present the special purpose operational brigades number 46 and 451, the special purpose detachment 15 called "Veatici" (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, p.69)

In addition to this military potential, military forces of missile defense and radio equipment were also discovered in the Donbas area, which are part of the structure of the military-cosmic forces belonging to the Russian Federation. In the spring of 2015, were identified units of the 338th subdivision of the 4th Regiment of the army, in whose competence was located the airspace control ("Kast" and "Nebo" type radar stations). Also were spotted ZRPK "Pañiri", ZRK "Buk" involved in the downing of "Boeing MH17". Several soldiers from units stationed in the Middle East, in the Arctic, Tajikistan, were also pointed. In the military operations in Donbas are attracted the soldiers present in the units deployed in the territories occupied by the Russian Federation - Abkhazia, Crimea, and even the Transnistrian area of the Republic of Moldova (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, pp. 69-70).

A component of the aggression of the Russian Federation in Donbas is the arming of the military with weapons and special equipment. Thus, based on the observations made by the Research Agency Inform Napalm, in the conflict zone of Ukraine were identified over 40 types of military equipment belonging to the Russian Federation. A large part of the latest technique equipment was deployed during 2004-2015 years. Also, in order to handle the specific technique, special training of personnel was mandatory (this proves that Russian military personnel is active in the Donbas area).

Russian military equipment located in the eastern part of Ukraine includes: armored cars GAZ-233014, "Tiger", GAZ-39371, "Vodnik", KamAZ -43269, "Vistrel", TAB 82 A, tanks T- 72 (model 1989), T-72BA (model 1999), T-72B3 (model 2011), T-90A (model 2006), T-72 C1, trucks model KamAZ-5350 "mustang", "Ural 632301", "Ural-43206", RSZO 2B26, 9K58 "Smerci", CHAP1 RL232-2M, ZRK9K330 "Tor", 9K331 "Tor M-1" and 9K332 "Tor M-2", ZRPK 96K6 "Pañiri-C1". There are radio stations R-166-0.5, R-441-OB "Liveni", KŞM R-149BMR "Kuşetka-B", REB RB-341B "Leer-3", REB R- 378b "Borisoglebsk-2", REB R-934UM, REB R-330 J "Jiteli", REB "Torn", REB "Rtuti BM", RB-636AM2, "Svet-KU", BLLA "Granat-1", "Granat-2", "Forpost", "Orlan-10", "Eleron-3SB", "Zastava" [17, pp.68-80]. In the Donbas area, Soviet model equipment was used in military operations such as: T-64 tanks, T-72B, 2C1 "Gvozdika" artillery installations, "Strela-10" anti-aircraft complex, fighting machines. of infantry "BMP-1", "BMP-2", multifunctional armored tractors "MT-LB", howitzers caliber 122 mm "D-30" and caliber 152 mm "Msta-B", anti-tank guns MT-12 "Rapira" (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, pp. 80-81).

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has accused Moscow of increasing the presence of troops in the area under cover of military exercises on the border with the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. Thus, according to UN data, the conflict in Donbas has resulted in about 14,000 deaths since its outbreak in 2014.

Ukraine's Military Intelligence Service warned that Russia has begun preparations to force the Ukrainian army to respond to the "hostile actions" on the demarcation line in Donbas. This would serve as an excuse for Russia to increase its military presence in the separatist territories of eastern Ukraine by introducing "regular units" with the alleged aim of "protecting Russian citizens", given that tens of thousands of Ukrainians in Donbas have already received Russian passports.

⁴ Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта. Львов: Прометей. 2017, с. 29-30

This scenario has already happened in 2008 in South Ossetia, when Georgian troops entered the territory of the separatist after facing several challenges, falling into Moscow's trap, according to Russian independent experts, which triggered Russia's military intervention, under the pretext of "imposing peace", which led to the recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and the other Georgian separatist region of Abkhazia by the Russian Federation⁵ (SUA și NATO, în alertă, după escaladarea tensiunilor între Rusia și Ucraina în Donbas).

In the context of the events in the eastern part of Ukraine, it is worth paying attention to the social factor, which determines the vectors and interests of the foreign policy of a state, in this case Ukraine. The Ukrainian population, especially in the south-eastern parts of the country, remains skeptical about Ukraine's integration into the EU. Thus, according to the survey conducted by the group "Reiting", the population of the cities Dnieper (49%), Zaporozhye (35%), Harikov (32%), Mariupoli (24%), Severodonetsk (23%) voted for Ukraine's accession to the EU. Supporters of Ukraine's EU integration are in Lvov (86%), Ivano-Frankovsk (85%) and Uzhgorod (82%). For the integration into the Eurasian space, the Ukrainian population voted also in Mariupol (37%), Odessa (29%), Harikov (27%). The lowest percentage (2%) regarding Ukraine's accession to the Eurasian project was obtained in the western part of the country (Феномен Новороссии по-прежнему присутствует в политическом поле Украины). Unlike the situation in the south-eastern areas of Ukraine in 2016, currently, the vast majority of the population is in favor of Ukraine's integration into the EU.

Another factor that could have an impact on the regional security, including the security of the Republic of Moldova, can be considered the stability / instability of the Odessa region. In the last years 2016-2017 Odessa has become a city where the increase in crime and the number of extremist organizations came out of the control of Kiev⁶ («Правый сектор» и криминал делят Одессу на сферы влияния).

During Tsarist Russia, Odessa ranked 5th in the empire in terms of crime, mostly such as theft. Odessa is currently out of the control of the law enforcement agencies of Ukraine. Thus, according to statistics, in 2015, crime in the Odessa region increased by 21%, compared to 2014, and in 2016 - by 45%. Particularly serious crimes increased from 355 to 717 annually, and serious crimes - from 4397 to 6295. Also, during that period, there is an increase of 76.0% in murder cases, as well as doubling of rape cases. According to V. Serdiuk, head of the National Police Department, the situation in Odessa in recent years has become critical. The causes of the increase in crime in Odessa are - economic stagnation, declining income, loss of jobs, political and social instability, illegal distribution of weapons in the eastern part of Ukraine.

The return of the combatants to their motherland, which in the absence of a service, were involved in criminal activities. Another factor that contributed to the increase of crime in Odessa was the adoption and approval by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on November 26, 2015 (entered into force on December 24, 2015) of Law No. 838-VIII on the introduction of amendments in the Criminal Code of Ukraine with reference to the order and term of detention of detainees. This law was called Savchenko's law, according to which one day of detention was equivalent to 2 working days, which led to shortening the detention period in prisons of detainees. Although Savchenko's so-called law was repealed on June 21, 2017⁷ (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001) (Верховная рада Украины отменила «закон Савченко», сокращавший сроки уголовникам 2017), many detainees have already been released, and they are now continuing their illegal activities. The reform of the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine has no less impact on the situation in Odessa, which has led to the replacement of professional staff with unskilled / non-professional staff. Another aspect that diminishes the security of Odessa is the fight of interests between the politicians Poroshenko, Kolomoiskii, Tymoshenko for the influence in the area, especially

⁵ SUA și NATO, în alertă, după escaladarea tensiunilor între Rusia și Ucraina în Donbas. https://deschide.md/ro/stiri/externe/82945/SUA-%C5%9Fi-NATO-%C3%AEn-alert%C4%83-dup%C4%83-escaladarea-tensiunilor-%C3%AEntre-Rusia-%C5%9Fi-Ucraina-%C3%AEn-Donbas.htm?fbclid=IwAR2608RmIFe5NM8WmUHvZKOrCREJAlia4_DrHRZ_vgSjZvJKUcdf1QUE4k

⁶ «Правый сектор» и криминал делят Одессу на сферы влияния. <https://vz.ru/world/2015/3/5/732919.html>

⁷ Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova. Institutul de Politici Publice. Chișinău 2001.

⁸ Верховная рада Украины отменила «закон Савченко», сокращавший сроки уголовникам. <http://www.mk.ru/social/2017/05/18/verkhovnaya-rada-ukrainy-otmenila-zakon-savchenko-sokrashhavshiy-sroki-ugolovnikam.html>

the fight to have a monopoly over the four ports, the customs, the market "sedimoj kilometer", points which bring income and through which the greatest crimes are committed.

Another aspect of Odessa security, including regional security, is the polarization of the city. The presence of the "right-wing sector" and pro-Russian forces lead to a destabilization of the situation, to an increase in crime⁹ (Оганджанов И. Беспредел у моря: как Одесса превратилась в криминальную столицу Украины).

The multiethnic aspect of the Odessa population could also destabilize the situation dramatically. Thus, according to the general census of the population, conducted in 2001, in the Odessa area live over 133 ethnic groups: Ukrainians -1542.3 thousand (62.8%); Russians -508 thousand (20, 7%); Bulgarians - 150.7 thousand (6.1%); Moldovans -123, 8 thousand (5%); Gagauzia - 27, 6 thousand (1.1%); Jews-13.4 thousand (0.6%); Belarusians-12.8 thousand (0.5%); Armenians-7.4 thousand (0.3%); romi-4.0 thousand (0.2%); Polish-3.2 thousand (0.1%); Germans - 2.9 thousand (0.1%); Georgians - 2.8 thousand (0.1%); azeri-2.7 thousand (0.1%); Tatars - 2.6 thousand (0.1%); Greeks 2.1 thousand (0.1%); Albanians-1.9 thousand (0.1); arabi-1.3 thousand (0.1%); other ethnic groups-45, 6 thousand (1.9%) (Численность и состав населения ОдесскоВсеукраинской переписи населения 2001 года. Государственный комитет статистики Украины 2001).

A direct threat to the security of the Republic of Moldova is the Region that claims to be a sovereign and independent state is the territory of the Republic of Moldova on the left bank of the Dniester River, which occupies an area of 3.7 thousand km², which represents 11% of the territory Republic, with a population of 730 thousand out of the 4380 thousand inhabitants of the country, i.e., 16.7% of the total population. We will mention from the very beginning that there are no preconditions for the political self-determination of this territory. First of all, in this region as shown by the statistical data live: the native population, the Moldovans, which constitute 38.5%, 29.5% - Ukrainians, 25.3% - Russians, 1.6% - Bulgarians, 4, 6% - other nationalities¹⁰ (Феномен Новороссии по-прежнему присутствует в политическом поле Украины). Moldova has become a real hotbed of conflict.

Since 1995, Russia, in order to maintain its military presence in Moldova, has taken the path of transforming the small contingent of Russian troops in Transnistria into peacekeeping forces. The intention of the Russian Federation to turn the former 14th Army into a peacekeeping force is not new. Russia made proposals to Moldova in this regard during the armed conflict in the summer of 1992. On November 22, 1995, the issue of transforming the small contingent of Russian troops from Transnistria into peacekeeping forces was discussed in the Joint Control Commission (JCC). The military formations of the Russian Federation, deployed in the eastern districts of the Republic of Moldova, include the units and subunits of the former 14th Army, which in 1997 were called the Russian Troops Task Force (GOTR). This transformation is explained by the Russian Federation by the considerable decrease of the military presence in the region and by the new peacekeeping missions carried out by its troops. However, the closest explanation to the truth of these metamorphoses would be the following:

1. The continued use of the collocation "The 14th Army" had become too inconvenient for Moscow on the grounds that it was associated with Russia's direct involvement in the military conflict on the part of the separatists.

2. The change of name provided an opportunity to divert attention from Russia's unwillingness to continue to comply with the provisions of the 1992 Agreement. On the principles of conflict settlement in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova according to which military units in the region could not be used in the operation peacekeeping.

3. In 1997 the three-year period for the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from the territory of the Republic of Moldova by the famous Agreement signed in 1994 expired and the Russian Federation was forced to create the impression that even if the entry into force of the agreement in question had been blocked by the Russian Duma, however, Russia shall act to the best of its ability in accordance with the spirit of this Agreement. In reality, no new missions for the Russian troops have

⁹ Оганджанов И. Беспредел у моря: как Одесса превратилась в криминальную столицу Украины. <https://russian.rt.com/article/311089-bespredel-u-morya-kak-odessa-prevratilas-v>.

¹⁰ Феномен Новороссии по-прежнему присутствует в политическом поле Украины. <http://rebels-herald.ru/fenomen-novorossii-po-prezhnemu-prisutstvuet-v-politicheskom-pole-ukrainy/>

occurred and no considerable diminution of the military presence took place. By the end of 1997, only 377 wagons of military equipment had been withdrawn from the Russian Federation, out of the 10,000 or so determined before the 1994 agreement was signed. Radio electronics and logistical equipment, but no tank, armored fighting machine, artillery, anti-tank or anti-aircraft system, no ammunition wagon, etc. had been withdrawn. This trend has not changed further. In 1998 no wagons with GOTR military equipment were withdrawn from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in 1999, 122 wagons with automobiles, engineering equipment and repair equipment were withdrawn, in 2000 again only 40 wagons with automobiles and logistics equipment. (Thus, until now, military equipment was withdrawn from the territory of the Republic of Moldova in a volume not exceeding 5 percent of the volume declared for evacuation in 1994).

From a military point of view, the abrogation of the name "14th Army" seemed to be logical given that several units that were part of this structure until 1992 were on the territory of Ukraine, two military units (from Parcani and Dubasari) passed under the jurisdiction of Tiraspol, and the units in Tiraspol were essentially an infantry division with several reinforcement units. Currently, the structure of the Task Force has remained practically similar to that of the 59th Motorized Infantry Division and includes an infantry brigade (formed on the basis of the 3 infantry regiments of the 59th Division), a tank regiment, artillery, an anti-aircraft missile regiment, an anti-tank artillery division, a reconnaissance battalion, a transmission battalion, insurance subunits, depots, etc. The endowment of Russian troops over 6 years also remained unchanged: 117 T64 tanks in 2000 compared to 120 in 1994, 130 armored fighting vehicles compared to 160 in 1994, 128 pieces of artillery compared to 128 in 1994 and 180 in 1992. The most astonishing conclusion, reached by the military analysts following the timely assessment of the Russian military presence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, is that the total potential of the military forces on the left bank of the Dniester remained virtually the same as in 1992. Those of the reserve in the 14th Army were transformed into semi-deployed military units. Armed forces of the MRI, the decrease of the Russian forces was accompanied by the increase of the military force of the MRI in the same proportion, the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Russian troops pass with the military service in the Transnistrian military units. This way, on the left bank of the Dniester, a military potential much higher than the one existing on the right bank was preserved. The comparison of the potential of two military forces is not based exclusively on the number of categories of weapons and military equipment but, first of all, on their combat potential. Thus, the number of weapons systems, such as artillery, may be comparable, but if some of these systems do not have ammunition or are in a technical condition that no longer allows their use, when evaluating to the real military potential this category can be completely omitted. Also it is worth mentioning that the warehouses in Colbasna are practically divided into two and a part belongs to Tiraspol. At the same time until 1992 on the right bank there were no significant stocks of ammunition and the conditions of financing and activity of the National Army of the Republic of Moldova since its creation and until, it is estimated that ammunition reserves didn't happen. The fact that the army is trying to sell some categories of weapons and equipment is a tangential testimony that these categories do not have a decisive influence on the military potential. Thus, the organizational changes of 1997, making some changes in the structure of Russian military units, did not diminish the Russian military potential in the region, perfectly following the logic of the Strategic Course of the Russian Federation with CIS member states, approved by B.Eltin on 14 September 1995, which declared the Commonwealth of Independent States as an area of vital interest to the Russian Federation and formalized the implementation of the mechanism for maintaining the Russian military presence in the CIS states on principles and forms of military bases. The agreement on the principles of political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, signed in July 1992, determined that the military units of the 14th Army could not be used to carry out peacekeeping missions, given its active involvement in the military conflict, such as and by the fact that about 50% of the officers and about 80% of the non-commissioned officers of these units are semi-locals and, de facto, citizens of the MRI. Thus, Moscow imposed the application of the principle of neutrality and impartiality of the peacekeeping troops in its own elaboration. In the new formula, after the reorganization of the 14th army into GOTR, the fulfillment of peacekeeping missions is no longer attributed to military units brought to the region from

the depths of Russia, but to local troops. In reality, the very acceptance by the Republic of Moldova of Russian military forces as peacekeeping forces was the biggest political mistake that conditioned the blocking of the entire conflict resolution process and is it is a desecration of the very principles of such a process. In fact, the entire peacekeeping operation is, in reality, an operation to preserve the conflict and protect the separatist regime and its consolidation process (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001).

Russia has sought to justify its proposal to provide peacekeeping functions to troops in the 14th Army through the financial difficulties it faces in securing peacekeeping troops. In reality, the Russian proposal was further evidence that Moscow had no intention of complying with the Agreement on the Withdrawal of Russian Troops, an agreement signed with Moldova in October 1994, and "the transfer of the 14th Army's peacekeeping function." will perpetuate its presence in Moldova".

However, the Russian proposal pursued another objective. According to the provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Weapons in Europe, the Russian Federation undertakes to destroy or withdraw from the territory of the Republic of Moldova 5 types of conventional weapons (tanks, armored vehicles, artillery pieces, combat helicopters and attack aircraft). If the Republic of Moldova were to accept the Russian proposal, all or part of its weapons would go to the endowment of the peacekeeping forces", which would mean removing it from the FACE Treaty and therefore Russia, in this case cannot be charged with non-compliance with that Treaty. Russia, as the successor to the Soviet Union, has not reconciled and is not reconciling with diminishing its role in the former USSR. The main interest was to stop the centrifugal tendencies and diminish its influence in this territory.

In the composition of the Armed Forces of a.z. MRI are: units and subunits of infantry, artillery, tanks, air defense, transmissions, aviation, special, insurance and others within the Ministry of Defense; internal troops within the Ministry of Internal Affairs; border guards within the Ministry of State Security; Cossack troops; staffs and popular militia formations; staffs and civil defense formations. At the end of 2000, the number of military formations made up of the Ministry of Defense, the interior troops and the border guards reached 7,200, of which about 3,000 are deployed in the security zone. The Cossack troops (about 3000 pers) and the popular militia (about 3000 pers) are considered active reserve units. In case of military danger, it is expected to increase the staff to about 25,000 people.

Currently the military formations of a.z. MRIs are structured in accordance with their own military doctrine which provides for the maintenance of units with small numbers, but able to triple their numbers in case of need. Thus, each infantry brigade includes command, guard and insurance subunits deployed (which ensure the daily activity of the unit), as well as a battalion deployed by infantry (which ensures the training of recruits and the permanent formation of the military reserve). In case of military danger, it is planned to deploy units to the states of war.

The material basis of military formations a.z. MRI is the combat technique, weapons, equipment, ammunition and other material sources transmitted from the military units of the 14th Army both during the armed conflict in 1992 and in the following period. At the endowment of the military formations of the Ministry of Defense are:

T-64 tanks - 18 units; armored fighting machines 84 units; BTR-60 - 24 p .; BTR-70 - 26 units; BTR-80 - 11 units; BTR-D – 12 units; BRDM - 7 units; BMP - 3 units; MTLB. 1 units. Artillery pieces about 10 units: self-propelled howitzers 122-mm type "Gvozdica" - 18 units; anti-tank cannons 100-mm MT12 - 16 units; 85-mm cannons - 12 units; mine throwers M120 - 45 units; 82-mm mine throwers - 40 a units; BM-21 reactive projectile launch systems. Grade 20 units. Anti-aircraft guns - 49: 100-mm caliber type AZP-100 - 10 units, 57-mm caliber type C-60 - 12 units; of caliber 23mm type ZU 23-2 - 24 units; "Alazani" - 3 units; Anti-aircraft missile systems Complex medium-range anti-aircraft defense complexes (1-18 km) type Osa-2;

Igla type small-range anti-aircraft defense complexes (0.3-5km), about 40 complex units of ПТЯР "FAGOT" type anti-tank missiles, about 30 units; bullet armament about 20,000 a. The aviation subunits are equipped with: 6 helicopters - MI-8T; 2 helicopters - MI-2; 1 aircraft - AH-26; 4 aircraft -

AH-2 (2 for preservation); 2 aircraft - ЯК-18 (50), 10 aircraft ЯК-52. МИ-8Т helicopters are equipped with "HYPC" rocket launchers.

Under the management of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are: the internal troops are intended for the guarding of state objects and the performance of various service and combat tasks. In the composition of the internal troops are: Special Destination Battalion «Dnestr» - t. Tiraspol, 2 patrol detachments Prevomaisk and Parcani, 7 patrol militia sections, the Dniester Battalion is directly subordinated to the Minister of Internal Affairs of the a.z. NMR. The staff has about 400 people. In the eastern part of the Republic of Moldova there are weapons: 82mm caliber mine launchers, anti-tank grenade launchers, machine guns, submachine guns, sniper rifles, etc. The total number of subunits of the internal troops is subordinated to about 700 people.

Another institution that has military forces is the Ministry of State Security of the so-called "Transnistrian Moldovan Republic". The composition of this institution includes the following forces that are part of the Armed Forces of the "NMR": the special purpose battalion "Delta" (deployed in the city of Tiraspol). Its strength is 150 soldiers. Also in the management of the Ministry are weapons: armored vehicles, grenade launchers, small arms, special means. The Cossack Regiment of independent border guards (deployed in the city of Tiraspol) with a force of 300 soldiers is also a component of the Ministry's forces. Also, the Regiment is equipped with infantry armament and about 20 armored personnel carriers' type BTR-60, BTR-70.

Other military forces present in the Transnistrian area are the border guard troops consisting of a Training Detachment (deployed in the city of Tiraspol), 7 commanders (Camenca, Ribnita, Dubasari, Grigoriopol, Bender, Tiraspol, Slobozia), 29 border guards and 30 of border control posts. Weapons are present in the Transnistrian area: armored fighting machines, mine throwers, grenade launchers, small arms and a military force of about 1500 people¹¹ (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001).

Cossack troops (Черноморское Казачье Войско) are also present in the Transnistrian area. The Cossack troops are the main reserve of the FA of the a.z.RMN. The organization "Черноморское казачье войско" includes 7 districts of Cossacks, established according to the territorial principle and which bring together Cossacks from nearby localities (ponds). Their composition is as follows: Cossack District 1 (Camenca town); district 2 of the Cossacks (Rîbnița town); district 3 of the Cossacks (Dubasari town); district 4 of the Cossacks (Grigoriopol town (Grigoriopol, Crasnaia Gorca, Bîcioc estates); district 5 of the Cossacks (Bender town); Slobozia - the ponds: Sucleia, Slobozia, Glinoe, Dnestrovsc).

The Cossacks satisfy the military service in: 1) the Cossack regiment of border guards from the Ministry of State Security and 2) the motorized infantry battalion of the 1st motorcycle infantry brigade of the Ministry of Defense.

The number of Cossacks that can be mobilized reaches 3,000 (the total number of Cossacks and family members is about 10,000 people). The military command of the Cossack troops in number of 30 people performs permanent military service. Also, the Cossack troops are part of the Russian Union of the Cossack Soviet, in whose works the Cossack ataman in the region participates permanently.

The Territorial Defense Corps (People's Militia and Civil Defense) (народное ополчение) (formed on the basis of I. Izmirnov's decree of March 17, 1992) and the Civil Defense (formed in 1992) is the reserve of the Armed Forces of a.z. MRI and is structured in territorial battalions. In peacetime, the people's militia and civil defense have permanent staffs stationed in the district centers. The deployment of battalions is carried out in case of military danger or for concentrations and training applications. The staff of the battalion is completed with permanent staff from the battalion commander to the company commander. The staff is about 20 people and has a weapon of about 150 submachine guns. Also, the staff permanently carries out combat training exercises with the battalion commanders, company. The People's Militia and the Civil Defense have its own structure: the General Staff of the People's Militia Corps (Tiraspol) and 5 General Staffs of the Territorial Battalions (Ribnita, Dubasari, Grigoriopol, Bender, Parcani), the Permanent Staff of the

¹¹ Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova, Institutul de Politici Publice, Chișinău, 2001.

Territorial Defense Corps (People's Militia) and civil defense) up to 300 people, most of whom are reserve officers. After completing the battalions with troops in case of military danger, the Territorial Defense Corps can reach the number of 2000 people. The GOTR Independent Tank Battalion includes 80 tanks. This is the amount that corresponds to a regiment according to both Russian and European standards. At the same time, the Independent Tank Battalion of the NMR includes 18 tanks corresponding to the structure of two companies (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001, pp.28-31).

In 1991, the volume of real stocks in the Transnistrian area was 2500 wagons (45951 tons). Already in 1994, during the negotiations on the military patrimony on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, the warehouse command presented another information, which determines a volume twice smaller than the one presented in 1991: reactive projectiles 4 027 t. 212 wagons; bombs 82-mm, 120-mm 5 057 t 364 wagons; ammunition for anti-aircraft artillery 2,819 t. 151 wagons; ammunition for grenade launchers 2 649t. 233 wagons; anti-tank and anti-personnel grenades 643t. 40 wagons; 574t anti-tank missiles. 58 wagons; 3 845t cartridges. 184 wagons; mines and pyrotechnic means 3 397t. 20 wagons; instruction ammunition 1 255t. 100 wagons. In total, in 1994 there were 24,266 tons (1362 wagons) in the Transnistrian area compared to 1991 when there were 45,951 tons (2,500 wagons). The difference between the data presented in 1994 and those presented in 1991 is the direct result of the transmission of ammunition to the military formations of a.z.RMN during the military conflict and after its cessation.

Since 1994 the territory of the depots has been divided in two and on one part of the territory it has been offered to Tiraspol for the organization of the ammunition depot of the military formations of the a.z.RMN. To guard and ensure the activity of the warehouse, Tiraspol deployed a battalion from the 3rd motorcycle infantry brigade from Râbnița. Consisting of about 300 soldiers equipped with TB (БТР-70), mine throwing battery, anti-tank cannon battery (6 MT12 cal.100mm cannons), anti-aircraft battery (6 ZU23-2 coupled cannons) and infantry armament this battalion provides both security and control over deposits. At the same time, a border guard post is set up at the exit of the warehouse. Thus, the removal of weapons and ammunition is controlled by the security organs, and the reciprocal transmission inside the warehouses is carried out without any obstacle.

In addition to the transmission of ammunition and weapons inside the depots, in the years 1992-1999 were repeatedly found cases of transporting from these depots to the military units of azRMN 122 mm shells for howitzers, 100 mm for anti-tank guns, bombs 120 mm for grenade launchers, ammunition for RPG7 and RPG9 grenade launchers, RPG18 / 26 disposable grenade launchers, hand grenades, 9mm, 5.45mm and 7.62mm cartridges, et.

Since 1994, the Russian Party has repeatedly mentioned the existence of two categories of ammunition that prevented a rhythmic and rapid withdrawal of deposits from Colbasna: third-class or non-transportable ammunition and ammunition brought to the ready-to-use or coupled state. Which, for various reasons, cannot be transported in such a condition. Also in these documents was the third category, called ammunition that could not be used by the 14th Army formations due to the lack of appropriate weapons systems. Category 3 ammunition (non-transportable) was present - 435 tons in 1994 (0 tons in 2000).

During the Moldovan-Russian negotiations on April 27, 1994, the existence of 435 tons of non-transportable ammunition due to the expiration of the maximum storage terms (produced in the 30s and 40s) and violation of maintenance rules. According to the specialists' calculations, a period of 7 months was required for the liquidation of these ammunitions. The liquidation of these ammunition by detonation began in the spring of 1995. At the end of 1995 the Russian Party declared the destruction of 600 tons of ammunition, and on 18.11.1996 General V. Evnevici declared that the Russian Party destroyed 12237 units (204 tons) of ammunition as follows: shells 152mm- 254 units; projectiles 100mm-12 units; projectiles 125mm-1061 units; projectiles 85m- 51 units; projectiles 122 mm-452 units and projectiles 76 mm-136 units. Also, in the Transnistrian area, 122mm reactive projectiles were detected, 5 units, projectiles 30 mm 272 units, bombs 120 mm 9940 units, projectiles 23 mm 60 units.

The destruction of ammunition by detonation was continued in the following years. In total, according to many of Moscow's contradictory statements in the period 1995-1999 were destroyed by detonation not the 435 tons declared in 1994 but about 1000 tons of ammunition, or such a category of ammunition should no longer exist. At the same time, taking into account the fact that, despite the bilateral agreements, no foreign observer or expert was admitted to the destruction operations, as well as the division of the deposits into two parts in 1994 (one part being offered. FA RMN.), it can be stated with certainty that these actions were an integral part of the process of arming and equipping the military formations of azRMN and, on the other hand, they served as cover for various ammunition trading businesses (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001).

Since 1995, armaments have been produced in companies in the Transnistrian area. Thus, the mechanical plant in Bender produced in series: launch systems for reactive projectiles BM-21, Град with 20 pipes (mounted on the bodies of cars Зил-131); anti-tank grenade launchers ППГ-9 (since 1995); mine throwers (82-mm, 120-mm caliber) (since 1996); portable anti-tank grenade launchers ППГ-7 (since 1996); ПСМ pistols of caliber 5.45 mm. (only in the period 1995-99 about 2000 units were produced). Thus, by the end of 1999, 47 "Grade" type projectile launcher installations had been produced. Of these, 20 units were sent to the artillery regiment of the Armed Forces of the a.z. NMR. The others are exported. Thus, 7 BM-21 "Grade" reactive systems were delivered to Abkhazia through Bulgaria, under the cover of a Russian company.

Taking into account the location of the plant (right bank of the Dniester, inside the security zone, the special regime of the city of Bender) the leaders of Tiraspol, together with the Russian side, insistently promoted and managed to obtain the necessary conditions for the production and transportation of weapons. Thus, the condition was imposed that the checkpoint and crossing of the Peacekeeping Troops on the Bender Bridge be completed only by Russian and Transnistrian soldiers (in 1992 by the decision of the Unified Control Commission on all bridges on the Dniester were installed tripartite checkpoints, which included representatives of the peacekeeping forces of the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and the TMR).

All subsequent attempts by Chisinau's representatives in the Unified Control Commission to restore the status of this post as a tripartite and to carry out an inspection visit to the plant in accordance with the provisions of the 1992 Agreement and the CUC status were a response.

Since the spring of 1997, at the metallurgical plant in Râbnîța, the production of 82-mm caliber mine throwers was launched. The minesweeper production equipment was purchased in 1995 from the Russian Federation and also allows the production of 120-mm caliber minesweepers. The testing of the first throwers and the control shootings were carried out on May 17, 1997 in the presence of the representatives of Russia. Production capacity - 5-6 units per week. Most of the launchers are delivered to the military formations of a.z.RMN. Also in the spring of 1997, the first experimental batch (100) of antipersonnel mines in a wooden case (of the ПМД type) was produced at the factory. Subsequently, the production of anti-tank mines was found. GP-25 40-mm anti-personnel grenade launchers (with pipe mounting) are produced at the pump plant. Some of the subassemblies for these throwers are produced at the "Selihoztehnica" plant in Camenca.

From the spring of 1996, the plant began to systematically receive wagons and trucks with bombs and projectiles from the warehouse in Colbasna. These deliveries were covered by the process of destroying non-transportable ammunition from the warehouse in question. The immediate vicinity of the warehouse and plant (approx. 10 km), as well as the permanent blocking of access to the area by representatives of Chisinau or international organizations make it quite difficult to estimate the volume of deliveries for both weapons and ammunition production and trade. (Only 4 wagons delivered to the plant in the spring of 1997 contained about 200 tons of bombs and projectiles). Various sources confirm that, with the help of specialists from the Russian Federation, the technological process for the extraction of explosive material and the production of ammunition was launched, and the sale of different types of weapons, both from the GOTR arsenal and of own production is carried out under cover of export with metal.

Thus, at the "Electromaş" plant in Tiraspol, the following products were generated in series: 9-mm machine guns; Macarov pistols 9 mm mm; 5.45-mm PSM pistols; hunting weapons and special combat weapons manufactured from them. Subassemblies (including silencers - приборы для бесшумной стрельбы) are received from the Russian Federation. At the same time, the "Electromachine" plant and the "Electroaparat" plant (Tiraspol city) produce subassemblies and equipment blocks for various weapons systems, the assembly of which is carried out in the Russian Federation. In the most frequent cases, Tiraspol concludes the arms export contracts with the help of Russia and, in particular, of the concern "РОСВООУЖЕНИЕ" whose representatives are in the region on a permanent basis (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001, pp.33-34). Based on the fact that the situation in Ukraine is complex, in turn the implications of the crisis in Ukraine on the security system of the Republic of Moldova are complex (Albu N. 2015 p.30)¹².

The manifestation of "anti-Chisinau" attitudes in various districts of the Republic of Moldova - Gagauzia, Balti, Taraclia also poses threats to state security. The holding of the two referendums in the Gagauz Autonomous Region on February 2, 2014 was an opportunity for Moldovan society to have heated debates on how the Center communicates with the regions. During a discussion at the Russian Institute for Strategic Research, experts from this well-known institution confirmed the possibility of Moscow resorting to military or force majeure scenarios. The main argument was that, after what happened in Ukraine, the previously existing rules of the game have disappeared, which opens the "window of opportunity" for a multitude of scenarios.

According to security experts, there are a number of confidential analyzes that confirm Moldova's poor ability to cope with direct military aggression. There is a similar problem in Bălți. In the summer of 2012, the councilors from Bălți decided that they will organize a referendum for the extension of the municipality's autonomy. The plebiscite was to take place on September 9, 2012, but was not organized because the government had reached an agreement with local authorities. Balti Municipality was to receive the status of level II administrative-territorial unit, just like Chisinau. The agreement, however, was not respected. In June 2014, councilors in Balti again called for a law to be adopted to give Bălți a special status, otherwise they threatened to hold a referendum to create autonomy. Two elements explain the public's attention to this subject. The first case concerns the fact that, although the court declared them illegal, the political elite in Comrat insisted on organizing plebiscites, which was a political insult to the central authorities. The second issue is related to the blow of the image applied to the course of the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova, the development and the results of the referendums showing that there are solid opponents of the idea of European integration of the country (Ciurea Criza din Ucraina)¹³.

Finally, the last argument is related to the statements of the Russian Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, who stated that the Russian Federation will pay special attention to the Taraclia district, populated by ethnic Bulgarians, and to the Gagauz autonomy. The actions of Yakubov, born in Ceadir-Lunga and Hudiakov, born in Tiraspol, considered older friends with Gagauz leaders, give the impression that they did not represent Russia's official position. Likewise, Ambassador Muhammad's statement that he will pay more attention to Russian speakers in Taraclia or ATU Gagauz-Yeri could be treated as a platform for cultural support of Russian speakers in the mentioned localities. Therefore, the instability created in the southern regions of Moldova was exacerbated by events in Ukraine and Russia's political involvement, but also by domestic causes. A new touchstone for stability in the area will be the discussion of the Package of Laws on the Special Statute of Gagauzia Autonomy, which was not approved by Parliament (Ciurea Criza din Ucraina).

Thus, assessing the situation in Ukraine, we could highlight the following repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on the security of the Republic of Moldova:

- Although the "Novorossia" project can be considered an exhausted subject due to countermeasures taken by the West in reaction to the actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, it

¹² N. Albu, „Influența crizei din Ucraina asupra securității Republicii Moldova”, *Revista Militară nr. 2(14)*, 2015, p. 30.

¹³ C.Ciurea, *Criza din Ucraina și impactul ei asupra sistemului de securitate al Republicii Moldova*, Asociația pentru Politică Externă.

is possible that this project will be reactivated by Russia and Russian military formations deployed in the districts of the Republic of Moldova could support its development.

- The presence of armaments in the eastern part of Ukraine conditions the creation of criminal networks, including on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, involved in the illegal arms trade.
- The embargo imposed on the Republic of Moldova in September 2013 for the export of wines is of a political nature, to discourage European integration, it affects the economic security of the Republic of Moldova.

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THE INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 IN THE DANGER THAT POPULISM BRINGS TO THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

Populism has become, for quite some time now, a specter of democracy that threatens the structure of security wherever it shows up in situations that thoroughly fight democracy's fundamental values. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed what citizens think and the expectations that they have from those in power, so populism has also been affected through the relationship that it has with the people's level of satisfaction. This process requires a thorough analysis due to the threats that can appear from such leaders in a world that is still trying to find itself.

Keywords: populism; covid-19; post-pandemic threats.

INTRODUCTION

Populists are known for their ability to extend along the whole political spectrum and to adapt their ideas in order to survive any type of speech. Despite the support that populist leaders claim to have from modern-day citizens attracted to what they propose, these leaders have always operated by using a classic definition of "the people". Jan-Werner Muller, the famed author, clearly describes the behavior that populists are trying to get from their followers:

He defines this process as *"a way of perceiving the political world in which a morally pure and completely unified 'people' – but ultimately fictional, I would add – is set against the elites that are considered corrupt, or in any other way morally inferior (Muller 2016, pp. 19-20)*

At the same time, Muller rejects the idea that populists are doomed to failure once they are in power, a notion that makes them evidently more dangerous. Even if this ideology is based on two main ideas, anti-elitism and anti-pluralism, it has an enormous capability to adapt in the spur of the moment. Populist parties argue against the elites, but their speech changes radically once they become part of the government. From that moment on, all the positive results will be attributed to the success of the populist leaders, while any failures will continue to be the wrongdoing of the same elites. Muller argues that the illusion based on the sudden disappearance of populists once they are in power is a mere political maneuver: *"Populists always distinguish morally between those who properly belong and those who don't (even if that moral criterion might ultimately be nothing more than a form of identity politics)" (Muller 2016, 80)*

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the whole world in a very diversified way and has become an element that needs to be accounted for when trying to observe the populist mark in the world. With the emergence of populism as one of the more potent forces of today, a thorough analysis on the impact that COVID-19 has had on the ideology and its `people` is necessary if we want to be able to understand and contain the security threats of today and tomorrow.

METHODOLOGY

COVID-19 has led to the attention of the citizens focusing a lot more on the measures that their leaders had in store in order to see what kind of life-saving decision they can make in a very serious and real context. The relatively low level of confidence that people had in the governing ability of the "elites" was a general problem and, in such a scenario, the emergence of a populist actor is always a possibility.

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Even if the wide-area implications of the virus have to be analyzed using comparative studies in many countries, the purpose of this paper is not to analyze the way in which different parts of the world have responded and will respond to populism during the pandemic. Rather, we want to track the social changes that can affect the way in which this ideology is regarded by the citizens, but also the impact that the new status quo can have on security.

For this, we are going to use the works of exponential authors when it comes to understanding populism such as Muller, Mudde and Canovan. Furthermore, we're also going to use articles of known representatives of the international press such as The Guardian and The Conversation who have closely followed the reactions of the people during the early days of the pandemic. Last but not least, we will draw on the work of Ulrike Vieten in order to have a working guide for the image that we aim to present here. In her work, "*The 'New Normal' and 'Pandemic Populism': The COVID-19 Crisis and Anti-Hygienic Mobilization of the Far-Right*", professor Vieten offers a fresh perspective on the change that the populist perception can go through due to the effects of the pandemic and the normalization of the global far-right (Vieten 2020, 2).

Francis Fukuyama outlined that "*populism, most of the time, implies a politician that pretends to have direct and charismatic links to the people, something that grants him a special type of claim in following the people's interests* (De Witte 2019). Since a recession period is almost impossible to avoid due to the economic shock of the pandemic, and countries were having problems in the relationship with their citizens even before that, the question that we ask is obvious: Will populism rise even more in these circumstances? Will the global context evolve into something new, very close to a modern type of social anarchy, or will the people stand behind their governments in this new era?

In other words, what we aim to see is if the populist message is still popular in the face of a serious, real threat. Do the people support it simply as a way to somehow get back at their government, or do they see it as an actual possibility of leadership replacement? Furthermore, another very interesting question can be raised on the reaction of different populist actors: Did populist adepts have a unitary reaction to the effects of the pandemic, or have they adapted due to the characteristics of each country's situation?

POPULISM: A VIRUS HIT BY THE COVID-19 CRISIS

The populist leader does not base his power simply on the calls he makes towards the failures of the state, but he also identifies as one of the people, using a speech in which he always manages to find threats to the entire nation. The COVID-19 pandemic has emerged by spreading fear at a global level due to the necessity of imposing social and economic restrictions. Therefore, society was forced to undergo changes that also had an impact on the moral values of the citizens, thus changing the way in which populism can appeal to them.

As Margaret Canovan stated, the populist democracy aims to provide substance to the idealist notion of "people governance" using one of the forms of direct democracy, several times aiming towards a referendum, popular initiatives and organizational procedures (Canovan 1981, 137). Therefore, populism is not a "kamikaze" of political ideas that has the single purpose of getting to power so that it can then vanish among the classic ideologies. Such leaders that manage to get in power continue to govern in the way that brought them there, even showing a tendency for becoming more radical as time goes on.

Due to the effects of the pandemic, populists can therefore represent a certain danger not only through their amplified potential of radicalizing the entire population, but also through their flat refusal of leaving power when asked to do so. A small-scale study that was conducted in April 2020 has shown an almost immediate loss of citizens' trust for the governments of Great Britain and the United States due to the lack of an immediate and effective answer to the requirements of the pandemic (Strandberg, 2020).

Similarly, the way former American president Donald Trump has incited his followers to attack the Capitol on the very same day that Joe Biden was due to be formally recognized in Congress does nothing but prove the lengths that populists are willing to go to in order to ensure their stay in power (Beaumont et al. 2021).

Therefore, it becomes obvious that we need to analyze the way in which populism has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to identify the potential of future support for such leaders, as well as observe certain dangers that could present themselves in the short and medium-term.

Cas Mudde has emerged as one of the more sober analysts of populism from the beginning of the pandemic. While most observers were quick to point out (and rightfully so) that a lot of countries were falling in behind their leaders, the Dutch politologist had a much more rational approach. Mudde explained that populism, an extremely diverse and volatile phenomenon, cannot bring a unified, global response to the pandemic (Mudde 2020). Due to the risks, he identified that need for each individual situation to be evaluated on its own.

The populist threat in the pandemic. “The new normal”

The pandemic has transformed the need for truth felt by the general population, making this right completely essential in order for the citizens to feel that they are being protected. Populism works by distorting this reality and using its less-positive aspects in order to construct the image it needs to acquire social capital or power. Therefore, even though general support for populist leaders seems to have dropped down in the first year of the pandemic (McCaffrey, 2020), the long-term effects of the quarantine still remain a viable threat.

Hannah Arendt underlined that the essential element of totalitarian tendencies was their need of controlling the masses, as opposed to similar political movements that aim to remove or eliminate their opposition. When it comes to the actual threat, Arendt drew a line between the danger represented by such forms of leadership and the ability of citizens to understand and filter true and false information (Arendt 1953, 321).

When analyzing the current reality, the context seems to be perfect for populist actors who want to try and engage in such manipulation, while also being protected by the ideological umbrella of democracy. During the coronavirus, the best-known populists have overwhelmingly positioned themselves against protective measures, even though it is hard to understand whether this choice was made through some type of reasoning, or simply in order to be against the criticized elites. On the other hand, not all of them have done so and this is yet another testament to the difficulty of understanding and combating populism.

Prominent leaders such as Donald Trump of the United States and Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil have chosen the skeptical approach and tried to downplay the crisis, while Viktor Orban of Hungary and Andrej Babis of the Czech Republic have imposed severe lockdown measures. The speech of “us versus them” finds numerous supporters today due to the plethora of conspiracy theories and the promotional capacity offered by social media. When the public sees a picture in which it can only find friends and enemies, the consequences can always be dangerous.

Furthermore, populists have the distinct advantage of not being exposed to the same type of risk that other actors would if they were to be promoting extreme measures because they claim to do everything “for the people”, even if in practice they sometimes compromise and enter coalitions as well (Muller 2016, 37). Therefore, Vieten argues that the leading question we should be asking ourselves right now should be to find out if or how much the pandemic has blurred the lines between mainstream political mobilization (some of which is to be expected in the face of restrictions) and activities of the extremist and racist far right (Vieten 2020, 3).

Seeing how new information on this pandemic continues to emerge as the world is dealing with the crisis, the context does not provide many ways through which said information can be verified. Uncertainty is the engine of populist expansion. Confronted with a lack of clear solutions and information, the public may very well turn towards the pompous speeches of a populist leader at some point in time.

Therefore, we argue that the difference will be best seen in the amount of data and evidence that actors will be able to provide for the policies that they propose. Since populists tend to dismiss empirical data and rely on their own opinion, the demagoguery of such a leader will always try to use COVID-19 as a source of unchallenged, unverified accusations that cannot be effectively fought-off

due to lack of evidence. Spreading such discourses was one of the main ways in which Donald Trump was able to get into the most powerful office on Earth for four years. Through this type of *modus operandi*, the American politician was able to not only blame the conservative tendency against sudden changes, but also point the finger towards the new type of policy being conducted on online platforms such as Twitter (Richardson 2017, pp.5-6).

Even worse, preliminary findings suggest that, regardless of the difference in answers across the populist board, there is a variety of irresponsible and faulty approaches when it comes to how populist leaders and governments dealt with COVID-19 (Stavrakakis, Katsambekis 2020, 3). Therefore, while support for such actors seems to have dropped down since the beginning of the pandemic, its consequences can have the potential to breed even more populist leaders, so expecting the pandemic to signify the beginning of the end for far-right populism is a little premature at this point in time.

During the pandemic, populist leaders have drawn on their volatile nature and engaged in various forms of offering answers. Even if some of them took COVID-19 seriously, the scope and duration of their measures is another changeable element. For instance, Hungary adopted a bill that granted its leaders emergency power in order to deal with the pandemic head-on (Meyer 2020, 5). India and Algeria's leaders, on the other hand, took advantage of the newfound legitimacy when it comes to banning meetings to conveniently remove the protesters in their streets. On the other end of the scale we have former US president Donald Trump's approach who repeatedly claimed the virus will go away once the heat comes, and even accused his Democrat opponents of lying about it in order to bolster their poll results (Beer, 2020).

The advantage is that populists always use a real or fictional crisis as a way to oppose any other narratives that are present at some point in time, an approach that will almost always lead to conflict. Seeing how we are facing arguably one of the more challenging periods in modern history, the danger of populism is too relevant to be ignored.

Post-pandemic populism: How it can shape the security environment

It is precisely this diversity in reactions that allows us to come up with a clear argument regarding the future threats that can emerge from populism. It has become obvious that trying to perceive the policies of certain actors strictly through a populist lens is an exercise in futility. Even if we are still adapting and understanding the new status quo generated by the pandemic, we should still be able to draw conclusions regarding the way that populism will behave in the future.

The study of cases such as the one in Hungary has shown the necessity of an approach that can fight back against the thin ideological center of this idea and the danger it poses since it can embrace the characteristics of any of the problems found in the society it exists in (Urbinati 2020).

Notions like nationalism and nativism cannot be forgotten from such an analysis in order to guarantee its results. The COVID-19 pandemic is the first case study that has shown local differences in populist approaches, so the security environment must avoid using fixed strategies when fighting this threat. For instance, Donald Trump has, on multiple occasions, described the new coronavirus as "*the Chinese virus*", fueling the racist, anti-immigrant feelings that were already more than present in the United States (Stavrakakis, Katsambekis 2020, 7) The specter of populist threats has increased during the pandemic, despite their reduced power of impact. The threat is, therefore, still present and maybe more complex than ever before.

Second of all, can we speak about the risks of a new wave of populist support once the world reaches some type of normal? Seeing how populism is an extremely complex and representative democracy-dependent phenomenon, the answer will be that this depends on the way things are going to go in the next months and years.

The way in which national governments and international organizations will tackle the long road to recovery will either lead to a fresh wave of populist legitimacy, or to a fresh wave of diminished populist effects.

Here, we deem necessary to aim for a distinction between what we will call, for lack of better terms, "good populism" and "bad populism". There are certain ideas that can be found in almost any

analysis of this ideology: anti-elitism, anti-institutionalism, plebiscitary tendencies, and a certain appeal towards “revisionist” attitudes and all-out attacks towards their opponents. When it comes to the pandemic, different leaders have tackled different approaches, all of them consistent with the way they managed to get in power.

For instance, leaders like Narendra Modi of India and Viktor Orban of Hungary have used the crisis to further enhance the internal cultural conflict which helped them win their seat (Meyer 2020, 7). On the other hand, Geert Wilders and his Party for Freedom in Netherlands have their main focus on the issue of Islam (Damhuis 2019) and have asked for tighter restrictions from the beginning of the pandemic.

From this, we can draw that populists will continue to follow their own creed regardless of the security environment, and this means that they won’t always be a danger to it. However, we should bear in mind that COVID-19 is a rather exceptional situation that will not always happen to be outside a populist’s area of interest. This does mean, though, that such actors don’t necessarily have a love for anarchy, but simply choose to follow their political objectives no matter the cost to others.

We should also remember that, in recent years, many political scholars suggested that in order to weaken populism, democracies will have to curtail some aspects of their politics (Urbinati 2020). Now, with the pandemic forcing even constitutional democracies to adopt measures that are strikingly out of character, populism may have a leg to stand on in the long run once again.

The limitations and challenges of democracy that have led to the populist ascension are still present in the pandemic and will still be there when it’s over. Different actors will continue to see populism in different shapes ranging from a threat to a potential cure for modern, Westernized democracy. Regardless of personal opinions, its ambiguous and volatile nature makes sure that the risks that were there before COVID-19 took over the world are still a part of the structure of the international political life. Furthermore, the “patriotic” populist speech grows even more significant during national lockdowns and movement restrictions, something that Vieten calls “*the global return to the local*” (Vieten 2020, 4).

More and more people getting vaccinated certainly shows a step in the right direction. However, a return to complete normalcy is still a long way ahead and, as citizens become more and more tired of restrictions, we could see a surge in populist supporters because they claim to speak in the name of the whole “people”. While Muller warns against this behavior by arguing that “*the idea of a single, homogenous, authentic people is a fantasy*” (Muller 2016, 3) the support shown to the authorities by their citizens at the beginning of the pandemic may start to fade if this situation becomes increasingly drawn-out.

CONCLUSIONS

Populism will keep being dangerous for the security environment even after the COVID-19 pandemic is over. When it comes to such leaders, the behavior of certain actors or the political differences are not what’s important. Rather, they focus on establishing normative differences between the people they claim to be working for and the elites of the state.

It is our opinion that COVID-19 was a milestone for populism from two points of view: first, it tested the reaction of the people in the face of a very real threat, something which had not happened for quite some time. Second, it challenges the evolution of modern democracies because the pandemic has the potential to set up more fertile ground for even more populist actors, so authorities need to be able to contain this phenomenon.

The post-COVID-19 period will be extremely important for the type of support that we should expect to see populism receiving in the future. If citizens will continue to blame a lack of transparency and dialogue, the emergence of certain actors that will claim to be representing and unifying the problems of the society against the political elites may even be a good thing for modern democracies, assuming such actors can actually show up.

On the other hand, the difference between “good populism” and “bad populism” merely underlines the approach during this particular moment, without considering the fact that the problems

that may end up happening due to it can also lead to social tensions which, in the long run, may be problematic and not even remotely connected to their origin.

Therefore, it is essential that the security environment is able to maintain the analytical skepticism with which it has been observing populism lately. Identifying the short-term threats brought by the pandemic definitely represents a priority, but we must not ignore the ways in which these consequences can fuel the future emergence of new populist leaders. The COVID-19 virus has brought forward, even in the most prominent of democracies, the necessity for temporary bans on certain rights and freedoms. While populism has slowed down a bit during the pandemic, this need may end up fueling it even more in the long run. Seeing how this is an ongoing context, citizens may understand it in different ways and this might lead to unrest and confusion. Due to this, we are facing a double-edged sword of responsibility: Leaders need to take action in order to mend the communication channels with their own people, while the security environment needs to employ its early warning capabilities in order to learn from the lessons of 2016. If not, we can be certain that populism, this morally-self-satisfied version of politics, will always be able to use the lack of substance for its own gains.

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THE “HIDDEN“ ROLE OF THE STATE IN DIFFERENT APPROACHES ON COMPETITIVENESS (THEORETICAL COMPARISON)

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Abstract

From the perspective of political science the paper is a comparative overview of some of the main approaches on competitiveness. The focus is on their strengths and weaknesses in the explanation of the role of the government. Yet the paper compares some of the more recent authors as Porter, Reich, Thurow, Ohmae and Strange.

The implication is that government intervention is still needed to provide both sustainable competitiveness (Strange) (modesty as opposed to resource depletion) and social adjustment (jobs) to innovation in the long-term dynamic picture (Porter) because government is still at the basis of the welfare pyramid (Thurow). I start with the authors' assumptions and proceed with their view on the role of the government to conclude that this role is underestimated in the social and overestimated in the business sphere.

Keywords: competitiveness theories; state; role of the government; globalization.

INTRODUCTION

As there is no accepted definition of competitiveness (Porter 1990, xxiv) different interpretations (as mentioned by Harris and Watson) could be found. The competitiveness debate, if driven by a concern about the rate of growth of per capita real incomes, could also be seen as a debate between the mainstream economists and the “the most popular writers on competitiveness“, as political scientists, political economists and management theorists, that “come from outside the mainstream“ (Harris and Watson 1992, 234) and use grand generalizations². From the perspective of political science the paper is a comparative overview of some of the main approaches on competitiveness. The focus is on their strengths and weaknesses in the explanation of the role of the government. Yet the paper compares some of the more recent authors as Porter, Reich, Thurow, Ohmae and Strange³.

Different approaches on competitiveness focus on different key actors: Porter's innovation-driven national economy focuses on firms and the government's role is to encourage firm's competitiveness; Reich and Ohmae's “extremely globalized“ national economy focuses on the Multi-national corporations (MNCs) and the highly skilled labour as a factor. This approach is close to the neoclassical trade model or the Hecksher Ohlin-Samuelson model. The role of the government is in building strong infrastructure and increasing the professional qualification. Thurow's approach on the other hand is based on Neorealism (strategic trade theory, regionalism) and the main actors are the national governments whose role is to direct capital to key industries. The models of the three aim at increasing the general welfare. Economic growth is based on cosmopolitanism of global citizens through (MNCs), a wealth pyramid (Thurow) or productivity as “the root cause of a nation's standard of living“ (Porter 1990a, 617). Porter, Reich and Thurow represent mostly the US approach to

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² According to Harris and Watson authors as Reich, Porter and Thurow represent this non-mainstream view.

³ The literature selection is based on ch10 “Multinational Corporations and Global Production“, Theodore Cohn. Global Political Economy: Theory and Practice, Addison Wesley Longman, 2005.

competitiveness. This is not surprising since they have been actively engaged in the US economic policy⁴.

I argue that within the approaches, different interpretations about the role of the government are also possible because in the long-run, dynamic picture, the market factors, exogenous and endogenous to the state, are two complementary approaches and causality runs in both directions (Odell 2000: 68). The longer the lag, the more endogenous (embedded in the country's political economy) the market becomes. All of the authors use both endogenous (resulting from governmental role) and exogenous factors in the explanation of competitiveness. Among the endogenous are: the importance of the home base for domestic rivalry (Porter, Thurow, Pauly and S. Reich). Thus government's role is in education, infrastructure (Porter, Thurow, Ohmae), factor upgrading (Porter), facilitating R&D spending (Thurow, Ohmae). On the other hand the government is lacking and exogenous forces are at work because of the mobility of all factors (Porter), the rise of geocentric MNCs where ownership does not matter, opposite to the Vernon's cycle model, (Reich, Ohmae), the importance of global citizens and factor-price equilization (Reich, Ohmae), regional blocs (Thurow, Reich) and "symbolic analysts" (Reich). Thus the government becomes invisible (Reich, Ohmae), an "influencer" or just an additional variable in the static structure of the diamond (Porter) and cannot help those unable to compete (Thurow). The analysis on competitiveness is both micro (Porter) and macro (Thurow, Ohmae), both a zero (Thurow) and a non-zero sum game (Porter, Reich, Ohmae). What is implied is that government intervention is still needed to provide both sustainable competitiveness (Strange) (modesty as opposed to resource depletion) and social adjustment (jobs) to innovation in the long-term dynamic picture (Porter) because government is still at the basis of the welfare pyramid (Thurow). I start with the authors' assumptions and proceed with their view on the role of the government to conclude that this role is underestimated in the social and overestimated in the business sphere.

METHODOLOGY-ASSUMPTIONS OF THE AUTHORS

Porter's approach is based on the firms' decisions to compete in a global economy. While factors as labour, natural resources and financial capital explain the comparative advantage of nations in the 18th and 19th century⁵, increased factor mobility (Porter 1990a, 15) shifts the importance to factors as the creation of business environment, specialization in the form of clusters⁶ and the locational advantage, or firms' best choice of location for productivity, especially in industries involving sophisticated technology and highly skilled employees. Increase in knowledge-intensive industries after the WWII, (Porter 1990a, 13) increases the importance of competitive advantage based on the differentiation of production. Competitiveness and national advantage, as equal to industry's competitive advantage (Porter 1990a, 282), are based on the "diamond " (Porter 1990a, 72) as a system of four basic interrelated variables from the firms' perspective (the factors of production, home demand, firm's strategy and related and supporting industries) and two additional variables (governments and the chance factor). Domestic rivalry leads to improvement and geographic concentration, increases the interaction of the four variables and transforms the diamond into a system (Porter 1990b, 83).

In Reich's approach not all factors are equally mobile, the labour force being least so, relative to capital and technology. The skilled work force attracts foreign investment (Reich 1990, 59) and improves the country's standard of living generating a virtuous cycle of additional investment for education. This is vital especially with the tendency of the government (Reich means the American

⁴ Porter, previously appointed by President Reagan to the President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness, is a member of the Executive Committee of the Council on Competitiveness, which is a private-sector US organization and also with Jeffrey Sachs have created the Global Competitiveness Report. Reich has served as secretary of labour under President Clinton. Thurow has served in the President's Council of Economic Advisers in the mid sixties and the Economic Advisory Council in the late 70ies.

⁵ The theories of Adam Smith (absolute advantage) and David Ricardo (comparative advantage) are among the authors that contribute to liberal theories of free-trade. Adding capital to the labour factor in the explanation of country's comparative advantage leads to the Heckscher-Ohlin theory (Cohn 2005, 223).

⁶ Specialization is required for production. The cluster is a group of interconnected firms, suppliers, related industries and specialized institutions in a given field (Porter 1990, xii).

government) to retreat from the field of education⁷. Contrary to Porter, Reich's corporations are geocentric (Perlmutter 1969, 12), "disconnected from their home nations" (Reich 1991, 8). Nation's competitiveness is based not upon corporation ownership but upon differentiation of nation's labour skills and the value added to the world economy in this way (Reich 1991, 168). The national policy has to reward any global corporation that invests in the nation or the state should help corporations achieve economies of scale, "regardless of their nationality" (Reich 1990, 62) because these corporations increase the nation's standard of living.

Reich's approach is based on the global citizen. Human capital or the educated labour force is the most important element, opposed to Porter's focus on innovation. This human capital will be cosmopolitan but international cooperation comes as a second responsibility and the "primary responsibility" of the global citizen (Reich 1991, 312) is in improving the nation's well-being. Thus cooperation is based on rational self-interest (American model), not on altruism. Reich assumes, similar to the neoclassical trade Heckscher-Ohlin model of international trade, that the same technologies are available in all countries and identical factors of production, regardless of their location receive the same economic return. Thus a regime of free trade leads to "factor-price equalization", even if factors do not move, (Harris and Watson 1992, 252). Despite of the increase of intra-firm trade (Harris and Watson 1992, 254) however, in the neoclassical trade model, international trade can on its own lead to factor-price equalization, regardless of the patterns of firms' international investment.

Ohmae's explanation of globalization focuses on the "global localization" thesis (Ohmae 1991, 8) where firms operate globally but through local companies and markets and regional clusters of activity. Ohmae's approach is macroeconomic but the game is not a zero-sum. This is a cooperative competition organized around a "strategic triangle" of customers, competitors and company (Ohmae 1991, 2) but also taking into consideration the currency exchange rates and the country. In other words companies have to become embedded in the country in order to neutralize the impact of currency and protectionism. This is a model for MNCs, opposite to Vernon's model and more relevant since the 1980s – the MNC expands into the country and follows the needs of the local customers (Ohmae 1991, 31)⁸.

Thurow's approach focuses on the competition at the beginning of the 21st century as a zero-sum game ("head-to head" competition) because each region wants the same industries, and the regional blocs are the main players. This competition is opposed to the "niche" competition (Harris and Watson 1992, 258) typical for the early postwar years when GATT was created. However a niche competition is still possible within the industries. The focus is on research and development spending because "technological leaders remain economic leaders" (Thurow 1993, 188) and industries which will define national success in the third industrial revolution will be "microelectronics, biotechnology, telecommunications, civilian aviation, robotics ...computers" (Thurow 1999, 5). Contrary to Reich's idea, but similar to Porter, the firms have to remain national institutions for the national standard of living to rise.

RESULTS

The "Hidden" Role of the Government

In Porter the home business environment and consequently "ethnocentric" MNCs (Perlmutter 1969, 12) are most important for the firms' success. The government's role is to create the environment for competition by providing the education and infrastructure. The role of the government is different in the different stages of competitive development and different states remain at different stages⁹. In the first (factor-driven) stage basic factors¹⁰ as natural resources, location and semiskilled

⁷ Reich mentions that George Bush's 1990 education budget is smaller than Reagan's in 1989 (Reich 1990, 64).

⁸ Vernon also admits a change in the applicability of the product-cycle hypothesis since 1970s (Vernon 1981, 519) because of the convergence in the factor costs in the US, Europe and Japan.

⁹ For example all developing and centrally planned economies as well as nations with bountiful resources as Canada and Australia are said to remain at stage one (Porter 1990, 548).

labour (Porter 1990, 77) are source of the advantage. In the second (investment-driven) stage, although firms are the risk-takers, the government promotes risk-taking by directing the investments to particular industries and thus upgrading the factors (Porter 1990, 551). Governments provide the national consensus required for the long-term economic growth, or a commitment to improve factor quality. In fact it seems that stage two is government-driven which boosts the innovation-driven (third) stage where firms and private sector predominate and the government role becomes indirect. In the static picture the government influences the factor conditions through subsidies and policies towards education, the demand conditions through product standardization and government expenditure, the supporting industries through regulation of supporting services and firm strategy through capital regulations, tax policy and antitrust laws (Porter 1990, 128). However, the government is stronger because it can “pick clusters“ and winners (Harris and Watson 1992, 250).

In the Reich’s case government role is observed comparing US capitalism in the middle of the 20th century and in the future. In the mid 20th century the role of the American government was based on a national bargain, a “tacit agreement” (Reich 1991, 68) between the business and labour and the aim was economies of scale but also growing middle class¹¹ and welfare. The direct role of the government was in the provision of education, home subsidies, infrastructure, defence spending and encouragement of the companies to invest abroad. The indirect role was in the lack of centralized economic planning and non-intervention in the private corporate planning for research and development. Compared to this view, his idea about the future role of the government suggests a third, more modest way between the zero-sum nationalism and the laissez-faire cosmopolitans. According to this third way, not all government intervention should be avoided and its central role is the education of the labour force, improvement of the infrastructure and creation of “international rules of fair play“ (Reich 1991, 312) because the most important asset of the nation becomes the skills and learning of its work force (Reich 1990, 58).

While Porter and Reich focus mainly on the US model, Thurow argues that the three different forms of capitalism (US, Japan and EU or Germany) are based on different history because Germany and Japan had to catch up with the US and the UK. Compared to the US, the government in Europe and Japan has bigger role in economic growth and the linkage between economic and military strategies is more evident, the line between the public and private disappears (Thurow 1993, 35)¹². Governments manage trade, which leads to the increase of bilateral negotiations not in line with the most-favoured nation’s principle of free trade. Government’s role is in encouraging investments in skills, infrastructure and research and development.

Similar to Thurow, Pauly and Simon Reich¹³ focus on the difference of national structures, distinctive ideological traditions and national histories, embodied in the national, slowly-changing institutions that provide the framework and shape the corporate decisions of MNCs (Pauly and Reich 1997, 1). Evidence suggests that there is little blurring at the cores of firms based in the three regions, referred as the “Triad“, namely Germany¹⁴, Japan and the United States. The three structural ideal types are the US liberal democracy with free enterprise liberalism, the German’s social democracy, or “social market economy“ (Thurow 1993, 36) and the Japan’s developmental democracy and technonationalism. The market adaptation of the firm depends on its nationality (Pauly and Reich 1997, 4).

A Lack of Government Where More Government Is Needed

Although the title of Porter’s book suggests a focus on nations, the focus is on companies and the competition in industries. Although the government has a two-way relation with all the four components of the diamond, its role is that of a positive or negative “influencer“ (Porter 1990, 128)

¹⁰ Communications, infrastructure, highly educated personnel and research institutes are considered to be advanced factors (Porter 1990, 77).

¹¹ This agreement resembles Ruggie’s “embedded liberalism“ agreement.

¹² Airbus is an example of a Pan-European strategy, where a civilian manufacturer is owned by the British, French, German, and Spanish governments (Thurow 1993, 35).

¹³ They base their structuralism on Katzenstein, Garrett, Krasner. This is referred in footnote 20 on p.6 of their article.

¹⁴ German base is the analog to the American and Japanese cases because of Europe’s top one hundred firms, twenty-seven are German (Pauly and Reich 1997, 6).

and remains partial. Although the government could be one source of innovation (Porter 1990, 47) or a factor-creating mechanism (Porter 1990, 80) it is not a central but an additional variable in the diamond, a part of the diamond's environment. Although the home base is important, a firm may have different home bases for different businesses (Porter 1990, 614).

The nation is just a "region of the global economy" (Reich 1991, 244). The lines of the nations are blurred as a result of technology and interdependence and the key players and citizens of the world are the MNCs where control and "ownership" are "less important" (Reich 1990, 56). Governments and the national boundaries become invisible (Ohmae 1991, 183), "transparent" (Ohmae 1991, 12) and not protecting industries. This is a kind of bottom-up governance serving the people, not imposing on them its policy.

The government should not be disregarded for the provision of sustainable competitiveness or creating patterns of advantages, and its role is more important in the dynamic, long-term picture. Porter is against the inertia and considers governments slow (Porter 1990, 81) because governments favour policies leading to short-term, static benefits that undermine innovation and dynamism. However, he does not consider a possibility of supplementing his innovation-driven¹⁵ diamond with another diamond where governments may provide the continuity or social adaptability to innovation. The government may add modesty to innovation because resources are limited. The enforcement of strict safety and environmental standards aims at improving of the quality but does not create modesty and more depletes the resources of the first stage. The competitive advantage emerges out of pressure or rivalry (Porter 1990, 174) and resembles in this way the Schumpeter's idea of "creative destruction"¹⁶, an idea used also in Thurow's knowledge-based capitalism (Thurow 1999, 83) but there is no time for adjustment in this way. Thus the government is a "challenger" (Porter 1990b, 86) for higher level of companies' competitiveness and should encourage change, promote domestic rivalry and stimulate innovation. In Porter's diamond causality can run in both directions (Stopford and Strange 1991, 9). Porter's rational framework does not elaborate on the dynamic processes because the diamond is profit, not human-resource driven (where governments could create knowledge societies).

Government's role in education is a prerequisite for the global society to work. As Reich's cosmopolitanism is based on the American rational model (Reich 1991, 68), the impression is that the global educated labour force will come from certain regions only, mainly America, EU and Japan who have had the "national bargain" (Reich 1991, 68) as a prerequisite. However, as this education is nation based and in light of the phenomenon of "relative deprivation"¹⁷ (Reich 1992, 308) or neo-mercantilism produced by interdependence, it is not clear who will take the responsibility to educate the world society of solidarity and cosmopolitanism and whether the economic interdependence will naturally produce global citizens convinced of the necessity of cosmopolitanism. In other words, Reich does not explain how the ideal of cosmopolitanism will be produced and how the geocentric multinational firm has coped with problems as economic nationalism and trust-building (Perlmutter 2001, 18). Reich does not explain how the "future symbolic analysts" (Reich 1991, 309) or extreme globalists, and more precisely "symbol manipulators" (Harris and Watson 1992, 253, n30) will appear, what their predominantly American background implies (Reich 1991, 178)¹⁸, how the global obligations will be shared.

Thurow does not take into consideration that government policies may not always work in favour of the national interest but in favour of private interests. Government's role seems to be at the basis of the wealth pyramid for the maintenance of the social organization through provision of public order, infrastructure, education and health. However wealth is generally based on knowledge and the problem is that ownership of knowledge is a "slippery concept" (Thurow 1999, xv). At the same time governments lose their ability to help those who cannot compete successfully. In short the economic

¹⁵ The increase in firms' rivalry leads to increase in innovation (Porter 1990, 157).

¹⁶ "Creative destruction" (Stolper 1994, 61) is replacement of the old with new technologies, as a result of local rivalry and entrepreneurship. This is an idea of establishing a new structure of the economy by a process of integration.

¹⁷ "Relative deprivation" is when people evaluate their well-being in light of others' wealth.

¹⁸ Reich only mentions that most of them are white males, and the number of blacks and Hispanics is increasing (Reich 1991, 179). However it is likely that Americans will continue to excel at symbolic analysis (ibid:225).

game will be played on three levels: nations, companies and individuals (Thurow 1999, 97). It is interesting that the three main regions are building wealth being at different levels of the wealth pyramid (Thurow 1999, ch.13)¹⁹: Japan has to build a new structure and start at level one, the government's main role being the debt elimination, Western Europe is to create entrepreneurial environment without destroying the social welfare state, America has to work on skill-building and is closest to the top of the pyramid. A global economy replaces the national economies but there is no global government to replace the national governments. In this way no-one is responsible for maintaining a global wealth pyramid and firms are the "global or niche players" (Thurow 1999, 279).

Ohmae suggests that global corporations are "nationalityless" (Ohmae 1991, 195) and he bases this on the levelling of consumers' tastes, or the global product approach producing commonalities (Ohmae 1995, 26). Government's role is to create environment for the MNCs, not to protect against them but also the role of the government is to "represent and protect the interest of its people, not of its companies" (Ohmae 1991, 201), educate the people and let them decide which is good. The invisible continent has no government and resembles a "frontier environment" (Ohmae 2000, 215) where the fights are between speculators (risk-takers) and governments, responsible for the well-being of the people. However, it is not clear whether governments will intervene more to protect their citizens if conflict of interest arises between them and the MNC and whether it is possible for the government to educate its people without influencing them when education is the fundamental lever for success and starts at home as the first priority of any nation. The author's view of "one big happy family" (Ohmae 1991, 213) in the interlinked economy is a generalized talk about the future with focus on "cross-cultural alliances" (Ohmae 1995, xv)²⁰. On the other hand, although the companies do not approach states but regional markets still the home region is important and worldwide competitors have first attained "status of domestic giants" (Ohmae 1995, 45). The bloc competition is company-based and the company's strategy is to simultaneously and mainly through consortia alliances with regional corporations, become an "insider or honorary citizen" in the three main economic blocs, called "Japan-European Community-United States syndicate" (Ohmae 1995, viii) and thus become a triad power with strong holds in the regions south of its geographic region²¹.

Additional Criticisms and Further Suggestions

Historical structuralism offers bottom-up governance as a solution opposed to the "neoliberal hegemonic structures of global capitalist economy" (Cox 1997, 253), and to the "hyper-liberal form" (Cox 1997, 256) of capitalism in North America and Britain. Cox seems to combine Reich's idea on cosmopolitan society, resting on collective responsibility and cross-cultural understanding (in Cox's case) and Thurow's regionalism based on different forms of capitalism. The "new realism" called also "new multilateralism" and "new regionalism" (Cox 1997, 245) is realism with normative goals, focusing on the social cleavages, generated by globalisation, between a dominant trans-national class and subordinate social groups. It seems that Thurow's social order (in the wealth pyramid) is imposed from the top-down, as Cox would suggest the European "civil society" was built, while Reich's is from the bottom-up, as Cox suggests the American "civil society" was built, by a process building counter-hegemony through popular participation. Thus Reich resembles Gramsci's idea of a social order, grounded in civil society where the state is "political society + civil society" (Cox 1999, 4) and the human agency is important. In Cox's case however, solidarity is based on "strategy of class alliance" where "the war of position" (Cox 1999, 16) replaces the political authority in the long-run. Unlike Reich, Cox (the Gramscian view) is against competitiveness because it "justifies the gradual removal of the measures of social protection build up in the era of the welfare state" (Cox 1999,12) and imposes neo-liberalism as a hegemonic ideology.

¹⁹ Wealth is at the top of Thurow's pyramid, starting from the bottom the levels are as follows: social organization, entrepreneurship or individual initiative, creating knowledge, skills, tools, environmental resources.

²⁰ Samuel Huntington makes similar generalizations, although in the opposite direction, about the clash of civilizations or cultures.

²¹ Thus the Japanese Triad power is operative in the US, EC, and Southeast Asia but Japan is at its centre and the Triad becomes a Tetrahedron. In the same way the American includes the US, Japan, EC, Latin America and the European consists of Europe, US, Japan and Africa/Middle East. Latin America is the US biggest trading partner, Southeast Asia is Japan's, Africa is EC's and Middle East is the "common battleground" for all (Ohmae 1995, 122).

Krugman similarly argues that competitiveness is a metaphor used as a “political device” (Krugman 1994, 40), which is more dangerous to apply to nations than to corporations because “the concept of national competitiveness is elusive” (Krugman 1994, 31) and could result in protectionism and wasteful spending of government money. Both Thurow and Reich are not right, he argues. He backs his argument with statistical data showing that US industries with high value-added per worker are capital-intensive (like cigarettes and petroleum refining, computers, aerospace) as opposed to labour-intensive and consequently cannot increase the standard of living. Consequently competitiveness has more to do with political speculation than with productivity and increase of the standard of living. Another criticism of the “evolved capitalism” (Cox 1999, 17) in Europe and America is the contradiction or positive relation between the extension of consumer demand and resource depletion.

In this line Strange is concerned about “sustainable growth”, provided not by a strong but a “shrewd state” (Stopford and Strange 1991, 218) with clear vision of priorities. Strange treats the globalising (neoliberal) forces as a fact of contemporary realism. The role of states is to “act as good landlords” (Strange 1998, 113), occupying a territorial space but no longer in control of that place, both providing a market for goods and services and assuring the investors that their space can provide services as transport, communication, personal security and education, R&D necessary to business managers. There is a relative decrease of states’ power because the factors the states control (land and labour) have relatively less importance as determinants of competitiveness, compared to factors as capital and technology controlled by firms. Consequently governments “as a group” (Stopford and Strange 1991, 215) have lost their negotiation power to MNCs but state-firm collaboration is possible if states liberalize their regulations (Stopford and Strange 1991, 96) in line with the international structures formed by industries and firms.

With Reich and Ohmae also it is not clear whether they over or under-socialize. In historical structuralism the economic actor is “embedded in structures of social relations” (Granovetter 1985, 481) but the paradox in both realism (Porter) and liberalism (Reich/Ohmae) is that they tend to atomize or, under-socialize the actor although based on opposite grounds: as a “state of nature” in Hobbes’ realism and as a prerequisite to perfect competition in Adam Smith’s laissez-faire classical liberalism. With Ohmae’s suggestion about levelling of consumer’s tastes, there is also atomization as a result of over-socialization where the behavioural patterns have been internalized and “ongoing social relations have only peripheral effects on behaviour” (Granovetter 1985, 485).

CONCLUSIONS

In the different approaches (placed on a continuum) the level of government intervention is different. Ohmae/Reich’s view is that of the long-run future of “extreme globalization”(Harris and Watson 1992, 251) while Porter’s firm and Thurow’s region base their competitiveness on the home markets, which is close to the realists’ view. Thus the government’s role (in Porter and Thurow) ranks high in the help of their own MNCs. Like institutional liberals, Reich/Ohmae argue that “the mobility of MNCs gives them a major advantage over national governments” (Cohn 2005, 314) and the ownership does not matter. Government’s role rank high on another scale-that measuring help for its citizens to maintain an attractive environment for any MNC (Cohn 2005, 340). Cox’s historical structuralism agrees with liberals on the increasing role of MNCs but attribute this as a feature of the capitalist system.

Which approach is better for the future is not the right question because none of them alone can explain the complex reality of interdependence. All approaches generalize/overemphasize in their starting points, focusing either on firms (Porter), individual workers (Reich), individual consumers (Ohmae), states (Thurow). It is interesting that in terms of the evolutionary movement “from ethnocentrism to polycentrism to geocentrism” (Perlmutter 2001,17) a focus on the polycentric type of MNC is missing in the Porter-Thurow- Reich approaches and, observed as a whole they jump from the ethnocentric (Porter) to the geocentric (Reich) type of explanation. This disregards the nationality and cultural impact of the host country because of the increased mobility of factors, a feature, by contrast addressed in Cox’s “new realism” approach. Yet a problem remains of how sovereign states

will deal with the fact that many of their enterprises conduct other sovereigns' influence (Vernon 1981, 529).

The literature focuses more on the economic (supply and demand) than the political implications (internal, dynamic government role, embeddedness) of competitiveness. The different approaches do not explain how is it possible for the government to simultaneously create a business environment and a welfare state (a problem mentioned by Cox and Strange). It seems that sustainability, caring about the citizens and mitigating the effects of the MNCs is a task that contradicts government's role for maintaining a business-friendly environment. From the standpoint of political science government's priority is to provide economic growth/productivity and increase in the standard of living, to find the balance between the exogenous and endogenous factors of growth.

According to more contemporary authors as Jean Tirole competition policy in the digital age involves public intervention, contestable monopolies, efficient rivals in the market, and firms. Contestability or the ability to enter or leave the market freely is of key importance. Paul Romer integrates technological innovation in the long-run macroeconomic analysis as they are important in the process of economic growth. Other important factors are both imperfect competition and externalities to the discovery of new ideas. Innovation is driven by the profits originating from monopolistic competition. According to Paul Krugman, the whole doctrine of "competitiveness" is wrong as nations are not in economic competition. The result of this wrong perception leads to misallocated resources, trade frictions and bad domestic economic policies.

In my opinion economic growth and competitiveness have to be backed by a sound government policy. Government intervention, through the creation of economic stimuli is the answer to having a true national element in the international market. Governments are the agents that should provide the balancing factor in the equation. In the contemporary digital age I agree with Tirole that public intervention has to provide the contestability of the market. Also, as Romer suggests, new ideas will have an increasing impact on innovation and respectively on competitiveness. However I disagree with Krugman that the notion of competitiveness is outdated. Economic competitiveness based on competitiveness of ideas is vital for the future development of the area.

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AL QAEDA AND HYPERTERRORISM – THE SUCCESSFUL EMERGENCE OF BINLADENISM AT GLOBAL LEVEL

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Abstract

September 11, 2001 can be interpreted as a t_0 (zero time) for the studies on terrorism, because that was the moment when the shift from classical terrorism to hyperterrorism occurred. The emergence of hyperterrorism at global level via Al Qaeda was successful owing to very well defined strategies and tactics, which were put into practice under Osama bin Laden's coordination. The in-depth knowledge of the strategies and tactics of a complex enemy, who practices Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, constitutes a starting point in elaborating antiterrorist strategies adapted to the dynamism of the international security environment.

Keywords: hyperterrorism; Al Qaeda; strategy; tactic; Osama bin Laden.

INTRODUCTION

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks committed by Al Qaeda in the USA, targeting the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, marked a double global first: on the one hand, a world superpower such as the USA was attacked for the first time, not by a state, but a non-state actor and, on the other hand, classical terrorism was replaced by hyperterrorism.

As regards the progressive emergence of the concept of hyperterrorism, there were numerous analysts specializing in the issues of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism whose scientific approaches tended to label the September 11 events as new terrorism, unconventional terrorism or postmodern terrorism. This article considers the use of the concept of hyperterrorism to be more appropriate in terms of grasping the specificity of Al Qaeda's strategy, tactic and modus operandi, and studying the psychological profile of a „stateless and territoryless enemy” (Heisbourg 2003, 112) that practises a terrorism of Islamic fundamentalist origin, as are the perpetrators of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 AND THE SHIFT TO HYPERTERRORISM

It should be stressed that the notion of hyperterrorism, as established in the studies on terrorism, is due to François Heisbourg, director of Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique and president of the International Institute of Strategic Studies, recognized both in France and abroad as one of the leading experts in defence and international relations. His book, *Hyperterrorisme: la nouvelle guerre*, presents in a comprehensive and thorough manner both the theorization of hyperterrorism and the specificity of the Islamic fundamentalist terrorism practised by Al Qaeda at global level.

In this regard, nine eleven is a key moment, a t_0 (zero time) for the studies on terrorism, since it makes the transition from classical terrorism to hyperterrorism in a rapidly globalizing world: “That day saw the shift from the logic of classical terrorism «Kill one, be seen by a thousand» to a new logic «Kill as many as possible and be seen by all.»” (Bourdillon 2007, 15)

Thus, hyperterrorism would be defined by „operations with a highly suicide and destabilizing potential, as opposed to “classical” terrorism, which only commits small-scale attacks, causing a few dozen victims.” (Bourdillon 2007, 10)

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ON THE BASES OF THE FUTURE „BASE” (In Arabic, Al Qaeda means “base”. Therefore, the term written with capital letter „Base” will be used with reference to Al Qaeda) – STAGES IN THE FORMATION OF AL QAEDA AND THE EMERGENCE OF BINLADENISM AT GLOBAL LEVEL

The war in Afghanistan (1979-1989) provided a framework conducive to the emergence and consolidation of Binladenism. A first step was taken in 1979 by the Palestinian Abdullah Azzam, an important member of the Islamic fundamentalist group called Muslim Brotherhood, who laid the bases of the Afghan Service Bureau, also known as MAK - Maktab al-Khidamat. This bureau had as its main goal to recruit young Muslims animated by the desire to fight the invaders of Afghanistan. This is how Osama bin Laden was recruited and joined Abdullah Azzam, his professor of religion at the University of Djedda, in 1984. It should be stressed that Abdullah Azzam played a key role both in Osama bin Laden's spiritual moulding and in Al Qaeda: "Azzam, who is considered Osama bin Laden's spiritual master already asserts that the Islam will regain its purity only by engaging in the holy war against the infidels. [...] Azzam [...] is the genuine technical inspirator of the future Al Qaeda." (Rodier 2006, 31-33)

In a very short time, the new recruit Osama bin Laden got to understand the utility of the Islamic fundamentalist doctrine and to fully assume it, so that the future terrorist organization Al Qaeda became the symbol of Islamic fundamentalism: „For example, Al Qaeda, the terrorist group which became the flag ship of Islamic fundamentalism, promotes a Wahhabi ideology based on the identification of the „unbelievers” in the secular Western society, advocating the start of the „holy war” against the West, up to the supreme sacrifice and by any means.” (Barna 2007, 39)

In 1980, Osama bin Laden set up the Islamic Salvation Front after previously declaring himself a supporter of the Pakistani Mujahedeens. In Saudi Arabia, he recruited Arab volunteers and was engaged in their instruction in training camps, to later make them join the war fought by the Afghan Mujahedeens. It should be emphasized that Osama bin Laden was involved in both the military training of the future fighters against the USSR and in the financial support which would play a key role for the future Al Qaeda. Bin Laden's recruitment strategy proved to be very efficient: in a very short time, he became a mentor, training about 10 000 fighters, notably experts in undercover operations, sabotage and guerilla war, in his own camp of Peshawar (Pakistan).

If for Osama bin Laden, a first major role in his mobilization for fight was held by Abdullah Azzam, the Egyptian physician Ayman al-Zawahiri, a member of the group called the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, was to have a determining religious and political influence on Osama bin Laden: „Ayman al-Zawahiri was going to gradually impose his vision on the goals and principles of the Jihad: a „holy war”, fought in the name of Allah, to release the Muslim-inhabited territories from all influence, of both the capitalist West and the comunist USSR.” (Barna 2011, 25)

At this tactical level it is to be noted that the focus shifted from the war against the USSR to that against the capitalist West, an enemy which later turned out to be reduced to the USA. Or, in other words, bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri had already decided that the future terrorist organization Al Qaeda, created in the 1990s, would globally impose binladenism, its own version of Islamic fundamentalism according to Osama bin Laden, which would promote an offensive Jihad: „An alliance between the Egyptian revolutionary jihadists and the defensive jihadists who had once fought in Afghanistan triggered the offensive jihad against the Western world, by creating Al Qaeda.” (Raetchi 2019, 20)

In fact, Ayman al-Zawahiri became known as Osama bin Laden's right hand. At the same time, as author of „Knights under the Prophet's Banner”, the Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri has the main merit of having theorized the contemporary Jihad. The strategist al-Zawahiri manages to handle the Islamic fundamentalist discourse just like a linguist and to add a political dimension to the religious one, by legitimizing the use of suicide terrorist attacks on Western governments, institutions and even populations.

The war in Afghanistan came to an end after ten years of combat, by the victory of the Arab Mujahedeens against the USSR. Al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden wanted to mobilize so as to make

Al Qaeda, „a group composed of former Afghan veterans of the holy war” (Barna 2011, 25) internationalize the Jihad against the US, Israel and the Muslim governments serving the West.

Osama bin Laden was forced by the Saudi dynasty to leave Saudi Arabia after requesting the Saudi government not to allow US military bases to be placed on the holy territory in the context of the Iraqi invasion in Kuwait. In 1991, Bin Laden settled in Sudan, where he strengthened his logistical basis for preparing the future terrorist attacks that were going to shake the international security environment.

In exile in Sudan, Osama bin Laden did not give up in any way his religious beliefs, according to which Islamic fundamentalism is the way forward for the Muslim world to free itself from the injustice to which it is subjected by the unfaithful West.

Therefore, bin Laden moved from words to actions and the inventory of the most important terrorist attacks committed by Al Qaeda at the order of its leader reveals an increasingly unprepared international security environment in the face of the threat of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism in the process of imposing itself at global level: 1993 – the attack on the World Trade Center; August 1996 – the first fatwa issued by Osama bin Laden („Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Places”, calling on the USA to initiate the procedure for the withdrawal of its soldiers from Saudi Arabia); February 1998 – religious decree issued by Al Qaeda (the obligation of every Muslim to kill Americans and their allies); 7 August 1998 – bombings of the United States embassies in Kenya (213 killed and 4500 injured) and Tanzania (11 people were killed after an explosive device detonated); October 2000 – the terrorist attack against the navy destroyer USS Cole as it was refuelling in the port of Aden (17 members of the crew were killed and 40 were injured).

Although the US intelligence services already had enough pieces of the puzzle designed by Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, they were, after all, unable to put the pieces of this puzzle together in order to realize what was going to follow – September 11, 2001 and the emergence of bin Ladenism at global level. Even before September 11, 2001 CIA concludes as clearly as possible that there was „no information on any specific plot in progress.” (Raeŧchi 2019, 222). In fact, after September 11, 2001, the reform of the US intelligence community was going to be carried out as a matter of urgency.

THE ISSUANCE OF RELIGIOUS DECREES (FATWA) BY STRATEGIST OSAMA BIN LADEN – A VERY WELL-DEFINED STRATEGY OF AL QAEDA

For the Western democratic societies, which were used to the practice of issuing presidential decrees, the years 1996 and 1998 come with an element of novelty and propose another kind of decree – the religious decree, also known as fatwa. These are: the first fatwa issued by bin Laden in August 1996, known as the "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places" and the religious decree issued by Al Qaeda in February 1998, according to which every Muslim has the obligation to kill Americans and their allies, whether civilians or military. It is obvious that these two religious decrees issued by Al Qaeda emphasize once more that terrorism of Islamic fundamentalist origin poses a threat to international security.

At the same time, the two fatwas translate a very well organized strategy masterminded by Osama bin Laden, who managed to successfully mobilize members and followers of Al Qaeda starting from a discourse based on his personal religious interpretation of the Quran and Jihad, underlain by his own version. Bin Laden thus managed to join a radical religious dimension and a political dimension so that the two combine harmoniously and legitimize in front of the Muslims the conduct of the "holy war" against the infidels, with the aim of "returning to Islam" (Ferjani 2005, 17) in the face of westernization.

Although the Quran contains no reference to the encouragement of terrorism, Islamic fundamentalist terrorist groups justify their attacks as an expression of their obligation to fight the „holy war” in the name of Islam against the unfaithful West which threatens their culture and values and takes advantage of the natural resources of their land. One can note a significant difference, induced by the dimension with violent and armed tones which the Islamic fundamentalist terrorism promoted, from the meaning given by the Quran to Jihad as „each Muslim's inner struggle on the path to faith”

(Barna 2007, 111): „It should be mentioned that, in the Quran, the term Jihad is not the equivalent of armed conflict, but it expresses each Muslim's inner struggle on the path to faith.” (Barna 2007, 111)

The "merit" of strategist Osama bin Laden is that he successfully credited the religious dimension of Jihad with a strong political dimension, both of which combine harmoniously and legitimate the war against the West by the perpetration of terrorist attacks. The issuance of religious decrees (fatwa) by bin Laden may be interpreted as a legitimation of the holy war waged by the faithful against the unfaithful. Indeed, Osama bin Laden urges Al Qaeda members and supporters to fight even at the price of the supreme sacrifice to impose the Islamic fundamentalist doctrine at global level. The success of a fatwa is highly dependent on the person who transposes it in words: "It should not be forgotten that the power of a fatwa entirely depends on the person who issues it." (Gunaratna 2002, 12)

It should also be emphasized that Osama bin Laden's effort of legitimizing "the holy war" against the unfaithful West is backed by the Egyptian physician Ayman al-Zawahiri, bin Laden's right hand, who, through his work "Knights under the Prophet's Banner", manages to highlight the political dimension of Jihad and to legitimize the combat against the West and modernity even more, going so far as to plead for the perpetration of suicide terrorist attacks: "The contemporary notion of Jihad has been reinvented, customized and turned into a political instrument." (Barna 2007, 23) Al-Zawahiri clearly distinguishes between the internal enemy, represented by corruption at government level, and the foreign enemy, represented by the US and Israel. Al-Zawahiri goes so far as to discredit UNO by calling it „Haiaa Kofria Almania Musaitira" ("Global Heathen Domination Organization") in his efforts to criticize democracy, a "heathen religion" (Alexe 2019, 187) which is deeply incompatible with the values of Islam.

TACTIC OF AL QAEDA

The success of the near simultaneous bombings of the United States embassies in Kenya (213 people died and 4500 others were injured) and Tanzania (11 people were killed after an explosive device detonated) in 1998, of the terrorist attack against the navy destroyer USS Cole as it was refuelling in the port of Aden (17 members of the crew were killed and 40 were injured) in 2000, culminating with September 11, 2001, demonstrates that, in addition to a well developed strategy masterminded by strategist Osama bin Laden, Al Qaeda had an exceptional tactic that ensured the supremacy of binladenism.

An extremely important feature of Al Qaeda's tactics is represented, at structural level, by its octopus-like organization: "Al Qaeda is a genuine octopus, infiltrated in about seven other terrorist organizations, including Taliban, acting autonomously both internally and internationally." (Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 19) The octopus-like organization of Al Qaeda ensures the global spread of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism and it is the expression of a modus operandi that focuses on the simultaneous commission of terrorist attacks in different countries and, paradoxically, even on hitting targets situated on different continents. That is why the USA have often been unable to completely annihilate the Al Qaeda "superstructure" (Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 20)

Al Qaeda "superstructure" (Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 20) can also be interpreted from the perspective of the Phoenix bird symbolism in Greek mythology: even if an attempt is made to cut a tentacle, the other tentacles quickly mobilize and give concrete expression to the Islamic fundamentalist discourse by terrorist attacks committed simultaneously even in countries situated on different continents: "Another tactical feature is the obvious preference for multiple, even simultaneous attacks. In 1998, the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya were bombed simultaneously. The September 11, 2001 attacks of the United States were also simultaneous."(Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 22)

The lengthy preparation of terrorist attacks is another strength of binladenist tactic, meant to maximize the success of the attacks committed and to work out all the details, so that Al Qaeda's plan should not be discovered and annihilated: "The bombings against the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania had been prepared in five years (1993-1998) and the September 11, 2001 attacks in the USA took at least two years to be prepared." (Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 22)

It has to be pointed out that Al Qaeda parent superstructure encompasses several terrorist organizations that develop rapidly through cells, so as to make the tentacle hits even stronger and impossible to annihilate, and get Al Qaeda to gain "worldwide coverage" (Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 20): Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Egyptian Islamic Group, Armed Islamic Group of Algeria (GIA), Turkistan Islamic Party, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, The Army of Muhammad of Kashmir and Abu Sayyaf Group of the Philippines.

"N.B.C. (nuclear, biological and chemical) superterrorism" (Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 21) is another particular feature of binladenist tactic as regards the commission of terrorist attacks. As compared with the so-called classical terrorism specific to the Cold War, materialized in seizures of embassies, hijacking of aircraft, car bombs, Osama bin Laden showed his tactical ingenuity by adding means of mass destruction to terrorism in the classical meaning. In 1998, the Arabic publication *Al-Watan al-Arabi* brings to light evidence attesting that Osama bin Laden would have strengthened Al Qaeda's tactic by initiating a project to acquire Russian nuclear weapons.

Another specificity of the binladenist tactic resides in the communication method chosen so that the preparation and commission of terrorist attacks should not be discovered by governmental structures involved in preventing and combatting Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. From this point of view, "steganograms" represent the most secure channel of communication for Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda: "Steganograms are encoded messages, hidden in other encoded messages on the web, or inserted into photos, films, music or radio programs. This steganogram-based communication makes it extremely difficult to monitor ben Laden's communications [...]." (Munteanu and Alexe 2002, 22)

Although strategy and tactics served him well for a long time and he eventually managed to hide in Pakistan for a decade, Osama bin Laden was killed in Pakistan, in the region of Abbottabad, on May 2, 2011 (at 1 p.m.) in an attack ordered by the American president Barack Obama as part of Operation Neptune Spear. The killing of Al Qaeda leader was officially confirmed through a press release of the Pakistani Foreign Affairs Ministry. Nevertheless, killing Osama bin Laden did not mean the total disappearance of hyperterrorism, just as the arrests of numerous Al Qaeda leaders did not lead to the annihilation of the "little Jihad, Jihad Al-achkar, the war against the other" (Marret 2005, 102), also known as "the holy war." (Marret 2005, 102)

CONCLUSIONS

In preventing and combating hyperterrorism and in developing counter-terrorism strategies adapted to the dynamism of the international security environment, a key element is the in-depth knowledge of the enemy. In the present situation, the enemy is a complex "stateless and territoryless" (Heisbourg 2003, 112) one, whose actions are harder and harder to predict. Therefore, the knowledge and thorough understanding of its strategies and tactics is a starting point in successfully preventing and combating Islamic fundamentalist terrorist attacks.

Besides "endurance and intelligence" (Heisbourg 2003, 226), a key role in combating Islamic fundamentalist terrorism is held by the intelligence services. Although the current trend in combating Islamic fundamentalist terrorism demonstrates the undeniable success of UAVs (Stamate 2019), HUMINT (all the information that can be obtained from human sources) (Sîrbu 2019) should in no case be neglected. On the contrary, it should be consolidated, considering that both human couriers and sleeper agents are two of the strengths that the hyperterrorism promoted by Al Qaeda masterfully refined.

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RUSSIAN ELECTRONIC WARFARE CAPABILITIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR EUROPEAN STRATEGIC STABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF THE SYRIAN CONFLICT

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Abstract

The Russian intervention in Syria, as well as the associated deployment of electronic warfare systems, generated alarm among NATO members linked to the possibility that a strengthening of electronic warfare capabilities by Russia could reduce the current technological asymmetry in favor of NATO. Such reduction would come from the use of electronic warfare systems to hamper the command and control capacity of attack and defense systems. This paper analyses the Russian intervention in Syria in order to define whether it can be understood that there is an increasing risk to Euro-Atlantic security stemming from Russian advances in electronic warfare.

Keywords: Syria; Russia; electronic warfare; NATO; military strategy.

INTRODUCTION²

Despite the relevance of the electromagnetic spectrum and its importance for modern warfare, during the last 20 years it has been sidelined by the consolidation of cyberspace as the fifth domain of warfare. This, however, changed in April 2014, when a Russian *SU-24 Fencer* fighter equipped with a sophisticated Electronic Warfare (EW) system conducted a series of low altitude flights over USS *Donald Cook*, an *Arleigh Burke* destroyer, allegedly jamming all of its electronic sensors and communication systems (it was later confirmed that this information, widely reported at the time by Russian media, was false) (DRFLab 2017). However, Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine and Syria, as well as the operation of EW systems close to NATO and EU countries (including the jamming of GPS signals) showed both the extent of Western reliance in the radioelectric domain (particularly between 9 KHz and 3000 GHz) and the significant advances made by Russia in EW capabilities.

Unlike during operations in the Ukraine, where the Russian EW was aimed at supporting the ground forces and combined cyber, information and electromagnetic capabilities, in Syria the Russian forces have focused on the use of drones to collect electronic intelligence and jam the Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities (McCrary 2021; Turunen 2020, 16). Although Russia has focused on thwarting the command and control of the anti-Assad fighters as means to degrade their capacity to communicate and therefore coordinate their operations, it has also used its EW capabilities to diminish the intelligence gathering efforts (from low-orbit surveillance satellites, reconnaissance aircraft or drones) from the US and NATO via spoofing the GPS signals (Kofman et al. 2017; C4ADS 2019). These tactics have generated a certain degree of concern among foreign militaries also present in the conflict, particularly the US military, who were able to realize their own limitations regarding electronic protection capabilities (Stupples 2015; Seligman 2018). We could consider that this realization, added to the use of EW that was reported in the Ukrainian and Syrian conflicts, its potential use both in grey-

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zone scenarios and as an integral part of Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2/AD) strategies, and its military reliance to the electronic spectrum for waging the “American way of war”, is likely to have fueled the renewed US interest in increasing their EW research and development projects. An example of such growth in interest from US policymakers can be drawn from the topics covered by Congressional Research Papers. These have increased tangibly the number of papers dedicated to EW, reaching a record of 5 EW-specific CRS reports published in 2020.

RUSSIAN EW CAPABILITIES

Despite the recent publicity, Russian EW has a long history dating back to the early 20th century (Kjellén 2018, 19). However, the basis of the current approach was laid during the Cold War with the development of the Radio-Electronic Combat (REC) doctrine. The REC doctrine brought the previously dispersed techniques and disciplines under one conceptual umbrella, integrating them into a concept of operations and developed a wide range of means to operate in the electromagnetic spectrum (Turunen 2020, 14). Although the end of the Cold War led to a significant loss of EW capabilities, the military modernisation process that began in the mid-2000s revitalised the Russian EW industry and brought new materials into service (Radin et al. 2019, 187-88; Denisentsev 2014). Despite this, the war in Georgia (2008) highlighted the immaturity and limitations of Russian EW (Collins 2018). However, lessons learned from this campaign – such as its apparent fiasco in the information domain (Beehner 2018) – also served to mature capabilities that could be observed in Ukraine or Syria.

Broadly speaking, the current Russian REC doctrine combines the traditional electronic attack and protection functions with activities such as technical reconnaissance countermeasures or radio electronic information support measures (Ramm 2015a, 2015b). Similar to the West, with the progressive consolidation of *Cyber Electro Magnetic Activities* (CEMA)³ due to the increasing convergence between cyberspace and radio-electric domains, the Russian doctrine also envisages the use of a wide range of information actions to protect, exploit, degrade or deny the use of electromagnetic space. Unlike the West, however, Russian doctrine also envisages the use of conventional means – such as anti-radiation missiles – to degrade adversary electronic systems. While these kinetic means would be employed in open conflict, all other tools of information warfare - from EW to degrade adversary radio communications or spoofing GPS signals to psychological operations, propaganda or cyber-attacks⁴ – could also be used in the grey zone. In this case, as with other information weapons, EW operations make it difficult to attribute responsibility while degrading the adversary's civilian and military capabilities, reducing resilience and contributing to escalation dominance. In any case, EW can be regarded as a force multiplier capable of being used in any scenario and contingency for offensive or defensive activities and supporting operations on land, sea, air, space and cyberspace. This is why Russian EW is not limited to the tactical level, but can also be used at the operational and strategic levels across the entire spectrum of conflict and fully integrated with actions in other domains.

Despite the lack of a detailed and structured reporting from Russian authorities in regards to its current EW weaponry and tactics, there is a significant degree of exposure of such systems in both State-backed media, such as official Army publications, and Russian press. The validity of these publications should be questioned, as it has been shown that a certain degree of exaggeration is occasionally added to such reports. A prominent case is found in the news reports about the USS Cook incident previously mentioned. Other, subtler enhancements also make their way into publications about successful military operations in conflicts such as the Syrian civil war, as well as into reports signed by commanders about the capabilities and progress made by their own areas of responsibility. This is enhanced by the extended use of EW capabilities within a wider trend of State propaganda about the military might of the Russian armed forces.

³ It is important to point out that, in general terms, EW has three components: electronic warfare support, electronic protection, and electronic attack.

⁴ Strictly speaking, these are informational weapons focused on achieving informational-technical effects on adversary infrastructures and systems and informational-psychological effects on the perceptions of their population.

Having said this, Russian EW capabilities can be better structured based on their capacity to support military operations in the land, air and sea domains:

Regarding ground forces, the participation of EW resources on ground operations and planning underwent significant change during the structural reform of Russian Armed Forces in 2008. Such reform embedded EW units in the organic structure of tank and motorised rifle manoeuvre brigades (McDermott 2017, 5). These units consist mainly of electronic attack systems, but also capabilities for anti-air protection for ground forces and automated command and control systems which are integrated with those of the ground forces they accompany. As noted by McDermott (McDermott 2017) this represents a significant difference between Russian and Western organization of EW resources, since Russian ground units are not deployed without an EW support component.

Such systems have also been reported to support psychological operations. For example, multiple reports emerged during the Ukrainian conflict about text messages being received by Ukrainian civilians containing demoralizing messages and encouraging them to surrender. Although this could never be proved by research, it is believed that the Russian Army launched these operations using the *Leer-3* system. This tactic, as reported by Kjellén, was tried in exercises at the Prudboi range in the Southern Military District (Kjellén, 2018, 70). The *Leer-3* system consists of a mobile platform and an attached small UAV, which have the ability to create virtual cell tower (spoofing) and intercept or alter, as proven in Ukraine, the data received by mobile phones in the area.

Regarding the Russian Air Force, EW support to air operations is far less intense as in the case of ground forces, at least in what refers to the diversity of EW technology being embedded in aircraft. As such, the main support consists of electronic countermeasure (ECM) pods in the systems of specific aircraft such as the *Su-34 Fullback*. This is the case of the L-175V *Khibiny* pods, among others (i.e., the *SAP-518* usually mounted in the *Su-27/Su-30/Su-35 Flanker* fighters), which provide protection against guided missiles⁵. Reportedly, a more sophisticated version of the *Khibiny* technology, referred to as *Tarantul*, is currently being tested, potentially providing electronic protection for a larger group of aircraft (Kjellén, 2018, 57). Another key task and capability of Russian airborne EW system is SIGINT. In this regard, deployment in environments where NATO aircraft conduct operations provides the benefits of collecting such signals, which can then be reported back and analysed (C4ISR intelligence cycle) to reinforce the possibilities of their own EW systems in a potential standoff against NATO forces.

As for EW in the Russian navy, as reported by McDermott, EW forces are represented in naval fleets as well as in battalions in the respective Military Districts. Both support structures pursue a largely protective goal against potential enemy strikes. In this regard, as an example of ongoing technological developments, the *5P-42 Filin* electro-optic countermeasure can be cited. This system, embedded in at least two frigates since 2019 (McDermott, 2019) generates strong beams of light which impede attackers to correctly see the platform and aim any fire towards it. As reported by McDermott citing Russian media outlets, the Russian Navy claims this system attacks the optic nerves of enemy forces, creating temporary blindness and even hallucinations.

As a conclusion of this brief overview of Russian EW capabilities, it can be observed that the Russian military are investing resources in EW research and development to obtain strategic advantages derived from negating enemy technology. Additionally, although we can assume that any lacks or issues presented by the current program will unlikely surface to open sources, this program seems to count with a high level of endorsement and institutional support, tangible not only in the investments made but in the structural changes made to accommodate EW as a crucial component of military operations and protection of critical infrastructure.

⁵ Needless to say that those systems can also detect traces and discriminate targets, so they may provide an additional layer of Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) capacity. In any case, the Russian doctrine prioritises land-based control of aircraft and hence, IFF interrogation may be accessory.

RUSSIAN EW DEPLOYMENT IN THE SYRIAN CONFLICT

As could possibly be expected based on the summary of Russian EW capabilities, EW capabilities and personnel were largely present and active during the Russian intervention in the Syrian conflict.

In this regard, the Syrian intervention saw both the use of EW as combat support and as protection for critical infrastructure or equipment. Due to the heavy use of UAVs as compared to previous Russian deployments, such as the east Ukraine conflict, discussions about the implications of Russian EW measures in Syria are largely centered about UAV-borne EW capabilities and protecting their critical infrastructure against UAV-based airstrikes.

Due to the symbolism and impact it has had on the military planning and exercises carried out during 2019-2020 (Sukhankin, 2019), the most relevant example can be found in the protection of the Khmeimim airbase, located in Western Syria and key for Russian deployment in the country. In Khmeimim, a series of electronic protection systems containing at least one *Krasukha-4* jammer was deployed, providing coverage against UAV airstrikes. However, such coverage was continuously tested by Syrian rebels between 2017 and 2019, when they managed to inflict minor damage on the base by conducting massive drone attacks (reaching 80 UAVs) or exploiting temporary de-activations of the electronic protection measures to attack the base (Urcosta, 2020, 51). Whether the finding of these “opportunity windows” was accidental or based on an advanced EW collection plan is an open question that could provide significant implications for the analysis of the Syrian conflict.

Apart from the evident benefits gained from EW as a support and protection force multiplier, it is noted that the Kremlin has also found it possible to use the Syrian conflict as a great maneuvering ground in which to improve its newest technology in real situations (Turunen, 2020, 16). As noted by Turunen, the scope of such tests has differed in the Syrian conflict in comparison to the deployment in east Ukraine. In this regard, the deployment in Syria has represented a testing ground for EW capabilities linked to UAV deployment, signals intelligence and protection against reconnaissance.

This testing strategy not only allows Russia to acquire greater experience and training in the use of this equipment, but also to deepen the general training of their troops and detect possible improvements or failures that may be found in specific systems or tactics. However, it should be noted that, as McDermott (2017, 21) points out, the scope of the Syrian deployment in terms of the volume and novelty of tested equipment is not comparable to the volume of testing that took place in the eastern Ukraine intervention.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EUROPEAN STRATEGIC STABILITY

While some commentators see the Russian EW as one of the Kremlin’s “silver bullets” - along with hypersonic weapons or nuclear torpedoes - against Washington’s military superiority, others consider it as another piece of Russia’s deterrence strategy (or so called A2/AD) in Europe. Both positions are partly right: the US has maintained its military dominance for decades thanks to its information superiority. However, its reliance on the ability to collect, process, disseminate and exploit more information, faster and better than its opponents, has also become its main weakness. Therefore, it is not surprising that countries like Russia, unable to symmetrically compete with the US, are exploiting this dependence asymmetrically. One of the many responses put forward by Moscow is the enhancement of its EW capabilities. On the other hand, this development is also part of the A2/AD with which Moscow threatens the strategic balance in Eastern Europe⁶. In this sense, EW capabilities can be regarded as another layer - along with long-range radars, multi-layered air defences and long-range precision attack systems - that may contribute to altering NATO’s strategic calculus. By its nature, EW can also contribute to escalation dominance and, above all, be used in the grey-zone to

⁶ However, this concept originally used to depict the Chinese strategies to ensure the control of its first island chain does not fully grasp the Russian approach. Strictly speaking, what Moscow has developed is a Reconnaissance-Strike Complex (*Razvedyvatel no-Udarnyy Kompleks* – RUK). Conceived by the USSR in the 1980s, it consisted of a broad range of sensors and vectors capable of identifying enemy forces and launching long-range precision strikes. A RUK was sited within a (mostly anti-air) bubble to prevent the adversary from hitting its most precious components. In addition, it is important to bear in mind that what might be termed an advanced *Integrated Air Defence System* (IADS) is but one component - together with the air defences of land-based units and the air force – of Russia’s air defence (Kofman 2020).

exploit the electromagnetic dependence of advanced societies. In this case, they would unlikely be used in isolation, but as part of information warfare in the context of multidimensional (hybrid) strategies.

In this sense, it is important to analyze in greater depth whether the currently known or public Russian EW capabilities really respond to or justify this social alarm about an increased risk on European security. On the basis of what has been described above, and following the conclusions reached by the main studies and sources analyzed, it can be stated that we are in an intermediate situation between the total absence of risk for NATO and the situation of serious risk perceived from some sectors, due to a series of reasons:

First, one of the arguments frequently detected when denouncing the dangerousness and risk involved in Russian investment in EW capabilities is conditioned by the alleged novelty of such systems. From this point of view, Russia would be investing large sums of money in the development of electronic warfare capabilities that would be groundbreaking with the current technology at its disposal. Not only that, but it would be doing so with sufficient efficiency and speed to have significant updates in its systems to be able to test some of them in the conflict in eastern Ukraine and other different and more evolved ones in the Syrian conflict.

While it is true that Russia is making a clear commitment to the development of its electronic warfare capabilities, it is not so evident, based on the systems whose deployment in Ukraine and Syria has been made public, that the pace of technological development and production of these systems is so high and efficient. In fact, as Kjellén states, there is no known case of a novel electronic warfare system deployed in Syria that had not already been tested before in Ukraine, although those sent to Syria probably included improvements derived from lessons learned from previous deployments (Kjellén 2018, 62). An exception would have been the *Tarantul* devices mentioned previously, which so far have not been sighted in Syria.

Likewise, from the point of view of advancement in the technologies underlying such systems, Kjellén also warns that no major advances are perceived between one generation of systems and the next from the point of view of the technology behind them, so this argument would lose force when it comes to justifying a possible Russian competitive advantage from major technological advances in the short-medium term.

As the main exception to this fact, and with the aim of offering a balanced view of the analysis carried out, it is worth mentioning the existence of specific cases in which progress is being made and which present relevant innovations in the field of electronic warfare, such as the enabling of radars on drones or research and development to suppress or hinder satellite detection, reconnaissance, command and control capabilities. Likewise, Kjellén highlights the efforts being made to generate systems to protect troops and facilities against guided missiles, as well as the development of specific command and control systems for electronic warfare, which allow for better coordination of operations while transmitting valuable situational awareness information in the electromagnetic spectrum (Kjellén 2018, 62).

Secondly, it is noted that alarm about Russian electronic warfare capabilities has largely been driven by assumptions or claims, many of them coming from unreliable media, about the capabilities of such systems. The clearest example is the incident in which, allegedly, a single aircraft equipped with *Khibiny* systems, intended to protect the aircraft itself, would have inhibited the USS Donald Cook's communications completely, leaving it "blind" (Kjellén 2018, 56) to what was happening in its vicinity. Similarly, contradictory and differently ranging versions have been detected about the real capability of the *Krasukha* family of systems, claiming that they would be able to blind NATO command, control and reconnaissance systems completely and in a very high radius.

Faced with this possibility, two clear tendencies of response to the question have been observed, conditioned by the specific source that is consulted. While non-specialized press, especially those media that could be classified as having less technical rigor or knowledge, (for example, The Huffington Post, with headlines such as "NATO would be totally outmatched in a conventional war against Russia" (Ritter, 2017) tend to affirm that, indeed, Russian electronic warfare systems can generate a significant advantage over NATO forces. However, academic reports

stemming from institutions specialized in Defense matters coincide in their affirmations that, at a technological level, the current threat posed by Russian EW technology is definitely not as strong as portrayed in the press. McDermott, who makes a clear comparison between NATO's capabilities and those possessed, for example, by the Ukrainian army in the Donbas during the conflict, states this categorically.

At this point, it is interesting to stop and think about the implications of this statement. In a context of frequent proxy conflicts, where the involvement of rival powers is not always easy to determine (as was, formally speaking, Russia's involvement in Ukraine), should the existence of neighboring countries with a clear technological disadvantage vis-à-vis Russia not be a source of concern, even if NATO countries are not nearly as vulnerable themselves? Is this not, in practice, a "proxy" capability gap, allowing Russia to advance and promote its interests? These questions have predictably already made their way into NATO's strategic planning, and have possibly been weighed against the dilemma of escalating tensions that would be generated by any perceived attempt by NATO to develop Ukraine's or other non-member's military capabilities. What is worth noting at this point is the distinction between a conventional conflict and a nuclear conflict. While in the nuclear realm, as Dalsjö, Berglund and Jonsson (2019, 52) point out, an overmatch of EW Russian capabilities against US EW is highly unlikely both offensively and defensively. However, we do observe a clear risk in the case of employing such systems against less prepared militaries of countries in Russia's immediate sphere of influence, as was the case in Ukraine.

This leads us to the following statement by McDermott, in which he considers that, although he categorically denies that Russia has sufficiently powerful systems to, in their current size, be highly disruptive for Allied capabilities, it is capable, with its current dimensions, of using them to generate serious disruptions to the operations of its enemy. Thus, we could consider that half of the initial Russian objective has been achieved, being the generation of an asymmetric advantage at the tactical level through the application of a specific technology. Kjellén goes so far as to predict that, in a scenario of direct conflict between NATO and Russia, the first signs of ongoing conflict would manifest themselves in the electromagnetic spectrum, since, for the Kremlin, this domain is where NATO is perceived to be weakest (Kjellén 2018, 28).

In particular, McDermott points to the urgency of providing such capabilities to the states most affected by this threat, such as the Baltic countries. Specifically, the author points to the existence of a key challenge for NATO. According to him, the organization bases an important part of its military superiority on the development of highly complex and effective command and control systems, which make it possible to coordinate operations through the simultaneous communication of all the actors involved. Thus, the possibility that, by means of electronic warfare systems, these command and control systems would see their effectiveness reduced, would lead to a situation in which one of NATO's main strategic advantages could be seriously affected.

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ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEFENCE POSTURE BY USING THE MILITARY POWER

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Abstract

The development of a national defence enhanced posture is a fundamental requirement in line with the developments of the current and possible future security environment, as well as regards the commitments made at North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Union (EU) level in relation with the development of capabilities and contributions to missions and operations. Romanian Army prepares, integrates at national level and, if necessary, makes use, in accordance with the law, of all available resources. While peacekeeping or peace-building operations are presented in the various defence and national security strategies as the last resort, the last option after all other measures have been actively explored, it remains in the eyes of public opinion and policy makers the first face of the armed forces, the heart of the profession of soldier. The conventional deterrence has always existed – if *vis pacem para bellum*. Two main mechanisms can discourage a potential opponent. The first is the threat of retaliation, also known as deterrence by punishment. The second mechanism consists in persuading him of the impossibility, or at least of great practical difficulty, of achieving his immediate objectives, thus prompting him to give up not for fear of the consequences of his action, but due to his low chances of success. The guarantee of sovereignty, independence and state unity, the territorial integrity of the country and constitutional democracy is the most fundamental task of the armed forces. It is, after all, the primary role of defending the land of the homeland when it is threatened. The most obvious expression of that is the concept of ensuring the capacity to implement defence plans drawn up at national level.

Keywords: enhanced national defence posture; military power; military capabilities; intervention and stabilization; deterring and preventing; protect and anticipate.

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL DEFENCE ENHANCED POSTURE

The concept of "national defence enhanced posture" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 2020), recently surfaced into Romanian defence policy, is defined as a set of actions intended to "strengthen its role as an allied state and regional actor actively participating in euro-Atlantic and international security" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 n.d.).

The current global security environment is characterised by an increased change in the balance of power within the international system and a move towards a layered multipolar system with global or regional power centres.

This leads to an increased perception of strategic uncertainty and unpredictability. Intensification of strategic competition in areas of interest in the Romania's neighbourhood, generate "a complex regional security context with a broad spectrum of risks and threats to vital national interests" (Romanians White Book n.d.).

Therefore, the development of a national defence enhanced posture is a fundamental requirement in line with the developments in the security environment, including at regional level, as well as regarding the commitments made at North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European

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Union (EU) level, in relation with the development of capabilities and contributions to missions and operations. In this respect, the national effort involves "the development of robust and resilient national defence capability packages, interoperable, flexible and efficient" (2. p. Romanians White Book n.d.).

They are intended to deter an aggression against Romania and to prepare an adequate response to the current and possible future security environment, in order to carry out the constitutional missions of the Romanian Armed Forces.

MILITARY POWER – STRATEGIC APPROACH

Romanian Army, as the leading force of the Romania military power, "is subordinated exclusively to the will of the people" (Romania Constitution n.d.). It has the sacred mission to guarantee and defend the fundamental values and interests of the Romanian people and state, in accordance with the provisions of the Romanian Constitution. Romanian Army prepares, integrates at national level and, if necessary, makes use, in accordance with the law, of all available resources. At the same time, it has the mission to materialise the national contribution to the NATO's collective defence framework, along the lines of operational commitments made as a member state of the EU, as well as for participation in the peace operations and missions under umbrella of United Nations Organization (UN) or coalitions of will.

These requirements are met through specific missions and tasks that are detailed in the following sections.

Interventions and stabilization – participation in peacekeeping and peace-building operations

While peacekeeping or peace-building operations or shortly said «intervention operations» are presented in the various defence and national security strategies as the last resort, the last option after all other measures have been actively explored, its remain in the eyes of public opinion and policy makers the first face of the armed forces, the heart of the profession of soldier. Intervention, that is an armed action, remains at the heart of military identity, with other functions merely strengthening or derived from this initial ability to use force.

Romanian Army could accomplish these missions only under the umbrella of an international organization. As an example, there are three basic criteria in international law, under which NATO can act as an international political and military cooperation organization. These are: in collective defence against an attack on one of the member countries, as defined by the North Atlantic Treaty Article 5; as a crisis management tool, based on a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) provided mandate adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (also referred to as the Charter); or based on an intervention by invitation (Handbooks n.d.) of the legitimate government of the host-nation state.

The intervention is, as the Romanian doctrine understands, the initial phase of an operation and it implies a projection of forces outside the national territory through air, maritime or even ground means. While ground forces appear to play only a secondary role in first-entry operations, two notable exceptions exist through amphibious landings and airborne operations that mix naval and air domains with land, respectively. Both are considered strategic operations when they are aimed at seizing a base that could constitute a «bridgehead» - typically an airport or a deep-water port - that would then safely project enough means to alter the overall balance of power.

It is clear that these modes of action have been relatively little used over the past three decades, in part because of their high cost, difficulty in implementing them and the risks associated with them. Moreover, post-Cold War geopolitical conditions have provided armed forces with relatively easy diplomatic access to areas adjacent to the theatre. Examples are the deployment of US forces to Saudi Arabia in 1990 or Kuwait, in 2003 – or even in the theatre itself due to the presence of a local ally – such as the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan in 2001 – thus avoiding such risky ventures. Beyond these problems of first-entry, the development of the denial of access threat has also led to questioning the assumption of control of common spaces and thus conducting to the dependence on naval, air and informational capabilities.

As the projection is completed, the intervention may continue through a phase of combat or coercion. The latter has long been the heart of a Western strategic thinking characterized by the direct strategy in which the destruction of enemy armed forces remained the main means to constrain the will of an adversary.

From this perspective, armed forces naturally play its role. However, it will vary depending on the means and modes of action implemented by the adversary as well as the political objectives of the intervention. During the 1990s, from the Balkans to Iraq, it was thus possible to see that when the objective was limited to banning an area to the adversary, or to force it to renounce to the violence, the air power alone could achieve the bulk of the major effect.

On the other hand, since the objective was more ambitious, like the "regime change" (Cirincione 2003) sought by the United State of America (US) in Iraq in 2003, the need for control of the land domain required the use of ground troops.

The military history of recent campaigns shows overall a good Western «military effectiveness» in the intervention phase itself - thus including projection and coercion. Nevertheless, many strategists agree on the mediocrity of the «strategic effectiveness» of these interventions. This is the question asked by a group of RAND Corporation researchers based on the US military experience over the period 2001-2014. In the final report, *Improving Strategic Competence: Lessons from 13 Years of War*, they identify seven key lessons. One of these is the importance of anticipating and planning for the needs of "stability operations, capacity-building, transition, and, if necessary, counterinsurgency" (others 2014). It thus appears that stabilization is just as necessary, but much more difficult to implement, than the intervention itself to ensure the success of an operation. Indeed, the skills required to conduct the stabilization phase are essentially within the operational ground domain, since the latter aims to "restore the minimum viability conditions of a state and ending of violence as a mode of protest and laying the groundwork for a return to normal life by launching a civil process of reconstruction." (French Joint Doctrine 2013)

In a 2017 paper entitled "Small Footprint, Small Payoff" (S. Biddle 12 April 2017) researchers Stephen Biddle, Julia Macdonald and Ryan Baker identified three dilemmas that hinder the effectiveness of such an approach. In all three cases, there are asymmetries, but this time no longer between the interventionist power and his opponent, but between the intervener, called "principal" in the micro-economic terminology of the study, and his local partner, called "agent", who is supposed to implement the strategy on the ground in order to minimize the footprint of the former.

The first dilemma refers to an asymmetry of interest: while the "principal" seeks to stabilize the country according to his own interests, his conception often runs up against the interests of the "agent". Typically, through the implementation of democratic or anti-corruption reforms that seem necessary to the "principal". However, sometimes its threaten the interests of the "agent" more directly than the adversary himself would.

The second dilemma is an information asymmetry: the "agent" is by definition better informed of the situation on the ground. Moreover, as the person is following the strategy for which he is receiving assistance involves important means that, as they grow, make the delegation of powers less attractive.

The verification of the "agent's" compliance with the "principal's" interests is only useful if there is a conditionality of the assistance granted. This is the third and final dilemma. To function, conditionality requires double credibility: maintaining aid if implementation is in line with expectations and cutting it off if it does not. However, the experience of recent years shows that it is extremely difficult to maintain this double credibility: after investing large sums of money and committing its prestige, the "principal" can sometimes hardly weigh on his "agent". Conversely, if he threatens too seriously with disengagement, he harms the relationship with his partner, maintaining distrust and ultimately the merits of his assistance.

The consequence of these dilemmas of the minimalist approach is simply the lack of "control" exerted by the intervening power over the situation on the ground. This defect may result in inefficiency, but it can also lead to political risks. The "principal" can thus be liable against his will by the behaviour of the "agent".

Deterring and preventing – contribution to collective defence

The Brussels Summit Declaration, July 2018 reaffirmed that "as a means to prevent conflict and war, credible deterrence and defence is essential and will continue to be based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities. A robust deterrence and defence posture strengthens Alliance cohesion and provides an essential political and military transatlantic link, through an equitable and sustainable distribution of roles, responsibilities, and burdens" (Brussels Summit Declaration 11-12 July 2018).

As a strategic concept, deterrence is not defined by specific means but as the ability to deter a potential aggressor from taking a particular action. The conventional deterrence has always existed – if *vis pacem para bellum*. Two main mechanisms can discourage a potential opponent. The first is the threat of retaliation, also known as deterrence by punishment. It consists of threatening to inflict "unacceptable damages" on those who would attack a perimeter of interests previously defined in a more or less ambiguous manner. A second mode of action exists, deterrence by denial, which may complement a deterrence in retaliation. This second mechanism consists not in threatening the aggressor with punishment but in persuading him regarding the impossibility, or at least of great practical difficulty, of achieving his immediate objectives, thus prompting him to give up not for fear of the consequences of his action, but by his low chances of success. Armed forces can help to make each of these two mechanisms credible.

The effectiveness of deterrence in retaliation is based on three elements: the operational capacity to carry out such damage, the political will to inflict and bear the consequences in terms of escalation, and finally the ability to convince the adversary of the credibility of this threat. In order to strengthen the credibility of this concept, weakened by the asymmetry of interests, deterrence strategists have developed various mechanisms, including the use of advanced forces as a "detonator" (tripwire).

This is underlined by the deployment of NATO's rotational force in the three Baltic countries and Poland decided at the Warsaw Summit in 2016. The latter was put in place in the context of Russian aggression in Ukraine and while the credibility of the Atlantic Alliance in a similar scenario involving a member state could appear to be diminished - at least in the minds of Russian decision-makers. In the absence of a tripwire, the credibility of a threat of retaliation against such an assault was much more questionable.

It is in part to deal with this scenario that the members of the Atlantic Alliance have decided to strengthen their presence in the Baltic States through the deployment of the Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP), a ground force generated on a rotational basis but deployed permanently. These four battlegroups of just over a thousand men each representing some 15 Member States embody the alliance's ongoing commitment alongside its allies most vulnerable to Russia's attempts at strategic intimidation. By their mere presence on the ground, they deprive a potential adversary of any certainty as to its ability to sustain the war on a limited scale.

Despite all its virtues, the mechanism of tripwire gives way to a dose of uncertainty. While they significantly raise the cost of an assault and make reprisals more credible, the 4,000-strong eFP is not, strictly speaking, a difficult obstacle that can drastically reduce the military feasibility of such an attack. If, despite all the aggressor countries, Russia in this example, agreed to take responsibility for an escalation, placing the West in front of the *fait accompli* and challenging it to "risk" Paris, London or Washington to save Tallinn, then deterrence by reprisal could reach its limits.

NATO has also developed tailored Forward Presence (tFP) in the Black Sea region. In Romania, a multinational framework brigade for training Allies' land forces is now in place, and work is underway to develop further the brigade's capacity to contribute to the Alliance's strengthened deterrence and defence posture. A number of air and maritime measures in the Black Sea region have led to a substantial increase in NATO's presence and maritime activity in the Black Sea (Brussels Summit Declaration 11-12 July 2018).

In order to compensate the balance, a containment deterrence strategy can complement the "blind spots" of deterrence in retaliation, particularly in a collective defence context. In this case, it would involve deploying a force powerful enough to effectively repel a conventional aggression or, at

the very least, raise the cost sufficiently to make it unattractive. The benefit of such an approach on retaliation deterrence is that if the deterrence were to fail the prevention force would be more likely to engage in conflict than a retaliatory force obeying the escalatory logic of all or nothing. On the other hand, a strategy of deterrence by conventional ban results in a high cost of implementation, especially in its ground component. It obviously depends on the opposing means and the balance of power, but it seems clear that in Eastern Europe today against Russia, only heavy forces (armoured cavalry, artillery, mechanized infantry) and many would be able to prevent such aggression.

On the other hand, because it is closer to a logic of employment, deterrence by denial is not without risk. For example, there is ambiguity about its use that can be both defensive and offensive. If it were to be interpreted as such by the power that one seeks to deter, then the whole manoeuvre will have been counterproductive since it would appear as a provocation, that is, an incitement to aggression that is precisely being sought to prevent.

Such an approach cannot, however, work without relying on a retaliatory nuclear deterrent whose credibility is enhanced as the prohibition measures put in place increase - in this respect, a prohibition force is a de facto important tripwire. Conversely, a prohibition force without the capacity for retaliation will never be a complete deterrent: an adversary can always hope to rise to the challenge and achieve its gains.

Strategic intimidation actually presents itself as one of the possible modes of action of the prevention function. While it shares with deterrence the fact that it seeks to prevent the outbreak of armed conflict, prevention extends far beyond vital interests, to include the preservation of limited interests such as maintaining the stability of a given area or respecting international standards. Intimidation is arguably the most aggressive form of crisis prevention in that it relies, like deterrence, on the mechanism of threat.

Unlike deterrence, on the other hand, it is not a threat of defensive action or retaliation, but a threat of offensive action, i.e. an intervention. The criteria of operational credibility then converge with the capabilities of the intervention function.

As in a deterrence, the credibility of an attempt at intimidation is not limited to the operational ability to carry out a threat. It also requires a demonstration of political will and understanding by the adversary. In order to do this, strategic intimidation, in addition to political-diplomatic means, can carry out military activities signalling the reality of the threat. While NATO has rarely resorted to such warnings, Russia has made effective use of such warnings during the Ukraine crisis. For example, when Ukraine launched its "anti-terrorist operation" in 2015 to recapture the separatist provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk, Moscow carried out large-scale exercises and deployed ground forces on the Ukrainian borders, ultimately leading to threats to the completion of the operation.

Protect and anticipate – guarantee the sovereignty, independence and state unity, the territorial integrity of the country and constitutional democracy

Of all the strategic functions of the military power, protection is perhaps the most fundamental of the armed forces: it is, after all, the primary role of defending the land of the homeland when it is threatened. The most obvious expression of this is the concept of "ensuring the capacity to implement defence plans drawn up at national level" (2. p. Romanians White Book n.d.), whose concept dates back to the immediate post-war period and which aims not only to protect the country from a foreign invasion, but also against a possible hybrid enemy, infiltrated or insurgent.

"The aggressive behaviour of the Russian Federation, the militarization of the Black Sea region and the hybrid actions carried out by the Russian Federation, aimed at maintaining a tense and insecure climate in the area close to our country" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024), is leading Romania to continue firmly the extensive process of building robust deterrence and defence capabilities, beginning in 2015. This process is carried out together with the increase of the armed forces interoperability with allies and the strengthening of the institutional capacity to counter hybrid actions.

For Romania, the definition of ways to ensure national security is achieved through the interaction between national potential and posture and the effort and collective contribution of security

development management, assumed at multilateral level, primarily in NATO and in the EU. This paradigm requires the continuous adaptation of national risk and threat management capacity, with a focus on the interaction and synergy component between the tools and capabilities that can be engaged at national level. As a result, "the main guarantor of Romania's security is the national defence capability, intrinsically matched by NATO membership" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 n.d.).

To consolidate this approach, Romania is strengthening military cooperation with the US, not only in the allied format, but also especially as an operational objective to be implemented on the national territory. Subsumed, our efforts are directed towards the deployment on its territory of means to strengthen NATO's forward presence and so, to discourage possible aggressive actions by some state actors. These efforts are combined with those undertaken at national level "to increase military mobility capacity" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 n.d.), an objective undertaken at the level of Europe by NATO, through the implementation of the Enablement Plan of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) Area of Responsibility (AOR) and Reinforcement Strategy. In the meantime the military mobility is among the EU's member states concerns.

The Armed Forces contribute substantially to the strengthening of the national defence capacity, aimed at ensuring territorial integrity, sovereignty, unity, indivisibility, independence of Romania, as well as the security of the Romanian people. It also, develops actions to increase the efficiency of national crisis prevention and management systems, internal and external, military or civil. It contribute to the mechanisms and capabilities to combat asymmetric and hybrid threats, capable of ensuring state resilience in emergency or crisis situations and enabling the continued functioning of essential institutions and services.

As the National Defence Strategy of Romania, 200-2024 reveals, Romanian Army act in order to develop the capacity to respond to the new challenges of the security environment, but also increase resilience, including through active measures to prepare the population and territory for defence. It is done through developing immediate response capabilities, able to carry out deterrence and defence tasks against a possible aggression, until the intervention of the main national and/or allied forces. In this context, one of the outmost task is "to strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence posture in the Black Sea area" (2. p. Romanians White Book n.d.).

After 2018, NATO has reinforced the maritime posture and has taken concrete steps to improve the overall maritime situational awareness. Moreover, the Alliance has "prepared strategic assessments on the Black Seas" (Brussels Summit Declaration 11-12 July 2018) and agreed to strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture in all domains. This topic has been underlined constantly through the Romania demarches at NATO HQ. Ministry of defence, in 2018, asked for a coherent approach, at strategic level, to the presence from the entire eastern flank, "including in the Black Sea region, from the perspective of planning, training, conducting exercises and exercising the act of command" (NATO n.d.). As a result, Allied defence decisions, taken at the Brussels Summit in 2018, substantially reflect national objectives, with "a focus on strengthening the Allied presence on the Alliance's eastern flank, including the Black Sea" (Bruxelles n.d.).

Ensuring the security in the Black Sea region by deepening partnerships with NATO's riparian states, as well as cooperation with NATO partners in the region has recognized by our allies. In one of his declaration, in 2018, the British Defence Secretary stressed, "Romania is a factor of regional stability and has a substantial contribution to ensuring security in the Black Sea and Western Balkans region" (Britanie n.d.).

Another thread of work in the recent years is the continuation to reinvigorate our culture of readiness. As part of our efforts, Armed Forces continue to ensure that Romania has the full range of capabilities and forces that are trained, interoperable, deployable, and ready to meet all national and allied requirements. We are part of the NATO Readiness Initiative (Britanie n.d.), launched at Brussel Summit that ensures more high-quality, combat-capable national forces at high readiness.

As a collective effort, "the NATO Readiness Initiative will further enhance the Alliance's rapid response capability, either for reinforcement of Allies in support of deterrence or collective defence, including for high-intensity warfighting, or for rapid military crisis intervention, if required. It will also

promote the importance of effective combined arms and joint operations". (Declaration 11-12 July 2018)

Another thread of effort regards the highest priority given to the contributions to command and control through the NATO Force Structure. Romania develop land command and control capacity at corps, division and brigade-level on its territory "to contribute to reinforcement planning in the region." (Bruxelles n.d.). That approach is fully-covered by the implementation of the force structure resulting from the "Strategic Defence Analysis 2020".

Our ability to meet the challenges of a changing security environment is underpinned by an array of robust, sophisticated, and evolving capabilities across all domains, including heavier, more high-end, fully supported and deployable, sustainable, and interoperable forces and capabilities that are held at high readiness to perform the whole range of Alliance tasks and missions. In this context, Romania ensure "at least 20% of the defence budget for the procurement of military technology" (Bruxelles n.d.) and develop of modern, highly operational capabilities fully interoperable with allied and partner forces to ensure the fulfilment of constitutional missions.

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the future evolution of the strategic environment, which attests the challenges and threats from potential adversaries and their increased exploitation of the battlefield complexity, some priorities are emerging to ensure that the Romanian military power enhances its strategic relevance.

Maintain the relevance of strategic functions. Intervening, deterring, preventing, protecting and anticipating remains the essential displays of the armed force strategic relevance.

Do not sacrifice quantity to quality anymore. The time of the armies reduced at minimum is ending, and the increase of the potential adversary capabilities proliferate the lethality and attrition toward our forces. After years of constant reduction, the armed forces have begun to recover based on 2% budget allocation. It must continue to do so, which in turn will allow them to have modern and adequate equipment, thus putting an end to "temporary" capacity disruptions that affected its operational efficiency.

Increase autonomy and resilience. The growing challenge to control common areas will profoundly challenge the permanent availability of a joint support. Whether it is about fire support, intelligence and targeting or mobility, armed forces need to increase their autonomy in order to continue to fulfil their operational missions. They will also need to rethink their resilience and survivability in the challenged environment by reinvesting in their ground-to-air defence, cyber and electronic defences, and by giving greater importance to the concealment.

Rethinking the joint towards a multi-domain. The evolution of the future strategic environment will transform the nature of the joint operations. The resulting synergies, however, cannot be substitutes and thought as possible further reductions. The autonomy of each force category will give an increase possibility to the mutual support inter-domain, and therefore a certain capacity redundancy is needed as a guarantee of security. To do so, the Armed Forces will need to have advanced means of deep-sea strikes, target acquisition, and enhance their links with Special Forces and cyber-offensive assets.

Do not lose sight of the human. As long as people live on earth and war is the product of human activities, armed forces will remain strategic.

To accomplish its strategic tasks the Romanian Armed Forces require being reliable among its allies and partners, but especially deterrent-credibility in the face of its opponents. At a crucial time when is evident the end of strategic comfort, it must more than ever hold its leadership of the defence domain and reaffirm, in the eyes of all, its ability to respond in the physical environment and in the human field, and that it is fit to the strategic challenges of the future.

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US-CHINA COMPLEXITY: DEFINING THE POST-COVID-19 PANDEMIC WORLD

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Abstract

The US-China relation becomes the most important part of the international new post-pandemic order related to the evolution of the world order after the Covid-19. We are talking about the most important economies of the world, giving 25% and 23.5% of the world GDP, economies and countries involved in a number of strategic rivalries as well as of harsh competitions, with a lot of newly come instruments that do not benefit of any international regime, rules and norms – cyber, a.i., quantum computers, space, Arctic region etc. In the absence of a dominant power able to impose the respect of a rules based world and to project its power in order to forge the new rules and norms in the field of new technologies, the US needs a real multilateralism and a conjunction of the democratic powers in order to acquire altogether the needed preeminence in order to get those rules and norms approved at the level of global institutions, if it is not for a smooth bilateral relation with China which could agree a number of such provisions and try to negotiate for including its own interest.

Keywords: global volatility; strategic rivalry; primacy of competition; power balancing; assuming risks; frictions; conflict; confrontation.

GLOBAL VOLATILITY: G2 VERSUS TRADING INSULTS

The relationship between China and the US is not at its high, on the contrary: there was never a more vivid and public miss acceptance between the two countries except for the economic war and the pandemic period when president Donald Trump embraced the concept of “Chinese virus” (Khan 2020) for the Covid-19 pandemic to underline the link to Wuhan, China. Moreover, at some moments, he put the blame on the P4 laboratory in Wuhan for producing the virus (Coronavirus: Trump stands by China lab origin theory for virus 2020), even though there were no evidence in this direction. That and the economic war were definity for the worse bilateral relations between China and the US in history.

It is true, on another notice, that China itself changed dramatically its behaviour during the pandemic crisis. Pressed by perceived responsibility and even the perspective of being sued for compensation due to the fact that it didn't notified the world in due time about the coronavirus, it didn't contain the virus itself in Wuhan and not allow it to spread as pandemic in the whole world, and that it was ultimately responsible for the pandemic in the world (Miller and Strashak 2021), China moved to clear and unprecedented actions that costed a lot: first, it left its responsible and reasonable course of using propaganda and informational warfare, with its need for respectability (Vilmer and Charon 2020) that was its point and begin to use direct and harsh propaganda via Russia's networks in the West, European countries and the US, and Iranian ones for the Arab countries (Wiskeyman and Berger 2021). The main target was to avoid responsibility and try to alternate the source of the virus via conspiracy theories and fake news involving the virus being brought to China by American military athletes (Shumei and Lin 2020) or the virus being spread in Italy (Hui and Yusha and Juechenng 2021) or somewhere else way before the outbreak of the pandemic in Wuhan.

Second, China begins its unrealistic and costly campaign of the mask diplomacy(Jacinto 2021) involving the humanitarian help all over the world in spite of the low quality of its products –

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criticised and returned from France, Italy, Spain, Slovakia – and mixing paid furnitures with humanitarian help. Then, in some cases, it begin to use its concentration of the manufactured products, needed at the same by all the states – be it masks, ventilators, antibiotics, protection material – for political conditioning for the prioritisation in supplies (Mattis and Auslin and Felter 2020). And in the third place, it revealed in some other cases that it used its dumping procedures and subventions from the state in order to take as much as possible from the supply chain in quite all products, producing smaller or bigger parts in China itself. In a period with huge problems in transportation due to quarantines and lockdowns, that situation revealed important gaps in the world trade and competition (Is it possible to end China's control of the global supply chain? 2020).

That behaviour made the US begin a process of repatriation of the companies (Pamuk and Shalal 2020), Japan investing money to relocation (Japan's game plan – to pay companies to move out of China 2020), as well as South Korea investing in repatriation, and made the EU, for instance, through the voice of the High Representative Josep Borrell (Terrabianca 2020; Small 2020), propose a change of behaviour – beside repatriation of highly sensitive technological products – and move manufactured goods needed in times of crisis in Northern Africa, with the aim of having them closer, of accessing easier and stabilizing a sustainable development as well as jobs for the migrants from the region moving to the EU. Security costs should be assumed and added to the strictly pragmatic and competitive market economy that lead to the concentration of the production of needed goods in China.

Therefore, three were the options of the US-China relations (Chifu 2020, 11-21) after the change of the American administration: a cooperation between the US and China in a type of G2, assuming the responsibilities for all the issues of the world – an approach strongly rejected by China which didn't want to assume anything more than its own security interests and sovereignty core territorial claims; an anarchic world, the GO World of Ian Bremmer (Bremmer 2012), where each side will use and abuse existing rules and ignore any type of new norms that would need to be put in place; and a confrontation between the US and China, with different type of instruments, that somebody will say is already on the way for some time. Fact is that the global volatility of the world during the Covid-19 pandemic was accentuated by the premises of a possible confrontation and conflict between the major economies of the world.

But the final conclusions were postponed until the new American administration took over and a more elaborate and long term approach to China is established by the new policies. And the conclusions came up with less inclination for a form of cooperation and a lot of insults traded by each side (Collinson 2021), as shown in the opening of the first meeting in Anchorage, March 18 (Biden Jr. 2021).

THREE TRACK APPROACHES: HOW TO MANAGE STRATEGIC RIVALRY

Before Anchorage, the new Biden administration has build up its China interim policy and assessment, and the conclusions after taking over the administration already prepared the way it envisaged to cope with the strategic rivalry assumed with China. First, it was the statement made by President Joe Biden (Joseph R. Biden Jr., 2021-1) at the State Department, on February the 4th, when installing formally State Secretary Anthony Blinken. It was both an approach with a liberal and idealistic instrument of defending democracy in front of authoritarianism when he stated: “American leadership must meet this new moment of advancing authoritarianism, including the growing ambitions of China to rival the United States and the determination of Russia to damage and disrupt our democracy” (Biden Jr. 2021-1).

More direct, regarding China, it has been defined as the most serious competitor for the US due to direct challenges posed to American and Western prosperity, security, and democratic values (Chifu 2021-1; Biden Jr. 2021). And the conclusion was also very clearly stated: “We'll confront China's economic abuses; counter its aggressive, coercive action; to push back on China's attack on human rights, intellectual property, and global governance. But we are ready to work with Beijing when it's in America's interest to do so. We will compete from a position of strength (...) renewing our

role in international institutions, and reclaiming our credibility and moral authority, much of which has been lost” (Chifu 2021-1; Biden Jr. 2021-1).

So President Biden announced that the US will manage the strategic rivalry with China based on an approach with three tracks: cooperation, when the American interest is present, on major global issues; competition from a position of strength, through real multilateralism and engaging to sum up and converge all the resources of the democratic countries in the world to get the preeminent strategic weight necessary (Chifu 2021-1); and conflict and confrontation when defending its own principles and values. All those should be used in a framework defined as leading with diplomacy but being prepared to use defence and deterrence in order to block any attempt of Beijing to use force against allies and global partners. This three track approach is a more realistic and sophisticated one than the Cold War type approach of friends and foes and that’s why old cliches do not match today, in the highly technological world of post-Covid-19 New World Order.

These premisses have been underlined by State Secretary Anthony Blinken on the 3rd of March presentation of the Foreign Affairs Strategy of the US (Secretary of State Antony Blinken Speech on Foreign Policy 2021) in the wake of the launch of the Interim National Security Strategic Guidelines (Biden Jr. 2021-2) document launched in the same afternoon. In the elaborated statement of Mr. Blinken, the approach to China was far more present and defined. Russia and China were named, this time, “adversaries and competitors” which attack and raised doubts about the strength of the democracy and the democratic system. For the US, China became “the biggest geopolitical test of the 21st century”, with a special point in the eight first priorities of the American Foreign policy (Chifu 2021-2).

“China is the only country with the economic, diplomatic, military and technological power, to seriously challenge the stable and open international system. All the rules, values and relationships that make the world work the way we want it to because it ultimately serves the interests and reflects the values of the American people. Our relationship with China will be competitive when it should, be collaborative when it can be and adversarial when it must be. The common denominator is the need to engage China from a position of strength. That requires working with allies and partners, not denigrating them because our combined weight is much harder for China to ignore” (Secretary of State Antony Blinken Speech on Foreign Policy 2021).

Actually, Anthony Blinken changed, by nuancing, the cooperation-competition-conflict triad – confront, counter, push back for the confrontational part –with a relation defined as collaborative, competitive and adversarial at the same time, for each of the three tracks. It involved also the need for combined weight of allies and partners, and added “engaging in diplomacy and in international organizations”, “standing up for our values when human rights are abused in Xinjiang or when democracy is trampled in Hong Kong because if we don’t, China will act with even greater impunity” and “insisting on a level playing field” as a set up for a free and fair competition for everyone “pushing back against unfair trading practices by China and others”.

If the success of managing the strategic rivalry with China sits on the diplomacy and transatlantic relations with the Europeans and the relations with the QUAD (Chifu 2021-3), the Quadrenial Partnership for Security between the US, India, Japan and Australia, plus the cooperation with the Global Partners – a format that has been already put in place in the NATO framework – Wales Summit, 2014, via participation in the common effort in Afghanistan – let’s see also how the EU-US relationship has been seen on the other part of the shores of the Atlantic. The details comes from the official statements of the White House (Readout of President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Call with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen 2021) and President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen after the phone conversation Biden-von der Leyen on March the 5th(Statement by President von der Leyen following her phone call with President of the United States, Joe Biden 2021). The White House Readout was more expeditive, including China as a main issue for „coordination and shared interest”.

In the statement of Mrs von der Leyen, the reference to China was not present. In the more detailed press conference, that included the questions and answers, president Von der Leyen “defended the EU’s recent investment pact with China as part of its economic partnership and

competition with Beijing but said that, like Washington, Brussels saw China as a “systemic rival” when it came to democracy and human rights” (Chifu 2021-4). So, in qualifying the relationship with China, both the US and the EU had the same concept in hand – the “systemic rival”. But in another part related to common enemies, she included Covid-19 and added that EU and the US should cooperate better to face the rising power of China: “Von der Leyen said she invited Biden to a global health summit in Rome on May 21 to streamline the fight against COVID-19, the common enemy that has killed over a million people in the EU and US combined. She hopes the commonality would extend to foreign policy issues as well, where both could cooperate better to face the rising power of China” (Chalmers 2020).

The approaches on China are substantially the same across the Atlantic. If we are to consider the Joint Communication of the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council, EU has established, in March 2019, practically the same framework and demands, issues and problems identified (EU-China a Strategic Outlook 2019), in a less diplomatic format, in the 2019 report to the Congress of the US-China Economic and Security Review (2019 Report to the Congress of the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission 2019). Actually the concerns are the same: unfair practices, such as subsidising industries, stealing intellectual property, cyber-attacks and cyber espionage, keeping its currency low, coercing industries to transfer know how and putting up barriers to trade, genocide against the Uyghur population in the province of Xinjiang, attacking the autonomous democratic regime in Hong Kong via electoral and security laws, pressing Taiwan democracy and Tibet religious habitudes, extending territorial claims and unfriendly activities in South China Sea against its neighbours and limiting the freedom of navigation and flight in international waters and international airspace.

THE COLD WAR CLICHÉ AND ITS LIMITS: POWER BALANCING AND PRIMACY OF COMPETITION

There is very easy and superficial to resort to clichés such as the second Cold War or the third/fourth World War in describing the post-Covid-19 world order based on US-China relations. It is not the case and both references are wrong. In all aspects. And we have several arguments for that, the first and most important one is the degree of sophistication of the bilateral relations between China and the US and the triad already underlined before of the cooperation-competition-conflict in those relations. It doesn't mean it is easy to face the management of the right balance between the three tracks, in order to avoid the relationship not to sweep in uncharted territory of violence.

The differences of the competitors in the former US-USSR competition are enormous: the Soviet Union had a military and especially nuclear capability pair with the US, even though its economic capacity, at its peak, was less than 40% of that of America. China is matching the economic power, competing and getting to the same GDP in a decade, according to the estimates. China, on the contrary, does not match the military power of the US at a global level, but can challenge US in the regions and parts that are of essential interest. We could add the interdependence of both economies and the number of strategic common goals that US and China are sharing at the international level: nuclear non-proliferation, global heating and environment, if not also the need to avoid military confrontation and direct violence. This basis of common interests could help in finding ways to manage the strategic competition (Medeiros 2021).

The bilateral relationship benefits of a number of clichés, wide spread at the global level. First, the cliché of a rising China and a declining US (Marcus 2021). It is far from the truth, and the reference of the comparison of geopolitical power could show us the reality of a relationship where China was ranking the third after the US and the UK in 2019 (Roger 2019). “The West is inherently superior in the organisation of its politics, economy and society, while China is a bundle of malign contradictions” (Marcus 2021) is also a cliché and there are more and more analysts that think the opposite, remarking the adaptability of the one state-two system approach.

The great power competition in Asia and the strategy of the US to avoid that the region is dominated by a hostile hegemonic force (Bisley 2020) runs closer to the idea of power balancing or managing competition than blocking the development of China. We are moving closer to uncharted

waters than to a Cold War or World War since the new US-China relationship seems to be more complex, harder to manage and most probable will last much longer.

Ian Bremmer has also approached and discussed the US-China relationship. China represents, therefore, a genuine threat to the US in terms of “short term geopolitical competition as well as long-term existential challenge” (Bremmer 2020). Bremmer also underlines the interdependence of the US and China and rejects the cliché of a Cold War 2.0. He listed as common interests, besides nuclear non-proliferation, climate change and pandemic, the macroeconomic stability, assuming that China will be a part of the solution. (Atlantic Council, in a study about the scenarios of the US under Biden administration, noted the possibility that China would not want the stability of the World, but will prefer taking advantage of the vulnerabilities, insecurities and instability of the economy, even on the future possible economic crisis (Burrows and Manning, 2021).

Bremmer also added that destroying China’s economy means also destroying US economy as well (Bremmer 2020). We could add that we do not have the two blocks needed for a Cold War: if there is a possible block of democracies, the autocracies could not go together and make a block since all of them – China, Russia, Iran first and foremost – are dependent economically on the democratic countries and could not team up since their economies are not complementary. The real question mark stands behind the possibility of world to be polarized and the countries to be obliged to take parts.

On another point, it is still a question at what respect and how deep the integration of the EU countries are into the common effort required by Washington in order to counter China and support the new rules and norms needed at the level of the international system in relations with the new technologies. Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen already proposed the Transatlantic Technological Agreement to take the place of the rejected TTIP (Statement by President von der Leyen following her phone call with President of the United States 2021), and the project has already been embraced in the Congress, with the White House having this in mind for some time in its strategies – see the Interim National Security Strategic Guidelines (Biden, Jr. 2021-2) as well as the UK’s Integrated Review of Security, Defense, Development and Foreign Policy, that has made the same point as a perspective for the UK until 2030 (Global Britain in a Competitive Age. Integrated Review on Security, Defense, Development and Foreign Policy 2021).

ASSUMING RISKS, FRICTIONS, AVOIDING MILITARY CONFLICT AND CONFRONTATION

The relation of the US and China has been already defined in a piece for Foreign Policy co-signed by Jake Sullivan, the new National Security advisor and Kurt Campbell, the new top Asia Adviser of the US President, in September 2019, under the concept of Competition Without Catastrophe (Campbell and Sullivan 2019), the way the US can both challenge and coexist with China. The paper noted that “the era of engagement with China has come to an unceremonious close”. That would be the best definition of the bilateral relation today.

Fact is that the US has to accept more risks and the costs related to them in addressing China, coping with threats and challenges coming from China and confronting China on issues of first importance. Identifying, balancing, and managing risks is the solution (Medeiros 2021) of the real balance between the triad of cooperation, competition and confrontation with China, and America needs to learn to live with this new situation. It is a tremendous change in behaviour from a diplomatic form that requires, according to all the books, downplay disagreement, minimize friction, reduce competition, and expand cooperation. And to move to a type of risk management that involves assuming and tolerating risks, frictions, dealing with tensions, accepting a certain level of costs coming from those risks and using this new environment in the triad relation with China.

Yes, it is less acceptable and closer to an anti-fragile approach to foreign policy (Taleb 2014) the idea of balancing competing interests and avoid to always reconcile differences and disagreements. Some fundamental issues related to principles and values cannot be solved, but there’s no need to try always to settle everything. Assuming the incompatible principles and values and the harsh competition is as important and hard as assuming depending from the other

liberal democratic countries and a real multilateralism that has to accommodate common interests. Here the EU can play its part with the capacity of forging consensus with numerous actors as the idea of the legal power of the EU could be used by the US at a global stage through reforming the global institutions or introducing new ones with the new rules.

The strict combination of harsh competition, defend and deter military and strategic offensive moves towards allies and partners, democratic alliance as well as the system of international bounds via treaties and normative assumed commitments is a good step forward in dealing with China without any direct military confrontation, but with diplomacy and from the position of strength. The primacy of competition in U.S.-Chinese relations (Medeiros 2021) does not mean that military conflict or confrontation is inevitable, but the US needs to adapt in this coalition of democracies that it needs to forge and to lead. Power balancing, binding China in new normative and international institutions, degrade existing Chinese capabilities, international agreements and treaties that could pressure China into changing its behaviour, bilateral US-China competition, could represent the bases of a new American China policy.

At the same time, as Sullivan and Campbell underlined, competition without catastrophe means that any escalation of rivalry should avoid violence, military clashes of any kind and an acceptable level of risks and costs assumed (Sullivan and Campbell 2019). So, the competition between China and the US should be the new reality but the confrontation and conflictual part of the triad of relations should avoid spiraling out of control. It is about risk management but not competition limitations, military clashes denial but not lack of military show out, catastrophe avoidance but not refusing direct confrontation in defense of the principles and values. And using the military presence, development and deployments for defense and deterrence, when technological edge should ensure the dominant level of the combined democratic conglomerate, lead by the US, in order to enforce the rules based world.

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COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRATION OF POWER INSTRUMENTS AND CIVIL-MILITARY CAPABILITIES FOR COUNTERING HYBRID THREATS

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Abstract

Given the future military confrontations characterized by an increased degree of complexity, multidimensionality and ambiguity, the article aims to raise awareness of the need, and also to develop effective mechanisms for a comprehensive and integrated approach to capabilities and effects of the actions of all power instruments, military and civilian, governmental and non-governmental, national and international, in countering the consequences of hybrid threats.

Keywords: hybrid threats; comprehensive and integration; power instruments; civil-military capabilities; countering hybrid warfare.

INTRODUCTION

In hybrid conflicts, the actors have elements that, as the case may be, are mainly directed towards affecting decisions in the political, diplomatic, social, military, economic, informational, etc. fields. In most cases, their nature is unclear, ambiguous and also involves factors and actions in several areas.

The operational environment, which has become particularly complex and unpredictable due to the involvement of civilian actors, the civilian population, of cultural and psychological factors, required increasing the degree of civil-military integration and reviewing working methods and tools towards conflict management.

Also, as a result of the multiplication and diversification of the situations in which military structures are called to intervene, and of the amplification of operational needs dictated by the hybrid operational environment, there was a need to create (integrated) force structures adaptable to new types of risks and threats.

METHODOLOGY

The hypothesis was that, following the multiplication and diversification of situations in which security structures are called to intervene and the amplification of operational needs dictated by the hybrid operational environment, a comprehensive approach is not enough; what is needed is a *comprehensive and integrated* approach to all power tools, and to civilian and military capabilities.

Using specific theoretical and methodological tools, we analyzed the multidimensionality of the hybrid operational environment in correlation with the dynamics of the actions of the actors involved.

The critical analysis aimed both to clarify some aspects characteristic of the hybrid operational environment, and to identify practical ways and tools to improve the comprehensive and integrated approach, as the main way to counteract the effects of hybrid threats.

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The interdisciplinary analysis was one based on logical arguments, thus trying to highlight the essence of the processes within the hybrid conflict, to present possible effects and thus to draw relevant conclusions in order to achieve effective concepts of civilian and military integration.

WHY A COMPREHENSIVE-INTEGRATED APPROACH?

The broad spectrum of hybrid actions and conflicts requires national and international entities/institutions, competent and coordinated responses as well as military and civilian capabilities capable of conducting coherent and effective actions in particularly complex missions - limiting the effects of hybrid threats.

The characteristic of the classical comprehensive approach (so to speak) is that it starts from a preliminary study or a preliminary understanding of a mission, of an organization as a whole, and then moves on to the study of the role played by each party/entity in the organization and dynamics of the whole mechanism - an atomistic, static, causal, goal-oriented approach (NATO Standardization Office, 2018, I-2; United Nations, 2013, 3).

Instead, in our view, it is not enough to analyze the role of the parties (in our situation the instruments of civilian and military power, national and international, governmental and non-governmental) and what they could achieve in order to accomplish the ultimate goal; we need *full and coherent integration* of the effects of the actions of all these instruments of power, a *comprehensive and integrated approach* – dynamic, complex, quantum.

Moreover, by integrating the actions of various civil and military instruments from all environments of manifestation of hybrid conflicts, based on principles, mechanisms, norms, etc., *indirect, cumulative or cascading effects* can be achieved, which would make the mission more effective, would reduce the costs and the time necessary to achieve the ultimate goal.

Also, regarding the action of *comprehensive integration* of all instruments of military and civilian power, it is useful to have a clearer delimitation of it, by defining the concepts/notions with which it operates. Thus, “*comprehensive*” means something “*that includes much (broad), that has a rich content*” (Dexonline, 2021), and “*to integrate*” implies “*to include (itself), to integrate (itself), to (incorporate) (itself), to harmonize (itself) into a whole*” (Dexonline, 2021).

In this context, an important and necessary aspect is the *integration, full harmonization* of joint *military* operations, actions (from all environments: land, air, sea, cyber, space) of other components/*civilian and military government* institutions, national and international, as well as the effects of the actions of non-governmental organizations and/or other pressure groups.

Consequently, the result would lead to a *comprehensive and integrated approach*, which involves harmonized operations and activities with coherent effects, conducted efficiently and carried out on the basis of mutual commitments, mutual trust and common goals. This approach combines in a unitary way all the elements of the civilian and military system, intra and inter-state and from all the areas of manifestation of the hybrid confrontation.

This *comprehensive integration* must be understood as a living organism. Similar to the parts of an organism (nose, lungs, heart, etc.) that are very different but together contribute significantly, in a unitary/integrated manner to support the life of the organism (vital goal), components of a campaign to combat hybrid threats (civil and military, governmental and non-governmental, national and international) through a *comprehensive integration* must pursue the common/vital goal. These tools, forces and capabilities are not just simple elements/ components, but they must be “organs” with a well-defined role in a “living and healthy entity”. There are different elements, but each contributes with something specific and vital, something (forces, effects, resources, etc.) that could not be brought by any other component.

A *comprehensive and integrated approach* must be a way of resolving issues of great importance, not only for local communities affected by (hybrid) conflicts but also for government structures, and successful collaboration within the inter-institutional and international community can make a substantial contribution to promoting common values and interests (Rațiu 2020, 90).

ASPECTS REGARDING THE MECHANISMS OF A COMPREHENSIVE-INTEGRATED APPROACH

Given the fact that future campaigns/operations will focus on “*the integrated application of all instruments of power, both military and non-military, in order to create the planned effects. Forces and capabilities must be able to address a method of politically, militarily, civilly, economically and scientifically coordinated and concerted action between governmental and non-governmental organizations*” (Romanian Ministry of Defense 2007, 24), we need an integrated perspective that regulates the concept of building, training and employing the targeted capabilities for participation in the full range of operations, including in the hybrid context.

The strategies and methods used in comprehensive integration can be multiple and different, but the real challenge for entities involved in hybrid conflict management is to *properly calculate the effects of the mix of approaches* to be used throughout the confrontation (strategy), estimating the timing of implementation of appropriate tools, capabilities, methods, equipment (time), but also the extent to which they are applied (intensity).

Thus, given the complexity of the approach, in our opinion, it is necessary a *strategy* (integrative document), built on a scientific basis, able to generate the implementation of new systems of norms, procedures and standards derived from the holistic-dynamic conception of approaching actions.

The proposed *comprehensive capability integration strategy* must address all structures involved in the security process in the context of hybrid threats.

In this sense, the *Comprehensive Capability Integration Strategy* would have the following attributes:

- Establishing the principles governing the status and role of each instrument of power;
- Defining the situations and conditions in which these tools will be used;
- Highlighting the integrated organizational structures, necessary for management of capabilities and coordination of effects;
- Directing the development of an integrated capabilities plan;
- Regulating in a unitary conception the process of generating capabilities, the constitution of the groups of forces, the planning of the actions, the succession of the employment of the instruments (capabilities), the command and the control;
- Directing the preparation/training of capabilities (integrated training) intended to participate in integrated actions before any hybrid threat arises.

The comprehensive capability integration strategy offers the possibility and opportunity to develop other follow-up documents that strengthen trust between institutions, promote the communication of lessons learned, encourage the development of common procedures and also create the framework for training and of integrated exercises. All this will facilitate a better planning of campaigns/operations and their implementation/application at a higher level.

Knowing the operational environment – an imperative of the comprehensive capability integration Strategy

Given the existence of *threats, aggressions and hybrid operations*, the following question arises: where are they carried out? Therefore, the environment in which they manifest is characterized by a wide range of components: actors, physical space (land, air, sea, cosmic) of actions, intelligence, technology, cultural environment, risk factors, threats, etc., practically, a mix of elements, and their combination/crossing leads to a *volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous* context (VUCA- Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity) – a *hybrid operational environment*.

Consequently, the hybrid operational environment is “the framework for the manifestation of hybrid threats, involving the complex and combined configuration of the multitude of actors, means, actions and effects that converge in a concerted” (Rațiu 2017, 265), and often in a secret way, to meet certain interests/purposes.

An essential part of the *comprehensive capability integration Strategy* must be the identification of sources of insecurity through a thorough understanding of the hybrid operational

environment. Insecurity is the result of the interaction of a wide range of factors, so it is important to use a comprehensive and integrated approach to the context and operational environment, based on a multicriteria and multilateral analysis.

The analysis must focus, without limitation, on directions such as:

- the actors involved (to which reference has been made) the civilian population with its culture, ethnic or marginalized social groups, religion, natural resources, imposed limits and borders, political, economic, social issues, etc.;
- the basis, the causes, the circumstances of the conflict and their implications on the resolution approach;
- conflict history, geo-strategic position, physical environment, climate, geography, infrastructure, etc.

Thus, a first effective tool for a better understanding of the hybrid operational environment – the actors, conditions and circumstances that influence the employment of power tools/capabilities – *JIPOE – Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment* (US Joint Chiefs of Staff 2014, I-1). This tool provides a holistic understanding of the hybrid operational environment. It supports decision-makers so that they know better how factors in the operational environment influence and shape the choices of the actors involved (opponents' capabilities and intentions, for example) and how they act to accomplish goals and achieve the desired end state.

If the civilian population is the "*center of gravity*" of the hybrid conflicts around which all actors, forces, capabilities, actions and effects revolve, the process of *intelligence Preparation of Battlefield* (IPB), well known in the military, *is not sufficient anymore*; we need "a more precise understanding of the operational environment, including aspects of local communities, an in-depth knowledge of what people mean, their social and cultural structures, how they think, act and/or react to certain internal and external stimuli" (Rațiu 2016, 112).

In this hybrid operational environment, *the support and protection of the civilian population is in fact the mission* of the integrated, governmental forces. "*Confrontation will be won by influencing the population and not by destroying the opponent*" (Headquarters International Security Assistance Force Kabul Afghanistan, 2009, 1). A careful analysis of civilian considerations is essential for long-term success.

For a more complete analysis of the action context within the hybrid confrontations, the characteristics of the civilian population /"human terrain" and its culture in the operational area must also be taken into account.

That is why it is necessary to apply a new integrative tool, that of *Civil Preparation of the Battlespace*, which would include several distinct stages (Marine Corps Civil-Military Operations School 2019, 23):

1. Defining the civil environment in which it operates;
2. Analysis of the civilian operational environment (human terrain);
3. Development of the model of the civilian operational environment;
4. Determining the actions of the civilian population in the analyzed area.

Consequently, it can be stated that by raising awareness of the importance of human terrain and by using such methodologies/tools, a close relationship with the civilian component (population and civil actors in the operational environment) is achieved and maintained, facilitating cooperation, harmonization of activities, exchange of information, integrated planning and management of campaigns/missions to counteract the effects of hybrid conflicts.

Ways to alleviate the friction between military and non-military instruments

Military structures and civilian actors have traditionally perceived their roles as distinctly separate and different. For example, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are reluctant to act alongside military forces, even if they come from the same country or from the country receiving assistance. Aware of the need to maintain neutrality and protection, they often felt threatened by being associated with the military. On the other hand, military leaders tended to view civilian organizations, especially NGOs, as undisciplined, and their operations incoherent, inefficient.

Over time, after the experience gained in the last theaters of operations, the attitude of both sides began to change. Civilian personnel often seek protection, logistical, medical or evacuation support from the military. NGOs have earned the respect of the military and government structures for initiative, speed in mobilizing resources, ingenuity, and the military instrument has imposed itself through vision, judicious action planning, special logistical capacity, etc.

However, many shortcomings in coordinating the actions of these elements still persist. Therefore, the *comprehensive capability integration Strategy* must focus on interagency/interinstitutional actions which, through a holistic capability analysis, comprehensive planning and integrated implementation, will lead to the neutralization, limitation or elimination of the effects of multidimensional actions of opponent groups.

Moreover, in the process of proposing ways, solutions, ideas *to promote and make the comprehensive integration more efficient*, there were identified the following essential aspects:

- *areas where there are differences in approaching* participants in integrated actions (defining the final status, setting initial objectives, planning and decision, developing plans, conceptual elements, action principles, communication, intelligence cooperation, standard cooperation procedures in different situations);

- a set of fundamental ideas, theses and norms – *principles* (ex: knowledge of the cultural context, priority of capability employment, unity of effort, integration of command, mutual knowledge, concentration of efforts in support of civilians, adaptability, regular determination of actions, communication and mutual information, etc.), which should represent standards, important landmarks in the conceptual realization of *comprehensive integration*.

Consequently, in order to comprehensively integrate all actions and capabilities required by a hybrid context, the commander/head of mission must have a full perspective of the campaign/mission, in order to identify the mechanisms by which relations between available forces, military and civilian, national and international can be improved. Also, if possible, it should make a prospective assessment of all actors (independent, unknown, etc.) operating in the region and their actions, the aim being to *focus and synchronize efforts* for maximum effect.

CONCLUSIONS

The military forces have not been for a longtime the power that holds the monopoly over security, but they are/act as one of the other tools available to politics. In the future, wars, hybrid warfare or crisis management missions will be much more complex and multidimensional, therefore, a holistic/integrated approach of all these is considered to be successful, involving *political, military, diplomatic, informational, civil* and *economical* tools from various actors: *states, governmental* and *non-governmental organizations*.

Regardless of the typology of actors involved in crisis dynamics, military structures, governmental, nongovernmental organizations or media agencies, they all have specific objectives and interests in conflict areas/theatres of operations. These objectives will lead to different policies and actions, which often contradict each other.

An essential feature of the comprehensive, “classical” approach during different types of warfare/operations is that we can start from a preliminary study or a preparatory understanding of the mission (final purpose of the mission), of the organization as a whole, and then we can move on to the study of the role that each part plays in the organization and dynamics of the whole system.

However, it is *not enough* to analyse the role of the parties (in our situation the instruments of civil and military power, national and international, governmental and non-governmental) and what they could accomplish in order to achieve the ultimate goal, but it is necessary the complete and coherent integration of the effects of the actions of all these instruments of power, a *comprehensively integrated approach*.

The comprehensive integration is a process by which the capabilities of a joint task force together with those of other national and international organizations and agencies are combined to achieve coherent effects.

The consequence is a *comprehensive and integrated approach*, which involves joint operations commanded and deployed through mutual understanding, trust and common goal—a fundamental objective of any Force.

This approach combines in a unitary way all the elements of the civil and military system, intra and intergovernmental/inter-state, and also the typology of the approach, the effect and the network.

It can also be emphasized the need for a culture of *integration* and coordination of civilian and military instruments, ensuring a functional synergy of all mechanisms and structures, regardless of interests and subordinations.

A culture of *integration* plays the role of an ideology meant to eliminate the conceptual and action barriers between vectors of the two domains. Civilian and military instruments can develop into/become coherent capabilities when the culture of coordination creates a task force mobility, which could ultimately lead to a blurring of civilian and military differences. Such a strategy is necessary both at the level of execution, but especially at the level of conception.

Therefore, the *comprehensive and integrated approach* (multilateral and interdepartmental) of the issue of power instruments in hybrid warfare or crisis management, continues to reveal number of challenges, which analysts, theorists and decision makers/policy makers must take into account: the presence of planning and command parallel structures, lack of experienced and authoritative specialists, different or even antagonistic organizational cultures, as well as different funding mechanisms for civilian and military instruments.

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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTELLIGENCE SERVICES IN THE CONTEXT OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND INFORMATION OVERLOAD

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Abstract

Intelligence has been one of the first professions in the World existence, due to the human nature of permanent desire of progress and possession. Its evolution has been marked by various developments, out of which technology seems to have the greatest impact. While advanced technology has made the overall cycle of life faster and better, it has also diversified the challenges to many professions, intelligence being one of them. Adapting to the ever evolving realities, intelligence has to transform the challenges in opportunities and advance the national interests of security at national and international levels.

Keywords: intelligence; challenge; opportunity; information overload; technological development; collection; analysis.

INTRODUCTION

For the most part of the history, intelligence collection had been made through the effort of spies, who openly observed enemy's maneuvers and acquired illegally documents of interest, informing directly their superiors. Later on, when the enemy's communications were coded, methods of interception and decoding were developed. Transmitted on paper or via technical means, the messages of interest were targeted and then decoded for the political or military use.

In the last two hundred years, while the technology developed in an accelerated manner, often in lead being the military research, sophisticated means of collection and transmission, as well as capabilities for interception and decoding were developed in a continuous and competitive cycle.

Analyzing the history of intelligence, we could infer that along with the World Wars and the fall of the Berlin wall, the period of swift technological progress of the years 2000 greatly influenced the domain.

METHODOLOGY

Our approach in addressing the subject is a three-step one. First, we will analyze the technological developments influencing the intelligence field along the history.

The second step is presenting the challenges and opportunities caused by the information overload upon the intelligence, and its impact in reaching the specific goals in the domain.

Finally, we will draw a few conclusions concerning the current situation, hopping in contributing to creating a clearer picture of the intelligence realm, being on the same time aware that within the existing limits of the Conference proceedings the subject would be far from being exhausted.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS EFFECT ON INTELLIGENCE

The First World War brought the first uses of technology in the field of intelligence. Thus, the installation of cameras on aerial means allowed the creation of images that provided clues to the disposition or movement of enemy troops (Missouri S&T 2004). Interception of enemy

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communications was also used successfully. The British interception of the German Foreign Ministry's telegrams to their representative in Mexico, who was instructed to promise the accreditation state the recovery of lost American territories if it entered the war on the German side and attacked the United States, accelerated the entry of US in the fight (Loch K. Johnson 2007).

In World War II, aerial photography was widely used both to identify targets and to assess their impact after hitting, as precision bombing was a non-existent concept and quantity replaced quality, with devastating effects on the civilian population and infrastructure (Missouri S&T 2004).

Technological progress on that period has allowed the development of communications encryption and decryption equipment. Thus, the ability of the British army to decipher the messages sent by the German encryption machine Enigma (Crypto Museum 2021) allowed achieving essential successes both in land battles, but especially in naval battles in the Atlantic Ocean. Equally, the US military's decoding of Japanese coded communications won the Battle of Midway, which marked a turning point in tipping the balance of victory over the Americans in the Pacific (Hystory.com 2019).

The Second World War also caused the emergence of two new forms of collection, Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) and intelligence by measuring technical parameters (Measurement Intelligence - MASINT). The first example of ELINT was the determination of the emissions of the Japanese radars, whose period of operation was associated with the missions that the aviation was to carry out, constituting an indication of alerting the American aviation and anti-aircraft means (Jeffrey 2007). In the field of MASINT, the collection of data such as the level of chemicals in the waters around the German military facilities indicates an increase in the production of bombs or projectiles and the imminence of the execution of a new offensive plan (Jeffrey 2007).

During the Cold War, the advent of satellites allowed the development of Imagery Intelligence (IMINT). The images were vital in the determination by the two superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union, of the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles held by the competing state, of the technique capable of using this type of weapon (fixed ground facilities, mobile means, submarines, later aviation), as well as their characteristics. Mutual knowledge of these capabilities led to the conclusion of an arms control agreement - *Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems* (US Department of State 1972), with each party having the certainty that it could verify a possible breach, and an increase in the number of means of striking the other party no longer had military or economic reasons, as each would be able to completely destroy his opponent several times with the existing ones.

Technological progress has had a major impact on the transformation of the military intelligence field throughout its existence, but the greatest influence has been felt since the 2000s, when innovations in communications and imagery² have experienced great dynamics. The Internet has spread to almost the entire globe, offering increasing speeds and capacities for uploading or downloading written, audio or video files.

The development of the Internet has allowed the development of applications, such as social networks. The largest of them (established in 2004), Facebook, had on 23 October 2020 a number of 2,701,000,000 accounts (Statista 2020). All these networks mean as many databases, ready to be used for positive or evil purposes. In accessing the internet, it has gone from the cable connection, from the 90's, to the wireless connection, with faster and faster speeds of loading or downloading data.

The year 2020 marked the emergence of 5G communications networks, which will provide such a high speed of data transmission (Qualcomm 2021) that it will make it possible to exchange them in real time, in large volumes and almost total digitization of the industry. Of course, the increase in the volume of data will be followed by the need to store them, in specially designed servers (in the "cloud"), or in their own servers, to maintain full confidentiality.

² Imagery Analysis is the thorough process of detection, recognition, identification and interpretation (analysis) of objects/terrain/situations on imagery. The determination of their significance and implications in the geographic area in which they are imaged are primal. Analysis is accomplished according to the NATO Standard (STANAG 3596) Reconnaissance Reporting method, comprising of 19 Categories. In doing this, all aspects of a location of interest or a potential object may be described properly and completely. Source <http://www.vigilance.nl/imagery-analysis.html>; details in AAP- 6, NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions, NATO Standardization Agency (NSA), 2019), source: file:///C:/Users/ficalinro/AppData/Local/Temp/AAP-06%202019%20EF.pdf, accessed on 27 February 2021

However, technological developments involve, in addition to economic and financial competition, aspects of national or international security. Thus, the development of 5G technology by China and its willingness to implement it through Huawei in various countries around the world, led to fears that it could be used for espionage purposes (Rubio 2020). For this reason, countries such as the USA, Great Britain, France or Singapore have forbidden local companies to cooperate with Huawei for the development of 5G networks. On 21.10.2020, Sweden also joined the countries banning the use of Huawei or Zhongxing Telecommunications Equipment – ZTE technology, motivating the recommendation of military intelligence and security services and asking local telecommunications companies to replace, by 2025, any equipment of the above-mentioned Chinese companies in network infrastructure on the territory of Sweden (Tiezii 2020).

Thus, if 20 years ago to intercept a phone a person or a team were needed to install a physical device in a phone or on the phone line, and for these activities to be legal you needed a court order, now the intelligence services can intercept almost any call just by activating specialized equipment thousands of kilometers away from the target.

Disputes over the legality of such actions are usually resolved after the technology has evolved again, and the activity that can be incriminated no longer needs to be performed, the cycle repeating itself. According to some theorists (Johnson 2007), at this point it is easier to record all telephone conversations and use specialized search programs in the database thus created, using keywords to discover information of interest, than to make efforts to find clues, which then to or used to obtain warrants for targeted listening, for a limited time, to a target telephone.

Currently, the more technologically connected you are to the world around you, the more vulnerable you are to exposing activities.

And it's not just about intercepting communications, but also other aspects, such as video camera systems in big cities, which are usually connected to the network using wireless internet, thus theoretically allowing signal interception. Increasing the number of monitoring cameras is undoubtedly a positive aspect of ensuring the security of a nation, but it can also be destructive in the case of the use of information by enemy organizations or individuals³. In addition, the diversity of entities that install video surveillance cameras in a city without centralized coordination makes it possible for such a network to be set up by an organization with malicious interests, or to interfere with well-intentioned but unprotected systems due to the lack of a decent security culture, describing the technical characteristics in detail⁴. In Photo 1 is shown the Bucharest Surveillance Center, where the journalists from Libertatea apparently entered and took photos without any restrictions.

In addition to intercepting communications, devices containing Global Positioning System (GPS) applications such as phones, tablets, or smart watches can track or trace a person's route. Although seemingly harmless, it has been demonstrated that an inventive mind can turn an



Figure 1. Bucharest Surveillance Command Center
Source: Libertatea, 10 June 2018

³ According to the Article "Bucharest is monitored with over 1,700 surveillance cameras", from the newspaper *Libertatea*, 10 June 2018 Edition, in Bucharest at that time there were at least 1,709 surveillance cameras belonging to the six Districts of the Capital, adding to the 302 owned by the City Hall. Source: <https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/bucurestiul-este-monitorizat-cu-peste-1-700-de-camere-de-supraveghere-2286127>, accessed on 28 February 2021.

⁴ Such examples can be found in Bucharest at the following links: <http://www.netcam.ro/network/imagini/camere-web-live/webcams-din-zona-bucuresti.html> – set up for touristic purposes, and <https://adp-sector1.ro/proiecte/sistem-metropolitan-de-supraveghere-video/meant-for-surveilling-the-Public-Parks-in-the-1st-District>, having 703 video cameras. Accessed on 28 February 2021

application developed for positive purposes, such as monitoring health parameters, into one designed to achieve precise military goals.

In this respect, the site Bellingcat showed how the fitness application and monitoring of physical parameters "Polar", installed on smart devices such as watches or medical bracelets, can uncover military bases, headquarters of intelligence agencies, military airfields, nuclear weapons storage sites, secret bases or diplomatic missions (Postma 2018).

Thus, the application also functions as a social platform, where personal data is downloaded for comparison (similar to two other applications, Garmin and Strava). By overlapping the data, both the duration and performance of the physical exercises and the routes where these exercises take place are disclosed, connecting the bases where the soldiers run with their homes or places of stationing in external missions. Often, the data is connected to the information on Facebook, even if the user did not make this connection personally, but failed to set up electronic devices and computer applications so that they do not do it automatically. Some platforms do not allow access to the data of other people using the same application, while others allow access to the history since its launch (provided it has been used since that date), in the case of Polar, from 2014.

Analysing in an unauthorized manner (due to a product security vulnerability) the data on the Polar platform, Bellingcat site experts were able to profile more than 6,500 users, military or civilian, American or other nationalities, working in the Armed Forces or intelligence services in Naval stations, Army or Air bases, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or the National Security Agency (NSA), located in Guantanamo Bay (American base in Cuba), Crimea, Baghdad, Afghanistan or South Korea (Postma 2018).

Another application that can be used extensively for espionage purposes, recently developed (2006), is Waze. It was originally developed in Israel (European Patent Office 2008), the previous name being "FreeMap Israel". Taken over and developed by Google in June 2013, the app has about 130 million monthly users, and is available in 50 different languages. The application is based on the free collection of travel data and traffic values from users, which can report accidents, traffic jams, delays compared to normal values on certain routes, optimal travel routes, maximum permissible speeds, real average speeds, the nearest objectives of interest (fuel stations, pharmacies, hospitals, police stations, etc.).

Waze offers the recognition of a route for an intelligence officer without him exposing himself by going out on the field. By combining the Waze application with other applications such as Google Earth, maps can be created that include images at the level of travel routes. In 2014, Waze launched the Connected Citizens Program (CCP), which allows two-way data exchange free, a program currently used by 450 government organizations, ministries of transport, municipal companies that analyze traffic or emergency services (ESRI The Science of Where 2021).

Created for eminently positive purposes, the application can also be used for negative purposes, with major consequences. A demonstration of this was made by two students from the Technion Institute of Technology in Israel in 2014 (Atherton 2014), who created a fake traffic jam using data sent to the Waze application from several thousand fake accounts simulating as many different phones used in traffic, created using a computer program. Thus, they signalled the existence of a blockage on one of the important road arteries in Tel Aviv, blocking the traffic on the side ones. The demonstration and the way of action were sent to the Waze administrators, in order to be able to prevent such cyber-attacks from malicious organizations.

INFORMATION OVERLOAD IMPACT UPON THE INTELLIGENCE

The technological developments, especially the digitalization, has also influenced in a huge manner the information field. From producing it, to transforming the old data into digital formats and the capability of storing vast amounts of information in virtual public libraries or classified servers, doubled by easing the access to almost any piece of information from anywhere on the globe to anyone on the planet, the domain exploded in almost all aspects. Named an Era of Information, the period at the beginning of the 21st Century lives at the level of expectation.

For the intelligence field, easier access to collecting information and transforming it into useful products and knowledge has become a big challenge. From the concept of superiority of information, the specialists moved to the concept of the superiority of knowledge, meaning that the information presented to the decision makers has to be timely, accurate, and actionable. In order to do that, an intelligence service should be able to distinguish the valid information from fake news or disinformation operations of its enemies. Luckily, differentiating between information and intelligence is not a new endeavour, many services (including the Romanian Military Intelligence Directorate) having for decades as logo the owl, a bird able to see in darkness and distinguish its prey from other uninteresting items.

Easy access to collection may lead, sometimes, to a culture of a minimal effort, acquiring and providing information readily available, sometimes not verified from multiple sources. This habit is induced, at times, by leaders of shallow understanding, looking to find rapid confirmation from their intelligence services on what they hear on television or read in the newspapers. The trend was nicknamed “passing on information” and “making educated guesses” by Nick Gurr, former Deputy Chief of the British Defence Intelligence for Analysis and Production in one of the meetings hosted in Brussels by the EU Military Staff Intelligence Directorate, showing that the same challenge exists in many countries.

If the passed on information is taken as a valid fact by a leader and publicly expressed, followed by later denial, it may lead to an unfavourable assessment of lack of competency from a friendly service, with repercussions on the reciprocal trust and cooperation level. Moreover, it may look like a weak organization for an enemy intelligence service, and could be followed by successful disinformation campaigns (as long as everything in open media is taken as valid facts and acted upon).

One of the most disastrous impacts of a disinformation campaign has been the Brexit Referendum. According to multiple sources, some 80.000 posts of the fake Facebook accounts linked to Russian agents have been published in two years prior to the referendum (Gillett 2017). Another source is mentioning an inquiry of the British Parliament on Facebook and Twitter as part of ongoing probes into alleged Russian meddling in the Brexit vote (Ghosh 2017). To add up, according to The New Yorker (Mayer 2018), a US private Big Data company, Cambridge Analytica, obtained millions of people’s personal data from Facebook, without users’ permission, availing them to influence the Brexit campaign by primarily targeting American citizens having relatives in UK.

While probing the meddling of foreign entities in the Brexit referendum is difficult due to the lack of legislation governing the virtual environment, the tight result of 51.89% of the leave vote against 48.11% on the remain vote may be considered the outcome of a concerted mass-media pro leave campaign against a paralyzed safeguarding sense of right and wrong. The results will negatively affect the Union and its member states for a very long period on multiple levels, security being just one, as well as most of the British citizens, starting with those previously working in Brussels in EU institutions.

Coping with information overload may seriously undermine the quality of intelligence. All the documents delivered to an analyst are potentially important, having already met some criteria defining them as relevant to a certain monitored issue. Prioritization is important, but there are known biases, like the tendency to consider the most recent information the most valid one. In addition, when the documentation is vast, the documents read at the beginning are fading away, or the opposite, the understanding of the later ones is impaired by tiredness and, not rarely, stressful environments.

The solution may be the artificial intelligence capable of processing massive quantities of data and rapidly presenting the requested findings. The artificial intelligence may also help eliminating the information duplicated (circular reporting) during the collection process.

Technology is also called to solve the current challenges of the fast revolving cycle of intelligence when it comes to the last component of it, dissemination. After the fast collection and even faster analysis in the intelligence services laboratories, a rapid dissemination of the now intelligence product is required. Being classified, adequate means are requested at both ends, sender and receiver. The reality of nowadays shows that the slightest effort in deciphering a message may

lead to annoyance and avoidance of such messages, being preferred current unclassified “intelligence” products, ready to be made public in the virtual environment, part of a never-ending political campaign. Of course, the case is different with classified strategic intelligence papers, forming the most important part of the existence reason of an intelligence service, and contribution to the knowledge supremacy of a state.

CONCLUSIONS

We appreciate that technological development has led to important changes in the intelligence domain, in all aspects of the intelligence cycle, from management, to collection, to analysis, and finally to dissemination. In addition, it greatly affected the theoretical and practical approach to the training of intelligence officers, the technical qualities being highly sought after today, compared to the desirable psychosocial skills 30 years ago.

We also consider that technology can allow the planning and execution of missions faster than in the past, but also countering the illegal hostile actions. Connecting the facts and events is much easier, which creates additional pressure on intelligence services to deliver faster the desired outcomes.

We emphasize that another consequence of the technological revolution is the overload of information available, from which an intelligence service must have the ability to quickly detect useful information, through computer applications or the effort of professionals, and then deliver information products in a timely manner to decision makers. They, in turn, thanks to the same technological revolution, are overloaded by information from the mass media, some of interest in certain particular situations, and require fast and punctual information that is not related to the usual strategic purpose of an intelligence service. In these circumstances, the reality shows that one falls either in accepting the requests as they are, transmitting information as polite as possible, or structural changes are started to provide answers to contemporary worrying events.

We believe that another major challenge to an intelligence service in the age of technology may be the interruption for a short or a long period of one of its major high-tech components, the Internet. Thus, the growing dependence on the Internet, the digitalization of society, can cause major damage to the general functioning of a state, with major implications on its security in general and citizens in particular, if, for accidental or intentional reasons, its provision is interrupted. Thus, the intelligence services have the obligation to have their own information circuits, which would allow to timely informing the decision makers on classic alternative channels, as in any classic war situation. Although difficult to imagine, the current COVID 19 pandemic shows us that even the most negative scenarios can become a reality in unfavorable contexts.

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ASYMMETRIC OPERATIONS OF THE HOSTILE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICES ON THE ALLIED STATES TERRITORIES

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Abstract

Globalization and technological developments brought to societies huge benefits, but also new security challenges. State or private entities, having access to new, advanced technologies, and benefiting of the rapid and free movement, developed methods and strategies to harm their perceived enemies. National security, considered alone or in conjunction with those of the allied states or within the security organizations is challenged lately by hostile acts performed by various entities, aimed at weakening societies, value systems, beliefs or even the simply well-being of the citizens. Intelligence services, as part of the national / organizational security systems are called to discover, perform early warning, monitor, and counter such aggressive actions, even if a clearly attribution of the perpetrator is difficult. Our endeavour is to draw a picture of the current preoccupations in the field, presenting also three cases where the uncertainty of the transgressors has been eliminated without any shadow of doubt.

Keywords: asymmetric; hybrid; threats; intelligence; hostile; strategy; security; case study.

INTRODUCTION

The period of the years 2000 has been characterized by an accelerated globalization, possible due to the freedom of movement of citizens and goods that followed the opening of the borders in large parts of the World. This freedom was accompanied by the huge technological progress leading to major breakthroughs in the field of communications and permitting an easy access to information.

The 2003 EU Security Strategy (EUSS) described very well the situation of that period on the European continent, mentioning the challenges to the European and international security, listing terrorism, illegal proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, failed states and organized crime.

Furthermore, it correctly envisioned the fact that, in the globalization era, the threats apparently situated at distance represent a concern as big as threats situated in its proximity, reality requiring the developing of a security culture allowing a prompt reaction, when necessary, in defending the strategic objectives of the EU (Council of the European Union 8.12.2003)².

Despite the accuracy in describing the threats, part of these have been affected the EU security sooner than expected. Starting 2004, a string of terrorist attacks took place in Western Europe, characterized by a big number of casualties and followed by political decisions and societal trends with a significant impact on the European security. Question marks on the existing alliances viability aroused, followed by doubts on the political and economic agreements. Populist leaders took the power and partisans of restricting the freedom of movements and other collective rights have emerged.

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² *“In an era of globalization, distant threats may be as much a concern as those that are near at hand... The first line of defense will be often be abroad. The new threats are dynamic...Conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early”.*

The aforementioned challenges permitted to hostile intelligence services to exploit the vulnerabilities by encouraging the separatists' movements in different countries, with some painful successes. Their actions were also possible due to the technological developments, combined with the rights given by the continuous openness of the World. However, despite the asymmetric approach and the covert nature of operations, the technology also permitted the attribution of some cases to their real perpetrators, eventually acting appropriately to impede the repetition.

METHODOLOGY

Our approach in addressing the subject is a four-step one. First, we will try clarifying the main terms used, namely asymmetric threats and hybrid threats.

The second step is presenting the efforts done at national level, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) level, the European Union (EU) level, and joint level in countering the hybrid (asymmetric included) threats.

Finally yet most importantly and in deeper length, we will be presenting few asymmetric operations perpetrated by hostile military intelligence services on the territories of the EU, NATO or allied countries.

Based on the case studies presented, we will draw some conclusions concerning the effectiveness of the efforts of countering the asymmetric / hybrid threats to the security interests at the national and allied levels.

DEFINING THE TERMS

In order to define the main terms, **asymmetric threats** and **hybrid threats**, we are referring to three sources belonging to the two most relevant organizations for Romania's security point of view, NATO and EU, and national ones. As such, the first definition comes from the **NATO** Glossary of Terms and Definitions (NATO Standardization Office - NSO 2019), according to which the **asymmetric threat** is "A threat emanating from the potential use of dissimilar means or methods to circumvent or negate an opponent's strengths while exploiting his weaknesses to obtain a disproportionate result". In order to further clarify our approach in the field, we are also adding the definition of the **hybrid threat**, from the same source, which is "A hybrid threat is a type of threat that combines conventional, irregular and asymmetric activities in time and space". These two combined explains why usually the asymmetric threat is addressed by many in conjunction with the other two, conventional and irregular, under the umbrella of the hybrid concept.

The second definition we would like to present is deriving from **EU** documents (Daniel Fiott 2019), where the **asymmetric threats** are "Tactics and strategies that are designed to exploit weaknesses and vulnerabilities in powerful military and political actors". Furthermore, the EU (European Parliament; European Commission 2016) considers that "**Hybrid threats** can be characterized as a mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and unconventional methods which can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific objectives while remaining below the threshold of open organized hostilities".

On the same subject, the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE), defines this type of threat as "...an action conducted by state or non-state actors, whose goal is to undermine or harm a target by combining overt and covert military and non-military means". (European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats 2021)

At the **national** level, the **asymmetric threat** is defined within the Guide of the National Defence Strategy for 2015 – 2019 (Romanian Presidency 2015), as "The threat emanating from a non-state actor employing unconventional methods and means in order to provoke important damages compared to the level of actions, by exploiting states vulnerabilities and avoiding a direct military confrontation". Furthermore, the **hybrid threat** is defined as "The threat emanating from a state or non-state actor utilizing a variety of methods and means, conventional and unconventional (political, military, diplomatic, economical, cyber, informational), together or separated, in order to fulfil its goals".

In analysing the two national definitions we should take into consideration that the separation state/non-state actors made in 2015 is no longer valid, according to the current NATO and EU documents adopted with Romania's agreement as a voting member.

COUNTERING THE ASYMMETRIC / HYBRID THREATS

Countering Asymmetric / Hybrid Threats at the National Level

At the national level, the National Strategy for State Defense 2020-2024 (NSSD 20-24) (Presidential Administration 2020) foresees from the cover motto the need to overcome the different challenges ahead. In the foreword, NSSD 20-24 connects from the very beginning the national security to the security of NATO and EU, acknowledging the complex links among the three notions and the common goals. Later on, other strategic partners are associated to the national security, like United States of America (USA), and specific policies and actions at national and international levels.

Flexibility, adaptability, and rapid reaction on crises are the main features of the national strategic leadership, allowing anticipation and planning in order to avoid the strategic surprise. The technological developments are acknowledge for their potential contribution to the raise of the complexity of the risks and threats to the national security. Asymmetric and cyber-attacks, disinformation, fake news, use of civil technologies in asymmetric and hybrid actions should constitute a constant preoccupation for the national security services.

The Greater Black Sea Area security concerns also deeply the national security through the vectors of instability situated in this region. Protracted conflicts, immigration, changes of the borders by force, the use of the asymmetric and hybrid tactics and means to promote security goals, originated from the area, are all issues affecting our security and our allied and partners' - like Republic of Moldova's security.

The Strategy takes into discussion other threats like the reconfigurations of the relations among global actors, the aggressive posture of the Russian Federation towards Western and NATO states materialized in frequent breaches of the international laws, the assertiveness of regional state having global ambitions, migratory flows, and COVID-19 pandemic challenges. A special paragraph is dedicated to the diversification of the asymmetric, cyber and hybrid threats of hostile entities, and another one to the possible threats emerging from the misuse of the technological developments (artificial intelligence, machine learning, dark web, cloud and smart computing, big data, internet of things, fast internet/5G, ransomware, hacktivism, unmanned systems). In the abovementioned stances, specific security actions being required from the state organizations.

NSSD 20-24 foresees also the need to develop mechanisms for citizens to understand, prevent and react when confronting threats, risks and vulnerabilities (Presidential Administration 2020). In this respect, according to one of the projects of the Presidency, a culture specific to the security domain has to be developed.

Based on the NSSD 20-24, the White Book of Defense 2020 (WB 20) (Ministry of National Defense 2020) is meant to implement the provisions of the aforementioned document in practice at the Ministry of National Defense (MoND) level. WB 20 observes that the determinations of reconfiguring the World's power centers and the low appetite for a conventional major conflict amplify the asymmetric and hybrid actions to fulfill the strategic goals for state actors.

In order to counter the threats, the Ministry of National Defense intends to develop strong, credible, interoperable, flexible and efficient defense capabilities, having especially in mind the asymmetric and hybrid challenges.

Integrating the new technologies in the daily work, digitalization, modern command and control systems are objectives of immediate interest. The defense organization is tasked to adapt in order to counter the new disruptive technologies, the threats in the cyber environment, and the disinformation and hostile propaganda activities.

Being member of a complex security architecture at the NATO at EU levels, MoND participates in NATO projects like Strategic Air Capability, NATO Airborne Early Warning & Control, Air Command and Control System, or EU projects as European Defense Fund, European Defense

Industrial Development Program, Coordinated Annual Review on Defense, and Permanent Structured Cooperation and some of its subsequent projects.

Countering Asymmetric / Hybrid Threats at the NATO Level

NATO is focusing on addressing the overall hybrid threats, its documents using this formula and not asymmetric threats in particular. By hybrid, the Alliance is referring to propaganda, deception, sabotage, disinformation, cyber-attacks, economic pressure, deployment of irregular armed groups and other non-military tactics used by adversaries to destabilize the security in areas of interest and spreading uncertainty within the populations.

NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg considers (Finland, 2 October 2017) that the late characteristics of the attacks are the higher pace and strength, enabled by the technological developments.

Alliance's strategy in fighting hybrid or classical actions foresees that the main obligation to counter them belongs to the member states (MS), NATO standing ready to offer support according to Article 5 provisions (NATO 2019). In this respect, in 2018 NATO member states representatives decided to create counter-hybrid support teams, charged with offering expertise to MS if demanded. Moreover, since the reorganization of the Intelligence structures in NATO, the newly created Joint Intelligence and Security Division developed a hybrid analysis structure responsible for tailored warnings.

Taking into consideration the global character of the hybrid threats, NATO is also consolidating its partnerships with third states and like-minded organizations. A proof of the NATO – EU solid partnership in countering hybrid threats is demonstrated by the inauguration (October 2017), of the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats based in Helsinki by the Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the High Representative and Vice President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini (NATO 2017). The Center functions as a fusion structure of knowledge, supporting member states in refining their capabilities to fight the hybrid threats.

Countering Asymmetric / Hybrid Threats at the EU Level

European Union has been preoccupied by the asymmetric threats since its first security strategy, in 2003. At that time, the Union faced a variety of dangers there were not purely military, and consequently could not be addressed by military means. Countering proliferation of weaponry and dual use technology, terrorism, illegal migration, organized crime, disinformation, propaganda, required a mixture of instruments not all available and efficiently coordinated.

Over the time, the threats have diversified exponentially, and so the preoccupations at the EU level. Starting 2016, the European Union has established a variety of processes in various policy fields through specific documents (“2016 Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats – a European Union response”; “2018 Joint Communication on Increasing Resilience and Bolstering Capabilities to Address Hybrid Threats”).

The results of these processes have been included in the Progress Reports to the Council in the next three years. The execution of the 2016 Joint Framework and the 2018 Joint Communication's provisions has been advanced by cooperation among the MSs, EU bodies, and international allies (European Commission 2020).

The EU has been continuously adjusting to the shifting security challenges of the hybrid domain: refining policies, updating processes and procedures, anticipating trends and evolving threats. As such, the MSs established in July 2019 a “Horizontal Working Party on Enhancing Resilience and Countering Hybrid Threats”, having as a central goal to support the specific cooperation among members, with a particular accent on fighting disinformation.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought a new array of challenges, as it is obviously used by some state players to create societal rifts in foreign countries, blur the responsibilities, manipulate the vulnerable public opinion and advance their goals through the newly discovered *medical diplomacy*, namely providing vaccines to some friendly member states from alliances or organizations of interest in exchange for promoting their policies in strategic fields of interest. This type of action, certainly

hybrid in nature, is part of the same strategy of divide and conquer very effective in other cases like BREXIT.

In order to better analyses and counter the hybrid threats, within the EU Intelligence and Situation Centre (EU INTCEN) has been established in 2016 the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell (HFC) (EU Military Staff 2019), having the role of coordinating the domain within EU intelligence bodies. The HFC performs all-source study of hybrid and cyber threats together with the Intelligence Directorate of the EU Military Staff (EUMSINT), within the format of the Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity (SIAC), and provide written intelligence products or oral briefs as required by the stakeholders.

Another step towards addressing the hybrid threats has been the creation of the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (CoE), in 2017, by nine countries, NATO and EU. As of today, Helsinki CoE has 27 members, bringing together their knowledge and offering their fusion expertise in the field of interest.

ASYMMETRIC OPERATIONS PERPETRATED BY HOSTILE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICES ON THE TERRITORIES OF THE EU AND/OR NATO COUNTRIES

In line with the main goal of this paper, we would like to present a few case studies on asymmetric operations perpetrated by hostile, assertive military intelligence services in order to better understand the modus operandi and draw possible useful conclusions on specific early warning and countering actions.

The focus will be on the Russian military intelligence service (Glavnoye razvedyvatel'noye upravleniye – GRU), involved in the last years on an array of asymmetric hostile operations. These were ranging from poisoning political opponents of the regime abroad or inland (Alexander Litvinenko, Serghei Skripal, Alexander Navalnii), attempts of overthrowing democratic regimes (Republic of Montenegro), meddling in the democratic elections in foreign countries (United States, Germany) or referendums (UK), discrediting efforts of anti-doping sport association (The Netherlands).

Unfortunately, even if perceived as acts of war by some leaders, these operations are difficult to attribute and do not fall into the UN Charter definition of acts of war³. Consequently, and due to the different respect paid to the international laws by democratic countries, they cannot be answered proportionally, leaving the options to diplomatic expulsions, economic sanctions, and blaming speeches during the international conferences or official meetings.

Case study concerning the Russian military intelligence service operation to sabotage and delegitimize The World Anti-Doping Agency – WADA's activity

This case study is relevant due to its target situated outside of the usual range of military or political targets of a military intelligence service, the vast amount of resources involved, and the irony on acting against an environment where fair play is supposed be the norm.

The objective is the World Anti-Doping Agency – WADA, based in The Hague, and the efforts were directed to sabotage and make irrelevant the investigation of WADA against the doping program of the Russian athletes. However, the operation involved few teams acting on at least four continents (Europe, South America, North America, and Asia), inferring that, if in a case apparently outside the main scope of a military organization are used so many resources, in an operation falling under the regular portfolio of missions, the resources would be unrestrained.

On 4 October 2018, the US Department of Justice (DoJ) made public (US Department of Justice 2018) the indictment of a group of seven Russian GRU officers, accused of five crimes under the U.S. Law. The indictment shows that from about December 2014 and lasting until at least May 2018, the perpetrators hacked computers belonging to U.S. citizens, companies, international organizations, and their respective personnel situated round the world, based on their strategic interest to the Russian government.

³ Article 51 of UN Charter states that “*Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations.*”

The aims of the scheme was to make public the unlawful acquired data as part of an influence and disinformation campaign meant to “undermine, retaliate against, and otherwise delegitimize the efforts of international anti-doping organizations and officials who had publicly exposed a Russian state-sponsored athlete-doping program” (US Department of Justice 2018).

The prosecution alleges that the offenders, and unidentified plotters, using false characters and proxy servers, investigated targets, sent spear phishing messages, unlawfully collecting information.

When needed, GRU specialised personnel travelled on the globe where the persons of interest were actually situated. The Trojan horse used to access the information of interest was very often the Wi-Fi networks, either public or private, including the hotel ones. After acquiring the information, the deployed team sent it to its handlers in Russia for utilisation.

In July 2016, WADA’s Independent Person Report was issued, showing Russia’s methodical state-sponsored sabotage of the drug testing process prior to, during, and subsequent to the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Soon after the publication of the report and the International Olympic Committee’s and IPC’s following resolutions concerning the elimination of Russian competitors, the plotters hacked the networks of WADA, the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), and International Court of Arbitration for Sport (TAS/CAS). When needed, they travelled to Rio de Janeiro, Lausanne, or Ottawa, to perform hacking operations after obtaining the needed login credentials using the hotels Wi-Fi networks.

Starting September 2016, the plotters started releasing to the public and the media the stolen data, including information about athletes allowed to use prohibited substances due to personal health issues, in order to create a picture of a generalised use of forbidden medicines among the athletes. When better serving the goal, the information had been altered from its accurate form, 250 sportspersons from 30 states being exposed.

The media campaign lasted until the end of 2018, around 186 reporters being periodically contacted in an effort to magnify the fake revelations.

Case study concerning the Russian military intelligence service operation against the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

In April 2018, four defendants indicted in US in the WADA case, using diplomatic credentials, deployed to The Hague in the Netherlands to pursue a close access operation targeting the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). As later documented, all four were GRU operatives, and their mission included later on a second stage trip to Spiez, Switzerland.

In Spiez, the object of interest was the Swiss Chemical Laboratory, an OPCW accredited facility specialised in analysing military chemical agents, including the substance that the United Kingdom authorities suspected it was used to poison a former GRU officer in that country, Serghei Skripal.



Figure 2. The cover of the Dutch Defense Intelligence Service Report

However, the team of four was discovered on the course of the OPCW intrusive mission by the Dutch defence intelligence service (Militaire Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst – MIVD) (Ministerie van Defensie, Militaire Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst 2018). The MIVD counter-espionage action led to the capture of specialised Wi-Fi GRU gear unprofessionally placed in the trunk of a hire vehicle abandoned in the close proximity to the OPCW Headquarter.



Figure 1. Group of Russian GRU officers at their arrival at Schiphol

After performing the specific checking, the Dutch MIVD discovered that the equipment has been used in various places around the globe, including Brazil, Switzerland and Malaysia.

The modus operandi being described in the previous case study, we would not insist on it, limiting the information to the essential part and looking to underline the outcome, the complete failure.

The success in disrupting the illegal Russian GRU officers had been possible due to the close cooperation of the intelligence services across the Atlantic, and due to the mistakes made by the operatives in the preparation of the mission and on the Netherlands territory. Analysing the facts, an astonishing conclusion surfaces: the Russian officers did not care much about the consequences of their illegal actions, either due to their self over confidence and disrespect towards local intelligence services, or the solid back up at home. Unlike in other situations, bearing diplomatic Russian passports did not offer to the authorities to possibility to deny their association with the Russian Government, unlike in other instances where private organizations, like Fancy Bears, were made responsible for the wrongdoings.

Case study concerning the Russian military intelligence service operation on the Republic of Montenegro territory

On 16 October 2016, day of Parliamentary elections in the Republic of Montenegro, a coup attempt took place in the Republic, having the ultimate goal of changing the power favourable to the accession of the country in NATO with another one opposing joining the Alliance and friendly to Russia.

However, due to a series of events, the coup had failed, and on 5 June 2017, Republic of Montenegro became the 29th member of NATO.

According to different sources (Stevo 2019), (Bajrovic Reuf 2018) citing the Montenegro judicial proceedings, on the eve of Montenegro's 2016 parliamentary elections, police in Podgorica detained former Serbian gendarmerie commander Bratislav Dikic and 19 other individuals on charges of forming a criminal organization with the intent to overthrow the government. Soon after, the Special Prosecutor for Organized Crime had indicted fourteen people in the capital city of Podgorica. These people were later identified as Russian agents, Serbian extremists, and leaders of the Montenegrin opposition alliance (Democratic Front – DF) prepared to oust the government violently on election night. According to officials, Serbian nationals initiated the enterprise in early 2016 under the direction of Russian GRU and Russian Federal Security Service (Federal'naya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti – FSB) operatives.

The planned takeover was relatively straightforward. Under the command of Bratislav Dikic, a group of 20 individuals dressed in stolen Montenegrin police uniforms was to occupy parliament on the night of the election. Meanwhile, the Democratic Front would declare victory and call on hundreds of mobilized supporters to storm the building. In response, the group of disguised police would fire on opposition protestors. The DF would then call for nationwide protests, alleging that the violence was an attempt to prevent the triumphant opposition from seizing the reins of government. The plotters also planned to assassinate the Prime Minister, Milo Djukanovic. In this manner, opposition leadership envisioned a state of emergency as the springboard to state control.

Montenegrin authorities, however, successfully prevented the coup attempt. On October 12, four days before the elections, former police officer Mirko Velimirovic confessed to his involvement as a gunrunner, giving the Montenegrin authorities their initial lead. Investigations ensued, leading to the discovery of encrypted phones among ten individuals, including leaders of the Democratic Front. Arrests commenced, and officials confiscated rifles, spiked road barriers, handcuffs, batons, and other equipment exclusive to the state's special police.

As detentions were underway, Montenegrin security services received communications from Serbia's Security Intelligence Agency (Besbednosno-Informativna Agencija – BIA) that 50 Russian GRU special forces troops had entered Montenegro's mountainous Zlatibor region from Serbia on the night of 15 October. Their aim was first to neutralize a nearby Montenegrin special forces camp and then to travel to Podgorica to assist Dikic's group in the planned post-election clashes. Linked through

their encrypted phones to indicted Montenegrin plotter Milan Knezevic, the specialists terminated their operation due to the later radio silence. Without further intelligence from BIA, Montenegrin authorities believe that the GRU unit fled Montenegro through neighboring borders.

Two Russian agents distinct from the group in Zlatibor escaped into Serbia. These GRU operatives had been coordinating coup-related efforts within Montenegro in the months leading up to the election. As word of the plot's discovery spread, the two successfully made their way to Belgrade to and were later extricated back to Russia. A day after, the Security Council Secretary and former FSB chief Nikolai Patrushev, made a short, unplanned trip to Belgrade. Significantly, to mention, BIA communications with Montenegrin counterparts discontinued after Patrushev's trip to Belgrade. The two were tried in absentia in Podgorica. Another unusual link between the alleged perpetrators and Russian highest level of politicians has been uncovered when the Serbian authorities arrested at Podgorica's request two Serbian citizens in Belgrade, on 13 January 2017. Following their previous activities, one of them proved to be in the close proximity of the Russia's Foreign Minister, Serghei Lavrov, during his visit in Serbia, in December 2016, including in tight secured places of the visit (Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty 2017). Very soon after the initial arrest, on 8 February 2017, the Belgrade High Court rejected Montenegro's request to extradite the two, saying the request was baseless (Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty 2017).

On 9 May 2019, after a 19-month trial, 13 people were sentenced over the 2016 failed coup for attempting an act of terrorism. Among them, in absentia, the two Russian GRU operatives (15, respectively 12 years in jail), two members of the FD to five year jail terms each, and Bratislav Dikic to eight years (Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty 2017).

The Montenegrin Appeals Court on 5 February 2021 cancelled the initial decisions against the suspects, mentioning "significant violations of criminal procedure," and requested the High Court to retake the trial (Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty 2021).

Moscow authorities has repeatedly dismissed at all levels the accusations about their role as being absurd.

CONCLUSIONS

Hostile military intelligence services execute operations on the territories of perceived enemy countries no matter the military strength of these or possible consequences. In perpetrating the aggressive operations, intelligence services use a vast array of asymmetric means, employing high-end technological tools and facilities.

Despite the effort to cover their actions, the technological developments also permit to professionals in the attacked countries to attribute most of the assaults and indict the wrongdoers. Unfortunately, due to the lack of legal means at the international level, most of the perpetrators remain unpunished. Worth mentioning is that even when the attacks are repeated on the same country (United Kingdom) and using the same tactics and procedures (poisoning political opponents), and the leadership is well aware of the deed amounting to an act of war and the responsible country (Bolton 2020), the retaliation measures are weak and non-efficient.

Global in nature, the hostile operations presented show that, through steady, trustworthy cooperation among allies, the intelligence services can uncover them and point to the evil organizations. On the same time, sharing the knowledge can help preventing or mitigating the effects of the aggressiveness. Romania's national security considered alone or in conjunction with those of its allies could be ensured only if the threats are known and countered with strength and professionalism.

Beyond providing awareness to the asymmetrical / hybrid threats, efforts on discouraging such acts are needed, and international legislation adapted to the current reality. Failure in punishing the unfriendly operations would only inspire wicked countries and private entities to act again with undesired consequences on people wellbeing.

Romania's security umbrella, constituted by the membership in NATO and EU, as well as the strategic partnership with United States is offering a wide array of tools, ranging from military to economic, political, social and judicial, to counter the conventional and unconventional threats.

However, the national effort is decisive and should raise to the reality of the present global challenges.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PROCESS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract

Information is a very valuable weapon, with its help you can manipulate, you can change behaviors and actions. Also the Internet makes the process of communication at the mass level amplifies the speed dissemination, which further accentuates the influence. Since 2015, the EU has worked actively to reduce the impact of disinformation. The European Parliament has consistently pushed for adequate staff and adequate resources for the task force. This resulted in the formation of a team called the East StratCom Team. This team has developed, in cooperation with the EU institutions and the Member States, the Action Plan. The creation of the East StratCom working group was aimed at countering Russian disinformation. At the same time, another StratCom interinstitutional working group was created, which aimed to address the phenomenon of radicalization in the Arab world using public diplomacy and communications. In this article we aim to analyze how the implementation of the Action Plan is working in the EU and what are the results since 2015 till now. Also we analyze the pandemic and its role in the accessibility of measures to combat fake news and how EU took action to combat COVID-19 disinformation. Although the East StratCom working group has taken important steps and the sites to combat fake news and the Code of Practice have also brought quantifiable results on this front, the EU is still failing to combat Russian misinformation and propaganda. As a general conclusion, we believe that the European Union has shown through the steps initiated that it knows what needs to be done to implement and use strategic communication effectively, but, to date, it has been limited in finding an effective solution.

Keywords: EU; EU vs Disinfo; East StratCom; EU narrative; strategic communication; propaganda; fake news; informational war; Russia; coronavirus.

INTRODUCTION

The European Union’s (EU) vision regarding strategic communication

Since 2015, the EU has worked actively to reduce the impact of disinformation. According to official statements and documents, strategic communication is a concept of the Union, but also an *important tool* in promoting the EU's general political interests and objectives. As a result, the concerns of the EU member states have focused on the development of a common capability in response to misinformation, manipulation and the various types of propaganda that have become increasingly common in recent years in the information environment.

A first form of concrete expression of the concerns of EU member states to develop a common capability in response to misinformation, manipulation and various types of propaganda is answered in 2015 when the *European Council* defines strategic communication as "an important tool in promoting the EU's global political objectives", stressing the (*Action Plan on Strategic Communication*, EC, 2015, 1) "need to counter Russia's ongoing disinformation campaigns" (Strategic Communication, EEAS 10), and invited high representative/vice-president at the time Federica Mogherini to take action in this regard, in cooperation with the member states and EU institutions. As a result of this, the first *Action Plan for Start-Up Communication* emerged in June 2015.

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This document sets out the first objectives for improving the EU's communication capacities and measures, as a response to external disinformation activities. The European Council also mentioned further “creating a communication team” in response to Russian propaganda and set up a working group called *East StratCom* within the *European External Action Service (EEAS)*.

The European Parliament consistently pushed for adequate staff and "adequate resources" for the task force. This resulted in the formation of a team called *the East StratCom Team*. This team has developed, in cooperation with the EU institutions and the member states, the Action Plan outlining the measures set out in the EU's strategic communication on Eastern neighborhood issues, and beyond, as well as the wider EU efforts in support of media freedom and strengthening the general media environment.

The team consisted of nine communication experts, recruited from EU institutions or seconded from member states. However, this task force was not budgeted. The working group also began the weekly drafting of two bulletins, *Review of disinformation* and *Digestion of disinformation, which aim at cases of disinformation. They are promoted through a Twitter account (@EUvsDisinfo)*, which, from July 2015 until February 2021, has gathered more than 53.700 followers and which, in 2016, generated 500.000 tweet impressions per month and currently exceeds five million impressions (EUvsDisinfo, 2016).

The creation of the *East StratCom* working group was aimed at countering Russian misinformation. At the same time, another StratCom inter-institutional working group was created, which aimed to address the phenomenon of radicalization in the Arab world through the use of public diplomacy and communications. This working group aims to encourage dialogue and foster mutual respect between Arab and European communities. Coming against the background of increased migration, this initiative is led by the “strategic communications division” of the SEAA and consists of representatives of the geographical departments of the SEAE, the coordinator of the Counter-Terrorism Council and all relevant Commission DGs, which include the spokesperson service, promoters of EU policies and projects in the region and coordinates closely with EU delegations in order to strengthen existing links and highlight common values (*Report of the European Union Institute for Security Studies, EU, 2016*).

Unlike East StratCom, the Arabic-language working group does not have a dedicated staff and operates using existing resources. Other measures include creating an EU narrative to be promoted through strategic communication campaigns and the issue of interculturality, closing cultural gaps, for which action plans regarding each target country are individually adapted.

THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN PROMOTING EU POLICY OBJECTIVES IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBORHOOD

The use of communication tools has played an important role in the political, economic and security developments that have affected the EU's eastern neighborhood in recent years. The Union's political objectives towards its Eastern Neighborhood were summarized in the Declaration adopted at the Eastern Partnership Summit (EaP) in Riga, of 22 May 2015, which defined the European Partnership as a partnership aimed at: “building an area of common democracy, prosperity, stability and enhanced cooperation” based on “mutual interests and commitments and supporting sustained reform processes in Eastern European partner countries” and strengthening “democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the principles and norms of international law”. This partnership is based on the right of each partner to choose the level of ambition and objectives they aspire to in their relations with the European Union (Report of the European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2016, 9).

The *EU Action Plan* highlights the following as general objectives:

1. Effective communication and the promotion of EU policies and values vis-à-vis the eastern zone;
2. Strengthening the general media environment, including support for media independence;
3. Raising public awareness of disinformation activities and improving the EU's ability to anticipate and respond;

4. Effective communication to the general public.

In order to achieve these objectives, the EU's strategic communication to the East must contain positive and effective messages on EU policies. These messages should make it easy for citizens to understand the political aspect and economic reforms promoted by the EU. They should also promote the universal values of the EU: commitment to democracy, the rule of law, the battle against corruption, minority rights and fundamental freedoms of expression and the media. These messages should be promoted using positive narration, in a simple and clear language based on real-life success stories to resonate with the target audience.

2016, THE REFERENCE YEAR IN THE ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING OF COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGIC AT EU LEVEL. DOCUMENTS FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The action plan for the Start-up Communication of June 2015 was, both doctrinally and practically, the starting point for the regulation of strategic communication at EU level. This was continued the following year by the organization and planning of the field by including strategic communication in the main documents in the area of defense, security and foreign policy of the Union.

The development of *the Common Framework for Countering Hybrid Actions (6 April 2016)* at the level of the European External Action Service sets out the role of strategic communication by bringing together existing policies and developing 22 operational actions to raise awareness, strengthen resilience, prevent, respond to crises and restore, as well as enhance cooperation with NATO. These actions are based on a number of supportive measures such as (Press release, the EU strengthens the response to hybrid threats, 2020):

- **Awareness-raising actions**, by establishing communication mechanisms to ensure the exchange of information between Member States, as well as by coordinating EU actions along the lines of strategic communication;

- **Actions to strengthen resilience**, through sectorial treatment of security (cybersecurity) or critical infrastructure (energy) issues, as well as by protecting the economic, public health sectors and supporting efforts to combat terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization;

- **Prevention, crisis response and restoration actions**, by carrying out concrete procedures, as well as by re-examining the usefulness and practical application of the solidarity and mutual defense clauses in the event of a hybrid attack;

- **Actions to enhance cooperation between the EU and NATO, as well as other partner organizations**, in a joint effort to counter hybrid threats. In this respect, it should be recalled that the NATO summit in Warsaw has brought back the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO, activated in 2002, on the basis of the Joint Declaration on European Security and Defense *Policy*, a partnership reconfirmed on 8 July 2016 in a new NATO-EU Joint Declaration. This statement creates the procedural framework for collaboration and even integrated action by “increasing the *common capacity to counter hybrid threats, including strengthening resilience and developing cooperation for early analysis, prevention and identification, timely mutual information and carrying out, at possible level, the exchange of intelligence, coordination of strategic communication and response measures*” (Joint Declaration EU-NATO, 2016).

This *common framework* is based on the European Agenda *on Security*, as well as sectoral *security strategies*. Thus, strategic communication becomes an integral part of the actions of the European External Action Service and aims to promote the EU's core values and objectives among internal and external audiences, in order to develop the security culture and the public understanding of the danger posed by the propagation of fake news.

The framework mentions as the main means of countering the communication of a permanent flow of accurate information about the European institutions and their activity, as well as an increase in the speed of reaction in case of misinformation, such as fake news. Both traditional and e-chronic and digital media channels, such as social media, are used for active information. (*Joint Framework for Countering Hybrid Threats*, 2016, 2)

The implementation of the operational actions provided for in the *Joint Framework for Countering Hybrid Actions* was assessed in the Report of the *Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union* of 17 October 2016, which highlights the key role of strategic communication and the need for NATO-EU cooperation in this area, naming, as an expert, the development of response capacity through information exchange, as well as strengthening cooperation in the field of cyber security and crisis prevention.

The European Union's Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy sets out as objectives of strategic communication the real-time countering of fake news by increasing the flow of information and promoting the values and principles of the European Union. The *Implementation Plan on Security and Defense*, presented to the Council of the European Union on 14 November 2016 by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, detailed the provisions of the *Strategy* and highlighted the role of strategic communication in the security and defense of the Union. As a measure, *the Plan* provides for the establishment of the Strategic Communication Division within the *EAATo* to apply the provisions of the *Strategy*, design and promote key EU policies and its core values, respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, respect for law and human rights, both globally and among domestic audiences (*Strategic Communication, EEAS, 2019*).

All these measures have as main objectives the establishment of the strategic communication framework at European Union level with the aim of rapidly countering disinformation and propaganda actions, increasing the quality of the content of the messages and the speed of their propagation, as well as the interaction with the media and local actors.

The main areas of action of the Action Plan are:

a) Enhancing the EU's strategic communication capacity by creating the East StratCom working group and setting its objectives;

b) Developing relations with partners and communication networks will play an important role in increasing the impact and increasing the effectiveness of the communication activities undertaken by East StratCom; the networks will be made up of important EU communicators and will operate in parallel with networks of journalists and media representatives for effective communication;

c) Communication campaigns on EU-funded programs, projects and activities; East StratCom will promote current and planned activities to ensure the achievement of strategic objectives;

d) Military for freedom of the media and freedom of expression; active involvement in efforts to promote media freedom in the eastern region, through OSCE cooperation with the Council of Europe, and directly in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia;

e) Activation of public diplomacy. The EU will intensify interaction with the local population through initiatives of public diplomacy aimed at exposing the audience to everything the EU stands for, explaining policies, promoting dialogue and providing timely and timely information;

f) Capacity building provide for journalists and media actors. Training and capacity-building provided for journalists and media actors in the region, in particular through the OPEN communication program, which will include opportunities for communication with the EU media to facilitate the exchange of best practices;

g) Supporting pluralism in the Russian media space; the EU will make sure that communication materials and products are available in local languages, especially Russian;

h) Involvement of civil society; the EU will encourage the involvement of civil society;

i) Raising awareness, developing critical thinking and promoting media literacy; the EU will work with Member States and key partners to raise awareness of disinformation activities among the general public;

j) Strengthen regulatory cooperation in EU Member States; Although media policy remains a national competence, the EU will act to improve cooperation between national regulators (*Joint communication EU, 2019*).

RECOGNITION AND EXPOSURE OF RUSSIAN DISINFORMATION AND PROPAGANDA WAR

The spread of disinformation through online platforms in the context of the 2016 referendum on Britain's exit from the EU, as well as the US presidential election, raised the focus on responsibilities in the area of strategic communication.

In 2016, the EP Motion [2016/2030 (INI)] was supported in the European Parliament. This resolution was supported by 304 MEPs, had 179 votes against and 208 abstentions and was not accepted, but sounded the alarm regarding the level of Russian propaganda and misinformation. The most important findings of the motion are (Report on EU strategic communication to counteract propaganda against it by third parties, 2019):

“- Russia is using contacts and meetings with EU counterparts for propaganda purposes and to publicly weaken the EU's common position;

- the Russian Government aggressively uses a large range of tools, like think tanks and special foundations (e.g. Russkiy Mir), special authorities (Rossotrudnichestvo), multilingual TV stations (e.g. RT), pseudo news agencies and multimedia services (e.g. Sputnik), cross-border social and religious groups;

- Russia is investing relevant financial resources in its disinformation and propaganda tools committed either directly by the state or through Kremlin-controlled companies and organizations;

- Kremlin funds political parties and other organizations in the EU with the intention of undermining political cohesion and that, on the other hand, Kremlin propaganda directly targets journalists, politicians and specific people in the EU;

- Russia has the capacity and intention to carry out operations aimed at destabilizing other countries;

- Russian strategic communication is a component of a wider subversive campaign to weaken EU cooperation and sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of the Union and its Member States;

- much of Kremlin's hostile propaganda aims to describe some European countries as belonging to Russia's "traditional sphere of influence";

- Russia exploits the absence of an international legal framework in areas such as cybersecurity and lack of accountability in media regulation and makes any ambiguity in these matters in its favor;

- calls on the Member States to develop coordinated strategic communication mechanisms to support attribution and counter-disinformation and propaganda in order to expose hybrid threats. (Report on EU strategic communication to counteract propaganda against it by third parties, 2019)

The motion also provides for a strategy to combat Russian propaganda, the main measures proposed being(*Report on EU strategic communication to counteract propaganda against it by third parties*, 2019):

- Member States holding the rotating EU Presidency include the strategic communication component as part of the program;

- strengthening cooperation with NATO in the field of strategic communication;

- close monitoring of sources of funding for anti-European propaganda;

- funding support for media freedom in European Neighborhood Policy countries;

- strengthening the EU's Strategic Communication Working Group, turning it into a full-time unit of the EUAE, with adequate staff and budgetary resources;

- it is essential that the EU continues to actively promote respect for fundamental rights and freedoms through its external actions;

- developing capacity-building programs for media actors, encouraging exchanges of information, partnerships and networks, such as content sharing platforms, media research, training and mobility opportunities for journalists and placements with EU media to facilitate exchanges of best practices;

- stresses the important role of quality journalistic education and training, inside and outside the EU, in producing high-quality journalistic analyses and high editorial standards;

- calls on the Strategic Communication Group to create a Twitter @EUvsDisInfo address in order to establish an online space where the general public can find a number of tools to identify misinformation, explain how it works and act as a relay for the many civil society initiatives focused on this issue;

- stresses the importance of communication in a coherent and efficient manner, both internally and externally, and the provision of tailored communications to certain regions, including access to information in local languages. Welcomes, in this context, the launch of the SEAE website in Russian as a first step in the right direction and encourages its translation into several languages, such as Arabic and Turkish;

- underlines the responsibility of the Member States to be active, preventive and cooperative in combating information operations hostile to their territories or aimed at undermining their interests. Urges member States' governments to develop their own strategic communication capabilities;

- calls on each Member State to make available to its citizens two weekly newsletters of the EU Strategic Communication Working Group, The Disinformation Digest and The Disinformation Review, in order to raise awareness of the propaganda methods used by third parties;

- underlines its support for initiatives such as the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence in Riga, NATO's Centre of Excellence for Strategic Communication (NATO StratCom COE);

- condemns the acts of periodic repression of independent media, journalists and civil society activists in Russia and the occupied territories, including Crimea, since its illegal annexation. It points out that since 1999, dozens of journalists have been killed, disappeared without a trace or been placed in Russia”.

In the EP Resolution on Online Platforms and the Digital Single Market of June (*European Parliament resolution on online platforms and the digital single market*, 2017), EP members called on the Commission to analyze the legal framework on fake news and to checking up the possibility of legislative intervention in order to limit the dissemination of fake content. The Commission has included the initiative against false online information in its 2018 work program.

In October 2017, the Commission has set up a High Level Expert Group (HLEG) representing academia, online platforms, media and civil society organizations. It also launched a public consultation regarding "fake news and online misinformation", focusing on content not covered by existing legislation. The HLEG report, published in March 2018, avoided the term “fake news” and instead preferred the term misinformation, defined as *false, inaccurate or misleading information conceived, presented and promoted for profit or to intentionally cause public harm* (*Online platforms, the digital single market and disinformation*, 2019).

The Commission Communication of April 2018 on the approach to online disinformation reflects the recommendations of the HLEG report, including (*European Parliament resolution on online platforms and the digital single market*, 2019):

- “- a *European code of practice on disinformation*;
- an *independent European network of fact-checkers*;
- *improving media literacy to help Europeans identify online misinformation and see content critically*;

- *encouraging Member States to boost support for quality journalism*;
- *The Commission and the SEAE will coordinate activities such as information to counter false narratives, combat misinformation and extend this collaboration to other EU institutions*;

- *support for Member States to increase election resilience. The Commission called on national authorities to identify best practices for combating cyber-attacks and misinformation and to provide recommendations and measures to ensure elections through a selected mechanism”.*

On 28 June 2018, the European Council called for an action plan by December 2018, with proposals for a coordinated EU response to disinformation, including appropriate mandates and resources for the relevant teams.

On 26 September 2018, a Code of Practice was published *by online platforms, social networks, advertisers and the advertising industry*. The code (*Code of Practice on Disinformation*, 2018) regulates itself and aims to reduce online disinformation by:

“- better examination of ad placements to de-demonize the spread of misinformation,
- transparency of political advertising and problem-based advertising to enable users to identify promoted content;
- closing fake accounts and increasing transparency about bot-based interactions;
- easy-to-use access to reliable and diverse news sources;
- empowering the research community by encouraging efforts to monitor online disinformation and supporting research on disinformation and political advertising”.

As proposed by the European Council, the Commission and the SEAA, on 5 December 2018 they published an *Action Plan* (Action plan against disinformation, Joint Communication, 2019) calling for the aggressive use of disinformation by many state and non-state actors and identifying the themes of their actions, including in the anti-Covid vaccination campaign. According to the available reports, more than 30 countries resort to various forms of disinformation and influence, including in their own territory. The disinformation actions carried out by the actors, within the Member States, are increasingly a source of concern throughout the Union. There have also been disinformation actions in the Union by non-state actors, for example on vaccination. As far as external actors are concerned, there is solid evidence of the Russian Federation. However, there are other third countries that resort to disinformation strategies, quickly appropriating the methods used by the Russian Federation (Action plan against disinformation, Joint Communication 2019, 2).

As a form of coordinated response, the *Plan* is based on four pillars:

(I) *improving the capacity of the Union institutions to detect, analyze and denounce misinformation* – provides for an increase in resources for disinformation efforts, materialized in strengthening the SEAE and the EU Merger Cell against Hybrid Warfare, before the 2019 Parliamentary Elections, with 11 additional posts, as well as doubling the budget allocated as short-term measures, but also by proposing the creation of 50-55 new posts under the EU Merger Cell against Hybrid War in the next 2 years.

(II) *strengthening coordinated and joint actions to combat disinformation* - materialized by the installation of a rapid alert system that transmits real-time alerts in the event of the publication of disinformation content for the purpose of prompt and effective intervention. An important role for the functioning of this mechanism is attributed to communication and collaboration between the Member States.

(III) *mobilization of the private sector to combat misinformation* - this pillar actually materializes in the application of the Code of Practice signed by online platforms, advertising agencies and the advertising sector, which were supposed to implement policies before the 2019 Parliamentary elections.

(IV) *informing citizens and improving resilience at the level of society* - this pillar aims at an active disinformation policy at EU level, developed at the same time as involving academic and civil society communication in the process of understanding the sources of disinformation and its dissemination.

In 2019, the signatories of the *Code of Practice* published the first results of their efforts. According to them, the main social networks, Facebook, Twitter, but also search engines such as Google and Mozilla, and professional bodies representing the advertising sector have submitted their first reports on the measures taken to comply with the Code of Practice on *Disinformation*. According to the Raptor Code, they must be submitted every six months.

According to them, some progress has been made, both in terms of *the removal of false accounts and the limitation of the visibility of websites that promote disinformation*. However, further measures are required to ensure full *transparency of political advertising until the start of the campaign for European elections in all EU Member States*(, to allow adequate access to platform data for research purposes and to ensure adequate cooperation between platforms and each Member State through the contact points within the early warning system'.(Code of Practice on Disinformation, one year after its entry into force: online platforms submit self-assessment reports, 2021)

Monitoring *the Code of Practice against Disinformation* is part of the Action Plan *against Disinformation*, which the European Union adopted at the end of 2018 to strengthen capacities and

strengthen cooperation between Member States and EU institutions, with a view to proactively addressing the threats posed by misinformation.

The signatories who submitted the reports joined the Code of Practice in October 2018 on a voluntary basis. The Code aims to achieve the objectives set out in the *Commission Communication* presented in April 2018 by establishing a wide range of commitments articulated around five areas:

- reduce advertising revenue from accounts and websites that publish false information and provide advertisers with appropriate safety tools, as well as information on websites spreading misinformation;

- allow public disclosure of political advertising and endeavor to disclose thematic advertising;

- establish a clear and publicly accessible policy on identity and online bots and take steps to close fake accounts;

- provide information and tools to help users make informed decisions and facilitate access to various points of view on topics of public interest, while prioritizing reliable sources;

- provide researchers with confidential access to data in order to better track and understand the dissemination and impact of disinformation.

The Code of Practice is also closely linked to the recommendation included in the election package announced by President Juncker in the 2018 State of the **Union address**, with the aim of ensuring free, fair and secure European Parliament elections. The measures include greater transparency of online political advertising and the possibility of imposing sanctions for the illegal use of personal data for the purpose of deliberately influencing the results of the European elections. Member States have also been advised to set up national election cooperation networks consisting of relevant authorities such as electoral authorities, cybersecurity and data protection authorities, as well as those responsible for law enforcement, and to appoint a contact point to participate in a European-wide election cooperation network. The first European meeting took place on 21 January 2019.

With regard to future reports, the *Commission* expects Google, Facebook, Twitter and Mozilla to develop a more systematic approach to enable adequate and regular monitoring and evaluation based on appropriate performance data. As regards the professional bodies representing the **advertising sector** (World Federation of Advertising Agencies, European Association of Communication Agencies and Interactive Advertising Bureau *Europe*), the Commission takes note of their constructive efforts to raise awareness of the code, but also notes the absence of companies among signatories and highlights the essential role that brands and advertising agencies play in efforts to combat vector disinformation.

A rapid alert system between EU institutions and Member States was also launched on 18 March 2019 with the aim of sharing data and evaluations of disinformation campaigns.

In the Joint Communication of 14 June 2019 on the implementation of the action plan against disinformation, The Commission and the High Representative/Vice-President noted that, despite the progress made by online platforms, more remains to be done: all online platforms must provide more detailed information to help identify the malign actors and the Member States concerned, enhance cooperation with the fact checkers and empower users to better detect misinformation, as well as comply with the rules for the protection of personal data.

The European Council of 20 June 2019 called for efforts to raise awareness, increase preparedness and strengthen resistance to disinformation. It welcomed the Commission's intention to assess the implementation of the commitments made under the Code of Practice. In her mission letter to the European Commissioner for Justice, Vera Jourová, President Ursula von der Leyen called for 'closely monitoring the implementation of the Code of Practice' and 'proposing regulatory intervention if necessary' on the basis of the Commission's assessment of online platforms'.

BEHAVIOR BEFORE THE ELECTION

The EP resolution of 10 October 2019 regarding foreign electoral interference and misinformation called for a modernization of the East StratCom task force to a permanent structure with higher funding. It called on online companies to cooperate in the fight against disinformation and the EU to create a counter-hybrid threat legal framework. On 29 October 2019, the Commission

published its first annual self-assessment reports by the signatories of the Code of Practice, which presented its final assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of the Code on 10 September 2020, calling for more structured cooperation between platforms and the research community. The Council conclusions of 15 December 2020 called for increased responses at EU level to combat hybrid threats and strengthen resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. On the same date, the Commission published its proposals for the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Markets Act, with the aim of creating a safer digital space and a level playing field. The DSA focuses on rules for online platforms such as transparency, removal of illegal content and effective safeguards for users, among others. The next step is the negotiation of the proposals by the EP and the Council.

REPORTS IN THE SUMMER OF 2020 SHOW THAT PLATFORMS HAVE INCREASED THE VISIBILITY OF WELL-DOCUMENTED CONTENT, WITH MILLIONS OF USERS BEING DIRECTED TO SPECIFIC SOURCES OF INFORMATION

It is also highlighted that the platforms have included, in the conditions of use of their services, policies to eliminate vaccine misinformation, which have resulted in the blocking of hundreds of thousands of accounts, offers and requests for announcements related to coronavirus and including erroneous information on vaccination. They have also stepped up their work with the veracity verifiers of the information to make the safe content of vaccination more visible. This series of reports marked the end of the initial 6-month reporting period.

In view of the relevance of these reports, in the current epidemiological context, the program will continue for the next 6 months. *The Commission* also requested online platforms to provide more data on the evolution of the spread of misinformation during the coronavirus crisis and the granular impact of their actions at EU level misinformation during the coronavirus crisis and the granular impact of their actions at EU level.

Thierry Breton, Commissioner for the Internal Market, said the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the role that platforms play with the appropriate responsibilities. Substantial measures must be taken to prevent disinformation from hindering joint vaccination efforts by all EU countries. Platforms need to become more transparent, including in terms of the effectiveness of the measures taken. (Coronavirus Disinformation: Platform Monitoring Programme, with a focus on vaccines, EU, 2020)

This monthly reporting program was created as a result of the Joint Communication of 10 June 2020 (Joint Communication, 2020) to ensure accountability to the public for the efforts of relevant platforms and associations in the sector to limit online disinformation related to coronavirus, with current reports focusing on actions taken in December 2020 by Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Twitter and TikTok.

PANDEMIC AND ITS ROLE IN THE ACCESSIBILITY OF MEASURES TO COMBAT FAKE NEWS

We believe that the current crisis caused by COVID will produce significant changes in the strategic communication process of the European Union, as in many other areas of reference. In this regard, it should be noted that the process of combating false news has already been accelerated by taking concrete measures, such as those mentioned in this article, which have been dragging on or lingering since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

We believe that the current crisis caused by COVID will produce significant changes in the strategic communication process of the European Union, as in many other areas of reference. In this regard, it should be noted that the process of combating false news has already been accelerated by taking concrete measures, such as those mentioned in this article, which have been dragging on or lingering since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

At this moment, the European Union is much better prepared to address the risks of communication through social networks and to use social communication to promote its own values

and interests. The big wave of false news on online platforms provoked a chain reaction of strategic communication at EU level, consisting in mobilizing all relevant actors, starting with public authorities and ending with online platforms, invited to dialogue and implementation of protection measures of citizens, the crisis has become an opportunity to test the way the European Union approaches strategic communication, highlighting the following issues:

- understanding the phenomenon by making the distinction between illegal content and harmful content but at the limit of the law as well as between misinformation as intentional activity and erroneous, unintentional information;
- very active information of EU citizens. on risks and involvement in combating discrimination;
- dismantling the myths related to coronavirus as well as detecting and denouncing over 550 disinformation speeches from pro-Kremlin sources on the EUvsDisinfo website (euvsdisinfo.eu, 2021);
- cooperation with international partners and member countries, used as a key element in the fight against misinformation;
- transparency and ensuring freedom of expression.

The actions taken have led to the empowerment of EU citizens. by raising their awareness and increasing the resilience of society. All this will contribute to addressing future strategic communication activities and combating discrimination, in particular through the "Action Plan for European Democracy" and the "Legislative Act on Digital Services".

"During the coronavirus pandemic, Europe was flooded with disinformation campaigns," said European Commission Vice-President Vera Jourová. These campaigns are designed not only as an attack on health, the objective being to undermine trust in governments and the media (*Coronavirus, EU takes more measures against disinformation*, 2019).

The example put forward by the Commission is that of the increased number of those who dispute vaccines in Germany. According to one survey, in less than two months, the number of those willing to accept vaccines has fallen by 20 percent. The theory taken up by social media that the consumption of bleaching substances would help in the fight against coronavirus is, in the opinion of European officials, another attempt to mislead. "Disinformation during the Corona pandemic can kill," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said.

EU ACTIONS TO COMBAT COVID-19 DISINFORMATION

The EU is committed to protecting societies, citizens and freedoms from hybrid threats, including actions to spread erroneous information and misinformation, as outlined in the 2019-2024 Strategic Agenda. The aim is to enhance cooperation in identifying, preventing and countering attacks, while increasing resilience to these threats.

In the context of the intensification of disinformation activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the EU institutions have acted to **raise awareness of the dangers of disinformation** and have promoted the use of **safe sources**.

In addition, the EU has **encouraged online platforms** to help combat fake news and other attempts to spread erroneous information by removing illegal or false content. As a result, among other things, **more than 3.4 million suspicious Twitter accounts** targeting discussions about coronavirus have been suspended since the start of the pandemic.

In order to combat disinformation in relation to the coronavirus, the European Commission has created its own *anti-disinformation* (Combating disinformation in relation to coronavirus, 2020) website, on which active information is carried out, concrete cases of disinformation and sources of disinformation are presented. At the same time, the ESAFE EUvsDisinfo project aims to increase citizens' awareness and understanding of Russian disinformation operations (Euvs DisInfo, 2019).

Measures have also been taken with regard to cybercrime:

- “- **cyber attacks** against organizations and individuals, including phishing campaigns that distribute malware through harmful links and attachments;
- telephone fraud strategies and **scams related to supply** and decontamination;
- the sale of **counterfeit medical and sanitary products** and the distribution of false home test sets for coronavirus detection;

- **home visits by fraudsters** who claim to be law enforcement or health care officers and provide tests for COVID-19 to enter homes and steal valuables;
- intensification of smuggling and sexual **exploitation activities**, including children.

One of the main measures is applied by Europol, the EU law enforcement agency, which collects information from EU Member States and publishes regular reports on how (*EUROPOL, 2021*) **criminals adapt their crimes to exploit the coronavirus pandemic**".

CONCLUSIONS

The EU's response has been labelled by most specialists as slow. The Union has not engaged directly in the propaganda struggle and has preferred to recommend to the Member States to act at national level. The fact that the EU has also used outsourced communication services, we believe is another disadvantage for implementing a viable strategy to combat Russian disinformation and propaganda.

Brexit and the US elections have influenced the EU's approach, perhaps also from the perspective of the European elections, the EU vs Disinfo Plan to combat disinformation at EU level, launched in June 2019, stating that there is concrete evidence of their ongoing disinformation activities and support from Russian sources who are expected to decrease turnout and influence the preferences of European voters. (*Action plan against disinformation. Report on progress, EUvs Disinfo, EC, 2019*)

Although the East StratCom working group has taken important steps and the sites to combat fake news and the Code of *Practice* have also brought quantifiable results on this front, the EU is still failing to combat Russian misinformation and propaganda.

As a general conclusion to this article, we believe that the European Union has shown through the steps initiated that it knows what needs to be done to implement and use strategic communication effectively, but, to date, it has been limited to the implementation of structures and the implementation of reports of necessity or the reporting of problems in the field without taking concrete measures that can be an effective response to false news and narratives launched by Moscow. In the same vein, while supporting collaboration with NATO for joint action, the steps are far from concrete. We believe that these problems are caused, first of all, by bureaucratic apparatus which makes it difficult for decision-making, coordination and synchronization of actions, and we underline here the large number of European institutions mentioned with powers in this area, in conjunction with the number of states participating in NATO's decision-making process.

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LANDMARKS OF RUSSIA'S USE OF INFORMATION WARFARE

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Abstract

Russian Information warfare represents an extended concept that covers a wider and more diverse range of actions when compared to NATO's approach on information operations. Russian techniques, tactics and procedures in the field of information warfare do not differ much from those used in the Soviet period but are adapted to the new technological achievements. The specific means of use the information warfare are acquired by the future politico-military leaders of the Russian state starting with their preparation period at an age of accumulation. On short and medium term, it is likely that Moscow's activities specific to the information warfare will increase being favored by the limitations imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic.

Keywords: information operations; information warfare; special propaganda.

INTRODUCTION

Sun Tzu stated that "all warfare is based on deception. That is why (...) lure the enemy to trap him; feign disorder and crush him; avoid him where he is strong. Pretend inferiority and encourage his arrogance. Don't weaken him for a moment, harass him" (Sun Tzu 1976, 24-33)

Vladimir Putin stressed that "Russia's approach to future conflicts, which will be asymmetric, is one based on intellectual superiority" (Presamil.ro 2017)

The transformations that took place at the beginning of the 21st century, generated mainly by technological evolution, have influenced the way wars are conducted. Thus, conflicts no longer take place only in trenches, through conventional military actions, but have as a *"battlefield"* the online environment, being won essentially by having information supremacy (Intelligence.sri.ro 2019).

This thesis was developed on the basis of consultation of open sources that address the issue of Russia's information warfare as well as through analytical research carried out by authors that led to the formulation of conclusions and assessments presented in this paper.

Information warfare involves the use of diversion, manipulation, disinformation and distortion of reality, the numerical force being replaced by troll armies. Thus, achieving the proposed objectives or promoting one's own interests can be achieved by altering the reality which in turn is achieved by changing people's opinions (Intelligence.sri.ro 2019).

Even though the information warfare has a long tradition in Russia, recent years have marked a shift using geopolitics as the main foundation. Political geography offered Moscow ideological arguments in its strategy to confront "the West." Unlike the ideology of liberalism, Moscow promotes a neoconservative post-liberal power that fights for a just multipolar world, defending tradition, conservative values and true freedom. These elements were the basis for justifying Ukraine intervention, namely the annexation of Crimea, in the context of rivalry between "Eurasian civilization" and "US-led Atlantic civilization" (Darczewska 2014).

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RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE ON INFORMATION WARFARE

According to RAND corporation, "information operations known as influence operations includes (...) the dissemination of propaganda in pursuit of a competitive advantage over an opponent" (Schville, Adler, Welch, Baffa, and Paul 2020).

The Russian Federation's perspective on information warfare (*informatsionaya voyna*) is rooted in Soviet thinking which defined the concept by the phrase "special propaganda" ("*spetspropaganda*") (Porotsky 2019, 6-19).

Currently "information warfare is a holistic concept that includes psychological operations (PSYOPS), electronic warfare, computer network operations and information operations" (Porotsky 2019, 6-19). Some of the elements that frame the current concept of information warfare are also found in the methods used by the Soviet Union in the action plans generically called "active measures". Russian Federation military doctrine, developed in 2010, stated that information operations aim to "achieve political objectives without the use of force". (Porotsky 2019, 6-19)

In contrast to NATO's approach, the Kremlin's angle is different in terms of complexity. Thus, we note that for the Russian Federation, all areas form a unit under the concept of "information warfare" while NATO approaches the concept of "information operations". (Scîrlet and Ichimescu 3/2020).

Moscow considers information, implicitly information warfare, as a "dangerous weapon" due to its characteristics: low costs, easily accessible, penetration into target environments without taking into account borders (Darczewska 2014).

Russia's perspective on information warfare refers to influencing the consciousness of the masses as part of the existing rivalry between various international actors in the information space, by use of special means to control information resources as "information weapons". Moscow mixes by definition the information and cyber space, appealing to psychological warfare between East and West and to geopolitical elements specific to the Cold War. (Darczewska 2014)

In Russia there are two geopolitical schools of thought whose representatives, Igor Panarin and Aleksandr Dughin, approached information operations as part of the information warfare. The perspective promoted in both schools of thought reveals that information warfare is a means by which states achieve their goals internationally or regionally or in terms of domestic policy, thus gaining geopolitical advantages.

The work of I. Panarin and A. Dughin focuses on two levels, as follows:

- raising public awareness in Russia of the "external threats" that exist in the information environment;
- setting up a system to respond to these threats from an information point of view. (Darczewska 2014).

I. Panarin and A. Dughin are "both theorists and practitioners of information warfare" through analytical programs and programs produced on Russian TV stations: "*NTV*", "*Channel 1*", "*Ren-TV*", "*TVRT*". At the same time, radio stations from the Russian Federation, such as the "*Voice of Russia*", host shows produced by I. Panarin with suggestive titles ("*Global Policies*" and "*Window to Russia*") where aspects of domestic and international politics are approached and commented. (Darczewska 2014)

PARTICULARITIES OF THE RUSSIAN INFORMATION WARFARE

Russia's information strategy aims internally to mobilize society and externally to rebuild the sphere of influence in the former Soviet space. From Moscow's perspective, two key factors are essential to information operations success: the existence of the Russian diaspora, receptive to Kremlin propaganda, and the use of Russian language in the information environment. (Darczewska 2014)

In Russia, information operations are treated as an interdisciplinary science since it covers a very broad range of actions targeting political, social, military, diplomatic, psychological, intelligence and counterintelligence domains. (Darczewska 2014).

A number of educational institutions and research centers deal with the issue of information operations such as the Information Security Institute at Lomonosov Moscow State University. Students of this institute are trained in the history and economics of the former Soviet states, the social movements and political representation of the Russian diaspora and ways of cooperation with their representatives. It should be noted that among the lecturers of this institute are people like Maxim Meyer, media strategy specialist and executive director of the Rusky Mir Foundation, who actively supports Russian communities abroad. (Darczewska 2014)

Another example at the institutional level is the Military Information and Foreign Language Department of the Military University of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation. The changes within this institution are suggestive of an understanding the way Moscow relates to special propaganda. Thus, the subject entitled *Spetspropaganda* was removed from the curriculum in the 1990's to be reintroduced in 2000 when the institution was reorganized.

Currently, specialists are training in "organizing foreign intelligence and military communication" and "monitoring and developing military intelligence." Special propaganda is learned within the institution by both military and civilian personnel, such as journalists and war correspondents (Darczewska 2014).

Also, the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where future Russian diplomats are trained, have in their curriculum in addition to sociology, philosophy and political science subjects such as: network communication technology, information and network war and situation analysis. The subject of information warfare has been given the status of an academic science. (Darczewska 2014)

The early writings given by the professor Igor Panarin at the Diplomatic Academy formed the basis of the Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation. In this context, I. Panarin described two major forms of aggression against Russia, as follows:

- the first form began with the launch of the Perestroika reform program and ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- the second form started at the beginning of this millennium and will last until 2020 when Eurasianist ideas will prevail. (Darczewska 2014)

In his book, "*The Second Information War - War on Russia*", I. Panarin argues that "all the colorful revolutions in the former Soviet Union and the Middle East are a product of the information aggression and social control technologies used by the United States" (Darczewska 2014)

In the same volume, I. Panarin defines the terms used in information operations of the Russian Federation, as follows:

- manipulation of information: the use of authentic information in a way that produces false implications;
- social control: influencing society;
- disinformation: dissemination of fabricated or manipulated information;
- fabricated information: creating and promoting false information;
- information manipulation: using authentic information in a way that gives rise to false implications;
- social maneuvering: intentional control over the target audience in order to obtain certain advantages. (Darczewska 2014)

According to I. Panarin, the tools used in information operations can be divided into secret and open. These include: "propaganda (black, gray and white), information (structures that gather information about the opponent), analytical component (media monitoring, current situation analysis) and organizational component (coordination of media channels, media influencers to influence politicians' opinions and the media in general to achieve the results desired by the state involved in the information war)". In addition to these tools, I. Panarin also mentions "other combined channels" including the use of special operations forces for sabotage missions conducted under a foreign flag. (Darczewska 2014)

I. Panarin distinguishes the following stages in the process of information operations management: forecasting and planning, organization and stimulation, feedback, operation adjustment and performance control. (Darczewska 2014)

Russian techniques, tactics and procedures in the field of information warfare do not differ much from those used in the Soviet period with the mention that they have been adapted to the new tools that technology has made available. Thus, in order to achieve its goals, Moscow uses both state-controlled media, such as “*Russia Today*” or “*Sputnik*”, as well as a community of hackers or trolls coordinated by the Russian intelligence structures (Jonas and Chabuk 2018).

Another channel of interest from an information operation perspective, in a globalized and interconnected world, is the Internet and especially social networks, despite the fact that some of them are outside of Kremlin’s control. Thus, Russia used the social network Facebook to promote spots with the Black Life Matters movement while officially categorizing the same entity as a dangerous threat. (Jonas and Chabuk 2018). Black Lives Matter is a decentralized political and social movement protesting against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against black people.

According to figures circulated during the hearings in the US Parliament (House Intelligence Committee), the Internet Research Agency (IRA) in Saint Petersburg is responsible for the financing of approximately 3,500 spots on Facebook in order to influence an audience of approximately 11 million US users (Jonas and Chabuk 2018). IRA is a Russian troll farm in St. Petersburg, in essence a Kremlin backed enterprise staffed with hundreds of people whose main job is to sow disinformation on the internet (Calamur 2018).

In an attempt to influence the target audience in various states, from US, UK to the Baltic States, Russia has used the online environment to create confusion, to cause ethnic tensions or erode trust in democratic institutions. As an example, the Kremlin financed spots on Facebook also for “*Blue Life Matters*” movement (which represents a countermovement started in response to *Black Life Matters*). In this case, Russia’s goal was not to get involved in a US internal dispute in order to impose its own position, but to exploit the existing social division to create an atmosphere of general suspicion in society (Jonas and Chabuk 2018).

CONCLUSIONS

The information warfare of the Russian Federation represent another level of the hybrid approach of conflicts. Along with the use of private military companies, information warfare allow the achievement of Moscow’s objectives without a direct involvement of the state. The possibility of a plausible denial of information aggression favors Kremlin’s impunity.

The main difference between Soviet propaganda and the information warfare waged currently by the Russian Federation is that Moscow no longer seeks to proclaim an absolute truth but to distract, confuse, polarize and demoralize.

The tactics, techniques and procedures by which Moscow wants to influence public opinion and through this political agenda in various countries are constantly changing, being permanently adapted for a better penetration of the target audience.

In the context of Covid-19 limitations, the relatively low costs of the activities in the information environment compared to those of a conventional aggression represent pre-requisites for the intensification, on a short and medium term, of the information warfare waged by Russia.

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IMPLEMENTING THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT IN LIBYA

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Abstract

The last decade of the XXth century was marked by three major humanitarian crises, in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The international community adopted different approaches to these situations, but they all had in common a sense of failure. Today, we see that such catastrophic situations continue to exist in places like Yemen or Syria, where civilian populations face atrocity crimes. These are just two examples of ongoing humanitarian crises and we have to keep in mind to there is an imminent risk for the escalation of disastrous conflicts in countries such as Ethiopia or Myanmar. By 2005, the United Nations adopted a comprehensive tool for avoiding and approaching situations where the lives of civilians are in peril, namely, the responsibility to protect. The analysis of its use in Libya, having NATO as a main actor, will reveal the reasons this tool is not as effective as the world hoped in the moment of its creation, and, hopefully, will contribute to an enhanced understanding of the responsibility to protect.

Keywords: humanitarian; atrocity; risk; responsibility to protect.

INTRODUCTION

On March 23, 1999, the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) launched a bombing campaign in Yugoslavia, also known as Operation Allied Force, without having an authorization from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The allies focused their attacks on the territorial infrastructure of Serbia, including bridges and electric and fuel networks, which contributed in a decisive manner to the end of the Kosovo conflict, on July 10, 1999. This conflict shocked the entire world with its ethnic cleansing and other atrocities.^[A1] (Tatum 2010, 133)

NATO's intervention on humanitarian grounds in Kosovo was undertaken without the existence of an UNSC resolution, which should have provided the required international mandate for approaching the situation. The lack of official approval at UN level for intervention in Kosovo was mainly based on Russia and China's unfavorable stances regarding such an approach. In contrast to the divergent opinions at UNSC level on Kosovo's conflict, Rwanda's catastrophic situation from 1994 was approached at the same level by deciding to stand aside. This was a dilemma underlined by the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, while presenting his annual report in September 1999 to the UN General Assembly. (Annan 1999)

The solution for tackling the tensely-debated dilemma^[A2], mainly created ^[A3]by NATO's intervention in Kosovo, for approaching situations with populations being threatened by *genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes*, was called the *responsibility to protect* (R2P). It was created at the Canadian Government's initiative, which contributed to the activity of the International Commission for Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The 12 members of ICISS released, in December 2001, *The Responsibility to protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*, a document which promoted a new perspective for approaching the challenges related to humanitarian intervention, such as sovereignty, and detailed in a comprehensive manner the R2P concept. (Evans, et al. 2001, 1-9)

In essence, the concept promoted by ICISS says that the state has the main responsibility for protecting its population, and, when it can not do that, does not want or it is the perpetrator of aggression itself, the responsibility to protect belongs to the international community. The concept

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contains three dimensions – the responsibility to prevent, the responsibility to react and the responsibility to rebuild – having names that suggests a multitude of tools and measures that can be used in situations such as those mentioned before. (Evans, et al. 2001, 17)

After considerable efforts for creating, defining and promoting the responsibility to protect, the final version of the concept was adopted in the *2005 World Summit Outcome*, paragraphs 138-140. (60/1. World Summit Outcome 2005, 30)

Furthermore, an important perspective for understanding and analysing R2P was included in a report of a former United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon. His report indicated that R2P has three pillars. The first (*The protection responsibilities of the States*), and most important, represents the responsibility of the state in protecting its population, having in mind the responsibility generated by sovereignty and other relevant legal obligations. (Moon 2009, 10-14) The second pillar (*International assistance and capacity-building*) represents the commitment of the international community in offering a multidimensional assistance that can help certain states in overcoming challenges related to protecting their populations. (Moon 2009, 15-22) The third pillar (*Timely and decisive response*) is the action taken by UN member states, based on the characteristics of the situation, for helping those populations that are not protected by their states[A4]. (Moon 2009, 22-28)

Considering that it involves the possibility of using force, the third pillar is the most controversial part of R2P. There are two conditions that require to be met in order to implement this pillar. These are part of Paragraph 139, 2005 World Summit Outcome: “*should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.*” In such situations, UN’s member states should be prepared to act in accordance with the nature of the situation observed at the ground level, while considering the possibility of cooperating with relevant regional organizations. (60/1. World Summit Outcome 2005, 30) The third pillar was further clarified by Ban Ki Moon in his 2012 report, *Responsibility to protect: timely and decisive action*, where it was underlined that its purpose consists in *assisting or persuading* national authorities to meet their responsibilities to their populations. (Moon 2012, 4) The specific measures available to use “*when a state does not respond to diplomatic and other peaceful means*” are established by Articles 41 and 42, Chapter VII, of the UN Charter. Examples of actions specific to Article 41 are sanctions such as freezing of financial assets belonging to the government or certain individuals, imposition of travel bans, controlling the availability of weapons, limiting the diplomatic contact with the target state. Actions specific to Article 42 involve the use of force and some examples are deployment of UN multinational forces for creating security zones or no-fly zones, or for establishing a military presence on land or sea for protection or deterrence purposes. The specific types of measures applied are determined by the UNSC, considering the operational details. (Moon 2012, 9)

The three responsibilities or dimensions (prevent, react, rebuild), defined by ICISS and mentioned earlier, were not adopted as part of the UN language. In this article, they will be used as tools for analysis, considering that they contribute to the correlation between R2P and the relevant events mentioned in the next section of the article. Furthermore, considering that they include common measures, it is also important to mention the dimensions’ role in understanding the relation between the UN’s peace operations (conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, peace building) and the responsibility to protect. (United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Principles and Guidelines 2008, 17-19)

Having noted these main details as part of a basis for understanding the responsibility to protect, the next sections of the article will aim at providing a short description of the Libyan conflict from 2011, underlining events relevant for analysing R2P.

THE LIBYAN CONFLICT’S ESCALATION

According to certain perspectives, the Arab Spring have begun in Tunisia, in 2011, after a fruit seller set himself on fire, angry with the measures adopted by the local authorities. This incident contributed to the escalation of tensions between the Tunisian population and the authorities, situation transposed subsequently in other regional states, but, the foundations of this dynamic can be

identified in Lebanon. In March 2005, after the assassination of the country's prime minister, there were peaceful protests that demanded the retreat of Syrian security forces from Lebanon. After a month of efforts, the protestors' demand was fulfilled. The name attributed to this movement is the Cedar Revolution and it represented a very strong democratic signal for the entire Arab world. (Haas and Lesch 2013, 70)

After the dynamic of the Arab Spring reached Tunisia and Egypt, the escalation of the Libyan population's complaints, related to socio-political issues, happened in Benghazi. The main reason for escalation was the arrest of a human rights lawyer, named Fathi Tarbil, involved in representing the families of the victims from the Abu Salim prison incident, that happened in 1996, when many prisoners were allegedly killed by the security forces of the regime. (Vandewalle 2012, 203-204) Hundreds of protestors gathered in front of a police station, in the day of February 15, 2011, and the security forces responded by using live ammunition against the protestors, causing 10 deaths. Two days later, hundreds of thousands of peaceful protestors occupied the streets of multiple cities from the Cyrenaica region, namely Benghazi, Ajbadiyah, Darnah and Zintan, situation approached by Gaddafi's regime by using force, marking the moment of tensions escalation. (Haas and Lesch 2013, 64) The protestors' dissatisfaction was generated by multiple issues: "*corruption, repression, frustration, fear, authoritarianism, cronyism, extreme centralization, indifference to widespread youth unemployment, phony elections, poor governance, arrogance, patronizing attitudes, lack of due process, little accountability or transparency, partisan judicial procedures, bribes and nepotism.*" (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 128) The historical division between the Libyan regions of Cyrenaica (east) and Tripolitania (west) was once again a highly relevant subject for the internal Libyan environment. Part of this contrast was that, on one hand, the anti-Gaddafi movement rapidly developed in the eastern region, obtaining access to weapons from unsecure garrisons of the Libyan forces, while, on the other hand, the regime managed to maintain the public order in the western region, where the motivation against Gaddafi was not that high. In Tripolitania, fear, propaganda and actions of the police and foreign mercenaries were efficient measures until a certain point. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 132)

Gaddafi's popularity in Cyrenaica was always lower compared to the other Libyan regions, Tripolitania and Fezzan. His coercive measures used against the local tribes were once efficient, but in the current situation, there was an active and intense support between the local tribes and the general population, which included both random individuals with a certain level of education and public servants or members of the army that opposed Gaddafi's regime. The regional dynamic, mentioned before, also contributed to this situation. Communication tools such as social media played an important role in the awareness related to local events and rapidly attracted new protestors. An example was a video with leaders of Cyrenaican tribes that declared their support for the new National Transition Council, during a highly solemn ceremony. (Haas and Lesch 2013, 71-72)

As the situation deteriorated, the National Transition Council, self-proclaimed as unique representative of the Libyan people, gradually obtained acknowledgment, in 2011, at international level from members of the European Union, the Arab League, and, probably most important, from the United States of America. (Vandewalle 2012, 204) On February 21, two aircrafts of the Libyan air force were bombing the city of Benghazi, already surrounded by the regime's ground troops. The next day, Gaddafi blamed the "*rats and cockroaches*" that opposed him in Benghazi, using words that reminded of the Rwandan genocide. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 132)

UN'S DECISIONS AND NATO'S APPROACH TO THE LIBYAN CONFLICT

On February 26, 2011, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted the Resolution 1970, which underlined that the situation in Libya was marked by a "*gross and systematic violation of human rights, including the repression of peaceful demonstrators, expressing deep concern at the deaths of civilians, and rejecting unequivocally the incitement to hostility and violence against civilians made from the highest level of the Libyan government.*" "*Recalling the Libyan authorities' responsibility to protect its population*" and acting under the Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the resolution imposed an initial set of measures against Gaddafi's regime, involving an embargo on

arms and materiel or equipment for military use, travel restrictions and asset freeze for certain individuals that violated the human rights and the international law, through actions against the civilian population[A5]. (Resolution 1970 2011)

Following the Resolution 1970, on March 8, 2011, NATO deployed Airborne Warning and Control Systems aircrafts for monitoring the situation in Libya. This measure was further strengthened through ships deployed in the Mediterranean Sea. (NATO and Libya (Archived) 2015) The political and diplomatic initiatives of the United States of America, France and Great Britain were aiming for obtaining the UNSC's authorization for executing additional coercive measures for solving the Libyan conflict. (Hehr and Murray 2013, 65-67)

Considering the lack of a positive evolution in Libya, UNSC adopted the Resolution 1973, on March 17, 2011. The document reiterated "*the responsibility of the Libyan authorities to protect the Libyan population and reaffirming that parties to armed conflicts bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of civilians*" and took into consideration "*the widespread and systematic attacks currently taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against the civilian population may amount to crimes against humanity*". Under the Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Resolution authorized states to take all necessary measures (Article 42, UN Charter) for protecting the civil population and the zones they inhabited, being under the threat of the regime's forces attacks. One important point is that exercising the control of a part of the Libyan territory through occupation forces was not authorized. A no-fly zone was created in the Libyan airspace, denying all the flights in this space. Also, the measures imposed by Resolution 1970 were further consolidated. (Resolution 1973 2011)

From the point of view of the responsibility to protect, Resolution 1973 authorized the implementation of the third pillar (Timely and decisive response) or the responsibility to react dimension[A6][A7]. UNSC authorized in the undertaking Article 42 (UN Charter) type of actions in through a peace enforcement operation. On March 19, 2011, Operation Odyssey Dawn was launched in Libya, a multinational operation led by Washington, which involved coercive measures that contributed to implementing the provisions established by Resolution 1973. (Gertler 2011, 4) These measures can be summarized in the following paragraph: "*The no-fly operation was enabled by a strike against Libyan air-defense assets and other targets using 110 Tomahawk and Tactical Tomahawk cruise missiles and strikes by three B-2 Spirit bombers delivering 45 Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs) against Libyan air bases. 16 Tomahawks were also fired from British ships in the area, and British Tornado GR4 aircraft flying from the Royal Air Force base at Marham, England, reportedly employed Storm Shadow cruise missiles.*" (Gertler 2011, 7)

At the end of March 2011, the operational command was transferred to NATO, replacing Operation Odyssey Dawn with Operation Unified Protector. According to NATO, the operations' objectives were enforcing the necessary arms embargo in the Mediterranean Sea, enforcing a *no-fly* zone in Libya and conducting air and naval strikes against military entities that attacked or posed a threat to the Libyan population. (NATO and Libya (Archived) 2015) Besides NATO member states, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates joined the operation by making available a combined number of 20 aircrafts that contributed to imposing the no-fly zone. (Gertler 2011, 20)

Meanwhile, at ground level, the city of Misrata was a point of intense military activities, being a strategic point in the regime's resource resupplying network from the east of the country. Gaddafi's forces made considerable efforts for denying the success of international humanitarian initiatives, and, besides mining actions in the city's port, they have bombarded, with Grad type missiles, strategic locations for the overall safety of the population, blocking the access to supplies, food, water, electricity or communications. The siege of Misrata was lifted mid-May, but, until then, thousands of civilians have been killed and the city's infrastructure was destroyed. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 133)

The international coalition's actions also generated civilian casualties. One such incident happened after bombing a location near the city of Surman, owned by one of Gaddafi's allies, after which 15 persons were killed. Furthermore, the regime charged NATO with killing a similar number of civilians, during the attacks executed in Brega. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 134-135) (Brega Airstrike 2011)

On August 21, 2011, the opposition forces were launching *Operation Mermaid Dawn* (referring to the “Mermaid” nickname attributed to Tripoli). This was the siege of the Libyan capital, organised by rebels that gathered in Zawiyah, Gharyan and Misrata. The siege took place both at ground and sea level, with boats coming from Misrata. This initiative was also supported by the forces that participated in Operation Unified Protector. After losing the capital on August 22, 2011, the regime was only holding control of Sirt, Bani Walid and Sabha. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 138-139)

Resolution 2009, adopted on September 16, 2011, underlined the UNSC’s support for the National Transition Council, in the context of reconstructing Libya, and established the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), for an initial period of 3 months, having a mandate that should have contributed to Libya’s stabilization and reconstruction through actions such as promoting an inclusive political dialogue, with the aim of achieving national reconciliation, assisting the Libyan authorities in enhancing the capabilities of local institutions, promoting the rule of law and protecting human rights, taking necessary steps for the country’s economic recovery. (Resolution 2009 2011)

After capturing Tripoli, there were signs of transition to normality in Libya. The National Transition Council was preparing the plans for reconstruction and international actors were considering to resume diplomatic and economic relations with Libya. For example, in September 2011, the United States embassy in Tripoli was reopened and the American ambassador was announcing the interest of about 150 American companies for business opportunities in the country. On October 18, 2011, the American State Secretary Hillary Clinton made a visit to Tripoli for celebrating the results obtained. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 140-142) The reconstruction could not be done while Gaddafi was still free. The rebel’s efforts for finding his location were successful two months after capturing Tripoli. On October 20, 2011, Muammar Gaddafi was captured and killed in the city of Sirt. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 141-142)

On October 27, 2011, UNSC announced the termination of the multinational operation and the lifting of certain sanctions imposed against Libya, through Resolution 2016: *„Welcomes the positive developments in Libya which will improve the prospects for a democratic, peaceful and prosperous future there.”* (Resolution 2016 2011)

Behind a state of celebration generated by the liberation of the Libyan people from the regime, certain factors, with long term effects, were developing. There were political issues at the level of the National Transition Council, which suggested a lack of unity between the new leaders, transposed at local level through a lack of various militias’ loyalty. Also, once the regime lost the control of arms deposits, the access to weapons was available for rebels who had no military training and who lacked a well organised chain of command. (Lobban and Dalton 2014, 137-140) On October 31, 2011, UNSC adopted Resolution 2017, related to the mentioned issue: *“Expressing concern at the proliferation of all arms and related materiel of all types, in particular man-portable surface-to-air missiles, from Libya, in the region and its potential impact on regional and international peace and security.”* (Resolution 2017 2011)

THE ASSESSEMENT OF IMPLEMENTING THE R2P IN LIBYA

This part of the article will be built using the theoretical basis established in the Introduction section and the contextual aspects provided in the second and third sections. The objective of this section is to assess the results of Operation Unified Protector and to contribute to their correlation with the current state of the responsibility to protect.

Starting with the responsibility to prevent [dimension\[A8\]](#), if it is considered that the escalation of conflict towards war represents the proof of prevention’s failure, then the assessment of this part of the Libyan conflict can be rapidly done. It is still important to determine whether the best possible decisions and measures were adopted at this level of the Libyan conflict. The responsibility to prevent was determined by the measures authorized in Resolution 1970, detailed in the third section of this article. It is also relevant for this level of the analysis, to mention that the situation in Libya deteriorated rapidly, process indicated by events on the ground and the sharp loss of credibility, reliability or trustworthiness of Gaddafi’s regime. Considering that the first pillar of the responsibility to

protect was not effective anymore, the local population being under an imminent risk posed by Gaddafi's forces, it was necessary to implement measures specific to the third pillar of R2P.

In other words, the operational situation in Libya imposed the authorization of measures specific for the responsibility to react. This action happened through the adoption of Resolution 1973. It is unfortunate for the overall evolution of the responsibility to protect that there is a concern related to the real objective of Operation Unified Protector. This aspect is probably related to the heritage left behind by humanitarian intervention, which was often synonymized with regime change, a problem that should have been solved by the responsibility to protect. More specifically, the actions that produced civilian casualties, exemplified in the third section of this article, raised questions that asked whether NATO's actions further deteriorated the local situation. Another aspect of concern is the presence on the ground of Qatari forces, with *hundreds of troops* supporting Libyan rebels through training, communications and strategy. (Black 2011) It is difficult to assess the entire set of actions the Qatari forces conducted at ground level. From one point of view, this situation can be equated to territorial occupation, not authorized by the UN, but from another perspective, it can be considered that the Qatari representatives did not deviate from the mandate and offered support for protecting the local population. There is a clear assessment that can be done considering all these details, indicating an overall level of transparency that was not ideal for the responsibility to [react](#) and for the third pillar of R2P[A9][A10].

NATO's involvement in Libya officially ended on October 31, 2011, with the Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stating that the Alliance conducted one of its most successful operations, that fully complied with the mandate given by the UNSC. (NATO Secretary General statement on end of Libya mission 2011) However, the Peace Support Operations Doctrine (AJP-3.4.1) states that "*The actual success of an operation will therefore be measured against the overall result and not just on the achievement of the military objectives.*" (Peace Support Operations AJP-3.4.1 2001, Chapter 2, 2) and "*All too often, once the conflict has been brought to an end, the attention of the international community moves on, the peace building phase of the mission plan is under-resourced and the operation stalls.*" (Peace Support Operations AJP-3.4.1 2001, Chapter 2, 7)

After the conflict in Libya apparently ended in 2011, there was no solid initiative for a peacebuilding process. The responsibility to rebuild dimension had almost no content for Libya, excepting UNSMIL, an operation which was unable to approach the local challenges. It proved to be only a matter of months before the cyclic nature of conflicts was demonstrated in Libya.

CONCLUSIONS

The Libyan conflict from 2011 is unique from the R2P's point of view. It was an important step for this concept's evolution and a test that it did not manage to pass, mainly because a certain lack of transparency during the responsibility to react and, more importantly, because the responsibility to rebuild was missing. Having in mind the diverse visions and interests of the Security Council's permanent member states, R2P is a concept that can not be fully embraced by the international community, thus there are situations [\[A11\]](#) that can not benefit from a R2P approach. The concept can provide its *spirit*, acting as a political commitment reminded in situations of genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes, where the local civilians can only hope that this will be enough to save their lives.

For NATO, conducting an operation that lacked transparency and that was not followed by the required step for stabilizing Libya and bringing the country to a healthy path, proves the necessity for improvement, at least at the level conducting of peace operations. Considering NATO's aim of adopting a more global approach (Stoltenberg 2021, 11), there is an important possibility of encountering challenges that share aspects with the Libyan conflict. Such a scenario would be a test both for NATO, which will have to prove its level of multidimensional robustness, and for the UN, which will probably have to choose between one of the two notorious models of approaching situations that involve atrocities: the *Rwandan model of avoidance* or the *Kosovo model of acting without UNSC authorization*.

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NATO'S ENCOUNTERS IN THE CYBER DOMAIN

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Abstract

Last two decades technological advances in artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, telecommunications or space assets, brought new threats for the international security and have fundamentally changed the nature of warfare. Coercive cyber aggressions between opponents have enough potential to affect the digital economy and national security services without escalate into traditional conflicts. Cyber threats to Western security organizations are becoming more frequent, complex, and destructive. NATO's strategic competitors such as Russia and China seek to shape cyberspace through state action in order to gain an asymmetric military advantage. By adapting its posture in the cyber domain, refining doctrine and developing new capabilities, NATO aims to deter cyber aggressions against its interest and to coordinate better the defense of its member states.

Keywords: cyber security; cyber warfare; defense concepts; NATO; Russia; China.

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Cold War, radical groups, terrorist organizations together with intelligence agencies and military regimes that controlled weapons of mass destruction, represented the most plausible world's threats. In the last two decades, the security environment witnessed a significant shift: the world's most relevant state actors shifted the focus from being nuclear powers competing in an arms race to becoming cyber powers that allows much softer tools to be employed to achieve military objectives.

Nowadays increasing connectivity and reliance on information technology is a vulnerability recognized by NATO and national security doctrine as it is being targeted by cyber-attacks and subversion of democratic institutions carried out by disinformation.

Just as in the traditional domains, cyber threats for NATO are emerging from a wide range of sources that include state actors, especially China and Russia, but also a significant number of non-state actors, including proxies and criminal organizations. Cyber operations performed by opposite actors are likely to target NATO Computer & Information Systems (CIS) infrastructure and data bases to affect the communications' confidentiality, reliability or availability either in reality or in perception.

Due to the interconnected and omnipresent nature of cyberspace and the fact that cyber operations are cheap, accessible, discreet, stealthy and have the element of plausible deniability, they can result in disproportionate effects against a technology-dependent organization or even nation.

INCREASING CYBERSPACE CHALLENGES

Russia represents a significant cyber threat to NATO and this has already been demonstrated by integrating cyber in the operations carried out during the Georgia and Ukraine/Crimea conflicts. Cyber is a low cost and deniable tool, especially when “*non-state*” proxies are used. The use of Moscow proxies to disrupt and destabilize the civilian population and critical infrastructure particularly in its near abroad, but also in NATO/EU space bordering Russian territory, is a distinct possibility.

Generally, a proxy is in the service of a state-actor when the respective state lacks the required skills, knowledge and means to operate in cyberspace. Another important reason for state actors to use proxies could be associated to political unwillingness to openly employ state resources, especially in those cyber operations that contradict legal, ethical, cultural or assumed norms. A state

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operating through proxies could demonstrate plausible deniability, whilst not exposing state-owned technical capability.

Often Moscow has an important influence on elections, public opinion and even politicians using information warfare and cyber-attacks. Russian also interfered with NATO exercises and other Baseline Activities and Current Operations (BACO) using cyber operations, but also Electronic Warfare (EW) interference (including GPS jamming) to disrupt Alliance's events. To estimate the impact and the effectiveness of such activity coordinated by Moscow is difficult given the challenges faced by NATO and its members individually to implement effective cyber defense capabilities.

Cyberspace consists mostly of artificially constructed computerised environment that is global and interconnected, but which is restricted by jurisdiction national and international barriers. Even if NATO affirmed that international law applies in cyberspace (Wales Summit Declaration 2014), for many other actors, including state ones, anything that cannot be punished for or retaliated against is allowed.

Cyberspace was considered an enabling element for the three traditional domains, but military is now relying more and more on secured access to cyber as a prerequisite for the deployment and activation of forces and has been granted to cyber the domain relevance. Cyber domain is part of NATO's collective defense commitment as the other traditional domains confirmed by member states official position and by NATO Secretary General statement that "*A serious cyberattack could trigger Article 5*" (<https://www.nato.int> 2019).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for more security in the digital world has heightened. Because of the increased online presence, requested to preserve human social and professional relations, new opportunities emerged for cybercriminals who targeted the online commerce and financial tools, as well as the healthcare system.

The EU High Representative Josep Borrell, in April and the NAC, on 3 June 2020, condemned the destabilizing and malicious cyber activities performed in the context of the coronavirus pandemic (Statement by the North Atlantic Council concerning malicious cyber activities 2020). NATO statement expressed the solidarity and mutual support for those affected by malicious cyber activities, including healthcare services, hospitals and research institutes. The statement also requested the respect for international law and norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace after disinformation campaigns conducted from China or Russia flooded Western media and social networks.

The limited military cyberspace resources have to be employed carefully, only in the necessary areas otherwise the Internet could easily absorb entire cyber capabilities. The military activities have to remain limited in the cyberspace, targeting only specific areas of interests. The largest part of cyber activities is performed and controlled by private entities in both EU and US, and all allied operations and missions have some degree of reliance on civilian government or private industry, mainly in the field of communications infrastructure, logistics, equipment, or host nation critical national infrastructure.

Alexander Glenn, senior research for NATO and Cyber policy, identified four major cyberspace activities related to the military: intelligence, information, crime and military operations: "*militaries participate in intelligence operations, conduct information operations, conduct and support conventional and special operations, and respond to a limited subset of crime. Together these four areas make up the military cyber domain* (Crowther 2017)."

ADAPTING THE ALLIANCE'S CYBER POSTURE

Facing new complex and destructive threats coming from the cyber environment, NATO has to adapt its doctrine and structures to the evolving security landscape. The need to enhance NATO's collective defense capabilities, in order to be able to respond to the cyber threats, was first agreed by the decision makers during 2002 NATO summit meeting in Prague. Starting this point, the subject's relevance constantly increased, receiving central emphasis on the Alliance's meeting's agenda. After in 2008 a dedicated defense policy was approved, in 2014 cyber defense became part of collective

defence, allies admitting that cyber-attacks could trigger the activation of Alliance’s founding treaty Article 5.

Because of the technological evolution, NATO’s traditional operating environments have been supplemented and the Alliance declared that cyber is a “*domain*” of military operations, similar to air, land, and sea domains² and endorsed the development of national cyber defense infrastructure as a priority. While “*domain*” is defined by Merriam-Webster as a sphere of knowledge, influence, or activity , cyberspace is defined by AJP-3.20, Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace as: “*The global domain consisting of all interconnected communication, information technology and other electronic systems, networks and their data, including those which are separated or independent, which process, store or transmit data.*”³ The Alliance’s purpose regarding cyberspace was clarified by the declaration issued after the NAC meeting in Brussels during the NATO summit 2018: “*We must be able to operate as effectively in cyberspace as we do in the air, on land, and at sea to strengthen and support the Alliance’s overall deterrence and defense posture.*” (Brussels Summit Declaration 2018) During the Brussels Summit NATO’s members expressed their determination “*to employ the full range of capabilities, including cyber, to deter, defend against, and to counter the full spectrum of cyber threats, including those conducted as part of a hybrid campaign*”, as a major step for including the cyber-attacks in the threshold Article 5 collective defense commitment.

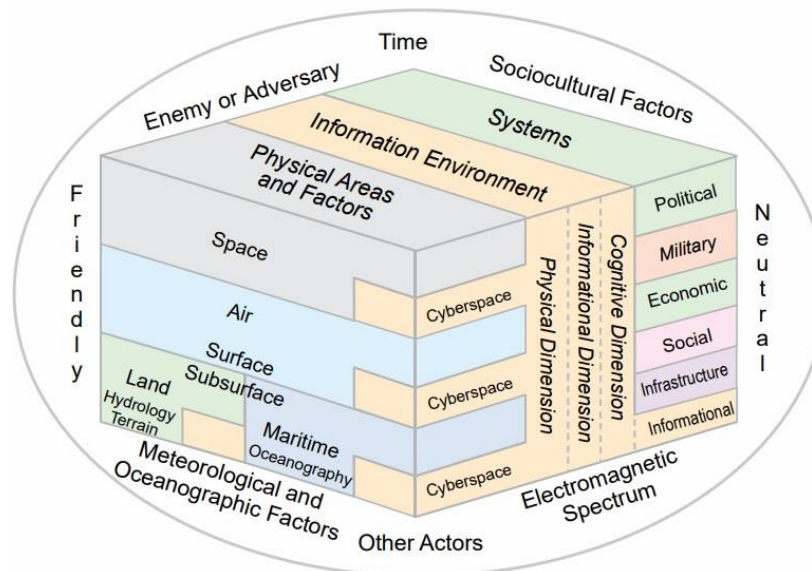


Figure 1. Holistic view of the Operational Environment

Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Planning, released on December 1st, 2020, offers the diagram above as example of the Operational Environment, comprised of the stated domains: Land, Air, Maritime, Space, and Cyberspace.

Each domain has specific characteristics that implies different ways to conduct operations, to create desired effects and furthermore, to achieve decisive conditions and objectives in the operational environment. Through cyber operation, a wide range of effect can be generated either in cyberspace or in other domains and environments by both friendly and opposite entities.

In July 2016, Allies reaffirmed NATO’s defensive mandate and recognized cyberspace as a domain of operations. As a consequence, the Alliance’s adaptation process had to focus to enhance the resilience of capabilities and assets, to coordinate and deconflict resourcing priorities during

² US Department of Defense (DoD) and later NATO recognized “space” also as a domain of military operations.

³ DoD define cyberspace as “A global domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures and resident data, including the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers”.

NATO planning of operations. Cyberspace operations are integral part of Alliance operations and missions and have to be considered since the early stages of planning.

To counter cyber threats is complex due to the fact that significant amount of actions could happen below the threshold of armed conflict, fact presented by the US Cyber Command, which recognized that “adversaries operate continuously below the threshold of armed conflict to weaken institutions and gain strategic advantages. (Achieve and Maintain Cyberspace Superiority 2018)”.

NATO is assisting its member and partner nations in the cyberspace domain by sharing information and best practices, and by conducting cyber defense exercises to help develop national expertise. NATO established at its level a multinational and interdisciplinary cyber defense hub, the Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence in Tallinn-Estonia, which mission is “to support our member nations and NATO with unique interdisciplinary expertise in the field of cyber defense research, training and exercises covering the focus areas of technology, strategy and law” (NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence n.d.).

In October 2018, the Alliance declared the initial stand up of the Cyberspace Operations Centre, (CyOC) in Mons-Belgium, that functions at the strategic level as part of NATO’s strengthened Command Structure. The CyOC serves as NATO’s theatre component for cyberspace and has the mission to provide cyber situational awareness (SA), to synchronise the related planning aspects and to coordinate operational activity in cyberspace, ensuring freedom to act in this domain and enhancing the Alliance’s resilience. This center, that is to be fully operational in 2023, represents the most significant NATO Command Structure Adaptation (NCS-A) measure for the cyber domain and make use of national cyber capabilities for its missions and operations.



Figure 2. CyOC position in NATO Command Structure. (Portuguese Military Academy - NATO Cyber Defence n.d.)

Other allied cyber capabilities are based in SHAPE, in Mons, like the NATO Computer Incident Response Capability (NCIRC), which protects the Alliance’s networks by rapidly providing centralized cyber defense support, or the NATO Cyber Rapid Reaction teams that are on standby to assist NATO members, 24 hours a day, if requested and approved.

To facilitate capability development under a NATO-wide and common approach cyber defense, the alliance defines targets for member countries’ implementation of national cyber capabilities using the NATO Defense Planning Process.

Following Bucharest’s determination to improve cyberspace regulatory framework and to integrate cyber effects in joint operations, starting December 2018, Romania also established a strategic-operational military cyber-agency, the Cyber Command. The agency’s mission is to plan, synchronize and conduct cyber activities in order to protect and increase the resilience of CIS infrastructure that supports military operations. (The Cyber Command n.d.)

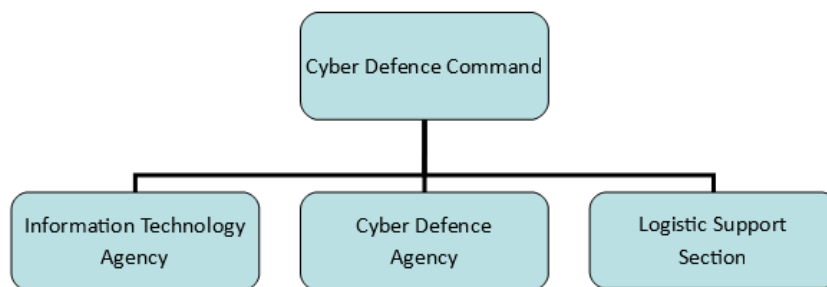


Figure 3. Romanian Cyber Defense Command Structure

In addition to NATO organizational adaptation, members agreed at the Brussels Summit on how to integrate sovereign cyber effects, provided voluntarily by nations, into the Alliance’s operations and missions. Allies established mechanisms to enhance information-sharing and mutual assistance in preventing, mitigating and recovering from cyber-attacks.

NATO is cooperating with the EU through a Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defense, signed in February 2016, which allows both organizations to exchange information related to cyber-defense. The agreement involved both organizations specialized structures, NCIRC and the Computer Emergency Response Team – European Union (CERT-EU) and granted access for EU staff members to NATO exercises “*Cyber Coalition*” (Cybersecurity in the EU Common Security and Defence Policy, Challenges and risks for the EU 2017). Up to that time, at the EU level, in order to mitigate cyber threats to its security, the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), an agency dedicated to achieving a high common level of cybersecurity across the union, had been established in 2004. According to its mission statement, ENISA “*contributes to EU cyber policy, enhances the trustworthiness of ICT products, services and processes with cybersecurity certification schemes, cooperates with Member States and EU bodies, and helps Europe prepare for the cyber challenges of tomorrow*” (ENISA – The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity n.d.). Having common challenges, NATO and the EU are further consolidating their cooperation on cyber defense, particularly on information exchange, research, training and exercises.

CONCLUSIONS

NATO’s potential adversaries are developing offensive cyber capabilities to exploit ridges and vulnerabilities in order to confuse and undermine the Alliance’s reaction in future conflicts. The constant technological adaptation of the NATO and national security forces to the current strategic scenarios is essential to maintain a reliable defense posture.

The EU and NATO are targeted by similar cybersecurity threats that undermine, in various degrees, all operational environment factors, political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, and their cooperation is leading to common or complementary defense solutions.

By constantly adapting its structure and posture, NATO is able to face new emerging threats and to increase its reediness and responsiveness in all operational domains. The Alliance’s adaptation process comprise also the development of policies and capabilities for the cyber domain designated to improve the understanding of different threats and risks and its ability to react in order to achieve NATO’s ambitions for the cyberspace.

Given that, over the past few years, the frequency and complexity of the cyber-attacks and their potential to generate instability grew substantially, the need to achieve consensus for a worldwide recognized legal framework in the cyber domain should become a high priority for international organizations.

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EUROPEAN COMMON DEFENCE A NEW CHALLENGE FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract

The efforts for peace at the end of the Second World War were based on the belief that only through "European unification" was there hope for an end to a chapter in Europe's recent history of war, bloodshed and destruction. The supreme objectives of safeguarding peace, but also of economic unification, contained in the Constitutive Treaties of the European Communities were impregnated with the fundamental intention of ensuring peace. The Treaties that gave birth to the European Communities and the Union confirm that the goal of peace has succeeded, and that a violent confrontation between Member States is currently unlikely. On the other hand, the conflicts that have affected the former Yugoslavia have shown that peace and democracy in Europe are not as obvious as they seemed. The Yugoslav crisis has also shown that it is vital to act in support of peace beyond the borders of the conflict-free zone within the European Union. The paper aims to analyze the evolution of the concept of common European defence, in order to identify features and trends of the European security environment that can provide an image of the future options of the European Union in the field of defence.

Keywords: *European Union; common defence; structured cooperation; coordinated defence analysis; crisis management.*

INTRODUCTION

At the end of World War II, Europe became the confrontation scene of the two superpowers, the United States of America (hereinafter the abbreviation US) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the abbreviation USSR will be used below). Beyond any doubt, the moment 1945 not only represented the end of an era that until then had been dominated in international relations by Europe, but it reflected a point in time when the European identity was about to collapse under the weight of the ideological and the military clash of the two power blocs.

Later, the solution of economic integration provided the European Union with the opportunity to gradually develop a foreign policy which contributed to the maintenance of peace and helped guarantee the security of member states.

Nowadays, European Union is a powerful regional actor with a strong will to become a relevant global actor. Committed to the goal of becoming a global security provider, European Union and its Member States have the second largest defence budget in the world, but still need to improve their common approach on defence matters.

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

In the years which followed the second World War, Europe struggled for its own survival. The establishment of the European Organization for Economic Co-operation on the 16th of April 1948 (Barbezat, 1997) (hereinafter the abbreviation EOEC will be used) managed to bypass the "entry" of Western Europe into the sphere of US economic influence, but the danger posed by the expansionary policy of the Soviet Union was maintained. The USSR continued its "aggression" in various ways, and, under the force of the Soviet soldier's boot, communist governments were installed in many of

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the states of Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, the civil war in Greece, which took place between 1946 and 1949, and which was funded by communist countries in the Balkans and orchestrated in Moscow, risked threatening European democracy and the origins of its civilization, as fascism had done in its days.

From a military perspective, between 1945-1950, Western Europe was clearly under threat from the danger of a resurgence of German militarism or a Soviet invasion, situations in which, in the event of aggression, it did not have the necessary means of defence. Immediately after the end of World War II, France and Great Britain considered Germany "the greatest danger", an argument that led to the signing, on March 4th 1947, of a "Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance", also known as The Treaty of Dunkirk. Shortly afterwards, however, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin announced a spectacular readjustment of the island state's foreign policy, recommending the expansion of the recently concluded Franco-British alliance to the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, leading thus at the signing on the 19th of May 1948 in Brussels of the "Treaty on Economic, Social and Cultural Cooperation and the Legitimate and Collective Defence"².

The shortcomings of the post-war years, the destruction and fears of social upheavals generated the idea that the next defensive alliance could no longer be limited to military issues, as had happened in past centuries, economic and social welfare being identified as the essential component of national defence, in an era that foreshadowed to be dominated by global ideologies and conceptions of society. These were the reasons why a military pact, such as the Brussels Treaty, contained the express commitment of its signatories to cooperate loyally and to coordinate their efforts for economic reconstruction (NATO, 2009), even if, in essence, this was done through the EOEC.

Although some experts question how the signing of the Brussels Treaty contributed to European integration, it is certain that this alliance, especially after 1954 when the Western European Union was formed (hereinafter the abbreviation WEU), became one of the "driving forces" of European unity, maintaining a formal bridge with Great Britain and "offering a helping hand to the defeated".

There is no doubt that, given the broad level of Soviet politics, especially after the violent Greek civil war, the Treaty of Brussels was not enough. This was one of the premises that led to the signing of the "North Atlantic Treaty" in Washington on April 4th, 1949, an event that put the Brussels Treaty in a long numbness, from which it will not recover until 1984³.

The creation of NATO cannot be limited to the process of establishing European unity, this moment representing, rather, a result of the confrontation and division between the two blocs of power, NATO being the mechanism of the Western defence system, with the role of protector of the European freedom and democracy.

The existence of the North Atlantic Alliance did not, however, remove the European nostalgia for setting up its own defence system, which would embody the community's response to the dangers associated with the Cold War. This approach, however, was not considered possible, being conditioned by the economic and political circumstances of the time. For this reason, at the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe on the 11th of August 1950, W. Churchill proposed the establishment of a European army, including Germany. France expressed its dissatisfaction and distrust of this project, understanding that this approach is nothing more than a rearmament of Germany. However, with the passage of time and pressure from the Americans (Britannica, 2020), the French government reconsidered its refusal, and in 1951, Prime Minister René Pleven commissioned Jean Monnet to draw up a Plan (the Pleven Plan (CVCE, 2013) similar to the Schuman Plan, establishing a European Defence Community (hereinafter referred to as the abbreviation EDC). In this way, the Treaty establishing the European Defence Community was signed on the 27th of May 1952.

Through this initiative, France hoped to block the reappearance of an autonomous German army by integrating any German armed forces into the newly created European army. From an

² In 1954, the Treaty on Economic, Social and Cultural Cooperation and the Legitimate and Collective Defence became, by the accession of Germany and Italy, the Western European Union (WEU).

³ The "missile crisis" and the participation of a WEU fleet in monitoring the events related to the Iraq-Iran war, events that gave impetus to a first definition of a European security and defence identity, as stated in the October 1984 "Rome Declaration".

organizational point of view, the institutional structure of the EDC was similar to that of the European Coal and Steel Community (hereinafter the abbreviation ECSC will be used), being composed of a Council of Ministers, an Assembly, a Court of Justice and a Commissariat.

In contrast to the creation of the ECSC, the establishment of the EDC was marked by a lack of enthusiasm, with politicians of the time stating that "it is not as easy to integrate soldiers and officers as it was to integrate steel and coal." This lack of enthusiasm was attributed to the fact that the armies are in the service of the policy of defending territorial integrity and independence, representing a part of the hard core of sovereignty and, at the same time, the complement of the foreign policy of the respective nations. The unanswered question was, as Raymond Aron put it, "to what state or power and policy would the European army submit?" (Raymond, 2019)

This question has sparked a real controversy in France, none other than the author of the project to set up a European army, and at European level a solution has been sought to resolve the tensions in the Hexagon (Kosicki, 2018). Italian Prime Minister Alcide de Gasperi proposed, as a solution to the crisis, the establishment of a European Political Community (hereinafter the abbreviation EPC will be used), which would have competences in the field of economic policy coordination and which, within a foreseeable time horizon, would have gradually absorbed the ECSC and the EDC. Finally, the historic negative vote in the French Assembly on the 30th of August 1954 led to the abandonment of the draft constitution of the EPC. Consequently, although all the other states had ratified the constitution of the EDC (Britannica, 2018), due to the controversies and the situation in France, the constitution of the EPC did not materialize and, implicitly, neither did the constitution of the EDC⁴. Finally, subject to severe limitations and controls⁵, the WEU allowed the rearmament of Germany, which later made it possible for Germany and Italy to become part of the "Brussels Treaty"⁶.

AFTER 70 YEARS

The implementation of the European construct, first through the creation of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as the EU abbreviation), through the Maastricht Treaty, and later through its consolidation, through the Treaty of Lisbon, resulted on the one hand in the cessation of WEU⁷ by the withdrawal of Member States from the Brussels Treaty⁸, and on the other hand it paved the way for the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (hereinafter the abbreviation CSDP will be used), with ramifications that outlines the institutional framework for cooperation in the field of defence and security at EU level.

Since the failure to establish the EDC almost 70 years ago (Britannica, 2018), Europeans have failed to advance defence projects, with most countries retaining in their own hands what they believe was strictly national sovereignty. The succession of crises since 2014, from the conflict in Ukraine to the waves of refugees and Brexit, as well as a more pronounced political appetite, derived from pecuniary reasons related to the protection of national economic interests, have caused a change of perspective on this issue in some of the European capitals.

In fact, the major crises that have affected Europe in recent years are the premise from which the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was mandated by the European Council in June 2015 to develop a new Global Strategy for EU's Foreign and Security Policy (European Parliament, 2020).

Presented at the European Council meeting on the 28th of June 2016, the final document of the EU Global Strategy sets the framework for the Union's external action in the medium and long term, focusing on five major priorities: Union security, resilience of Eastern and Southern states and societies of the Union, the integrated approach to conflicts, regional orders based on cooperation and global governance for the 21st century (EEAS, 2020).

⁴ Italy had not done so, but there were no problems.

⁵ France's position prevented the political dimension of the European Communities from developing until 1992, even if we can see an unblocking of this situation with beginning of 1986, with the adoption of the Single European Act.

⁶ Which was renounced with the reunification of Germany on 3 October 1990.

⁷ Amended by the "Paris Protocol" of 24 October 1954, the "Treaty of Brussels" was renamed "Western European Union".

⁸ On June 30, 2011, the WEU officially ceased to exist.

The next step was taken in December 2016, when the European Council approved the Security and Defence Implementation Plan that provides strategic directions to the action course for developing EU security and defence policy on three important objectives:

- a. consolidation of Member States' capacities;
- b. conflict prevention and crisis management;
- c. the protection of the EU and its citizens (EEAS, 2018, p. 1).

The concrete actions through which it is intended to achieve these objectives are (EEAS, 2018, pp. 2-3):

- a. initiation of the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (hereinafter will be used the abbreviation CARD);
- b. the development of a Permanent Structured Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as PESCO);
- c. the establishment of a Military Planning and Conduct Capability (hereinafter the abbreviation MPCC will be used);
- d. creating a set of crisis rapid response tools, including battlegroups and civilian capabilities.

The Coordinated Annual Review on Defence

CARD provides an overview, at EU level, of defence spending, both in terms of national investment and research efforts. The aim of this initiative is to boost European cooperation in the defence sector, including by developing the industrial component and by strengthening financial support for this segment (EDA, 2020).

Through its solutions for the multinational defence cooperation format, CARD has the capacity to provide a real picture and overview of how EU capabilities are being developed. Benefits include:

- efficient identification of deficits;
- in-depth cooperation in the field of defence;
- a coherent approach to planning defence spending (European Council, 2020).

The first CARD report, examined on the 20th of November 2020 at the meeting of EU defence ministers, emphasized that "European defence is fragmented, there is insufficient operational commitment and many capabilities are unnecessarily doubled" (EDA, 2020).

In this regard, during the meeting, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, emphasized the need to "intensify the in-depth dialogue at EU level, with the report pointing to the Member States where there is great potential for European defence cooperation, by equipping Member States' forces with modern equipment and improving their interoperability" (EDA, 2020). According to the European official, the target areas to be pursued are: the main battle tank program, surface patrol ships, fighter-centered systems, Counter-UAS/Anti access systems, space defence and military mobility. At the end of defence ministers meeting, it was concluded that for European defence to function at the level of ambition desired by the Member States, more time and coordination are needed (EDA, 2020).

Permanent Structured Cooperation

The Treaty on the Functioning of the EU provides for the possibility for a group of Member States to strengthen their defence cooperation by establishing a permanent structured cooperation format, which allowed EU leaders⁹ to launch, on the 22nd of June 2017, the package of initiatives in this area.

Member States participating in the PESCO initiative have established an initial list of 17 projects in areas such as: staff training, capabilities or operational capacity building (EEAS, 2020).

This first set of projects, together with the stages of implementation of PESCO, was adopted by the EU Council on the 6th of March 2018. The initiative was further developed by the adoption by the Council on the 25th of June 2018 of the governance rules for the projects within PESCO. These measures encouraged the participation of Member States in the initiative, so that on the 19th of November 2018, the Council adopted a second set of 17 projects, covering areas addressed in the

⁹ All EU Member States participate in PESCO, except Denmark and Malta.

previous set as well as new ones such as the operational capacity of ground forces, naval forces, and cyber defence, respectively, bringing the total number of projects to 34.

One year later, on the 11th of November 2019, the EU Council adopted an additional 13 projects, currently reaching a total of 47. Of this last set, of proposals, five projects focus on training, while the remaining eight focus on the development of naval, air and space capabilities (EEAS, 2020).

It is important to note that on the 5th of November 2020, the EU Council set out the general conditions under which relations with non-EU countries interested in participating in the PESCO initiative are managed, thus advancing the opportunity for EU defence cooperation, more intense and ambitious, including Union partners (EEAS, 2020).

At the same recent meeting of defence ministers in EU Member States on the 20th of November 2020, a stage analysis of the PESCO initiative was also carried out. At the end of it, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, said that there was a strong political will in most European capitals to develop PESCO¹⁰ and explained that, given the recent nature of the initiative, 26 projects producing results that can only be measured in 2025, it is premature to draw conclusions before projects reach a level of operational capacity maturity (EDA, 2020).

It is important to note that, in addition to a stage analysis of the CARD and PESCO initiatives, at the last meeting, the defence ministers of the EU Member States examined the “Strategic Compass”, a strategic document in the field of CSDP. As the document is classified, we can only guess its content, which most likely contains a mapping of risks and threats to the EU and provides guidance on security and defence needs, closely linked to the level of ambition of the Union on these levels (Koenig, 2020).

Optimization of crisis management structures

Following the set of measures adopted on the 8th of June 2017 by the Council, it was decided to set up a Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) (European Council, 2017) in the European Union General Staff (hereinafter referred to as the abbreviation EUGS), with the role of executing operational planning and of conducting of EU operations with a non-executive mandate¹¹.

The MPCC becomes the EU's first permanent operational command, and is intended to command and control operations with up to 2,500 troops¹². The headquarters are located in Brussels, and the General Director of the EUMS is also the Director of the MPCC. Since its inception to date, the MPCC has led three of the EU's operations, namely the EU training missions in Somalia (EUTM Somalia), Mali (EUTM Mali) and the Central African Republic (EUTM RCA) (EEAS, 2020).

The creation of MPCC follows the European Union line to become an international security actor. If EU's initial operations had an emphasis on the humanitarian concerns and they were aimed to support the implementation of peace agreements or democratic elections, throughout the last 15 years, EU operations like EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUTM Mali and EUNAVFOR Med Sophia, were focused on utility-based concerns like fighting terrorism and border control. While the initial operations yielded rather mixed outcomes, the latter operations in Somalia and Mali are clearly rooted in a broader policy strategy and there is indeed proof of them giving positive stimulus to other forms of EU involvement. This evaluation indicates that the EU is increasingly capable of submerging its military instruments within its overall foreign policy set of tools.

The rapid crisis response tool set

The operational dimension of the EU's commitment to defence has also been strengthened by measures taken to optimize the engagement of EU Battle groups, including by adapting mechanisms for securing financial resources for their deployment.

EU battle groups are one of the tools at the Union's disposal to provide a rapid response to crises and conflicts. In this regard, in order to prevent political, technical or financial obstacles that

¹⁰ At that time, Poland and Hungary conditioned the development of PESCO on the settlement of the dispute with Brussels on certain sensitive issues related to the functioning of the rule of law in the two countries.

¹¹ The non-executive mandate refers to advisory missions and operations and assistance.

¹² This is the size of a battlegroup in terms of personnel.

prevented in the past¹³ deployment of battle groups, on the 22nd of June 2017, EU leaders agreed that a possible deployment of these military forces would be a common expense, with funding to be managed at Union level through the Athena mechanism (European Council, 2020).

European Defence Fund

The European Commission's multiannual budget proposal, approved by the European Council in the summer of 2020 and refined by the provisional political agreement on the 14th of December 2020 between the German Presidency of the EU Council and the European Parliament, provides for a separate budget for the field of defence in the multiannual financial framework for the period 2021-2027. The new European Defence Fund is designed as a co-financing scheme for defence research and capabilities development projects, and has a value of 7.95 billion euros. To this it is added a fund of 1.5 billion euros for the financing of military mobility projects, respectively a fund of 5 billion euros for the financing, through the Athena mechanism, of EU measures for conflict prevention and crisis management (European Commission, 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

In recent years, the European Union has faced a number of significant security challenges, with the need for a coherent and effective response becoming increasingly evident. Initiatives such as CARD, PESCO or MPCC can play a progressive role to the EU's role in the field of defence, as this package of initiatives represents the moment of the transition of European defence to a higher level.

The EU Treaty and the Treaty on EU functioning, together with subsequent agreements, offer a huge advantage to those who support the idea of a common European defence. At the moment, there is a legal framework for defence initiatives that seemed impossible 15 years ago, to which is added a strong political will that has led European governments to remove some of the reluctance to opt out for delegating one of the sovereign powers, that of defence, to the European Commission.

However, much of the reluctance will continue to persist since, in the context of many recent developments in European defence, it is still difficult to find a comprehensive answer to the question posed 70 years ago by Raymond Aron, "whose state or powers and whose policies would the European army submit to? "

Of course, in a simplistic approach one can answer that EU and CSDP will be the instruments to which the European army will be "subjected", but history has shown that not infrequently Member States have tried, through representatives of the EU institutions, to influence decisions and directions of action in accordance with the national interest.

Differences in perceptions about the origin of threats can be effectively exploited by those who oppose the idea of a common European defence. The possibility of Germany benefiting from a surplus of expertise and funding for the development of military capabilities, even in a European context, is causing chills among those who evoke the memory of the two world wars. As 70 years ago, France plays first fiddle in the development of a common European defence. "There is no question of turning our backs on NATO, but how can we be reliable allies if we always ask for help?" said French Defence Minister Florence Parly in 2019, arguing for the EU's strategic autonomy¹⁴ as a means for the Union to pursue its own interests on a large scale, internationally, in the absence of US military participation. However, the concept does not mention any security guarantees for the Member States situated at the eastern border of EU, which is probably seen as the main disadvantage of the European common defence concept. Without a pledge similar to NATO's article 5, the strategic autonomy and the common European defence represents just an impossible endeavour.

The materialization of the institutional dimension of strategic autonomy could have been realised in 2019, if France's proposal to establish the position of Commissioner for Defence had found support among EU Member States. Although a failure at that time, from a future political perspective,

¹³ Although created in 2005, these military forces were never deployed in support of an operation or to support crisis management.

¹⁴ The European Global Strategy uses the term "autonomy" seven times, referring to decision-making autonomy and autonomy of action, stating that "a Adequate level of ambition and strategic autonomy is important for Europe's ability to promote peace and security within and beyond its borders."

it is possible that this initiative will be advanced again at the time of the formation of the next European Commission, given that this new post would widen the negotiating area for key positions at European level, such as the President of the European Commission, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Central Bank or the High Representative of the EU.

At the same time, the fact that Member States are open to political negotiations for the development of a common European defence is highlighted by the compromise made to France, by which it was decided to set up the Space and Defence Industry General Directorate, under the European Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry Breton from France, and responsible for the implementation and supervision of the European Defence Fund, as well as for the creation of a European market of defence equipment.

Following this direction, I believe that it is essential for the European Union to put more effort into cooperation between national defence industries, and this can only be achieved if Member States can rely on support from the European Defence Fund or incentives from a framework similar to it. This might be, in fact, the main advantage which the European common defence concept brings, which resides in the idea of strengthening the European defence industry and the cooperation between national defence industries. In other words, the type and the quality of the military capabilities will receive a greater importance than the amount of funding spent dedicated to defence budgets. In this respect, the performance of Europe's military-industrial complex could become crucial on developing the European common defence. On the other hand, the "protectionist" logic of the European Defence Fund will limit the access of American companies in consortia of projects that will be financed with European money, a fact that reflects the difference of vision between countries such as France and Germany, which give signals of industrial independence in the military field from the USA, and the Eastern European states, closer to a spirit of complementarity with the USA and NATO.

From a social point of view, the rise of nationalism in many European countries, amid crises caused by waves of migrants or the COVID-19 pandemic, has the potential to discredit EU efforts to develop defence initiatives. The phenomenon of nation-state re-legitimization combined with political narratives that refer to setting investment priorities in social fields much closer to people's perception, such as education, health or infrastructure, can create difficulties at European level in supporting budgets for funding research and development of military capabilities.

Also, nationalist narratives can amplify the confusion about the future profile of the European Defence Union, which is seen as a kind of European multinational military organization or, in other words, a parallel European military alliance and even competing with the North Atlantic Alliance. In order not to put the common defence in a shadow cone, as happened with the WEU 70 years ago, I believe that there is a need to find ways to make the European Union and NATO complementary in the field of defence. Thus, on the model of the "Berlin Plus" arrangements, ways can be developed in which NATO can benefit from the European Union's expertise in the fields of cyber and hybrid threats, simultaneously with the extension of the cooperation in the field of intelligence.

The results obtained so far indicate that there is potential to build an integrated, efficient and more capable Union that can do more for its own security and defence. In order for the achievement of the common European defence not to remain just a label of political discourse, efforts will have to be channeled towards amplifying the advantages obtained in this field so far, by developing strategic guidelines and by continuously strengthening the commitment to cooperation in the field of defence.

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SYRIA – “THE WAR WITH MULTIPLE PROXIES”. VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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Abstract

The civil war in Syria, triggered by the pro-democracy demonstrations of the "Arab Spring", was a complicated combination of religious, cultural and ethnic-identity contradictions. The non-international conflict was turned into a "*battlefield*" for foreign powers, which led to the transformation of a civil war into a "war with multiple proxies". The United Nations' efforts to mediate the conflict, based on a six-point plan, remained in the draft phase. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have denounced flagrant violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the al-Assad regime, which has widely used non-discriminatory weapons banned in violation of the Geneva Conventions, 1949. The Bashār al-Assad regime is accused by the international community of being guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, but attempts to incriminate it have failed.

Keywords: civil war; non-international character; mediation; non-discriminatory weapons; violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Syria is a parliamentary republic, divided between ethnic and religious groups and social classes, each with divergent interests and opinions, provoking social and political instability. After two tumultuous decades of long series of coups, Hāfiz al-Assad, using the army, gained power and maintained it for thirty years. During Hāfiz al-Assad's rule, Syria became one of the most influential countries in the Middle East, with relations with Western powers, the United States and conservative Arab countries, but also with the Soviet Union. Bashār al-Assad, who succeeded his father in leading the country, by contradictions in his actions turns Syria into a retrograde country (Lesch 2019) by violating human rights, violent repression of protests, martial law in force, large numbers of political prisoners, widespread corruption, overpopulation the country, the non-recognition of Kurdish citizenship, the imprisonment of Kurdish political leaders, censorship and strict control of the media representing "*parts of load-bearing walls destroyed in a house with a dilapidated foundation that was about to collapse*". (Human Rights Watch 2010, 55)

The historical context

The spread of the "*Arab Spring*", which extinguished dictatorial regimes in the MENA countries, reached Syria in early 2011. Violent repression by government security forces on protesters escalated into a civil war in 2012, with the formation of numerous fighting and a complicated alliance, culminating in one of the worst humanitarian crises, with more than 5.6 million refugees in Europe and Turkey and 6.6 million displaced within the country. (USA for UNHCR 2019) The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights counted 371,222 victims in the 8 years of violence. Among them, 112,623 are civilian victims, of which 21,000 children and 13,000 women. The parties to the war, not stating the exact number of casualties, are estimated to be 100,000 more than the deaths confirmed by documents. To the total number of victims must be added the 88,000 tortured in the detention camps of the al-Assad regime and the 11,200 abducted by ISIS and the Tahrir-al-Sham Front. In total, the estimated number of victims is 570,000. (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights 2019)

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The multitude of independent armed groups is participating in this civil war, forms conjuncture alliances, regrouping in the two main fronts, the regime and the opposition.

The regime's front consists of government forces led by Bashār al-Assad: the "Syrian Army", the "National Defense Force" and the "Republican Guard". Government forces are militarily supported by the Russian Federation, Iran and Hezbollah, and the Lebanese Shia Islamic Military Group - considered a terrorist organization. (Salem, Alsharif and Roche 2016)

The opposition front is made up of a variety of armed factions with divergent ideological goals that are divided into three major groups. The first group includes the Syrian National Coalition (SNC) in Doha, Qatar (The AsiaN Editor 2012) – supported by the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, France, Egypt, Qatar, Jordan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates; Free Syrian Army (Syria Call 2018) (FSA) in Istanbul, Turkey, which in 2018, forms the “National Liberation Front” – supported by the United States and Turkey. The second opposition group is the Kurdish ethnic minority, representing more of 10% from the population and concentrated in Rojava - the "Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria". The Kurdish forces consist of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the People's Protection Units (YPG), and the National Coordinating Committee for Democratic Change and the Kurdish National Council (KNC). Kurdish Militias control Syria, most of which is not under government control. (Perry and MacSwan 2019) The US-backed Kurdish minority is fighting in this conflict for greater autonomy and the elimination of discrimination (banning the Kurdish language, banning the establishment of Kurdish schools and unconstitutional recognition of Kurdish identity). (Ernstorfer 2016).

A third opposition group is Islamist Militias, which aim to establish a new Islamic society operating under Sharia law. The Syrian Islamic Front (IF) (Ernstorfer 2016), the Syrian Revolutionary Front (Ernstorfer 2016) (SRF), all is supported by Saudi Arabia. The most extremist factions are the Al-Nusra Front - the official branch of the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda in Syria and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (The BBC News 2015). ISIS has been defined as a "*de facto regime*" with its own government structure and armed forces, especially following the conquest of Raqqa and Palmyra in Syria. (The BBC News 2012).

In July 2012, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officially declared Syria a civil war (The BBC News 2012), following the spread of the conflict outside the Idlib, Homs and Hama areas. The civil war has turned into an international conflict due to the involvement of Russia, Iran, Turkey, the USA and the Sunni Arab countries. Syria is becoming (Ernstorfer 2016) a "*battleground*" for pro and anti-government alliances, in a civil war that overlaps with an international conflict. The hegemonic rivalries between Russia and the USA, between Iran and the USA, the perpetual struggle of the Americans with the terrorist organizations and the Turkish's one with the Kurdish ethnic minority are taking place on the territory of Syria.

INVOLVEMENT OF THIRD COUNTRIES IN THE CONFLICT AND THE LEGAL BASIS FOR THEIR INTERVENTION

The involvement in the conflict of global powers (USA and Russian Federation), as well as regional powers (Iran, Turkey, Hezbollah, and ISIS) have significantly changed the point of civilization of the conflict and created alliances and rivalries of overlapping interests.

The Russian Federation officially justifies its intervention in Syria by countering the Islamic State and supporting the al-Assad regime, thus consolidating its influence in the Middle East, but also to reaffirm itself as a global military power after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Iran – a Shiite Muslim country, officially justifies its intervention in the conflict by fighting Sunni religious divisions specific to the geopolitical context of the Middle East, but in reality its interest is to ensure its influence over the al-Assad regime, consolidating access to the Mediterranean.

Saudi Arabia – a Sunni Muslim country in rivalry with the al-Assad regime – Allawi, is interested in consolidating its regional domination over Iran. Both countries are using the "*open front*" in Syria, entering into a war of proximity, thus avoiding direct conflict.

The US entry into the conflict was driven by regional geopolitical goals to stem Iran's expansion into the Middle East. The United States predicts that by removing al-Assad's regime, Iran,

Hezbollah and other jihadist groups would greatly diminish its influence in the region. The decline of Russian rule in the Middle East region and the curtailment of its dominance as a supplier of arms to African countries are other strategic interests of the United States in its long-standing rivalry with the Russian Federation. The official motivation of both countries is the fight against terrorist organizations in the area, especially ISIS. In reality, each country supported opposing factions and thereby contributed to straining relations between them.

United Nations efforts to resolve the Syrian conflict

Close cooperation with the Arab League, involved in Syria – as part of mediation, the appointment of Kofi Annan as special envoy of the United Nations and the Arab League for Syria (Security Council Report, UN 2017) and the development of a six-point plan to ceasefire and respect human rights and reduce mortality in Syria, represented the cumulating efforts made by the UN in resolving the conflict.

The six-point plan called for a “*political process led by Syria to address the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people*” (Security Council Resolution, UN 2012) under the auspices of the United Nations; representing the imperative requirement for all parties to the conflict to withdraw their military forces from civilian areas; stop using heavy weapons; provides humanitarian assistance in the affected areas; to check detention centers and the release of detainees arbitrarily; to restore freedom of association in peaceful demonstrations and freedom of the press. In the action group for Syria, members agreed to monitor the implementation of the plan (BAN 2012) by Resolution 2043 of 21st April 2012, by which the Security Council established the United Nations surveillance mission in Syria (UNSMIS) for a period of 90 days, with an extension of another 30 days. (UNSMIS; Peacekeeping UN 2012)

The UNSMIS mandate failed without completing the points expected by the Syrian government's failure to implement the plan, by sharpening rivalries between permanent members of the Council – Russia and China vs. the US by veto power, by the resignation of Kofi Annan as special envoy and the appointment of Lakhdar Brahimi in his place. (The BBC News, Kofi Annan quits UN Syria role 2012) Security Council Resolution 2118 of 27th September 2013 calls on Syria to destroy its arsenal of chemical weapons. Following the session of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), a unanimous vote of the UN Security Council urged Syria and all parties to the conflict to become members of the convention, creating the legal basis for the mandate of Resolution 2118 to begin Syrian territory (Walsh and Labbot 2013), (OPCW Press 2013). After the failure of the Geneva Conference, the Montreux and Geneva Peace Conferences followed.

In the United Nations' attempts to resolve the Syrian conflict, a conference was convened in November 2015 under the auspices of the International Support Group for Syria (ISSG), an association of the Arab League, China, Egypt, the EU, France, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United Nations and the United States to resolve the end of the Syrian conflict. (EEAS Press Team 2015) Following another conference in Geneva between the ISSG, the US and the Russian Federation, Resolution 2268 of 27th February 2016 is issued, which represents the agreement to establish the force responsible for the ceasefire and hostilities for all parties to the Convention, the Islamic State and the Al-Nusra Front being excluded. (U.S. Department of State 2016) Other important Security Council resolutions were:

Security Council Resolution 2254 of 18th December 2015, which provides for a ceasefire, with the main objective of creating a constitutional committee tasked with drafting a new constitution (Vohra 2019); Resolutions 2314 and 2319 of October and November 2016, respectively - resolutions providing for the extension of the mandate of the joint OPCW-UN investigation mechanism to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in Syria and respectively the extension of the mandate for another year; Resolution 2328 of 19 December 2016 – request for immediate, unhindered access to observe the monitoring of civilian evacuations from Aleppo, Syria; Resolutions 2332 and 2336 of December 2016 – cross-border humanitarian aid for 24 months, immediate and

unhindered humanitarian aid access throughout Syria (Security Council, UN 2016); Resolution 2401 of 24th February 2018 – calls for a national ceasefire in Syria for 30 days from 24th February 2018; Resolution 2449 of 13th December 2018 - renewal of the authorization for cross-border and cross-border humanitarian access to Syria; Resolution 2504 of 10th January 2020 – cross-border humanitarian access through two border points, for 6 months. (Security Council, UN, Security Council Resolutions 2017-2020)

Syria's ambassador to the UN, Bashār Ja'afari, has accused the United Nations of abandoning its neutrality and responding to "*political and financial pressure and polarization practices of some member states*", especially those who support the investigative group set up by the General Assembly in December 2016, which he considers it illegal and that it violates the UN Charter. (Associated Press 2018)

To all these resolutions we can unequivocally add the provisions of Article 2 (4) of the UN Charter prohibiting the use of force. The ban is not absolute, as the Charter provides for two exceptions to the Allied provision (4) in Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The first exception: If the recommended measures have proved ineffective, the use of force is foreseen, but only as a result of the decision taken unanimously by the Security Council. This exception is stipulated in Article 42. The second exception: When the actions taken by that State are communicated to the Security Council and do not interfere with the authority and responsibility of the Security Council, the use of force as a means of individual or collective self-defense is envisaged. This exception is stipulated in Article 51.

Another dilemma is the provisions of Article 20 of the Draft Articles of the Commission on International Law (2001), regarding the responsibility of states with respect to wrongful international acts, in which the military intervention of one state on the territory of another state is allowed with the consent that state, which makes the legal action, the so-called "*intervention by proxy*". (United Nation 2001, 72-74)

Another controversial subject is the responsibility to protect (R2P). States have a responsibility to protect their own individuals within their territory. Failure to fulfill this obligation entitles other states to intervene. The responsibility to protect is a principle that arose from moral and political rather than legal considerations and was developed on the belief that through more effective protection, the sovereignty of the state is enhanced. The UN Charter together with the Geneva Conventions, the Genocide Convention have all the necessary legal instruments related to human rights, but various cases depend on the competences of the Security Council in authorizing the use of coercive measures when these types of threats are identified. (Rotmann, Kurtz and Brockmeier 2014) The UN Charter stipulates such an intervention only under the authorization of the Security Council, which would give it legality.

US military intervention in Syria

The justifications for US intervention in Syria are multiple. A first legal justification for the intervention would be based on Article 51 Chapter VII of the UN Charter - which allows the use of force in cases of individual or collective self-defense, as a right of a Member State to defend itself in the event of an armed attack, requesting this by a notification to the Security Council and without compromising its authority and responsibility. (United Nations Organization 1945, 10-11) Analyzing in the light of Article 51 and the declared existence of an armed attack on its territory, Iraq has requested international assistance in the fight against the jihadist group ISIS. After the jihadist group expanded by conquering the Syrian regions of Raqqa and Palmyra, US military intervention was to target al-Assad regime as well. When the state that did not request military intervention as was the case in Syria, the state that intervenes militarily must justify that the country in question "*cannot or does not want*" to solve the threat. (Cantwell 2016) Moreover, the legality of self-defense actions conditions the fulfillment of the principle of necessity and proportionality. In the Security Council notification, the United States - through its UN Ambassador Samantha Power, justified the initiation of military action in Iraq and Syria, by clarifying that it faces a serious threat from the attacks of the ISIL group, extended to "*safe sanctuaries*" by on Syrian territory, and the Bashār al-Assad regime has shown that

it "cannot and does not want" to act against them. As a result, the United States "have initiated necessary and proportionate military action in Syria to eliminate the ISIL threat to Iraq". (Power 2014)

Moreover, the American intervention extended its military actions to the al-Assad regime, being justified by the use of chemical weapons by Syrian regime forces, considering the use of chemical weapons as a threat to US national security (Goldenberg 2016) as a violation of *jus cogens* rules – preemptive norms of general international law with an *erga omnes* (General Assambly Report, UN 2019, 141) effect that can present an example of possible interference with the principle of state sovereignty. In addition, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969) provides for the nullity of a treaty concluded if it conflicts with a rule of general international law. "A preemptive rule of general international law accepted and recognized by the international community as a whole is a rule from which no derogation is permitted and which may be amended only by a subsequent rule of general international law of the same nature." (Vienna Convention of the Law of Treaties, UN 1969, 18)

Article 54 corroborated by Article 48 of the draft articles on State liability for "wrongful acts" at international level, drawn up by the International Law Commission in 2001, which deals with treaties protecting "erga omnes" obligations; provide another justification for US intervention in Syria. The article stipulates that the treaty partners may invoke the wrongful acts and may operate, by taking action, in the event of infringements. (Klabbers 2013, 185) The United States initially invoked as a legal basis Article 48, Chapter I, Part III for the responsibility of the Syrian government for violating an obligation due to the international community as a whole, so that later through Chapter II, Part III to justify the adoption of countermeasures. Article 54 was invoked as justification for the US Government's commitment to take legal action against the State in violation of its international obligation, thereby ensuring that the violation ceases. (International Law Commission 2007, 137.)

Russian military intervention in Syria

In accordance with Article 20 of the Statute of the International Law Commission of 2001 and following al-Assad's official invitation to initiate military intervention, the Russian Federation justifies its presence on Syrian territory. Since September 2015, the Russian Federation began launching airstrikes against the CNS and jihadist groups, while Syria was already providing the necessary equipment to the regime's forces. The legality of Russia's intervention in Syria raises some questions. The government of one state has the right to initiate a formal invitation to intervene in the territory of another state in accordance with international law. The doubt of the legality of this act arises with respect to the nature of the party that issued the invitation, how much recognized legitimacy that government has to give the consent of a third party. Since the start of the 2011 crackdown, the legitimacy of the al-Assad government has been controversial in the United States, Britain, France and Germany. (UK PM's Office Cameron 2011) Libya, on the other hand, has recognized the Syrian National Council as the country's legitimate authority. (Sherlock 2011) Therefore, controversies over the recognition of the legitimacy of the Syrian regime also call into question the legality of Russian military intervention.

Turkish military intervention in Syria

On 24th August 2016, during the "Euphrates Shield" operation, the first Turkish military intervention in Syria takes place. For the legal justification of the military intervention, Turkey invoked the right to self-defense against the expansion of the Islamic State and the Kurdish Militia YPG, according to Article 51, Chapter VII of the UN Charter and UNSC Resolution 2249 adopted in 2015. (Yesiltas, Seren and Ozcelik 2017, 49,52) Following this "successful" operation, Turkey has released 2,015 km² occupied by ISIS in Syria, thereby allowing many deported Syrians to return home. (Begeg 2018) In 2018, Turkey issued a notification to the Security Council regarding the initiation of an additional military operation, starting with 20th January 2018. Due to the escalation of missile attacks on two provinces on the Turkish-Syrian border in the Afrin region, which is under the control of Kurdish Militias, Turkey has again called for the right to self-defense and fight against the terrorism, considering the operation important for ensuring security at its border. The justification for the

intervention was also made by Article 51 of the UN Charter, but also in the context of the responsibility of Member States in the fight against terrorism, including by RES 1373 (2001), RES 1624 (2005), RES 2170 (2014) and RES 2178 (2014) of the Security Council. (Begec 2018, 2)

VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW IN THE SYRIAN CONFLICT

The al-Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian forces, as well as other parties to the war, carried out countless indiscriminate attacks during the 8 years of conflict. According to the Syrian Organization for Human Rights, in 2018, approximately 489 attacks on civilian objects were carried out. (Syrian Network Human Rights Report 2018)

A wide range of civilian facilities were attacked, such as schools, medical facilities, places of worship, communal facilities and infrastructure. The indiscriminate attacks were carried out using banned weapons, including chemical weapons, barrel bombs, firearms and cluster munitions, in areas populated by civilians, killing about 200 civilians, including 20 children. Human Rights Watch reported that Syrian-Russian forces, in coalition, used non-discriminatory weapons prohibited under international humanitarian law. (Human Rights Watch Report 2019)

Use of chemical weapons, barrels bomb, cluster munitions and incendiary weapons

At the beginning of the conflict, in 2011, Syria was not a party to the conventions banning the use of chemical weapons. The declaration of their possession, announced a year later, was justified for use in cases of external aggression, not against the population. (Sanders-Zakre 2019) Syrian Human Rights Watch confirmed, at the end of 2012, the first alleged use of chemical weapons, and in August 2013, a serious chemical attack in the suburban area of Ghouta, resulting in a thousand civilian casualties.

The international community has accused the Syrian regime of war crimes and violations of the Chemical Weapons Protocol (1925). In October 2013, under pressure from the international community, Syria called on the OPCW and UN teams to implement a plan to destroy chemical weapons stockpiles on its territory, in accordance with the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (OPCW Press 2013). Although the OPCW Executive Board said Syria had inactivated chemical weapons and implemented a program to transport and destroy them, another chemical attack took place in April 2014.

In case of non-compliance by the Syrian regime, UN Security Resolution 2209 (2015) condemns the use of chlorine gas and threatens to activate collective military intervention. Subsequently, the veto power of the Russian Federation and China in the Security Council became an obstacle to condemning the Syrian regime, no matter how many chemical attacks took place, with civilian casualties reported by the OPCW mission. Human Rights Watch reported that between 2013 and 2018, 85 chemical weapons attacks by the Syrian government were confirmed. The same organization also confirmed that between July 2017 and June 2018 there were 36 cluster munitions attacks. (Roth 2018)

In 2015, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, chairman of the UN International Commission of Inquiry into Syria, denounced the chemical bombing campaigns carried out by the Syrian regime, which were the main cause of civilian casualties and internal displacement in Syria. More than 50% of all deaths are victims of airstrikes, ground bombs and explosions, especially barrel bombs. (Pinheiro 2015) A barrel bomb is a large incendiary device, usually full of explosives, incendiary materials, nails and other objects that cause extensive wounds and unnecessary suffering. The al-Assad regime has also been accused of using other illegal means of war, such as firearms and cluster munitions, killing thousands of civilians.

In 2017, the report "*Rain of Fire*", published by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) which confirms, through concrete documents, that the Russian intervention in the Syrian war, resulted in 78 attacks with incendiary weapons unjustified by military necessity and directed to civilian areas. (Syrian Network Human Rights Report, Russian forces have used incendiary weapons 78 times at

least since they intervened in Syria, Rain of Fire 2017, 1) Through these actions, the Russian Federation violates Protocol 1980 on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Firearms of 1980, an integral part of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons deemed Excessively Harmful or with Non-Discriminatory Effects (1980) and the Regulation on Firearms.

The Russian Federation, ratifying both the Protocol and the Convention, has violated its obligations under the Convention. (ICRC 2005, 45-46) Syria is not a party to Protocol III or the Convention. The use of these types of weapons violates the principles of the international humanitarian law, being classified as non-discriminatory. Both forces also used "*cluster*" munitions; a type of weapon that can be launched on fixed or mobile targets, by aircraft or from the ground using artillery systems. These "*cluster*" munitions contain several explosive bombs with different power, which cause lethal damage on large areas, on impact with the target.

Moreover, incomplete detonation at the time of impact may leave parts of these devices unexploded. Since the start of the Syrian war, the Cluster Munition Coalition has accounted for more than 600 cluster munitions attacks. (Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor Editors 2018), (HRW 2020) The 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions prohibits, in accordance with international humanitarian law, the production, storage and use of such weapons. The most powerful states from a military point of view - the USA, Russia and China are not parties to this Convention, but being classified as non-discriminatory weapons, they are also recognized as illegal for these countries.

War crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria

The Syrian civil war, despite its external involvement, is classified as an "*armed conflict that is not international in nature and takes place in the territory of one of the contracting parties*". (ICRC, Article 3, The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols 1949) For this type of conflict it is problematic to establish the legal status and responsibility of the parties involved. As the aggressions are not carried out by the ordinary armed forces, the distinction between civilian and combatant status is difficult. In an international armed conflict, the status of prisoner of war is attributed only to combatants. In non-international conflicts, a person who falls into the hands of one of the parties to the conflict does not enjoy the status of prisoner of war or the protections reserved by the Third Geneva Convention.

Non-international conflicts are governed by Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions (1949), which regulates the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts, and by Article 3; relating to non-international conflicts, which is common to all four conventions forming a mini-convention, in a condensed format, with essential rules of the Geneva Conventions, which makes them applicable to non-international conflicts international. (ICRC, The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols 2010) Common Article 3 also provides for the application of minimum requirements for human treatment, such as a ban on killing, mutilation, degrading treatment, hostage-taking, executions without prior trial by a regularly constituted court, and provides for the assistance of the wounded and sick.

Article 7 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court in Rome of 1998 defines crimes against humanity as part of a widespread or systematic attack on any known civilian population. (Rome Statute of ICC 1998, 3-4) The article also presents a list of acts that constitute crimes against humanity: murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, imprisonment and other deprivation of physical liberty in violation of international law, torture, rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, sterilization imposed, disappearance force, apartheid, persecution of a group on the grounds of race, sex, religion, ethnicity, political belief or national identity, and "*other inhuman acts of a similar nature that intentionally cause great suffering or harm to the body or mental or physical health*". (Rome Statute of ICC 1998, 3)

The al-Assad regime, along with other parties to the war, has been accused of acts classified as crimes against humanity and war crimes. Amnesty International has denounced violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in all 8 years of the conflict.

In the spring of 2011, according to a report published by Amnesty International, following the riots in Tell Kalakh, Syrian government forces launched a campaign of mass arrests of male residents, the elderly and minors, who were arbitrarily arrested and subjected to torture and degrading treatment. The case of Tell Kalakh, which resulted in 9 deaths, is the first case of acts that could constitute crimes against humanity (inhuman treatment of detainees in detention camps).

Another terrifying case is the Saydnaya prison. Amnesty International's 2017 report entitled "*Human Slaughter: Mass Hanging and Extermination at Saydnaya Prison, Syria*" showed the mass extrajudicial executions of detainees. The organization counted more than 13,000 people secretly hanged in Saydnaya. Most were civilians and alleged opponents of the al-Assad government. (Amnesty International Report 2017) The report confirms that a so-called Military Court was used to determine the executions, which issued summary and arbitrary decisions. (Amnesty International Report 2017) Executions by hanging were preceded by acts of torture by infection, refusal of water, food and medical treatment and degrading treatment in infected environments.

Pressure from the international community to hold President Bashār al-Assad responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria has resulted in further aggression among the civilian population or rebels.

Twenty-eight Syrian refugees from Jordan, through human rights lawyers, have opened trials at the International Criminal Court. As Syria is not a party to the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, refugees lawyers, to open trials, used a previous ruling on Rohingya - Bangladesh refugees against Myanmar, a non-member of the Rome Statute. Jordan being a party to the Rome Statute, the International Criminal Court has jurisdiction over the country and in this way the appeal to the Court of the refugees was admitted. (Gjevori 2019)

CONCLUSION

The civil war in Syria, triggered by the pro-democracy demonstrations of the "*Arab Spring*", was a complicated combination of religious, cultural and ethnic-identity contradictions. The geopolitical supremacy of the two world powers, in continuous military rivalry, overlapped with the domination struggles of the regional powers of religious rivalry in contradiction with Islamic jihadism. The non-international conflict has been turned into a "*battlefield*" for foreign powers, with each side supporting rival forces, with Russia and Iran supporting al-Assad's forces in its fight to annihilate anti-government forces and the expansion of jihadist groups into Syrian territory.

An international coalition led by the United States, supports the Syrian Anti-Government Forces and the Kurdish minority in the fight against the Islamic State and the terrorist group Tahrir al-Sham, and after their annihilation, in the fight against the al-Assad regime. Regardless of the public justifications of each party involved in the conflict, the protection of their interests in the region is the main objective, which has led to the transformation of a civil war into a "*war with multiple proxies*". The religious rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran uses the conflict in Syria to strengthen each other's dominance in the region. Unresolved tensions at the end of the Cold War between the Russian Federation and the United States use the conflict in Syria to reconfirm their exclusive dominance as world hegemonies, ignoring China's military power.

The United Nations' efforts to activate the collective security system to resolve the conflict have been thwarted by the veto power of the Russian Federation and China in the Security Council. Moreover, the conflict mediation organization's attempts, based on a six-point plan devised by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, remained stuck in the draft phase.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have reported in their reports flagrant violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the al-Assad regime, which has widely used non-discriminatory weapons through the use of internationally banned chemical weapons, cluster munitions, firearms and barrels dropped from helicopters or planes to inhabited areas have claimed thousands of lives; all this being prohibited in violation of Article 35 of the Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. By violating human rights and international humanitarian law, the al-Assad regime is accused by the international community of being guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. International community attempts to incriminate President

Bashār al-Assad for the crimes committed have failed, as Syria is not a party to the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

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INTRODUCTORY STUDY ON THE INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW APPLICABLE TO ARMED CONFLICTS AT SEA

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Abstract

The purpose of the international humanitarian law applicable to armed conflicts at sea is the same as the International Humanitarian Law relevant to land conflicts: to reduce the destructive consequences of the armed conflict to a minimum, to protect the civilians and other non-combatants, as well as the civilian and cultural objects, to ensure a minimal consideration of some fundamental human rights and to limit the means and methods of warfare in accordance with the four customary cardinal principles, as considered by the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion on the *Legality of the Use of Nuclear Weapons*: the principles of humanity, distinction, proportionality and military necessity. Without any pretense of being an exhaustive study on the subject, the purpose of this article is to offer introductory insight into the international law of naval warfare.

Keywords: naval warfare; combatant conduct; ship status; legitimate target; protected persons; neutrality; blockade.

INTRODUCTION

The primary sources of the international humanitarian law that determines the conduct of the combatants and the protection of objects and persons in the event of a naval armed conflict are the customs and the international conventions: the Hague Conventions (1899, 1907) and the Geneva Conventions (1949).

The Hague and Geneva Conventions have a predominantly customary character, because they codify customs, the oldest sources of international law. At the same time, we point out that certain customary norms in international humanitarian law have the character of jus cogens.

Customary laws are still non-derogable and they must be followed under every circumstance by the contracting parties and by all parties involved in an armed conflict, whether they recognize the state of belligerence or not (Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, Geneva, 12 August 1949 n.d. Common Article 2). Positive laws derived from customs apply not only to those who signed and ratified the conventions, but also to non-signatory powers (Mulinen 1987). These aspects are mentioned in the Common article 2 of the 12th of August 1949 Geneva Conventions, restated by the 1977 Geneva Protocol I relating to the protection of victims of international conflicts². Beside the conventional laws, a 2005 study of the ICRC (Henckaerts and Doswald-Beck 2005) identified 161 rules derived from the practice of states involved in international and non-international armed conflicts, rules which are customary and bring the same amount of legal constraint upon the belligerents as the positive law.

The legal framework for naval armed conflicts is determined by a series of instruments of international humanitarian law (Mulinen 1987, 17): The Paris Declaration respecting maritime law (16 April 1856), the Convention relating to the status of enemy merchant ships at the outbreak of hostilities (Hague, 18 October 1907, H. VI), the Convention relating to the conversion of merchant ships into warships (Hague, 1907, H. VII), the Convention concerning bombardment by naval forces

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² Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977 n.d. Art. 1 (3).

in time of war (Hague, 1907, H. IX), the Convention relative to certain restrictions with regard to the exercise of the right of capture in naval war (Hague, 1907, H. XI), The London Declaration concerning the laws of naval war (26 February 1909), the Oxford Manual of the laws of naval war, adopted by the International Institute of International Law (9 August 1913), Part IV of the London Naval Treaty of 22 April 1930 regarding the rules of submarine warfare (London, 6 November 1936), The Second Geneva Convention for the amelioration of the condition of wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea (Geneva, 12 August 1949, G. II), the Convention concerning the rights and duties of neutral Powers in naval war (Hague, 1907, H. XIII), the Havana Convention on Maritime Neutrality (Havana, 20 February 1928), the Convention relative to the laying of automatic submarine contact mines (Hague, 1907, H. VIII) and the San Remo Manual on International Law applicable to armed conflicts at sea (San Remo, 12 June 1994).

The laws that apply to naval warfare have a specific object of regulation, which separates them from the laws applicable in armed conflicts on land, because they address the specific issues of combatants, theaters of operations, means and methods of surface and submarine warfare, as well as aeronaval operations.

LEGITIMATE TARGETS IN NAVAL WARFARE

According to the principle of distinction, as stated even in the Declaration of Saint Petersburg (1868), the armed forces must make a clear distinction between the civilians who are not taking direct part in the hostilities and the enemy armed forces who play an active role in military operations³. They can only engage the enemy forces, aiming to diminish the fighting capacity of the enemy and subdue his will. The members of the enemy armed forces are regarded as legal combatants providing that they follow the laws and customs of war, they are placed under the authority of a commander, they carry their weapons openly and wear a distinct sign of identification recognizable from afar⁴. According to the principles of humanity, necessity and proportionality, destruction of the enemy ships and injury caused to the enemy forces should be limited as much as possible. Ports, coastal settlements, vessels and aircraft owned or controlled by the enemy are legitimate military objectives and can be attacked if there is sufficient proof that the respective ships and/or settlements are used as means to conduct military operations and that their destruction would offer an effective military advantage⁵.

Conditioning the destruction of enemy objectives and the collateral damage among the civilian population, non-combatants and protected objects is established by prohibiting the means and methods of warfare which are of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering, indiscriminate effects or grave, widespread and long-term environmental consequences⁶ and by deploying the least amount of military force required to meet the end objectives, in accordance with the principles of necessity and proportionality as well as with the military imperatives of the concentration and the economy of effort (comprised of forces and means).

In surface warfare, the combatant and auxiliary enemy ships are liable to be attacked, captured or sunk. The enemy ship that surrenders by lowering the flag (signifying allegiance), shutting down the engines and hoisting the white flag is no longer susceptible to attacks, and in case of damaging or capturing the enemy vessel, the officers and crew become prisoners of war, falling under the laws of the 3rd Geneva Convention. To the extent allowed by military necessity, after capturing or destroying the enemy vessel the captors or forces conducting the attack must retrieve the bodies and search and rescue the wounded, sick and shipwrecked (Convention (II) 1949, Art. 18, 20).

The capture of civilian and non-combatant ships and aircraft by the belligerent forces is allowed under certain conditions: in the case of evasion or refusal to submit to identification,

³ Declaration Renouncing the Use, in Time of War, of Explosive Projectiles Under 400 Grammes Weight. Saint Petersburg, 29 November/11 December 1868 n.d. "the only legitimate object which States should endeavor to accomplish during war is to weaken the military forces of the enemy".

⁴ Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea. Geneva, 12 August 1949 n.d. Art. 13 (2).

⁵ San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea, 12 June 1994 n.d. Article 40.

⁶ Ibid. Articles 42, 43, 44.

resistance to visit and search, shipping contraband, breaching the blockade, uncertified or fraudulent papers, disregard of the regulations related to the theater of operations and contribution to the war effort of the enemy. The citizens belonging to neutral parties on board seized civilian ships and aircraft must be repatriated immediately, even if those ships are enemy merchant vessels. The civilians aboard captured ships become prisoners of war if they are citizens of the other belligerent party and if they are suspected and confirmed of taking part in enemy military operations.

The merchant ships and civilian aircraft of the enemy are susceptible to attacks on the assumption that they oppose the procedures of inspection and identification, they refuse to stop when summoned by the belligerent warships, they travel in armed convoys and act as warships or auxiliaries of the adversary.

THE RIGHT TO VISIT AND SEARCH

Visit and search are actions taken by a belligerent warships or aircraft with the purpose of determining whether another ship or aircraft is hostile or neutral by inspecting the papers and cargo on board. The cargo may consist of free trade goods or contraband. Exercising the right of visit and search is prohibited in international straits, archipelagic sea lanes and in neutral waters. Non-merchant civilian vessels should not be submitted to visit and search, because they do not pose a military threat, and only the merchant vessels can undergo visit and search because of the risk of conversion to warships. The merchant vessels escorted by warships are not subjected to visit and search if the commander of the convoy testifies that they are not belligerents and they do not transport contraband.⁷ (Manual of the Laws of Naval War. Oxford, 9 August 1913 n.d.)

Trade between belligerents is permitted during hostilities, except for arms trade. Contraband refers to the illegal trade of goods destined for the enemy or another belligerent and it can be of two types: either absolute or conditioned. Absolute contraband refers to goods that are specifically designed for use in military operations (weapons, ammunition, equipment etc.) Absolute contraband goods can be confiscated anywhere without restriction, providing that there is sufficient proof of their intended military use or that they are meant to reach enemy territory. Conditioned contraband represents goods with no exclusive military destination, that are susceptible to application for both military and civilian purposes, in times of war as well as during peacetime. Conditioned contraband can be confiscated if its military purpose is confirmed, which is harder to prove and less obvious than in the case of absolute contraband. The goods that are not considered contraband, thus not being subject to confiscation, even if they are intended to reach enemy shore, are the goods with no military use, that can raise no suspicion in this regard: the objects meant for aid of the sick and wounded, property of the humanitarian personnel, goods destined for prisoners of war and other objects that are expressly protected under international conventions or bilateral agreements between the belligerents. Neutral powers have the obligation to notify the belligerents about the transit of protected objects.

Any vessel sailing under the flag of the enemy state can be subject to visit and search. Ships of neutral states are excepted. Any ship or aircraft owned or controlled by a belligerent state can be subject to visit and search, even if it bears neutral flags and markings misleadingly.

MEANS AND METHODS OF NAVAL WARFARE

The international regulations concerning the means and methods of armed conflicts taking place both on land and at sea are based on three fundamental principles: the combatants have a limited right to choose the means and methods of injuring the enemy⁸, there has to be a distinction between the civilian population and the military forces and between protected objects and military objectives (or legitimate targets)⁹ and the means and methods have to be deployed to the least extent possible, for the purpose of reducing the amount of unnecessary suffering sustained by the combatants. Barbarous and treacherous means and methods are prohibited: espionage, sabotage,

⁷ Oxford Manual 1913, Article 32.

⁸ San Remo Manual, 1994, Article 38.

⁹ Ibid. Article 39.

mercenarism, terrorism, piracy, means of nature to cause superfluous injury, indiscriminate effects, and harmful, widespread and long-lasting effects on the natural environment¹⁰.

Naval mines

Maritime mines can be used for maritime interdiction or deterrence, for defending territorial waters, ports and other settlements, in anti-submarine warfare and in blockades. Since they have potentially indiscriminate effects, the use of maritime mines is permitted only under a series of conditions. There are two types of naval mines: armed and remotely controlled. The remotely controlled mines are harmless unless they are armed deliberately from a distance, through signals. Armed mines become dangerous immediately after they are armed and laid in the water and cannot be disarmed remotely. All armed mines are by design harder to control, thus having to be disabled and removed without delay, as soon as the hostilities end or the threat that justified their deployment ceases to exist.

During peacetime, for the sole purpose of providing security for its citizens, a state can lay naval mines only in the internal waters. The presence of naval mines in territorial waters and archipelagic waters during peacetime, for reasons of national security, must be internationally notified, and the mines must be disarmed and removed after the threat has passed. However, if the mines laid in the territorial or archipelagic waters are the remotely controlled type, then the international notification, removal, disarmament and destruction are not compulsory. It is forbidden to deploy mines during peacetime in the territorial waters of another state without its consent. Furthermore, it is forbidden to lay mines in the coastal waters of another state for any other reason than military necessity. In other words, mines cannot be used to enforce commercial blockades.

Assuming they do not disrupt high seas navigation, remotely controlled mines can be laid in international waters, beyond the boundary of territorial waters.

In the case of mining in anticipation of an armed conflict, it is illegal to lay armed mines in international waters, with the single exception of urgent individual or collective self-defense (art. 51 of the UN Charter and art. 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty). In these exceptional conditions, the placement of armed mines in international waters and the determined date of their removal must be internationally notified.

During armed conflicts without a naval component, the use of naval mines is permitted if their presence is quickly notified. Mines cannot be laid in the territorial waters of neutral states. Anchored mines must become harmless upon detaching from the anchoring cable and unanchored or drifting mines must become harmless one hour after the person who laid them lost control of them. Both anchored and unanchored mines must be precisely located, for ease of disablement and removal. If mines are placed in the way of maritime trade routes, neutral navigation shall be redirected to an alternative route. Mines can be used in blockades but placing them in the internal waters of an enemy state is forbidden.

Regarding other weapons specific to naval war, the use of torpedoes is prohibited unless they become harmless after missing the target¹¹. Other banned means are those with potentially indiscriminate effects: fragmentation weapons and thermobaric bombs, napalm and other incendiary weapons, guided missiles and projectiles with a range of action that exceeds the visual range (excepting the missiles and projectiles guided through sensors which enable the distinction between military targets and protected persons and objects), concealed traps and devices of nature to cause superfluous injury, the use of which represents an act of perfidy.

Blockades

A blockade is a military operation by which one belligerent party prevents and interdicts the access of all ships and/or aircraft to ports/airports or coastal territories of the enemy party. A blockade can be established in accordance with customary rules by the government of a belligerent party. The government determines the duration and exact coordinates of the blockade, as well as the time limit

¹⁰ Ibid. Articles 42, 43, 44.

¹¹ Oxford Manual, 1913, Section III, Article 19.

for neutral vessels and aircraft to depart from the designated area. The efficiency of a blockade is determined by the extent to which it manages to restrict movement of ships to or from the enemy owned or occupied territory. The difference in status between military and neutral vessels and aircraft is of little importance in a blockade. What matters most is the interdiction of all passage in the designated area, excepting the access to neutral waters, shores, ports and airports, where the government of a belligerent state does not have the right to impose blockades. Vessels and aircraft can pass through a blockade only with authorization from the government that imposed the blockade, in cases of insufficient essential supplies, technical emergency or situations that require humanitarian assistance. Breaching a blockade means deliberate unauthorized passage through the interdicted area and is subject to international accountability.

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF NEUTRAL STATES IN NAVAL WAR

The neutrality of states can be permanent or occasional and it implies that the neutral territory is inviolable in the event of an armed conflict, as long as the neutral party abstains from partaking in hostilities, treats the belligerents impartially if it chooses to offer humanitarian or medical assistance to protected persons or shelter to refugees, and if it takes all necessary measures to prevent the development of military operations in its territories, which include the territorial waters. If a neutral power is subject to an act of aggression, the UN Charter provides it with the right to individual self-defense and the UN Security Council can authorize a peacekeeping operation on the territory of the aggressed neutral state. The UN members are expected to support the UN efforts to restore peace and security and to refrain from providing support to the enemy state or to the aggressor.

Respecting neutrality is an obligation of the belligerents: the transit of military forces and objects through neutral territory is prohibited, apart from the transport of prisoners of war and unarmed sick and wounded members of the armed forces on routes determined by the neutral state. Prisoners of war who escape from captivity shall not be pursued on neutral territory if they do not take part in military activities.

Access to neutral ports can be interdicted impartially, to all belligerents. The belligerent affiliated vessels docked in neutral ports and harbors before the beginning of hostilities have a 24 hour term by which they are compelled to depart. The right of belligerent vessels to enter neutral ports is limited to cases of absolute necessity, severe damage inflicted by the enemy, major technical problems, humanitarian emergencies etc. The time limit of docking and departing from neutral ports for belligerent vessels without the aforementioned special circumstances is 24 hours. It can be extended by 24 hours in certain cases. Belligerent vessels cannot dock for repairs in neutral ports and harbors for more than 48 hours and a potential extension over 72 hours cannot occur without the knowledge and consent of the neutral state. During their stay in neutral ports, belligerent vessels docked for repairs are not allowed to reinforce the fighting capacity and they can only fix the navigation system and fill the supply of food and other indispensable items. Enemy or neutral merchant ships that have been captured can be brought into neutral ports if technical problems, poor weather conditions or food shortage prevent them from sailing further.

The neutral state has the right to prohibit all belligerent navigation in its territorial waters, with the exception of international straits, that are mandatory crossing points for both merchant fleet and belligerent vessels. The regulations concerning the right of passage through international straits do not involve the status of neutrality. In international straits, belligerent vessels and aircraft are only allowed quick passage and defensive actions and they are forbidden from the use of international straits as sanctuary or base to conduct offensive operations and to exercise the right to visit and search. Maritime archipelagic lanes share a similar legal status with the international straits, thus being open only for non-military purposed vessel crossing.

Belligerent aircraft have no right to fly over neutral airspace, unless it is in the airspace above international straits and archipelagic lanes, which are open only for the passing of armed belligerent ships and aircraft. Unarmed aircraft can enter neutral airspace if it obliges to the impartial conditions imposed by the neutral state. In case of emergency, belligerent aircraft can enter neutral airspace and

land on neutral territory, on the condition that all belligerents receive equal treatment from the neutral state.

PROTECTED PERSONS AND OBJECTS

The types of ships that are not subjected to rules of international humanitarian law applicable to war at sea are the merchant vessels with a privileged right to sail which has been agreed upon by bilateral accords between belligerents before the beginning of an armed conflict. The categories of protected persons¹² in naval war are citizens of neutral powers, prisoners of war, the wounded, sick and shipwrecked, the civilian population and other non-combatants, as the personnel conducting sanitary and religious services.

The conditions that the vessels and aircraft must follow cumulatively to maintain their privileged status of protected ships are to abstain from getting involved in hostilities, to submit to identification and inspection processes, to comply with the needs of the belligerents (to sail away from the theatre of operations when requested, to not obstruct the navigation of battleships etc.) Protected categories of ships and aircraft are the ones destined for exchanges of war prisoners (cartel ships), hospital ships and ships that carry sanitary and religious personnel (appropriately marked), ships that conduct non-military scientific research, ships under free navigation agreements (coasters, fishing vessels etc.) and civilian passenger ships. They are protected from attacks and they are required to follow the orders of the military commander responsible for the area in which they are sailing. Civilian passenger carriers can be taken into belligerent custody, but they cannot be destroyed. As an exception, civilian ships and aircraft can be destroyed if they are ashore or landed and they do not respond to the summoning of the interceptor. In the Second Geneva Convention for the amelioration of the condition of wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of the armed forces at sea (G. II, 1949) there is specified that the ships carrying the sick and wounded cannot be subjected to attacks neither when they are full nor when they are empty¹³. In submarine warfare, according to the 1936 London Protocol and to customary practice, the passengers of a commercial vessel are protected only if the vessel responds to the summoning of the interceptor, they do not sail in armed convoys and have not converted into enemy military ships. The exceptions from capture and destruction applicable in surface warfare apply to submarine warfare as well.

Regarding the protection of persons with an undetermined legal status or a status that is not covered by the laws in the conventions, or that exceeds positive law in other words, the Martens Clause is there to cover the legal omissions and loopholes and provide protection for combatants and civilians in accordance with the principles of international law, "as they result from the usages established between civilized nations, from the laws of humanity, and the requirements of the public conscience."¹⁴

CONCLUSIONS

The regulation of war at sea was of great interest to the international community, as many atrocities took place at sea. For this reason, the need was felt for the first codified norms to restrict the war at sea.

So, the international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts at sea derives from conventional and customary sources, represented by the "law of the Hague" and the "law of Geneva", which regulate the conduct of the combatants and establish the protection of the noncombatants, hors de combat, civilian population and neutral parties. The secondary sources are the jurisprudence and the doctrine, represented in the case of naval warfare by the manuals of Oxford and San Remo. Regarding the limitation of some means and methods of naval warfare, a precise legal definition of certain actions and methods should be avoided, because it would reduce the applicability of laws to the point where they would become ineffective against continuously developing means of warfare.

¹² Convention (II), Geneva, 1949, Article 13.

¹³ Ibid. Article 22.

¹⁴ Ibid. Article 62.

Since surprise remains a definitive requirement for success in military actions, the inventive and unconventional solutions that the belligerents come up with may have unexpected destructive consequences, deviating from the laws and customs of war without facing any legal reprisal, if the authors are ingenious enough to elude any legal determination which may render them legally accountable. Consequently, the laws that limit new means proactively are preferable to those that are established after the occurrence of morally condemnable, but legally unqualifiable events.

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MEDIATION – A KEY INSTRUMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE FOR THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF POSSIBLE CONFLICTS IN THE FUTURE

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Abstract

The role of mediation, in the current context of the security environment, involves the implementation of mediation techniques aimed at an integrated operational and efficient approach, depending on the development level and the requirements of the society, adapting the regulations of the mediation field, in accordance with the local specificities of each state, based on the broad consensus of the society.

Keywords: mediation; international relations; security environment; integrated approach.

INTRODUCTION – BRIEF HISTORY

The current international security environment can be defined as an atypical one, particularly difficult to be anticipated, given that the dangers, threats, risks and vulnerabilities require concerted action in order to eliminate the sources of conflict and violence between state and non-state actors. The international community must promote the development of a culture of security and defense, based on the common values, ideals and interests of international society, in order to maintain world peace and security. Globalization, the increasing number of actors on the international stage and the higher degree of interdependencies, has generated reconfigurations of power relations in the international system, causing conflicts whose complexity has become more and more difficult to manage.

Under the circumstances, it is necessary to promote a global order, based on observing the rules of international law, aimed at ensuring the respect for human rights, sustainable development and efficient management of divergent situations, perceived differently by the states of the world, according to the national interests and needs, military and economic power, membership or non-membership of an alliance.

On the other hand, humanity is currently undergoing a major test, with a negative impact, generated by the Covid-19 Pandemic, which has provoked social and economic emergencies, with major and inherent potential for conflicts. Those effective peaceful resolutions can be achieved through national and international recovery and resilience strategies that identify opportunities for amicable discussions between all decision-makers and lead to viable solutions. In carrying out these strategies, the efficiency and importance of the mediation procedure for the transparent resolution of the post-crisis problems generated by Covid-19 is indisputable, as I will detail below.

VALUING THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIATION AS A FACTOR FOR RESTORING COMMUNICATION

Conflict is a component part of human nature, social relations, induced by genetic factors, by the social environment and the education that each individual receives. Consequently, a broad consensus in society - which can facilitate the implementation of laws in an equitable manner, so that all people can be partners in the state or institution to which they belong - varies in accordance with the degree of development of each society, depending on the economic, political and social priorities of each state.

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The essential factor in economic growth and innovation in a state is the responsible and transparent engagement to implement decisions aiming at general well-being and economic prosperity. In this way, through well-structured partnerships, including those in the business field, which attract capital, management and innovation, people come together and productive services, jobs are provided, converging to strengthen international cooperation in the public and private sectors. „*Generically called disputes, these contradictions of interests, legally substantiated or simply an expression of circumstantial claims, have often led to violent conflicts with disastrous consequences on the international balance.*” (Ghiba 2017,35)

The cooperation between States and the International Court of Justice, as an alternative instrument available to States in a dispute, obliged “ *first of all to seek a solution through negotiation, investigation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement [..]. or by their own peaceful means* ”(Justice 1945) in accordance with art. 33 of the Charter, has important consequences on the way states envisage their commitments, representing a solid foundation of the rules-based international order. The ICJ is one of the most efficient judicial bodies for resolving international disputes, provided that the necessary competence and power are granted to it, since the consent of states, as the main feature of jurisdiction, generates many problems in this regard.

The special impact in ensuring global security by the International Court of Justice, the main judicial body of the United Nations, consists in resolving disputes with reference to violations of the rules of international law, effective in regulating legal relationships resulting for judgment and in preventing similar violations of rights, by way of the rules of conduct imposed on the disputing parties and on the basis of the principles set out in the decisions rendered.

The work programs of the International Court of Justice are also relevant for taking into consideration the factors which, rationally and in good faith, may relate to the conditions set out in art. 4 paragraph 1 of the Charter on the Admission of Members to the UN, according to which “*Membership in the United Nations is open to all other peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations*” (ONU 1945) Analyzing the de facto principle deriving from this article, it follows that there is a general legal obligation for all members of the United Nations to act as lovers of peace, the only major obligation of the entities that use them being to act in good faith in order to find a solution to put an end to the dispute, inclusively when the states have to consent to the jurisdiction of the ICJ.

To this end, mediation, as a formula for alternatively resolving, in good faith, political, economic, informational, cultural, educational and so on conflicts, arises many questions about the use of the term, as well as the practices to which it applies: is it a mediation, a conciliation or a negotiation, the procedure used by the above-mentioned entities in order to find a solution putting an end to the dispute?

Conceptually according to analysts in this field, mediation “*can be defined as a voluntary, structured process, through which a mediator facilitates communication between the parties to a conflict, which allows them to take responsibility of finding a solution to the conflict between them*” (Commission 2012,7).

Given that, in international conflicts and not only, mediation becomes institutionalized and tends to function in other forms of social organization, I believe that this procedure contributes both to the sustainability of an existing system and to generating a potential way for social change, where the necessity imposes it, in order to identify instruments conducive to dialogue, with the positive intention of helping the parties to find solutions, because “[.....] *we must not be concerned with preventing the outbreak of conflicts, but with resolving them peacefully.. In other words, we are talking about rendering the conflicts civilized*” (Ghiba 2015,7).

In the above mentioned context, the usefulness of mediation results from the celerity with which an agreement can be reached, versus the alternative of the resolution by the Court, and requires a permanent research and the identification of viable and effective methods of resolving disputes that punctually define their causes, before analyzing opportunities and solutions, that turn

disputes into dialogue, generating discussions leading to the transformation of the differences of opinion, interests and needs into innovation.

“The complexity of the relationships outlined within the international community involves determining communication links that exceed the management of conflicts generated by a security environment with a rapid and constant pace of evolution, requiring the existence of innovative procedures, specific to mediation, which dwell on deeply the current phenomenon of conflict causes in order to prevent their recurrence, adapted to new security risks.” (Simion 2020,5).

Given the current international crisis generated by the Covid-19 Pandemic, the implementation of increasingly professionalized mediation techniques, adapted to the new conflict context, must also take into account the cultural and social impact and differences. Their implementation, for an integrated operational and efficient approach, requires, depending on the level of development and requirements of the society, the adaptation of mediation regulations, according to the local specifics of each state, based on the broad consensus of society.

An important facilitating instrument of conflict resolution, in an evolutive manner, focused on democratic rules, is diplomacy, which includes effective mediation techniques, with major impact in resolving conflicts generated by ethnic polarization, climate change, social and economic tensions, precarious governance and cultural differences.

“Digital Diplomacy facilitates dialogue (between citizens of the world and the entire diplomatic corps, between diplomats and institutions from the accrediting countries), participation in events, understanding the challenges of world politics, sentiments of not feeling excluded from the events and decisions of foreign policy and, last but not least, a higher level of participatory democracy.” (Bodoni 2016,9-16).

For a good harmonization of all these above-mentioned situations, generating conflict, diplomacy can revive international mediation, which is *“an efficient and viable diplomatic procedure for resolving the dispute”*. (Constantin 2005,19). Given that it uses a variety of instruments, skills in the art of negotiation and mediation techniques, based on long expertise in this regard, it can contribute to the resolution and prevention of conflicts in the future, proving its usefulness, to act in a multicultural environment, with various actors, including civil society.

“Conflict is a motor of change. By a stretch of imagination, it can be transformed in a constructive way in order to ensure equity, progress and harmony or, on the contrary, exploited in a destructive way generating strong insecurity.” (States-ECOWAS 2008,7).

In consideration of the above, it follows that the mediation procedure, based on transparency, amicable settlement and direct participation, in good faith, are vectors more important than ever in these times for strengthening democracy and international stability. Promoting open and transparent governments, while guaranteeing security, confidentiality and civil liberties, is a major challenge of our times. Altogether, I believe that flexibility, which has always been a hallmark of diplomacy, provides an instrument for communication and amicable settlement of conflicts, able to be adapted to new challenges, and it will be useful for both states and other new actors on the international scene. In their efforts to create a better world for the 21st century.

The International humanitarian law is a "guardian" of the respect for human vulnerability and personal integrity, a shield against bloody challenges, for people not being directly involved in war, along with medical personnel from medical missions or prisoners of war. It is regrettable that the current Covid-19 pandemic has not contributed to the end of wars, and in these areas, governments can sometimes come up against difficulties implementing decisions helping to combat this virus. However, given that the obligations under international humanitarian law (mentioned below) concern exceptional circumstances for war-torn states, they should not be an impediment to the fight against Covid-19, on the contrary, they should have contributed to the improvement of COVID-19 response strategies.

Now, more than ever, given the increasing population vulnerabilities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the most important international bodies in this field must focus on respecting the application of the law and the responsibility for violating the rules of international humanitarian law, which implicitly aim at the protection of the person.

“The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mark Lowcock, declared: “COVID-19 has already turned life upside down in some of the richest countries in the world. It now reaches places where people live in war zones, not having easy access to clean water and soap, and having no hope for a hospital bed if they fall seriously ill.” (OCHA 2020) In accordance with this, an integrated approach, taking into account the level of the imbalance caused by the pandemic, which also affects the financial dimension, whose evolution is directly determined by the decisions of international financing institutions, is absolutely necessary in the overall framework of the fulfillment of sustainable development goals (SDG), focusing on the humanitarian actions and the agenda for peace and sustainable development, in accordance too with the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 1991, which *“designed the blueprint for today’s international humanitarian system, which tirelessly strives to provide life-saving assistance.” (OCHA 2016, 46/182).*

The shock of the Covid-19 pandemic has major implications for the policies and governance of many key actors, which require global action programmes. In this regard, the United Nations, N.G.O or important donors, which participate in the reconfiguration and preparation of effective instruments for the realization of S.D.G. (Sustainable Development Goals), must put the emphasis on the resistance to possible future pandemic shocks. These can be achieved through the emergency response of national governments and state authorities, transposed through short-term crisis management measures, as a humanitarian response. Long-term strategies are also needed to strengthen the humanitarian system, based on solutions focused on knowing the instruments related to identifying who and what to do, how and in what way, that is focused on concrete solutions, depending on the real and objective „on-site” availabilities”.

“In March, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appealed for a global ceasefire because of the Covid-19 pandemic, pleading for a halt to hostilities to create corridors for life-saving and to open precious windows for diplomacy.” (Hinds 2020).

The way in which the actors from the humanitarian assistance domain or field or area, including humanitarian organizations and agencies, will be able to identify effective solutions to counteract the negative effects of the humanitarian sector, caused by the Covid-19 crisis, will influence the future of the humanitarian sector. In accordance with the provisions of the Protocol Additional I of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 (Crucea Roşie 1977) and the commentary of 1987 on international armed conflicts, the permanent or temporary medical units *are assigned exclusively for medical purposes* Therefore, whether civilians or military, these units can, by preventing any disease. Including Covid-19, reduce the number of victims, this protection being of course possible if their destination is totally a medical one.

“As it results from the definition of the international humanitarian law, this branch of law has a customary character, and, in accordance with the provisions of art. 38 point 1 letter b) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, the international custom, “as evidence of a general practice accepted as law”, is a source of international law.” (Ghiba M.-D.2017,25). Given the above-mentioned provisions, the effects of the pandemic, *in order to integrate a humanitarian and emergency response*, will reconfigure and reorganize important segments of the international humanitarian sector, with major impact on the lives of billions of people on the planet, which will redefine the future of the humanitarian area, leading to the establishment of new sources of international law.

The International Health Regulations (IHR) of 2005 (UE 2009) is the instrument by which the World Health Organization can implement states' responses to global pandemics, taking also into account the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations (Unite 2020) is the areal for the international humanitarian action. Therefore, given that international emergency situations aimed at public health have a recommendable and non-binding character, they will generate numerous international conflicts between states, states and international organizations, investor-state disputes and conflicts related to human rights, between states and individuals.

Article 43 of the IHR provides that *“any state party affected by [an additional measure] may request the state party implementing such a measure to take counsel with it [...] [in order to find a mutually acceptable solution.” (Red Cross 2009).* The settlement of disputes concerning disputes from one state to another is not hindered by these consultations, as Article 56 of the IHR (CruceaRosie

2009) provides for mechanisms to resolve them, which in the first instance may choose any peaceful means, but are not obliged to resolve the conflict. If these means fail, the involved countries may agree on referring the dispute to the Director-General of WHO or to the International Court of Arbitration, whose resolutions shall be of a recommendatory nature.

Although the IHR can provide, in a transparent and efficient way, viable guidance as global response to protect the world's population from pandemics, it is necessary to identify new improved strategies to discover and report in good time the outbreaks centres, new sources of financing for development and maintaining the health of the population, the effective inter-state exchange of information and technology that avoids damage and represents effective strategic mechanisms for monitoring and resolving conflicts and suppressing the pandemic.

MEDIATION – THE AVATAR OF EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION OF THE 21st CENTURY

The rapidity and extension of the changes, which occurred at the beginning of 2020, in the current security environment, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, which changed life as we knew it, require a readjustment and modification of the social contract, focusing on the individual, on the connections between the individual and the organization and the correlation of the organization's objectives with those of the society. In a world currently based on new technology, which involved bold technological innovations and digital transformations, which dominated the conversations between people, paradoxically accentuated by the international pandemic element, Covid-19, human concerns were considered separate and inferior, even in conflict with technological advances, being particularly difficult to remain human in a world based on technology.

As society has been concerned with adapting its ways of working in response to the crisis, with the potential to create sustainable value for organizations, for their workforce and for the society in general, Covid-19 has shown that human activities are not separated by technological advances. On the contrary, not the technology generated conflict, but the digital divide between regions, urban and rural communities has been the great challenge "*In fact, classroom seems to be the first place of mediation, the first space of speech organized by the teacher...*" [...] "*After all, time for deliberation and negotiation is still time*" (Beillerot 2010).

This crisis represents a unique opportunity – given the current situation, burdened by crises and conflicts in all spheres of international life – to identify new instruments and practices (with a desire for connection and well-being at work), to manage the way people adapt and work in partnership with the available technology in order to cultivate their capabilities to high standards and to generate connections which can open a future way appropriate to fuel development and innovation, to return to work, by designing the future of labor, using the lessons and practices they identified during their accelerated response to this crisis.

COVID-19 placed at the center of organizations the issue of physical, mental and financial security. The stress and exhaustion that many individuals faced, determined by the fact that they had to fulfill their professional obligations staying at home, in parallel with their personal obligations and roles (as parents, for example), generated conflicts. In this way, pandemic caused discrepancies between the feeling of personal identity and belonging to community life. The disagreements created, as a result of people's attempt to transcend personal gain in relation to the common good, also led to significant economic discrepancies between different regions of the world.

Now is the time to encourage open dialogue and open practices, through mediation, to resolve these disputes, ensuring, through the principles governing the institution of mediation, both the respect for fundamental rights and the protection of individuals, in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights and the relative jurisprudence [*"The Convention establishes a catalog of civil and political rights (with the exception of property rights, economic rights and rights with social connotations - freedom of association, right to training, prohibition of forced labor"* (Radu 2016,8)].

The mediation procedure facilitates dialogue, develops trust between the conflicting parties and opens the possibility of redefining work objectives, towards results instead of stricto sensu established activities. In this way, the possibility of people to live and perform socially and individually,

at very high levels, in an effort to embrace reformulations and solutions, governed by the law of the people, which has the precedence over the authority of states, opens up. The hierarchy of ethical, deontological and moral norms, as a standard of conduct, often contested in case of a dispute, are the basis of the principles and actions of mediation techniques.

Moreover, it must be borne in mind that *“some conflicts are now being treated as threats to international peace and security, even if two states are not fighting. Particularly when internal conflicts involve violations of universal norms, such as self-determination, human rights or democratic governance, concerted international actions – including the threat or use of force – are taken to prevent, end or resolve them”* (Council 2021) the mediator's role as defender of the public interest, as well as its ability to effectively manage the disputes faced by citizens in their relations with the public administration, can help them, through mediation-specific techniques, to promote open government strategies and initiatives, by identifying the difficulties between citizens and the public administration, due to its role as an intermediary.

A direct consequence of the crisis generated by the current pandemic is the impossibility in some cases to resolve disputes between the parties "face to face", which reveals that the IT tool determines the effectiveness of current experiences of digitalization of mediation. Online mediation can set efficient and ambitious goals, based on the existence of Covid-19, as an alternative solution of communication for the parties to a conflict, but also for the case of court proceedings, in order to identify convenient, mutually beneficial solutions through methodological and technical tools specific to this alternative procedure, being an effective alternative to maintain social connections and resolve disputes quickly, where possible. This procedure requires, of course, a material basis for achieving the flow of information, Hi-Tech, at high technological standards which characterize the digital system.

“[...] as an observer of the legal profession community, I predicted that alternative methods of dispute resolution (ADR) would be one of the major axes for transforming the practice of law. However, our predictions lacked a health crisis and two months in detention, which made them essential to ease the jurisdictions that passed from "crowded" to "suffocated". Another imperative was born from this health crisis: that is to promote social distance. In this context, dematerialized platforms for resolving disputes amicably become a tool of choice.” (Hantz 2020).

Furthermore, online mediation does not lead to a deprivation of rights, such as a lawsuit. On the contrary, the freedom of action of mediation procedures, the flexibility granted by the status of the mediator, are an effective, fast and safe dispute management tool, including in terms of protecting the health of the parties to the conflict, thus respecting the rules of physical distance due to the pandemic, with the role of solving the disputed problems with maximum efficiency and rapidity, in many situations, while respecting the security of the global health of the population.

CONCLUSIONS

The basic criteria of Maslow's hierarchy of needs still guide what people want and how they order their preferences, so that building a sustainable post-Covid future focuses on the need to approach the ethical issues of access to data related to future-oriented workforce and requalification, involving investments in work for an uncertain future. As the return to work takes place, organizations have the opportunity to build a culture of action that will transform the way of approaching the organization's resilience and create strategies that strengthen the organizational connectivity and provide solutions in order to resist and even to prosper in environments of perturbation, conflict, uncertainty and change.

The moments of crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic, together with the conflicts generated by unstable governments, socio-economic and ethnic tensions, forced people around the world to test their stress and ability to connect people and technology in the most dynamic business environment that many of us have ever seen. Organizations quickly experienced actions induced by significant changes in the future of work. The sustainability of those actions will be the real way to recovery. In a post-Covid world, purpose, potential and perspective are, in fact, an improved version of yesterday and a sustainable version of tomorrow. Through its many tools for identifying the emotions that a person affected by a conflict has, focused primarily on the social and relational framework, mediation

contributes to escalate these feelings and accept a negotiation, by restoring deficient communication. This procedure of mediation has been, is and will be an important architect in promoting and consolidating the practices of democracy, human rights and freedoms, at the international level, which integrates the moral values common to the subjects of law and carries out its mission, focused on the triple commitment of neutrality, impartiality and confidentiality.

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GENERALS DE GAULLE, DUMITRESCU AND HERUVIM, GRADUATES OF SAINT-CYR

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Abstract

A very important Romanian historical event took place on 14 May 1968 when General Charles de Gaulle, the president of The French Fifth Republic, visited Bucharest, an initiative stemming from this visionary head of state's idea of a unified Europe stretching "from the Atlantic to the Urals". Have you heard of Romanian generals Polihron Dumitrescu and Ioan Heruvim? Charles de Gaulle's visit proved quite difficult to manage for the communist regime, one of the difficulties being the French general's meeting with these two generals, former classmates from the Special Military School of Saint-Cyr. His itinerary included the cities of Craiova and Târgoviște because of these expectedly emotional meetings with Dumitrescu and Heruvim, the former having been de Gaulle's class president, and the latter one of its most brilliant students, and the city of Cetatea Băniei where the French general performed an official military salute.

Keywords: General Charles de Gaulle; General Polihron Dumitrescu; General Ioan Heruvim; Paris; Craiova; Târgoviște.

INTRODUCTION

The French leader's visit to Bucharest had very clear objectives connected to de Gaulle's Foreign Policy ideas of promoting the independence of the nation-state over political regimes. He was a responsible and staunch supporter of interaction between Eastern and Western Europe, a topic that concerned the entirety of Europe, and he had already made the first step in this direction in 1967 in Poland where the result did not live up to his expectations as the Polish political regime did not believe as much in his theory. His visit to Bucharest was even more unexpected as Nicolae Ceaușescu was planning to take advantage of his moment of glory in international affairs and once again express his opposition to Moscow's policies. France had intended to organize this visit in the same year as the one to Poland, but the Six-Day-War between Israel and the neighbouring states of Jordan, Syria and Egypt forced them to postpone it (Măță 2011, 185).

The general demonstrated his unmatched oratory skills at the Great National Assembly in Bucharest when he spoke of "*the historical friendship between the French and Romanian people, as well as the two countries ending the two-bloc system in a united Europe*" (Leșu 2013). His visit to Romania took place at the same time as the student occupation protests of May 68 which were sweeping through France from Sorbonne to the Latin Quarter, culminating in the general strike that almost halted France's economy.

As a result, Charles de Gaulle shortened his stay in Romania by one day due to worries regarding the situation in his home country, but also because he had been able to get back in touch with his former colleagues from the Special Military School after almost a quarter of a century: generals Polihron Dumitrescu and Ioan Heruvim.

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Figure 1. May 14, 1968. General Charles de Gaulle is welcomed to Romania by Nicolae Ceaușescu and an enthusiastic spectator

(source: <https://www1.agerpres.ro/flux-documentare/2015/11/22/documentar-125-de-ani-de-la-nasterea-generalului-charles-de-gaulle-presedinte-al-frantei-1959-1969--11-32-13>)

A HISTORIC OFFICIAL SALUTE AND THE SECRET MEETING

An exceptional historic political Romanian-French event takes place on 16 May 1968 in Craiova in the People's Park: General Charles de Gaulle, famous in the Second World War, known as "Colonel Motor", steps out of the presidential car, raises his arm and starts to politely address surrounding people. While doing so, he looks around as if to find someone until he notices the people accompanying him, and *"walking in a military manner and saluting, he stopped in front of a person he clearly recognized, the Romanian general Polihron Dumitrescu, and quickly paid him his respects in French"* (Roșulescu 2011). A military service member, Charles de Gaulle was on an official visit to Romania as the president of France, but he could not forget his personal reason behind this trip. This was an unusual event for the French and Romanian people gathered in the area close to the Debarcader restaurant, but for the escort unit in charge of security, this was no chance event, but something that had been in the making for at least a year since it was announced that de Gaulle, a French general, would be the one to initiate the official salute and render honors to a Romanian general.

The two generals had been good colleagues and friends back at the Military School of Paris between 1922-1924 when Polihron Dumitrescu was de Gaulle's class president. At such military schools, it was customary for students to salute and render honors to their class president so Charles de Gaulle simply did what he used to do four and a half decades before on seeing his superior. After regrouping at Vila Jianu, the French president gave his memorable speech in front of 100,000 people at the sensational meeting that took place in the Administrative Palace Square. The Moorish dining room at Minerva restaurant would be the last destination from the official itinerary of that day.

The meeting had apparently unforeseen events, similar to what had happened in the People's Park earlier that day. Close to nine o'clock, General Charles de Gaulle left the meeting despite those attending being convinced that he was only temporarily away due to a health problem or fatigue, but the official personnel knew the truth. *"A few minutes later he was on Ulm Street, on the east side of the city, in general Polihron Dumitrescu's house (his former house that he received back all fixed, refurnished, etc. with this occasion in mind)"* (Rezeanu 2008, 10-12). The only person to bear witness to the almost two-hour long discussion between the two generals was Polihron Dumitrescu's French wife. She had respected the suggestions from the Department of State Security, the secret police agency of the Socialist Republic of Romania, to not talk about the hard times they had fallen on between the end of World War II and 1968. In return, the representatives of the communist regime in Romania promised the Dumitrescu family that they could keep the house and all the furniture even after President Charles de Gaulle left – a promise they kept.

The president's room at Vila Jianu had a considerably long bed in an area where there were no windows for security reasons. "To help the general rest, a special double bed was built, 2.20 m in length due to his height. The French presidents and his personnel stayed at the villa for a short rest and a private breakfast. (...) The French sent us a recording of the failed assassination attempt that had taken place a few years before. To make sure all unwanted incidents could be avoided, the bedroom was moved from the one with a view towards Mihai Viteazul Street where there was still visibility to one inside. Full attention" (Gigea-Gorun 2001, 96).



Figure 2. Major-general Polihron Dumitrescu

(source: Polihron Dumitrescu, *Answering my calling*, „Ascultând chemarea”, Editura Militară Publishing House, Bucharest, 1968, p.2)

MEMORIES UNDER THE CHINDIA TOWER

A day later, on 17 May 1968, general Charles de Gaulle and Nicolae Ceaușescu arrived at The Royal Court of Târgoviște where he met another former classmate from the famous Special Military School of Saint-Cyr, general Ioan Heruvim, a war veteran. The atmosphere was festive with men playing horns on the medieval ruins of the royal court. The French president stated that *“I feel very happy to be at Târgoviște and that I can visit so many places that confirm the Romanian people's origin. I bring you the French salute. Long live Târgoviște! Long live Romania”* and left the following message in the guest book of the County Museum: *“Honour and happiness for Târgoviște”*.

He was profoundly affected by both extremely emotional meetings with his former classmates Ioan Heruvim and Polihron Dumitrescu. He was aware of the historic importance of this event after more than four decades since military school. He was a head of state, but in a delicate situation back in his country due to the social crisis in France from May 1968 which led to his shortening the trip. The other two Romanians were in very similar delicate situations, even if the details were very different. The two generals' identities were completely unknown in their towns, “celebrated but unknown Romanian general” (Roșulescu 2011) applied to both of them. They had both finished the School of Infantry, the Bucharest War College and the Special Military School of Saint-Cyr where they met Charles André Joseph Marie de Gaulle. After World War II, many superior officers who fought on the Eastern Front were treated with disdain.

We can imagine that they may have exchanged old jokes from their time together as young infantry officers in training at the Special Military School of Saint-Cyr. Dumitrescu as the class president had good results in his studying and military training, a situation that may suggest his true high intellect. They could have exchanged questions and answers about each other's military career and families. What is certain is that both Polihron and Ioan kept in mind the advice they had received from the Department of State Security about not discussing their military and social downfall after 1945, something that Charles must have already been well acquainted with. The fact that the French president had to shorten his visit to Romania due to the serious events happening in Paris led to Oltenia-style jokes in the press such as *“during Charles de Gaulle's visit at Craiova, he also stopped*

in Bucharest” confirmed by Petre Gigea-Gorun². This was what happened during the first visit of a French president to our country, the general known worldwide as “colonel motor”, a nickname that can be analyzed and understood in two ways.



Figure 3. Colonel Ioan Heruvim, Knight of the Order of Michael the Brave, commander at the School of Cavalry in Târgoviște, 1945

(source: Cornel Mărculescu, Dora Dalles Middle School Bucșani, Dâmbovița County
<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10154324218281308&set=pb.742336307.-2207520000.&type=3>)

“COLONEL MOTOR”, TANK COMMANDER FOR FRANCE

Making use of his long and interesting military experience, Charles de Gaulle published many books on military theory such as *The Enemy's House Divided* in 1924 or *The Edge of The Sword* in 1932. *“I had already participated at a few conferences about the art of war, such as the one at Sorbonne. But in January 1933, Hitler became the Reich leader. From there on, things only rapidly got out of control. No one else was presenting any suggestions to handle the situation so I felt obliged to reach out to the public and present my own project. But because the situation was bound to have repercussions, I was already expecting to end up in the limelight one day. It was difficult for me to assume this risk after respecting the official military ideology for 25 years”* (De Gaulle 1969, 11-12). He published *Towards a Professional Army* in 1934 and *France and Her Army* in 1938, the latter leading to a serious argument with Marshal Pétain. De Gaulle criticized the outdated war of position carried out up until that time and, six years later in his second book from his series of four, the future general and president emphasized the strategic role of the art of war, as well as a sound education of capable military leaders with a strategic vision. In practice, de Gaulle was referring to the need to create a professional army with armed corps that could combine fire power and quick movement and be capable of initiative and quick offence.

He was a strong believer in the role of tanks and proper coordination in the military which attracted the favors of General Guderian³, the creator of the strongest German force of armored warfare. This happened at a time when Colonel Émile Mayer was removed after criticizing the French Armed Forces and expressing different, but brilliant military theories such as the fact that the defense strategy at Maginot would not be enough to win the war. De Gaulle had already embraced the theory of a concentrated war of movement and armed warfare with tanks and cannons when in 1937 he was given the command of the 507th tank regiment in Metz. On 3 September 1939, France declared war

² Petre Gigea-Gorun, born 31 March 1930, was a Romanian minister, dignitary and diplomat between 1960-1989, who authored 39 books of memoirs, monographs, epigrams, poetry and literature. He was mayor of the city of Craiova and Governor of Romania at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In 1984, as Minister of Finance of Romania, he received the „Best negotiator of the year” Award of Excellence from Euromoney. Between 1986 and 1989 he was Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to France. When President Charles de Gaulle visited Craiova in 1968, Petre Gigea-Gorun was the Vicepresident of the People's Council of Dolj county and one of the main organizers of the visit.

³ Heinz Wilhelm Guderian, (17 June 1888 - 14 May 1954) was a German general during World War II, the “father” of the “blitzkrieg” approach. He continued his father's military career and after Germany's loss in World War I, he became an expert in tanks and armored corps. Hitler appointed him Inspector General of Armoured Troops in 1944, but demoted him one year later due to differences in military strategy. He died in 1954 and was buried at Goslar.

on Germany and de Gaulle took over command of the fifth army's tank force and received his nickname of "Colonel Motor".



Figure 4. Charles de Gaulle standing next to a D2, 1937 "Colonel Motor"

(source: Die Welt Wasilij, Saizev <https://www.facebook.com/wasiwot/posts/938529639887464>)

"COLONEL MOTOR", MOTORIST FOR ROMANIA

"Colonel Motor" has another meaning for our country as de Gaulle was the one to bring the first automobile to Romania and help build this industry through Dacia in collaboration with Renault. Romania was already manufacturing off-road vehicles in Câmpulung Muscel since 1957, but it was looking to expand into the automotive industry. De Gaulle visited Mioveni where the *Uzina de Autoturisme* would be inaugurated after signing the contract in September 1966. After signing the contract, Renault agreed to let Romanian engineers and workers first build a car prototype before the official inauguration date. At first, the prototype was supposed to be a Renault 16, but in the end a Renault 8 model was chosen and called Dacia 1100. After the French president's visit in May, "*the production of Dacia 1100, a model licensed under Renault 8, starts on 20 August 1968. It is a rear-engined rear-wheel-drive small car. The first automobile that drove out of the factory was a present for the president of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceaușescu. According to the contract, Renault provided all the parts needed for this model, and Dacia handled the assembly line*" (Dacia Clasic, n.d.).

Before visiting the Dacia factory, he witnessed the Olcit factory venture in Craiova, a moment of great enthusiasm in the Oltenia region that we are reminded of through the following poem: "*Somewhere close to Craiova/ Where leeks grow straight/ And the man from Oltenia/ Is smart from birth./ A strange metal vehicle/ Is about to be born/ From the renowned Gallic rooster/ And the lady dog from Oltenia. People from Oltenia are confused/ And they start wondering/ Will their new car/ Bark or crow?*" (Detailing Workshop 2019). A year after the visit, General de Gaulle was not the president of France anymore, however, the projects continued as both Renault and Citroën wanted to continue expanding into the Comecon market. Production started at the Olcit factory in Craiova at the end of June 1977 and was completed in 1980. There was a possibility to obtain a license for a French plane - the MIRAGE-F, but this could not be completed as France refused to allow the production of high grade military technology in a country part of the Warsaw Treaty as it violated CoCom- Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls regulations imposed on state members of NATO. These regulations restricted the list of nuclear, military and civilian embargo for communist states. Despite this, the negotiations concerning the production of planes in Romania that took place during de Gaulle's presidential term resulted in obtaining the rights to produce the ALOUETTE III 316B helicopter in 1970 (Măță 2011, 145-146).



Figure 5. May 16, 1968. Nicolae Ceaușescu and Charles de Gaulle greeting people in Craiova city center
(source: http://vladimirrosulescu-istorie.blogspot.com/2011_10_03_archive.html)

A COMMON DENOMINATOR: THE SPECIAL MILITARY SCHOOL OF SAINT-CYR

Charles de Gaulle was the second son of a devoutly traditional patriotic middle-class Roman-Catholic family known for historians and writers. He was passionate about military life and studied at Saint-Cyr where, in 1913, he joined the infantry regiment led by colonel Philippe Pétain as a young second lieutenant. De Gaulle was a young intelligent soldier, hardworking and eager in his military career, a brilliant mind with great self-confidence and remarkable courage. During the First World War, he fought in the Battle of Verdun where he was wounded three times and spent two years and eight months as a war prisoner despite his five attempts to escape. After a short visit to Poland as part of a military mission, a year of teaching at Saint-Cyr and a two-year training course at the École Supérieure de Guerre ("Superior War School"), he was promoted by Marshal Pétain in 1925. When the Second World War commenced, de Gaulle was commanding the French fifth army's tank force. In May 1940, he temporarily took over command of the fourth Armoured Division. He maintained his rank of division commander until the end of his life.

He had the opportunity to apply his theories about armed corps and tank power during the battles of Montcornet (17 May 1940) and Abbeville (27 May – 4 June 1940). He was commended as "an admirable spirited and courageous leader" (Agerpres 2020) and wrote his memoirs in his book "The Complete War Memoirs of Charles de Gaulle".

Polihron Dumitrescu attended the Infantry Military School between 1911 and 1913 and was promoted from second lieutenant to lieutenant, and eventually captain when Romania entered World War I in 1917. In 1921 he attended the Superior War School in Bucharest for one year, after which he was sent to finish his studies at the Superior War School in Paris between 1922 and 1924. He was promoted to major and then later, during the reign of Carol II of Romania, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1933 and colonel in 1937.

He became division commander in 1943 and later Vice Chief of Staff of the Third Army, Commanding Officer Infantry of the 21st Infantry Division, Director of Supreme Military Education of the Ministry of War, General Officer Commanding of the 21st Infantry Division and lastly Deputy General Officer Commanding of the Capital Military Command. He was awarded the Order of the Star of Romania in 1945 and retired on 9 August 1947. The general wrote his memoirs and published them in 1997 after the fall of the communist regime (Roșulescu 2011).

Ioan Heruvim was awarded the Order of Michael the Brave, class three by royal decree nr. 1888/12 October 1944 as commander of Regiment 11 Roșiori. He became commander at the School of Cavalry in Târgoviște where he brilliantly led the cavalry officers and Academy Professors to form the new cavalry elite of Romania with astonishing results in battle and equitation. A street connected to Viforâta village, close to Dealu Monastery where Mihai the Brave's head rests, takes its name from the general. He also received post-mortem the title of honorary citizen of the city of Târgoviște, together with others such as artists Vasile Blendea and Gheorghe Petrașcu, actors Tony Bulanda and Mihai Popescu, the writer Radu Petrescu, professor Cezar Spineanu, the engineer Constantin

Tzitzeclis and the traditional and popular folk music singer Ileana Sărăroiu (Târgoviște Town Hall, n.d.). Neither he, nor his family published any book of memoirs.



Figure 6. May 17, 1968. General Charles de Gaulle at the Royal Court of Targoviste

(source: <https://www.comunismulinromania.ro/index.php/14-18-mai-1968-vizita-lui-charles-de-gaulle-in-romania-ata-t-in-capitala-cat-si-in-orasul-craiova/>)

PARIS-CRAIOVA-TÂRGOVIȘTE MILITARY ITINERARY – CONCLUSIONS

The itinerary of General Charles de Gaulle's visit to Romania was created while keeping in mind the two meetings with his former classmates, Polihron Dumitrescu and Ioan Heruvim, otherwise Craiova, Târgoviște, Slatina or Ploiești would not have been part of it.

A visit to Pitești and Colibași-Mioveni to visit the new Dacia factory for automobiles had already been taken into account and from there to Bucharest.

The French president's wish and actions completely changed the two generals' lives as Romanian authorities were forced to rescue them from the dismal conditions they had been placed in by the communist regime. I commend de Gaulle's honesty and sense of responsibility as through his salute, he was able to still pay his respects to Polihron Dumitrescu, a superior student from their time at Saint-Cyr. This gesture born of nostalgia after four and a half decades of not having seen his "superior" classmate (Roșulescu 2011) proved his sense of honour and real dignity.

This was the first and last reunion of the three generals due to their advancing age and other events. In 1969, Charles de Gaulle was replaced by Georges Pompidou and never visited Romania again. His Romanian colleagues were unable to leave the country and visit him due to travel restrictions imposed by the communist regime.

The important thing was that the military itinerary Paris-Craiova-Târgoviște was a success and Charles de Gaulle managed to achieve all his objectives during his visit to Romania.

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THE BATTLE OF MĂRĂȘEȘTI. THE STORY OF A MAUSOLEUM

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Abstract

Located in the “fire triangle” Mărăști, Mărășești, Oituz, the battle of Mărășești represents the most important battle of the first World War on the Romanian front.

The battle from Mărășești, which lasted 29 days (24 July/6 August to 21 August/3 September 1917), stands for an important page of military history, being dubbed the “Romanian Verdun”. The Romanian army, although exceeded both in number and in the first technical means of fighting, managed, by tactics and by galvanizing the soldiers, to frustrate the offensive plans of the “frontier breaker”, Anton Ludwig August von Mackensen.

Right on the ground where the battle had taken place, the Mausoleum of the First World War Heroes was built. The remains of over 5,000 soldiers and officers are buried there.

This paper aims to bring back to the image of today's generation the brilliant victory of the Romanian army.

Keywords: First World War; Mărășești; Ecaterina Teodoroiu; Mausoleum; Eremia Grigorescu.

INTRODUCTION

Mărășești, managed to crush the plans of the Central Powers to get Romania out of war. Engaged in an overwhelming war, the Romanian army, made up of peasants and led by skilled commanders, managed to cope with an enemy who had both numerical superiority and the most modern technical means.

The reorganization of the Romanian army in the winter of 1916 and spring of 1917 was carried out under very difficult conditions. A large part of population from the Southern part of the country took refuge in Moldavia. The Russian troops, who had a staff of about a million people, were also brought here. Thus, in a few weeks, the population of Moldova has tripled. The difficult living conditions represented by the lack of clothing and food, led to exantematic typhos and recurrent fever epidemics, which hit both the civilian population and the military.

THE BEGINNING

After the battle in Mărăști, ending with the success of the Romanian army, the German army reorganizes, giving up the offensive in the Namoloasa area. It forces the entry into Moldova, through the Mărășești and Oituz points, aiming to pullout the Romanian army from the war and to have a free way to enter Ukraine.

In the summer of 1917, the front settled on the Galati-Nămoloasa-Tecuci-Mărășești-Mărăști-Oituz line. Although the force ratio was superior to the enemy, the Russian-Romanian army had, in the Mărășești area, a well-designed defense system by general Christescu. The system develops in length on the Cosmești-Muncelu line and in width, in rows defense trenches.

At Mărășești there were four rows of trenches, spread over a width of 4-5 kilometers. In the middle of it is the railway knot at Mărășești and the bridge at Cosmești. The bridge was of particular importance, facilitating the passage of German troops to southern Ukraine.

The battle was conducted along three lines:

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1. Toward Siret;
2. Front on Mărășești;
3. The counterattack from Răzoare Forest, Muncelu, Cota 100.

The length of the front was about 35 kilometers. There were numerous forces present in this area: The Russian 4th Army (84 battalions) and the Romanian first Army (6 divisions, including a cavalry division, an aeronautics group division and a heavy artillery division).

The German forces in the offensive sector were consisted of 102 infantry battalions, 10 cavalry squadrons, 24 pioneering companies, 2 mini-cars, 1135 machine guns, 356 mine throwers, 223 field tunnels, 122 guns and heavy howitzer (Kirițescu, 1989,84-85).

THE STAGES OF THE BATTLE

The battle in Mărășești took place in three stages.

The first stage

The first stage started on the morning of 24 July/6 August 1917, with an artillery barrage that lasted 2,30 hours. Mărășești was razed from the face of the earth. Three German divisions, 12th Division, 76 and 89 Infantry Division attacked Mărășești Frontal, on a 10 km sector between Siret and Focsani- Mărășești railway. This sector was defended by the Russian 34 Infantry Division, in which General Christescu sent the Romanian 5th Infantry Division. The latter gets into the defence system and stops the German advance, preventing the enemy from reaching the bridge at Cosmesti.

The next day, von Mackensen, attacks northwards, perpendicularly to the front, in the area of Doaga- Mărășești. It is causing the Russian-Romanian troops abandoning the village of Doaga. The 34th Russian Division was decimated. The German army used a hollow with chlorine gas. Almost all the horses used to tow the heavy cannons of the Russian 34 Division died asphyxiated and they were abandoned.

The Russian 71 infantry Division, the Romanian 14 and 9 Infantry Divisions receive orders and enter the device to cover the remains of the Russian 34 Division and to stop the advance of the German army on the Doaga-Mărășești sector. Romanian soldiers showed great heroism in hand-to-hand fighting. (*Actualitatea*, no.13-14, 1921, 4-8)

On 27 July/9 August the whole fight was moved to the flow area of Siret. The Roman 5th and 9th divisions in the area of Siret are retreating to the north of the railway Tecuci- Mărășești. From Iasi, from the Romanian-Russian united command led by Scerbaciov, orders are given for a counteroffensive on the entire front area. This counteroffensive starts on 28 July/10 August. Despite the hard fighting, Russian-Romanian troops were unable to recover the village of Doaga. In regiments 5 and 9 Romanian infantry and in regiments 13 and 71 Russian infantry there are massive losses (Dabija 1936, 506).

General Ragoza and general Christescu are to be put under pressure following the failure. While Christescu wanted an offensive action, general Ragoza wanted to withdraw from Sascut. Following these disagreements, general Christescu is replaced, and he is sent to inspect conscripts from Moldova (Ioanițiu 1929,330).

After the war, Christescu was declared by communist history as the traditional model of cowardness, as a traitor of the Russians, and was banned from burial in the Mausoleum in Mărășești.

General Eremia Grigorescu was brought to the leadership of the first Romanian Army under pressure from landlord Negropontes. A command is created under the leadership of Russian General Ragoza.

As of 29 July/11 August 1917, the intensity of the battle around Mărășești has decreased.

The second stage

The second stage was the beginning of a German offensive in the Panciu-Muncelu area. The Russians are withdrawing from the line, and General Ragoza is asking the command of Romanian troops to withdraw. This is where the conflict between generals Grigorescu and Ragoza comes from.

This withdrawal meant the loss of Marasesti locality and the alignment of troops on the Adjud line. Ragoza is dismissed, and the command of the Romanian-Russian troops lies with General Eremia Grigorescu (Actualitatea no 18-19, 1921, 1-5)

On 1/14 August 1917, von Mackensen gave orders to attack the Chicera, with the German army advancing on the front area 10 kilometers. There is a danger of the front breaking and of the German troops entering, surrounding the Romanian-Russian troops in the Mărășești area.

The Germans at the same time strongly attack the position of the Cosmești bridge. The Romanian troops could not resist and are retreating in the area of Nicorești. They decided that the bridge should be dynamited so that it would not fall into the hands of the enemy.

On 6/19 August 1917, a generalized attack begins on the whole front line, the climax of the fighting in Mărășești. The 5th German infantry Division hits the front hard between Panciu and Mărășești, in the area of the Răzoare Forest and the Cota 100.

The front situation is represented in Fig. 1.

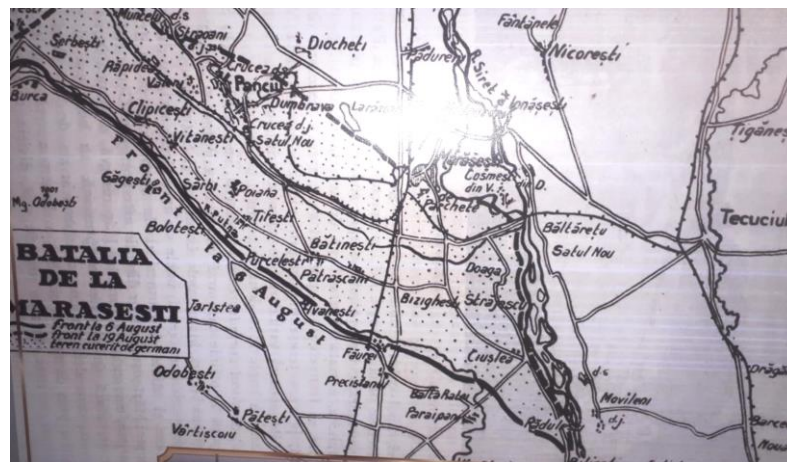


Figure 1. State of the front on 6 and 9 August 1917

Source: The Vrancea Museum, The Mausoleum Marasesti

Captain Grigore Ignat dies here. The actions stopped the German army from moving forward until reserves came. The Germans have not managed to break the front.

There were fierce battles in the Mărășești railway station area. The railway station and the railway were destroyed.

In the no. 90 Order of the day, General Eremia Grigorescu (Fig. 2) addresses the Romanian soldiers: "...you have ruined the terrible efforts of the wild enemy, proving the world more than once that there's no way of passing through here. There's where the German General Mackensen has seen what defeat means.

Mărășești has been the tomb of the German illusions. (Munteanu, 1977, 97-98).

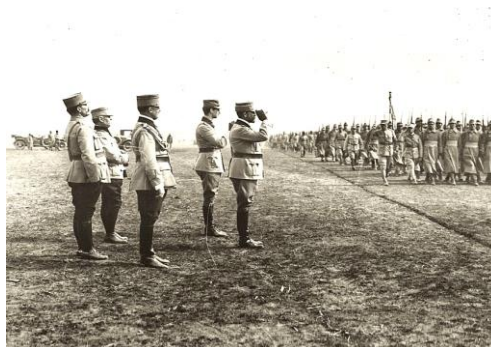


Figure 2. General Eremia Grigorescu

Source: The Vrancea Museum, The Mausoleum Marasesti.

The third stage

Phase three took place from 7/20 August to 21 August/3 September 1917 and was characterized by a weakening of the intensity of the fighting. The Germans focused on strengthening positions in the Varnita-Muncelu area, trying another massive attack (Actualitatea no 21-22,1921,5-7)

On 15/28 August, the German IX Army launches its last offensive. The artillery opens fire on the Mărășești -Varnita line. Early in the day, the Germans are strongly attacking in the workers' area, the Russians are retreating to the north, two Russian regiments are deserting, with the remaining empty position being immediately occupied by the Romanian 3rd Infantry Division.

On 16/29 August the Romanian 9 and 13 Divisions and the Russian 15 Division are brought from the Doaga- Cosmești area to the Muncelu area in order to recover the lost land. Ecaterina Teodoroiu also dies here, headed by an infantry platoon. In the no. 1 Order of the day 23rd August 1917, Ecaterina Teodoroiu is called "The Heroine from Jiu" (Fig.3).

From the stories heard from the villagers of Fitionești village, we find that the place where the heroine died is in a clearing in the north of the Fitionești village. Severely wounded she was taken to the field hospital where she died. She was buried in Fitionești, District of Putna, her remains being later moved to Tg. Jiu, in a mausoleum in the city centre.

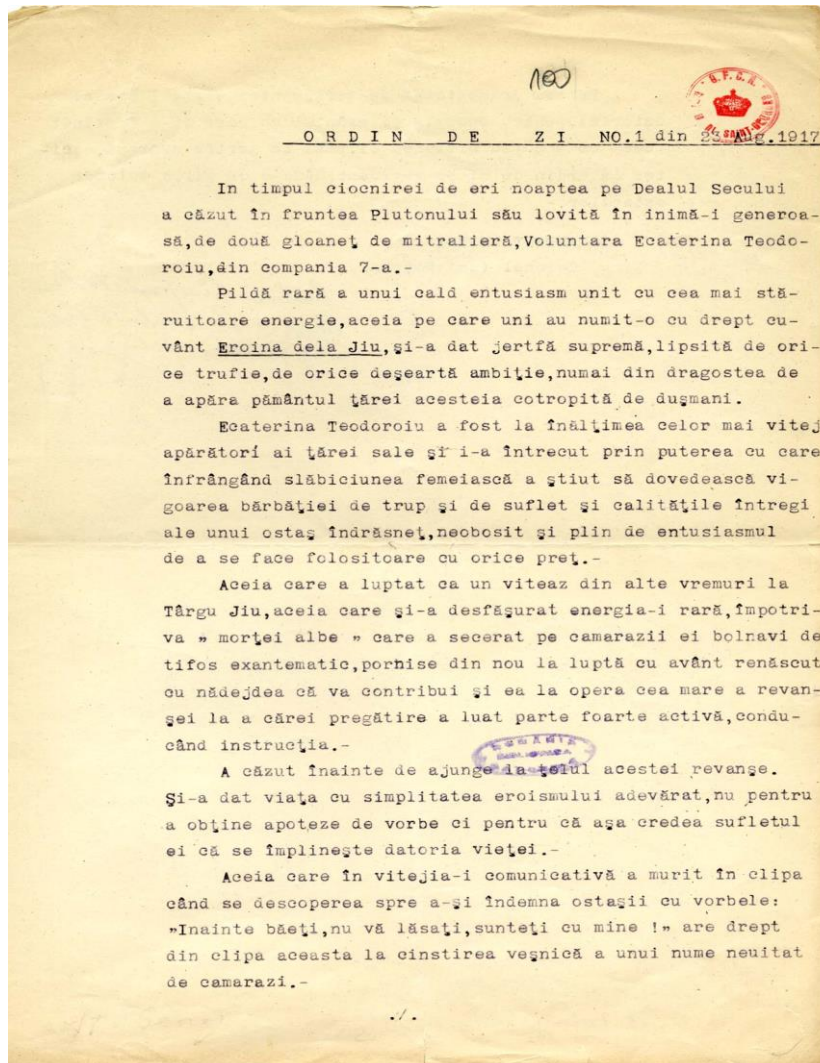


Figure 3. Documents about death of Ecaterina Teodoroiu

Source: National Library of Romania- Digital Library:
http://virtual1.bibnat.ro/arhiva%20istorica/Fond%20Saint%20Georges/dosar-938/Fond%20Saint%20Georges-dosar%20938-fila%2098-103_005.jpg

Another heroic story is that of Măriuca Zaharia, a 12 year old girl, who, from up a tree kept providing useful information about the position of the german troops till she was shot to death.

On 20 August/3 September, given the massive effort and the fact that the troops were exhausted, both sides decided to stop the fight and to preserve every place they took as a result of the fighting (Kiritescu 1989, 177).

This is how the event known in German historiography as “the battle of penetration at Putna and Sușita” ended (Vulcănescu 1938, 923).

CONCLUSIONS

Losses are massive in both sides. There were 27.410 injured and missing deaths in the Romanian camp, the 4th Russian Army recorded 25.650 wounded and missing deaths. The opposing camp recorded 60.000-65.000 dead, wounded and missing.



*Fig. 3: The Mausoleum of the First World War Heroes
Source: The Vrancea Museum, The Mausoleum Marasesti.*

The heroism of the Romanian “opincars” had a great echo in the newspapers of the weather. Thus, several Allies' publications take over the article of the “Times” press correspondent to the Romanian Army. The heroic feats of these peasant-soldiers on the battlefield were praised as they faced an army which strongly outnumbered them, being by far better equipped.

The mausoleum built in memory of the heroes at Mărășești (Fig. 3) right on the former battle field, on the land donated by Ulise Negropontes on the 14th July 1921, is now known as The Church of the Romanian People. It shelters the remains of 5,073 soldiers and officers, in 154 individual vaults and 9 common ones. There also is a vault of the young heroine, Măriuca Zaharia. (Bălescu, 1993, 77).

In the central part there is the sarcophagus of general Eremia Grigorescu. On the front of the building there is the inscription “to the glory of the heroes of the nation, framed by the localities in which the great battles were fought during the summer of fire Jiu – Olt – Sibiu – Coșna – Cireșoia – Robănești – Neajlov – Dragoslave – Predeal – C. Lung – Panciu – Răzoare – Brașov – Porumbacu – Mărășești – Mărăști – Oituz – Doaga – Muncel – Arabași – Barcut – Amzacea – Prunaru – Cerna – Cașin – Valea Uzului – Sticlărie (Bălescu, 1993, 84).

On the right of the Mausoleum there is The Museum of Battles or The Museum of Arms, where among other exhibits as arms, documents, photos, military equipment, personal objects belonging to Ecaterina Teodoroiu, a symbolic figure of the war, are to be found.

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MILITARY MOBILITY IN THE EUROPEAN THEATRE

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Abstract

To ensure its defense and deterrence posture, NATO has to prove the ability to quickly deploy, reinforce and sustain its forces across the entire SACEUR Area of Responsibility. To ensure the end-state of free deployment of forces across Europe, the Alliance identified the need to abolish legal and administrative barriers and to improve the infrastructure status and transportations capacity.

Both NATO and the European Union recognized the military mobility deficiencies as a strategic vulnerability for Europe in case of a peer-to-peer conflict scenario.

Keywords: NATO; European Union; Eastern Flank; military mobility; deployment; sustainment.

INTRODUCTION

All the emplaced and the foreseen deterrence and defense measures are depending on the Alliance ability to quickly deploy its forces in the required areas, to integrate them in assigned Area of Responsibility (AoR) and to properly sustain and reinforce them. For an effective deterrence posture, against a peer adversary, NATO has to look back and to reassess the lessons identified and learned during the Cold War.

In that period, the allied effort was directed to Central Europe with massive conventional forces deployed forward, in response to Moscow's threat. The regional responsibilities were clearly defined and assigned to field commanders that were already aware about the future boundaries, neighboring formations and the arrangement done for national, multinational and host nation support. Also, there were in place detailed plans on Rear Area engagements as infrastructure, war stocks, strategic lift capacity, and sustainment procedures.

As for nowadays situation, we can identify different types of barriers for military deployment and operations. Primarily, the physical, legal and administrative obstacles are in relation to the existing transportation infrastructure of the European territory and with the border crossing procedures. In 2017, during a US led exercise that simulated an airborne operation designated to repel an adversary force that violated the territorial integrity of a NATO member, the helicopter of General Ben Hodges, US Army Europe commander, flying from Hungary, was diverted from its planned course to accomplish border crossing procedures in Romania. (European Army Center 2021) Such administrative procedures, as passport and customs checks, but also infrastructure caveats and legal constrains constitute typical routine in Europe and pose a significant risk to military speed and efficiency.

MOBILITY AND SUSTAINMENT CHALLENGES

Through the adaptation process and the Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic area (DDA) posture, NATO is committed to reach again the peer-to-peer deterrence capabilities. In current security environment, the readiness and the ability to quickly deploy and effect are some of the most relevant characteristics of forces. In this spirit, NATO looks for reducing the obstacles to military movement into and across Europe, and for an efficient sustainment flow for its forces.

In conjunction with the implementation of Joint Support and Enabling Command (JSEC) in Ulm, starting 2018, NATO members took further steps to ensure allied forces can be mobilized and

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deployed faster, and to improve the forces military mobility by land, air, and sea. At the Brussels Summit in July 2018, the Alliance agreed upon an “*enablement plan*”, in order to enhance Command and Control (C2) capabilities and to increase transport capabilities in support of military mobility.

NATO tested its ability to move military assets between European countries during large military exercise that involved force deployments, overloads of the transportation infrastructure and logistic hubs, joint training and integrations of units. Exercise series like Trident Juncture, Brilliant Jump or Noble Jump each represent a massive logistical challenge that tests the ability of NATO members to deploy a fighting force to wherever it is needed. The practiced deployments are focused on the NATO Response Force (NRF) elements with high readiness and are closely coordinated with local NATO headquarters and national authorities from the receiving nations.

The primary objective of this type of training events is to maintain the readiness of Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) forces, to evaluate their ability to rapidly deploy and to enhance the logistic interoperability of allies and partners. However, through NATO exercises relevant lessons regarding legal and administrative procedures are identified, information regarding the infrastructure status is collected and the local logistic hubs’ capacity to deal with the burden of receiving large volumes of troops and equipment is also tested.

In April 2020, the International Centre for Defense and Security published a report signed by the former LANDCOM and US Army Europe commander Ben Hodges together with Tony Lawrence and Ray Wojcik, regarding the military mobility in Europe. “*Until Something Moves: Reinforcing the Baltic Region in Crisis and War*” study recommends that NATO and the EU should continue to work together to “*reduce potential barriers to movement created by cross-border and in-country movement regulations, customs and taxation requirements, and other administrative and legislative procedures*”. (Ben Hodges 2021)

At the EU level, according to the Council decisions of June 25, 2018, the European Commission launched, in collaboration with European Defense Agency, the development of the “Action Plan on Military Mobility” that intends to soothe and standardize cross-border procedures for military personnel and equipment. The EU is recognizing that the military mobility represents a “*strategic weakness in European defense cooperation*” and “*in the event of an unpredictable crisis at any EU border, military personnel and equipment must be able to move rapidly across the territory. Currently, training and the movement of military assets across the continent is severely hampered by the lack of appropriate infrastructure and cumbersome customs procedures.*” (EU Parliament 2021)

After 2014, the relevance of the mobility projects increased dramatically for the Eastern Flank’s NATO members. Romania's 2020 *White paper on defense*, also underlines the importance of the military mobility and states that “*promoting projects on the interconnection of transport routes, in the context of the commitments on military mobility undertaken in the framework of NATO and the EU*” (R. W. defence 2020) is a major objective of Bucharest.

The challenges of NATO’s Eastern Flank and the critical importance of military mobility were regularly promoted by Romania inside both Western organizations. Among other central figures as the head of the EU Military Committee, General Claudio Graziano, the former Commander of LANDCOM and US Army Europe presented his view on military mobility during “*Military Mobility and Supporting Infrastructure. A New Challenge to EU and NATO*” conference. The 2019 event, was organized by the New Strategy Centre and German Marshall Fund Romania in association with the Ministry of Defense of Romania, represented a local platform for discussions regarding the abolishment of procedural and legal barriers, infrastructure improvement and better coordination of the activities in support of military operations in the Eastern Flank.

In March 2020 when the economic difficulties generated by COVID-19 pandemic hampered the resource allocation for projects such as European Defense Fund and the Military Mobility initiative, the foreign ministers of the states belonging to Bucharest Nine Format protested. Poland, Romania, Latvia and Lithuania, EU and NATO members, mentioned in a joint letter that Brussels’ budget cuttings could affect EU ambitions in the “*military mobility*” programme. The project was considered one of the Commission priorities and contained measures to move troops and equipment efficiently across Europe in the event of a conflict in the East.

The Bucharest Nine demand came as a technical document was previously released by EU Commission in which it was revealed the EU's 2021-2027 budget proposal to drastically reduce the funding for the military mobility programme. In these conditions, without a common funding, the EU countries supposed to exclusively allocate national funding for updating bridges, roads and rail networks to ensure military responsiveness in case of a conflict with Russia. Following negotiations, the bloc's defense plans were assumed by Brussels and the Military Mobility initiative is set to obtain 1.5 billion EUR in the seven-year plan starting 2021. (Sprenger 2021)

INFRASTRUCTURE GAPS

During the Cold War, both security blocks developed a deep knowledge, translated into capabilities, on the infrastructure requirements for large military operations and strategic and operational deployments of forces and equipment. Nowadays much of that knowledge has been lost and the old infrastructure degraded. Moreover, the majority of present-day maps do not offer even basic figures regarding the infrastructure characteristics.

After the Cold War, due to the changes in the security environment and a shift in NATO's focus from deterrence to out-of-area-operations, roads, bridges and rail networks across Europe were not built with military considerations in mind, and cannot sustain use by heavy military equipment.

Infrastructure represents a major factor within high-level keystone considerations such as strategic advance planning and the Concept for Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA). Assessing the impact of infrastructure deficiencies on NATO force deployments and operations is a priority for both NATO and EU, but the Alliance is lacking the economic leverage to act on its own to mitigate the identified gaps.

The development of infrastructure became an inherent part of readiness and reinforcement initiatives and relevant progress has been made to integrate infrastructure into the overall process, starting with strategic level planning.

Infrastructure is a cross functional approach in support of planning, conducting and sustainment for operations, and it constitutes a significant aspect of the physical operating environment. Starting 2014, after decades when the military infrastructure has been neglected and was only treated at the tactical level (construction), the return to the collective defense concerns has led to readiness and reinforcement initiatives that often have to rely on an inadequate infrastructure. Because these initiatives require an AOR prepared to the level of ambition and specific timelines, the focus has increased on NATO territory enablement and on infrastructure investments.

The transport infrastructure deficiencies, identified by NATO planners, are ranging from limitations generated by the weight capacity of the road surface, bridges capacity and railway traffic restrains. For strategic and operational deployment of heavy equipment, the railway system is the optimal transport choice, but the investments in this sector were very limited in Eastern Europe generating a significant decrease of its transport capacity. The road network was developed without considering the military needs and transport standards and has as the main restraint the capacity of bridges which cannot ensure the passage of the heaviest armour.

These infrastructure capacity challenges can be solved on long term through standardization and expensive investment programs, but a short-term mitigation option could be the creation of accurate databases with infrastructure specifications and the acquisition of indispensable equipment such as rail wagons with appropriate carrying capacity and road semi-trailer carriers. For deploying and sustaining operations, NATO is relying on Logistics Functional Services (LOGFAS), a software that enables logistics planners at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels to effectively plan for movement and sustainment of personnel and equipment. For operations, the LOGFAS data base creation, synchronization and deconfliction is the responsibility of SJLSG HQ. The SJLSG Allied Movement Coordination Centre (AMCC), the Major NATO Command (MNC) agency for management of strategic movements is providing the validation and supervision for this task, but nations are often reluctant to share all relevant details, especially in term of infrastructure capabilities.

NATO efforts, in conjunction with the European Union, are directed to enhance military mobility. Areas of cooperation include coordination of military requirements, customs and border-

crossing legislation, regulations and procedures, and transport infrastructure. NATO members, together with EU, are working to ensure that the required legislation and procedures are in place to mobilize and move the forces across borders rapidly, to enhance Command, Control and Communications (C3), and to increase the Alliance's capabilities and capacities, including by upgrading the infrastructure across Europe. As part of these broader efforts, in October 2019, NATO, in close cooperation with EUROCONTROL, (EUROCONTROL civil-military organisation) established the *Rapid Air Mobility Mechanism*, which allows Allied aircraft to move across Europe with priority handling by Air Traffic Control in Europe.

Within the framework of the *European Union military Mobility Concept*, parameters for EU infrastructure work have been established, allowing nations to organize national infrastructure planning and to implement military considerations required by NATO. The next step, which is already initiated, is the *Strategic Infrastructure Master Planning* that should establish a connection of infrastructure to defense planning. This would support the allies at the political level in their determination to what degree infrastructure requirements should be included in future capability targets.

All these projects will widen the current purely force focused defense planning process to include infrastructure. As one of the supporting pillars, infrastructure assessment is further being developed. (Conference 2021) This allows for assessing the capability of existing infrastructure in support of operations. Focused at NATO operational and national level, the infrastructure assessment provides input for gap analysis in support of *Strategic Infrastructure Master Planning*.

CONCLUSIONS

In order to increase Europe strategic independence both NATO and EU should continue working in conjunction to re-establish capabilities, to improve the ability to reinforce and resupply across the continent.

The road and rail networks should be set to be able to handle heavy military equipment, investments are needed to prepare the internal waterways and also sea and air ports that connect not only different European region, but the EU with its oversea partners. Being a costly long-term process, achieving the required level of mobility for military operations should be complemented with short and medium term security mitigations measures.

To address deployment, reinforcement and sustainment challenges for the NATO's Eastern Flank, regional initiatives have been emplaced to increase cooperation and to preposition forces, equipment and stocks. All these incoming resources would be under the C2 of regional multinational headquarters that will address security threats by coordinating the host receiving nations' efforts to the ones of sending nations.

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EUROCONTROL is a pan-European, civil-military organisation dedicated to supporting European aviation.

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A COMPARATIVE VIEW ON SECURITY CULTURE AS REFLECTED IN ROMANIA'S NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGIES

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Abstract

The present paper aims at analyzing the concept of security culture by, firstly, pinpointing its theoretical underpinnings and, secondly, by undertaking a qualitative thematic analysis of the concept as it is presented in Romania's National Defense Strategies from the last decade. The objective is to examine to what extent the evolutions in the security environment are mirrored in the understanding of the concept at strategic level and in the objectives and actions proposed for the implementation of security culture at societal level.

Keywords: strategic culture; security culture; security environment; threats; risks; vulnerabilities.

INTRODUCTION

Security culture is a concept of increasing importance in contemporary society because there are several transformations that have occurred in recent decades that have led to a change in the paradigm of security itself. These changes pertain to international relations e.g. the end of the Cold War; to a more intense scrutiny on the role that culture plays in the field of security; and to the transformations of the informational and communicational media. The present article is aimed at analyzing the themes that have been considered relevant as pertaining to security culture in the Romanian National Defence Strategies. The reason for choosing to analyze these themes is that they determine the public sphere discussions on the issues of security culture, as well as on the measures needed to build a resilient security culture, as these themes become the narratives that will then be the basis for communication strategies meant to build and strengthen security culture. These themes are the building blocks of security culture.

THE EVOLUTION OF SECURITY CULTURE IN LIGHT OF THE TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

In order to fully grasp what security culture is and how it can be achieved, one needs to first examine the terms that make it up. Culture can have many definitions and interpretations which could be summarized under four main categories: (1) to the products that it is manifest in; (2) the mechanisms, patterns and behaviors that lead to its formation, transmission and that are engrained in it; (3) the attitudes, values, knowledge and beliefs it encapsulates; (4) the process of fostering growth and development. As A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn explain in their extensive study of culture: “Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand as conditioning elements of further action” (Kroeber & Kluckhohn 1952, 357) As it can be seen, culture is a shared schema of interpretation for a certain group; however, this does not mean that culture implies homogeneity or lack of debates or differentiations within a certain group. Members of the group could be experts or novices, they might have differences or variations in knowledge or values or beliefs, communities that develop cultures and function in a cultured environment might have factions, but they share overall values and interests that are meant

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to protect and ensure the wellbeing and survival of their communities. This utilitarian and pluralistic view of culture is the background for the development of contemporary security culture.

The term security culture has evolved from the Cold War term strategic culture, first introduced by J. Snyder and defined as “the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired with regard to [nuclear strategy]” (Snyder 1977, 8). It evolved from a culture of isolation, fear and distrust that the two geostrategic blocks, NATO countries and Warsaw Treaty countries separated by the Iron Curtain, had with respect to one another. It provided doctrines and mechanisms meant to manage and control the conflictual situation that simmered between the two blocks for over 50 years. As such it was focused mainly outward, towards enemies but also towards allies, and it was based on clear delimitations and roles that were assigned to all those targeted. Strategic culture as such did not focus on the situation within the borders of the countries, or on the domestic public’s attitudes towards security. Strategic culture is a matter of the image a state or organization promotes towards those that are not part of their respective communities. As such, it was more homogeneous in the time of the Cold War when dissention on the part of the Warsaw Treaty countries was extremely difficult, and the NATO countries maintained their image of morally superior, progressive, free and developed societies.

The concept of strategic culture continued to evolve in international relations studies. Lucian Pye (1985) viewed strategic culture as a generator of preferences and as a vehicle for the transmission of values and for the renewal of these values. Rosen further refined the term by explaining that strategic culture includes “the beliefs and assumptions that frame (...) choices about international military behavior, particularly those concerning decisions to go to war, preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable” (Rosen 1996, 12). In these definitions, the focus remains of the external, international, conflictual nature of strategic culture as it is still influenced by traditional views of warfare as a clearly temporally, spatially and auctorially delimited engagement. A.I. Johnston takes the definition of strategic culture one step further by analyzing more closely the traits of culture with a focus on the relation between cultural patterns and behaviors. He explains that the former affects the latter in the sense that patterns limit behavioral options and affect how members of a particular culture learn from the interaction with their environment (Johnston 1995, 45). In terms of strategic culture, this means that leaders can choose from a set of strategic choices which can allow for predictions with respect to targeted behavior and which can be enacted in a certain context.

The concept was further enhanced by C.S. Gray who defined it as: “the master narrative, is the disarmingly elementary, even commonsensical, idea, that a security community is likely to think and behave in ways that are influenced by what it has taught itself about itself and its relevant contexts. And that education, to repeat, rests primarily upon the interpretation of history and history’s geography (or should it be geography’s history?)” (Gray 2006, 7). He extended the meaning to include the image that a society has of itself, the image that it promotes and teaches about itself, as influenced by the historical and geographical context in which it finds itself. Thus, strategic culture in Gray’s understanding is more encompassing and it signals the shift to what security culture is today. This shift has been caused by the increasingly complex and complicated geopolitical contexts, determined by sometimes conflicting geostrategic interests, by the unpredictable and hybrid security challenges and demographic changes. The more complex contemporary warfare has become and the more the classical delimitations between actors and types of actions that belligerent parties can engage in during war have been blurred, the more the need for a more nuanced, extensive and inclusive view of strategic culture has become. This trend has led to the adoption of the concept security culture, whose focus, as we shall further analyze, is placed more on domestic audiences than on international relations.

Moreover, the adoption of the concept of security culture has also been warranted by the societal transformations that have also occurred. Once the Cold War ended and communication among all countries, regardless of their past political regimes, became more widespread, the populations could make comparisons with other societies and examine their own societies and cultures in light of an extended array of values, attitudes, behaviors, which means, in light of other cultural lenses. Information exchange and sharing means that cultures become more comparable,

more diverse approaches are encouraged, attitudes are being refined, values are being contested, supported, extended, modified, leading to development, but possibly also to deterioration or corruption. In other words, cultural interaction is an opportunity, however, it can also give rise to vulnerabilities and risks, when the values it is founded on are challenged and attacked, either from within or from without. In this new context, security culture becomes much needed in order to preserve the wellbeing of societies.

Security has an equally multifaceted definition with different interpretations depending on the theoretical framework that studied it. The understanding of the concept has also evolved from what it meant in traditional international relations when the focus was on the security of the state against outside aggressions more precisely military security, to what it means today, when the concept is widened both in scope as well as in audiences. This widening of the scope of security has been debated by Barry Buzan who explains that the concept of security is related to survival, and in order to be considered a security issue, a threat, be it military or non-military, has to be “an existential threat to a referent object by a securitizing actor who thereby generates endorsement for emergency measures beyond rules that would otherwise bind” (Buzan 1997, 13). These threats can be found in any of the sectors which are placed under the umbrella term of security (Buzan et al 1998, 21-23). For example, in the military the referent object is the state or another political entity and the existential threats usually pertain to the military, i.e. survival of the armed forces. In the political sector the existential threat is to the state, its sovereignty or ideology. In the economic sector, existential threats are more difficult to determine as the economic system, especially in a globalized world, can fluctuate but eventually balance itself. In the societal sector the referent object can refer to “collective identities that can function independent of the state, such as nations and religions” (Buzan et al 1998, 22-23). In the environmental sector, existential threat could range from particular ones, such as endangered species, to more general one, such as global warming. Buzan explains his approach to security and this explanation foretells the development of security culture which has to mitigate for the effects of various actors, on different security sectors. “The future management of security will have to include a handling of these actors, as for instance in strategies aimed at mitigating security dilemmas and fostering mutual awareness in security complexes” (Buzan 1997, 20). The strategic approach to existential security threats has become increasingly engrained in Romania’s National Defence Strategies as our analysis in the second section will prove.

Bjørn Møller (2000) explains that there has been a refinement in the analysis of the addressee of security as well. Møller suggests three such levels: the state in which case security refers to sovereignty and power; collectivities, in which case it refers to identity; and individuals, in which case it refers to survival and well-being. As he explains, the levels are interconnected “State security may be worth striving for, but only to the extent that it contributes to the security, i.e. survival and well-being, of people.” Thus individual and global security are, in fact, “two sides of the same coin”.

This connection between all levels of security is becoming increasingly visible in the context of the transformations in the informational environment which are caused mainly by the increased use of social media and online information sources in order to form, inform and distort public opinion on issues varying from political, medical, cultural, economic, military etc. domains. Kavanagh and Rich (2018) analyze the current informational systems and conclude that we are witnessing what they call truth decay in contemporary society. They define this concept as the culmination of four trends:

1. “increasing disagreement about facts and analytical interpretations of facts and data;
2. a blurring of the line between opinion and fact;
3. the increasing relative volume, and resulting influence, of opinion and personal experience over fact;
4. declining trust in formerly respected sources of factual information” (Kavanagh & Rich 2018, x-xi)

Given the fact that opinions are transmitted freely in the online environment and that one post could reach millions of people irrespective of its informational rigor or truth content, societies in their entirety could be affected, results of democratic processes could be tainted or reversed, the very fiber that holds societies, states, organizations, communities together could be frayed. This surge in disinformation and the decay of reliable sources of information have also led to a transformation of the

understanding of security culture. Disinformation has become a major threat for all domains of security and for liberal democratic systems as such. P.W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking (2018) analyze the ways in which social media turn from community building tools which foster constructive dialogue, into destructive instruments, whose effects can be comparable to those of wars because they are the perfect battleground for fake news dissemination. The authors notice that this duality is inherent to social media and it is based on the one hand on the evolutionary advantages of human beings: dynamism, adaptability, need to belong, but on the other hand, uses these advantages to the detriment of people, exposing them to disinformation campaigns, as people are badly equipped to handle the immense flux of information that they are exposed to almost instantaneously. However, “humans *are* unique in their ability to learn and evolve, to change the fabric of their surroundings” (Singer & Brooking 2018, 285). The authors have uncovered five constant rules of online warfare, aka LikeWar (Singer & Brooking 2018, 285-287).

First of all, “*First, for all the sense of flux, the modern information environment is becoming stable*”, meaning that the internet has become the prevalent communicational medium and it will remain so for the foreseeable future. Second of all, the internet is a battlefield, not a promoter of peace and understanding. In fact, it is a platform on which actors, regardless of their nature and allegiances, compete in order to reach their goals and which they manipulate to serve their interests. The best and worst aspects of human nature compete on the internet to draw attention and engagement from the public. Thirdly, this battlefield changes how people think of information itself. If something happens, in this digital era, people automatically assume there is a digital trace of the event, a video, an online message, an image, and if the trace cannot be found, they are less likely or willing to believe the event happened; and no event has any power unless people believe it occurred. “The nature of this process means that a manufactured event can have real power, while a demonstrably true event can be rendered irrelevant. What determines the outcome isn’t mastery of the “facts,” but rather a back-and-forth battle of psychological, political, and (increasingly) algorithmic manipulation. Everything is now transparent, yet the truth can be easily obscured.” Fourthly, “war and politics have never been so intertwined” because the online environment and the means by which military or political competitions are won are practically identical, and the programmers in Silicon Valley have become global power vectors, whose decisions change battlefields and conflict outcomes. Last, all people are part of the warfare, surrounded by countless information battles and struggles, more or less visible, but whose common goal is to alter people’s perceptions about the world they live in. Anything that people notice, like, distribute becomes a new attack. I would add here that in this ongoing influence war, people are both actors as well as targets or victims, are alternatively in positions of power or of subordination, and, for the most part, they are unaware of the effort made to change their perceptions, or, on the contrary, to reinforce their beliefs and to maintain them in the echo chambers they have been isolated in. Although the internet is the great social unifier and equalizer, it can in fact become, via fake news and disinformation, the greatest agent of separation, division, dissension builder, common denominator suppressor and polarization and radicalization agent.

From the point of view of security culture development, all these consequences and mechanisms of disinformation and truth decay affect the very perception of what security is, what individuals should expect security to represent for them. A mature security culture requires dialogue and agreement on its defining characteristics in order to be able to ensure and promote individual and societal security. The development of security culture is based on an extremely important process: an awareness of security which Roer defines as “knowing and perceiving a situation or a fact” (Roer 2015, 43), more precisely, an understanding of the situations that may represent risks and threats to individual security, of the vulnerabilities that some actors interested in attacking and destabilizing societies might take advantage of, as well as the identification of the opportunities by which the threats, risks and vulnerabilities could be turned into factors to increase social security. This understanding brings to the foreground the need to identify the necessary competences to efficiently respond to security threats, vulnerabilities and risks. In this security awareness-building process certain cultural values that are already fixed might be called into question and the cognitive dissonance that ensues might be hard to manage, especially if those aspects called into question are values or beliefs deeply ingrained in the respective groups’ identities.

In light of these developments, it is becoming increasingly important that states take an active role in implementing security culture at the level of their societies in order to promote the values that their societies are based on, to safeguard national interests from ill-intended intrusions, to enhance the resilience of the citizens in face of aggressive and ever more pervasive disinformation campaigns. In this respect, security culture operates at all three levels mentioned by Johnston (1995) individual, community and state as it is meant to strengthen the bonds that hold these societal structures together as well as to ensure that citizens are aware of the security issues that may affect them and have the necessary coping mechanisms to face them.

QUALITATIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF SECURITY CULTURE AS REFLECTED IN ROMANIA'S NATIONAL DEFENCE STRATEGIES

In this section we provide a thematic analysis of the ways in which the concept of security culture has been approached in Romania's National Defence Strategies starting from 2010, the first time it was mentioned, until the latest Defence Strategy adopted in 2020. Our goal is to analyze how the concept has evolved both in understanding as well as in application by drawing a parallel to the evolution of the theories on security culture as well as of security environment itself as presented in the preceding section.

To meet this objective, we have firstly identified all references to security culture in the three National Defence Strategies analyzed, and we have coded those reference with respect to the following criteria: number of occurrences of the term, the audiences that it targets, the definition that is provided for security culture, the objectives it is supposed to meet and the actions that it entails.

It is important to note from the very beginning that National Defence Strategies employ a constructivist approach to security building in that they embody the idea that it is in the power of state and civil actors to collaborate in order to construct a secure society, resilient in the face of threats and risks and less exposed to vulnerabilities. This constructivist approach to security is based on a common discourse which fosters a common understanding of what a state on security is and what measures are needed in order for it to be achieved. To this end, it is of great importance to identify the themes that underlie the National Defence Strategies approach to security culture in order to ascertain how it could be proliferated to the societal level and which actors could play a role in materializing these themes into adequate narratives and discourse that could foster a common societal understanding and adherence to security culture.

Strategy	No of occurrences	Chapters	Audiences	Definition	Objectives	Actions
NDS 2010	1	The intellectual, educational and cultural dimension of national security	a) The state and the civil society b) The educational system	Values, norms, attitudes or actions that determine the understanding and assimilation of the concept of security and other derived concepts.	a) Defence and the accomplishment of the state of national security; b) The democratization of the national security and defence field; c) Expertise held not only by the state; d) Dialogue between the state and civil society; contributing to the improvement of governance in the field of national security and defence.	
NDS 2015	2	The educational, healthcare, social and demographic dimension	political class and the civil society	No definition provided	a) to promote values, norms, attitudes or actions allowing for the assimilation of the national security concept;	

Strategy	No of occurrences	Chapters	Audiences	Definition	Objectives	Actions
		Final considerations			b) the civil society becomes involved in the development of the security culture and in the open debate of security issues.	
NDS 2020	11	Introduction 1.1 Romania – promoter and actor involved in sustainable international partnerships, regional pillar of stability 1.2 Romania - a state resilient to threats, security and prosperity provider for its citizens 2.3. National security objectives 4.2. Risks 4.3. Vulnerabilities 5.1.4. Intelligence, counter intelligence and security 5.1.8. Education, Health, Society and Demographics (Societal Dimension) 5.3. Correlating the lines of action with national security objectives in terms of threats, risks and vulnerabilities Final considerations	a) all Romanian citizens b) as many society and generation segments as possible	No definition provided	a) to ensure resilience and good governance for the benefit of all Romanian citizens b) to develop its own rapid and efficient response mechanisms c) to develop mechanisms for citizens' understanding, prevention and response when faced with threats, risks or vulnerabilities impacting national security d) to create a strong and resilient state is interdependent with its citizens' level of security culture e) to contribute to understanding the role that every societal actor – state, public institutions, but also private entities (corporations and individuals) – has in the process of ensuring national security f) to correlate the lines of action with the national security objectives will remain a permanent, inter-institutional effort, supported by a deeper dialogue between the institutions and the citizens, with the aim of strengthening security culture and resilience.	a) Strengthening the security culture among the decision-making apparatus, considering their status as managers of classified information, by raising awareness of the main counterintelligence risks and vulnerabilities that can facilitate the manifestation of threats to national security with a major impact in terms of national interests, as well as from the perspective of the interests entailed by partnerships; b) Strengthening the security culture among the decision-making apparatus, considering their status as managers of classified information, by raising awareness of the main counterintelligence risks and vulnerabilities that can facilitate the manifestation of threats to national security with a major impact in terms of national interests.

The concept of security culture is first mentioned in the 2010 National Defense Strategy (NDS 2010). It only appears once but a definition of the term is given. As such, it refers to values, norms and actions meant to ensure an understanding and acceptance at a societal level of what security is. This signals that fact that security is viewed not solely at state level, but also at the level of the individuals that make up that society, and that education is responsible for disseminating security culture. To the extent that security culture presupposes a delimitation among values, an indication of what norms and actions are recommended in a particular society, it is important to notice that the definition does not provide any insight. The objectives it sets forth are also ambiguous, but it is clear

that it encourages democratic collaboration between state and civil actors, with a focus on educating the latter in order to become actively involved in creating the state of security.

In the *National Defense Strategy 2015-2019. A Strong Romania within Europe and the World*, the concept of security culture appears in the chapter entitled “The educational, healthcare, social and demographic dimension”, where one of the lines of action is “fostering the security culture, including through continuous education, aimed at promoting values, norms, attitudes or actions allowing for the assimilation of the national security concept” (NDS 2015, 14). More details about the concept are provided in the *Guide to the National Defense Strategy*, drafted by the presidency, in which security culture is defined as “the sum total of values, norms, attitudes or actions that determine the comprehension and assimilation at a societal level of the concept of security culture and those derived from it (national security, international security, collective security, insecurity, security policy etc.)” (Guide to NDS 2015, 7). As it can be noticed, the definition is taken over from NDS 2010. However, one important aspect that is mentioned in the Guide to the National Defense Strategy is that in a world in which security has become a main concern, each person needs to play a role in providing security. “This perspective places the citizen in a double position: of beneficiary as well as generator of security.” (Guide to NDS 2015, 14) This basically means that security becomes stronger at the societal level if it is clearly understood and assimilated at the individual level, and that it presupposes the cooperation among governmental and nongovernmental organizations, public and private entities meant “to promote knowledge, respect and mutual trust among citizens and the state institutions,” (NDS 2015,14) which basically means that collectivities are the ones that ensure the transfer of security from state to individual level and vice versa. What is evident from these clarifications on security culture is that, in light of societal transformations we have examined in the first section, it has become obvious that the levels at which security operates have become entwined and the positive or negative evolution of one will intrinsically affect the others, idea which is reflected in one of the final paragraphs of NDS 2015 (NDS 2015, 23): the development of security culture entails a coordinated, joint and consistent effort at the level of the political class and civil society.

The new *National Defense Strategy 2020-2024. Together for a Strong and Prosperous Romania in a World Marked by New Challenges* (NDS 2020) mentions security culture more times with a focus on resilience both with respect to the state institutions and to the citizens. It correlates more strongly the actions taken at state level with the effects they have on the citizens and acknowledges that the security of the states is directly impacted by the security culture of the individuals. This change occurs in light of the transformations to the informational environment that we have discussed in section 1, changes which have a direct impact on the citizens, as the targets of disinformation campaigns are firstly individuals, and when they go viral, and become diffused in society, they can alter security at the higher level of collectivities and the state as such. Given the nature of social media and the online environments, resilience needs to be built both from the bottom up, from the citizens to the state, but also from the top down, as state institutions themselves need to become more resilient in face of informational attacks. According to NDS 2020, security culture is based on “the development of quick and efficient reaction mechanisms, (...) for citizens included” (NDS 2020, 6). Security culture is seen as an essential “enhancer of Romania’s resilience” and as a promoter of national security values, and, consequently, it needs to increase and include as many societal and generational population segments as possible (NDS 2020, 10). The citizens’ security culture is intercorrelated with the national goal of creating a powerful and resilient state, due to the new challenges in the international security environment which call for the development of comprehension, prevention and reaction mechanisms for the citizens when they are faced with threats, risks and vulnerabilities that impact national security (NDS 2020, 12). NDS 2020 focuses much more both on security culture as much needed for citizens’ resilience capacity in the face of outside threats and risks and on the changes in the informational environment which pose dangers due to disinformation and hostile informational operations. A precarious or distorted security culture among citizens but also institutions is analyzed as both a risk (NDS 2020, 28) and a vulnerability (NDS 2020, 29) for national security and, therefore, building a resilient security culture in public and

private institutions which manage strategic information is enumerated among the national security objectives (NDS 2020, 16).

Agency with respect to the actions that the objectives presuppose is somewhat unclear, but what can be deduced from the way the themes are formulated is that agency is no longer one-sided, from state institutions to the civil society. Rather, it becomes a collaborative effort, in which the relevant themes with respect to threats, risks, vulnerabilities are constructed through dialogue. This societal conversation ensures the greater understanding and meaning building with respect to security and how it is relevant for each individual and it also constructs individual responsibility with respect to active involvement in developing security culture at the level of the community and eventually the state. Inherently, the way the objectives are presented in NDS 2020 points to the fact that agency is no longer viewed as top-bottom but both as a horizontal and a vertical process whose aim is to create accountability and responsibility among citizens as well, with a view to creating a public discourse that enforces and promotes security culture at all levels.

Special attention is paid and clear reference is made to the actions needed to ensure a robust security culture among decision makers, as they are privy to classified information that must be handled with great care in the information age, when cyber attacks have become very frequent. In this respect, the security culture that is referenced is more narrow in scope, and it refers precisely to building an understanding of what classified documents and intelligence are and how they need to be protected.

In the previous Strategy (NDS 2015), the development and consolidation of security culture was mentioned briefly only in the section regarding “The educational, healthcare, social and demographic dimension” (NDS 2015, 22). In the current strategy it is also included in “The intelligence, counterintelligence and security dimension”, with direct reference to the consolidation of security culture at the decision-making level, where classified information is managed and raising awareness with respect to the main counterintelligence risks and vulnerabilities which can facilitate threats to national security and have a major impact on national interests (NDS 2020, 35). NDS 2020 also correlates courses of action with national security objectives and explicitly mentions that this is a permanent, interinstitutional effort based on the continuous dialogue between institutions and citizens in the spirit of building and reinforcing security culture and societal resilience (NDS 2020, 40). Moreover, a legislative action is mentioned as NDS 2020 refers to the fact that “a coherent and applied legislative framework, aimed at strengthening the security culture and modernising the institutions with responsibilities in the field of national security” is needed. Thus, this strategy includes a measure that can address, via legislative means, the promotion of security culture at an institutional level.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, what the analysis has revealed is that the attention given in Romania’s National Defense Strategies to security culture is proportionate to the increase in the types and numbers of threats and risks posed by disinformation campaigns that target the security values liberal democratic societies are based on. These threats could be very efficient because a lack of resilience of the civil society and state institutions caused by a precarious security culture, more precisely a lack of understanding and assimilation of the values, norms and actions that it is based on, increases risks and vulnerabilities which can only be mitigated by conjugated actions taken at a state, collective and individual level to develop, promote, educate the public with respect to security culture. It can be noticed that while the objectives proposed are clear, the agency is less clearly defined. It is understood, rather than clearly stated, that in order to build security culture a concerted effort is needed on the part of state and civil organizations, however, a definite framework for such collaboration is not set. One aspect that NDS 2020 makes clear is that there are no longer clearly defined roles of agents and audiences. Both citizens and state institutions can and do play both roles, as collaboration in this democratic informational environment is the key element for trust and resilience building. Special attention is played to the fact that the citizens as well as the state institutions are responsible for building and promoting a resilient security culture. This is a medium if

not long-term project that involves all levels of society and whose aim is to ensure a resilient state and citizenry in face of the new informational challenges. Security culture depends on a common understanding of the values that it is based on, on adherence to the norms that it presupposes and on concerted actions meant to enforce it in society.

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PROMOTING GENDER AWARENESS – EFFECTS ON NATO’S STRATEGIC SECURITY

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Abstract

As the terrorist threat and the race for power continues, the most successful alliance is still facing undoubtable risks in its endeavor of maintaining stability – economically, political and most of all, socially. This paper intends to address the gender awareness phenomenon and study its effects on redesigning NATO’s security strategy architecture and reshaping the international relations among political actors. Furthermore, as the NATO 2030 analysis identified several risks and shortcomings of the alliance it is believed that strategically using the Women, Peace and Security Agenda can mitigate and favorably exploit these ‘loose ends’.

Keywords: inclusiveness; gender flexibility; integration; integrity; empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

When facing so diverse and innovative threats one must exploit all the assets in hand, probably one of the most important but in the same time overlooked is changing the way in which a wide range of issues are approached. North Atlantic Treaty Organization is no exception from this tactic and it comes naturally that talking more often about gender awareness has become ordinary business. But what is in fact ‘gender awareness’? Even though dedicated literature emphasizes this concept as the knowledge and understanding of the differences in roles and relations between women and men, especially in the workplace (Cambridge Dictionary 2021), when talking about foreign policies, international relations and moreover international conflicts and security we find ourselves forced to expand the gender concept and take into consideration the impact of conflict, especially on women, children and vulnerable peers. In addition to what it has been stated before, as NATO developed a Women Peace and Security Policy having as a starting point the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security (UN 2000), “integration” means integrating gender perspectives in everything that NATO does. On one hand NATO has made a lot of progress in gender mainstreaming, including the development of Gender Advisers, gender training (SHAPE 2020), and institutional and operational structures but on the other, there are easily identified areas where this concept is not intensely discussed, for example in the NATO 2030 Initiative based on the report to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on how to make NATO an even stronger Alliance put together by an independent group, co-chaired by Dr. Thomas de Maizière and Dr. Wess Mitchell, the gender awareness concept as well as the WPS policy are not exploited at the level where a difference can be made.

This article intends to provide a different perspective for the gender awareness concept and by utilizing qualitative analysis methods to ultimately prove that efficient usage of the aforementioned concept would generate beneficial effects.

In developing NATO 2030, NATO has already committed to consulting civil society, the private sector, and young leaders. NATO 2030 is an opportunity to do something radically different: to go beyond NATO’s customary circles of security think-tanks and make use of unconventional means of dealing with conflict, instability and external threats.

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WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY – UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT WITHIN THE ALLIANCE

Gender is an issue because of the fundamental differences and inequalities between women and men these differences and inequalities may manifest themselves in different ways in specific sectors but there are some broad patterns that always should be taken into consideration. When setting the strategy for conflict prevention the main areas on which NATO should focus refer to: inequalities in political power (access to decision – making and representation), inequalities within households, violence against women and discriminatory attitudes.

For the past two decades considerable efforts have been made within the alliance with regards to the WPS, the first formal NATO/EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security was held in December 2007. Its focus was on how gender perspectives apply in operational contexts. A first Action Plan to support the implementation of this Policy was endorsed at the Lisbon Summit in 2010 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325. The Policy has been updated several times, most recently in 2018, with new plans to guide the implementation of each revision. The updates account for changes in the security environment as well as the continued evolution of NATO's understanding of how best to integrate gender across all of its work. Furthermore, in 2019, NATO adopted its first policy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in support of its work on WPS.

NATO's work on WPS is guided by three principles: integration, inclusiveness and integrity. Integration, referring to the fact that gender equality must be considered as an integral part of NATO policies, programmes and projects guided by effective gender mainstreaming practices. To achieve gender equality, it must be acknowledged that each policy, programme, and project affects both women and men. Inclusiveness meaning that representation of women across NATO and in national forces is necessary to enhance operational effectiveness and success. NATO seeks to increase the participation of women in all tasks throughout the International Military Staff and International Staff at all levels. Integrity, focusing on systemic inequalities is addressed to ensure fair and equal treatment of women and men Alliance-wide. Accountability on all efforts to increase awareness and implementation of the WPS agenda will be made a priority in accordance with international frameworks.

Besides implementing policies, efforts have been in other areas as well, for example the Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security issued the NATO Gender Inclusive Language Manual, as gendered language is important as it frames the understanding of equality. Gendered language shapes views on women's roles and directly impacts women's participation in all aspects of society. Research highlights that gendered language can contribute to the marginalization of women in the labour market, impede educational attainment, reinforce traditional gender roles, and support harmful traditional practices. It can also empower, advance and promote equality between women and men.

Gender is a primary marker of social and economic stratification and, as a result, of exclusion. Regardless of one's socioeconomic class, there are systematic gender differences in material well-being, although the degree of inequality varies across countries and over time. As a result, gender inequality is a characteristic of most societies, with males on average better positioned in social, economic, and political hierarchies. (Boyer, et al. 2020)

FORGING RELATIONS AND STRENGTHEN SECURITY IN NATO

The principle of consensus decision-making is applied throughout the Alliance, reflecting the fact that it is the member countries that decide and each one of them is involved in the decision-making process. This principle is applied at every level of the Alliance, including policymaking.

NATO decisions are taken on the basis of consensus, after discussion and consultation among member countries. A decision reached by consensus is an agreement reached by common consent and supported by each member country. This implies that when a NATO decision is taken, it is the expression of the collective will of the sovereign states that are members of the Alliance. It is this decision-making process that gives NATO both its strength and its credibility.

But what lies behind this decision? Are any consultative bodies able to provide advice from a gender awareness point of view? Denying the reality and existence of this issue does nothing else but altering the whole process of decision making.

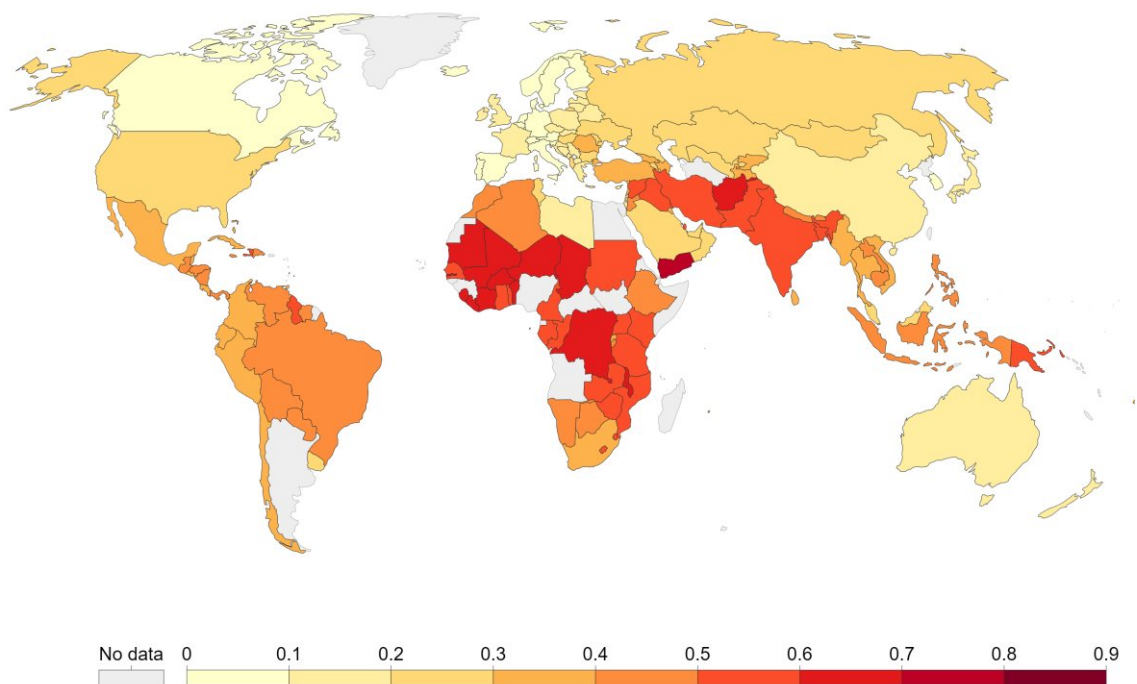
Tackle the gender differences, exploiting strong points of women contribution

In most societies, men and women differ in the activities they undertake, in access to and control over resources, and in participation in decision – making. Realizing these differences enhances the awareness of possible inequalities between women and men, which can form a constraint to development because they may limit the ability of men, but more often of women, to develop and exercise their full capabilities, for their own benefit and for society as a whole.

What is mandatory to be taken into consideration when having set as a goal the good governance as well as peace and stability is the unquestioned effect on development which the inequalities have on it.

Gender Inequality Index from the Human Development Report, 2015

This index covers three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and economic status. Scores are between 0-1 and higher values indicate higher inequalities.



Source: Human Development Report (2015)

Figure 1. Gender Inequality Index (Human Development Report 2015)

It is to be observed that areas where the level of inequality among gender is higher coincides with the regions where political and military stability is frail and so conflicts are more prone to occur, escalating towards full crisis.

Besides differences in position between women and men, positions and roles among women differ. Although in conflict situations the victim role and the vulnerable positions of women are often emphasized, the multifaceted role of women is increasingly recognized. Women can be mothers, breadwinners, combatants, peace activist at the same time, women's role are not given by nature but are negotiable. The underlying notions of femininity and masculinity are negotiated interpretations of what it means it means to be a man or a woman. Masculinity is often linked to aspects of aggression, militarization, dominance, hierarchy and competition, feeding into the organization of war. Femininity

is regularly associated with motherhood, care, non – violence and potential capacities for peace. The interpretation of masculinity and femininity shaped by the gender culture in which women and men live and by the nature of the conflict, in the end determine male and female actions, behavior, perceptions, rationality, positions and roles. (Bolasco Sergio 1990)

Strengthening the roles and positions of women in conflict

The Alliance's Strategic Concept of 2010 identifies crisis management as one of NATO's fundamental security tasks. It commits the Alliance to stand ready to contribute to effective conflict prevention and to engage actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations. This requirement is fulfilled through a combination of effective consultation procedures, crisis management arrangements, military capabilities, and civil emergency planning preparations.

Taking into consideration the aforementioned aspects there are several action items that are to be approached by NATO in facilitating strengthening the roles and positions of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post – conflict reconstruction. These include to: 1) gather additional data on the accurate roles of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post – conflict resolution; 2) collect best practices and lessons learned of how women's role in the field have been addressed so far; 3) further translate existing policies into practice by setting specific objectives and developing concrete guidelines; 4) monitor/evaluate/review the activities undertaken and outputs achieved so far in order to assess whether and how women's role have been strengthened; 5) increase the number of women and gender – sensitive men at all levels of the alliance and particularly in the field of conflict – related interventions; 6) increase the participation of local women in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all field activities focusing on women's roles in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post – conflict reconstruction; 7) enhance the commitment among all staff that deal with the issue of women in armed conflict; 8) enhance expertise in this field by providing staff training, but also training for local women and women's organization. Training must be adapted to the specific mandate and activities of the alliance, to the specific conflict situation; 9) increasingly incorporate gender and conflict issues into the alliance's activities, instruments and tools; 10) further link the fields of, experts in, and information on women, gender and armed conflict. (Sweidan 2016)

As a natural step in the process of empowering women and actively engage them in the decision-making process, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) – together with UN, government and civil society partners – launched a new financing mechanism to urgently accelerate women's influence and participation in peace processes across the globe. The new WPHF Rapid Response Window (RRW) on Women's Participation in Peace Processes and the Implementation of Peace Agreements addresses the countless technical and logistical barriers that women and local civil society organizations often face to participate meaningfully in peace processes at all levels – such as travel, childcare, translation, advocacy, and capacity building support.

NATO 2030 – WPS AGENDA AND CURRENT THREATS

Artificial intelligence is increasingly influencing the opinions and behavior of people in everyday life. However, the over-representation of men in the design of these technologies could quietly undo decades of advances in gender equality. Over centuries, humans developed critical theory to inform decisions and avoid basing them solely on personal experience. However, machine intelligence learns primarily from observing data that it is presented with. While a machine's ability to process large volumes of data may address this in part, if that data is laden with stereotypical concepts of gender, the resulting application of the technology will perpetuate this bias. While some recent studies sought to remove bias from learned algorithms, they largely ignore decades of research on how gender ideology is embedded in language. Awareness of this re-search and incorporating it into approaches to machine learning from text would help prevent the generation of biased algorithms. Leading thinkers in the emerging field addressing bias in artificial intelligence are also primarily female, suggesting that those who are potentially affected by bias are more likely to

see, understand and attempt to resolve it. Gender balance in machine learning is therefore crucial to prevent algorithms from perpetuating gender ideologies that disadvantage women.

Emerging technologies are innovative technologies that have been recently developed, are under development or will be developed within the next few years. Disruptive technologies, however, are innovations that drastically change the way organizations and industries function. They force businesses to alter the way they manage operations, so they do not lose market shares or fall into irrelevancy. Emerging and disruptive technologies are a challenge but also opportunity for NATO. Competing with the efforts underway by large authoritarian states to achieve dominance in key EDTs must be a strategic priority for the Alliance and its members. (NATO 2030 - United for a New Era 2020) NATO should serve as a crucial coordinating institution for information-sharing and collaboration between Allies on all aspects of EDTs that have a bearing on their security. NATO should hold a digital summit of governments and private sector with the aim of identifying gaps in collective defence cooperation in security-related AI strategies, norms, and research and development (R&D), and safeguarding against the malign and aggressive use of AI.

Climate change will continue to shape NATO's security environment. While modulating emissions is primarily a national competency, NATO has a role to play in increasing situational awareness, early warning, and information sharing, including by considering the establishment of Centre of Excellence on Climate and Security. It should build on efforts to include climate change and other non-military threats such as pandemics in NATO planning on resilience and crisis management, with an emphasis on making energy and telecommunications grids better able to withstand weather events. NATO should revise its 2014 Green Defence framework and make more strategic use of the Science for Peace and Security programme in order to develop and implement better green military technology,

Climate change is already forcing millions of people from their homes, and future storms, droughts, rising seas and other impacts of climate change will further exacerbate people's vulnerabilities. Due to socially constructed roles and responsibilities, climate-related disasters have different impacts on men, women, girls and boys. The most recent research found climate impacts will exacerbate violence against women. Therefore the next phase for the WPS agenda must deal with more sophisticated and intersectional threat assessments, risk analysis and gender analysis that is fit for purpose to deal with the intersection of gender, climate and conflict. There is increasing evidence that violence against women and human rights abuses generally may be important indicators of conflict, including in countries that otherwise appear stable, and that this information might contribute to identifying where to focus international alliance's efforts on conflict prevention.

CONCLUSIONS

Probably the most important aspect which arises from the aforementioned discussions is that gender equality for women's economic empowerment and sustainable progress requires measures to compensate for existing disadvantages that prevent equal opportunities. If we take into consideration the most known conflicts the de conflict key areas would go around equitable access to resources and opportunities for both women and men.

Gender inequalities are not only economic, but are also reflected in other ways that are difficult to measure and change. Ideas about appropriate behavior, independence, and aptitudes are often grounded in gender stereotypes and vary for women and men. Ideas and practices tend to reflect and reinforce each other which contribute to the complexity of achieving change.

Reducing inequality strengthens economies and builds stable, resilient societies that give all individuals the opportunity to fulfil their potential, which on the long run, will definitely have effects on development, socially, politically, financially, effects that will ensure maintain healthy relationships among all allies.

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LINGUISTIC POLICY AND THE SECURING OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN TODAY'S SOCIETY. THE UKRAINIAN CASE

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Abstract

Our study takes into consideration the consequences of the linguistic legislation adopted by Kiev in recent years in order to secure the identity of the existing national minorities. It also tackles the potential conflicts between the Ukraine and its neighbouring states with regard to the observing of the cultural rights of the minority groups. The issue of the use of regional languages fits into the category of the highly ideological and politicized matters in the Ukraine.

Keywords: linguistic policy; forced Ukrainization; identity security; regional languages; language conflict.

INTRODUCTION

The securing of national/ethnic identity has become an issue of interest on the agenda of security studies, especially after the amplification of the globalization and regional integration processes, such as in the case of the expansion of the European Union (Castells 2006; Lieber & Weisberg 2002; Neumann 2009; Şerbu 2006). The two processes contain phenomena that are beneficial to contemporary society, but also a number of dangers pertaining to the temptation towards “levelling”, homogenization or even the exercising of a linguistic imperialism in certain communities, regardless of their size. However, identity is the way through which meaning can be conveyed to people’s lives at a time when modern states’ reason to be may disappear. In this sense, people want more than just a market economy. Indeed, it could be said that the state is an agent of globalization, and not of people. The reaction to these is the alternative construction of meaning, based on identity (Castelles 2006). It can be achieved through policies of securing of national/ethnic identity. In contemporary society the *“national existence of an ethnic group is largely conditioned by the functional status of the ethnic language. In individual speech, as far as we know, a number of significant particularities of the individual – social, psychological, linguistic – are naturally objectified”* (Chemes 2012, 384). For this, it is necessary that we understand what securing is and how it can be achieved, which are the ways in which it can be achieved, to what extent the linguistic policy of a state can contribute to the (de)securing of the identity of a national majority or ethnic minority living in that particular state.

Researchers in the critical security studies, especially those belonging to the *School of Copenhagen*, drew attention to the fact that achieving a fully secure society requires not only an extension of this research domain, but also the identification of new concepts and notions. One of these concepts is that of *securing*, which describes the process through which political actors transform facts, phenomena, and processes that **do not** constitute existential threats to the survival or territorial integrity of the state in matters of national security and thus extraordinary measures, made in order to “cope” with those “threats”, are legitimized. The conceptualization of securing as an *act of speech* is important because it shows us that notions/words describe not only the objective, concrete and tangible reality, but they also become a way to construct the social reality, which is neither observable not tangible, but without which society, freedom and democracy could not exist (Buzan& Waever& Wilde 1998, 23-26). For example, describing an immigrants camp in any Western city as a “jungle” does not mean that this term describes a concrete reality that would truly resemble an immigrants/asylum seekers camp. That camp is metaphorically defined as a place where people are

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predisposed to illegal and thus dangerous deeds. Similarly, speaking in the current Ukrainian society of the Ukrainian language as being “trendy” does not mean that a different linguistic “trend” might be accepted in the public arena tomorrow. To the contrary. A Facebook posting by former Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko referring to the state language on the occasion of the passing by the Parliament in Kiev on 25 April 2019 of the *Law regarding the functioning of Ukrainian as state language* does not leave room for the language of the enemy in Kremlin in any sphere of activity: “*Let me emphasize that this law does not in any way affect any language of the national minorities living in Ukraine. We tried to take into consideration the points of view of all interested parties. The only opinion that we did not intend to consider was Moscow’s. Let Moscow worry about the Russian language. We simply gave Ukrainians the right to listen to Ukrainian songs, to watch Ukrainian films, to read Ukrainian books, because people tend to do these things. The Ukrainian language is trendy. It is not, however, trendy not to know the Ukrainian language*” (MC 2019).

With the help of language and through an act of speech, a threat can be constructed which could be real or only stated as such. There are two conceptual dimensions of the theory of securing. The first is linked to the criteria and modalities through which a problem can be secured. About the second we speak when we can say that a problem was successfully secured, on a scale ranging from un-politicized to politicized (Buzan & Waever & Wilde 1998, 23-26). The stages of a securing process are the following: first of all, there has to be a legitimate authority that presents/identifies *someone* or *something* as an existential threat to society or one of its segments; the second step - concrete measures are taken to eliminate the threat in order to protect society or one of its segments. In its turn, society or one part of it accepts the idea that something might happen to it and for this reason agrees to measures taken to protect it (Buzan & Waever & Wilde 1998, 25). In essence, a speaker identifying a need for securing (Peoples & Williams 2017, 96) utters a speech through which something/someone is presented as a threat (Peoples & Williams 2017, 95). Upon perceiving the act of speech, the population must accept the existence of the threat so that the observer/communicator might finalize the process of securing. In his studies on the processes of securing, Ole Waever believes that the communicators who identify a security problem and communicate it to the society are its political elites (Waever 1995, 55), the ones that can legitimately take securing measures. Thus, the theories accepting the linguistic construction of security issues have had a great impact on security studies. However, these theories did not come to occupy an empty spot regarding the research in the field of language constructed social reality (Balzacq & Léonard & Ruzicka 2016, 494-531).

THE ISSUE OF LINGUISTIC IDENTITY IN THE UKRAINE

The Ukraine, having become an independent country after the fall of the Soviet Union, is characterized as a multilingual society, an “*advocate of the ideal of a multilingual and multicultural state*” (Plokhly 2018, 382) in which bilingualism became the norm after 1991 (Plokhly 2018, 387). The largest minority is the Russian one, followed by several smaller ones. In its South-West (Subcarpathia, Chernowski, Bukovina) and South regions (Odessa), beside Ukrainians, a number of other minorities are present, among which Romanians (some of which identify themselves as Moldavians). According to statistics, Ukrainians compose 77.8% of the population. Other minorities include Byelorussians 0.6%, Hungarians 0.3%, Crimean Tatars 0.5%, Romanians and Polish 0.3%, Jews 0.2%. Other minorities make up 1.8%. (World Population Review 2020)

As in many other countries in the post-Soviet space, the security preoccupations - defined here as preoccupations for sovereignty, internal stability and territorial integrity - have played an important role in the government decision making process related to minorities, including here the issues of a linguistic nature.

Although not always explicitly stated, namely the *fear* of separatism, of secession, of disintegration of the country has shaped the perception by the Ukrainian state of the issues regarding ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities. To the extent that the Ukrainian political elite perceived such phenomena as threats to the society, a series of legislative and implicitly administrative decisions were made by the Rada. In an effort to secure the Ukrainian nation, its leaders failed to consider the fact that the measures made to secure the majority could be perceived as threats by the Hungarian,

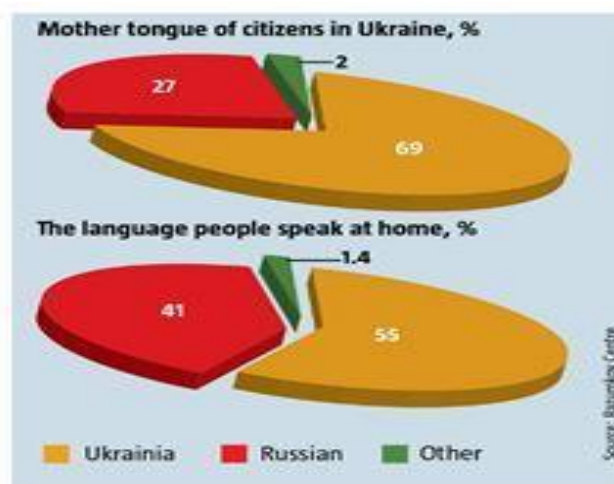
Romanian, Polish or Tatar minorities or by the emblematic linguistic minority of the speakers of *Surzhyk* (Karadeniz Press 2013). Contemptuously defining a mixture of grains – oats, barley, rye – the term *surzhyk* describes a degraded variety of a long dominated language, Ukrainian, appeared in an attempt by its speakers to more closely resemble the dominating, exemplary language, *Russian* (Bivolaru 2016, 74-87). Such a paradoxical situation, in which the majority of Ukrainians were forced to “swallow their tongue” (Golopentia 2009, 10-13) in their own territory for centuries on end, led to a linguistic conflict. It is not therefore surprising that analysts and theoreticians often connect a growing ethnic, linguistic and national identity to the aggravation of ethnic and linguistic conflicts in certain situations (Posen 1993, 27-47).

The existence of linguistic conflicts is far from unique, specific only to the Ukraine (recent years conflicts in Catalonia speak for themselves), they are in fact the “norm” in political communities where language acts as a *marker* of identity (Arel 2018, 233-264) and where the majority does not respect the linguistic rights of minorities. Our working hypothesis for this study is that, following the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014, the issue of national minorities in the Ukraine was included in the security policy as a potential source of danger to national stability and identity. This main problem refers to the process of securing and de-securing of states, as it is defined by Barry Buzan (Buzan 1997, 5-28). In the international environment, one characterized by change, we observe a re-conceptualization of the notion of security, including new issues related to threats and risks to state stability, including the linguistic and identity ones, as a consequence of the emergence of the new generation warfare, namely the hybrid warfare. Furthermore, security problems are shifted from state/society level to the level of region of a state, including the level of communities and individuals.

After the political and geopolitical events known in specialty literature under the name of Euromaidan when, under the pressure of protests, the Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich fled to Russia and power was seized by pro-Western forces, a growing number of analysts, politicians, journalists, independent observers in the European Union, and in Romania as well, expressed their hope that the new Ukrainian leadership will choose the European vector of development, which includes among other things a wide range of national minority rights (Gherman 2018, 17), a hope further fuelled by the fact that the Ukraine signed in 1996 and ratified in 2005 the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*.

As proved by the political and social evolution of the last decades, and especially of the last years, things did not follow a desired path and the sharing of the linguistic good has become a “hot” issue in the Ukraine. According to article 10 of the Constitution, the official language of the country is Ukrainian. The same article guarantees the free development, use and protection of the Russian language and of the languages of other national minorities (Patras 1999). The Law of Culture of 2011 states that the “*State ensure the comprehensive development and functioning of the national language of cultures in the Ukraine, it promotes the creation of the internal (national) cultural product in the Ukrainian language and its popularization in Ukraine and abroad; the use of other languages is guaranteed within the sphere of culture*” (Patras 1999).

According to the 2001 census, 67.5% of the population consider the Ukrainian language is their mother tongue, while 29.6% name Russian as their mother tongue. According to social monitoring studies conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy for Sciences, the official language is used in daily communication by 42% of families, Russian by 36% and other languages by 21%, as can be observe in the image below:



Source: Ukraine/ 4.2 Specific policy issues and recent debates, online <https://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/ukraine.php?aid=425>

HOW THE LINGUISTIC POLICY IN UKRAINE BECAME AN SECURITY ISSUE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON REGIONAL STABILITY

Specialists in the field of security studies and policies, but not only, searched for solution to find an adequate action model at political and military level in order to eliminate the threats to nationals security from the Ukrainian society. Among these there was a group of Ukrainian political scientists and historians led by Volodimir Iablonski and Serhii Zdoriuk, who received a research project from the National Institute of Strategic Studies, financed by the government in Kiev (Gherman 2018, 17). The result of their work constituted the foundation for a monograph, *Ukraine and the Russian World Project*, which provides several recommendations to state institutions, such as the Presidency and the Parliament. One of these recommendations envisaged the countering of the influence of the Russian Federation over Ukraine. The practical modality to achieve this was to identify ways to reduce the dependency of the Ukrainian society on the Russian language (Gherman 2018, 18). Thus, in the opinion of the authors, Russian schools in the Ukraine are one element in the promotion of this language. The “logical” consequence is that Russian is regarded as a danger/threat to the Ukrainian state. The identification of the Russian language as a threat to Ukrainian identity and security was also enhanced by the launching of the geopolitical concept “Russian World” project by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Kiril, on 3 November 2009 (“*Ruskyi Mir*”) (Pieper 2017). In fact, the high priest revitalized an older idea expressed by the leader in Kremlin, Vladimir Putin who in 2007 stated that “*the Russian world can and must unite all those who love the Russian word, the Russian culture, no matter where they might live, in Russia or beyond*” (Gherman 2018, 18). This project includes three elements: the Orthodox religion, the Russian language, and the commune historical memory. The Patriarch Kiril further explained that Russia, Ukraine and Belarus must compulsorily participate in this project.

According to research carried out by Marin Gherman, after the annexation of Crimea by Russia the experts of the National Institute for Security Studies in Kiev recommended to the Ukrainian state power the following: 1) the regulation of the information space by introducing linguistic quotas in the audiovisual media, which was put into practice in the summer of 2017 and which had a negative impact on Romanian language media as well; 2) the education of the majority of children in the state language, an aspect which is mentioned in the new Law of Education passed in September 2017; 3) the formulation of an own national ideology as an alternative to the “Russian World” geopolitical project (Gherman 2018, 18). The creation of a geopolitical project of the “Ukrainian World” can be a solution to eliminate the threat generated by the “*Ruskyi Mir*” concept, but it can also constitute at the same time a threat to the linguistic identity of Ukrainian’s national minorities! We have to deal here with a double process of securing and de-securing taking place in the Ukrainian society. Aiming to reduce Russia’s influence, Kiev believes it necessary the challenge the pillars of the “Russian World”:

mass-media, the Russian school and the Russian Church. AN attack on these three elements collaterally attacks the identity elements of all national minorities and communities, including the Romanian one (Gherman 2018, 20).

The rational solution can only be to respect the rights and freedoms of all Ukrainian inhabitants by adopting a linguistic policy adequate to a multilingual society and to a lesser degree by way of futuristic geopolitical projects (mirroring that of the Russian Federation) which do nothing but preserve the linguistic rifts in the West and South-East of the country. Until the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of the hybrid war at the Eastern border, researchers of Ukrainian linguistic policy believed that the linguistic legislation in the country was sufficient and non-restrictive for the development of linguistic diversity, as Russian and other minority languages were constantly used in most of activities in the public sphere (Stepanenko 2003, 115). Problems arose after Euromaidan and after the Ukrainian president signed on 25 September 2017 a controversial law which made the Ukrainian language a compulsory subject in all state schools beginning with the fifth grade (Radio free Europe, Radio Liberty 2017).

Fears related to the loss of ethnic identity were heard in the Ukrainian society by way of petitions by national minority representatives addressed to the president in power, Petro Poroshenko, and asking him not to sign the *“Law regarding the functioning of the Ukrainian language”*. His answer to these requests showed indifference and ill faith: *“I emphasize that this law does not infringe the languages of the national minorities in Ukraine”* (Ukrainskie Radio 2019). Hennadiy Moskal, the governor of Zakarpattia Oblast, with a significant Hungarian community, was one of the most vocal critics of this legislative act, claiming that it violates the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*. Yaroslav Halas, spokesperson of the governor of Zakarpattia Oblast, expressed what some critics suspect to be exactly the purpose of this law. *“This law envisages protecting the Ukrainian language, but it is especially aimed against the Russian language because this latter one dominates the capital and the regions in the East. Its purpose is not to protect the 150.000 Hungarians or couple of tens of thousands Romanians, who live in the Chernivtsi region or in the Odessa region, where there many Moldavians or Gagauzi”; “...in Transcarpathia this law hits the national minorities.”* (Ukrainskie Radio 2019).

The authorities in Kiev, in an attempt to secure the identity of the majority through linguistic policies that do not take into account the ethnic structure of the society, created huge problems of identity security to ethnic minorities who perceive themselves as discriminated and in danger of losing their identity. Alexandrina Cernov observed the effects that the law of 2017 regarding the status of the Ukrainian language might have on the Romanian minority: *“Beside the grand propaganda in favour of the Ukrainian language, I believe that an attempt is carried out to eliminate other languages from communication, because there are laws that impose on us to communicate less and less in our mother tongue. Consequently, these attempts to eliminate the mother tongue from communication impose logical reactions from parents who think of their children’s future prospects.”* (Cernov 2019, 5) These natural identity defence reactions inevitably lead to tensions at the level of the relations between the state and minorities. Referring to this aspect, professor Marian Gherman claimed that the *“attempt by ethnic Romanians to defend themselves by way of old methods, as those used before the Russo-Ukrainian confrontation, when the new geopolitical challenges were invisible, is seen by Kiev as an act of betrayal and secession, which determined a distancing between centre and periphery, between leadership and ethnic groups – a situation never experienced before”* (Gherman 2019, 3). In these circumstances, the Ukrainian society may slide towards national extremism, which prevents the achievement of a democratic legislation that is adequate to minorities. As the history of the Balkans and of the post-Soviet society in Ukraine’s proximity, and not only, demonstrated, after the end of the Cold War the nationalist manifestations are aimed against the enlargement of national minority rights. The Romanian minority in this country has perceived itself as such beginning with 2017. We find this perception especially among specialists, but not exclusively. Alexandrina Cernov observed the attempt to marginalize and disrespect the Romanian minority long before the passing of this recent legislative linguistic policy act: *“Romanians are described as enemies of Ukraine. Attempts to accuse Romania and the Republic of Moldova are observed daily in the Ukrainian mass-media and on the*

internet. It is easy to find reasons: either that Romania is preparing for war against Ukraine (there is even discussion of three possible locations of a possible war: an air and maritime one at the Black Sea, on the Danube in Ismail or in Bukovina); or the double citizenship which could negatively impact Ukraine especially in Bukovina where the populations is willing to obtain Romanian citizenship; or the little aid that Romania offers in order to help Romanian culture in Ukraine, all qualified as direct interference by Romania in Ukrainian policy” (Cernov 2019, 5). Authors like Anthony Giddens believe that “ethnic minorities are still perceived as threats by any people”, such fear deriving from the fact that minorities have constantly been used as scapegoats for any society failure (if we have in mind here Western Europe) (Giddens 2001, 260).

The “threat” posed by ethnic minorities cannot be overlooked, because attributes like language, history (regardless of the imaginative degree), religion, outfit, traditional crafts “are very actual in everyday life”. According to Giddens, of all these identity attributes, language is the most significant and important, because “none of us invents the language learned in childhood and we are all obliged to observe the permanent rules of usage of the linguistic method” (Giddens 2001, 52).

In June 2017 a group of parliamentarians forwarded to the Rada the project of the *Law regarding the status of the Ukrainian language*, in which it is stated that Ukrainian is the state (official) language. It also states the creation by the National Committee for Linguistic Standards of centres of examination that will provide public functionaries with certificates stating their linguistic skills. Petro Poroshenko signed the measure on 25 September, after days of criticism especially coming from ethnic minorities.

The law does not exclude education in other languages; pupils may continue to study their own mother tongue. In the over 15000 schools in Ukraine, according to the data of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education, the Russian language is used as primary language in 581; Romanian in 75; Hungarian in 71; Polish in 5. Approximately 400,000 children are enlisted in these schools (Wesolowsky 2017).

MEANINGS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN OF UKRAINE

There is a growing number of opinions in the Western regions of the country according to which it would be beneficial to develop a state along the exclusively Ukrainian linguistic lines, accompanied by an intense process of “De-Russification” in the East and South of the country. Thus, the inhabitants of these regions, who do not believe that Russia develops a policy of linguistic and cultural “Russification”, asked for the preservation of the Oriental/Russian Slave identity, as it was promoted during the Soviet Union. In spite of this, when this simplistic dichotomy is placed under scrutiny, the self identification by people as Ukrainian becomes more complex, because many citizens perceive themselves somewhere in-between these two cultural and linguistic poles. A large number of Ukrainians are comfortable using both languages and usually use one of them in their professional activity and the other in their private lives. This is further complicated by the presence of communities of Hungarians, Romanian, Bulgarians, and Tatars in Crimea (at least until the illegal annexation of the peninsula in 2014). The vast majority of those identifying themselves as members of these communities keep their mother tongues for their private lives rather than totally introduce the official language in their everyday lives.

Against this diverse ethnic-cultural and linguistic background, the public efforts of Vladimir Putin to reformulate the institutional perception of the Russian nation following his re-election as president in 2012 have had profound consequences in Ukraine. Putin resuscitated the concept of “*Ruskyi Mir*” (Socor 2014), one long used by Russian ultra-conservative circles to describe a Russian cultural and linguistic space that expands beyond the borders of the Russian Federation. The “defence” of the “*Ruskyi Mir*” served as a pretext for the annexation of Crimea and the invasion of Donbas in South-East Ukraine. The idea itself attempts to undermine the Ukraine by dividing the country between Ukrainophones and Russophones.

Unexpectedly, Russia’s military actions, accompanied by this narrative, accelerated the incomplete process of Ukrainian nation building. Thus, the great regions of the country chose to reject the notions of ethnic identity specific to the XIX century and based on common history, culture and

language, in favour of a more inclusive civic identity constructed on the respect for values, rights and common citizenship. This aspect was observed by sociologist Stuart Hall who states that civic identity only through a relationship with the *other*, with what I am not in relation to the other. It results from this that the Ukrainian identity is a socially constructed one (Stuart 2015, 3-4), which never happened in the political space of the Tsarist Empire and of the Soviet Union. Centuries of Russian imperial assimilation sought to reduce the Ukrainian culture from an independent entity to a simple regional denotation. The consequences of this fact are seen nowadays in the struggle among the politicians in Ukraine for the conservation of identity.

The aggression by the Russian Federation in Donbas gave politicians the opportunity to intensify the identity discourse in terms of a security problem. Regardless of what Russian media say to inhabitants in Eastern Ukraine, the humanitarian crisis, the people affected by civil war are impossible to ignore. According to the Centre for Monitoring of Internal displacement, as a consequence of the conflict, the number of displaced persons reached 1.65 million at the beginning of 2016. This is the way in which a linguistic issue can generate a humanitarian crisis, creating a major problem at the level of the entire Ukrainian society.

CONCLUSIONS

After the annexation of Crimea and the aggression in Donbas by the Russian Federation, for reasons of national identity security, Ukraine adopted a number of measures towards De-Russification. By changing the linguistic legislation, as a result of the passing of a new law in September 2017, the aim was to consolidate the role of the Ukrainian language in society and the reduction of the role of the Russian language in school education in the South-Eastern regions of the country. This fact led, on the one hand, to the Ukrainianization of the public space, mass-media, administration and education system, and on the other hand to the restriction of the rights of national minorities to use their own languages in the education system. The consequence of these measures is the identity de-securing of the ethnic minorities in the Ukrainian society. The requests by Russian, Romanian, Tatar, Roma, Hungarian etc. ethnic groups with regard to these restrictions were ignored, being considered hysterical, exaggerated and unfounded. The reasons, regardless of how well reasoned and justified by the authorities in Kiev, can not replace the authentic fears of minorities regarding the security of their national identities and the observance of their civil rights.

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PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DURING CRISES AND CONFLICTS: THE COVID-19 CHALLENGE

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Abstract

The spectacular evolution in communication technology, and not only, enabled the world to achieve today a high degree of interconnectivity and interdependence that would have been hard to fathom only a couple of decades ago. The economic, political and, alas, health crises swiftly cross political, cultural and religious borders and yield consequences not only where they appear. This phenomenon forces national institutions and international organizations to communicate with the public opinion at a transnational level, a process also achieved through public diplomacy. The present article suggests a framework of action in which public diplomacy may be used as an instrument of communication in the case of crisis provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic. The current period of time is seen as a critical moment, a crisis that can permanently shatter institutions and societies. There are considerable dangers beyond the impact of the pandemic on people's lives, ranging from an economic crisis that might prove more serious than the one in 2008/9, to an accentuated crisis of democracy and geopolitical changes, while public diplomacy could mitigate or eliminate these possible evolutions.

Keywords: globalization; crisis; public diplomacy; Covid-19; transnational communication.

INTRODUCTION

The corona virus epidemic seems to affect the course of universal history through its consequences manifesting as a genuine *turning point* not only in the medical field, but also in those of economy, finance and trade, as well as in that of international affairs. Examples in recent decades demonstrate that each exceptional event at international level, regardless of it occurring at a technological (the explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor, the chemical accident in Bhopal, the nuclear meltdown in Fukushima etc.), environmental (Hurricane Katrina, the drought in the Sahel etc.), or societal level (the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the communist regimes, the 2008/2009 financial crisis, the crises in North Africa known as the *Arab Spring*), acted as a historical marker in the collective psychic and led to major changes at the level of each individual society and of humanity as a whole. The current pandemic caused by the virus contracted the economic activity at global level so that analysts compared this period with that of the Great Recession in 1929-1933 of the past century when, among other consequences, unemployment reached an unseen before level in the world's modern and contemporary history (Iacurci 2000). At the same time, Covid-19 exacerbated national rivalries in many domains where states used to cooperate. It emphasized, especially in the Western (American) society, racial frictions, while socio-economic inequalities were accentuated, like between urban and rural communities. Many aspects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the response to them were heavily politicized in many countries regarding the acceptance or rejection of governmental measures to contain the situation, like the compulsory wearing of a face mask or the observation of a number of rules which affect/limit a number of freedoms specific to liberal and democratic societies. Only a decade ago, until the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, all collective efforts have been dedicated to the creation of a civil global society “*steeped in American-oriented values: democracy, human rights, and social, political, and economic liberalism*” (Arquilla & Ronfeldt 1999, 65-66). Such rhetoric of global interconnection, considered as a key factor in the use of public

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diplomacy in the whole world, was put under question by the pandemic through the measures taken by governments at local level in order to limit the circulation of people and goods.

All these sparked an avalanche of questions that sit on everybody's lips, from ordinary citizens to politicians, from entrepreneurs and doctors to analysts and researchers in various fields (security, internal policy, foreign policy, public diplomacy etc.). How will the measures to contain the pandemic affect the role and especially the mechanisms of functioning of the institutions and organizations involved in managing foreign policy, including the health ones, at regional and global levels? Will the pandemic de-values classical institution and their specific instruments in the struggle for hegemony and control and will it accentuate the role of those capable of effectively using soft power? Will there be an increase of the role of public diplomacy in the current global health state? What types of public diplomacy messages are functional and effective in such situations? Which is the channel through which public diplomacy could demonstrate its effectiveness, having in mind that its classic type activities, like face-to-face meetings, are suspended in most countries? These are only a couple of the questions to which we will try to find the answer.

THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON FOREIGN POLICY

The pandemic caused by the Covid-19 virus emphasized the fact that nowadays, due to the unprecedented development of the means of communication, a number of social phenomena manifest themselves a lot more intensely, without being fundamentally different from what people "experienced" in the case of other epidemics or pandemics. Perceptions on the pandemic occurring one hundred years ago are relevant to this end. When the 1918 flu pandemic started spreading in a world still at war, the warring nations quickly blamed and accused each other for front trenches lacking proper hygiene facilities, over-populated medical camps, non-hygienic transportation of the troops etc. But these factors existed and manifested themselves on all belligerents, accusers and accused alike (Simms 2018). As the spread of the Covid-19 virus became global, Western media and American leaders emphasized "the initial failure by China to contain the virus and to prevent the spread of the pandemic" (Emerging Views 2000). In their turn, the Chinese not only rejected the accusations, but they also formulated the same type of accusations against the Americans (Winter 2020). How can we overcome such situations in the preset society? Why, after a century of evolution in knowledge and development of medical security, reactions and situations like those generated by the Covid-19 seem to repeat themselves, only with other actors and along different geopolitical coordinates? Could answers to these questions be found? The possible answers can be found within an extremely wide range, from negation to affirmation.

Sceptics favour the truth that each pandemic that took place in the past was different than the preceding one, something which proves to be true in the case of the current pandemic. For these, the medical staff and public administration staff at all levels must take action on the "frontline", and not other categories of specialists. Without categorically dismissing such a prejudice, we believe that it would be useful to study the way in which people reacted in pandemic situations in the recent or remote past (Bergdolt 2012, 11-12). Referring to the lessons that could be learned by researching the "Spanish Flu" that caused so many victims in 1918-1919, Professor Stephen S. Morse from Columbia University, New York wrote more than a decade before the Covid-19 pandemic: "That historical data from 1918 keep even today such utility is both a demonstration of the value of history and a great irony in itself. The irony happening now, almost 90 years after the gravest pandemic in recorded history, is that we still do not have a full understanding of the fundamental aspects of flu transmission, so that we have to rely on century old empirical results. A lot more research is clearly necessary in order to better understand flu epidemiology and transmission, to project useful interventions and to develop the technology to quickly and effectively manufacture the necessary vaccines" (Morse 2007). The lessons of the past and the geopolitical projections can also be useful in understanding the crises provoked in modern society by various viruses and other pathogens, as they are used in other domains of human experience, such as wars and hegemonic rivalries in the international arena.

On 14 April 2020, Condoleezza Rice, former US State Secretary and national security advisor to the Bush administration, stated in a press conference at the Hoover Institute that international

institutions did not respond effectively to the Covid-19 crisis. However, individual countries responded on their own, without cooperation or coordination (Rice 2020). This led to the emergence of fierce competition between international actors, each looking to enhance its advantages in relation to the others, even if the need for cooperation against the virus required another type of behaviour. From a different perspective, if we look back in the recent history, we will observe that this type of behaviour recently seen in the case of the SARS-COV 2 crisis is not singular. In the past, countries like Russia exploited similar crises, using them against the United State, including the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s (Boghardt 2009). Iran and Russian sponsored mass-media constructed a series of conspiracy theories about the United States and SARS-COV-19 and promoted criticism regarding the measures by the Trump Administration to combat the pandemic (Chernaskey 2020). Both China and Russia used he pandemic to re-enforce their image in the international arena by providing medical assistance to a number of states in difficulty, as it was the case of Italy, but this, in the opinion of specialists, seems rather to have been a geopolitical gain than an act driven by humanitarian reasons (Braw, 2020). In these strategies of competition at regional or global levels, the instruments of soft power, among which public diplomacy, played an enhanced role through an effort of accommodation and adequateness to a society in a pandemic situation.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Covid-19 pandemic influenced both the international environment and the instruments through which states consolidate their image or enhance their influence in order to be able to impose their interest at regional or global level. One of the ways through which states try to shape their foreign policy is public diplomacy because it mainly, but not exclusively, addresses certain target groups in other societies and has more credible instruments than the official ones so that the message reaches them. To this end, professionals and analysts in the field of public diplomacy quickly adapted to the situation created in the world by SARS COV2. The efforts of the state institutions grew in order to create facilities for the promotion of its interests through public diplomacy. Through various measures, in support of their external actions, they attracted the support of international non-state actors like big manufacturers of pharmaceutical equipment and products. From this perspective, the observation by a number of analysts that internal public diplomacy overlaps with “a specific governmental public relations function” (Signitzer & Wamser 2006, 435–464) seems to have been confirmed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Upon summary analysis, we can state that up to now China has exploited this opportunity. According to analyst Raj Verma, this public diplomacy campaign carried out by China has also involved non-state actors. Researching this phenomenon, Raj Verma noticed that “Chinese multinational corporations have also indulged in “mask diplomacy”. It is not completely clear whether this is at the behest of the Chinese government. The Alibaba Foundation and the Jack Ma Foundation have already provided medical assistance to France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Ukraine and other counties. Jack Ma Foundation has also published a handbook to help countries fight COVID-19. Huawei has also provided testing kits and masks to Italy, Ireland, Spain, Poland, Czech Republic and the Netherlands. Oppo, Xiaomi and other Chinese smartphone companies have also sent thousands of masks to European countries” (Verma 2020, 205–209). China provided medical assistance and sold ventilators, other intensive care facilities, masks, gloves, test kits and medication to numerous European countries. It sent medical experts and shared medical expertise with France, Italy and the “17+1” group countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEEC). The Chinese assistance was positively appreciated in most European countries. Thus, some of the officials of the countries where China sent aid became “agents of influence” of the Chinese public diplomacy. A relevant example is that of the Hungarian prime-minister, Viktor Orban, who “personally welcomed the arrival of a plane from China at Budapest airport, noting that 86 planes had arrived up to 24 March with masks, tests and ventilators” (Szicherle & Krekó 2020). A genuine war of public statements ensued in Hungarian mass-media regarding the battle for public standing between pro-Europeans and pro-Chinese in Budapest. On a different note, the cabinet and its media did not present important information about the equipment Hungary bought. For instance, the quality issues with Chinese-manufactured masks were never raised towards China, even though the government in

Beijing had to take action against shoddy masks itself. In contrast, Zoltán Kovács noted on Twitter that the masks distributed by the EU “are of such low quality that they are of little use.” He did, however, forget to mention that those masks were purchased from China. The price of the equipment was not mentioned either. Overall, the government made Beijing look like a charity instead of a business partner” (Szicherle & Krekó 2020).

Nevertheless, China was the one who used the pandemic situation in order to create perception advantages for itself in the international arena. The Chinese diplomacy tried to discredit some states by showing and exaggerating their difficulties in combating the pandemic and solving the public health crisis. It demonstrated its determination to impose its own narrative both at European and global level. The Chinese narrative was conceived in order to counter what is perceived as Western hostility, given the criticism by the USA regarding the Chinese lack of transparency at the onset of the pandemic. This aggressiveness took the form of doubts expressed on tweets to Chinese diplomats regarding the origins of the epidemic. A true war of messages was carried out between China and the great Western powers through tactics specific to public diplomacy, each side seeking to convince the public opinion about which state was guilty of the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, “Inside China, a raft of conspiracy stories have appeared online, including that the contagion might have been brought in by American athletes staying in Wuhan during the Military World Games last year” (Austin & Smith 2020). We must underline the fact that during this period China, as well as the Russian Federation, used its previous “mask diplomacy” experience gained while intervening to help states affected by other pandemics. In 2009, it used “mask diplomacy” in Mexico during the H1N1 flu in order to have itself described as a benevolent nation (Browne 2009) in order to counterbalance the attractive image enjoyed by the USA in this country. China applied the same tactic at the beginning of February 2021, when “half a million doses of the Chinese Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine arrived in Pakistan, before soon also reaching 13 other countries including Cambodia, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe. The Chinese ambassador to Pakistan declared it a “manifestation of our brotherhood”, a sentiment echoed by the Pakistani government” (Khan 2021).

Neither did the Russian Federation miss the chance to use the opportunities generated by the pandemic in order to re-enforce its public diplomacy in Western areas of interest or in other regions of the world. Although the Russian authorities were confronted with growing difficulties in managing the pandemic, “On April 1, Russia sent humanitarian aid to the United States. The massive cargo aircraft, an Antonov An-124 Ruslan, took off from the Chkalovsky military airport near Moscow bound for the U.S., landing in New York City’s JFK airport on the same day. The aircraft was filled with medical equipment and protective gear including medical masks to help Americans in fighting COVID-19. Russia’s initiative resulted from a prior telephone conversation between Putin and Trump. Earlier on March 22 as a gesture of goodwill, Russia sent medical assistance to Italy amid the country’s struggle with the pandemic. Russia also sent medical military aid to Serbia to fight corona virus” (Krasnyak 2020). It is interesting to note that, in order to be more easily promoted through public diplomacy, the vaccine for the protection of the population against the SARS COV2 virus was named *Sputnik V*, which “alludes to the world’s first space satellite that the Soviet Union launched in 1957” (Budnitsky 2020). The promotion of this vaccine is done on a website edited in no less than eight languages and it offers “a press kit with photos, videos, and graphics for anyone wanting to cover the initiative. As the site explains of Russia’s reputational goals, “In 1957 the successful launch of the first space satellite Sputnik-1 by the Soviet Union reinvigorated space research and exploration around the world. The announcement of the new Russian COVID-19 vaccine created a so-called ‘Sputnik moment’ for the global community. The vaccine is therefore called Sputnik V” (Budnitsky 2020). According to Chatham House experts, “The Kremlin’s economic response to COVID-19 has been modest compared to many of its rivals. Although the government is under increased pressure to spend its ‘rainy-day fund’, it believes that doing so will ultimately undermine the fiscal stability underpinning its geopolitical sovereignty” (Chatham House 2020). This fact influence the quality, attractiveness and credibility of the Russian public diplomacy conducted in various spaces during the Covid pandemic. As a matter of fact, there are experts who noticed that the Coronavirus pandemic

has had little visible effect on Russian foreign policy, except the fact that it strengthened its fundamentals (Lo 2020).

The breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic activated channels of so-called “aid diplomacy”. By aid diplomacy, I mean a sub-type of public diplomacy that concentrates on the distribution of aid as one of its primary strategies. The spread of the virus at the end of 2019 and the first half of 2020 made people understand that this global issue could not be solved individually by a single country. Even for China, producing a sufficient quantity of masks at the peak of the coronavirus was more than a challenging task to complete; thus, China acquired masks from abroad. Other countries with even lesser production capabilities equally could not meet the demand during their own peaks either (Varpahovskis 2020).

The main preoccupations of Western public diplomacy institutions and organizations, mainly those in the EU, USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia etc, was to make functional a connecting bridge between societies and to combat the disinformation carried out through public diplomacy strategies and tactics by China, the Russian Federation and other illiberal or authoritarian states (Bishop 2020). Naima Green-Riley believed that “America’s strength is its openness. In order for such a truth to persist, it will be important to manage the threat posed by public diplomacy from influence-seeking authoritarian states such as China by pursuing four main policy goals, namely: (1) comprehensive monitoring of the tools of public influence employed by these states; (2) a well-informed citizenry; (3) an information environment in which knowledge consumers have access to details about the origins of narratives and news; and (4) a values-based approach to confronting authoritarian outreach to the U.S. public. Pursuing such goals should allow the United States to exercise the appropriate caution to ward off unwanted exploitation of its openness while also staying true to its ideals.” (Green-Riley 2020, 63)

The Western states adapted their public diplomacy strategies in accord with the rules imposed by the sanitary measures meant to contain the pandemic. The dynamic was not modified, because public diplomacy is in essence a set of activities focused on communication, but solutions were identified to preserve the previous parameters. So that digital information to the target audience became an objective promoted by the EU member states, as well as the USA, NATO etc, because a huge growth of the time spent by people online during locally or nationally imposed quarantines had been observed. From this perspective, most of public diplomacy activities have been carried out online through the social networks. The Facebook pages of the embassies of these countries in various parts of the world provided real-time information related to the efforts made to discover vaccines in order to combat the pandemic, and also the achievements obtained in managing serious illnesses. Such an example is that of the US Embassy in Georgia. “American Story Time,” a digital public diplomacy program launched by the U.S. Embassy Tbilisi in March 2020, immediately reached its target society by prioritizing manifestly its principal goal: to help Georgian youth learning English as education institutions remained closed and moved online. Going live on Facebook – alone or with family members – to read American stories starting from *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss to *The Gift of Nothing* by Patrick McDonnell and more, American diplomats coordinated efforts to spread authentically the image of the United States, its culture and society in the best ways possible. In addition of being an enjoyable activity, each story time increases understanding of American values (Khatiashvili 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

The promotion of public diplomacy in the online environment provides important advantages compared to classical manifestations. Analysts like Corneliu Bjola and Ilan Manor believe that “All the while citizens are online comparing their nation’s handling of the crisis, to that of other nations. Herein lays an opportunity. Indeed, diplomats can now use social media to document their nations’ successful efforts to contain the coronavirus outbreak while holding true to national values” (Bjola & Manor 2020). The pandemic severely tested the capacity of democratic societies to maintain confidence in its fundamental values through effective communication, to protect the national image of their countries as the crisis escalated, and to counter the digital disinformation spread by non-

democratic regimes or non-state actors with obscure interests. At the same time, it showed the necessity that all public diplomacy institutions and organizations, once the pandemic is over, draw the appropriate lessons, learn how to think digitally without prejudice and begin to update their digital expertise, instruments and strategies in order to be better prepared to face the next global crisis which may come about sooner than expected.

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DIRECTIONS OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE OF THE ROMANIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL PARTICIPATING IN STABILITY AND SUPPORT OPERATIONS

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Abstract

The identification and choice of directions for the development of intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations abroad can be approached starting from different criteria.

In our opinion, they refer to: components of intercultural communication competence; the different explanatory models of the intercultural communication competence; the sociological model of intercultural communication competence.

Keywords: intercultural communication competence; stability and support operations; directions of training and development of intercultural communication competence.

INTRODUCTION

The current operational environment, dynamic and complex, requires in addition to military forces, in general, and multinational forces, in particular, new capabilities of relational communication, adaptation and action that allow them to identify and combat hypothetical opponents acting on the basis of their ability to conventionally use combat actions related to unconventional types of combat. Given this context, intercultural communication, seen not only from an internal perspective as a vital and standard element to be achieved at the level of national contingents, but also as a tool of balance in establishing positive relations with all actors in the operational environment, from regional partners to the local population, becomes a vital requirement for the achievement of the objectives that the multinational military forces have in the whole spectrum of operations.

In this context, the military education institution has an important role in terms of training and developing the competence of intercultural communication of all Romanian military personnel who will participate in external missions, including stability and support operations.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Intercultural competences can be defined in general as adequate knowledge about certain cultures, as well as general knowledge about problems that arise when members of different cultures interact, maintaining receptive attitudes that encourage establishing and maintaining contact with different people, and the necessary skills interacting with others from different cultures.

Some of the common elements of intercultural competences in different cultures include respect, self-awareness/identity, looking at other perspectives/worldviews, listening, adapting and building relationships.

In a study (on 100 subjects) that questioned the importance of intercultural communication competence of Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support missions, the results were as follows:

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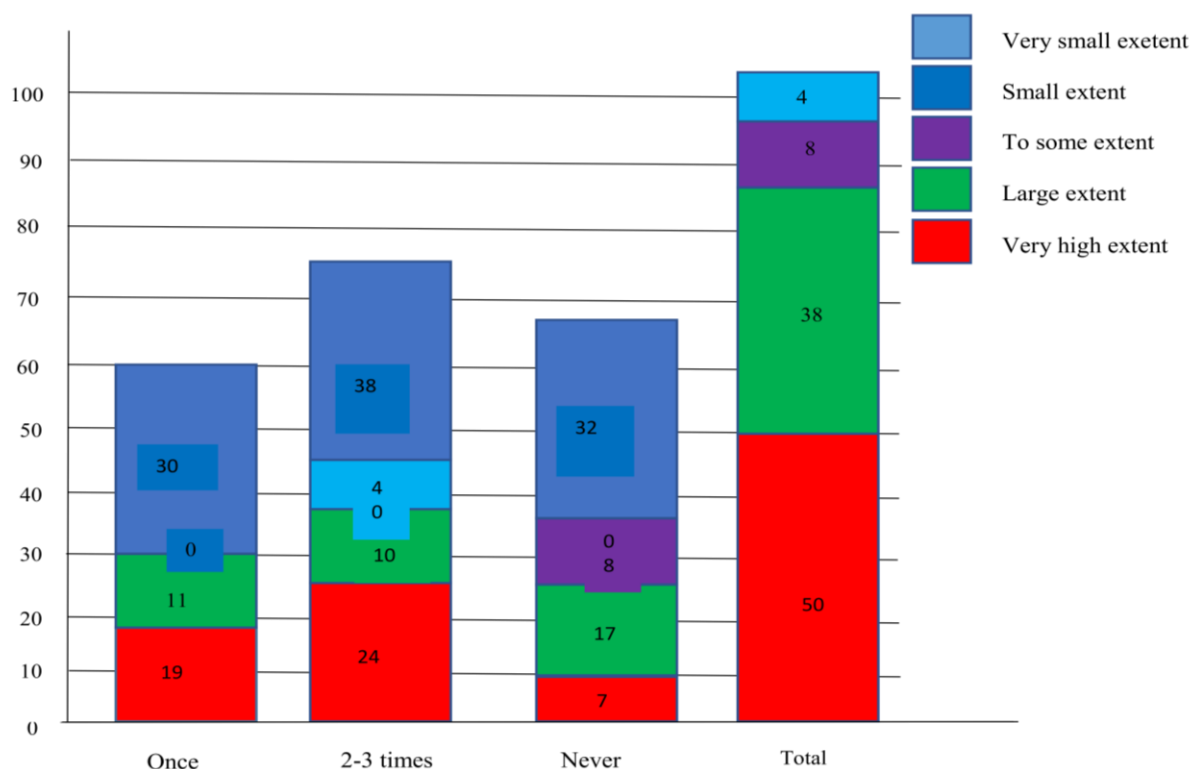


Figure 1. The correlation between the need for cultural communication competence and frequency of participation in external missions (Olar 2016)

According to the data in Figure 1, the respondents attach great importance to the need for intercultural communication competence. Thus, in proportion to 88.00% consider that such a competence is *necessary in a very high measure* (50.0%) and to a *large extent* (38.0%). Only 12.0% of them think to such competence as being something to *some extent necessary* (8.0%) and to a *small extent measure* (4.0%). It seems that experience does not play a significant role in appreciation the need for the intercultural communication competence of the participating Romanian military to stability and support operations. However, the analysis of their options according to the frequency of participation in missions shows that 63.30% of those who were once in the theater of operations appreciates that the existence of the intercultural communication competence is needed to a very large extent, while the military personnel that has been 2-3 times in theaters of operations make the same assessment in proportion of 63.15%.

Considering the data above, there are some directions of training and development of intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations used as a methodology for approaching these:

I. *Training and development directions according to the criterion "components of intercultural communication competence"*

Starting from the series of researches that have been carried out in this field and from the numerous conceptual models that have been proposed, we appreciate that the components that represent the essence of intercultural competence (*attitudes, abilities, knowledge, behaviors*) (Barrett 2021, 2-4) can be considered as it follows:

According to the criterion "*components of the competence of intercultural communication*" we will distinguish the following directions of development of this type of competence:

- *the direction of developing **the attitudes** of the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations* towards the constant, continuous and effective raising of the level of their competence of intercultural communication. These are attitudes favorable to the development of the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military involved in stability and support operations abroad.

The formation and development of these attitudes are done through adequate methods of social, psychosocial, material and moral nature that the military institutions with attributions in the field permanently practice in the process of formation and professional development of their students (Radu 1991, 332-351). Following the transposition of this direction, the Romanian military must possess attitudes such as: respect and curiosity for other cultures, the desire to learn about other cultures, their openness to other cultures, the attitude to suspend their prejudices, the attitude of tolerance for ambiguity and appreciation of cultural diversity. In our opinion, it is about the development of attitudes favorable to the participation of the military in stability and support operations, on the one hand, and the elimination of negative ones on the other hand.

- *the direction of development of intercultural communication **skills** of the Romanian military* participating in stability and support operations is expressed by the set of capacities developed by them to raise the level of their competence of intercultural communication. Here, it is about both the innate skills and those acquired through learning by the Romanian military personnel. We note as part of these: the ability to listen to people from other cultures; interaction with these people; adaptation to other cultural environments; language skills, sociolinguistic and communication skills, including the ability to manage the ruptures of communication; to serve as an intermediary in intercultural exchanges; to find out information about other cultures; to interpret cultures and relate them to each other, empathy, multiple perspectives, cognitive suppleness; to critically evaluate cultural views, practices and products; awareness of communication, especially of differences in language conventions, including in one's own culture;

- *the cognitive direction for the development of the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military* participating in stability and support operations is materialized by establishing the database and information necessary and sufficient for them to develop in a constant rhythm the intercultural communication competence. In essence, this direction aims to coordinate the efforts of actors involved in the process of developing intercultural communication skills of Romanian soldiers participating in stability and support operations in order to acquire an adequate volume of data and information useful for the upward evolution of their intercultural communication skills. Attention must be focused on transforming this data and information into knowledge that the military will be able to effectively and constantly add to the cognitive fundamental of their intercultural communication skills. It is known that not all data and information transmitted in the learning process automatically become knowledge (Muntean, Danaiața, Margea 2021, 1-3). In practice, only a part of this data and information becomes knowledge after its assimilation and logical memorization by the Romanian military.

Mainly, at the end of the training process, the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations must be in possession of some knowledge regarding: their cultural affiliation, knowledge of ways to communicate, especially of different linguistic and communication conventions in different cultures, knowledge of their own culture, especially knowledge of views, practices and products of certain cultural groups, general knowledge of culture, especially knowledge of the processes of interaction between cultures, societies and individuals, knowledge of the civilization and culture of the country in which their mission will take place;

- *the behavioral direction of developing the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military* participating in stability and support operations refers to the acquisition of individual and collective behaviors in full consensus with the principles, values and national and international norms of humanitarian law, of general human rights.

We appreciate that the formation and development of behaviors in strict accordance with national and international legal norms are a guarantee of the success of fulfilling the missions entrusted to the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations abroad. Basically, it is about an effective and correct behavior of the Romanian military during intercultural meetings, manifested by flexibility in cultural and communication behavior, by orientation towards action, towards the willingness to act in stability and support operations to promote the common good, in particular by reducing prejudice, discrimination and conflict. Such behaviors are formed and developed through a set of social, psychosocial, material, moral, legal methods (Radu 1991, cap 15).

II. *Training and development directions according to the criterion "models of representation of the competence of intercultural communication"*

Starting from the criterion "models of representation of the competence of intercultural communication" (Byram, 2021, 2-5) we can refer to the following directions of development of this type of competences:

- *the direction of developing the **capacities** of the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations* abroad in order to constantly, permanently and effectively **raise the level of their intercultural communication competence**. This direction aims to increase the capacity of the military in the field of knowledge of what to do in stability and support operations regarding intercultural communication with the military of other armies participating in the same mission, with members of the International Red Cross, with members of volunteer organizations, with representatives of the local power and the population in the area. From a practical point of view, the development of this direction refers to the acquisition and manifestation by the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations of the following capabilities: curiosity and openness to other cultures; the ability to be tolerant of people from other cultures; the ability to trust one's own culture; the ability to overcome prejudices regarding people belonging to other cultures; the will to relativize one's own values, beliefs and behaviors; the ability to accept the other's perspective; the ability to reconsider his vision of the world. For this purpose, methods and techniques can be used to develop the necessary and sufficient skills of the Romanian military to help them perform their tasks effectively when participating in stability and support operations abroad;

- *the direction of developing the **capacities** of the Romanian military* participating in stability and support operations abroad **to know the realities they face during the fulfillment of such missions**. It is about the ability to know facts, events, people, both as individuals and as members of groups, as well as the ability to know the products of their activity, especially those they can meet in the theaters of stability and support operations. Also, it is about the development of the knowledge capacities by the Romanian military: of the general interactions between the societies and the individuals belonging to them; of the social processes in one's own society but also in the society in which the future mission can probably take place; of the way in which the population in the area of stability and support operations and not only perceives them; of the ways in which one can effectively relate to different people within the area of the stability and support operation. At the same time, the Romanian military must also develop the following types of skills: the ability to interpret a document or an event related to the culture of the country where the stability and support operations take place; the ability to explain such documents or events and relate them to one's own culture; the ability to predict how misunderstandings occur during stability and support operations; the ability to look at the culture and civilization of the country where the stability and support operations take place from different perspectives.

In our opinion, such capabilities are developed through the entire process of training and professional development of the Romanian military carried out in military education institutions;

- *the direction of developing the **capacity to learn, do and engage** of the Romanian military* participating in stability and support operations abroad in order **to amplify their competence of intercultural communication**.

In our opinion, this direction implies the development of the following types of capabilities in all Romanian military personnel: the ability to assimilate new knowledge from a new culture and the ability to accumulate given cultural practices; the ability to use operatively and effectively this knowledge during the execution of stability and support operations; the ability to use this knowledge under the constraint of real-time intercultural communication and interaction; the ability to evaluate, in a critical manner and on the basis of explicit criteria, the points of view, practices and products of one's own country and of the culture of the country where the stability and support operations take place.

We appreciate that such capabilities are formed and developed through the military training process and through the use of active learning methods such as the simulation method, the case study method, the modeling method or the role play method.

III. Training and development directions according to the criterion "sociological model of intercultural communication competence"

Based on the sociological model of intercultural communication competence, the following directions of action can be drawn for the development of intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations abroad:

- the direction of **cognitive-informational development** of the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations abroad. This direction refers both to the development of the military's capacities to acquire knowledge about the culture and civilization of the country where the stability and support operations take place, and to the involvement of other psychic processes in the activity of developing the intercultural communication competence. It is about thinking, memory, language, attention, will and even temperament. On the other hand, we appreciate that this direction of developing the competence of the Romanian military concerns both the nature and the content of data and information transmitted, acquired and transformed into knowledge and skills through the professional development process carried out by military educational institutions;

- the direction of **affective-motivational development** of the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations abroad. In our opinion, this direction of development includes two interdependent and complementary components, namely: the affective component and the motivational component. The first component concerns the positive and negative emotional feelings that the Romanian military can experience while participating in stability and support operations. Our interest is, first of all, that negative emotional states be eliminated or, if this is not possible, that their effects be limited as much as possible. In addition, we believe that the positive feelings of the military regarding their participation in stability and support operations must be developed. To this end, one can go on developing the feelings of satisfaction regarding the fulfilled duty, the feelings of national pride regarding Romania's contribution to regional stability and not only.

The motivational component refers to the needs, motives, interests, aspirations, beliefs and ideals of the military participating in stability and support operations. They can be oriented in the sense of fulfilling the missions entrusted to the Romanian military personnel using both the intrinsic motivation and the extrinsic motivation that the commanders have at their disposal;

- the direction of **behavioral-action development** of the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military participating in stability and support operations abroad. This direction of development refers to the development of individual and collective behaviors desirable in all Romanian military personnel involved in stability and support operations, on the one hand, and to the implementation of such behaviors, on the other hand. This double objective can be materialized through well-known learning methods, through exercises and field applications, as well as through the use of methods such as: modeling, simulation, case study, role play, synectics. In our opinion, the lessons learned on the occasion of the execution of similar missions by the Romanian military personnel also play a significant role. We appreciate that, regardless of the criterion chosen for designating the directions of action aimed at developing the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations, our option must lead to the achievement of the following mandatory and cumulative objectives:

- training in the military personnel a high flexibility that translates into a rapid adaptation, without major dysfunctions to any new, unexpected and random situation that may arise during participation in stability and support operations;

- the development of creativity in all soldiers, meaning the ability to innovate, invent and create, while participating in stability and support operations in order to fulfill the tasks entrusted. We appreciate that the complex and dynamic intercultural situation during the stability and support operations requires the development and especially the manifestation of such a capacity in all the military personnel;

- all military personnel must achieve a high efficiency in fulfilling the specific missions entrusted within the stability and support operations. In addition, the development of these qualities,

through the training process in military educational institutions, makes the participation of the Romanian military in stability operations abroad to be distinguished by promptness, efficiency, continuity and full security for all involved.

CONCLUSIONS

The competence of intercultural communication is a result of personal, group and institutional efforts to train the skills of the Romanian military personnel. The article has focused on analyzing aspects related to the directions of training and development of intercultural communication skills of Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations, addressing broadly the directions of formation and development according to the criterion "components of intercultural communication competence", directions of formation and development according to the criterion "models of representation of intercultural communication competence" and directions of formation and development according to the criterion "sociological model of intercultural communication competence."

We appreciate that the formation and development of behaviors in strict accordance with national and international legal norms are a guarantee of the success of the accomplishment of the missions entrusted to the Romanian military personnel who participates in stability and support operations abroad. Basically, it's an effective and correct behavior of the Romanian military personnel visible during the intercultural meetings that is expected to manifest through suppleness in cultural communication, through action-oriented behavior, willingness to act within the framework of stability and support operations in order to promote the common good, in particular by reducing prejudice, discrimination and conflict.

Also these specific behaviors are formed and developed through a set of social, psychosocial, material, moral, legal methods that can contribute to the accomplishment of the mission entrusted.

In our opinion, establishing the criteria on the basis of which to choose the directions of action is necessary in the process of training the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations because in this way objectives such as: - the selection of the most adequate scenarios regarding the possible and probable intercultural situations in which the Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations can be found and their introduction in the role-playing games and in the simulations performed in the military education institutions; - the effective use of new information and communication technologies in the intercultural communication competence formation process can be successfully achieved.

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DIGITAL DIPLOMACY APPROACHED AS A SUBTYPE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

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Abstract

As a subtype of new Public Diplomacy, Digital Diplomacy is considered one of the major trends of the twenty-first century in diplomatic communication and during the Covid-19 pandemic this aspect was reiterated. The importance of Digital Diplomacy is based on the usage of communication technologies, the internet and social media, which at the same time represent its base, for the strengthening of the diplomatic relations. Covid-19 has disrupted almost every aspect of life and diplomacy is no exception. Today, Digital Diplomacy has become a standard practice and we have to mention that it doesn't replace the traditional diplomacy, but complements it. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, for international actors was clear how important the exploitation of Digital Diplomacy benefits is.

Keywords: Digital Diplomacy; Public Diplomacy; Crisis Management; Social Media.

INTRODUCTION

Pandemics are atypical contexts characterized by outbreaks of infectious diseases affecting individuals and communities over a wide geographical area. With many “unknowns” as well as ebbs and flows, pandemics are non-linear and challenging.

Modern diplomacy is currently going through fundamental changes at an unprecedented rate. Technical developments, and mainly digitization, affect how the services and work of diplomats is understood; the public is now more sensitive to foreign policy issues and is searching for ways to influence diplomacy through social media and other platforms.

Technological innovations like the internet have given practitioners new ways of reaching out to foreign publics and have had wide reaching effects on international communication and thereby on Public Diplomacy. Developments and changes in communication behavior mainly due to the emergence of networked forms of technology influence the work of Public Diplomacy practitioners immensely. These changes and developments include a greater importance of public opinion, more global and intrusive media, globalization making it more desirable to protect cultural diversity, and increasing global transparency. Digital Diplomacy uses communication technologies, the internet and social media to strengthen diplomatic relations.

The role of the digital media in the world of diplomacy is critical. Before the Covid-19 spread, digital media almost inevitably meant social media. Covid-19 has created a scenario for countries around the world to seize the moment to pursue for.

The main purposes of this paper are: to explain the characteristics of Digital Diplomacy and to present the evolution of Digital Diplomacy during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The paper is divided into two chapters. The first one is about the characteristics of Digital Diplomacy. This chapter offers information on the definition of Digital Diplomacy and the main goals of Digital Diplomacy. The second chapter presents the evolution of Digital Diplomacy in the pandemic era.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research interests focus on the impact of digital technology on the conduct of diplomacy, especially on the Public Diplomacy field. Due to the international Covid-19 crisis all states needed to adapt their Public Diplomacy strategy into a complex digital plan in order to keep a connection with their target audience.

For the realization of this article were used qualitative methods:

- Collection and selection of material (scientific journals, documents, sources from the internet, etc.);
- Applied methods (comparative, narrative, based theory, etc.).

THE DEFINITION AND MAIN GOALS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

By the fact that diplomacy is now emerging as a social institution, Digital Diplomacy is now perceived as a subtype of Public Diplomacy and involves the use of a variety of digital platforms and tools of communication. (Vinod n.d.)

Diplomacy comes in many shapes and sizes. It is in under the guidance of presidents and prime ministers as well as lawyers, scientists, economists, aid workers, and of course, ambassadors. They presented the diversity of potential diplomatic actors, but also the coherence of what we might call the “diplomatic style” - the effort to increase power and influence through innovative partnerships and strategies.

Basically, the main goals of Digital Diplomacy are knowledge management, information, consular communications and response, disaster response, external resources and policy planning. To explain the evolution of Digital Diplomacy, must be restored to the effects of the technological revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in diplomatic communication, appearing Public Diplomacy.

Public Diplomacy refers to processes in which countries seek to accomplish their foreign policy goals by communicating with foreign publics. It is also a tool for creating a positive climate amongst foreign populations in order to facilitate the acceptance of one’s policies. Conceived in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, a US career diplomat, *Public Diplomacy* literally reaches beyond traditional diplomacy, aiming at the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries. (Public Diplomacy -Edmund Gullion n.d.)

The use of social media in Public Diplomacy activity created a new kind of collective memory that saves stories and events that would otherwise be forgotten quickly. This new collective memory could make Digital Diplomacy efforts more sustainable, as all the information will be available online even when a project is long terminated.

Digital Diplomacy was developed at the end of the twentieth century, but the concept of *Digital Diplomacy* has also been called *eDiplomacy* or *cyber diplomacy*. The first developments of *e-Diplomacy* (“E” is the abbreviation of the word “electronic”) belong to 1992 when at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro for the first-time civil society e-mails were used for lobbying in the negotiations as well as at the same time in Malta, at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, was founded the first unit for computer applications in diplomacy (Diplo 2014).

On the other hand, many diplomats have often considerate the Arab Spring as the origin of Digital Diplomacy. The use of digital media in diplomacy had begun earlier, but at the beginning of the Arab Spring it was estimated that on the internet were recruited most of the youths to Jihadi movements. Realizing the need to counter Al-Qaeda’s recruitment tactics, and its online narrative, President Bush’s Undersecretary for Pubic Diplomacy and Public Affairs launched *Public Diplomacy 2.0*. (Manor 2017)

Media coverage is almost instantaneous not only thanks to the media, but also through smart phones and social networks. As evidenced by the revolutions involving the Arab world in the spring of 2011, authoritarian states find it difficult to control the flow of information. (Manor 2017) Social media, like other forms of technology, are making societies much more democratic, but they are also offering them new tools of control in power. Therefore, Digital Diplomacy should be combined with smart power, which means maximum utilization of the benefits of digitization and empowering protection

policies against various threats arising from communication technologies, the internet and social media because there is no escape from digitization.

The term Digital Diplomacy 2.0 has three main characteristics: The first one is the capacity of technology to facilitate the creation of relationships around social networks and on-line communities. The second characteristic is the related dependence of Public Diplomacy 2.0 on user-generated content from feedback and blog comments to complex user-generated items such as videos or mash-ups. The third characteristic is the underlying sense of the technology as being fundamentally about horizontally arranged networks of exchange rather than the vertically arranged networks of distribution down which information cascaded in the 1.0 era.

Hence, the new challenge facing diplomacy is to use the Internet and the social media as tools at the disposal of foreign action. "Diplomacy 3.0": the transition from digital communication to Digital Diplomacy. (Antonio Casado Rigalt 2017)

In the figure below we can observe how Digital Diplomacy is applied. A digital plan on Public Diplomacy is always targeting the government of the target state. The continuous lines are the main direction of the strategy and the dash lines refer to the primary message that may be edited or adapted to fit the target audience.

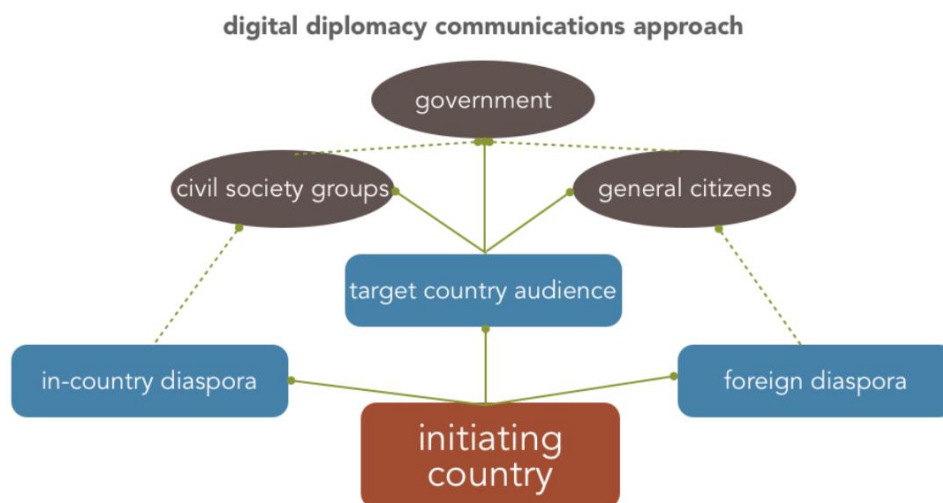


Figure 1. Digital Diplomacy Communications Approach
 Source: <https://envoycentre.wordpress.com/2014/01/22/what-is-digital-diplomacy/>

Diplomats may use social media to keep track of events, collect information, and identify key influencers. They also have avenues for leverage that aren't limited to the conventional audience. They will assist with the consultation process, policy development, and concept sharing. There is still a lot of content on the internet that is of uncertain quality. (Rashica 2019) Because of the way social media operates, it has a massive influence, and it would be great to help as much as possible as the truth emerges. For the time being, the position and value of social media networks such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube is increasingly increasing, with the latter being vital communication tools for many politicians and diplomats around the world.

The new networking technology have also had a major effect on harmful incidents. Terrorist and xenophobic organizations use them to rally and attract supporters. The social media movement is altering people's perceptions of the environment and how they communicate. (Stanzel 2018) It has not only made it easier for governments and diplomats to communicate with the media, but it has also increased public awareness of the consequences – both positive and negative – a Facebook comment, video, or image can have in a relatively short timeframe. Users of Digital Diplomacy must be trained and practiced on a regular basis, as well as integrate new digital technology as soon as possible.

The adoption of Digital Diplomacy by foreign subjects, predominantly governments, is focused on a variety of priorities, with the latter being the most active. According to the researcher Viona Rashica, the main goals of digital diplomacy include a large category of aspects from Public Diplomacy and Consular communication to Policy planning and Disaster response (Rashica, *The Benefits and Risks of Digital Diplomacy* 2018):

Public Diplomacy: To maintain contact with audiences as they migrate online and to harness new communications tools to listen to and target important audiences with key messages and to influence major online influencers;

Information management: To help aggregate the overwhelming flow of information and to use this to better inform policy-making and to help anticipate and respond to emerging social and political movements;

Consular communications and response: To create direct, personal communications channels with citizens travelling overseas, with manageable communications in crisis situations;

Disaster response: To harness the power of connective technologies in disaster response situations;

External resources: Creating digital mechanisms to draw on and harness external expertise to advance national goals;

Policy planning: To allow for effective oversight, coordination and planning of international policy across government, in response to the internationalization of the bureaucracy.

The strategic use of digital platforms establishes the order on digital activities through the definition of measurable goals, target audiences, and parameters for evaluation. The goals decide the target audience, which in turn decides the platforms and methods to be used.

The threat of adversely manipulating data or hacking sensitive data is the greatest risk of the digital world. The Russian government's digital misinformation operations, which have reportedly tried to undermine political processes in Europe and the United States in recent years, provide credible evidence in this case. (Bjola 2018) More worryingly, how the digital medium operates makes it an easy target for use in propaganda. Due to the confirmation bias that online echo-chambers allow and perpetuate, misinformation spreads quicker, reaches deeper, becomes more emotionally charged, and, most significantly, becomes more resilient as a result of algorithmic content delivery and the circumvention of conventional media filters and opinion-formation gatekeepers. (Bjola, "Getting Digital Diplomacy right: what quantum theory can teach us about measuring impact." 2016)

Facebook was facing the harshest criticism of its history of privacy practices and how it treats user data, known as the "Cambridge Analytica Data Scandal". The analytical data firm that has worked with US President Donald Trump's electoral team and the Brexit winner campaign, and has taken millions of American voters data and has used them to build a powerful software program to predict and influence the US presidential election of 2016. Cambridge Analytica had access in informations of over 87 million Facebook users without their knowledge. (Cadwalladr 2018)

As mentioned, Digital Diplomacy does not replace traditional diplomacy, but it can strengthen the state's work in international relations quickly and more effectively. Today, it is an essential element for realizing foreign policy. Digital Diplomacy helps a lot in advancing its foreign policy goals, expanding international alignment, and affecting people who never set foot in any of the embassies of the world. (Adesina 2017)

Generally, Digital Diplomacy has four primary aspects: direct foreign engagement with a target country, domestic awareness of foreign policy, domestic Public Diplomacy and engagement of diaspora communities at home and abroad. (What Is Digital Diplomacy? 2014)

Last, but not least, the costs of using new technologies are falling rapidly as a result of continuous technology advancements. International practice shows that competent use of Digital Diplomacy tools can bring big dividends to those who invest in it. Moreover, Digital Diplomacy does not always require financial investments and this fact makes Digital Diplomacy more attractive to governments and embassies for spreading their work.

DIGITAL DIPLOMACY IN THE COVID ERA

The global health crisis precipitated by Covid-19 has ushered in a new chapter in Public Diplomacy, as border closures, lockdowns, and social distancing become the norm across the globe. As nations struggle to contain Covid-19, in a pandemic fraught with life-and-death decisions and uncertainties about shifting economic, social, and political power.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic has changed or postponed most Public Diplomacy plans for 2020, both state and non-state actors have had to adapt their approach to fit into this new reality in which restrictions on travel and gatherings have resulted in events becoming less frequent and maintaining a country's public image during these turbulent times can be a challenging task.

The Covid-19 can be a compelling context for investigating the intersections of Public Diplomacy and Digital Diplomacy and also represents a unique opportunity to examine Public Diplomacy activities during crises situation. The Covid-19 outbreak challenged digital Public Diplomacy activities at least in two ways. First, diplomats faced a public health threat, rather than a political, economic or military one. Second, the Covid-19 virus spread among nations with unprecedented speed so diplomats response had to be direct and in real time.

Diplomatic practitioners looked at new forms of technologies as instruments of diplomacy, for example, digitized approaches of regulatory mechanisms, implementation of innovative digital technologies, and mobilizing digital tools. The pandemic has accelerated governments to adopt tools such as e-government portals and the developments of specific websites as their country's national Covid-19 platform to disseminate information the development of the crisis.

In order to maintain in a strong connection with the public diplomats must: remain engaged with the targeted audience and have a long-term plan to interact with them. Digital engagement strategies are not new to Public Diplomacy. However, with the rise of social distancing and temporary pausing of in-person programs, seeking out actionable ways to connect through Digital Diplomacy has become an urgent matter. (Iosifidis 2016)

Covid-19 was also a governance crisis, by default a Public Diplomacy crisis, and in this particular situation citizens around the world had judged a country regarding the time of response to the crisis and the efficiency of actions taken by the government.

Generally, the Digital Diplomacy is not impacted by crises unless any of the following three points happen, altogether or independently: prolonged crisis, high level of intensity, affects the country's identity and culture.

Normally, all crises affect the perception of countries for a specific period of time. Perceptions affected during a brief period do not substantiate a lasting change of image. (Consulting 2020) In order for this to happen, a crisis must affect or be related to one of the following areas: Public Governance (National government), Identity and Culture (People), History and Land.

The change in perceptions is predominantly related to Public Governance at 95%. While only 5% is grouped into Identity and Culture. This crisis is not related to History and Land. (Consulting 2020)

The pandemic has tested diplomats capacity to offer timely and effective consular assistance, to protect the national image of their countries as the crisis escalated, and to counter the digital disinformation spread by an anxious public or by strategically minded actors.

The main challenges faced by diplomats during pandemic were related to:

- The improvement of the online platforms to offer the stability and security required in meetings;
- Interact with the public exclusive online;
- Create content that may reach a high engagement rate;
- Organizing social and cultural events, meetings or conferences online;
- Adapting the diplomatic protocol rules to the online environment.

Considering all of the above, for diplomats a quick knowledge of various events can be an advantage to national interest in many cases. Digital technologies are extremely useful for gathering and processing information regarding diplomatic activities as well as for fast communications in urgent

situations. They enable governments to think about the consequences of events in different parts of the world and how they affect their country.

If crisis management perceptions are affecting the image of a country, emotions will generate results or impact the following dimensions of Public Diplomacy: mainly the target audience will have a different perception about the country and that may affect the impact of previous messages that were disseminated to influence governmental decision. Other domains that may be affected are Cultural Exchange, Investments, Exports, Tourism.

Countries that have and use a Digital Diplomacy strategy have proven to be more resilient. Those who work to manage their image and manage perceptions and reputation have more control over their national brand. Digital Diplomacy strategy should be a tool to provide answers in terms of behavior during a crisis.

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, "Digital Diplomacy", "e-diplomacy" and "cyber-diplomacy" are all terms that describe the same reality: the advent of a new diplomacy adapted to the digital world, mainly Digital Diplomacy can be stated as using the Internet and new communications technologies (i.e. the social media) to help international diplomatic objectives.

While digital technologies have demonstrated clear potential for revolutionizing how diplomats conduct Public Diplomacy, deliver consular services, or manage crises, one should nevertheless be mindful of the fact that the core function of diplomacy that is, relationship building and management cannot be accomplished without close and sustained human contact.

Digital Diplomacy supports Public Diplomacy which is built over time through perception. This perception is generally built on Public Governance, economic status and Cultural and Historical heritage. In order to accomplish its foreign policy objectives a state must implement an efficient digital plan.

The innovation potential of Digital Diplomacy remains largely untapped, but in order to access it, it is important to understand what Digital Diplomacy can serve to and how it should be managed.

Lack of knowledge about the usage of digital technologies, the internet and social media can result with a lot of consequences, conflicts, even with discharges of positions. Digital Diplomacy users need to be very careful about what they publish, especially in social media, because a single word, comment, like or a picture can have many negative effects.

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SOCIAL MEDIA IN INFORMATION WARFARE. ASSAULT WEAPON WITH HIGH RECOIL

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Abstract

Beyond the benefits or risks of individual or institutional communication through social media, we must note that it is the perfect environment for fake news and propaganda because of the speed of information propagation, the unfriendly environment for checking sources, algorithms behind social networks and, last but not least, the extremely low cost. In other words, the Internet and web 2.0 have created the favorable framework for the conduct of the war "for minds and hearts", as it can be called the information war waged through social media. Beyond these considerations, the non-regulation of the online domain - the lack of rules, be they deontological, make social media a powerful weapon of attack in this type of war. At the same time, the use of this space by state actors should be done with caution because it involves risks that could result in the loss of the most important action capacity: credibility. This article aims to analyze social media as a tool in information warfare.

Keywords: social media; StratCom; narrative; strategic communication; propaganda; fake news; informational war; Russia.

INTRODUCTION

About social media and information warfare

Information warfare has become the most evolved form of conflict in recent years, due to low costs, low losses and maximum efficiency. The cyber warfare wage, or cyber warfare, is one of the main threats to national security.

As a natural consequence from a contextual point of view, social media is a very well-researched topic of late, and social media analysis is a priority for the commercial and political field in which very large amounts of money are invested.

Because social media encompasses a diverse range of communication styles, including multimedia and short messages, and connects a wide range of actors, it is a complex network. Analyzing the theory of complexity in terms of information systems, the networking world is a complex adaptable system with the potential for self-organization (Merali, Y. 2006, 216-228). Similarly, complexity can be seen in military systems, information warfare and riots (Schneider, J. J. 1997, 21-28) such as the Arab Spring, where a complex political system is thrown into chaos when it spontaneously reorganizes into a different state.

Information warfare is changing and spontaneously reorganizing due to the disruptive influence of another complex system: social media. The relationship between social media and information conflict has not yet reached its final state, which makes it difficult to predict the future with a certain degree of certainty. However, social media is an ideal tool for information-based conflicts. The use of social networks is not always successful in the complex system of policies and conflicts.

Some researchers warn that the role of social networks in riots such as the Arab Spring and in influence campaigns such as the one carried out by Islamic State between 2014-2016 should not be underestimated but nor overstated to prevent similar events. On the other hand, the government's attempts to block access to mitigate the riots have had varying degrees of success, which must also be assessed in relation to the context of the event.

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Looking at these events we find that social media is not the main factor in triggering the uprising but the social context plays a very important role. Incitement to revolt would not be successful through social media if the political and social climate were not conducive to such events. Social media can therefore be considered a tool for triggering, supporting or facilitating information-based conflicts and perhaps not enough to create social upheavals on its own without a specific context.

Given its pervasive nature, social media is expected to become a redoubtable weapon in the information-based conflict, and its initial roles may become more significant due to the speed of information transmission, the difficulty of the source verification process and, last but not least, the algorithms behind social networks. However, we believe that, at least for the foreseeable future, social networks will remain a tool to facilitate a revolt rather than to become the primary factor of instigation.

In other ways, social media is one of the many variables in a complex system and has the ability to facilitate state changes within that system, rather than act as a catalyst for system change. In other words, social media is the main channel of communication, rapid transmission of information and environmental influence. Since the main purpose of social networks is to facilitate communication, its ability to serve as an improvised command and control network or mass communication platform for psychological operations will be an opportunity that alone will be exposed in contexts conducive to the outbreak of the uprising, as previously shown, using actions specific to information warfare.

Although information warfare is traditionally a military concept research has shown that it is relevant to the social, corporate and personal spheres (Cronin, B. & Crawford, H. 1999, 257-263), as well as the concept of strategy, or, more recently, that of strategic communication, to which it is often attached. Starting from this consideration we will address the role of social media in information warfare, considering information warfare as an application of military concepts, both in military and civilian environments.

In this context, starting from the definition of information warfare as "*actions taken to defend army-based processes, information systems and communications networks and to destroy, neutralize or exploit the similar capacity of the enemy in the physical, informational and cognitive fields* (Brazzoli, M. S. 2007, p.219)" is highlighted to us the defensive dimension and, therefore, that attacks allowed by social networks must be taken into account in determining countermeasures.

In this perspective, social media is used to create accounts and develop groups that, collaborated with the algorithms behind social networks and other programming mechanisms developed using artificial intelligence such as bot networks or the construction of non-existent human profiles, ensure their transmission and support of messages, which, if necessary, can be used in the command and control of information warfare.

The Internet and web 2.0 platforms first showed their potential in political and military unrest in 1994 when Mexico's Zapatist movement, though defeated militarily, continued its online fight in an effective campaign dubbed by researchers as "social war" (Ronfeldt, D. & Arquilla, J. 1998, 2-7).

Subsequently, social networks played a significant role in a number of large-scale civil unrest. These social disorders initiated through social networks are a form of psychological influence operations, in which instigators try to influence the perception of the general population and to urge physical action to protest (revolts) against the government. This type of unrest is increasingly common globally since the 2016 US elections, continuing with Brexit, then the elections in France, Austria, Germany and the recent US elections, validated earlier this year and which were recently given in the public space the first official conclusions on attempts to influence (National Intelligence Council 2021).

From a military point of view, the contemporary operational environment dominated by technological developments, which have increased the speed of information movement, has created new challenges, both in terms of decision-making within the Coalition and in terms of interaction with the population in the areas of operation.

Due to the ubiquitous nature of social networks, it is inevitable that military operations will not be affected by this technology. To do this, we will address both the benefits and vulnerabilities and

risks, the use of social networks in the military environment, and the implications they may have as a precursor to the use of social networks in an information war scenario.

As Prier Jarred specifies in his article "Commanding the Trend: Social Media as Information Warfare", *"the combination of social network, propaganda and dependence on unverifiable, or hard-to-verify, online news sources introduce the possibility of completely falsified news entering the mainstream of public consciousness. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as **fake news** and has generated a significant wave of criticism of social media. Fake news is a special form of propaganda composed of a false story disguised as news"* (Jarred Prier 2017, 50). On social media, this becomes particularly dangerous because of the viral spread of sensationalized fake news. This fake news comes from several categories. There is fake news that consists of wrongly chosen titles, buried leads or stories with weak sources (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online, s.v. "lede").

For example, during the 2016 US presidential election, one of the most streamed fake news on social media came as a source for an American, supposedly a patriot, who posted on his blog a news that the Pope had blessed Donald Trump for the presidency who received over a million reactions on Facebook alone, without taking into account the reactions on Twitter (Tess Townsend, 2016). This news generated more reactions on that site at the end of 2016 than traditional news sources received (Craig Silverman 2016, 12-16).

ABOUT PROPAGANDA AND FAKE NEWS IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Russia's involvement in information warfare is already a certainty long before the existence of social media. According to a 1987 US State Department report on the Soviet information war, *"active measures are distinct, both from espionage and counterintelligence, as well as from traditional diplomatic and informational activities. The purpose of active measures is to influence the opinions and/or actions of individuals, governments and/or the public"* (United States Department of State, 1986-87). This report highlights that Soviet agents were trying to forge a propaganda narrative to penetrate the countries or individual candidates where they were interested in stinking. The active measures were designed, as the retired KGB General, Oleg Kalugin, explained, *"to produce short circuits in the alliances of all Western communities, especially NATO, to sow discord among the Allies, to weaken the United States in the eyes of the people of Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and thus to prepare the ground where the war really takes place"* (Jarred Prier 2017, 77).

If messages designed to influence behavior have existed for centuries, it is also a certainty that methods of mass communication have allowed a wider dissemination of propaganda. Noting the rise of the media and its presence in everyday life, the French philosopher Jacques Ellul noted the simplicity of propaganda in 1965. According to Ellul, *"propaganda ceases where the dialogue begins"* (Jacques Ellul 1965, p.6).

For the propaganda to work, it needs a previously existing narrative on which to rely, as well as a network of fans who already believe the theme of the narrative, the "propagandist". While social media involves dialogue – and this should inspire us to identify and use it in combat – social media helps the propagandist spread the message through an established network.

The mechanism used is a logical one, a person is inclined to believe the information on social networks, because people are psychologically tempted to choose to pursue things that fit their beliefs and things recommended by people to ask for them. This person, in turn, is likely to share the information of others in his network (bubble), who are similar in beliefs and therefore prone to appreciate the message and who in turn will share the information further by propagating the message in turn in their own network. Consequently, in this network propaganda is certain that it has achieved its purpose. However, it is not considered dangerous because it remains located (Jarred Prier, 2017, 58) within this fan network.

The most effective propaganda campaigns are not limited to those prone to appreciating the message. Essentially, propaganda permeates everyday experiences and the individual targeted by an aggressive campaign in the media will never fully understand that the ideas he has are not entirely his own. In other words, propaganda is easier to understand if everyone around a person seems to share the same emotions on a particular subject (Thomas Rid 2013,132).

Even a general discussion among the crowd can provide the illusion that propaganda is information (Thomas Rid 2013, 85). In other words, propaganda creates the impression of the individual that he discovers the information himself, and the ideas he finds online become his own, that he learns by discovering his own information, a way in which the mind simplifies solving problems through trust in quickly accessible data. The process of learning through discovery is influenced more by the amount and frequency of information on the same topic online, and less by its accuracy or provenance (source). Essentially, the mind creates a shortcut based on the latest available information, simply because it can be easily remembered.

The Internet makes it possible to flood the daily consumption of the person's usual information, which helps to spread propaganda.

One of the main principles of propaganda is that the message must resonate with the target. Therefore, when we are presented with information that is in the structure of our faith, our bias is confirmed, and we accept propaganda.

If it's outside our network, we can initially reject the story, but the volume of information can create a heuristic availability in our minds. Over time, propaganda normalizes - and becomes even credible. It is confirmed when a fake news story is reported by the media, which has become dependent on social media for spreading and receiving news.

Social networks like Twitter and Facebook use an algorithm to analyze words, phrases, or hash tags aimed at creating a list of topics sorted in order of popularity. This "trend list" is a quick way to review the most discussed topics at a time. (Jarred Prier 2017, 58)

According to a 2011 study on social media, a viral topic "*will capture the attention of a large audience for a short period of time*" and thus "*contributes to the mechanisms for setting the goal to be achieved.*"

Using existing social networks with "bots" accounts, "*foreign agents can insert propaganda into a social media platform, create a trend, and disseminate a message faster and cheaper than through any other method or information medium*" (Jarred Prier 2017).

According to the American researcher Jarred Prier, author of *Commanding the Trend: Social Media as Information Warfare*, social media facilitates the spread of a story, of an event outside the fan group, of people who believe strongly in that thing, by forming a trend. He argues that in warfare there are four factors on which the success of the formation of a trend depends.

1. the message is found in an existing story, even if it may not yet be very well known - on the basis of which the narrative can develop,
2. identifying a group of fans, people who already believe in that message and who will pass it on,
3. a relatively small team of agents (trolls) or hackers, programmers, cyber fighters
4. a network of bot-type, automated accounts.

For this mechanism to work any form of propaganda must match that narrative, a narrative that is already supported by individuals who believe in it, to penetrate the message more easily into the fan network. Typically, the cyber team (trolls, hackers, programmers, cyber fighters) is responsible for developing the specific message for dissemination. Then the team produces fake videos, memes or videos, often in collaboration with those individuals who truly believe, fans. To achieve the effective spread of propaganda, true believers, the cyber team and the bot network combine their efforts to take command of the trend (Jarred Prier 2017, 58) [18].

Through case studies conducted by the American researcher show that this model was successfully used by both Russia in the annexation of Crimea and subsequently by other state and non-state actors who have successfully managed to influence publicly through social media (Jarred Prier 2017 77) [19]. Constraint and conviction remain decisive factors in information warfare, all the more so as more and more countries turn to such techniques and try to influence public opinion through social networks.

On the other hand, even if the mechanism proposed by the American researcher will be improved with the help of artificial intelligence, I believe that the best way to counter fake news and

propaganda is still social. Also offers the antidote through active information, education and use of network users in the role of truth-spreading elves...

"Trolls against elves"

A topic addressed in the studies of the NATO StratCom Center, Riga can be translated not by achieving a rival capability to Russian trolls – which would be a big mistake of the Alliance as it could seriously shake its credibility by altering one of the main narratives - of justice and the legality of its actions - but by using them to identify fake news and counteract them by supporting the institutional message and spreading the truth.

CONCLUSION

In order to have an overview of social media, in addition to the fact that these technologies are centered on the concept of user-generated content, online collaboration, information sharing and collective intelligence (Davidson, M. A., & Yoran, E. 2007, 117–119)[20] we must keep in mind that these technologies are centered on the concept of social network, a concept that has integrated users and made possible the generation and exchange of content, producing collective intelligence and, by implication, the emergence of Web 2.0. Therefore, social media and web 2.0 are new concepts based on a concept recognized for its characteristics, developed with the help of technological evolution and the emergence of the Internet.

Basically, if the social network makes the difference from "one-to-one" or "door to door" communication to "from three to infinite plus" communication to mass communication, virtual space, the Internet and web 2.0 make the switch to **virtual social networks** in which it is preserved and even amplifies the intention to communicate with the transmission of the desire and intention to influence.

As Jacques Ellul explains, *"in this context, as a conclusion to the conclusion, to counter fake news and propaganda through social media is necessary an analysis and an integrated response in the same environment is necessary. In other words, a multidisciplinary analysis team and a prompt and committed reaction to social media are required. First of all because this is the channel on which the fake news was posted and propagated and naturally the reaction must reach those infected with fake news, exposed to propaganda and, secondly, because the speed of the spread of information as well as the interaction specific to social networks favors both the time and the volume/number of users exposed to information, power and rhythm on the penetration of information using the principle that "propaganda ceases where the dialogue begins" (Jacques Ellul 1965,6).*

Just as propaganda needs to function by a "bubble" of users who believe in the narrative that dresses the propaganda, so counterpropaganda needs a "bubble" of users to identify it as propaganda and help spread this message. Because, as I previously mentioned, the individual is inclined to believe the information on social networks, because people choose to pursue things that fit their beliefs. This individual, in turn, is likely to share the information of others in his network, who are similar in beliefs and therefore predisposed to appreciate and promote the message in turn. Basically, applying the same principle of "bubble", as there are followers to promote fake news there is also to counter it. The difference, in applying this principle, can be made from my point of view by the sensational information.

At the same time, I believe that to successfully apply this counter-terrorism principle and turn users into combatants in countering propaganda and fake news, they must be educated both to detect them and to understand the special role they can play in this process.

It is obvious that social media has become a ubiquitous source of communication that poses security threats and plays an important role in information conflict. These threats, especially vulnerabilities, malicious codes and social engineering, illustrate that social media is a tool that can be used offensively in information warfare. For the defense against such attacks, it is recommended that vulnerable individuals and organizations implement a multi-technical layered defense to minimize the likelihood of a security incident occurring. Social networks may continue to be a tool in information conflict, but they are unlikely to be the main incitement factor. Its use as an information warfare tool may eventually decline, but it will still be useful for mass influence operations.

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DISINFORMATION SOUNDS LIKE A THERAPEUTIC STORY – AND THAT’S WHY IT’S WORKING

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Abstract

This past year has shown that the sanitary risks of SARS-CoV-2 virus pandemic are equally matched, if not exceeded on long run, by infodemia effects. Disinformation, fake-news are widely considered an existential threat to open, democratic societies, straining the limits of institutions to cope with socio-political tensions. As such, acknowledging the significance of this phenomenon, this paper address the phenomenon of disinformation, challenging the prevalent current paradigm based on cognitive, linguistic approach, by offering a new perspective grounded on the role of fictional stories for individual and collective sense making. We advance a new interpretation upon the mechanisms behind disinformation consumption using the role of an immature ego structure, thus explaining the demanding side of disinformation. The utility of this new interpretation ranges from the reconsideration of mental irrationality in sense-making, or proposal of new tools for recognizing those predispose to consume disinformation, to a more comprehensive approach to strategic communication.

Keywords: security; disinformation; ego structure; story; meaning.

INTRODUCTION

The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has shown once again the importance of proper communication for a robust response in cases of national security emergencies and consequently the risks associated with the disinformation phenomenon.

Due to the technological and socio-political transformations that have taken place rapidly for the past twenty years, an adequate approach when defining risks and threats to national security must be addresses through a systemic approach to society, the so-called whole-society-approach, which necessarily includes the informational space (National Defense Strategy 2020-2024, 26). As the informational domain has a tripartite definition (abstract, technological, cognitive), the way people process information has become essential for an adequate strategy in fighting disinformation. How people think, how they generate meaning or separate truth from falsity have become hot topics of dispute for experts in strategic communication.

During the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, the informational domain marked by hyper-interconnectedness has been one of the systems that have illustrated the massive effect induced by simple fluctuations in the economy, sanitary or educational systems. At individual level, (new) mass-media news has contributed to the subjective perception of an unstable and unpredictable environment, threatening the ontological security. For Anthony Giddens (Giddens, Anthony 1991, 35), ontological security is a subjective need to represent oneself as a whole person, with stable and continuous features through the time, that can exert his agency in a stable cognitive environment. It is therefore vital for an adequate strategy on information security to understand how individuals perceive the reality, represent themselves in society and make decisions in this new informational space, whether in their personal lives, or as high level decision-makers in private or governmental organisations. Consequently, continuing a line of inquiry suggested by Vosughi in the seminal paper *The spread of true and false news online* (Vosughi, Deb, and Sinan 2018, 127), we will explore the

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mechanisms that leverage fake-news genesis and diffusion, to understand the “why’s” behind disinformation. As such, the key problem this paper wants to examine is how people using the information received from media make sense of their life, how they delineate between information and disinformation, between “true” and “false”.

We use a psychodynamic approach to the human mind, searching for deeper and more complex explanation than simple stimulus-reaction behaviourist schemata. The aim is to understand and explain disinformation phenomena, and not to judge or label individuals or social categories.

DISINFORMATION – A SYSTEMIC APPROACH

On 21 May 2020, Melissa Fleming, who leads global communications for the United Nations as UN Under-Secretary General for Global Communication, stated: "When COVID-19 emerged, it was clear from the outset this was not just a public health emergency, but a communications crisis as well". Such statements, although generous, indicate a rather narrow perspective on social mechanisms, locating the source of issues mainly at the level of communication. Consequently, the solutions for extra compliance with sanitary measures apparently might be achieved through more communication. This example illustrates the hubris of those practitioners and theoreticians that have come to believe that communication is a universal remedy, of those who really believe the J.L. Austin credo of doing things with words (Austin, John 1975), and believe that gaining public legitimacy undergoes the same treatment as selling cars. Seduced by explanations that give primacy to communications, we tend to forget that behind every utterance is a thought animated by emotions, and furthermore that language is a tool used both to express and to adapt. As Michael Tomasello has indicated, “language is the capstone of uniquely human cognition and thinking, not its foundation” (Tomasello, Michael 2018, 127). Furthermore, as experience has proved, communication, no matter how Abstractits actors may be, is done not only with words and images, but with actions too. When actions actually meet the needs, the effect of this form of communication is more powerful simply because it considers the receivers’ identity, addressing not just what they think or feel, but the whole personality as a living being in a specific socio-ideological context, with a specific set of values and ethics.

The information environment where communication takes place has a tripartite dimensionality, technological, informational and cognitive. Although technological development seems to grasp all attention and make the foundation for almost all the explanations behind information disorder, in this paper, we will focus on the cognitive, mental dimension of the informational space and the psychosociological mechanisms behind fake news. Before briefly presenting the current understanding of disinformation, it is useful to describe information and information space.

As we are told, we live in the information society, or knowledge-based society, a place where, apparently, “knowing” has become just as vital as breathing. In this new info-saturated environment, the stakeholders are both ordinary citizens, and media trusts, social-media platforms, state institutions. Seduced by the glamour of the current information technology, communication analysts tend to forget that in this space, technology is just a tool, and the mental dimension remains the most relevant feature in the information domain. After all, it is not the reach, speed, or information’s volume that drives confrontation in the informational space, but fear, distrust, and a heightened suspicion about intentions of the Others.

Information has a large variety of definitions and interpretations, but for the purpose of this paper, we use the phrase of semantic information (Floridi, Luciano 2010, 33), which is considered a way to codify the experience using symbols for sense making and truth seeking. Furthermore, information has a pragmatic, adaptive function, being intimately connected with decision-making. When translated from physics to psychology, information’s entropy reduction function might be associated with uncertainty decreasing, and knowledge acquiring. However, semantic information, unlike in the mathematical theory of communication, is human dependent, an active contribution being needed in order to create meaning, a subjective link between the knower and the respective object of knowledge. The nature of this link is often overlooked, but with Peirce’s theory on the sign, we learn that between the sign and the object stands the *interpretant*, which “in all cases includes feelings”

(Peirce, Charles 1998, 409). Furthermore, recent neuroscience discoveries have even showed that the fundamental form of consciousness is affect (Mark Solms 2021). From these observations, it is evident that, at the psychological level, information, emotions and sense making are intimately interconnected and should always be analysed together. Furthermore, as we will see, through the concept of identity, the individual Self gains meaning as a member of a stable, inclusive community, which fundamentally is a community of shared meaning.

Disinformation is defined as a form of information, information that is altered, false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organisation, or country (C. Wardle and H. Derakhshan 2017, 20). The effect produced is that of confusing the audience, of inducing alternative realities, so that the phenomenon of disinformation has been defined as a threat to security. Disinformation might be executed from outside, with Russia and China being the most mentioned foreign state-actors, but to ignore the contribution of inner voices, either the useful idiots, or the populist politicians, with political goals, would be an error. It is then noteworthy to acknowledge that the so-called foreign driven influences are foreign only in terms of geographical location of source, but the content manipulated is mastered to tap with surgical precision on the most pressing questions, fears and anxieties of the internal targeted audience. This feature indicates another major characteristic of disinformation, that is tailored and disseminated towards specific, beforehand well-known segments of audience, defined by particular psychological traits that enable precise, anticipated effects. Furthermore, the success of those who propagate disinformation seems to reside in listening much more comprehensively, on a deeper level of individual mind. Voicing concerns, fears, anxieties, but also the hopes, disinformation makes sense for specific audiences.

Using criteria as truth, false, or harm, the definition of disinformation is challenging and difficult, especially when there is intent to translate the phenomena in juridical norms. What is harm? How to delineate the agency, a real intention to induce harm? What is truth? These questions raise challenges for those who intend to punish the actors who disinform, but also raise heated debates on how to make clear the boundary between freedom of speech and disinformation, furthermore questioning the possibility for censorship. The matters of truth, agency, and harm lead us inexorably to audience, and mental reasoning.

Information is not just a flow that runs through networks of cables and processors, it is the “blood” that makes possible the emergence of various significations that stand behind social structures. And just like in critical discourse analysis’ methodology, information circulated should be acknowledged as simplicity carrying tacit presupposition about actors’ intentions, power, and identity. Therefore, information should always be analysed not just locally, using concepts of truth or falseness, but holistically taking in consideration the context, human motivations, interests, or the tools used in linguistic technology. Before scrutinising human judgment in order to understand what drives the spread of true or false information, thus clarifying the demanding side of disinformation, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of truth and its social determinism.

Among those who fight disinformation, it is widely accepted that telling the truth, grounded in empirical data and evidence, will ultimately undermine the power of lies. Behind this statement, there are at least two assumptions. First, that truth has some magical universal persuasive property. Unfortunately, evoking Daniel Kahneman, we know that “when faced with a truth which contradicts a bias we hold, we, as a species, are likely to ditch the truth” (Suiter, Jane 2016, 27). Secondly, that there is only one truth about facts and events, such treatment of truth being defined as the correspondence theory (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2018). As such, using the proper signs and language, the bearer of the truth will succeed to reflect adequately and accurately a fact, using symbolic language. This form of truth definition is mostly available for the scientific endeavour, although even in science there are different paradigms, schools of thought, and academic institutions. Moreover, scientific knowledge, which supposedly carries the truth, “cannot be thought of as angelically independent of the management policies these institutions develop in order to keep themselves in business.” (Valsiner and Rosa 2007, 25)

Theory and practice as well, however, show us that there are many other² definitions of truth, distant from logic, that furthermore underlie the social function of truth and the social constructivism behind truth crafting. Either for layers, or politicians (so called „spin-doctors”), the practice of spin it’s largely tacit accepted as a must for professional success, furthermore underlying the weak relevance of facts, and the role of semantics in persuasion or even manipulation. As such, especially with post-modernism, truth has been associated with language and belief, replacing argumentation and logic, with rhetorics, reducing the truth to a *convention*. The door to relativism and multiple equivalent perspectives is thus widely opened, the truth becoming nothing more than an indicator of personal, subjective adherence to a statement. Especially in politics, there is an evident “shift to post-truth, trading, heavily on assumptions about an “era of truth” we apparently once enjoyed” (Corner 2017, 1100).

Using this short examination of information and truth, we can advance a new definition of harm induced by disinformation, which can be associated with the impossibility of building a shared meaning, a fundamental pre-condition for what Tomasello called shared intentionality (Tomasello, Michael 2018, 15).

WHO ARE THOSE WHO NEED A STORY?

Misinformation and disinformation are transmitted more quickly than information (Vosoughi, Roy & Aral, 2018). The answer to this apparently strange situation might be given by understanding the demanding side of the disinformation process, the reason why people like to consume fake (news). Hence, we depart from the current explanations on disinformation, which are mainly rational, logocentric, or technology-centred, and advance a hypothesis that explains the attractiveness of disinformation as it consolidates the neurotic mechanisms and immature ego structures of the targeted audience.

The so-called conspiracy theorists or negationist rejects the official narrative on the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, having as main argument that the virus has been artificially created and manipulated. Correlated, in the informational space, there were extensively disseminated messages on themes as: “pandemic was created to control people and make them obedient”, “virus was created as an experiment to kill as many as possible (genocide)”, “pandemic is a tool for dictatorship establishment”, or “the virus is the result of corrupted elites” (with Bill Gates as the main exponent). One doesn’t need to be a chartered psychologist to acknowledge that the implicit, common thread of all these stories is the imagined conflictual relation between an oppressed, powerless victim (ordinary citizens) and a mighty persecutor (elites). Consequently, the labelling of those who don’t accept the official narrative on SARS-CoV-2 pandemic range from “delusional people”, “irrational”, to “stupid”. Both the nature of the “negationist’s” explanations on the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, and the labels used for them compel us to shift the attention towards some non-rational, pre-logical or para-cognitive defence mechanisms used by audience to makes sense of this situation, of the way certain people react to the official sanitary measures, their anti-vaccine attitude, or involved in fake news consumption.

The human mind is operating simultaneously under two different “logics”, one that obey the principles of formal Aristotle logic and the reality principle, and another one, marked by paraconsistent logic or affective logic, pleasure principle, even indifference to reality. The former is sensible to facts and scientific truths, while the latter disregards even the duality truth-falseness³. This non-logical, affective realm has received various interpretations, all labelled as irrational, like imaginary, beliefs system, defensive mechanisms, affective logic, hypothetical thinking, wishful thinking, or unconscious bias. Moreover, reasoning when affected by irrationality was considered biased. Although biased is currently so much associated with (thinking) errors, it is often, if not always, the single way available for individuals to make sense and to adapt to reality. Additionally, without these so-called irrational influences, creativity, hypothetic or counterfactual thinking would not be possible. Every single

² In one of these thesis (redundancy theory), Gottlob Frege or Frank P. Ramsey simply shows that the predicate “is true” doesn’t express anything larger or beyond the statement to which it is attributed.

³ For the unconscious, there is no negation, it is the mental space that tolerates the coexistence of opposites.

individual possesses a mind that operates under this dyad, the ratio between these two “logics” being variable, determined by context, age, education, biography, ego features, emotional disposition etc. As such, people use non-rational, illogical elements to make sense of their experiences.

We consider that an analysis centred on the correlation between the ego level of functioning and tendency to interpret messages using the so-called irrational mind is the most suited and relevant for understanding disinformation phenomena. Through the lenses offered by this tool (Bellak 2008), we can easily and meaningfully understand and explain the rejectionist attitude or the quasi-unanimous attitude of victimisation in front of an imagined persecutor, as an infantile, regressive level of ego functioning still present in many adults. A more mature, adaptive ego has two features, relevant for our topic, a higher disposition for testing and accepting reality (omnipotence diminished) and defensive mechanisms more adapted to social change. The positive consequences range from accepting personal limits of power and control, to a gradual shift from denial to intellectualisation or altruism, as higher, more adaptive forms of defence mechanisms.

The infantile, regressive level of ego functioning is also characterised by other feature that helps us to better understand the negationist attitude, that is a shallow level of super-ego⁴ integration, which further explains authority rejection and the feeling of being persecuted.

In the following paragraphs, we will indicate the correlation between disinformation consumption and infantile ego structure, using the concepts of narrative and story. As we will specify, the infantile has nothing to do with the degradation of the intellectual or cognitive function in pathological, psychiatric terms, but with the immature defensive mechanisms harnessed for self-esteem preservation.

We are told that “we need to equip people with the tools to see fact from fiction” (Pomeroy, Court 2020) but little is said about the massive power of various forms of fictions in human sense making. As Yuval Harari reminds us, humans are storytelling animals (Harari 2018). People need stories, and throughout all ages, individuals as part of a community have always needed a story. Stories are essential for humans to get a sense of continuity, facilitating interpersonal connection. From a psychological perspective, stories are the expression of the imaginary workings and the unconscious mind. Through their ambiguity, stories invite the listener to fill the gaps with personal attributes (ambitions, fears, hopes etc), making them unconsciously participatory. They can be recognised throughout the history in myths, legends, religions, or more recently as ideologies. They explain and make a meaningful link between past and present, between individuals and society, between the self-narrative and culture defined as a synthesis of collective stories. Stories seem to offer a resolution to our most basic conflicts and an illusory fulfilment of desires. Stories have made it possible for a shared meaning inside large communities to exist, and therefore the possibility for cooperation and coordination. They are simple and provide an imaginary way to escape the conundrums of the real world and the limitations of the Self. Along with these functions of stories, maybe the most significant one, as we learn from the seven plots series (Booker, 2004), is that no matter what the challenges might be, there is hope. Modern era and post-modernity, however, have brought the power of big, unifying “grand narratives” (Lyotard 1979) to an end. Religion or even modern ideologies lost their unifying function, their place being taken mainly by the frivolous, consumerist stories. The possibility for a communal, even imaginary reference has been thwarted by the fragmentation of society into a myriad of continually changing self-identities and an ongoing struggle for minorities rights. As such, adherence to disinformation might be interpreted as a form of identity recovery that promises to restore a more stable, meaningful and secure identity.

On the other hand, scientific thinking is considered the cure for disinformation. However, scientific discourse, through its characteristics, stands on the opposite side of the stories. Science is the language of modernity, with the rational, granular, mechanical view of the world. It keeps the reader in very close contact with reality, forcing him to continuously adjust to the facts and new changes. It is complex, precise, Abstract and highly rational, addressing the pure-logic-side of the

⁴ The superego is the third structure of the mind in Freud's structural theory, developed through identification, which leads to the internalisation of parents' values, and furthermore to internalization of society's norms.

mental reasoning. Science is organised as a database, from which affects were evacuated, and that is why its persuasive power is weak for masses, compared with stories, it simply doesn't inspire ordinary people to connect with each other.

Excepting the small minority of academia, the science discourse is non-participatory, while the story, through its plots and ambiguity, invites all subjects to project their own wishes, hopes and grievances, and thus becomes an excellent occasion for individuals sense-making process. While in science, people believe in facts, through stories people believe in belonging. Scientists might be linked (at the best) into knowledge based groups, while ordinary people that believe in a story feel included as members of the tribe. As such, tribes and stories acquire a containing⁵ function. What marketing guru Seth Godin teaches us seems to be ignored by many disinformation theoreticians. That, the world today is composed of various tribes (Godin 2008, 11), and meaning-making should not be isolated from the social context, so meaning should be intimately linked with self-identity, and not merely with rational information processing. Second, that using only the cognitive, rational frames for meaning-making is flawed for the adequate understanding of how audience's adhesion is generated, how people begin to believe in some particular stories.

In this context, people longing for stories is evident. It is stories and tribes that generate a meaningful identity, not facts or science. As we previously indicated, disinformation themes present in the media during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, but also those used by the Putin regime against the western world (Storytelling the disinformation, 2021) are all crafted as stories. When extended to large communities or entire nations through the ruling regime's controlled media, stories become propaganda, and reveal a paranoid, detached from reality society. Projected in the public space, this way of perceiving the world through disinformation stories gets legitimised as it seemingly shared by so many similar, normalising a point of view that paralyses any social responsibility.

Disinformation, fake-news are credible, consumed and disseminated because they provide a public story with illusionary, self-confirmation healing properties. If the reading of science fiction literature might be the expression of a healthy ego, which can temporarily regress in fantasia and then return into the real, the systematic ingestion of disinformation stories (or superstitions, mystery tales, conspiracy theories) illustrates ego's immature mechanisms, a fragile ego unable to change and to cope accordingly with the demands of life. Likewise, adherence to alternative views on reality (such as the so-called conspiracy theories or pseudoscience) might be linked with the perception of feeling excluded, marginalised. The correlated phenomenon of rejecting official science might be as well associated with individual's discomfort with one of the society's modernist ideology, namely that only what can be measured, quantified, matters.

CONCLUSIONS

No matter how spectacular and free from the physical world it might look, information gains relevancy through the interpretative function of human agents. Information pathologies that characterise the contemporary information space are fundamentally an evolving syndrome in the co-creation of meaning.

Sense making cannot be restricted to the informational domain, it must be connected with identity formation. Any analysis that focuses exclusively on the truthfulness quality of information is reductionist and local. Ignoring larger psychological, and socio-ideological contexts that generate meaning to individual's life and shape perception, judgment and decisions, is just another way of missing a genuine understanding of the disinformation phenomenon. Furthermore, focusing exclusively on the cognitive, rational level of interpreting information, as logic gives some undisputable form of authority, is misleading.

As the current association between disinformation impact and the emotional character of messages is shallow, we propose the use of the ego functioning level as an indicator for susceptibility to disinformation, interpreted as a meaning-restoring story. It better explains both the adherence to disinformation messages content and the rejection of authority. As such, an immature ego

⁵ In this context, containing is a function of the environment that provides safety and meaning.

characterised by excessive projection, omnipotence, denial of reality, low level of super-ego integration is more prone to disinformation. Disinformation prevents such forms of ego from contact with internal reality, protecting it from the most pressing internal conflicts, prolonging the existence of a fake, immature ego. Disinformation is designed as a story because, apparently, it offers a solution to an internal conflict, *pretending* that has solved it and furthermore maintaining the status-quo. As such, adherence to disinformation as stories might be perceived as a form of psychological resistance in the face of cognitive insecurity generated by the volatility of the contemporary society.

Disinformation stories become pseudo-therapeutic because they open an illusory intersubjective space where personal stories get intermingled with larger, collective stories, thus having a sense-making function.

In order to identify the factors that drive disinformation consumption and fake news spread, we suggest the use of various existing instruments designed to evaluate ego structure and functioning.

In conclusion, the response to disinformation becomes strategic when it is target-centric, and analyses the audience thoroughly and holistically, in their continually evolving socio-cultural context. State institutions and communication strategists might then realise that, in this ongoing battle for loyalties, citizen's hearts and minds will be conquered mostly by timely deeds and facts based on values and ethics, not just mere words and images. Instead of fantasising at strategic communication as the magic, silver bullet, its role as an essential tool in promoting national security interests would thus be clearer.

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PURPOSE OF USING CUBESAT SATELLITE TECHNOLOGIES IN THE MILITARY DOMAIN

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Abstract

The increasing usage of space capabilities in the military domain highly requires the development of Nanosatellite polar constellations. In this paper we will analyze the main features of small satellites constellations that could be useful in military purposes. The Nanosatellite or CubeSat technology aim at miniaturization, high modularity and software defined payload, allowing the functionality of entire military space applications and services portfolio, at major low financial costs, translating its scalability and flexibility into a capability. In addition, the efficient combination between low latency and high throughput bandwidth, integrated in federated mega-constellation architectures, transforms CubeSat satellite networks into resilient platforms for development of advanced technologies (5G, IoT), according with the military requirements standards.

Keywords: Nanosatellite; CubeSat; military space capabilities; polar orbit; advanced technologies.

INTRODUCTION

Recognition of outer space as the fifth operational domain at NATO level, since 2019 requires a reconsideration of the approach to the peaceful exploration of outer space, in relation to the intensification of its militarization by many states, belonging to the Euro-Atlantic area, but especially is the behavior of states outside of these organizations. The complexity and high financial costs necessary for the operationalization of new space programs, i.e., the upgrading of existing space programs, in conjunction with technological evolution and diversification of space multi-domain missions, lead to the inclusion in the design process of multiorbital space infrastructures of technical solutions in the CubeSat field of technologies.

With this paper we aim to analyze the paradigm, in a SWOT approach, whether the design of CubeSat satellite platforms allows the installation of communication, ISR, Earth observation (EO) or SSA capabilities, and whether these satellite systems, organized in low-orbit constellations (LEO) of the earth, lend themselves to applications on the military domain. Another perspective is given by the fact that, currently in Romania, the space field is considered emerging, being explored and exploited predominantly from the perspective of users of commercial, governmental and military space services, rarely emphasized with isolated initiatives for the operationalization and construction of large-scale space projects, where CubeSat technology, in a professional manner, can be a reliable option in the design of spatial architectures focused on specific missions and organizations.

Development of the advanced technology, at military domain cannot avoid the outer space, taking the consideration that space multiorbital constellations are built to ensure resilient space infrastructures, better connection and bandwidth particularly for end-users or emerging technologies and generally for the ground, air, maritime and cyber domain, because the future military conflict, for sure will be conduct even in the space.

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CUBESAT STANDARD EVOLUTION

Although the CubeSat standard was initially used mainly in the field of scientific research, specific to business and university medium, in recent years the fields of applicability, in which CubeSat satellite systems are used, have diversified and become of interest, including the military domain, taking into account the scalable capacity of the satellite platform, to concentrate in a miniaturized constructive solution, size and small mass, generically called unit (U), a diversity of sensors, configured in a versatile payload, adapted to the typically and mission requirements of different organizations.

Theoretically, the CubeSat standard is a nanosatellite technology, often intertwined, which was first developed and implemented in 1998 as part of a project "at the Aeronautics and Astronautics Department that Stanford University had with DARPA and the Aerospace Corporation, wanted to launch a little satellite, named picosat" (Cappelletti 2021). The term "nanosatellite is usually applied to the name of an artificial satellite with a wet mass between 1 and 10 kg"², but the consecration of CubeSat space platforms has been used more widely in the design and launch of small satellites. Thus, the result of miniaturizing the components of an artificial satellite, without omitting the basic components of a classic satellite platform (bus, payload and tracking system), of the CubeSat type, were so impressive that "the standard dimensions establishment for each unit (U) has 10x10x11 cm. The size of the CubeSat can be 1U, 2U, 3U, 6U or 12U, and typically the weight is less than 1.33 kg for each 1U" (Mahdi 2018), as is depicted in the Figure 1.

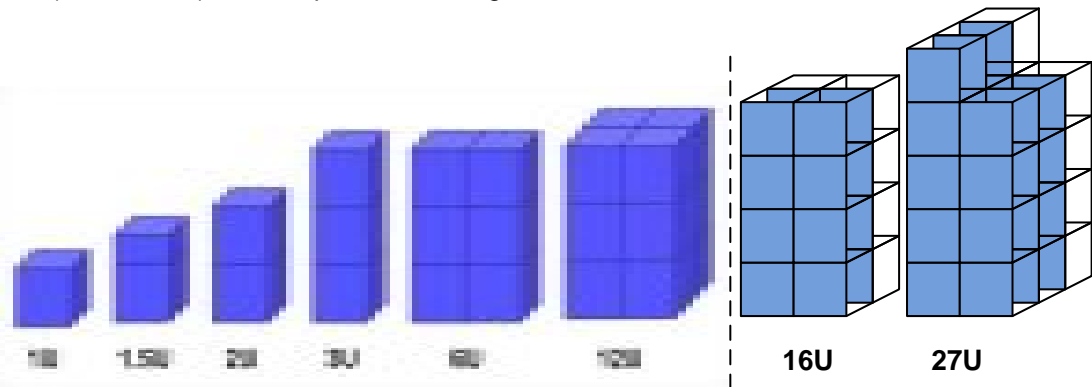


Figure 1. NASA classifications of CubeSat dimensions, adapted³

Theoretically speaking, CubeSat standard can go further than 12U dimension as we presented in the Figure 1, of a spacecraft and are possible to discover different classifications, that possible could reach the top limit dimension estimated around 27U for a CubeSat platform, but practically till now the biggest CubeSat satellite launched reached the dimension of 16U.

According with the ITU-R Report, published in 2014, named "Characteristics, definitions and spectrum requirements of nanosatellites and picosatellites" in order to clarify the issue of small satellite, that started to increase the interest of many organizations and the diversity of applications, regarding the perfect match between size, missions and price, they considered that "satellites weight less than 500 kg are often referred to as small satellites" (Report ITU-R SA.2312-0 2014) and was classified as shown in Table 1.

These data do not represent the characteristics of an internationally recognized dimensional standard of nanosatellite technology but represent a snapshot of the technological stage at the time of the analysis, as they are in a continuous upgrading, as a result of technological evolution and the identification of possible new areas of application, in which this kind of space platforms can be useful. According to the classification made by ITU-R, we identify that due to the small size, space platforms in this class, which also include CubeSat space platforms, are limited by:

- duration of operation in space between 1 to 3 years, dependent on the power limits of the bus, as well as the total amount of fuel with which the satellite platform remains on board, after

² <https://nanostarproject.eu/the-project/what-is-a-nanosatellite/>, accessed on 08.03.2021.

³ <https://www.nasa.gov/content/what-are-smallsats-and-cubesats>, accessed on 09.03.2021.

performing the approved orbital operations, applied only for CubeSat satellites that have installed propulsion;

- the specificity of the mission portfolio that such a space platform can execute, depending on the number of sensors that can be installed and configured on the payload;
- operational location exclusively in LEO and HEO polar orbits.

Table 1. Typical characteristics of small satellites (Report ITU-R SA.2312-0 2014)

Satellite type	Mass (kg)	Max. bus power (W)	Typical cost (USD)	Max. dimensions (m)	Development time (years)	Orbit	Lifetime in space (years)
Minisatellite	100 - 500	1000	30 – 200 M	3-10	3-10	GEO MEO LEO HEO	5-10
Microsatellite	10 -100	150	10 – 150M	1-5	2-5		2-6
Nanosatellite	1 – 10	20	100 k – 10M	0.1-1	1-3	LEO HEO	1-3
Picosatellite	0.1 – 1	5	50k – 2M	0.05-0.1	1-3		1-3
Femtosatellite	<0.1	1	<50k	0.01-0.1	1		<1

Moreover, the registration data on the evolution of CubeSat and nanosatellite capabilities, from 1998 onwards and continuing with a calculated forecast until 2025, they have been summarized in the Nanosats database, created and updated periodically, since 2013 by space engineering expert Erik Kulu, a collaborator of Tartu University/Estonia, between 2016 and 2019, for the development of scientific research projects in the field of construction and launching of CubeSat satellites. The accuracy of the input data in this database cannot be maximum, because some organizations do not publicly present their spatial projection, but it is updated quarterly by the author and have as their main basis a variety of sources, such as “launch satellite schedules, outer space stores and articles, official websites, various databases, presentation from related conferences, space reports and master of satellite list”⁴. Research from this database shows that since 1998 about 2968 space missions with CubeSat and Nanosat platforms have been planned and registered, belonging to a wide range of organizations, including the military organization. Thus, are the most recent update of this database was made in January 2021, resulting in the following data, presented in Table 2 and depicted in Figure 2, as follow:

Table 2. Typical characteristics of small satellites⁵

Nanosats launched	CubeSat launched	Interplanetary CubeSats	Countries with nanosats	Forecast
1474	1357	2	70*	> 2500

* A special mention refers to Romania regarding space activities. According to this database we could identify three space projects were Romania represented by University of Bucharest, launched in 13.02.2012, first artificial 1U CubeSat satellite, named “GOLIAT”, with VEGA rocket, on LEO orbit (310 x 1450 km / 69,5o). This satellite was operational for a short time because of lost tracking connection with the ground TT&C station, caused by the jamming of tracking frequencies. GOLIAT reentered in Earth atmosphere in 31.12.2014. Shortly after this attempted, another space project was launched by a joint venture between Romanian Space Agency (ROSA) and Institute of Space Science (ISS), that planned to launch two 2U CubeSat satellites, named “RoBiSat-1” and “RoBiSat-2”⁶. Unfortunately, this ambitious space science project was cancelled due lack funding.

⁴ <https://www.nanosats.eu/database>, accessed on 10.03.2021.

⁵ <https://www.nanosats.eu/database>, accessed on 10.03.2021.

⁶ <http://www2.rosa.ro/index.php/en/space-strategy/programul-star/proiecte-finantate-prin-competitia-c1-2012/98-cd1/385-romanian-dual-cubesat-mission-development-of-the-robisat-1-spacecraft>, accessed on 10.03.2021.

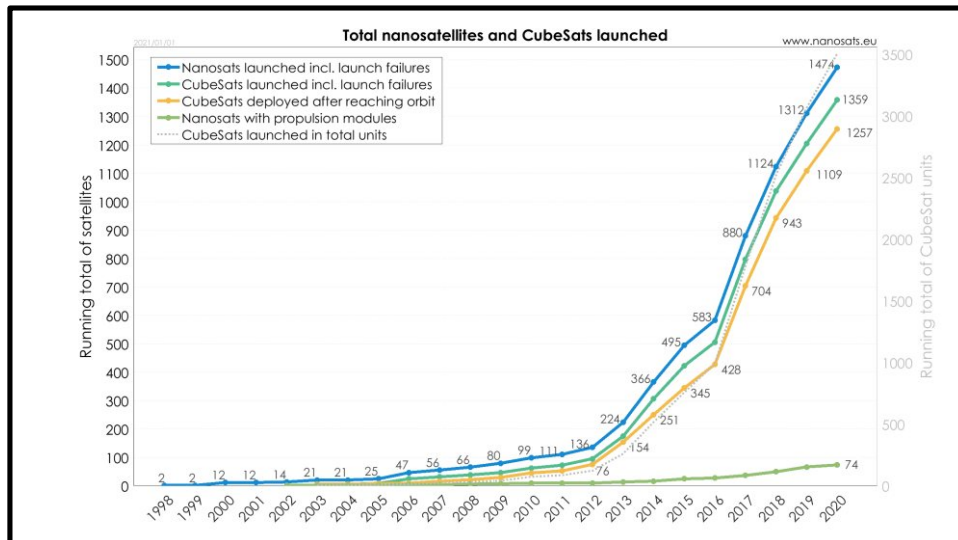


Figure 2. Total nanosatellites and CubeSats launched⁷

Starting with 2013, as is depicted in Figure 2, we can see the tremendous growing of CubeSat/Nanosats missions launched by different organizations, also including the launch failures. Other interesting fact from this database that we can identify is the highly rate, about 6.3%, of small satellites failures during launching procedures and launch vehicle failure. Moreover, the issue of the high failure rate of small satellites projects is also confirmed and deeply analyzed by Stephen A. Jacklin, from NASA Ames Research Center in the study “Small-Satellite Mission Failure Rates”. The study reveals the facts that from “2000 to 2016, 41.3% of all small satellites launched experienced total or partial mission failure. Of these, 6.1% were launch vehicle failures, 11% were partial mission failures, and 24.2% were total mission failures” (Jacklin Stephen 2019). In our opinion an important clue of this failure high percentage could gravity around the problem of avoidance by the organizations, especially by the university projects, the ITU spectrum international coordination process, important and highly time /money consumer stage, in the process of satellite manufactures.

Another important criterion of this database is referring to the affiliation of CubeSat satellite projects by types of organizations, were military CubeSat initiatives published, reached the number of 125 projects, represented 4,2% from the total number of CubeSat projects, the majority of this being under the development of US DOD. From this value we can identify at list 50 projects that are operational and other 75 projects that could be under development and are not launched yet, as is depicted in Figure 3.

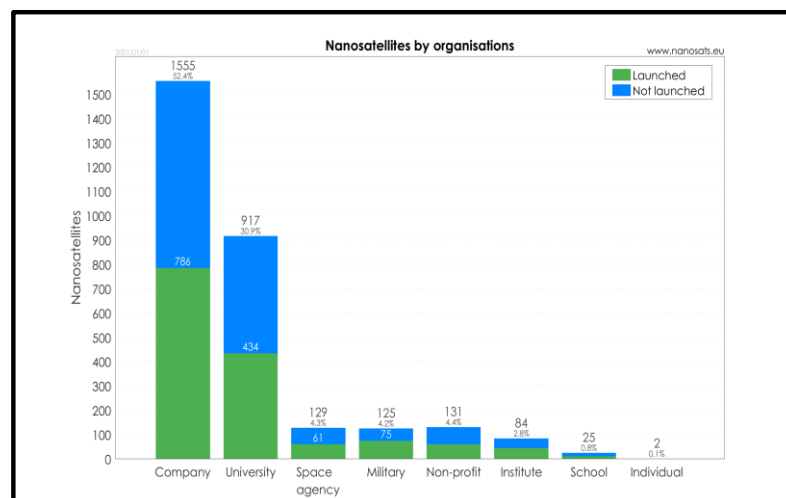


Figure 3. Nanosatellites by organisations⁸

⁷ <https://www.nanosats.eu/database>, accessed on 10.03.2021.

Taking in consideration that space is declared warfighting domain, is highly disputed and militarized, in near future we appreciate that many world armies, including small countries, could include the CubeSat LEO constellations as part of the future military space programs, because of their reliability, affordability and flexibility. Other reason is about the possible development and implementations of the advanced technologies, such as 5G and IoT, in military domain using swarm satellite constellations, in order to create a resilient federated critical space infrastructure. This opportunity can establish the link between other warfighting domains, and especially cyber domain, as far space domain and cyber converge each other in various scenarios.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Military space programs “provide critical information, intelligence, warning, and communication capabilities to commanders and warfighters across the spectrum of global conflict” (Nayak Michael p. 92). In order to identify if the CubeSat technologies is a interesting solution in development of military space programs we will do a SWOT analyze, in order to relieve as many as possible pro and negative arguments, that could be take in considerations by different military stake holders in the beginning of design process.

STRENGTHS

- can be build in short period of time, about 1-2 years, comparing with large satellite that are built in 3-5 years;
- CubeSat in less expensive comparing with large satellites, that permit to the owner the option on building swarm constellations;
- easy to find launching facilities, even the opportunity of launching the CubeSat from local facilities;
- CubeSat technology is simple, also the design and it's very easy to adapt according to the missions;
- flexible in design of space multiorbital architectures;
- reliable for image, EO and communications, using store&forward capabilities;
- easy to launch space capabilities for short missions or for typical military applications (Link 16, satellite communications);
- affordable in ITU coordination frequencies procedure.

WEAKNESSES

- limited by using only in LEO and HEO orbits;
- short period of mission duration, about 1 – 2 years, comparing with the large satellite were the mission duration is estimated at list about 15 years, guaranteed by the producers;
- limited by the dimension of payload, that imply the reduce number of missions. All most the CubeSat platforms is designated for a single mission;
- very difficult to implement on board active and passive protection solutions for this platforms;
- hard or impossible to develop SAR CubeSat platform;
- limited solutions for implementing beam forming and adaptive antennas;
- easy to lost the satellite from tracking.

OPPORTUNITIES

- to ensure worldwide coverage for different space missions is less expensive;
- reduce quantity or no space debris resulted, because CubeSat platform parts are entirely burned at the ending of lifecycle, when it re-entered in the Earth atmosphere;
- opportunity of including the national space industry in the development of the CubeSat platforms;
- easy to create a national military space programs with small amount of money;

⁸ <https://www.nanosats.eu/database>, accesed on 10.03.2021.

- design flexible architectures including multiorbital space capabilities;
- create the chance of developing national educational and research programs;
- possibility to test new space solutions and technologies;
- reduce dependency from commercial space service providers;
- provide space services for users in expedition missions;
- opportunity for development emerging technologies such as blockchain, 5G and IoT;
- possibility to see in real time the enemy troops movement and to act according with their actions;
- increase the accuracy of monitoring the space as a part of Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and Space Traffic Management (STM) projects;
- provide better connections for users, according to the principles of low latency and high throughput bandwidth, transforming the space in a “optical fibre”;
- possibility of including SDR solutions on CubeSat platform;
- easy to transform the satellite in a potential ASAT;
- “develop offensive and defensive counterspace operations” (Galliani Chalio);
- can provide the evolution of space domain.

THREATS

- large number of CubeSats launcher are failure;
- easy to jam the tracking, and communications frequencies of the satellite;
- simple to destroy this satellite with ASAT capabilities;
- high possibility for collisions with space debris;
- vulnerability of cyber-attackers and electronic warfare actions;
- possibility of losing the satellites during the mission, because of life length;
- small CubeSat constellation increase the chance of lost connections between users and the coverage can be a issue;
- information can be compromised and un-useful for users, because of the reduce number of satellites, and it's refers to period of time past since the moment when data is collected from space till arrived to users.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis carried out, we find that CubeSat technology favors the development of spatial programs applicable in the military field, taking into account adaptability to missions, low financial costs of achievement and the opportunity to project the national interests of the state in space. The negative elements of CubeSat technology gravity around the fragility of these satellite systems, high vulnerability to possible attacks by the enemy, and last but not the list, small size of these satellite platforms show limitations in the design of space missions. CubeSat capabilities promote space research, education and testing of new solutions.

According to growing military interest in small satellites, the future military space programs, CubeSat capabilities can only present the possible solutions in developing a multiorbital architecture, by exploiting both advantages of GEO satellites and small satellites operated in the MEO and LEO orbits. They are also active components of the SSA and STM programs, fundamental to the process of management of space infrastructures.

To summarize this paper the Nanosatellite or CubeSat technology in military applications aim the miniaturization, high modularity and software defined payload, allowing the functionality of entire military space applications and services portfolio, at major low financial costs, translating its scalability and flexibility into a capability. In addition, the efficient combination between low latency and high throughput bandwidth, integrated in federated mega-constellation architectures, transforms CubeSat satellite networks into resilient platforms for development of advanced technologies, according with the military requirements standards.

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DATABASE – WEB INTERFACE VULNERABILITIES

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Abstract

The importance of information security in general, of managed information at the level of a database has increased with the expansion of the Internet. On the other hand, it has acquired new facets with the increase of the accessibility of the users to as many resources as possible. Large volume of private data in use and the limitation of unauthorized actions to information have brought new aspects to the issue of ensuring their protection. The scope of this field is wide and allows the operation in several directions: identification, description, creation, implementation and testing of mechanisms aimed at improving the working environment in which database management systems operates. Due to the importance of the information managed by a DBMS², it is necessary to define a framework safe and easy to use. The database fulfills not only the role of storage, but also of data provider to users. Thus, the information must be protected throughout the interaction process: generation, storage, processing, modification, deletion, etc. Therefore, the security of databases must not only be reduced to the protection of certain data considered sensitive, but also to the creation of a secure, authorized and controlled global environment through which information becomes available to users.

Keywords: database; cybersecurity; web-base vulnerabilities; network interface; user credentials.

INTRODUCTION

When we operate with the notions of incident or security breach, we analyze information security. The incident is a security event that compromises the integrity, confidentiality, or availability of a computer infrastructure (or even the data/information itself). (ISO.2005)

Database security mechanisms must not only be limited to the protection of certain sensitive information, but also to the creation of a secure, authorized and controlled global environment. The security objectives of information systems are defined as follows (Info sec.2002), (Gary Stoneburner. 2001): availability as a requirement to ensure the proper functioning of the system and services; the integrity of the data and the system, respectively the confidentiality, as the capacity to keep the "hidden" character of the information; journaling as a need to uniquely identify and store the action of an entity of the system pursued and last but not least, security as a confidence in the system whose adopted security, technical and operational measures function and perform exactly the designed actions.

Servers continue to be the leader in ever-increasing attack targets. This is mainly due to the shift of the industry to web applications (the most common variety of assets, Figure 1), with system interfaces delivered as Software as a Service (SaaS) (Verizon. 2020)

According to the 2020 Verizon report, cloud resources were involved in about 24% of security breaches, while local assets are still the target in 70% of all reported breaches. Cloud targets involving an e-mail server or web applications account for over 70%, confirming the trend for cybercriminals to find the fastest and easiest way to reach their victims. The report centralized elements of information technology (IT) compared to operational technology (OT), in the case of assets involved in incidents. It was found that 96% of cases of security breaches took place in the field of information technology and only 4% in the operational one.

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² DBMS – DataBase Management System

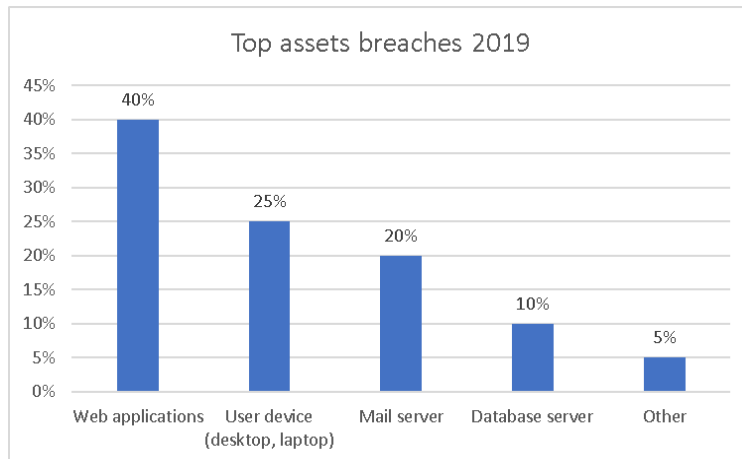


Figure 1. Top Asset varieties in breaches

Also, about 50% of reported security breaches are in the field of web applications correlated with database, because most of the time they interact.

WEB AND DATABASE VULNERABILITIES

Web applications include programs that perform certain actions mediated by a web browser, acting as a client interface (the program used to run the application). This architecture provides access to server services, including database management servers.

The need to take measures to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of resources within the systems used is growing due to the interaction with many insecure networks in an environment where it is not known who a potential attacker may be. Security attacks take countless forms such as: interceptions, disguises, forgeries, etc.

The advantages of the most important web applications refer to: flexibility, scalability, and increased redundancy. Because customers interact with a web browser, the type of computer or operating system does not affect accessibility.

Common web application vulnerabilities

OWASP Top 10 is a first step towards changing the software development culture within an organization, which refers to: Injection, Broken Authentication, Sensitive Data Exposure, XML External Entities (XXE), Broken Access Control, Security Misconfiguration, Cross-Site Scripting (XSS), Insecure Deserialization, Using Components with Known Vulnerabilities, Insufficient Logging & Monitoring (OWASP Project).

These vulnerabilities must be analyzed and prioritized according to:

- the degree of probability of vulnerability, in the sense that the easiest attack is when the resources involved are minimal (a simple web browser);
- detectability understood in the idea of detecting the threat as easily as possible. The most vulnerable information is the one produced in the URL, and the less in the lines of code;
- the impact or damage caused, if possible. If the computer system used is shut down, it is the biggest damage caused by the attack.

For the above reasons it is particularly important to know and assess, if possible, periodically, the state of the indicators as well as the listed vulnerabilities.

Database vulnerabilities

If there is an interaction of web services with a database management system, the issue of information security becomes even more important. Database security comprises a number of security features designed to protect the database management system (DBMS), which cover protecting the infrastructure of the database, securely configuring the DBMS and accessing the data itself. The security of database management systems must reflect the following: Deployment failure,

Excessive privileges, Privilege abuse, Platform vulnerabilities, Unmanaged sensitive data, Backup data exposure, Weak authentication, Database injection attacks³.

By comparing the vulnerabilities of the two fields of study: web, and database, we observe common elements or means that facilitate the exploitation of information in the database.

EXAMPLES OF DATABASE EXPLOITS

In a simple investigation, using shodan, we can find out that there are still enough database management systems, incorrectly or insufficiently configured, in terms of their security.⁴ In most relational database management systems, the default values are quite secure: connections are only accepted from the local interface, and the default authorization is inhibited or modified. However, there are situations when these minimum rules are not followed.

Such an example is shown in Figure 2, in which we see that a large amount of information is managed on a vulnerable MongoDB server from the perspective of default access settings, not being a singular case.

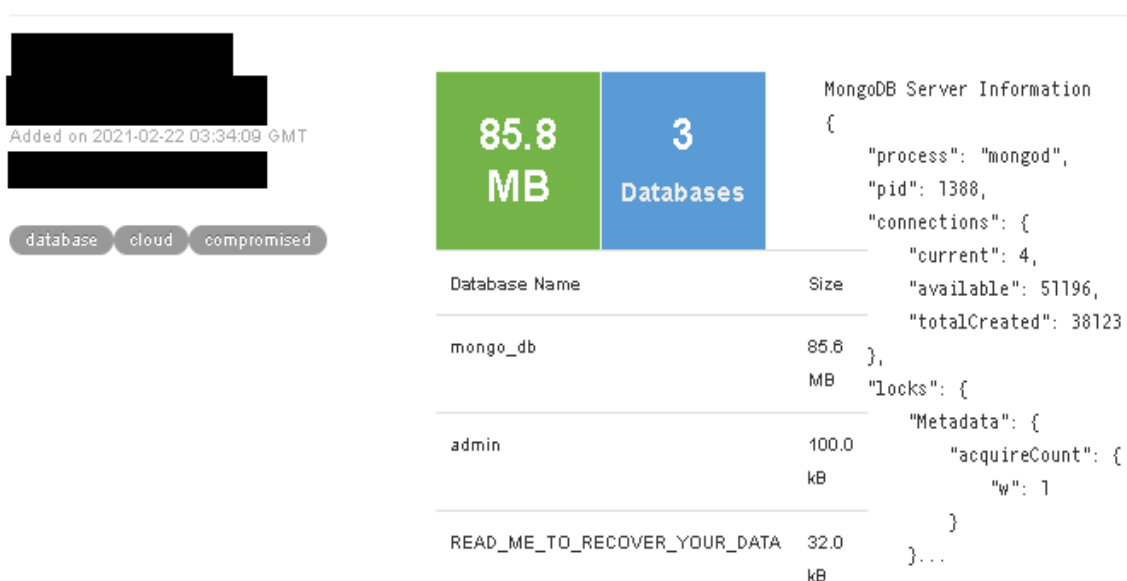


Figure 2. Vulnerability example at the administration level

Many of these instances, not being updated to the latest version, have the effect of introducing new vulnerabilities and security risks to the managed data.

Most MongoDB public implementation operates in the cloud: Amazon, Alibaba Advertising CO, Digital Ocean, OVH complete the most popular destinations for hosting MongoDB without authorization enabled. In fact, I have noticed this trend everywhere: cloud services tend to be more vulnerable than traditional data center hosting.

Not only for the reasons stated above, keeping the data itself secure is important also. In addition, the security mechanisms put in place must provide protection against countless security threats. All this to ensure protection for: Deployment failure, Excessive privileges, Privilege abuse, Platform vulnerabilities, Unmanaged sensitive data, Backup data exposure, Weak authentication, Database injection attacks.

For the study, we chose to detail the vulnerability of *Poor Encryption and Data Breaches*, which is a side often overlooked. Most of the time certain information stored in the database needs to be encrypted. In this way they can once again protect themselves against attacks and information/data leaks.

³ <https://looker.com/definitions/database-security>

⁴ Over 70000 instances, according shodan.io MongoDB search.

Data breaches are known among specialists in which important amounts of information have been accessed unauthorized, regarding: including social security numbers, birth dates, addresses, and in some cases drivers' license numbers (approximately 147.9 million consumers) (Josh Fruhlinger. 2020), 617 million online account details stolen from 16 hacked websites (email addresses, usernames, PBKDF2 password hashes, and other personal data)⁵, and perhaps the largest data leak, was Yahoo compromised the real names, email addresses, dates of birth and telephone numbers of 3 billion users account. Yahoo claimed that most of the compromised passwords were hashed⁶.

“Yahoo on Tuesday said “recently obtained new intelligence” showed all user accounts had been affected. The company said the investigation indicated that the stolen information did not include passwords in clear text, payment card data, or bank account information. But the information was protected with outdated, easy-to-crack encryption, according to academic experts. It also included security questions and backup email addresses, which could make it easier to break into other accounts held by the users.”(Jonathan Stempel, Jim Finkle. 2017)

The conclusion we reach by analyzing the events listed above materializes in the threat is real, present, constantly evolving and companies do not always take the best security measures to protect our personal data. In this regard, we have an example. In September 2019, the Zynga database was accessed unauthorized and more than 218 million user accounts were stolen. Zynga confirmed email addresses, salted SHA-1 hashed passwords, phone numbers, and user IDs for Facebook and Zynga accounts were stolen (Player security.2019)

POOR ENCRYPTION AND DATA BREACHES

Data breach might include:

- loss or theft of hard copy notes, USB drives, computers, or mobile devices;
- an unauthorized person gaining access to computers, account, or network;
- personal data email sending to the wrong person;
- sending emails using 'to' or 'cc', instead of 'bcc' (blind carbon-copy);
- employee copying a list of contacts for its personal use, etc.

The above incidents may occur due to the negligence of users with intent or not, due to breaches of security rules or their lack. But at the same time they can happen as a result of cybercrime, hacking.

Although it seems obvious, in some situations not all the data in the database are in encrypted form. It is practically impossible to encrypt everything. There are network interfaces in the databases that can be easily tracked by hackers if your data is not encrypted.

Aside to Injection flaws: SQL, NoSQL, OS, and LDAP injection, occur when untrusted data is sent to an interpreter as part of a command or query. The attacker's hostile data can trick the interpreter into executing unintended commands or accessing data without proper authorization.

If we add to all this the elements of GDPR⁷, we realize that it is very important to protect our personal data. GDPR calls for appropriate technical measures that include, but are not limited to, encryption in certain forms will be a requirement. (NICVA)

Penetration tests database

Given the previous examples where sensitive user information was stolen or leak, we can say that entities should not clearly store sensitive data in a database. At the same time, all external connections to the database should always use encryption mechanisms. In other words, sensitive data must be encrypted both at rest and moving.

Although new security standards and procedures have emerged, there are still organizations, as we saw earlier, that use weak algorithms for storing passwords, such as SHA-1. (Marc Stevens,

⁵ https://www.theregister.com/2019/02/11/620_million_hacked_accounts_dark_web/

⁶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yahoo-cyber/yahoo-says-all-three-billion-accounts-hacked-in-2013-data-theft-idUSKCN1C8201>

⁷ GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation.

2017) On the other hand, there are many users who use common words for passwords used or of low complexity. These aspects can be very easily exploited by interested people.

We performed some tests on the resistance to attacks on users' access passwords stored in a database. Passwords were protected with different hash functions: MD5, and SHA with different levels of complexity. Following the experiments, using common tools: sqlmap and hashcat, in which we also used dictionaries to attack this information, the results can be summarized as follows: the low complexity of the password generated success in identifying it, almost regardless of the standard used. On the other hand, a more complex password determined the failure to determine it, within a reasonable time.

In order to verify the resistance of these credentials, we executed an attack, on a vulnerable database, as in figure 3.

```
sqlmap -u http://192.168.43.78/pai_c/modificare_clienti.php?idclient=14 -D bd_pai_c
-T members -C username,password,email,admin --dump

[11:25:32] [INFO] using default dictionary do you want to use common password suffixes? (slow!) [y/N]
[11:25:33] [INFO] starting dictionary-based cracking (md5_generic_passwd)
[11:25:33] [WARNING] multiprocessing hash cracking is currently not supported on this platform
[11:25:34] [INFO] cracked password '12345' for user 'test5'
[11:25:39] [INFO] cracked password 'abcd' for user 'test_user'
[11:25:39] [INFO] cracked password 'abcde' for user 'test7'

Database: bd_pai_c
Table: members
[13 entries]
+-----+-----+
| username | password
+-----+-----+
| test_user | e2fc714c4727ee9395f324cd2e7f331f (abcd)
| user      | 430780c5b24102335aa77032a615fa70709bd5c44a0a1cf6c310b7287f3518dc7412038ff96986b2f24dc77c
| admin     | 430780c5b24102335aa77032a615fa70709bd5c44a0a1cf6c310b7287f3518dc7412038ff96986b2f24dc77c
| test      | $2y$10$HhLDYUiktcSosskj862Edu8uG7300HUZfV0Nx1kpwHytjwUDGdQ5m
| test2     | $2y$10$I1LLwhp3x1FnOXfv731F5OrP0ukQWZ5x/.pj6ayoFIp5H3TREPw1.
| test3     | 7bcba40edfdb12fae3001d3b271304109b225462015a3eccb0097d4f1d2d9a9baa0f947f7f8e1947e80c9b12
| test4     | D8022F2060AD6EFD297AB73DCC5355C9B214054B0D1776A136A669D26A7D3B14F73AA0D0EBFF19EE333368F6
| test5     | 827ccb0eea8a706c4c34a16891f84e7b (12345)
| test7     | ab56b4d92b40713acc5af89985d4b786 (abcde)
```

Figure 3. Sample result of the password attack on vulnerable database

Following the execution of this simulated attack, I obtained the clear password for some input data, for others obviously not.

The following table lists some of the relevant tests:

Table 1. Hash attack results⁸

Information	Method	Result	Success
e2fc714c4727ee9395f324cd2e7f331f	MD5	abcd	Yes
827ccb0eea8a706c4c34a16891f84e7b	MD5	12345	Yes
ab56b4d92b40713acc5af89985d4b786	MD5	abcde	Yes
3627909a29c31381a071ec27f7c9ca97726182aed29a7ddd2e54353322cfb30abb9e3a6df2ac2c20fe23436311d678564d0c8d305930575f60e2d3d048184d79	SHA512	12345	Yes
878ae65a92e86cac011a570d4c30a7eae c442b85ce8eca0c2952b5e3cc0628c2e79d889ad4d5c7c626986d452dd86374b6ffaa7cd8b67665bef2289a5c70b0a1	SHA512	abcde	Yes
27664cd89fdb076072835d7e69a5c2cdc8e264e486917457c1bf36e4a7c5d0998696fca8fbc9892295ed818ded8ee45778feb700ed33d1d191032cc22bcfd72f	SHA512	p3U/3ZGMEf7v\	No

⁸ sqlmap and hashcat tools.

If more companies used SHA-512 the situation would be better, because, at least for now, the algorithm is still relatively safe from brut-force attacks, if we take into account the statistics provided by the blockchain in the mining stage.

One such example is the mining process used in bitcoin. Bitcoin mining process is performing now at more than 153000 TeraHashes per second⁹ (where $SHA-256d(x)=SHA-256(SHA-256(x))$, that is two SHA-256) and also it is time and energy consuming process without a certain positive result.

Administrative actions

From the elements stated above, we note that it is imperative personal data be protected. Certain actions must be implemented by the service provider, but also the regular user must apply certain own actions.

These actions are simple. The most important of which is the management of data access. All this depends on the level of training and knowledge of users in the field of cyber security.

In order to assess the level of knowledge of regular users, we initiated an ad-hoc survey, through which we followed the way of managing the passwords of the access accounts. We focused on the objectives for identifying how to manage users' access data in email accounts, the interaction with the online payment environment, as well as the level of preparation and studies.

Following the survey, we found the following:

- Over 70% of respondents do not consider that they have a training in the field of cyber security;
- Although 25% have secondary education and 75% higher education, 95% use Internet services frequently;
- At least 30% have a personal email account, and 64% more than two email accounts, both organizational and personal;
- 16% use the same password for all email accounts, which is risky;
- Mobile technology is widely used, 70%, both for interaction with the Internet, e-mail, banking, etc.,
- Over 60% use password complexity, lowercase, uppercase and special characters, longer than 8 characters;
- 80% use electronic payment services, using the computer or mobile terminal.

From the survey we found the following risk factors regarding access data management and use of electronic services, figures 4 and 5: 60% never change the access password or only at the request of the service provider:

- 30% use the same access password for different accounts and services;
- 80% do not use or do not know what a password manager is;
- 15% had security incidents in the last year, and 3% with total loss of data or account.

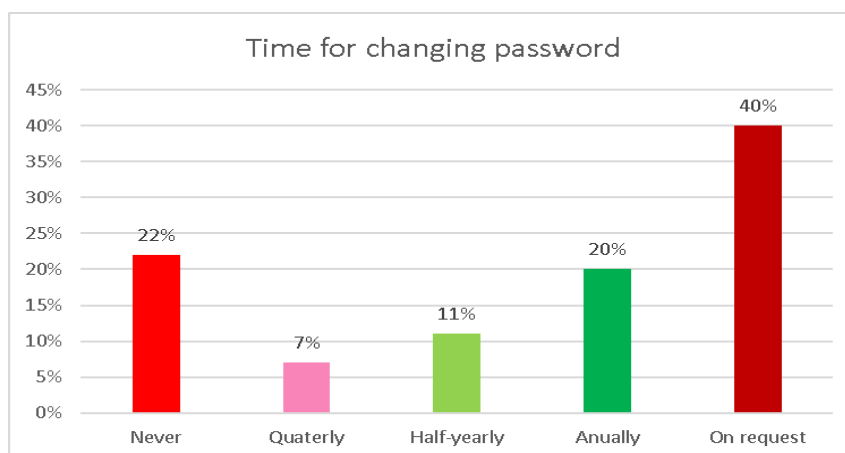


Figure 4. Password change frequency

⁹ <https://www.blockchain.com/charts/hash-rate>

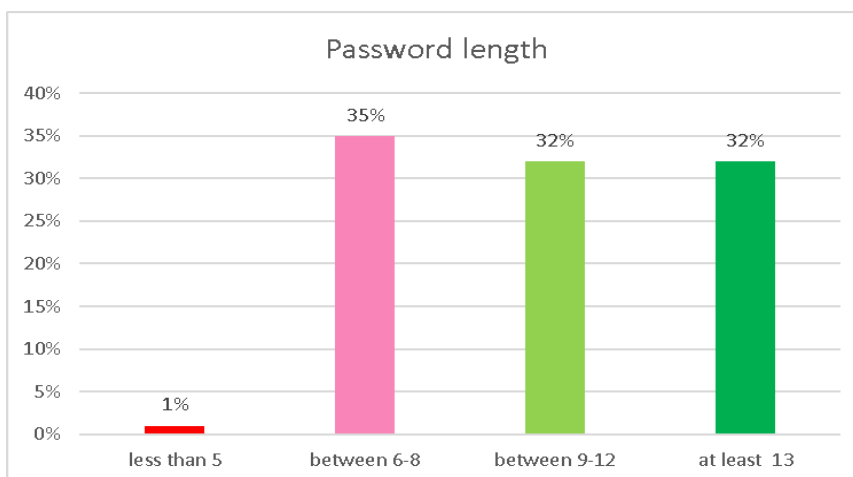


Figura 5. Length of the password

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of security tests on vulnerable databases, we have found that the information stored is not always secure. This finding is also confirmed by the multitude of events of theft of personal information, especially access data in various accounts. Although there is an improvement in the security environment, through the actions taken by major service providers, it is necessary for regular users to adopt appropriate behavior.

A large part of users widely uses electronic services at least email. But, through e-mail we exchange sensitive information: account access passwords, bank information, electronic payments, invoices, etc.

Following the survey, even if it has no sociological representation, we deduced that to a large extent they either misuse access data or do not know the implications of misuse.

A small number of users have been the subject of a cyber attack with or without data loss/email account. We can deduce that certain cyber attack situations may not have been reported by them, because often the unauthorized access to the email account is hidden for a long time. Attackers investigate the information circulated, analyze the behavior of users acting only in situations presumed to be advantageous to them, most often for illegal purposes.

That is why it is important to choose our electronic service providers that ensure a certain level of increased security. At the same time, it is necessary to respect and use the security mechanisms implemented by them. We must add the widespread training of users to raise the level of knowledge and skills in the field of cybersecurity, aside the technical measures mentioned above.

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INTERNET OF THINGS SECURITY FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

It was unimaginable for a non-professional user that access data to personal e-mail, bank or identity accounts could be stolen via a mobile phone interface or connection, no more than twenty years ago. Nowadays, people with bad intentions – hacker – can use smart devices, such as: webcams, microwaves, refrigerators, door controllers, and others, generically we named it IoT², to access accounts like the ones mentioned above, without much effort. The Internet of Things is the place where devices are digitally interconnected, interacts with almost every domain. IoT development is closely correlated with growing of Internet. These issues have generated an unprecedented upward trend in Wi-Fi and IoT interconnecting networks. Cyber-security has gained new meanings because of the increasing number and scope of IoT devices. By developing these devices, especially among regular users, it is necessary to improve their security more than ever. How prepared are regular users and how can they protect themselves in the context of IoT penetration into their daily lives? it is a question that needs to be answered, in terms of the actions it can take immediately or in the long run.

Keywords: IoT; cybersecurity; Wi-Fi access point; network interface.

INTRODUCTION

By the Internet of Things (IoT), as terminology, we understand a multitude of things, objects for a lot of people interconnected via the global Internet network.

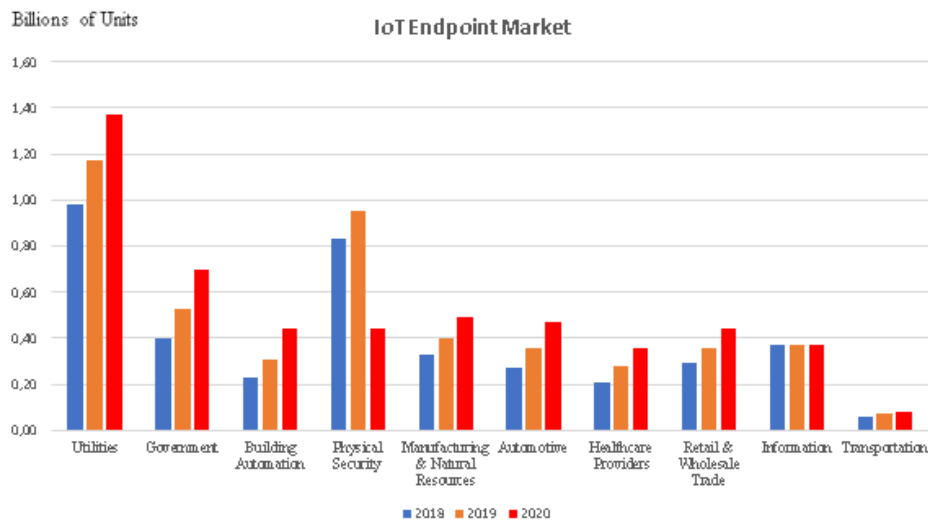


Figure 1. IoT Endpoint Market 2018-2020³

For the ordinary or professional user, it can be about: TV, webcam, intelligent central heating, or air conditioning thermostat, all interconnected. The IoT term is known for a long time if we refer to certain components of industrial robotics.

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² IoT - Internet of Things

³ EGHAM. 2019.

IoT devices are found in operational environments and in the daily life of ordinary users, but also industrial users: connected cars – embedded (consumer and commercial), outdoor surveillance cameras, doors control, small smart weather stations, etc., as shown in Figure 1.

What is new and in an exponential development is represented by the entry into personal use, at home, on the one hand, and the functioning independently of human action, on the other hand. (EGHAM 2019.)

The trend in the coming years for the IoT field is of constant growing, even explosive, both in terms of the number of devices as well as in the field of use. According to STATISTA, \$ 749 billion is estimated to be spent on the Internet of Things (IoT). Even if in 2021 there will be a reduction in the costs, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, by 2023 an amount of \$ 1.1 trillion is estimated for IoT. As a result, IoT security is becoming increasingly important, with significant amounts allocated to the field. Thus, more than \$ 120 billion were spent on IoT security in 2019 worldwide. (STATISTA 2021.)

The data from these IoT sensors and controllers are extremely valuable for changing user and business behaviors. Using data for better business decision making and automation for better efficiency is extremely valuable - and the basis for business moves, as advertising was Industry 4.0.

Thus, according to some estimates, with the increase in the number of IoT devices, the need for the communications bandwidth will increase also. The current trend is to use 5G technology. As shown in Figure 2, if in 2020, 70% of all IoT devices were owned by outdoor surveillance cameras, while connected cars- embedded were only 11%, in 2023 the ratio will change in favor of the latter, with an index increase by about 400%, while the number of outdoor surveillance cameras will be reduced by 50% as a share of total IoT devices in correlation with the 5G technology. (Alan Weissberger 2019.)

With the increase in the number and diversity of areas of use of IoT devices, new possibilities open up for hackers who will exploit their vulnerabilities.

Some of their vulnerabilities have brought IoT security into the multitude of cyber security issues that need to be addressed quickly enough.

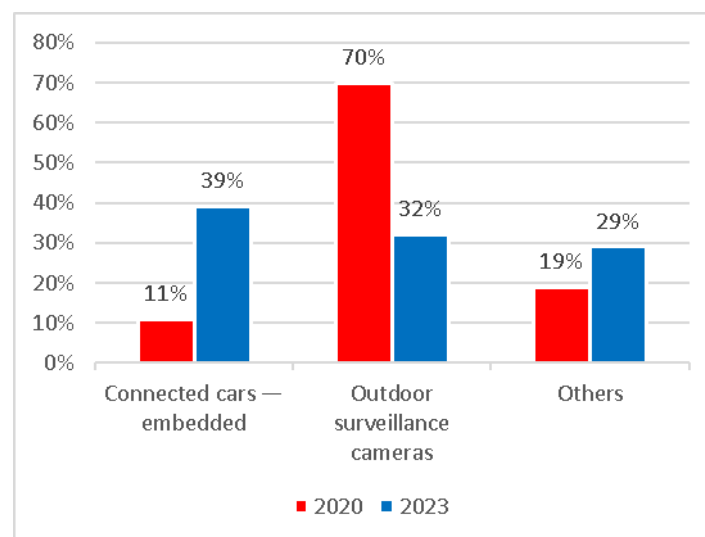


Figure 2. 5G IoT Endpoint Installed Base, Worldwide⁴

IOT DEVICES SECURITY

IoT security is the technological area involved in protecting devices and networks connected to the Internet of Things (IoT). IoT involves adding Internet connectivity to a system of interconnected computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects and/or people. The growth of the IoT devices market in Europe, reaching over 242 billion Euros⁵, will have as affect the development of IoT

⁴ Alan Weissberger, 2019

⁵ <https://www.peerbits.com/blog/biggest-iot-security-challenges.html>

applications that will implicitly generate new and multiple cyber security challenges. Because the manufacturers of these devices compete to provide users with the latest and most handy smart device, few of them are really concerned about the security issues associated with accessing and managing personal data, but also with the intrinsic security of the IoT device itself.

Therefore, it is important to know what the important common security challenges are affecting IoT devices.

Current IoT security challenges

According to the Symantec Internet Security Threat Report study (Symantec 2018. vol.23) the most important challenges can be summarized in:

- Insufficient software testing and updating of IoT devices, both in the manufacturing process and especially in the end-user operation process⁶;
- Vulnerable to brute-force attacks targeting the exploitation of default passwords⁷;
- Malware and ransomware attacks that use IoT devices as a means of penetrating computer systems⁸;
- Botnet targeting cryptocurrencies, with an explosion of use, especially in the last pandemic year^{9 10} (Jeremi Kirk 2020.)
- Data security and privacy (mobile, web, cloud (ISO 2005.)
- Attacks on data security and privacy;
- Use and exploitation of elements of artificial intelligence;
- Remote access to resources within the network architecture through the IoT devices^{11 12};
- all these actions are often illegitimate and have an illicit purpose.

IoT vulnerabilities

The OWASP – Internet of Things Project (OWASP 2018.) is designed to help manufacturers, developers, and regular users to better understand the security issues associated with the Internet of Things. The project allows users who act in any context to make the best security decisions when building, implementing, or evaluating IoT technologies. The project aims to define structures for various sub-projects that may or may not include IoT devices.

Within this project, in 2018 the 10 most important aspects regarding IoT security were published: (OWASP Top 10. 2018.)

- Weak passwords (Ant Allan.2020.);
- Unsecured network services;
- Systems that have unsecured interfaces;
- Lack of a secure update mechanism;
- Use of unsecure or technologically obsolete components;
- Insufficient protection of privacy;
- Unsecured data transfer and storage;
- Lack or insufficient management of devices;
- Unchanged or known default settings;
- Lack of security to physical attacks;

⁶ American Consumer Institute Center for Citizen Research

⁷ <https://www.varonis.com/blog/the-mirai-botnet-attack-and-revenge-of-the-internet-of-things/>

⁸ <https://bdtechtalks.com/2016/08/22/the-iot-ransomware-threat-is-more-serious-than-you-think/>

⁹ <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/03/11/1998560/0/en/February-2020-s-Most-Wanted-Malware-Increase-in-Exploits-Spreading-the-Mirai-Botnet-to-IoT-Devices.html>

¹⁰ <https://unit42.paloaltonetworks.com/los-zetas-from-eleethub-botnet/>

¹¹ <https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2015/09/9-baby-monitors-wide-open-to-hacks-that-expose-users-most-private-moments/>

¹² <https://www.wired.com/2015/07/hackers-remotely-kill-jeep-highway/>

VULNERABLE IOT INTERFACES AND SERVICES

Based on security challenges and IoT vulnerabilities, the risks, vulnerabilities of IoT devices present in the user's ecosystem can be defined, as well as the way of performing possible attacks, with the aim of counteracting these attacks or reducing residual risk, where these devices exist.

Once the most important risks and vulnerabilities of IoT devices in the study ecosystem have been identified, a possible scenario can be generated regarding the execution of possible attacks, of a malicious person (hacker), who acts for various purposes, most of the time illegitimate.

Mainly, the action of an attacker can be summed up in actions aimed at altering one or more components concerning confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information, managed within IoT devices, or within the ecosystem in which they are present.

Based on the above, the main interfaces and services through which an attacker can exploit them, we have identified the following:

Web services and interfaces

Through web services and interfaces, attackers exploit vulnerabilities in principle to:

- identify equipment access information: type, software version, firmware version, data about access accounts: username and passwords (whether or not they are the default ones);
- identify active / open web service ports;
- access information regarding the interaction with web services, through the administration interface, to alter the configuration, redirect certain services and/or intercept and record data traffic.

Local area network interfaces

Having as main purposes:

- identification of the network configuration, both hardware and software;
- the installation of malicious programs in the systems of the local network;
- changing the local network configuration (network addresses, routing tables, etc.);
- theft or destruction of data processed in the component systems, used for various purposes, including extortion;
- monitoring the network activity in order to further exploit the identified vulnerabilities.

Wireless network interfaces

Are most often exploited for the purpose of:

- identifying the network configuration;
- identifying the existing open services and ports;
- interception and recording of data traffic;
- identifying the network access data, adding of new privileged accounts, as well as executing harmful processes, for further exploitation.

These elements will be used to define a minimum framework of measures required to be performed by a regular user, with the aim of reducing the risks and vulnerabilities of current IoT devices encountered in a personal ecosystem, while maintaining an acceptable level of security

UNPROFESSIONAL USER DIRECT ACTIONS

In the current context, because IoT devices are developing almost exponentially and are widely present in the lives of ordinary users - non-professionals, usually without computer or cyber security knowledge, it is necessary to provide them with sets of simple organizational and technical measures, by which an acceptable level of risk can be maintained.

Following the analysis of the information contained in the generated reports, based on the main types of IoT devices and their most current risks, represented in figures 3 and 4, we can conclude the following:

- over 46,000 IoT devices have default authentication data¹³;
- over 80% of these devices use the HTTP / HTTPS protocol or allow a telnet connection;
- over 80% of webcams use HTTP protocols, with different ports open¹⁴.

This information, corroborated with others obtained using OSINT¹⁵ technologies, represents important ways and means of exploitation and use of penetration techniques for an attacker. At the same time, it is important information for the community of security administrators, to fight possible attacks on IoT ecosystems.

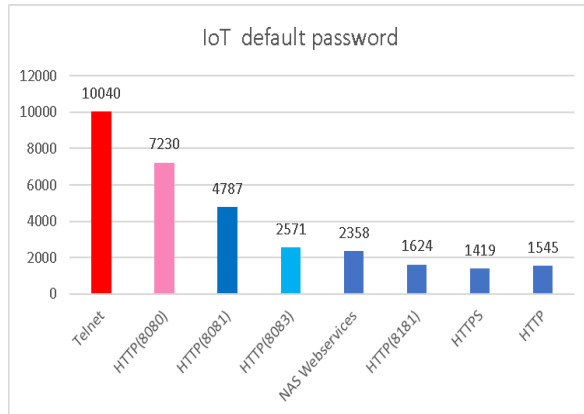


Figure 3. IoT devices with the default password

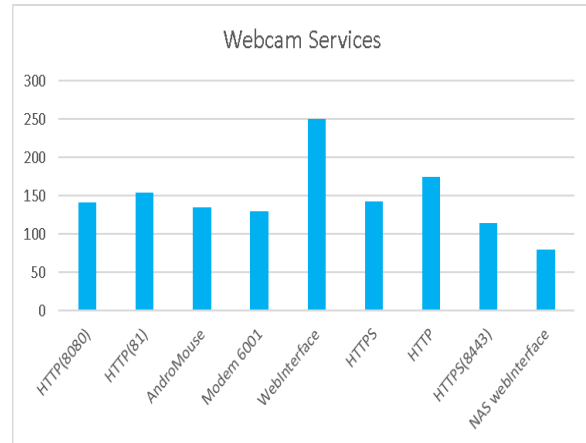


Figure 4. Webcam available services

On the other hand, we find the need to provide non-professional users with simple, basic knowledge and procedures, with which they can manage their security risks at an acceptable level, because of using IoT devices.

These actions can be categorized into:

- organizational actions, comprising a minimum set of guides / guidelines, and
- technical actions, which consist in the execution of simple, predefined or minimally configurable commands, through which the user identifies architectural elements of his own network ecosystem.

Managed actions

We propose to the user to read at least the main elements of access to IoT devices, specified in the technical documentation received when purchasing them.

We also propose to the user the completion of the synoptic for each device, specified in table 1, as follows:

Table 1. User action checkmark

No.	Action	How-to	Check	Notes
1	Read documentation	Read the documentation and find the information about the access for the admin interface	Yes/No	
2	Access to admin console	Access the management console using the information in section 1	Yes/No	
3	View default configuration	Write in the table 2 the information found: device name, IP address, firmware version, MAC, manufacturer.	Yes/No	
4	Change default access account information	Change at least the administrator account access password.	Yes/No	admin; administrator; root;

¹³ <https://www.shodan.io/report/CloKjAm0>

¹⁴ <https://www.shodan.io/report/MwhZCMPZ>

¹⁵ OSINT - Open-Source Investigation Tools

No.	Action	How-to	Check	Notes
5	Password complexity	Set a strong password: it must be at least 10-13 characters long and contain at least one uppercase, numeric and special characters.	Yes/No	Do not test the strength of your password using any specific websites.
6	Memorize the password	Remember the password. Do not write it on any medium. Do not tell anyone.	Yes/No	

Technical actions

The handiest actions available to the non-professional user refer to the identification of the network architecture and IoT devices present in his own ecosystem. We propose that the completion of information to be managed according to the structure presented in table 2. One table entry will be completed for each device.

The information can be found, either by referring to the technical documentation or by running simple programs, usually freeware.

Table 2. IoT configuration matrix

No.	IoT device	IP address	Port	Services	OS ¹⁶	MAC	HOP number	Producer	Firmware version
1	TV	192.168.100.27	80, 443, 9090	HTTP, ssl, X11, upnp	Linux 2.6	6 digits goups	n	Manufacturer	123456
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

To identify the architecture, we tested freeware utilities, through which a user without knowledge in the field of computer networks is more difficult to achieve. Freeware software products capable of scanning your own network ecosystem can be used using the `nmap`¹⁷ utility.

Following the execution of the program, the network architecture, and the “*targets*” to be analyzed are identified, and then we will select the network analysis profile.

We have reproduced some of them below, considering that we will analyze the address 192.168.100.1:

- intense scan: `nmap -T4 -A -v 192.168.100.1;`
- Intense scan plus UDP: `nmap -sS -sU -T4 -A -v 192.168.100.1;`
- Intense scan, all TCP ports: `nmap -p 1-65535 -T4 -A -v 192.168.100.1;`
- Quick traceroute: `nmap -sn --traceroute 192.168.100.1;`

The address 192.168.100.1 will be replaced with the address in your own network.

Following the execution of these commands, the information necessary to complete the data in the model specified in table 2 will be searched and identified.

By periodically executing such commands, the user can identify any configuration changes, by comparing them with the reference data recorded in the two tables.

CONCLUSIONS

With the broadening of the number and areas of use of IoT devices, the degree of insecurity has increased. Personal data and private life are even more imperative to be protected. This can be done by specially trained staff, those specialists in cyber security, involving the spending of sums of money. Therefore, this activity must be able to be carried out, even if limited, by the common, ordinary user, the non-professional one, because it does not involve financial expenses.

At the level of an organization (ISO/IEC 27001) there are sufficient material, technical, human, and financial resources to implement operational standards specific to the field of cyber security (Mona Mangat. 2020.). At the level of the individual, non-professional user, there are certain difficulties in implementing cyber security measures, because the resources available are limited and insufficient.

¹⁶ OS- Operating System

¹⁷ <https://nmap.org/zenmap/>

Therefore, we identified and proposed two major actions: organizational actions, focused mainly on the minimum education of the non-professional user, but also by providing a simple organizational framework consisting of two models to complete specific data, and indicating a freeware tool, easy to use and understand, because the user will be able to identify the data to be stored in the two models in the information on the screen display of the execution of those commands.

We intend, in the next stage, to validate by running a survey on the use of the risk reduction framework and on reducing the security vulnerabilities of IoT devices, addressed to target users, i.e. non-professionals in the IT field.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN HYBRID WARFARE: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND CLASSIFICATION

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence contributes greatly to enhance situational awareness, providing early warning and contributing to the decision making process in the hybrid warfare context. Artificial intelligence brings a paradigm shift to “new” wars and threats, powered by increasing availability of military data and rapid progress of artificial intelligence techniques. The purpose of this paper is to identify researchers’ interest in the use of “artificial intelligence” in the “hybrid warfare” environment and to establish the topics they approach. In this respect, the aim of this paper is to produce a literature review by accessing a scientific database in order to perform an analysis on how connected topics, such as: machine learning, data mining, deep learning and artificial neural network are integrated in the military domain.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; hybrid warfare; hybrid threats; decision making; machine learning; cybersecurity.

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade the rise of hybrid warfare term by describing the new type of wars produced different concepts like: hybrid threats or hybrid conflict (Glenn, 2009, 1). In the same time, the quickening progress of new technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, data mining, deep learning, artificial neural network, cybersecurity, and other aspects related to defense technologies represent a must which produces effects in all security and defense domains. Moreover, in the hybrid warfare context, information superiority represents a key concept used to enhance situational awareness, providing early warning and contributing to the decision making process. Avoiding or reducing unwanted consequences and preparing for an effective response to hybrid threats is based on “providing timely information that allows decision makers to analyze the data in detail and establish intervention measures” (Susnea 2013. 427-431).

This paper analyzes two emerging military topics such as "artificial intelligence" and "hybrid warfare". Through this the purpose of this paper is to produce a literature review by accessing the ProQuest Database in order to identify the articles written in the two areas mentioned above and to perform an analysis on how related topics such as: machine learning, data mining, deep learning and artificial neural network are developed in the military field.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial intelligence aims to build artificial minds, and thus, cares most for how systems can emulate intelligent behavior. Techniques from artificial intelligence are attracting much interest in the military field because it leads to a massive expansion in means of human capability and propose better solutions than human might in hybrid warfare conditions.

Artificial intelligence in hybrid warfare has two main branches: computer software and robotic and autonomous systems (RAS). The computer software branch includes informatics approaches

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from expert systems, speech recognition, natural language processing to machine learning, including digital records and metadata to military decision support systems. The robotic and autonomous systems branch is best represented by “powered machine capable of executing a set of actions through direct human control, computer control, or a combination of both” (Torossian et al., 2021. 5) and the cognitive (autonomous) aspects of these machine. These systems are based on technology that supports automatic target recognition, target acquisition, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), loitering weapons and so on.

Artificial intelligence technologies present a real opportunity for military integration, particularly because of the level of artificial intelligence development in fields like intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), logistics, cyberspace operations, information operations and deep fakes, command and control, semiautonomous and autonomous vehicles, lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS). Most of the applications listed above used supervised learning algorithms like logistic regression, k-nearest neighbor, decision trees, naïve Bayesian, support vector machine. Moreover, data mining plays an important role for decision support irrespective of type of military application. The increasing ability to track, collect and analyze large amounts of data in order to extract previously unknown patterns has led to an interest in the development of data mining algorithms which can extract useful information from these large datasets or streams of data. If data mining techniques such as clustering, decision tree and association are applied to hybrid warfare, it would help improve early warning for increased situational awareness and contribute to the decision making process.

In recent years, deep learning has become the leader in the machine learning domain. Unlike conventional machine-learning and data mining techniques, “deep learning is able to generate a very high-level data representations from massive volumes of raw data. Therefore, it has provided a solution to many real-world applications” (Pouyanfar et al., 2018. 92).

HYBRID WARFARE

To better understand the nature of future conflicts first we should define the new threats. Nowadays potential enemies “blend various approaches in war to fit them within their strategic culture, historical legacies, geographic realities, and economic means” (Williamson and Mansoor, 2012. 2). Starting with this point, threats will no longer come from states that use conventional means, but from states or groups that have a whole range of threats, techniques, tactics and the technology needed to mix them in an innovative way to produce desired effects (Hoffman 2009, 35-37). Regarding hybrid threats “blend the lethality of state conflict with the fanatical and protracted fervor of irregular warfare” (Hoffman, 2009, 5) to achieve political and military objectives.

Nowadays the reality has shown that hybrid threats, including “cyberattacks in the context of armed conflicts” directed against critical infrastructures (Pătrașcu 2018. 140), have produced major changes in the genetics of the concept of war. A concept that cannot be seen under its dual nature of black and white, conventional or unconventional, lethal or non-lethal, regular or irregular (Mosquera and Bachmann, 2016. 64), but the actions were divided into the gray area of the terms, still unregulated from the International Humanitarian Law perspective.

METHODOLOGY

Our paper examines researches from ProQuest Database on peer review between 2005 and 2020 by looking at key words from two fields: hybrid warfare and artificial intelligence. Based on this analysis we identified that starting from 2012 substantial progress has been made in artificial intelligence and its application to hybrid warfare as written in table no. 1.

First, we looked up in the database for the concept of "hybrid warfare" and we identified a number of 7531 papers. Also, we looked up for the "artificial intelligence" concept and we found 1 179 272 papers. Then, we queried the ProQuest Database using both concepts "hybrid warfare" and "artificial intelligence" and results 519 papers.

Secondly, we extended the list of search terms mixed "hybrid warfare" and "machine learning", "data mining", "deep learning", and "artificial neural networks" with the main purpose of

identifying researchers' interest in the use of artificial intelligence in the hybrid warfare and to establish the topics they approach.

During our research we encountered certain limitations in the case of non full text articles identified in the ProQuest database.

Quantitative Analysis of the Papers

Quantitative analysis perspective showed that research about artificial intelligence has been rapidly growing starting from 2012. Started from this moment, we queried 519 papers, but we found only 41 peer reviewed as shown in table no 1. Next, we extended the list of search terms by mixing and "machine learning" when the results showed us only 14 paper peer reviewed from a total of 155. Furthermore, we queried about "hybrid warfare" and "data mining" and the results showed that there are in the ProQuest Database only 13 peer reviewed paper from a total of 36. Last step was to search the database about "hybrid warfare" and "deep learning" where the results were less numerous than previous with 5 paper per reviewed from a total of 23. Finally, the last interrogation referred to "hybrid warfare" and "artificial neural networks" when the database returned only 1 peer reviewed paper from a total of 6.

Table 1. Total results in ProQuest database by year and peer review

Search terms	Oldest first result	Results	Peer reviewed results
"hybrid warfare" and "artificial intelligence"	2012	519	41
"hybrid warfare" and "data mining"	2016	36	13
"hybrid warfare" and "machine learning"	2017	155	14
"hybrid warfare" and "deep learning"	2018	23	5
"hybrid warfare" and "artificial neural networks"	2019	6	1

After summing up, the total number of peer-reviewed articles was 74 as shown in figure no 1, but only 55 papers of these were identified without being duplicated.

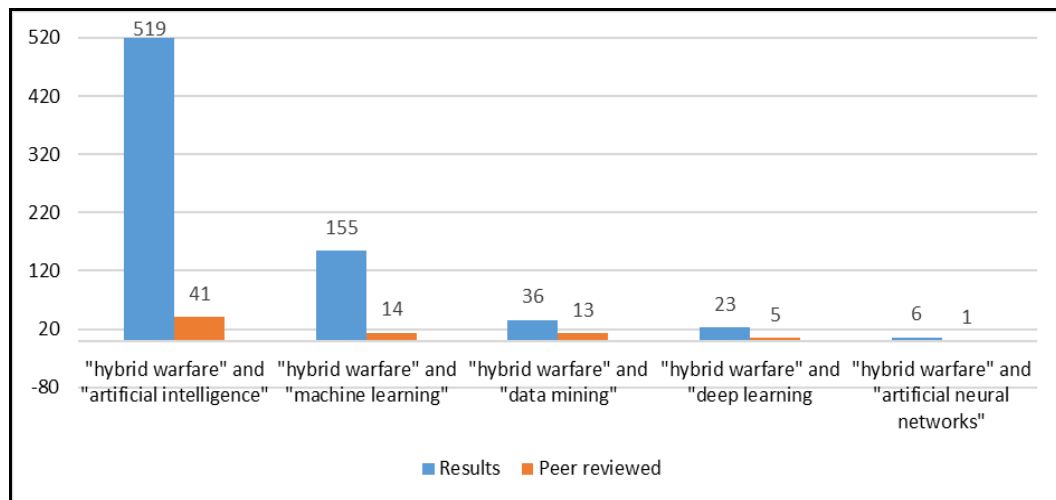


Figure 1. Total results on the searched topics in ProQuest database

The next step was to analyze the papers in terms of the year of publication. With this opportunity we found out that the oldest paper which contain the terms "artificial intelligence" and "hybrid warfare" is from 2012. This led us to the idea that, although the two terms are used frequently a few years before, only in 2012 is associated in the literature of technology of artificial intelligence with the new methods of waging war.

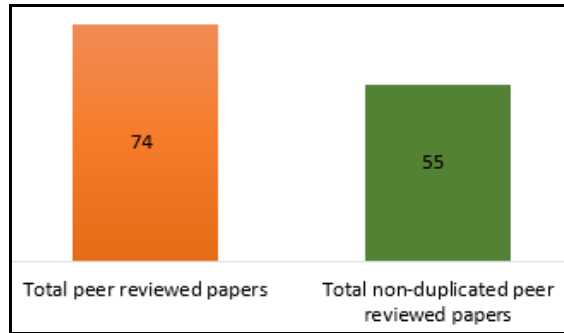


Figure 2. Total non-duplicated peer reviewed papers

Furthermore, this quantitative analysis will be extended with a qualitative analysis on the content of the 74 papers as shown in figure 2.

Qualitative Analysis of the Papers

Treating the literature review from a qualitative perspective may help writers to understand not only the numbers but also the semantic. What are the connected topics related to artificial intelligence which create effects in the hybrid warfare? How does artificial intelligence affect new methods of war? What countermeasures does the military have?

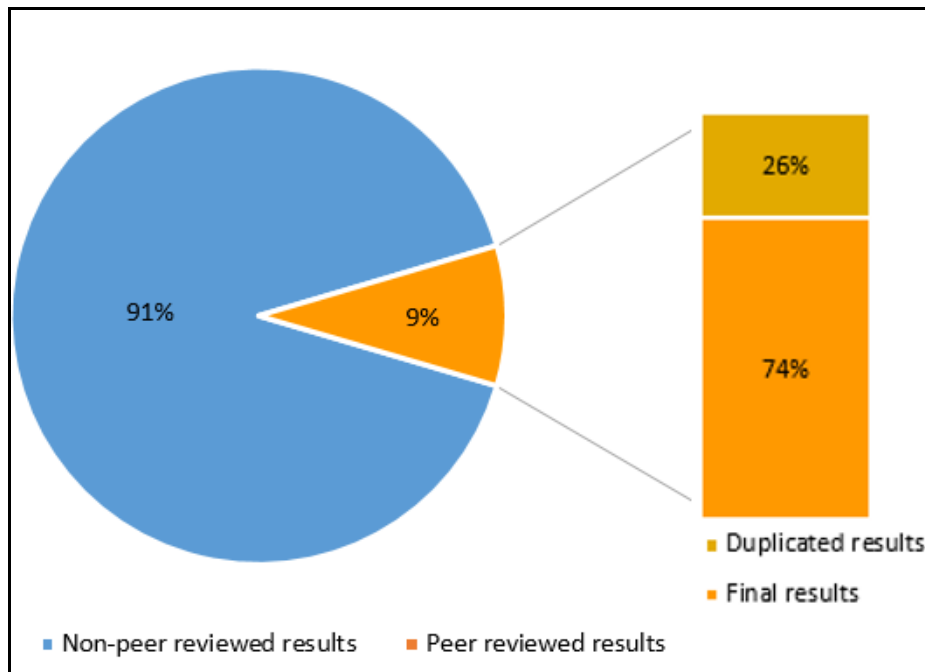


Figure 3. Percentage of peer reviewed articles

Following the qualitative analysis of the content of the 55 articles, a number of 6 military topics resulted, such as: information warfare, fake news/propaganda, threats in cyberspace /electronic warfare, drone warfare assets, decision making / C2.

Information warfare

From the information warfare (IW) perspective hybrid warfare was studied by analyzing dimensions like DIME/PMESII/ASCOPE (DIME – Diplomacy, Information, Military, and Economics; PMESII – Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, and Infrastructure; ASCOPE – Areas, Structures, Capabilities, Organization, People, and Events) with the purpose of “building a framework for the problem space of influence/information/hybrid warfare and introduces the idea of the perception field, understood as a molecule (gestalt or shape) of a story or narrative that influences an

observer” (Kodalle, Ormrod, Sample, Scott 2020. 12). In this respect, one of the military leaders concerns is on how to integrate the “flow of information warfare (IW) data products and services into command and control (C2) systems to enable enhanced tactical and operational war-fighter and decision maker situational awareness”. (Pirolo 2020, 1).

Fake news and propaganda

The term fake news is not new to mass media. A classic example of widespread fake news dates back to 1942, when the British set up the Aspidistra radio transmitter used in the air against Germany. The broadcasts tried to convince the German people that “the war was going badly for their country”. (Crowdy 2008. 218) Recently, fake news has become a buzzword, especially since the 2016 US presidential election, because it is estimated that about “25% of tweets spread either fake or extremely biased news” (Bovet and Makse 2019, 1-14). In these times of hybrid warfare, the tremendous increase of online platforms and other Internet services has contributed to the growth in the abundance of fake news and deepfakes, which have become “the latest weapon in the war against truth” (Brown 2020 57-58”).

Our analysis of the ProQuest papers highlights the authors' interest in studying fake news and propaganda topics, like “what deep fakes are and who produces them, what the benefits and threats of deep fake technology are, what examples of deep fakes there are, and how to combat deep fakes” (Westerlund 2019, 39-52). Furthermore, some authors claim that although fake news were “recently recognized as a powerful weapon in the modern hybrid warfare” (Monakhov 2020. 1) yet the prospects of artificial intelligence and data analytics are very important, these “can be used to detect words or word patterns that might indicate deceitful stories” (Iasiello 2017, 51-63).

Threats in cyberspace and electronic warfare

Warfare tends to follow the same pattern of development as technology. Advances in information and communication technology and low-cost services have made transition from conventional warfare to hybrid warfare. Old threats specific to conventional warfare, such as nuclear threats, have been gradually replaced or supplemented in hybrid warfare with new types of threats. Cyber threats are new types of threats that “involve the actions by a nation-state or international organization to attack and attempt to damage another nation's computers or information networks” (Kremling et al., 2017. 18).

In the context of hybrid warfare uses of cyber assets as part of it is “one of the most important factors for understanding the future arc of conflict” (Simons et al., 2020. 337-342). This idea is reinforced by the multitude of papers published in the recent years and indexed in ProQuest database. In their academic studies, the authors manifest a major interest in cyber threats and electronic warfare, such as the examining “some intelligent computational methods for big data analysis which are applicable to issues of cyber security and military science” (Kamenov 2018. 255-262), “methodologies, and mechanisms to describe relevant data and knowledge” (Maathuis et al., 2018. 32), “linkages between electronic, cyber and hybrid warfare” (Shalamanov et al. 2020. 269-284), and “the malicious behavior of mobile terminals” (Bărbieru, Șuşnea, and Şuteu 2019. 35-43).

Cyber threats create new opportunities and have the potential to change the playing field on modern battlefield. In this context, the existence of various types of electronic warfare (EW) systems that operate in cyberspace, and use of sophisticated methods for cyber defense are indispensable conditions affecting modern military operations. “These systems and their interactions are so complex that any modern military organization is unlikely to trace the full potential of any single cyber infiltration. The possibility exists for cyber attacks of every type, and the results can be catastrophic.” (Alford 2000. 101)

Drone warfare assets

The development of new smart technologies contributes significantly not only to the replacement of old capabilities with new ones, but also to the adaptation of planning tools at hybrid warfare concept. Military strategy and policy “will likely opt to capitalize on its momentum in producing

more advanced, high-end technology systems ...and developing more effective hybrid warfare CONOPS” (Kasapoğlu 2020, 124). Considering these aspects, it is crystal clear that new emerging technologies are decisive for both military planning and current operations and also may contribute to risk management in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) conditions: “artificial intelligence that can recognize when people entering a hazardous zone are not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment” (Patel, Grace, Chellew, Prodanchuk, Romaniuk, Skrebets, Ryzhenko, Erickson 2020. 2)

Decision making and C2 systems

Some authors have analyzed the topic of emerging technologies from the military decision makers perspective, “how leaders are prepared to serve at the strategic level” (Cormier, 2020. 163) and how they “integrate the big data analytics with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) into C4ISR capabilities ...in times of conflict or crisis” (Poh and Ong 2019 115). Thus, the concept of decision making is analyzed not only from the perspective of decision makers but also from the integration of new technologies in the military decision-making process for increasing the situational awareness by “developing an understanding of the current situation, imagining future military actions ...and establishing comprehensive approaches to achieve the desired end state” (Bălăceanu and Buță 2020, 18).

Critical infrastructure

Critical infrastructure has gained widespread public and private entities attention since September 11, 2001, attacks. These attacks “demonstrated our national level physical vulnerability to the threat posed by a formidable enemy-focused, mass destruction terrorism” (Department of Homeland Security 2003. vii). Protecting critical infrastructure against hybrid threats relies not only on national efforts, but on collective ones as well, engaging governments and the private sector, military and civilian stakeholder communities and international organizations.

In these unprecedented times, portrayed by complex and ambiguous hybrid threats and unprecedented evolution of artificial intelligence, there are authors claim that "critical infrastructures can be used as an instrument of hybrid warfare among weaker states" (Evans 2020. 35-42) and "coordinated information attacks have now become a violent tool for state and non-state actors, through the usage – coordinated information attacks against the strategic center of gravity of the enemy's critical infrastructure - of which, the set strategic objectives can be realized" (Csanád 2018 149-172). It is time “to put high stakes in the development of AI and escort the control of the critical infrastructure to AI.” (Chaudhry et al. 2018, 4865-4866). These initiatives of the authors contribute significantly to the improvement of the security of critical facilities, systems, and functions as modern society become increasingly reliant on those that life-essential services, such as telecommunications, energy, water, transport and distribution, banking and finance, emergency services.

RESULTS

Based on the qualitative analysis of the articles indexed in the ProQuest database, we identified the topic in which each paper. Going further, we performed a quantitative analysis to determine the number of items that address a particular topic. These data are summarized in figure 4. Thus, we find that about 60% of the articles analyzed the topic "threats in cyberspace/electronic warfare" and "fake news/propaganda" and the difference of 40% covers the other 4 topics in the following order: "decision making/C2", "information warfare", "drone warfare assets", and "critical infrastructures".

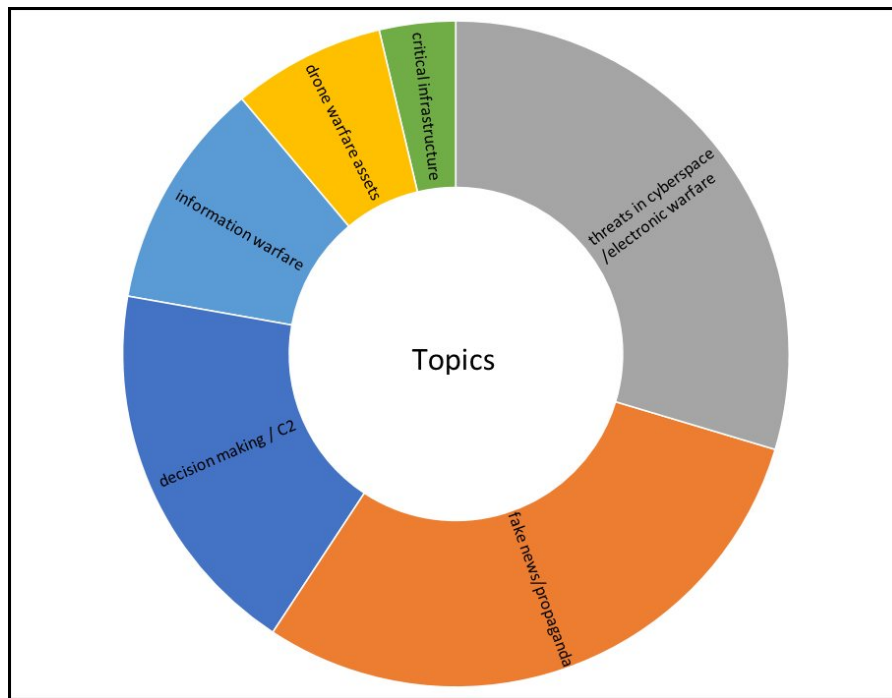


Figure 4. Peer reviewed articles topics

In the coming years, it is expected that artificial intelligence will develop a range of applications exceeding topics as shown above and being capable to develop complex tasks.

CONCLUSIONS

In recent years, the scientific community began focusing on how to use artificial intelligence in the hybrid warfare field. Starting from 2012, the authors have begun to correlate these two fields and moreover they have extended topics to others such as machine learning, data mining, deep learning and artificial neural networks.

From a quantitative perspective, our analysis showed that although there was a great interest in writing about artificial intelligence and hybrid warfare, there was still a reduced number of peer-reviewed papers. Out of a total of 519 papers, only 41 of them were peer reviewed and made the connection between artificial intelligence and hybrid warfare. Moreover, after associating 4 other terms with the concept of hybrid warfare such as machine learning, data mining, deep learning and artificial neural network, the number of peer review papers increased to 55 papers which represent a fairly reduced number considering that our research covered the period between 2012-2020.

To conclude, our paper studies the relationship between “artificial intelligence” and “hybrid warfare” in topics like INFOPS, decision making, ISR, Cyber, critical infrastructure. We discovered that none of the papers searched by the topics “artificial intelligence” and “hybrid warfare” in the ProQuest Database does not analyze hybrid warfare from the hybrid warfare perspective. Moreover, only few of our 55 papers analyzed describe the countermeasures using artificial intelligence against hybrid threats in domain like: Strategic communication (STRATCOM), Cyber Operations, Political adviser (POLAD), Legal adviser (LEGAD), Psychological Operations (PSYOPS), Special Operation Forces (SOF), Civil-military (CIMIC), Civil Affairs (CA), and so on.

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE – AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT IN CREATING A MODERN LEADER

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Abstract

This paper presents, in a concise manner, the importance of emotional intelligence in shaping the profile of the modern leader. Compared to the leader of the last century, the modern leader needs a multitude of skills in the field of emotional intelligence in order to deal with the change and to adapt to the realities of the organizational environment. Aspects such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy are just some of the skills that the modern leader must have, so that he can give consistency to the act of leadership. In this context, motivation is also a basic pillar that builds an effective relationship between the leader and his team. A motivated leader may be able to motivate his team and conduct it on the road to success.

Keywords: leader; emotional intelligence; leadership; organizations.

INTRODUCTION

True leaders are authentic and impress in absolutely every situation in which they act. If we were to try to identify the basis of their efficiency, we will discover strategy, vision, creativity. Moreover, true leaders impress because they always appeal to emotions. The way they act determines their own success and implicitly the success of the teams they lead. No matter how many qualities they have and no matter how skilled they are in the field of activity, if they fail to direct their emotions on the right path, they will certainly not be able to do what they set out to do, to the desired standards.

Over time, leaders were the ones who guided their subordinates, the ones who provided clarity and security, in times of uncertainty or when the subordinates had tasks to solve. In the current period, the architecture of organizations has undergone transformations, and the leader has become an emotional guide, responsible for directing the group's emotions in the positive direction and for eliminating harmful emotions. If the team's emotions converge towards enthusiasm, its members give performance and reach performance standards, while if their anxiety is aroused, their performance will decrease and the goal will not be achieved.

The main pillar in leadership based on emotional intelligence is the leader's use of skills in the field of emotional intelligence, very important in this context being how the leader relates to himself, but also how he relates to his team members. The important tasks of the leader are, on the one hand, to achieve within the team, a comfortable atmosphere, based on trust, and on the other hand to instill enthusiasm and passion in solving all projects. These responsibilities can be easily fulfilled by the leader if he has specific skills of emotional intelligence, such as self-knowledge, social awareness, self-control, relationship management.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is the result of an empirical documentary analysis conducted by studying and analyzing works that address the importance of emotional intelligence in the context of modern leadership. Given that observation is the first method of data collection used, the paper is mainly based on explanatory research, research with the help of which we highlighted the emotional skills that underlie the profile of an efficient leader.

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The approach of some components specific to emotional intelligence, specific to today's leader is the result of an empirical documentary analysis, and the conclusions drawn may be the basis of a new documentary study, much more complex and comprehensive. The empirical research carried out will open new research directions, current, being strongly anchored in the reality of today.

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The Socratic call "Know thyself!" encapsulates in two words the most essential elements of emotional intelligence, highlighting, in fact, the awareness of one's own feelings in the moment they appear inside each one.

Self-knowledge or metacognition, which refers to the awareness of one's own thought processes and meta-disposition, which refers to the awareness of emotions as psychologists describe them, have held the attention over time of many psychologists and psychoanalysts around the world, as extremely interesting processes. Awareness of one's own inner states, one's own emotions is called by some psychoanalysts as the observant self, i.e., self-awareness that allows the analyst to monitor their own reactions to the patient's words and the process of free association that the patient weaves. (Mark 1995)

In this sense, it is important to mention that in the physiological processes that take place, a neocortex is activated in the lingual area, being responsible for identifying the emotions that have occurred. Therefore, the awareness of one's emotions is in close connection with self-observation, in fact, the internal observation is the one that allows the awareness of emotions.

In other words, self-awareness, the element that underlies emotional intelligence, refers to being aware of both the mood in which the individual is and the position and what he thinks about this mood.

Emotional Intelligence Theory (EQ) is a concept often used in psychology, being brought to attention by John Mayer, a psychologist at the University of New Hampshire and Peter Salovey, of Yale University (1990), the term being later deepened by Daniel Goleman, in 1995, through the work of the same name, a concept applied by him in 1998, in the business domain.

According to the postulate of the psychologist John Mayer, self-awareness is a careful reflection on the inner state. This psychologist also believes that the discontinuity between awareness of one's feelings and taking concrete actions to change them should be overcome. So, practically speaking, when one can recognize the existence of inner states, one can act in order to overcome them.

At the same time, Mayer considers that each individual has his own way of controlling his emotions, addressing the following emblematic aspects:

- *self-awareness*: awareness of emotions, when they appear, causes individuals to create an overview of emotional feelings. It is, in fact, about creating a clear image of one's feelings and using intelligence in order to control one's emotions.
- *acceptance*: it is about accepting one's own dispositions that influence their life, without taking any action to change them. In this context, two directions of manifestation can be identified: there are individuals who easily accept the dispositions they have, people are usually well disposed, so they are not interested in changing their disposition, and those who, although they know very well the states they go through, they are interested in the less pleasant states, states that they accept in a passive way, not taking any action in order to change them.
- *closure in one's self*: there are individuals who are very often overwhelmed by the emotions that dominate them and cannot get rid of them, somehow they get controlled by them. These individuals get lost among their own feelings, not being very aware of them, failing to look at them in perspective. They often feel overwhelmed because they cannot control their own emotional states.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN LEADERSHIP

The fact that emotional intelligence is a key component of effective leadership is unanimously accepted by most authors who have conducted research in this area. George points out that leaders with a high level of emotional intelligence have the ability to recognize, evaluate, and manage emotions in such a way that they can work with people and also motivate their subordinates. (George 2000)

Other authors such as Prati, Douglas, Ferris and Ammeter point out that emotional intelligence is "the indispensable element for effective team interaction but also for increased productivity" and at the same time "team efficiency is determined by the level of emotional intelligence of the team leader." Its role is to motivate the actions of the team and to facilitate the connections between the team members. Also, the truly effective leader "influences the team in a transformative way". (Prati, et al. 2003)

American psychologist Daniel Goleman, an iconic figure in the field of emotional intelligence, found that many of the qualities associated with the leadership phenomenon such as intelligence, toughness, determination, and vision - are necessary for success, but are not enough. To achieve efficiency, truly effective leaders need more than these traits, they must be distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence. In this sense, the emotional intelligence of leaders includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, but also social skills. Listing traits can create a seemingly superficial picture, but Daniel Goleman has identified direct connections between emotional intelligence and business results.

It is true that the relevance of emotional intelligence for business has provoked a lot of debate, Daniel Goleman being the reference author on this topic, describing each component of emotional intelligence, generating detailed discussions on how to recognize potential leaders, how and why to performance and how it can be learned.

It is obvious that, along with emotional intelligence, both cognitive intelligence and technical skills are important, but emotional intelligence is the *sine qua non* of leadership. Without it, a person can be extremely skilled, analytical, and intelligent, but he cannot meet the conditions to become a true leader.

Within organizations, leaders come first, with multiple responsibilities. In addition to responsibilities related to the smooth running of work tasks, leaders have a major responsibility in terms of the emotional dimension. The leader is, since ancient times, the person who provides all members of the group with security, trust, empathy. Going through many decades in history and reaching the organizations of today, things have not changed a lot. The leader is still the main person responsible for managing the team's emotions, being in fact the one who directs the positive collective emotions in the right direction and eliminates the negative emotions that can have a toxic effect on members of an organization.

How do leaders use their emotional intelligence? How important is emotional intelligence in the leadership context? We have in mind two important questions whose answers have opened the horizon of long discussions.

Success in leadership encompasses three essential elements: **self-leadership, leadership of others, but also leadership of the organization.**

In terms of self-leadership, successful leaders are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and are able to continually improve themselves. Awareness of one's own qualities and one's own shortcomings, together with a full self-knowledge of one's own strengths are the first steps in terms of opportunities for development and improvement.

Leaders who do not possess self-knowledge, do not learn from their own mistakes, do not empower their subordinates and do not delegate responsibilities, are leaders who have great chances to fail in the leadership process.

Without awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses, it is virtually impossible for leaders to evolve, to develop new skills, to use their skills constructively. In this context, motivation plays an important role. Setting clear goals, while setting high standards, are the first stones in building the road to leadership success. Of course, there are obstacles along this path, but they must be seen as elements that can be overcome, as challenges that will always have a solution.

Self-regulation is also essential in managing all emotions in the leadership process. Very often, leadership means the ability to withstand pressure, to stay calm, to be in control of the situation. Self-leadership encompasses all these elements that any leader must consider.

Regarding the leadership of others, it is obvious that a particularly important role is played by subordinates. In this context, team motivation is one of the important responsibilities of the leader. An effective leader must, in the first instance, be a sufficiently motivated leader who is able to motivate his subordinates as well. The process of motivating subordinates is extremely important, leaders being responsible for developing their motivation. This requires, first, that leaders know the elements that underlie the motivation of subordinates, but also the connection between the motivations of subordinates and the purpose of the organization.

At the same time, leaders must be extremely adaptable and flexible, because team members have different needs, have their own feelings and feelings that often require empathy from the leader.

In this context, social awareness and empathy play an important role in leading teams. Empathy is the core competence of social consciousness that helps leaders connect to people's emotional ensembles. Empathy involves understanding the feelings of employees, but also making decisions that consider the feelings of others. As mentioned above, self-control is an element twinned with empathy, in terms of self-control involves the externalization of emotions in a limited way, in no case inhibiting them.

The last aspect that completes the picture of emotional intelligence in leadership is leadership at the organizational level. The mixture of self-knowledge, self-control and empathy is present in the ultimate ability of emotional intelligence. Managing team members' emotions is closely related to the leader's potential to manage relationships with them. This is possible if leaders become aware of their own emotions and manage to interact empathetically with subordinates.

The main purpose of all leaders' efforts to manage relationships properly, to guide the steps in the right direction, whether it is the question of agreement on a strategy, or openness to daily responsibilities. For this reason, leaders with social skills relate to people from a wide range and can identify commonalities and to build relationships.

The way leaders manage relationships with others, the way they put into practice the art of social interaction, reflects the level of emotional intelligence they possess.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN APPLYING THE COUNSELLOR'S STYLE

All coordinated activities carried out by the leaders highlight the leadership styles adopted by them. Effective leaders act based on one of the leadership approaches, and depending on the context, use different leadership styles. Leadership styles based on emotional intelligence are visionary style, counsellor, collegiale, democratic, promoter, dominator. (Goleman 2007)

No.	Leadership style	Influence on the climate	Implementation
1.	Visionary	This leadership style has a necessary influence on the organizational climate.	It is recommended to be implemented when a new vision and a change within the organization is needed.
2.	Counsellor	This leadership style has a positive influence on the organizational climate.	It is recommended to be implemented when followers need guidance in using their skills.
3.	Collegiale	This leadership style has a positive influence on the organizational climate.	It is recommended to be implemented when followers need motivation, or if they need to strengthen communication within the team.
4.	Democratic	This leadership style has a positive influence on the organizational climate.	Implementation is recommended when the leader needs the group's involvement in decision making.

No.	Leadership style	Influence on the climate	Implementation
5.	Promoter	If it is not implemented properly, it can have a negative impact on the organizational climate.	It is recommended to be implemented if the team members are competent and if they do not need many support points.
6.	Dominator	This leadership style can have a negative impact on the organizational climate if it is used for a long time.	It is recommended to be used when it is necessary to implement a change in the organization.

How important is emotional intelligence in applying the counsellor's style?

The responsibility of the counsellor leader in terms of subordinates is to support them in identifying their own strengths and weaknesses, while making a connection between them and their own professional and personal aspirations. The counsellor leader is the one who stimulates subordinates to set long-term goals, causing them to outline a plan to achieve them. Usually, when it comes to work, people prefer to select the elements that are related to their aspirations, ideals, and desires. Outlining a close connection between long-term goals and the daily tasks of subordinates is one of the motivational strategies of counsel leaders. However, the implementation of this motivational strategy implies that the leader must know his subordinates very well.

The counsellor leader acts as a trainer, knowing all the goals and qualities of his subordinates, supports them to shape and amplify their skills. The portrait of the counsellor leader focuses on two fundamental traits: self-knowledge and empathy, traits that give that much-needed authenticity to the leader.

Knowing his own emotions and feelings determines the leader to be permanently connected to internal signals, an extremely important element in the leadership context. A leader who possesses a poor self-knowledge, has difficulty in controlling his emotions, in establishing constructive relationships with subordinates. Moreover, empathy plays a key role in the leader-subordinate relationship and in the whole leadership process. Deep self-knowledge helps the leader to transpose into the position of the subordinate, being the initial condition from which empathy emerges.

The counsellor leader knows very well the potential of his subordinates, shows confidence in them and encourages them to do things in the best possible way. Because of these things, people are aware that the leader invests them with confidence and they always feel responsible for what he accomplishes.

CONCLUSIONS

In today's organizations, one of the essential tasks of leadership is the emotional one that materializes by directing the emotions of all members in a positive direction and eliminating any toxic emotions that may affect their evolution. This task belongs to the leaders, regardless of the level on which they are. If the team's emotions are channelled to exaltation, its members will be able to perform; in the context in which they are treated with indifference, they will no longer yield, the whole organization being affected.

The profile of the contemporary leader has an indispensable component, emotional intelligence, which greatly influences his efficiency in the leadership process. Emotional intelligence is the basic ingredient that provides the skills and abilities necessary to achieve an effective leadership act. All these skills can be developed through appropriate training, through intense efforts aimed at shaping and cultivating them.

A leader at the helm of an organization is even more effective as he has a wide range of skills springing from his emotional intelligence. An empathic leader, with a deep self-knowledge, with a high capacity for self-control, can manage complex leadership situations, can easily imprint change in the organization. Moreover, such a leader uses his emotional skills to direct the organization to change.

Resonant leaders are flexible and constantly adapt to both the situations they face and their subordinates. They do not mechanically correlate leadership styles with situations but are much deeper. They analyse individuals, observing the signs that indicate the leadership style they can

approach and calibrate them to their needs and characteristics. Therefore, they can apply the six leadership styles, adapted to the nature of the group they must lead.

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF MODERN MILITARY LEADERSHIP IN IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

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Abstract

This article presents the main types of modern leadership and the possibilities to use them in the context of sustainable development. Furthermore, the article highlights the important contribution that military leaders may play in implementing the sustainability of the military organization and the society of which it is part, through the combined use of appropriate leadership styles and of the most needed qualities that leaders should possess.

Keywords: modern; leadership; military; sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is a desideratum through which humanity pursues stable economic growth, based on the long-term achievement of a set of objectives that lead to the efficiency of resource consumption, so that they are available to future generations and avoid conflict situations generated by their lack. Thus, there is a two-way causal relationship between the manner resources are managed, the level of development and the state of security. Additionally, the permanence of the availability of resources ensures a stable state of peace, which in turn generates sustainable economic growth.

As a result of industrialization, globalization and excessive consumption of natural resources that affect the environment and the quality of human life, the solution of sustainable development is generally accepted as a permanent goal, as a basic guarantor of global security. The multitude of actors that interact worldwide and that are engaged in the race to gain a competitive advantage can be, at the same time, an imminent source of instability. In this context, it is easy to understand the importance of unifying and coordinating efforts under the umbrella of a higher forum.

The irresponsible consumption of natural resources was signaled in 1972, when the United Nations took the lead in solving economic, social and environmental problems in the field of sustainable development, organizing diplomatic conferences, adopting declarations, developing plans and other documents that represent the framework for the collective effort to eliminate development disparities between regions and communities. It was therefore necessary to have a guiding organization, which clearly formulated the problem and which set objectives and time horizons for their achievement by all those who adhere to the spirit of this initiative.

Subsequently, the measures were detailed and adapted to lower and lower levels. Organizations such as European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization have played a dual role, both executive, in implementing the global level goals, but also monitoring the implementation of objectives at Member State level. As a result, each state has developed national strategies and policies to support and respond to initiatives adopted at the international level, a major role in implementing the established measures being assigned to the national institutions.

This hierarchy occurred in the context of many problems raised at the lowest levels, but the complexity of reaching sustainable development requires integrated efforts. It is expected that the

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overall change be possible through specific transformations and measures taken by each organization, sector of activity and individual.

The emphasis is placed on the visionary and integrative role of leadership and not on management, the latter being more oriented towards planning, organizing and controlling the way activities are carried out (Vujic, Danijela, Novakovic, Srdan, Maksimovik, Mladan, and Karabasevic, Darjan 2019, 118)

Taking into account the fact that any change generates resistance, it is necessary to involve leaders to complete the work of managers and reorient their will and subordinates towards meeting additional objectives, the results of which are not immediately visible, but which provide common long-term benefits. What is more, the military organization must be involved in solving the security threats posed by the irresponsible management of resources, both by focusing on the sustainable position of the society of which it belongs and by decoupling from its insufficient resources. This contribution will have to be based on clear directions in order to implement the needed transformations and modernizations, these being achievable only with the support of military leaders at all levels.

The issue of sustainable development is widely debated in terms of economic, social, environmental, and transdisciplinary pillars, but less in relation to the military domain. Also, the role of leadership is analyzed from many points of view, in many areas, including the military, where the need to shape behaviors and attitudes is acutely felt especially during exceptional situations (mobilization, war, etc.). Nevertheless, the role of modern military leadership in achieving the goals of sustainable development is a less debated issue.

The purpose of this article is to identify ways in which modern military leadership can contribute to making changes specific to achieving sustainability. At the same time, through this article I intend to capture the attention of the decision makers, regarding the main types of modern military leadership that can be adopted and the qualities needed by military leaders to implement the objectives of sustainable development.

The third section of the article contains three subsections. The first subsection focuses on the main types of modern leadership, adapted to the current context in which society evolves. The second part aims to analyze the extent to which the types of modern leadership presented in the first subsection can be adopted in order to meet the objectives of sustainable development. At the same time, this part aims to identify some types of modern leadership specific to sustainable development. The last subsection is dedicated to presenting the role of modern military leadership in achieving sustainability.

METHODOLOGY

The research method applied in elaborating this article is the literature-review. In order to evaluate the trends within the research topic, I analyzed relevant documents available on-line, which constitute primary, secondary and tertiary sources. The article focuses on the critique analysis of relatively recent studies and initiatives concerning the role of modern (military) leadership in implementing the objectives of sustainable development. Deductive reasoning was used in order to identify the specific contribution that military leadership could have in solving the problems related to sustainable development.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MODERN LEADERSHIP TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The term "modern" is a relative one, being closely related to the specifics of society and the new trends that emerge at a certain moment. Today's modern society is undergoing an extensive process of change, the place of industrialization being taken by the knowledge-based economy (Vujic, Danijela, Novakovic, Srdan, Maksimovik, Mladan, and Karabasevic, Darjan 2019, 117). Moreover, studies show that there are significant differences between generations, and the issue of sustainable development is one that has concerned and will attract the attention of several generations, given its magnitude and the expected benefits. For example, taking into account the different generations that coexisted in 2019 (the "Baby Boomers" generation, which included individuals between the ages of 54

and 71, the "X" generation, which included people between the ages of 37 and 53, and the "Millennials" generation, which covered the age segment between 19 and 36-year-olds), it was demonstrated that there was a clear difference in the way problems were tackled, regardless of their nature, including those related to leadership (Faller, Marcia and Gogek, Jim 2019, 131).

According to a survey conducted in the medical field, the representatives of the youngest generation want their leaders to care about them and their career development and want to be led by reliable leaders, with successful results in their work (Faller, Marcia and Gogek, Jim 2019, 139). It is possible that this trend manifest in other sectors of activity, but it is necessary that the generalization be made on the basis of detailed studies.

On behalf of leaders, this process involves the exercise of a certain set of qualities and an adaptation of currently adopted practices to meet the demanding requirements, without giving up good practices adopted in the past, an idea supported by a study showing that the values on which leadership exist are always relevant, but they acquire new approaches (Ahn, Mark J. and Ettner, Larry W. 2014, 1). In the context of sustainable development, it is necessary to apply on one hand, the typologies that function and have been implemented in other circumstances in the past, and on the other hand, the types specific to sustainability, adapted to the evolution of society.

MODERN TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

When changes concern important areas of human action, such as sustainable development (economic, social, environmental) (United Nations 2002, 2), the state in general, and public administration, in particular, must identify the most appropriate measures and intervene to support citizens. Characterized by an increased degree of bureaucracy, pronounced territorial dispersion and reluctance towards the proposed leadership solutions, public administration offers the government the possibility to solve the problems of the communities served, especially through managers.

A study conducted in 2013 showed that although the role of leadership in public administration could not be denied, it had not received the proper attention from researchers' side (Kellis, Dana S. and Ran, Bing 2013, 131). The study also highlighted the importance of implementing leadership solutions in the public sphere, empirically analyzing, through a three-year survey, three factors to consider when laying the foundations of public leadership: core democratic values which must be respected by public domain leaders, staff development and retention on professional performance criteria, and diversity of public domain functions (Kellis, Dana S. and Ran, Bing 2013, 131).

These factors support the theory of public leadership, while the differentiation from private leadership is given by the relationships within and between public organizations, the increased level of complexity and the specificity of the rules and regulations to be observed. According to the authors, the combination of these elements will bring the possibility that managers in the public sphere be guided to achieve results specific to authentic leaders, who emphasize creativity, deep understanding and integrity, thus attracting executors in the desired direction. The study concludes that a modern approach to public sector leadership is needed, as the traditional typology is no longer sufficient when this side of human activities faces complex challenges (Kellis, Dana S. and Ran, Bing 2013, 138).

The evolution of leadership models starts from transactional leadership, based on simple and static ideas, and reaches transformational leadership, which uses complex and dynamic solutions (Torpman, Jan 2004, 892).

Although transactional leadership is a traditional form of leadership, it still has applicability and positive results, based on a relationship between leaders and executors that involves a permanent exchange between the needs of the leader and the achievements of executors, the latter being supported, appreciated, evaluated, and promoted on the basis of their performance.

Applied since the 1980s (Torpman, Jan 2004, 895), transformational leadership remains relevant through the effects it is expected to produce in both private and public spheres (Kellis, Dana S. and Ran, Bing 2013, 132), differentiating from traditional leadership in that executors act decisively in pursuing goals, without expecting personal or professional benefits. The members of the organization identify with the organization they belong to, so that their membership in that

organization is a value in itself (Torpman, Jan 2004, 893), fact that, in my opinion, represents the most important achievement leadership should obtain.

By adopting transformational leadership, performers are directed towards the great vision of the leader and encouraged about their ability to fulfil it. They are intellectually stimulated to be creative and to overcome traditional barriers to solving tasks. Moreover, transformational leadership ensures the mentoring of executors in accordance with each one's needs and is based on a good knowledge of them. On the other hand, performers identify so much with the organization they belong to that a possible criticism of its performance is perceived by them as a criticism of themselves.

As a result, problems may arise in the decision-making process when organizational decisions include personal considerations. That is why the solution of transformational leadership is called into question. Thus, the most important problems are related to the situation in which executors act without the support of the organization, or when the reduced definition of organizational expectations translates into a low level of guidance of the executors towards the fulfillment of the organizational objectives (Torpman, Jan 2004, 899). Therefore, it is very important that the distinction between the goals of the organization and the personal goals of leaders is not lost during the decision-making process.

Regarding the two types of leadership presented above, a study conducted between January and February 2016, demonstrated through descriptive, exploratory, conclusive and causal methods that the transformational side of leaders has a greater impact than the transactional one (Samanta, Irene and Lamprakis, Athanasios 2018, 179-180).

Apart from transformational and transactional leadership, that, as the analyzed studies show, are widely used as the main solutions for modern leadership, there are also other forms of modern leadership. Another example of modern leadership is the "laissez-faire" type, in which leaders detach from the organization's objectives, do not intervene in the work of executors, who have maximum freedom in how to achieve the proposed goals. It is considered to be an example of modern leadership, precisely because of the breadth given to managers, but, in my opinion, it is not suitable for large-scale changes, which involve fulfilment within certain time limits.

These three forms of leadership (transactional, transformational, laissez-faire) form a modern model of leadership, namely the multifactor leadership, as shown by a study based on empirical methods (Samanta, Irene and Lamprakis, Athanasios 2018, 173). Within this type of leadership, the same study states that, compared to its other two components, the laissez-faire leadership is the negative part of multifactor leadership.

The approach of analyzing the studies conducted on modern leadership models continues with distributed leadership, in which individuals, teams, organizations influence the environment in which they act, without assuming the succession of individuals at the role of leader (Kellis, Dana S. and Ran, Bing 2013, 133). In other words, everyone can contribute to achieving the established goals. In my opinion, it could be used in conjunction with other modern forms of leadership, for instance, the transformational leadership, to maximize efforts to achieve goals, when each individual contributes to the overall change.

Regarding the individual, two modern forms of leadership can successfully contribute to attaining sustainable development goals: "self" leadership and "empowering" leadership, both based on increasing the role of performers in the process of completing tasks (Nientied, Peter and Toska, Merita 2021, 36). Subject to a wide range of challenges, the environment in which organizations evolve requires adaptability and flexibility. As a result, one of the tasks leaders are involved in is to guide lower-level leaders and executors to lead, manage and motivate themselves (Nientied, Peter and Toska, Merita 2021, 36). Recent studies show that current organizations are annoyed by bureaucracy, requiring resilient and bold organizations that can solve in their own way new types of threats, such as the one generated by COVID-19 pandemic, when many employees experienced work from home (Müller, T., Niessen, C. 2019, 892-893).

Regarding the self-leadership, I believe that it is absolutely necessary in any context and that it must accompany each individual in everything he/she undertakes. Although most publications focus on presenting leadership as a process of influencing others, the idea of leadership through self-

influence and self-motivation when tasks are unattractive dates back to the 1980s, and is often adopted in Western countries, where employees have a positive attitude towards working (Nientied, Peter and Toska, Merita 2021, 37).

Related to self-leadership, a large study published in 2005, based on intercultural and transdisciplinary studies and data from previous research, shows the importance of an integrative approach to achieving the goals of sustainable development. The study also highlights that the benefits offered by sustainable development can be accessed through the prism of the intrinsic beliefs and motivation of each individual, who will voluntarily seek to implement specific changes (Brown 2005, 3).

On the other hand, "empowering" leadership does not exclude the influence that leaders could exercise from outside on performers, but involves a distribution of power, so that individuals are guided, motivated and supported to meet the objectives of the organization (Nientied, Peter and Toska, Merita 2021, 38).

Therefore, there is a wide range of types of leadership that can be used in both private and public spheres, depending on the situations that characterize organizations and their objectives at a given time. The high level of ambition the organizations that want to implement sustainable development goals have, the expected and beneficial results for all members of the organization and those outside it, evolving in the same environment, and the changes to be implemented require the adoption of the most appropriate forms of modern leadership.

TYPES OF MODERN LEADERSHIP, SUITABLE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The purpose of this subsection is to analyze how the types of modern leadership presented in the previous section are suitable for use in meeting the specific objectives of sustainable development and, at the same time, to identify new types of leadership specific to sustainable development.

The topicality of the issue regarding the role of leadership in achieving sustainable development is also given by the fact that the seventeen objectives and subsequent targets set in 2015 have not yet been completely met (United Nation 2015, 16-31). The effort needs to be channeled and leadership has to adopt the most appropriate models to be put into practice out of conviction, not through coercion.

Analyzing the solutions offered by transactional leadership, I came to the conclusion that it could be used to achieve sustainable development goals, in a certain context and to a certain extent. It is particularly important that executors and managers understand the benefits that humanity and future generations will have by achieving sustainability. In this sense, the transactional leadership could be used by leaders when presenting the implications of sustainable development to the executors, the role each of them has and the expected positive effects. In other words, it is about the exchange between the involvement of employees in achieving the sustainability of the organization, and the "rewards" received, both from leaders and through the positive effects obtained on the line of sustainable development.

Regarding the transformational leadership, I believe that it is the most suitable for achieving sustainable development, but analyzes in this regard need to be carried out. To pursue the achievement of sustainable development goals, "The World in 2050" initiative was considered the framework for identifying six major directions of transformation, namely: (1) education, gender perspective and reducing inequalities; (2) health, decent living and population growth; (3) energy decarbonisation and sustainable industrialization; (4) sustainable food, terrestrial, aquatic and oceanographic environment; (5) sustainable cities and communities; (6) the digital revolution (Sachs, Jeffrey D., Schimdt-Traub, Guido, Mazzucato, Mariana, Messner, Dirk, Nakicenovic, Nebojsa, and Rockstrom, Johan 2019, 1). These things taken into account, it is easily to understand that the need to implement transformations is not something that has to be demonstrated; on the contrary, profound changes are needed, so key interventions from leaders and modern approaches, adapted to reality, such as those in the field of transformational leadership, are needed.

The usefulness of transformational leadership from the sustainable development perspective was demonstrated in a study that focused on Nigeria, a country that, due to the lack of leadership involvement, has a high degree of corruption in government institutions, inefficiently manages resources and reduced development funds (Gberevbie, Daniel, Joshua, Segun, Excellence-Oluye, Nchekwube, and Oyeyemi, Adeola 2017, 8). To demonstrate the crucial role of transformational leadership in solving the problem of sustainable development, the author of the study used the historical method.

From 27 to 28 October 2020, the United Nations organized a conference on global leadership in Geneva, aimed at addressing major issues, including those in the field of sustainable development. The main goal was to find ways to accelerate the transformational process, bringing to the fore the role of transformational leadership in achieving goals related to "peace and disarmament, global governance and human rights, economy and environment, business and finance, the application of science and technology for achieving social progress, education and decent living" (Jacobs, Garry, Kiniger-Passigli, Donato, Henderson, Hazel, and Ramanathan, Janani 2020, 6). One of the resulting ideas was that "formulating the 17 goals of sustainable development and the 169 targets is an unprecedented example of the transition from evolution to conscious social transformation" (Jacobs, Garry, Kiniger-Passigli, Donato, Henderson, Hazel, and Ramanathan, Janani 2020, 39), which should rely on the contribution of leaders connected to global issues, with a transdisciplinary vision, expected to act as vectors of the necessary transformations.

In this context, the idea that time is important and there is no room for delays is confirmed. Thus, although the "laissez-faire" leadership is considered modern, my view is that it should not be used to achieve the goals of sustainable development, as it could unnecessarily prolong the period allocated to their implementation. Moreover, the impact of the irresponsible consumption of natural resources, its effects on the economy, the environment and society represent a big concern, therefore the solution of this problem does not support postponement. It has been almost fifty years since the need for sustainability was signaled, and it can only be achieved through the use of active types of modern leadership.

Regarding the distributed leadership, my opinion is that it is of major importance in achieving sustainable development. In this issue, the role of initiating leader was assumed by the United Nations, but the distribution of responsibilities to organizations such as European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization was also an important step. In turn, they transferred responsibilities to Member States and institutions involved and, ultimately, each organization, each individual will make a contribution to achieving the goals of sustainable development.

Organizations will need to adopt empowering leadership to give leaders the strength to step through the stages of their plans, and individuals will be able to adopt self-leadership to mobilize when dealing with the major change challenges.

The literature on sustainable development also addresses an organizational type of self-leadership, in which the emphasis is put on the role of organizational culture (Brown 2005, 3). The idea is that by orienting the behavior of each individual towards achieving sustainability, the formation of a common behavior at the organizational level is favored, which, over time, turns into organizational culture.

Of all the forms of modern leadership presented in the previous subsection, only the "laissez-faire" type is not recommended to be associated with sustainable development, the others can be used in different combinations and contexts, so as to obtain maximum efficiency.

Continuing the analysis of relevant studies, I have identified other types of modern leadership that can be successfully used in meeting the objectives of sustainable development. One of these is sustainable leadership, which is considered the link between leadership and sustainable development (Vujic, Danijela, Novakovic, Srdan, Maksimovik, Mladan, and Karabasevic, Darjan 2019, 119).

A 2003 study showed that sustainable leadership matters, spreads and lasts. It is a collective responsibility that does not unduly deplete human and financial resources, which it cares about and which avoids the destruction of educational and environmental environment (Vujic, Danijela, Novakovic, Srdan, Maksimovik, Mladan, and Karabasevic, Darjan 2019, 119). The same study

presents seven principles underlying sustainable leadership, namely: 1) detailing; 2) resistance; 3) width / coverage; 4) justice / fairness; 5) diversity; 6) ingenuity and 7) conservation (Vujic, Danijela, Novakovic, Srdan, Maksimovic, Mladan, and Karabasevic, Darjan 2019, 119).

To establish the role of sustainable leadership in achieving sustainable development goals, a 2019 study, based on a sociological survey using the interview procedure, concludes that, statistically, there is a significant link between employee accountability and their leadership support, in order to achieve the goals of sustainable development (Vujic, Danijela, Novakovic, Srdan, Maksimovic, Mladan, and Karabasevic, Darjan 2019, 124). Basically, not knowing the concept of sustainability in detail, giving up when the first difficulties arise, lacking of overview, creativity, conservation and integrity, are lines of unsustainable leadership, which inevitably leads to failure to achieve sustainable development goals.

THE ROLE OF MILITARY MODERN LEADERSHIP IN ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The military organization has a certain specificity through the prism of the hierarchical organization, through the existence of a deeply rooted organizational culture, the emphasis on norms and rules, and especially through the assigned mission (to defense).

The specificity of the mission made leadership concerns manifest in the context of combat situations. As a result, the importance of military leadership has often been stressed in connection with a military's ability to persuade colleagues or subordinates to engage voluntarily in mission accomplishment.

In terms of modern military leadership, principles that have always been implemented by leaders who led people on the battlefields received a new breath, specific to recent situations. A suggestive example is given by a 2018 article that describes in a simple and uplifting way twelve principles of modern military leadership: personal example, self-confidence, moral courage, physical courage, teamwork, physical training and energy, aggression and boldness, care for subordinates, lessons learned, decision-making power, determination and strong character. (Roberts, Ron 2018, 1-8). In general, these can be considered attitudes that can ensure military leaders career advancement and fulfilment of leadership functions at the highest possible level, from where they can intervene in the process of transformation and modernization of the military organization.

The link between this organization and the perspective of sustainable development is defined by the connection between state of peace, security environment, limited nature of natural resources and conflicts that may arise due to the irresponsible management of resources. Military structures are generally located in localities, influence the development of communities and are dependent on resources. They also have a significant impact on environment, in particular through activities performed during exercises and applications, but also through current activities. In the context of sustainable development, everyone's contribution matters and is reflected from the lowest level to the global one.

The idea mentioned above is supported by the results of a social survey conducted in Poland on the connections between military structures and local communities in the context of sustainable development. They show that military units have a major role in regional development, by contributing to the diversification of the local labor market, introducing new residents in the disposal area, instilling patriotic feelings among young people as a result of cooperation with local governmental and non-governmental organizations, influencing the real estate market, through renting and purchasing housing by the military and supporting local authorities (Sirko, Stanislaw, Kozuba, Jaroslaw, and Piotrowska-Trybull, Marzena 2019, 9). The economic and social impact should not be ignored. Therefore, the military organization must contribute to the effort to achieve sustainable development and benefit from the support of communities, or even be an example for them.

The visibility of the military organization and its appreciation by civil society is manifested especially during exceptional situations, but it is necessary for it to benefit from the support of the civilian population and to demonstrate the legitimacy of its actions in any situation. As a consequence, the alleged stay of the military organization in an oasis of unsustainability could have unfavorable

consequences in the future. In order for the transformation and orientation towards sustainability to take place in the military environment as well, adaptive leadership is needed.

Throughout their careers, the military personnel have to deal with a wide variety of tasks and missions, and it is important that they are constantly connected to the events in society. Continuously pursuing knowledge and adaptation to the dynamics of the environment in which they evolve, commanders must find the balance between leadership styles that encourage autonomy and control, individual and team work, stimulate flexibility and efficiency, creativity and discipline, analyze new trends in terms of opportunity, the costs involved and the benefits obtained, and to encourage their subordinates to go beyond their limits, but at the same time to be socially responsible (Kark, Ronit, Karazi-Presler, Tair, and Tubi, Sarit 2016, 160).

A study conducted through qualitative research, which was based on "in-depth" (semi-structured) interviews with military specialists in the Israeli army, showed that modern military leadership must include several styles of leadership, depending on the situation, the multi-domain approach being necessary in conditions of the current society (Kark, Ronit, Karazi-Presler, Tair, and Tubi, Sarit 2016, 164-183). According to this study, a single style of leadership is not efficient.

In relation to sustainable development, both the involvement of strategic level leadership, for understanding, promoting and imposing sustainable solutions (transformational and transactional leadership), and the contribution of leaders at lower levels, to achieve the sustainable development objectives and targets are needed.

Furthermore, implementing and instilling a culture of sustainability of each member of the led structure (distributed leadership) are of utmost importance. Also, the other modern types of leadership presented above (self-leadership, empowering leadership) could have a valuable contribution. However, sustainable leadership must accompany any other form of leadership.

What is more, when it comes to implementing major changes such as sustainability, informal leaders have an important role to play in channeling the efforts of those around them, and can make a significant contribution to the performance of the military organization.

There is also a need for a comprehensive integrated approach, involving structures from all categories of forces (ground, air, naval), military of all specializations and from different hierarchical levels, but also for a liaison with governmental and non-governmental organizations. Creativity and flexibility are important for identifying the adoption of the most effective solutions that lead to sustainability of the military organization, without sacrificing discipline or moving away from the basic mission of the structure. In fact, underpinning the adoption of sustainable solutions, such as the use of alternative energy sources, should be constructed on feasibility studies that demonstrate their efficiency and unrestricted freedom of action.

Taking into consideration the fact that one of the objectives of the sustainable development is the implementation of gender equality, and there have been concerns in establishing the opportunity to use male or female military leadership, the involvement of women in the military organization in reducing gender inequalities in this predominantly male organization is expected to give results, especially through the "soft" side of the power they can exercise.

Another goal of sustainable development that can be achieved with the involvement of military leaders refers to education quality. The military organization includes educational institutions, which provide the necessary human resources. Orienting leaders at the strategic level and at the level of educational structures towards increasing the quality of education must be a permanent concern. Thus, it is important that military students benefit from educational programs adapted to their educational background, the needs of the employer and the requirements of interoperability with the armies of the states in the alliances and coalitions of which their country is part.

Moreover, the continuous training of teachers, their participation in courses and exchanges of experience in similar foreign and national institutions in civil society, will ensure the conditions for obtaining a high level of education quality. In order for the results to meet expectations, pupils and students must show early self-leadership, to sustain the effort of continuous learning and improvement, which will ensure the possibility of career development.

Modern military leadership can also make its mark on other sustainable development goals. Actions such as stimulating defense industry in general, and domestic defense industry in particular, will provide military structures with the necessary equipment during exceptional situations. Strategic leadership has in this case a significant role, by requesting large-scale studies to indicate the current trend of the security environment, and short, medium and long-term forecasts, as well as by making informed decisions, through a comprehensive approach.

Enhanced partnerships, efficient consumption of resources, reduced footprint upon environment, are other main directions in which modern military leadership can act to achieve the sustainability of the military organization and the society in which it evolves. The extensive process of transformation and modernization must also take into account the funds available for their implementation and the availability of other types of resources, such as human and material.

In addition to the mentioned leadership styles, the military leader must, like any other leader, have certain qualities that ensure continuity and determination in the steps taken on the line of change.

The results of a study using the method of thematic analysis show that implementing change requires eight qualities of the leader (integrity, correct thinking, personal example, decision-making ability, trust, fairness, humility and a sense of urgency), of which integrity is the most important for achieving the sustainability of a successful organization (Vujic, Danijela, Novakovic, Srdan, Maksimovik, Mladan, and Karabasevic, Darjan 2019, 117).

Last, but not least, another study, based on in-depth interviews, revealed the qualities that higher-level military leaders must possess in order to adapt the military organization to changes in society, which are related to: (1) background (experience gained, a good understanding of the organization, reputation gained), (2) characteristics of the organizational environment (high performance at a fast pace, work under pressure / stress from superiors, competition for career development, duration of the position rotation cycle), (3) capacity to assess the context and (4) organizational strength (organizational flexibility, formal and informal processes and balance between them, efficient management of one's emotions, good relationship with others), all brought together under the concept of "smooth power" (Ohlsson, Alicia, Alvinus, Aida, and Larsson, Gerry 2020, 5-9).

CONCLUSIONS

Although at first glance one could think that within the military organization there is no room for creativity, initiative, vision, interdisciplinarity and concern for the external environment, this is not the case. In my opinion, the military organization has reached a high level of receptivity to the transformations that occur in society, but there is always room for improvement. Modern military leadership must follow the directions of modern public leadership, without excluding approaches specific to the private environment and those in the field of sustainability. Organizational inertia, resistance to change, ignorance of the societal trends are approaches that will not promote the implementation of sustainable development goals.

This article presented the main types of modern leadership, the possibilities of using them in the context of sustainable development and the role that military leaders can play in achieving the sustainability of the military organization and the society, through the combined use of appropriate leadership styles and qualities.

Two main ideas can be derived from the mentioned studies. First, the diversity of sustainable development goals and missions in which the military is involved requires the adoption of several types of leadership, so that the military organization adapts to changes in the civilian environment and represents a good example of sustainability. Second, strategic military leaders have an important role in initiating and shaping the process of organizational change, especially through the qualities they have, the orientation towards achieving the objectives of sustainable development being very much related to their involvement and commitment.

Further research is needed to establish the steps and procedures that military leadership should follow in order to implement the goals of sustainable development.

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NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN EUROPEAN FUNDS MULTIPLIER ROLE AND POSSIBILITIES OF MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROCESS

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Abstract

This paper aims at expressing the manner in which the Ministry of National Defence (MoND) can benefit from direct support, efficient and significant financial support for the implementation of sustainable reforms and public investments, as provided in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). The situation triggered by COVID-19 brings about new awareness in Romania and among all the EU member states, through the economic-financial crisis, jobs crisis, health, education, research, innovation and digitalization crisis, which has an impact on the drop of revenues both at European and international level. We must agree that such pandemics should find us prepared and that the investments should be planned well beforehand, similarly to the creation of an army. The defence of a state requires costs, and the financial support allocated to the defence sector is visible in the results of the foreign and economic policy of Romania. From this perspective, the MoND has prepared a series of proposals included in a number of reforms and investments documents. Such reforms and investments are absolutely necessary to Romania and represent essential contributions to the NRRP.

Keywords: recovery and resilience facility; reform; investments; European funds.

INTRODUCTION

The world is constantly changing, and the crisis triggered by COVID-19 has modified the economic, social and budgetary perspectives and led the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Union (EU) leaders to agree on a Recovery and Resilience Plan, to support and help also our country lead the way out of the crisis and lay the foundations for a modern and sustainable Europe, as to contribute to the repair of the economic and social damages caused by COVID-19 (European Commission 2021).

The European Union has decided to establish a *“temporary financial instrument – #NextGenerationEU, amounting to 750 billion euro, separated from the EU’s long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), for the period 2021 -2027. Its main purpose is to provide support to the member states to face the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis and its economic consequences. The recovery and resilience facility (RRF) is the main pillar of #NextGenerationEU and has total allocated budget of 672.5 billion euro (European Commission 2021)”. The budget of this instrument, RRF, consists of: “A. Grants amounting to up to 312.5 billion euro; B. Loans amounting to up to 360 billion euro (Ministry of Investment and European Projects 2021)”.*

In this context, the current framework has to be strengthened and to provide direct financial support to the member states, including Romanian, by means of an “innovating” instrument. Thus, a Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) has been established to provide efficient and significant support, having the multiplier role to accelerate the implementation of the sustainable reforms and

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public investments. RRF is conceived on another basis, with an approach different from the management of the cohesion funds, i.e. on a sectorial logic. The aim of this instrument is to provide financial support to the member states, in order to ensure fast economic recovery.

“To ensure that the financial support is frontloaded in the initial years after the COVID-19 crisis, and to ensure compatibility with the available funding for the Facility, the funds should be made available until 31 December 2023. To that end, it should be possible for 70 % of the amount available for non-repayable financial support to be legally committed by 31 December 2022 and 30 % between 1 January 2023 and 31 December 2023 (Official Journal of the European Union 2021)”.

Moreover, all payments for the projects to be included in the NRRP must be made until 31 December 2026.

Starting from this aspect, we have built up this approach since we have identified in this scope of the facility the fact that it refers to *“policy areas of European relevance structured in six pillars (the ‘six pillars’), namely: green transition; digital transformation; smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, including economic cohesion, jobs, productivity, competitiveness, research, development and innovation, and a well-functioning internal market with strong small and medium enterprises (SMEs); social and territorial cohesion; health, and economic, social and institutional resilience with the aim of, inter alia, increasing crisis preparedness and crisis response capacity; and policies for the next generation, children and the youth, such as education and skills (Official Journal of the European Union 2021)”.*

Besides, both at European and national level, integrated knowledge and education management digitalization in the military education institution has been a constant preoccupation in recent years, but the COVID-19 crisis revealed the vulnerabilities of the system and brought forward the necessity to accelerate this process.

ROLE, IMPORTANCE AND CURRENT STATUS OF THE NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN

The member states, including Romania, have prepared the recovery and resilience plans establishing a package of reforms and public investments. The Romanian state, in order to benefit from EU support, has to meet the condition for the reforms and investments indicated in the NRRP to be implemented until 2026.

We consider that the proposed NRRP has to efficiently detail the challenges in the European Semester 2020, particularly those in the Country Report (European Commission n.d.), which formulates a series of specific recommendations for each country.

“NRRP is Romania’s strategic document providing for the reform priorities and investments sectors at national level for the establishment of the RRF. The funding source is the funds allocated to Romania under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and, additionally resources allocated from the state budget. The end purpose of the NRRP is to improve the situation of the national economy after the COVID-19 crisis, as well as to ensure the economic growth and creation of jobs required for the inclusion of disadvantage groups, support the green and digital transition to promote sustainable development (Romanian Government 2020)”.

At this moment, NRRP is being largely updated, according to the provision and calendar indicated in the Memorandum *“Mechanism for the elaboration of the position of the Government of Romania as concerns the National Recovery and Resilience Plan”*, approved in the Government meeting on 20 January 2021.

We can notice that the updated NRRP gathers about 30 components, classified under six distinct pillars, according to the requirements of the REGULATION (EU) 2021/241 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, i.e.: *Pillar I: Transition to a green economy; Pillar II: Digital transformation; Pillar III: Intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth; Pillar IV: Social and territorial cohesion; Pillar V: Health and economic, social and institutional resilience; Pillar VI: Policies for the next generation, children and youth.*

In this phase, the Reforms and Investments Documents are collected from the specialized ministries and institutions in charge, including from the MoND, which are to be analyzed at the level of the MIEP to be included in the NRRP. At the same time, the MoND has to take into consideration that the projects proposed to be funded under NRRP must be mature project, an essential element being the commitment for them to be implemented and completed by 31 August 2026.

Thus, NRRP does not rely on project proposals, but is built on reforms undertaken by the specialized ministries, associated to investment measures evenly covering the 6 pillars agreed at European level, aiming at creating significant and long-term changes in remedying the challenges indicated in the Specific Country Reports, as to respond to the structural and stringent issues at national level.

With reference to the maximum allocations negotiated at the level of Romania, the public communication of the position paper “*Update of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan*” presented on 9 March 2021, in the European Affairs Committee of the Romanian Parliament, indicates that the recovery and resilience plans shall be approved within the budgetary framework negotiated and allocated for each member state, taking into consideration a minimum allocation of 37% to the achievement of climate objectives and 20% allocation for digitalization objectives. The RRF Regulation specifies that the national plans should address a series of country specific recommendations, as they are mentioned in the European Semester reports. These recommendations are expected to be addressed through a series of reforms and investments, that each member state will propose within its national plan.

Romania has an allocated budget of 29.2 billion euro, which should be directed towards strengthening the economic growth potential, the creation of jobs and the economic and social resilience. Some of the reforms proposed refer to: a sustainable pensions system, a fair public salary system, a reform of the public administration, the reform of the state-owned companies (Ministry of Investment and European Projects 2021).

Thus, Romania is interested, in the first place, until the due date, for the submission of the NRRP, in sending interim projects to the Commission, with reforms and investments in the following intervention areas: *Transport; Environment, climate change, energy, energy efficiency and green transition; Development of urban localities, valorisation of the natural and cultural heritage and tourism; Agriculture and rural development; Resilience in crisis situations; Health; Education; Business environment; Research, innovation, digitalization; Improvement of buildings.* (General Government Secretariat 2021)”

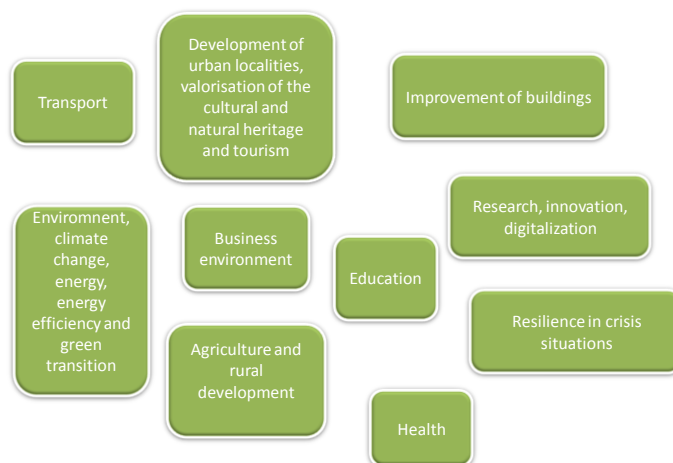


Figure 1. Types of intervention areas

We can underline that, at internal level, MIEP will propose for the Government to issue a decision containing as annexes the summary of each component (description of the current situation,

proposed reforms and investments, necessary budget), which is to become a mandate for the negotiations with the European Commission.

Therefore, before 30 April 2021, which is the due date for the official submission of the document to the European Commission, all the specific procedures for the political commitments and approval of the NRRP are to be completed. In its turn, the European Commission analyzes the NRRP based on transparent means and criteria.

POSSIBILITIES FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE MOND IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE REFORMS AND PUBLIC INVESTMENTS ACCORDING TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN

The update of the NRRP aims at including the contribution of all the stakeholders involved in the identification, drafting and formulation of reforms and investments documents, targeting the reforming of the most relevant sectors in our country, such as *the importance of green transition, digital transformation, intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth, health and economic, social and institutional resilience, as well as policies for the next generation, children and youth.*

In this context, the Ministry of Investments and European Projects (MIEP) has started the entire process of elaborating the NRPP document ever since October-November 2020, when an initial version was created.

During that period, the coordinators and members of the technical working groups at the level of each sector covered by NRRP worked based on the templates and in the format required by the European Commission in September 2020, according to the final Proposal of Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council for the establishment of the Recovery and Resilience Facility COM (2020) 408 and to the Guidelines for the completion of the NRRP, i.e. the criteria valid at that moment were complied with.

After the elaboration of the initial version of the NRRP, in November-December 2020 the first technical discussions with the representatives of the European Commission took place.

This is why, between 25 January – 23 February 2021, MIEP organized inter-ministerial consultations, in two rounds, as daily thematic discussion, to which participated the representatives of the specialized ministries in charge, involving also representatives of MoND, in each of the 10 working groups established per specific sectors. Representatives of the private sector and of the civil society, as well as academics participated to the second round, being invited to intervene in the debates and propose punctual contributions to be added in the Reform and Investments Documents. Thus, several public thematic debates were organized in February 2021, broadcast online, with partners in the business environment, NGOs and all the stakeholders in updating the NRRP.

Therefore, the updated version of the NRRP is drafted to comply with all the criteria required in the *Regulation (EU) 2021/241 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility.* The transparency of the topics under this approach was implicitly provided for during the meetings at the level of the MIEP, as well as through the public communication of the position paper “*Update of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan*” presented on 9 March 2021, in the European Affairs Committee of the Romanian Parliament.

In this context, in the next period the teams in charge at MIEP and at the ministries and institutions involved in the implementation of the reforms and investments proposed through the NRRP will participate actively to informal technical discussions with the representatives of the European Commission, as to agree on the detailed presentation of each component and to fit them in the format indicated in the Commission Guidelines.

“At this stage MIEP has decided to elaborate the first version of NRRP to be discussed with the European Commission. It was decided that the proposals sent to the European Commission to exceed the initial allocation (our estimation is 135% of the allocation), in order to have a margin for negotiation. This is also a decision taken by other countries that have submitted their first versions,

exceeding the maximum allocation. As such, Croatia proposed an over-allocation of 240%, Greece 141%, the Czech Republic 125%, Germany 124%, Hungary 108% and Italy 107%. Therefore, this is not an exclusive decision of the Romanian government. All these decisions are assumed by the respective governments, considering that certain components can be over-estimated in terms of costs and other will be eliminated during the negotiations with the European Commission (Ministry of Investment and European Projects 2021)”.

As you have noticed, even if states allocate more and more resources to the military, the real threat sometimes arises from other sectors of human activity, an unpredictable enemy, COVID-19. A very important role in the consolidation of the defence capabilities is strictly connected to the human resource and to the critical infrastructures preventing and mitigating the negative effects of phenomena that threaten the security of people.

The novelty of this communication is that MoND, may benefit from direct support for the implementation of sustainable reforms and public investments, as indicated in the NRRP.

The pillars of the development of the military structure are built by strengthening the human resource, modernizing the educational system, as a central element of the performance of such resource.

The following action roadmaps are of major importance for drafting projects involving entities in the Romanian army in NRRP: a) training the human resource in jobs and skills useful both for military activities in the civil life, when professional military leave the system; 2) modernizing the educational management and better digitalization of the military education institutions involved at all stages of training the military and civilians in the system; 3) rethinking the organization and modernization of the military hospitals infrastructure to counter any medical challenges and threats (as has been the case for the Coronavirus pandemic).

CONCLUSIONS

Strengthening the defence capabilities should also address to the human resources aspects along with the enforcement measures such as investments in infrastructure, equipment etc. The NRRP proposed by Romania has also included MoND, among the beneficiaries that may benefit from funding within NRRP, with a focus on increasing the competencies of the human resources in the military educational system.

As can be easily noticed, the support for the military education can be applied at two levels, one being the infrastructure in the military education institutions, that should rely on an integrated knowledge and education management digitalized system, and the other being the training and career management programmes, and respectively the management of qualifications and skills in developing both the military and civilian professional careers needed by and useful to MoND.

The military education is an essential component, a proof in this respect being the contribution to the elaboration of the NRRP, aiming in the first place at improving the military education system, as well as the training and qualification of the human resources in the military system.

To all these elements related to the human resource and to its better training for the army adds the rethinking of the organization and the modernization of the military hospitals infrastructure, as to counter any medical challenges and threats that may occur unexpectedly.

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TOWARDS AN EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM OF MENTORING IN THE ROMANIAN MILITARY

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Abstract

Mentoring seems to be beneficial for both employer and employee. However, success is not necessarily the outcome of a formal mentoring program. In this paper we look for the best evidence available that can support the formalization of mentorship in the Romanian Military. Where empirical data is not available we use case studies, historical data, and good practices. In the final section of the paper we formulate recommendations for the design of a semi-formal mentoring pilot program.

Keywords: mentor; mentee; mentoring program; military mentorship; evidence-based practice.

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring seems to be as old as human history. The Greek pantheon mentions Mentor and Telemachus, the Old Testament tells the story of Jethro and Moses, while Hinduism and Buddhism are traditions which have as cornerstone the guru – disciple interaction. In the Middle Ages the guilds composed of artisans or merchants institutionalized the notion of apprenticeship, while in modern times we have PhD advisers and coaches. In the military, mentorship is present from the time of the “knights and their squires to commanding Generals and their aides de champs” (Gleiman and Gleiman 2020).

Military history reveals many successful examples of mentor-mentee relationship. Two of the major figures of military history examples of mentee stand out as highly inspirational: Carl von Clausewitz and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Carl von Clausewitz met his mentor, General Gerhard von Scharnhorst, at the Prussian War College in 1801. During his time spent in this prestigious institution, Clausewitz gains Scharnhorst’s respect and empathy. In the end, with the support of his mentor, from a student that had problems following lectures “because of his lack of essential knowledge” and was “close to despair”, Clausewitz graduated first in his class (Billinger 2015). Clausewitz had the chance to work closely under Scharnhorst’s command where he had to “write newspaper articles and analyses propagating the military reforms” and, in time, he became “Scharnhorst’s closest and most devoted personal assistant”. Later in his life, Clausewitz called Scharnhorst “father and friend of my spirit” (Billinger 2015). During this time Clausewitz developed his ideas about war, ideas that will be at the foundation of his life’s masterpiece *On War*.

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Dwight D. Eisenhower was introduced to his mentor, General Fox Conner, in 1920 by George S. Patton. At that time Fox Conner was looking for a young officer to work for him for three years as an executive officer while he was in command of the US 21st Infantry Brigade in Panama. Aware of the qualities of his subordinate and also being aware of Eisenhower's child death, Conner, "using the vast library in his quarters", began an intensive training program with his mentee with the purpose of turning Ike "into a military history aficionado like himself" and to help him pass that tragic moment in his mentee's life (Cox 2010). Fox Conner had a great contribution in growing Eisenhower as a Supreme Commander, a coalition builder, using his vast experience and dedication in exposing his mentee to ideas ranging from Shakespeare to Nietzsche and from Matthew Steel's "American Campaigns" to Carl von Clausewitz "On War" (Cox 2010). On one occasion when Eisenhower was referring to Fox Conner, he mentioned that his mentor was "the ablest man I ever knew" (Cox 2010).

What these two examples of mentor-mentee have in common is that at one point both mentees were struggling to overcome their problems, Clausewitz in War College was unable to understand the lectures, and Eisenhower after the death of his child in 1921 was almost set towards failure in his career. But with the help of their extraordinary mentors, they overpass their weaknesses and problems to become their better version. With some certainty, it can be said that without their mentors today we would have talked about Eisenhower and Clausewitz differently or at all.

Beyond the historical argument, there is evidence that mentoring is an important development process for all parts involved, with major benefits for mentees, mentors, and organizations alike. From the mentee's perspective, connecting with a mentor at work is beneficial as it facilitates acculturation and career advancement. In this regard, in an article published in Harvard Business Review and entitled "CEOs Need Mentors Too", Suzanne de Janasz and Maury Peiperl (2015) state that mentoring programs help mentees "advance more quickly, earn higher salaries, and gain more satisfaction in their jobs and lives than people without mentors do". According to the same article, the mentoring relationship also has an impact on the organization: "the benefits are not only higher performance but also greater success in attracting, developing, and retaining talent" (de Janasz și Peiperl 2015). A mentoring relationship involves both career support and psychosocial support, the latter case involving a mentor's behavior that is geared toward developing "a sense of professional identity, self-efficacy, and self-worth" (Kram 1985).

MENTORING IN THE MILITARY

When searching for various mentoring programs already implemented in the military our main benchmark was the US Military and thus we follow Gleiman and Gleiman (2020) recent account of such programs. In the US Military there are two formal mentoring programs: MyVECTOR, for the US Airforce and Army Career Tracker (ACT) for the US Army. These programs provide web-based resources that allow access to career field, education and training information in addition to the option to be matched with a mentor. Despite this fact, the Navy and the Marine Corps have abandoned centralized, formal mentoring programs for being overly formal and started using less formalist and more decentralized guidance. We must also mention the fact that independent formal mentoring programs emerged outside the military, like eMentor and MilitaryMentors. These are run by non-profit organizations and their main purpose is to provide more adequate support to the members of the military than the official military mentorship programs.

Other mentorship programs that are worthy of mentioning are the Army Strategist Association (ASA) and PROMOTE. The former provides a program with guidance for both mentors and mentees that seek to foster mentorship and fellowship and strengthen the community of strategists. The later program was designed to develop mentorship and leadership for women working in Special Forces. When it comes to military mentorship programs, there is a real need of talking about In-House Programs. Despite the fact that the US Navy and Marine Corps have taken a decentralized approach when it comes to formal mentoring, they still have some programs in use, for example the Reverse Mentoring program. This program intends to cope with the biases and barriers of the senior Navy leaders, by pairing them junior Sailors, which basically become the mentors for their older colleagues. Both the mentors and the mentees gain valuable experience by learning the difficulties and the career

progress of each other. Military mentorship programs target especially the military service members. Nevertheless, there are some programs that aim at the broader military community, particularly veterans and spouses. The main focus of these programs is assisting mentees in times of transition, in particular from military service to civilian workforce. A prime example in this case is the Veterati organization. They provide mentoring for military veterans, helping them accommodate more easily to the civilian life, the mentors being veterans themselves. Also, for the spouses there are many available programs, most notably, F.I.R.S.T Spouse Mentorship program (“Friendship, Information, Resiliency, Support and Trust”). This program is centered upon personal and professional development for military spouses, providing the chance to be part of a community of practice model and to foster life-long friendships. They also support active civic duty of each member and volunteerism.

Beside the American models, we were also able to find information about a particular mentorship program of the Israeli military, offered by The “Netzach Yehuda” association (also known as the “Haredi Nahal” organization). This program is unique, considering the fact that it is centered around combining Jewish faith with the military service, with the main goal of helping young ultra-orthodox Jews to accommodate with the military life and still be able to remain connected to their religious practices and with their families back home (Nahal Haredi 2021).

While some of the authors of the paper have participated in or witnessed mentoring pilot programs in the Romanian Military educational system (M-A M & C-L A), we were not able to identify a formal document institutionalizing such a program at the organizational level. In the Minister of Defence Order no.122/2014 concerning the annual evaluation of military personnel, modified and completed by the Minister Defence Order no. 230/2020, there are some mentions that could be considered mentoring with regards to the activities the immediate superior needs to perform in order to evaluate the subordinate: “the evaluation is continued throughout the evaluation period by means of monitoring, counseling and guidance of military personnel in fulfilling job descriptions and / or professional training”. The Order 230 introduces the notion of additional counseling if professional objectives are not met and the possibility of modifying the initial objectives. In our interpretation this signals the possibility of things not working as planned and the effort of the legislator to find a solution within the legal framework available. Mentoring could thus help officers and noncommissioned officers better their professional performance and add some of the other possible advantages documented in the literature (e.g., job satisfaction, retaining talent etc.).

WHAT IS THE BEST EVIDENCE ONE CAN RELY UPON WHEN DESIGNING A FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAM FOR THE MILITARY?

Introducing a formal mentoring program in the Military may not necessarily be a success. Long (1994) makes an extensive inventory of deficiencies a mentoring program may present:

- time consuming;
- poorly planned;
- poorly matched (e.g., value disagreement);
- poorly understood (e.g. misconceptions of roles);
- generating work tensions;
- lacking or overusing mentors;
- lacking access for women and minority groups;
- mentor’s work style cloning (e.g., may copy leadership style and exclude the socially different);
- create poor relationships between mentor/mentee (e.g., overprotection);
- exaggerate visibility (e.g.,mentees’ performance is excessively monitored due to the association with the mentor);
- imposing mentoring.

Faced with such concerns a decision-maker may want to reduce risks by using the best evidence available. This could be a challenging approach as more cues of an undergoing replication

crises are starting to accumulate in fields of interest such as Psychology (Open Science Collaboration 2015).

However, there are also signs that subfields such as Behavioral Economics are thriving (Mustata and Bogzeanu 2017; Mustață and Ionașcu 2018). It seems that a careful scrutiny of the best evidence available can generate solid proof of efficiency. Therefore, we set out to find the best available evidence on military mentoring and mentoring in general. Our approach was to study the literature and in the gaps found to propose some recommendations based on case studies and good practices. The focus of the literature search was on evidence for mentoring and workplace mentoring in general, and military mentoring in particular.

Johnson and Anderson's (2010) literature review on military mentoring programs in the US "revealed not a single published evaluation of the efficacy of formal military mentoring", while a study in Taiwan with military students found participation in a formal mentoring program led to greater satisfaction, increased career commitment, and decreased stress. The same authors also mention a survey conducted in the US Army which revealed that officers are willing to join mentorship programs provided these are not formalized.

But most importantly for our purpose, Johnson and Anderson (2010) raise a new set of concerns and lingering questions regarding civilian and military mentoring programs:

- formal programs are usually using loose definitions of mentoring, which put participants in the position of not knowing what is expected from them;
- the perception of mentoring can sometimes be problematic as favoritism may be an implicit consequence of mentor-mentee interaction;
- mentoring programs will probably not be efficient if an all-size-fits-all approach is proposed. While all soldiers probably need mentoring, the most talented will have to be included in more intensive programs;
- mentoring can be perceived as a panacea for career advancement when in fact other factors such as motivation, intelligence, self-confidence or flexibility may play an important role in the process;
- developmental networks (e.g., short-term mentors, peer mentors, mentoring groups, online communities) may be a more robust solution one-on-one mentoring programs;
- not all mentoring is efficient. Dysfunctional mentoring can be worse than no mentoring; intrinsic motivation seems to be more efficient than extrinsic motivation, however there is the problem of the challenge of cultivating the former in a formal environment;
- program oversight may help, but too much of it can undermine the goals of the mentoring program.

In a more recent article Johnson and Andersen (2015) conducted a survey with personnel attending the U.S. Naval War College and made an inventory of the following mentorship functions, from the mentee perspective: "advocate on my behalf", "developed my military skills", "enhanced my military career development", "offered me acceptance, support, and engagement", "provided direct training or instruction", "increased my self-esteem", "increased my visibility/exposure within the Navy", "enhanced my creativity and problem-solving skills", "developed my personal ethics and professional values", "provided emotional support/counseling", "assisted in establishing professional networks", "served to protect me", "provided me opportunities (choice assignments)", "help me bypass bureaucracy".

As the evidence regarding military mentorship was so scarce, we were forced to broaden our search in order to have some kind of solid bedrock for the recommendations we set out to formulate. This choice presented us with the following insights about important aspects of mentoring:

- **mentor motivation** – If the benefits of mentoring are obvious for the mentees, it is also important to investigate issues related to the decision to guide others. Allen, Poteet & Burroughs (1997) highlight two overall psychological reasons why people mentor others: other-focused factors and self-focused factors. The first of these refers to the supportive behavior provided by mentors to help mentees succeed in the organization, the main reasons invoked by mentors being the desire to pass information on to others, the desire to build a competent workforce, the desire to help others

succeed, the desire to help minorities/women move through organizational ranks, and so on. On the other hand, mentors agree to enter into a mentoring relationship because of the personal satisfaction they receive as a result of supporting others, the main intentions explaining the mentors' decision to mentor being gratification seeing others succeed/grow, personal desire to work with others, increase personal learning, pride desire to have influence in others, and so on.

- **mentoring scope** – Turner de Tormes Eby, et al. (2013) have shown that the following subfields of mentorship may emerge in youth, academic, and workplace interactions: *instrumental support behaviors* (i.e., task-related assistance, sponsorship, exposure and visibility, and coaching), *psychosocial support behaviors* (i.e., offering counseling, unconditional acceptance, encouragement, and role modeling), and *relationship quality* (i.e., overall perceptions of relationship quality, and liking).

- **informal mentorships vs formal mentorships** – Although workplace mentoring, which may include formal or informal relationships between individuals working in an organizational setting, has many positive effects, studies have assessed the relationship between formal and informal mentoring and career outcomes. Research shows that informal mentorships are more beneficial than formal mentorships: “Protégés of informal mentors viewed their mentors as more effective and received greater compensation than protégés of formal mentors.” (Ragins and Cotton 1999) In the case of a formal mentoring relationship, in order to achieve the expected benefits, an aspect that must be considered involves making a match between the participants of the mentoring relationship, so that “formal mentoring relationships usually involve a third-party matching process and individuals may not even meet one another until after the match is made”, given the importance of the similarity between mentor and mentee. Turner de Tormes Eby, et al. (2013)

- **interpersonal relationship** – Given that mentoring involves an interpersonal relationship, success is conditioned by certain key characteristics. In this regard, there is a lot of research that studies the characteristics of successful and failed mentoring relationships, emphasizing that the similarity between mentor and mentee is of particular importance, given the greater willingness of mentors to guide people like them, and creating a more rewarding and enjoyable relationship for all those involved in the process (Straus, et al. 2013). Thus, there is clear evidence that deep-level similarity, meaning similarity in values, beliefs or personality, is associated with greater psychosocial and career support and a higher quality of relationship: “The more similar the protégé views his or her mentor to be in terms of attitudes, values, beliefs, and personality, the stronger the identification process and the more likely that instrumental and psychosocial support will occur” (Turban, Dougherty and Lee 2002).

- **age of mentee** – The age of the mentee is an important factor to be considered in a mentorship program, as it can shorten or prolong the mentoring relationship, older mentees having more short-lived relationships with their mentors than their younger counterparts. Also, they receive less career-related mentoring, but still manage to experience higher levels of mutual learning and relationship quality, in both formal and informal mentoring programs (Finkelstein, Allen and Rhoton 2003).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DESIGN OF A SEMI-FORMAL MENTORING PILOT PROGRAM IN THE ROMANIAN MILITARY

After reviewing the best evidence available regarding military mentoring in particular, workplace mentoring and mentoring in general, we formulate the following recommendations for the design of a mentoring pilot program in the Romanian Military:

1. If the military organization relies exclusively on informal mentoring, then it is not difficult to infer that mentorships will be the exception rather than the rule. A powerful mechanism for leader development remains thus underappreciated and underused. Another possibility is that mentorship relations become more frequent but lack the strategic orientation towards organizational goals and most often are managed in an empirical fashion rather than evidence-based. Our recommendation is to formalize such a program, but make it as informal as possible. This entails that the military organization may still decide why and how the interaction takes place, but leave to the participants the who and when. A semi-formal version of a mentoring program could thus be designed.

2. Due to the scarcity of evidence regarding military mentoring programs and the fact that we do not have any data from the Romanian Military, it is necessary that further steps be taken with maximum caution. Such a step would be a pilot program in which the design would be tested against a control group. Our recommendation is that the pilot program be tested as close as possible to a non-laboratory experimental setting.

3. Given that mentoring may come with certain possible negative connotations in the military it is necessary that prior to designing the program a survey is conducted in order to have a clear image of military staff perception.

4. The program should rely on a long-term strategy of leader development and propose clear and attainable goals for the participants. The scope of the program should entail career advancement but also psychological and instrumental support.

5. Given the differences between the category of forces (e.g. Land Forces vs Airforce) and even between specialties (e.g., infantry vs logistics) it is highly unlikely that a one-size-fits-all approach be successful. In contrast, a rather decentralized approach should be able to take into account all the particularities of different units.

6. Not everyone is suited to be a mentor and not everyone wants to be mentored, therefore participation in the program should not be compulsory and inclusion criteria should be rather high for the mentors. These criteria could consist of interpersonal skills, career achievements and intrinsic motivation.

7. The mentor-mentee relationship should be established between the two parties based on shared values and common interests. A possible solution to identify these shared values and common interests and purposes of the participants in the mentoring relationship could be to provide the opportunity to socialize prior to the start of mentoring programs. By calling on certain matchmakers, i.e., some consultants external to the organization, to act as intermediaries, a correct match can be made between mentor and mentee depending on their personality. Performing personality tests to ensure compatible matches between mentor and mentee should be an important part of matchmaking.

8. Developmental mentorships should also be available, in the sense that the mentee should have several possible routes of getting the needed support, including other mentors and online resources.

9. Both mentors and mentees should not be burdened with even more formalities to deal with. The paperwork required should be minimum and the agenda of meetings should be left on the participants' decision.

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SPECIFICS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION OF MILITARY PERSONNEL THROUGH THE EXAMPLE OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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Abstract

This paper deals with the specifics of the teaching and learning processes of a foreign language for military purposes. Members of the armed forces not only communicate differently than civilians, but they also learn differently. The theoretical considerations are supported by examples from the teaching/learning processes within military environment. It emphasizes the military significance of language competence and examines the role of multilingualism within NATO and EU armies.

Keywords: foreign language; armed forces; military education; specifics of military language education; multilingualism.

INTRODUCTION

Language skills have always been an integral part of the key military competencies. Although foreign language competence has long been quite stereotypically linked with the category of military intelligence, the (geo)political events over the recent decades have made it obvious, that a (very) good foreign languages command is significant in all branches and on all levels of the military, reaching from the education, leadership, diplomacy to the war. The following excerpt from the 2009 Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy expresses this fact in the following way: "Battlefield lessons learned have demonstrated that language proficiency and understanding of foreign culture are vital enablers for full spectrum operations. Today's full spectrum operations require adaptable foreign language and cultural capabilities to be fully successful."

MULTILINGUALISM WITHIN NATO AND EU

Soldiers of armies around the world benefit from the command of foreign languages. Foreign language policy has always been important at NATO due to its impact on interoperability. Mark Crossey argued: "Since the end of the Cold War, foreign language training – especially the learning of English, the de facto operational language – has become increasingly important within armed forces." (2008). He added that although language training should be primarily a national responsibility, it must be of concern to NATO regarding the enlargement, foreign operations, international partnerships, and other challenges. Language levels, requirements and assessment of language levels are regularly addressed within NATO internal documents, conferences on terminology management, and NATO Standardization Office.

Language learning is an important priority within the European Union. It's language policy is based on the famous motto „united in diversity“, which first came into use in 2000 and expresses the harmonious co-existence of the many European languages. On one hand EU values the uniqueness and inheritance of its individual languages, on the other hand it encourages the study of at least two foreign languages. English as lingua franca can open doors regarding employment, negotiations, research, travel, business etc., but EU especially promotes the „learning the neighbor's language“ policy. In his September 2007 speech, the former European Commissioner responsible for

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Multilingualism – Leonard Orban (2007) – said: “Our aim is to give the Union a new generation of multilingual citizens“. He held the view that good command of English is increasingly becoming not sufficient and that in order to be effective, language learning should meet at least 3 criteria: it should be attractive, it should start at an early age, and it should continue during one’s whole life.

There are several different types of multilingualism. Regarding the language skills, the EU refers to multilingualism as “both a person’s ability to use several languages and the co-existence of different language communities in one geographical area“(5). There have been many efforts in the area of language education policy to support language education and multilingualism with the EU, e.g. the position of the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, the European Day of Languages, Erasmus programs, conferences on linguistics and multilingualism and many other activities to promote language learning.

From the historical point of view, multilingualism in the European area is not a novelty and definitely not unusual. Medieval Europe’s citizens were multilingual due to the religion (pilgrimages, liturgical language), trade, changes of rulers etc. In fact, monolingualism is characteristic only of a minority of the world’s peoples (Guadalupe). Although multilingualism has received special scholarly attention just in recent years, it is a very common phenomenon. Its social, career and cognitive benefits have been widely recognized through many studies, it even improves learning abilities, changes neurological processes, influences decision-making skills and generally speaking, it is simply great for the brain.

LANGUAGE EDUCATION AT THE ARMED FORCES ACADEMY OF GENERAL MILAN RASTISLAV ŠTEFÁNIK

Over the last 15 years there have been several major changes in the foreign language education concept at the Armed Forces Academy of gen. M. R. Štefánik in Liptovský Mikuláš (henceforth the AFA). The year 2007 was the last year when the applicants could choose either English or German as the foreign language entrance exam.² Since then, English has been the only option for the foreign language entrance exam. This was also the year, when a second foreign language (German or Russian) ceased to be taught within all study programs.

After Slovakia joined the NATO in 2004, the focus has for obvious reasons been on the English language. All NATO member states, including Slovakia, have sought to develop proper English as Second Language (henceforth ESL) methodologies and language education strategies. Regarding the foreign language education within the Slovak Armed Forces this has had a huge impact on the second foreign language policy. As has just been mentioned, the cadets of AFA no more had the opportunity to study German or Russian. In addition to it, German language STANAG exams have ceased to be conducted over some time. French has never been taught at the AFA, while being one of the official languages of NATO. Taking into account the fact that Russian is the most spoken native language in Europe, followed by German, this has launched an unfavorable development.

In 2014 the second foreign language was reintroduced at the AFA, though just in one of the study programs of the master study, that is to say in the 4th and 5th year of study. Since then, the cadets may opt for German or Russian. At present, English is studied in all study programs of the master degree as the first foreign language, starting with the first term and ending after the fifth term by passing the NATO STANAG 6001 exam. Cadets should preferably pass level 2/2/2/2, however, currently it is not obligatory, so a certain percentage of them pass level 1 or 1+, and similarly a certain number of them pass level 3/3/3/3.

However, we are not talking here about conventional English language education. In the context of the Armed Forces Academy we should more particularly talk about Military English. Cadets are familiarised with the basic military vocabulary right from the beginning of their study, starting with topics like bootcamp, organization and structure of the army, army ranks, military education and

² The opportunity to opt for English or German as the foreign language entrance exam had been understandable given the significant number of applicants without any knowledge of English. This was due to the multitude of elementary and high schools teaching foreign languages other than English (mostly German, Russian and French).

career ladder, uniform and equipment, military routines, briefing, vehicles and weapons, shooting range, map reading, tactics, military exercises, radio talk, armed conflicts, peace support operations etc. Advanced students' topics include cyber security, casualty evacuation, civil-military cooperation (CIMIC), leadership, operations order (OPORD), laws of armed conflict, formal emails, military doctrine, foreign affairs etc. In addition to the military vocabulary, cadets study current events, grammar, they do reading and comprehension and listening and comprehension activities and learn to write properly and speak fluently.

The second foreign language education also includes some military topic, although not as many as Military English lessons. The level of command of a second foreign language in cadets tends to be significantly lower than the level of the first foreign language, which in most cases is English. Regarding the Russian language at AFA, there are currently three levels being taught: beginner, intermediate and upper-intermediate. German language is taught in two levels: beginner, intermediate. Current developments suggest, that in the next academic year, there will also be an upper-intermediate level of German classes.

In contrast to other technical languages, military languages are not typically being researched much by linguists and as a result, there is a lack of teaching material and apparent scarcity of specialized literature. This is partially due to the nature of communication within the military, which is typically marked by a certain level of security classification, and partially due to the complexity of a military language. Thus, foreign teachers at the AFA are challenged in their everyday teaching tasks to develop proper methods, materials and approaches for cadets to reach their aims, improve their levels of foreign languages command and acquire knowledge in areas like military terminology.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR MILITARY PURPOSES

The language that is being communicated within the armed forces is a very complex phenomenon. It is shaped by many factors including the political systems of the concrete individual states, geopolitics, partnerships, memberships in international organizations etc. Regarding the languages relevant for this article, i.e. the English, German, and Russian language, the way one should communicate within the military is constantly being re-considered, modified, debated, and dictated by the individual armed forces and the NATO (Slater 2015, 2).

Joining the army means walking into a new linguistic world. Once there, one might get lost without the proper military background knowledge. Aside from the acronyms and abbreviations, members of the military have a myriad of special phrases that set them apart from the rest of the society. This type of language may be defined as the military jargon or slang and its typical characteristics include uniqueness, the aspect of humor, friendship, but also cynicism and vulgarity. It reflects the interservice and interpersonal rivalries, it boosts the team spirit.

Apart from the military jargon we distinguish between the specialized (or technical) military terminology, official military terminology (inevitable for eliminating misunderstandings that could possibly lead to catastrophe and for optimizing operation under great stress), drill commands (*Kommandosprache* in German), and the language used by military officers (*Offizierssprache* in German; surprisingly, there is no proper English term for it). There is also a big difference in stylistics, vocabulary and even grammar between the language that is used exclusively within the military and the language used by the military, but in a dialogue with a non-military environment, e.g. with the press, politicians or simply put, with the public. According to Cori Dauber, official military language manifests at least three special features that can be revealed through linguistic analysis. Those would be: a sanitized form of language, emphasis on expertise of users, and a specific notion of hierarchy. Some examples of typical features of military language are: euphemistic aspect, linguistic economy, neologisms, occasionalisms, informal use of metaphors (especially with names / codenames; Dauber uses the term "internal symbolic logic"), etc.

SPECIFICS OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION AT THE ARMED FORCES ACADEMY

The specific features of the specialized military language and the nature of communication within the military have a great influence on the language teaching/learning process at the AFA. The rather formal classroom atmosphere has a particularly negative impact on improving English, Russian, and German communication skills. Young cadets are hesitant to work in pairs, they do not actively engage in discussions and conversations, they are typically not spontaneous nor creative. Most of the conventional language teaching methods are not suitable for the military environment, a personalized approach and modified solutions are necessary.

The most important factors affecting the language education within the AFA include the rank (e.g. in case of an inhomogeneous group, the lower-rank soldiers manifest unwillingness to cooperate; high-ranking commissioned officers tend to disrupt the classes with frequent questions or remarks), study program/specialization, (future) posting, eventual future deployment in a foreign country, present circumstances of the language classes (previous classes, e.g. if a physical training class precedes the language class, cadets tend to be physically exhausted and do not engage actively in the process, thus passive learning activities are recommended), etc. Unlike young cadets, generally speaking, commissioned officers are critical thinkers with intrinsic motivation, who need to know the purpose of their learning process, they are autonomous learners skeptical towards the presented ideas and the best way for them to acquire knowledge is through their own experience and while solving problems (Raviv 2013).

The linguistic features of the military language are based on the rules, standards and conventions of communication within the military, which are typically drilled by the cadets right after they join the army. Morpho-syntactic specificities have to be drilled so that they become a routine. The “previously rehearsed patterns of action” (Mälkki K., Mälkki J. 2013) are an integral part of every cadet’s education and training. This pattern reminds strongly of the Audio-Lingual Method³. This method, which is based on the typically military drill and response to form new habits of the language, has been dubbed the Army Method. Its other name fits the method accurately, since it reflects its military roots – the U.S. military’s need during WWII to train large volumes of personnel in disparate languages and the pattern of mechanical habit-formation activities (with little opportunities for mistakes). The method’s other typical features include teacher-centered lessons, focus on structural linguistics that emphasized grammatical structure, equal importance not given to all four skills, focus on memorization rather than functional learning, repetition drills, chain drills, drills, drills, and more drills etc. While the method was questioned and discredited by many prominent linguists, foremostly by Noam Chomsky, and practically stopped being used in foreign language teaching processes the way it used to be in the 50s and 60s, its characteristics overlap to a large extent with the nature and characteristics of the military language and communication. Against this background, the following can be concluded: the methods used in foreign language teaching/learning within the military environment must reflect the particularities of the specialized military language in order to be effective; a large amount of study material cannot be found in any students’ books nor textbook, which means it has to be compiled by individual teachers, implying the need for highly educated (both in linguistics as well as military matters) teaching staff.

SCHOLAR-SOLDIER

After the end of the Cold War, a new concept of the military officer emerged. The so-called scholar-soldier shall serve supranational purposes and be both: a well-trained soldier and a highly educated graduate (Paile 2013). The two models of military training and education – the Spartan model (focus on military training and field exercises) and the Athenian model (focus on academic education and knowledge; military officers as intellectual elites) shall merge and form the ideal model. “During the Cold War and its immediate aftermath, many believed that foreign language skills and

³ The Audio-Lingual Method is a method in teaching foreign languages based on behaviorist theory, i. e. the belief that people can be trained through reinforcement. Widely used in the 1950s and 1960s, the method became discredited by many scientists, especially by the famous Noam Chomsky and it fell from popularity.

regional expertise were only required by a very small segment of the force, usually serving in fairly specialized jobs.”(Carey 2008, 5). This notion has been proven wrong. The security policy issues particularly since the 1990s make it obvious, that the world needs military officers trained and educated complexly, which includes (not least) the foreign language skills.

Major Kenneth Carey, Brigade S2, 1st BCT, 1st CAV, stated: “If all our soldiers spoke Arabic we could have resolved Iraq in two years. My point is that language is obviously an obstacle to our success, much more so than cultural. Even a fundamental understanding of the language would have had a significant impact on our ability to operate.” This is a very strong statement, which should be taken into account and addressed by authorities of military training and educational institutions. Pedagogical staff at military academies and institutions have been modifying the curricula and adapting them to the current needs, reflecting the geopolitical changes and asymmetric threats. In spite of this, the language study advocates in general complain about the lack of scientific and academic attention to foreign languages within the military. This holds particularly true for the foreign teachers at the AFA, who strive to raise awareness to the problems caused by lack of foreign language knowledge and promote the importance of foreign language skills within the military.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the several decades of foreign teaching experience along with the observation of the learning process and communication of military personnel we can conclude that the military language education differs greatly from the language education in the civilian environment. Lack of linguistic research in the military makes it hard to reflect these differences and to apply the conventional teaching/learning methods in the military language classes. A tailor-made solution is necessary, i.e. individualized approach in teaching, methods carefully selected and modified for the military personnel, further research and development in the field of foreign language for military purposes.

The aim of the AFA is to develop military leaders of character, able to work in national as well as international security environments. Their foreign language education shall make sure that they develop reading, listening, writing and communication skills necessary to perform their duties effectively, to be able to interact with the international military environment, engage in lifelong learning process, and be an equal partner of soldiers of other NATO armies. Regarding this last point, the foreign language skills of Slovak military personnel in the European and NATO context are rather below average. We see a lot of room for improvement, including more focus on language lessons within the education process of the cadets, more focus on building intrinsic motivation in cadets and officers, enhancement of teaching methods (e.g. modernization of language labs, using modern technologies in classes, regular further education programs for teachers etc.), a closer cooperation with foreign partner academies and military institutions and many other achievable objectives. To keep pace with the NATO and EU policies and trends regarding language skills, Slovakia has to take a critical look at its shortcomings in language education on all levels, starting from elementary schools up to university level. Every effort should be made to support multilingualism in Slovak military personnel, to train and educate complex scholar-soldiers for the maintenance and defense of national and international security.

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WILL E-LEARNING HAVE A NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON UNIVERSITY DROPOUT IN ROMANIA?

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Abstract

University dropout provides nowadays a very broad theoretical perspective on the understanding of this concept in various higher education systems worldwide. This diversity of theoretical approaches, given the lack of a generally accepted formula for determining university dropout, renders this phenomenon increasingly studied today in the context in which the vast majority of the countries of the world are seeking solutions to reduce it. In this study, we shall discuss a number of theoretical considerations concerning the phenomenon of university dropout and from this perspective we shall try to articulate a viewpoint on the possible effects of online education on this phenomenon in Romania.

Keywords: university dropout; online education; higher education; virtual university campus.

INTRODUCTION

The huge technological progress that the planet has witnessed in recent decades and the need for further development, increasingly promoted by the countries of today's world, so as to raise the level of civilisation and modernise human societies, require a vigorous development of higher education. Thus, higher education is considered vital for the promotion of employment opportunities, social justice and economic progress in each country, being an area of strategic importance on which the future projection of human society as a whole depends.

By analysing a series of articles and theoretical studies that have addressed the issue of "university dropout" in the first decades of this century, we can understand that this concept is a controversial one, because it does not have a high degree of precision in terms of content, which makes it difficult for the States to approach the concrete problems associated with this type of dropout in a different way. But further confusion is caused by the multitude of the terminology used in various countries, but mainly by the way in which it is understood in each country according to the specific regulations of higher education.

Numerous studies have emerged in recent decades in various countries all over the world defining university dropout thereby offering researchers a very broad theoretical perspective for understanding this phenomenon that higher education systems around the world are facing today. The following presentation of the theoretical approaches to university dropout in different countries of the world, from the standpoint of the objectives we have in mind in this article, has the role of shedding more light on this concept, with the purpose of identifying the ways and measures by which university dropout can be decreased in the Romanian space.

Starting from some theoretical approaches related to university dropout in different states of the world, which we will present in the first chapter, we also intend to briefly discuss a series of general aspects concerning the phenomenon of university dropout in Romania, as perceived at the level of the institutions of the Romanian education system. Although no articles or studies have been developed in Romania on this subject, we believe that this aspect of university activity should receive the greatest possible attention, being an indicator of the quality of education promoted by each university, but also at the level of the higher education system in Romania. In this context, we are

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attempting, although it is not an easy thing, to provide an answer to the question: will e-Learning have a negative influence on the university dropout in Romania?

BRIEF THEORETICAL APPROACHES OF THE CONCEPT OF UNIVERSITY DROPOUT IN CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS WORLDWIDE

The study of the relevant literature in various States of Europe and North America indicates convincingly that the approach to university dropout has different theoretical nuances, that there is no universal definition of this concept, and that this makes it difficult for educational systems in different countries to apply identical normative frameworks and practices to the issue of dropout in higher education. Consequently, it means that comparing different countries in terms of their treatment of university dropouts in public higher education policies is not an easy task. This stems from the diverse nature of the higher education system in the different countries of the world, on the one hand, and the characteristics of the student populations in each State, on the other hand.

In the public policies pertaining to higher education in various States, as well as in the fundamental normative texts governing this field, the problem of dropping out of university is often found together with that of the completion of studies by students, which makes it difficult to clearly define dropping out of school in the university environment. Moreover, considering this aspect, a series of scholarly studies argue that there is no generic and universally accepted definition of dropping out in the university environment, neither in terms of the completion of university studies. In this regard, the research carried out in several European educational systems, in the field of higher education, has highlighted the fact that a student who lapses into the university dropout phenomenon is one who leaves university early and does not complete his or her studies when he/she normally should. At the same time, the analyses on university dropout are related to university completion rates, which express the proportion of students who have completed university studies.

According to a study published more than a decade and a half ago on the university dropout in Spain (Cabrera et al. 2006), the authors note that student dropout (“student desertion”) refers to a variety of situations, defined differently, from those that characterise the interruption of studies by students before their completion. Thus, from a theoretical point of view, students who leave a university before completing their studies, according to the Spanish authors, may find themselves in one of the following situations: involuntary termination (due to violation of regulations); withdrawal from the programme of study for another choice of studies in the same institution; withdrawal from the programme of study in order to take courses at another university; withdrawal from a certain university in order to go to another university to complete the programme of study started; withdrawal from university studies for a new training or employment opportunity; suspension of studies with the intention of resuming them in the future; other possibilities.

Bearing in mind that, in general, the statistics provided by Spanish universities usually identify a “case” of dropping out as a student who, from a theoretical point of view, started his/her studies at a university and along the way it a “moment” occurred when he/she no longer continued his/her studies at the respective university, it can be appreciated that this theoretical approach to dropping out is restrictive and does not lead to conclusive statistics on this phenomenon. A more in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of university dropout in Spain allows us to identify situations that cannot be described as early school leaving. Thus, this category may include students who complete their studies in another non-European community or institution (via the SENECA or ERASMUS programmes, etc.), or students who have interrupted their initial academic itinerary, choosing to enrich it with another itinerary in space, a university training, or some work experience, a common practice among young people in various European countries.

The studies conducted to identify the multiple facets of the university dropout phenomenon over the last few decades confirm these assertions, and this often means that university dropout is not measured at its real magnitude. One such study, carried out in 2005 at the University of La Laguna in Spain, showed that, of the total number of students enrolled in university courses during the academic years 1998/99 (bachelor’s degree) and 1999/2000 (associate degree), pointed out that 28% of the

students dropped out their initial studies and of these, 32.7% started courses for another specialisation at the same university and 13.2% started other studies at another university; the remaining 54.1% dropped out of university for an indefinite period of time.

The initial dropout figures, as shown in the previous example with regard to Spanish higher education, are alarming, but in reality the number of students dropping out of university is much lower. From this example, as is currently the case in many other EU countries, it appears that the percentage of students who initially dropped out only partially reflects this phenomenon, at a certain calendar date and for a certain category/group of students. Eventually, students who have dropped out may resume their university studies, and this makes it difficult to assess the whole dropout universe. Thus, researchers who have studied this phenomenon appreciate that the meaning of each dropout situation may vary according to the elements that define it, depending also on the person who evaluates it.

Expert studies addressing the many aspects of university dropout in the United States, the analysis of the factors that determine it, and the difficulties encountered by those who attempt to assess it as accurately as possible, have concluded that dropping out of university is a process rather than an isolated event. The characteristics of the university environment, the individual personality traits of students, the family environment, but also the economic context in which students live influence their progress in university career. Therefore, it is almost impossible to identify a single cause of this complex process.

The American authoritative literature acknowledges that the concept of dropping out of university is a controversial one. As a result, the measurement of university dropout rates differs from state to state, but also at the federal level. The lack of generally accepted standards in all states makes it difficult to assess universities from this perspective, as well as to compare these institutions. Many studies conducted in the United States admit that the university dropout is a major event in the lives of students, with a number of influences on the lives of those young people who have decided to leave university. It is also widely accepted that today the social significance of dropping out of university has changed significantly, with its perception being very different from that of other historical periods.

Most studies in the United States have found that dropout in higher education is linked to risk factors in four different areas: individual, academic, family and school. A number of specialized studies have shown that high dropout rates have been found in higher education for nonHispanic Black students, students eligible for free/reduced price lunch, and students with disabilities.

In the United States, although it is known that it is necessary to reduce the dropout rate in universities, the solution is not as obvious. Because abandonment is a process of gradual disconnection from school life, researchers conclude that no factor can be blamed for dropping a student who leaves the university. Nevertheless, a wide variety of variables have been found to correlate with university dropout, and identifying students as high risk has become a crucial topic in efforts to reduce the dropout rate. In addition, given the unique characteristics of the United States, with a society characterised by both important rates of immigration and high rates of internal mobility, students travel frequently, changing universities, districts and states.

The analysis of the causes that determine dropout in the US academic environment has led to the identification of certain factors that most authors associate with dropping out of the academia. A significant percentage of underperforming students and less qualified teachers, for example, are associated with greater dropout rates. Many aspects of family life and socio-economic status are also linked to the dropout behaviour.

WILL ONLINE EDUCATION INFLUENCE THE DROPOUT RATE IN ROMANIA?

The 2018 National Report on Romania conducted by the Services of the European Commission, which has also been submitted to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Central Bank and the Eurogroup, shows that although some progress has been made in the field of lifelong learning and higher education, however, “subsequent to the adoption in 2015 of the Strategy

aiming at reducing early school leaving and following the progress made the following year, there have been modest efforts to continue its implementation in 2017. This is reflected in the high rates of the early school leaving” (2018 Country Report on Romania, 15). The report states that regrettably Romania still ranks among the EU countries with the highest dropout rates, including a high dropout rate in higher education.

Specialised studies conducted in Romania, as well as the official documents on education drawn up by the public structures responsible for this area of national interest use the concept of school dropout (PTȘ), a term which is part of the broader theoretical field in which is the term the university dropout . Although, as presented in the first chapter, there are a variety of definitions of the concept of university dropout in various states of the world, in Romania, university dropout is defined as the leaving of university studies by the student before completing a level of study, without the student obtaining a diploma to complete his studies (Raftu 16). If we refer to one of the usual indicators, namely the proportion of the 25-34 age group who have left education and training early (Early Leavers from Education and Training 25-34, ELET 25-34), Romania has had a very unfavourable record over the last two decades, being currently the only EU country to show a strongly negative trend. Thus, according to the official information, the value of this indicator increased from 12% in 1997 to 24% in 2010 and 2011, followed by a slight decrease to 22% in 2013. Also, in 2015, Romania has an early school leaving rate for 18-24 year olds of 19.1%, i.e. the third highest-ranking rate in the EU after Spain and Malta. Moreover, in 2017, the dropout rate was of 18.1% among 18-24 year olds, still one of the highest-ranging in Europe. Given that the EU average rate in 2017 was of 10.6%, Romania’s commitment for 2020 of a dropout rate of 11.3% was a courageous target set by the Romanian authorities in the field of education (European Commission 2018, 240), but the information available so far seems to lead to the conclusion that this target has not yet been reached.

Important official documents drawn up at the level of the Ministry of Education, but also elaborated by some Romanian universities, which are accessible on the Internet, contain a series of aspects which clarify the concept of university dropout and the risk of dropping out, terms generally used in higher education in Romania. Thus, an in-depth analytical study issued by the Centre for Vocational Counselling and Guidance of the University "Ovidius" from Constanța, which also addresses the issue of university dropout, indicates that dropout is determined by the satisfaction of unrealistic reasons and expectations, as well as by their lack of clarity/specificity, emotional preparation and low academic skills, the shock of adaptation and marginalisation from the academic process (Raftu, 16). The same study also points out that the factors that determine university dropout can be both institutional (formal stipulations in the regulations concerning the minimum number of credits to be accumulated, number of absences from university courses, etc.), of a contextual nature (financial difficulties, changes in the family structure, moving to another location, employment - new study needs, etc.), or of an academic nature (lack of motivation, inability to meet requirements, change of priorities, inappropriate choices, dissatisfaction with the academic experience, inability to manage time and workload, etc.) (Raftu 12).

According to the Education Infrastructure Modernisation Strategy (2018-2023), the risk of university dropout is an indicator that measures the percentage of students enrolled in first-year undergraduate programmes with a bachelor’s degree average of less than 7 for each university. It is also specified that this indicator can only be applied to universities and according to the criteria set out above, higher priority will be given to those universities with a high risk of dropping out, i.e. a high percentage of students enrolled in first year programmes with low performance (The Government of Romania 64).

The transition to e-learning also in the university environment in Romania, in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic, represents one of the most unprecedented and unexpected events in Romanian higher education in recent decades. Given the fact that there was no experience of university professors in this respect, and that students had no competence in the field of online education, the current preliminary data circulating in various studies and articles on the effectiveness of this formula are not among the most optimistic.

The results recorded by various Romanian higher education institutions in the context of e-learning, considered by specialists to be generally lower than those obtained before the COVID 19 pandemic, were determined by other aspects which demonstrate that the Romanian higher education system was ill-prepared to move to e-learning such as: not all universities made available platforms to provide each teacher and student with an account for online courses; many teachers were not familiar with using computer platforms to deliver online courses; some teachers and students mentioned the lack of adequate equipment (laptops, tablets), which created difficulties in the conduct of courses; Internet connectivity, especially in rural areas of Romania, is a major issue within the Romanian space (Romania ranks 22nd out of 27 as regards Internet connectivity) (DESI 2019).

Taking into account the fact that university dropout has long-term negative effects on social development and economic growth, but also the fact that Romania currently has a high dropout rate, we believe that the Romanian authorities responsible for higher education need to develop strategies and effective policies so that online education does not amplify the phenomenon of university dropout. We believe that, in the future, university education in Romania will integrate the form of e-learning much better, and under these conditions, the responsible factors, both in public higher education and in the private sector, have to find solutions so that the many shortcomings observed so far should be removed as soon as possible.

CONCLUSIONS

Considering that one of the causes of dropping out of university is the poor adaptation of the student to the learning activity specific to the university environment (the university lays more emphasis on the individual effort of the students; the high difficulty of some subjects in the curriculum compared to those studied in high school; extensive bibliographies for many courses included in the curriculum, etc.), an aspect that is maintained in the context of online courses, we consider that this aspect will exert the same degree of influence on the phenomenon of dropping out of university. However, apart from this cause which contributes to the creation of the phenomenon known as university dropout, there are other causes which are relevant in the context of online education, aspects whose dynamics may intensify the phenomenon of university dropout both at the level of higher education institutions and at national level.

One of the reasons for dropping out of university is linked to the socio-economic situation of the families from which students at risk of dropping out of university originate. Romania is one of the EU countries with a poverty rate that places it at the tail end of the Union, a phenomenon that also affects young people from poor families who have chosen to become university students.

The economic data provided by the European Commission on this year's economic forecasts for Romania indicate that while in 2021 there will be a 3.8% increase in GDP, a number of Romanian experts in economics believe that the consequences of the crisis generated by the COVID 19 pandemic will be strongly felt especially in the second half of 2021 and will produce negative effects in several sectors of the Romanian economy. Under these circumstances, being affected financially also the families with young people who have the quality of students, the number of students who will drop out of university will undoubtedly increase. Also, the lack or scarcity of financial resources makes it difficult not only to pay the tuition fees (in the case of the students who are on the annual fee), but also to purchase a computer by the students who have this need, in order to be able to participate in online courses, aspects which, therefore, will certainly lead some young people to decide to drop out of higher education.

The lack of the direct contact of the student with university life, as is the case in traditional education, will, in our opinion, amplify the phenomenon of university dropout in the context of e-learning. The virtual university campus, the place where online courses take place, cannot have the magic of a "real amphitheatre" where students enter the traditional paradigm of university education and will never be able to create those strong informal links between students and between students and professors, relationships that confer a lot of charm to student life. Online education, without being considered as an inefficient educational field, is a great challenge for the Romanian education system at all levels, as well as a new start, yet we believe that from the point of view of university dropout, it

will not contribute to lowering the percentage of early school leavers. But, over time, the improvement of the teachers in this direction, alongside the gradual reduction of the negative effects that other factors have on university dropouts, may allow us to look with optimism at the way e-learning in Romania will develop towards the year 2030.

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