

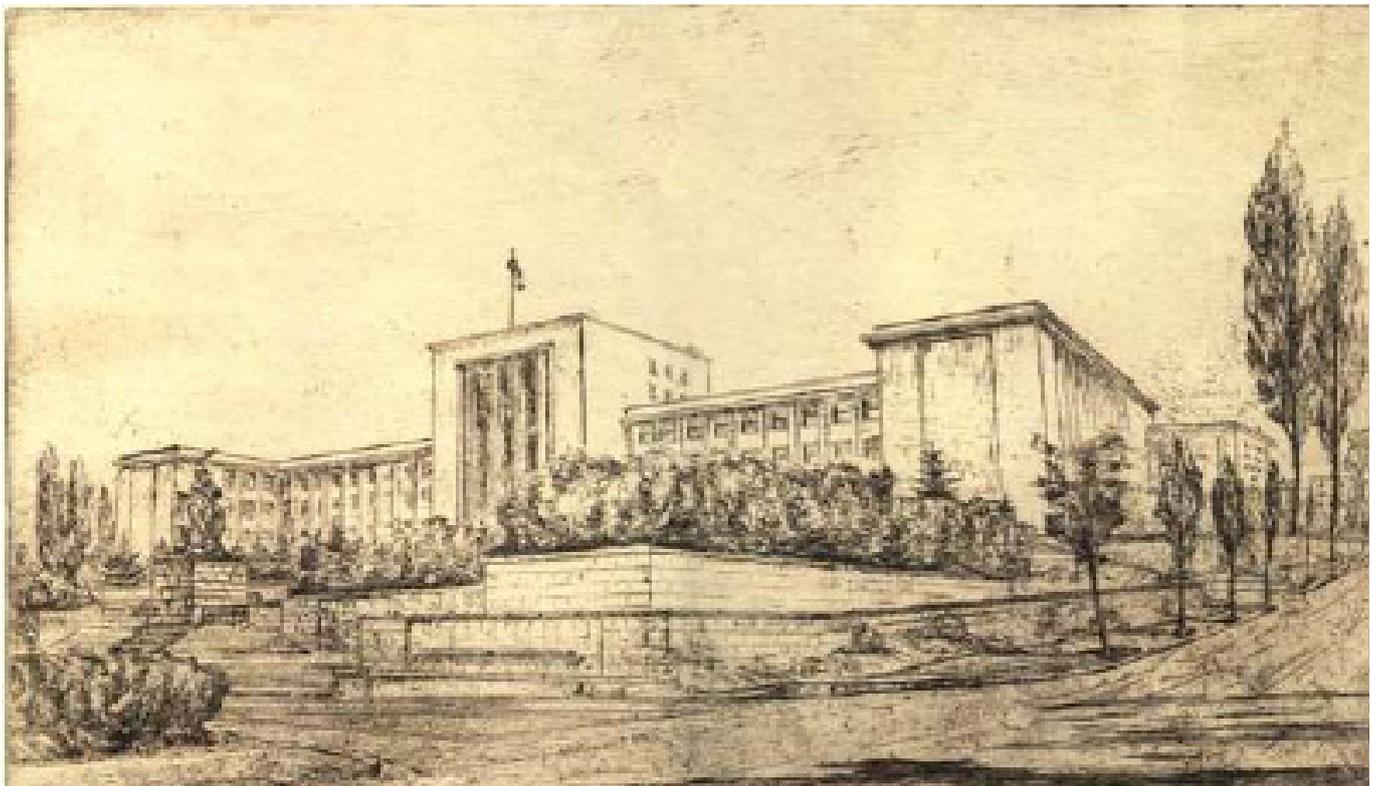
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## ONE ARMY, TWO SYSTEMS. MILITARY JUSTICE IN TRANSYLVANIA, DURING THE SECOND CAMPAIGN OF THE WAR OF REUNIFICATION 1918-1920

Col. (ret) Prof. Ion GIURCĂ, PhD\*  
Col. Liviu CORCIU, PhD Candidate\*\*

In the middle of the campaign for Transylvania's liberation, the Governing Council of Sibiu had decided to support the efforts of the Romanian army and ordered the establishment of a Territorial General Commandment meant to begin recruitment in Transylvania, Banat and the Romanian provinces in Hungary, in order to constitute an unit of volunteers. Ulteriorly, out of their ranks, 6th and 7th Army Corps have been established, recruited exclusively from Transylvanians regardless of their nationality. Under Decree I passed by the Governing Council of Sibiu, laws, ordinances, regulations and legal statutes issued prior to December 18th 1918, when Transylvania was proclaimed independent of Budapest, were temporarily in force. Within this context, militaries of Transylvanian divisions were subject to military jurisdiction under Austro-Hungarian Military Criminal Code of 1855, whereas Romanian militaries who were under the command of Transylvanian Commandment of Troops were subject to the jurisdiction of Romanian laws, implicitly to the Code of military justice.

**Keywords:** military justice; discipline; disobedience; court martial; campaign.

The topic approached in this current paper is specific not only to the military body, but also to the entire legislation within Romanian territories united subsequent to the War of National Reunification. At the time the Great Unification took place in the Old Kingdom, the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code of 1864 were into force, in Transylvania the Hungarian Criminal Code of 1878 and the Criminal Procedure Code of 1896, in Bessarabia the Russian Criminal Code of 1903 and the Criminal Procedure Code of 1864, whereas in Bucovina, the Austrian Criminal Code of 1852 and the Processual Code of 1873<sup>1</sup>.

We will attempt to continue presenting, the way we had learned in our documentation, the links between legislative inconsistencies from the two territories inhabited by Romanians, the lack of endowment with specialized personnel within martial courts and the disciplinary stance of some of the volunteer units comprised by Transylvanian divisions, during the second campaign of the Reunion War.

According to the provisions laid down under the armistice signed in Beograd on November

13<sup>th</sup> 1918, across the flow line of Mureş river a demarcation line was established which underwent a sinuous course, from Rodnei Mountains, to the North, crossing Bistriţa, Târgu Mureş, Alba Iulia, Deva, southern Arad and further westwards towards Szeged and Pecs, line which set up the boundaries up to which the Romanian army could march forward in Transylvania and Banat.

The very first military actions in Transylvania were carried out by subunits of the Border Guard Corps HQ, starting from October 29<sup>th</sup>/November 11<sup>th</sup> 1918, having the mission to enable the concentration<sup>2</sup> of the main forces of 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and 1<sup>st</sup> Light Infantry Division in western Carpathians.

The first elements fit for the value of a reinforced infantry regiment of 1<sup>st</sup> Light Infantry Division commanded by General Aristide Lecca, respectively, from 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division commanded by General Traian Moşoiu, Transylvanian at heart, crossed the Carpathians on November 10<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> 1918. Their task was to secure an operational alignment on the flow line of Mureş River, and to concentrate their efforts<sup>3</sup> towards the spring of Mureş River, within the Topliţa-Ditrău-Gheorghieni area, respectively, the spring of Olt River, within the Sândominic-Dăneşti-Miercurea Ciuc area.

Without encountering serious opposition, on November 17<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> 1918, the elements belonging

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to 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division which went forward entered Reghin, and two days afterwards Târgu Mures; on November 17<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> 1918, 1<sup>st</sup> Light Infantry Regiment occupied Miercurea Ciuc, whereas on the same day, 6<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Regiment occupied Braşov.

Due to Hungarian infringement of the provisions of the Beograd Armistice Convention, on November 29<sup>th</sup>/December 12<sup>th</sup> 1918, the Romanian General Headquarters solicited<sup>4</sup> the Danube Army Headquarters, the agreement of Allied Powers to cross the demarcation line established across the flow line of Mureş River, both for replying to the appeal of the *Consiliul Dirigent* that had solicited an immediate intervention, and for counter-tackling the reorganization and concentration of Hungarian forces within the concealment of delimitation line, and by this way to hinder the spreading and propaganda of anarchist ideas.

Within this context, the Romanian General Headquarters ordered the Transylvanian Troops HQ, established on December 11<sup>th</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> 1918, to occupy all Romanian territories which had been part of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy, save for Banat, already occupied by French and Serbian forces, in order to ensure order, life and welfare of inhabitants. On December 11<sup>th</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> 1918, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division soldiers entered Cluj, and in Sibiu, General Traian Mosoiu was welcomed as a hero.

Besides all the remobilized and established division HQs, starting January 1919, courts martial were to be established in order to sanction all infringements of provisions of military laws and regulations.

### National Guards

Romanian Army units recruited in Transylvania, also known as Transylvanian Divisions, were subsequent to the national guards which were first established<sup>5</sup> on October 18<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> 1918, the process going further on in November and December. At rural level, the guards were structured according to territorial principles, in each commune mostly inhabited by Romanians, a national guard was to be established, with the mandatory requirement that the number should not exceed 5% of commune population.

The guards had no special uniforms, therefore using either the old Austro-Hungarian uniform

or civilian attire, but had the obligation to wear a tricolor armband on the left arm, on which the words "Romanian National Guard" were written.

The efficiency of these structures which reached by end of November 1918 a number of 8,000-10,000 people was proven when it came to the defence of freedom of movement of the delegates from the Great National Gathering from Alba Iulia, when using armed forces, the liberated the railway blockades from Cucurdea, Teiuş, Podul Mureş and Coşlar, previously occupied by Szekler forces. In the meantime, more than 3,000 National Guard members ensured the order and safety of the delegates in Alba Iulia<sup>6</sup>.

Therefore, after the surge generated by the national feeling had been calmed down, after a decision<sup>7</sup> of the Public Defence and Security Sector within the *Consiliul Dirigent* from December 9<sup>th</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> 1918, the gradual abolition of Romanian National Guards within liberated territories followed, which had become a danger, as recorded in a report<sup>8</sup> by Transylvanian Troops HQ, although they had been truly useful at the beginning under the enthusiasm of the revolution.

The National Guards had been replaced by specialized gendarme and police forces, although their implementation lasted a long time. However, Transylvania lacked proper organization, especially because most of the administration had been settled with Hungarian clerks, which had retreated together with the former sovereignty.

That was why, *Consiliul Dirigent* called up<sup>9</sup> Romanian officers and militaries of all ranks, which had served in the former Austro-Hungarian army, thus organizing 15 companies of Transylvanian gendarmerie, which had the mission of disarming population and replacing local national guards.

Out of these forces, later on, the first Transylvanian gendarme regiments was established, headquartered in Braşov, Cluj and Arad, which gradually began to replace operational forces within services of maintaining order and the safety of communication ways within Transylvania.

In the Austro-Hungarian army, characterized by a complex structure and a multinational character<sup>10</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 63<sup>rd</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> Regiments were exclusively Romanian, to which 13 more regiments were added comprising over 50% Romanians, initially totalizing, at the beginning of the war 72,000 militaries<sup>11</sup>.



In 1915 Romanian forces comprising Austro-Hungarian units reached 200,000-300,000 militaries, who had taken part in the Eastern Front Campaign, in Galicia, but also on the Balkan and Italian fronts, being praised both in official communications as well as by Hungarian press.

In an article published on August 18<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> 1915 in the *Adevărul* newspaper by publicist Ion Greco, entitled "Romanian Regiments Sentenced to Death. What does Hungarian Praise Mean", the public was shown the battle course of one of these regiments, praised by Hungarian press, according to the author, only after having been "molten" by countless assaults against Russian cannons: "Because Hungarian press (...) praises Romanian soldiers only after they are dead (...). Hungarian praise towards a Romanian regiment means that a new regiment is sentenced to die and that sentence performance had begun"<sup>12</sup>.

However, the bravery of Romanian soldiers serving the Austro-Hungarian army was also recognized by imperial authorities, 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Alba Iulia being the only one from the entire dualist monarchy bearing the golden medal on the flag, and for its contribution in the Galician Campaign, the flag of the regiment was decorated by emperor Wilhelm II with "The Iron Cross"<sup>13</sup>.

### Establishment of Transylvanian Divisions

Simultaneously with Romanian army action in Transylvania, *Consiliul Dirigent* decided to support the liberating efforts and ordered the establishment<sup>14</sup> in Sibiu, on January 5<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> 1919 of the Territorial General Command (known in some documents as the A.B.U. Territorial Command), under the command of General Ioan Boeriu, having the mission to start recruiting in Transylvania, Banat and within territories inhabited by Romanians in Hungary, in order to create some Transylvanian volunteering units.

Approximately in the same period, Law-Decree no.345 of January 25<sup>th</sup>/ February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1919, decided, following to be subsequently ratified by the legislative bodies, the establishment of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Army Corps, with 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Divisions, exclusively recruited amongst Transylvanian inhabitants<sup>15</sup>.

The bill had been initially drawn up due to the proposal of the Ministry of War of that time, Army Corps General, Arthur Văitoianu, and was meant

to regulate the rights and duties of Transylvanians when exerting military service, and sought at the same time to apply Romanian military organization within a new territory, of principles of organizational and recruitment laws, as well as those referring to position of officers, allowances, marriage, pensions, etc.

Although the provisions from art.2, Law-Decree no. 345 established that all Romanian military regulations were also applicable to these units, the lawmaker seems to have taken into account the impartial reality of the situation, involving also a certain transitional stance, which was to be regulated under ministerial decisions.

The impartial reality of the situation was taking into account both the fact that those concerned did not know the laws, as well as the necessity of interoperability of the new structures, that most volunteers came from ex-POWs from the Serbian, Italian or Galician fronts. To those mentioned above, one must add the lack of training of the officers and soldiers under the regulations of the Old Kingdom, as well as language barriers, taking into account that the troop was to be recruited from more nationalities, save for Hungarian.

In order to implement Law-Decree no. 345, Ministerial Decision no. 40 was issued, which established firstly the constitution of 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions, as well as the method of operating with officers, organic composition of troop corps, weaponry, ammunition, and equipment to be distributed<sup>16</sup>, etc.

Alexandru Hanzu, former Austrian army colonel, originally from Săliște, Sibiu county, who became General of the Romanian Army on April 11<sup>th</sup> 1919, had been appointed commander of 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

Dănilă Papp, former colonel in the Austrian Great General Staff, professor within the Military Academy of Vienna, and remarkable commander on the Russian front<sup>17</sup>, originally from Bihor county, promoted in turn to General of the Romanian Army on April 11<sup>th</sup> 1919, was appointed as commander of 18<sup>th</sup> Division.

Military Justice within the two divisions, according to art.9 of Decision no. 40, was to be administrated according to Romanian Code of Military Justice, by courts martial, inspired by those from the Romanian Army, but having implemented some measures imposed by the transitional period.



In order to implement the provisions of the aforementioned two norms, on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1919, in Sibiu, the Organization Service of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Army Corps (6-7 OS) was established, under the command of general Ioan Boeriu, directly subordinated to The Ministry of War, having the mission of coordinating mobilization, equipping and training activities of Transylvanian divisions, but which also targeted unitary military organization of Transylvania, Banat and Maramureș<sup>18</sup>.

Until March 27<sup>th</sup> 1919, mobilization of 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions' units had been mainly done, their forces comprising, besides volunteers arrived in 1917 and trained in Moldavia, many militaries from the former Austro-Hungarian army, demobilized after the Armistice of Villa Giusti.

The Structure of those divisions was almost identical with the structure of infantry divisions existing within the Romanian army, comprising also infantry, artillery regiments, light infantry and engineer's battalions, as well as a campaign hospital.

Distribution of troops in peace garrisons of 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division's units was the following: 81<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment in Dej, 82<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment in Târgu Mureș, 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment in Cluj, 84<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Bistrița. To these artillery units and a light infantry battalion were added, totalizing 10,590 men<sup>19</sup>.

18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division distribution was 89<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Brasov, 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Sibiu, 91<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment in Alba Iulia, 92<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment in Orastie, to which there were added artillery units, a pioneer battalion and a light infantry battalion, totalizing 11,210 men<sup>20</sup>.

As a consequence to the worrying evolution on the Transylvanian front, since on March 25<sup>th</sup> 1919 the new government in Budapest had declared war to all neighboring countries, the Romanian General Headquarters ordered 6-7 OS to mobilize the two divisions starting with April 1<sup>st</sup> 1919, after which within 10 days they were to be at the disposal of operational HQs<sup>21</sup>.

Therefore, on April 1<sup>st</sup> 1919, 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions were taken out of 6-7 O.S. subordination, being directly operationally and administratively subordinated to the Transylvanian Troops HQ, respectively, to the Romanian General Headquarters, after which they were to be assigned to missions and to carry out military actions together with the Old Kingdom units<sup>22</sup>.

### One army, two systems of military justice

16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions left for the operational area, having military justice officers in order to implement laws according to the provisions of Law-Decree no. 345 of January 25<sup>th</sup>/ February 7<sup>th</sup> 1919, more precisely according to the Romanian military regulations and laws, when the units subordinated to the Transylvanian Troops HQ were located on the Apuseni Mountains' alignment. A court martial<sup>23</sup> had been also created within the vicinity of O.S. 6-7, but which was functioning according to Hungarian laws<sup>24</sup>. General Gheorghe Mărdărescu, commander of the Transylvanian Troops HQ was not very satisfied with its performance, having even solicited assignment of officers from the Old Kingdom with legal experience "because the way things work in that service, leaves excessively to be desired"<sup>25</sup>.

The situation was known, because ever since February 5<sup>th</sup> 1919, when he was the commander of the Territorial General Command, subordinated to *Consiliul Dirigent*, General Ioan Boeriu, initiated a report, registered as no. 44 of February 18<sup>th</sup> 1919, both to the Ministry of War and *Consiliul Dirigent*.

He referred<sup>26</sup> to the consequences of the Decree no. I entitled "ecree about the temporary functioning of public services, law implementation, clerks and language utilization", actually about the fact that the laws, ordinances, regulations and legal statutes issued prior to October 18<sup>th</sup>/ 31<sup>st</sup> 1918, date when Transylvania had been proclaimed independent of Budapest, had temporary remained into force "suiting the interest of public order and to ensure rightful continuation"<sup>27</sup>.

Therefore, according to those recorded in the report, militaries of Transylvanian divisions which were in the constitutive process, were subject to military jurisdiction under Austro-Hungarian Military Criminal Code, promulgated on January 15<sup>th</sup> 1855. To its provisions the Hungarian law article XXI ex. 1890, regarding punishment for disobedience towards the call up under flag order and the seducement to such an offence, the Hungarian law article XXX ex. 1912, regarding criminal provisions of the law upon armed power and other laws concerning fulfillment of military service obligations, as well as the Hungarian law article XXXII ex. 1912, regarding military criminal procedure were added.



The report caused no change of the attitude of the *Consiliul Dirigent* which, subsequently, on February 21<sup>st</sup> 1919 issued the "Order no. 30301 regarding military justice", which regulated the way it was about to administer military justice within the entire territory "added" to the Old Kingdom (Transylvania, Banat, the territories inhabited by Romanians in Hungary)<sup>28</sup>, subjected from a military-administrative point of view to 6,7 O.S.

Therefore, in Sibiu, a military court was to be established under provisions of Austro-Hungarian law, its jurisdiction was to comprise all the militaries subjected to O.S.6,7, as well as civilians who under existing laws were eligible on the side of the military judicial forums.

The order was also mentioning the fact that, given the mobilization stance, the court was to follow the campaign procedure, under chapter XXVII of Hungarian law military criminal procedure, the O.S. 6,7 commander having the processual attributions of the upper echelon.

The order also established a subsidiary in Cluj of the military court from Sibiu, in charge with causes concerning troops quartered in Cluj, Mureş and Solnoc-Dăbâca<sup>29</sup> counties, and established a military prison facility in Cluj and Sibiu garrisons.

We need to state the fact that according to art.59 of the Military Criminal Code of the former Austro-Hungarian army<sup>30</sup>, arrest in garrison imprisonment was applied to soldiers ranked up to sergeant, to those who had been subject to military demotion as an auxiliary punishment, wives and children of all those previously mentioned, as well as to civilians for acts within the competence of military justice.

Minimum duration of arrest was 24 hours, and maximum duration was 6 months, within special circumstances this term could be exceeded. Also, according to art.77 under the same Military Criminal Code, the imprisonment punishment could simultaneously be added several "aggravations", such as fasting, when the convict was fed several days in a row only with bread and water, the hard sheet, not more than twice a week, solitary confinement, not more than 14 days in a row, labor in the barracks or camp, etc.

Coming back to the way of applying military justice in the Transylvanian campaign, more precisely to the simultaneous and specific existence of every law-making entity, both in Transylvania, as well as in the Old Kingdom, of the own regulatory

framework within the domain, under legislation applicable within its territory, General Ioan Boeriu initiated a new step.

This time, together with the emergence of Law-Decree no. 345 of January 25<sup>th</sup>/February 7<sup>th</sup> 1919 and the issuance by the Ministry of Law of the "Decision no. 40 of January 20<sup>th</sup>/ February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1919, which we had presented before, he addressed to the *Consiliul Dirigent* by Report no. 11442 of April 21<sup>st</sup> 1919, informing the Justice Sector which was comprised within that there are inconsistencies regarding military justice administration to United Romania's troops and formations<sup>31</sup>, between provisions of Decree no. I of January 24<sup>th</sup>/February 6<sup>th</sup> 1918 and the provisions of Law-Decree no. 345, respectively of Decision no. 40.

General Ioan Boeriu, informed the *Consiliul Dirigent* about the legal framework applicable to military justice, confirming the prior agreement of the Romanian General Headquarters, communicated to the Chief of the General Staff of the Territorial General Command, at that time colonel Dănilă Papp, regarding the approval for Transylvanian divisions to establish, in their initial stance, their own courts martial.

Explaining to *Consiliul Dirigent* the possibility that Transylvanian Divisions, acting within military circumstances alongside the Old Kingdom divisions, as required by operational interests, to subordinate some of these units and the other way around, General Ioan Boeriu was wondering whether "is it good and efficient for Transylvanian divisions within criminal justice operational area to follow other laws as the divisions of the Old Kingdom?"<sup>32</sup>.

Out of his explanations, one could notice the incompatibility of the legal framework regarding military justice administration, both in terms of competence, as well as criminal procedure. According to article XXXII of Austro-Hungarian law, in campaign procedure, criminal justice fell under the competence of the division or army corps commander, through the legal officers that were nominated to him, situation in which soldiers from the Old Kingdom, reaching in the operational course the orders of a Transylvanian division commander, should have been judged following the former Austro-Hungarian army laws, which would have represented an infringement of the principles of the Romanian Constitution.



Things were no different even from the point of view of criminal procedure, taking into account at least two factors. First, the Austro-Hungarian army military criminal procedure had no way of appeal, whereas the Romanian Code of military Justice had the option of recourse to the Permanent Revision Council. The argument was solid, since the provisions of the High Royal Decree no. 2930 of September 16<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> 1916, respectively, of the High Royal Decree no. 7 of January 7<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> 1917, under which the right to recourse had been suspended, respectively lifted, had been abrogated under Law no. 2254 of August 28<sup>th</sup> 1918<sup>33</sup>.

The second factor concerned the procedure itself, precisely the fact that if the competent commander had submitted a sentence, deemed by him as being illegal, to the upper echelon in order to be quashed, according to the former Austro-Hungarian army military criminal procedure, this processual attribution would have been assigned to the commander of the Transylvanian Troops HQ, being thus faced with applying a foreign law, aspect forbidden by the same Constitution.

"I therefore suggest, Ioan Boeriu was concluding his report, to decree that military justice within Transylvanian division and unitary units located in operational area (...) criminal military justice to be made according to Old Kingdom laws, and to the other Transylvanian troops, respectively troops outside operational area, as well as the civilians subject to military jurisdiction in this territory, to have the laws applied as decreed by *Consiliul Dirigent*"<sup>34</sup>.

Although *Consiliul Dirigent* allowed within the text of "Decree no. I" the possibility for some derogations, explaining that laws, ordinances, regulations and legal statutes issued prior to October 18<sup>th</sup> 1918, were temporary into force, "with the exception of those comprised by the current decree, and in other ulterior decrees", there were no substantial amendments, neither were there any exceptions notified regarding military justice administration.

The Governing College persevered in maintaining its own jurisdiction and procedures regarding Transylvanian divisions, although there seem to have been opportunities of legislative harmonization. Specifically, another bill initiated by General Ioan Boeriu, under which he was asked for some modification of worth limit for offences

"originating from will of desire"<sup>35</sup>, motivating that they had been established in 1895, when the Austro-Hungarian Military Criminal Code was promulgated, and no longer corresponded to economic and social references of 1919, had been adopted by *Consiliul Dirigent* under "Decree no. XIII" of May 20<sup>th</sup> 1919, entitled "Decree regarding modification of some provisions of the Austro-Hungarian military criminal code, amended on January 15<sup>th</sup> 1855, and of the military criminal procedure applicable to the Romanian territorial armies from Transylvania, Banat, and the Territories inhabited by Romanians in Hungary"<sup>36</sup>.

The only modification brought to the administration of military justice, under this new decree, was that sentences pronounced by courts martials of Transylvanian divisions were to be no longer given "in the name of the emperor", but "in the name of the law".

#### **Disciplinary status within Transylvanian divisions**

Legal and procedural uncertainty among Transylvanian divisions had been also reflected in the disciplinary status of some of the newly-established units, especially because the ideas of the Bolshevik revolution were shattering not only Hungary, but also the entire European continent and naturally, they also affected the Romanian soldiers from the former Austro-Hungarian army.

The morale, the material and disciplinary status of Transylvanian forces, distributed in garrisons within internal area, were illustrated in a report from General Ioan Boeriu addressed to the Transylvanian Troops HQ, about an incident where 81<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment soldiers had brutally assaulted some gendarmes: "Most of these elements are soldiers who returned from Russian captivity, who had been through the Hungarian revolution filled with impulses hostile to the sovereignty of state. Their disposition towards revolt is also nourished by the deplorable circumstances the soldiers from this garrison are facing (Dej garrison), most of them are improperly dressed, barefoot and without bedsheet (...)"<sup>37</sup>.

The state of mind was not very different between 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry divisions distributed in operational area. By a telegram addressed to the Transylvanian Troops HQ, General Traian Moşoiu informed on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1919 that Transylvanian



forces from some units belonging to 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry divisions manifest lack of discipline, the officers from these units "being morally and materially unable to hinder them"<sup>38</sup>.

In order to remove this evil which was in his opinion "the germ of disorder", General Traian Moşoiu suggested that for each division, one country detachment of gendarmes to be attached, under the command of at least 3 to 4 energetic gendarme officers, who would be able to immediately repress any abuse.

On the same day, also in a telegram, the resolution of General Gheorghe Mărdărescu was communicated: "It shall be ordered to immediately report the measures adopted. I hereby declare the division commanders directly responsible for slipping on this slope. Courts martial, they also need to function and repress with their entire rigor these acts of wildness"<sup>39</sup>.

As consequence, the commanders of the two divisions were notified<sup>40</sup> by "Order no. 5090" of April 25<sup>th</sup> 1919, about their subordinated troops misbehavior and also about the concern of the superior echelon regarding the order and discipline amongst them, since the it gravely affect the prestige and honour of the Romanian army.

Besides, 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry divisions had been ever since April 1<sup>st</sup> 1919 at the disposal of the Transylvanian Troops HQ and had already left for the operational area, according to what the report recorded, legal officers being assigned, in order to apply justice according to the aforementioned laws (laws applied in the former Austro-Hungarian army).

General Dănilă Papp's reaction to the accusations brought against his subordinates came no later, so that, on April 28<sup>th</sup> 1919, he reported the situation to General Gheorghe Mărdărescu<sup>41</sup>.

Although he accepted that there were some units where the soldiers had committed acts of indiscipline which were under investigation, according to 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division commander the situation of his troops was no different from the entirely Transylvanian social behavior of that time. That behavior was facing a void when it came to authority, not only in administration, but also in all sectors of social life, both as having been proclaimed independent of Budapest, as well as due to the Bolshevik revolution, which was fully underway on Hungarian grounds.

As far as troop discipline was concerned, although their gradual mobilization had been attempted, taking into account their education ever since they had entered the units, wrote General Dănilă Papp, the operational events sped the process up. The daily arrival within units of approximately 200-400 recruits, doubled by the lack of officers, not more than 20 for each regiment, out of which most did not yet know Romanian, lack of non-commissioned officers and the need of time in order to train all of them, equally contributed to the situation.

Another cause, claimed General Dănilă Papp, was the request of Transylvanian Troops HQ to have over 5,000 people involved in guard missions of the railways due to the March 15<sup>th</sup> 1919 strike, mission which caused the training to fall from the top interest. This aspect had been reflected also in the disciplinary stance: "A systematic discipline implementation, which according to the morale of the people would have been necessary, could not be made and the regiments proceeded untrained to the front. The guilty ones shall always receive the deserved punishment"<sup>42</sup>.

Having all these assurances, at the beginning of July 1919, despite being located on Tisa River, in the vicinity of Szolnok, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division still did not have a military prosecutor (royal commissioner), although, the Transylvanian Troops HQ had sent a telegram to the Romanian General Headquarters in order to receive one "or at least a substitute of military prosecutor", according to the request "since this court cannot currently function because the actual military prosecutor does not know the [Romanian] laws"<sup>43</sup>.

In the absence of any explicit order this telegram may be considered a proof that Romanian General HQ did not accepted a dual administration of the military justice, or at least did not accept it for 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> divisions, which were subordinated through the Transylvanian Troops HQ, already involved in military actions alongside Old Kingdom's units.

The administration of military justice within 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division seems to have actually represented an issue since on July 14<sup>th</sup> 1919, the Transylvanian Troops HQ sent another telegram to the Romanian General Headquarters, in order to tell the fact that, although three assignment requests for a substitute of military prosecutor had been transmitted to the JAG's office of the 18<sup>th</sup>



Infantry Division court martial, the request was still unsolved.

This new step had been initiated as a consequence to a new request from General Dănilă Papp, who had warned the Transylvanian Troops HQ, that "due to dysfunctional military justice, discipline is highly jeopardized"<sup>44</sup>.

Being convinced in turn by the urgent character and the justness of the submitted arguments, General Gheorghe Mărdărescu, emphasized towards the Romanian General Headquarters the necessity of distributing one substitute of military prosecutor to each prosecutor's office of 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions' courts martial, who was to guide the work, otherwise they would not function.

However, court martial of the 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was functioning or at least this can be understood from "Report no. 710" of June 26<sup>th</sup> 1919 issued by General Gheorghe Mărdărescu, with the purpose of informing the Romanian General Headquarters about the performance of the death sentence of three militaries, sergeants Gondosch Mihail and Boschzer Mihail, respectively, soldier Friss Nistor. They had been judged on June 14<sup>th</sup> 1919 by 16<sup>th</sup> Division court martial, having been found guilty of "agitating the spirit of their comrades, urging them to no longer obey military laws, to kill officers or leave the front"<sup>45</sup>, and their sentences had been communicated to all divisions in order to be read in front of the troops "under arms".

Within 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, the Transylvanian Troops HQ had requested the Romanian General Headquarters ever since June 8<sup>th</sup> 1919, to send a military prosecutor together with all the necessary laws and regulations, because the division had reported that due to these shortages the court martial could not function properly<sup>46</sup>.

With all these repeated requests, it was only on July 5<sup>th</sup> 1919 when the JAG managed to select several officers: 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant (r) Albert Lee and 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant (r) Ion Dumitrescu, for 16<sup>th</sup> Division court martial, respectively 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant (r) Constantin Balescu, for 18<sup>th</sup> Division court martial, but the officers had not arrived yet, and other licensed officers, who had already been mobilized, were not available<sup>47</sup>.

16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division court martial was functioning ever since July 5<sup>th</sup> following the Romanian Code of military justice, according to a

telegram<sup>48</sup> dated August 20<sup>th</sup> 1919, and assignment, was as it follows: Captain Nicolae Negreanu, 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant Albert Lee and 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant Ion Dumitrescu. On August 28<sup>th</sup> 1919, this personnel was completed by Captain Aurel Bozac, former *auditor* (military prosecutor) within the Austro-Hungarian army, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Vasile Crăciun, magister on probation and 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenants Alexandru Țandrău, Emil Furcaș and Valeriu Simonetti, all three law students<sup>49</sup>.

However, it seemed like there was no sign of solid results, since with "Telegram no. 876" of October 7<sup>th</sup> 1919, the JAG from the General Headquarters addressed to 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division commander, warning him about the unreliability of the personnel of his division's court martial due to which: "many swindlers are on the verge of averting punishment"<sup>50</sup>.

Since on July 20<sup>th</sup> 1919 the offensive of the Red Hungarian Army had begun, which had succeeded to develop more bridge heads on the eastern bank of Tisa River, Transylvanian Troops HQ was submitting to the Romanian General Headquarters through "Telegram no. 8152" of July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1919, the report no. 778 by General Dănilă Papp, regarding 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division situation, where the state of spirit was not good at all: "this division's infantry is completely demoralized"<sup>51</sup>.

"The wind of revolution affected these troops", motivated<sup>52</sup> General Dănilă Papp, attempting to explain to his superiors what caused these states, "destroying even the last remnant of discipline from their soul".

Among other causes that had generated that attitude of the troops, General Dănilă Papp also blamed it on lack of necessary time for organization and training, after the recruitment process had ended, within regiments, the divisional forces being brought directly from the front, their fatigue, taking into account that Transylvanians were at war for five years, as well as lack of an adequate motivation, because the regiments of the division operated West from Tisa River, "a region soldiers know that it won't belong to us"<sup>53</sup>.

Last but not least, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division commander was mentioning that up to a great extent, the fact that until the date of the issuance of the report, July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1919, not even a single case of indiscipline had been brought before the court martial of the division, which had been banned

from judging according to Hungarian laws, and personnel to know the laws and procedures of the Old Kingdom had not arrived until then, also contributed.

The disciplinary situation of the forces comprised by the Transylvanian divisions seemed to worry the Romanian General Headquarters, or at least this way one could interpret "Order no. 9732" of July 24<sup>th</sup> 1919. Being inspected by Transylvanian troops, General Constantin Prezan, the Chief of the Romanian General HQ had telegraphically ordered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army Corps to immediately send to the Transylvanian divisions four substitutes military prosecutors, "from the skillful, energetic and experienced magistrates"<sup>54</sup> because when lacking competent personnel, the courts martial of the two divisions could not function.

"It cannot be punished as deserved" was recorded in the telegram<sup>55</sup> through which the order had been transmitted, "the various cases of deviation from duty, theft, fleeing from the front, indiscipline, desertions, etc. which are abundant in these divisions". According to the specifications from the order, 2<sup>nd</sup> Army Corps was to select officers on the same day, according to mentioned criteria, among the magistrates of the courts martial of subordinated divisions, those being about to go to the designated units even the following day.

We are required to mention that not all Transylvanian units had manifested a low combat spirit and a precarious disciplinary state. One of the units with forces recruited exclusively in Transylvania distinguishing from the others was the Regiment "Beiuș", made up exclusively of Romanian from the region of Apuseni Mountains, volunteers originating from the areas of Brad, Baia de Criș, Campeni, Abrud and Hălmagiu<sup>56</sup>.

On June 18<sup>th</sup> 1919, General Ștefan Panaitescu, chief of staff of the Transylvanian Troops HQ, was telegraphically reporting to the Romanian General Headquarters about the performance of the regiment in the battles on Tisa River: "Beiuș Regiment behaved very well in the operations it had performed (...). They took part in the attacks of Csucs-Borosbebes-Ocsod and they stood out especially when attacking the bridge head from Szolnok, supported by their own artillery, they had outflanked and attacked the enemy who had been supported by the various artillery units deployed on both banks of Tisa River. In this attack the *Beiuș*

Regiment went forward under enemy fire in perfect order without halting 6 kms on a smooth ground (open ground) until reaching bayonets. Out of the enemy forces, only those who had chariots at their disposal escaped"<sup>57</sup>.

A possible explanation of this difference in attitude seems to have been, besides an adequate training, the moral preparation of the troop. Before marching to battle, they had been gathered in the Orthodox Church from Țebea in order to take The Oath, with the regiment flag emerging from Avram Iancu's tomb. There, Colonel Gheorghe Rascoviceanu, commander of 9<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Regiment, told them as it follows: "Soldiers, I hereby tell you today under the evergreen oak of Horia the Martyr, before the tomb of Avram Iancu, former King of the Mountains. I hereby tell you today in the great hour, in the supreme hour of the redemption of our Folk. And I hereby tell you: may all your limbs tremble before the memory of all those who during centuries had whitened with their bones, the land of the Folk long and wide to get where we are and to become what we are. Be proud that fate has still chosen you, people of Apuseni Mountains, has decided that you be the first from all Transylvania, to do The Oath of faith and sacrifice for our beloved Homeland (...)"<sup>58</sup>.

The regiment had been formed in Brad, between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Regiments, and had constituted ever since a part of 4<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade, taking part in all exercises, marches and maneuvers, day and night together with them, which seem to have influenced the morale both of the troop as well as officers<sup>59</sup>, considered by Transylvanian Troops HQ as very good ones. Besides, General Ștefan Panaitescu was reporting that during the 40-day period as long as they remained in direct contact with light infantry regiments, between officers and the *Beiuș* Regiment troops, the most graceful harmony reigned.

### Conclusions

From the chronological exposition of the steps related to this topic, one should understand that at the moment the two legal acts had been issued, "Law-Decree no. 345" of January 25<sup>th</sup>/ February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1919, respectively "Decision no. 40" of January 26<sup>th</sup>/ February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1919, *Consiliul Dirigent* had already published "Decree no. I" under which Hungarian legislation, laws, ordinances, regulations and legal



statutes issued prior to October 18<sup>th</sup> 1918, were temporary in force.

However, one cannot support the idea that when the bills of the two legal acts had been drafted, the minister of war, General Arthur Văitoianu, could have been aware with the way military justice was administered within Transylvanian divisions, especially that the report of General Ioan Boeriu addressed to the Ministry of War, although dated February 18<sup>th</sup> 1919, had been registered by the Ministry of War no sooner than March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1919, under no. 7095.

Also, nothing entitles us to assert the hypothesis according to which, had he known these aspects, General Arthur Văitoianu would have adopted another measure, unlike that which, starting from January 24<sup>th</sup>/February 6<sup>th</sup> 1919, all regulations and all Romanian military laws became also applicable to the units comprised by Transylvanian divisions.

The system of a common military justice, difficult to be applied to the two entities which made up the Transylvanian Troops HQ, and we refer here to the regular troops from the Old Kingdom, and the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Army Corps Transylvanian divisions, had a visible impact upon the disciplinary state from some units of the latter.

Poorly equipped, with a reduced number of assigned officers, aspect which could be found more visibly within the precarious discipline level, but above all, with the troop marked by long years of war and affected by the wind of Bolshevik revolution, some of these units have not confirmed, being withdrawn from the front in order to carry out a training period, where they were used for guarding objectives, as well as to other preponderantly-administrative activities.

It is worth mentioning that in June 1919, in order to reestablish military order and discipline, other types of measures were taken, besides warning division commanders. Therefore, within 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, dismissal of all four commanders of infantry regiments was ordered, Colonels Pompert Bersan, Carol Divisioli, Adolf Reiner and Henrich Brandsch, who were replaced by officers from the Old Kingdom Romanian army structures<sup>60</sup>.

Obviously, Transylvanian Troops HQ made a direct correlation between troop disciplinary state and dysfunctional military justice within normal parameters, due to non-unitary legislation

and lack of specialized personnel, trained lawyers or magistrates, available to be assigned to courts martial.

In the documentation of the current material we have encountered many demobilization requests from some officers in reserve, magistrates or lawyers in civilian life, who were invoking different reasons to be left aside, requesting even their replacement with other magistrates who had not been called to mobilization yet, or who were proposing a rotation system for the mobilization of magistrates.

Besides, even the Ministry of Justice was cautious when granting magistrates' mobilization, due to the great number of issues that was facing, and economic, social and legislative reforms underway, so that, at the repeated requests from the Romanian General Headquarters, to this end, the answer was usually negative: "We requested the Ministry of Justice to allow at our disposal a number of 10 magistrates, officers in reserve, absolutely necessary for the completion of courts martial within the operational area", reported JAG, General Gheorghe Cereșeanu, "[but] I was given the answer by the secretary general that due to expropriation, compensations and electoral offices, it could not have any magistrate available for military justice"<sup>61</sup>.

Regarding the legislative differences we presented, we should add the idea that they had been part of a natural process, a chance taken, we believe, by the great political figures of that time on both sides of the Carpathians: "sudden removal of laws and lawful institutions, which had been in the neighboring territories, would not have contributed to the union of the soul, which every good patriot desired, and could not even have been realized without great difficulty. It was therefore inevitable, that for a transitional period (...) the laws that had dominated in the neighboring provinces before 1919"<sup>62</sup> to remain into force.

There have also been other disputes regarding legislation between Transylvania and the Old Kingdom. We could quote to this end the refusal of Transylvanian Bars of Lawyers to accept among its members lawyers from the Old Kingdom, due to differences in university training between the two categories of the same guild; the lawyers from the Old Kingdom could profess after faculty, whereas their homologous Transylvanian had to have,



besides the title of PhD in law, a number of years of practice<sup>63</sup>.

Legislative differences had not been solved even after the adoption in 1923 of the New Constitution<sup>64</sup>, which provided under art.137 that: "All existing codes and laws shall be revised in different parts of the Romanian state, in order to be compatible with the current Constitution and to ensure legislative unity. Until then they are in force". It was only in 1938 when, consequent to the reforming process of justice and its inherent legislation, one could talk about legal, legislative, administrative and judicial unification of the new Romanian provinces<sup>65</sup>.

As far as the Transylvanian volunteering units are concerned, a couple of years later, General Henri Cihoski wrote<sup>66</sup> that during the crowning parade ceremony from Alba Iulia, General Dănilă Papp presented 18<sup>th</sup> Division "in such [good] conditions" that he was decorated with the "The Crown of Romania" Order, in Rank of Great Officer.

#### NOTES:

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24 [AMNR], *fond Marele Cartier General*, crt. 1990, f. 118.

25 *Ibidem*, f. 327.

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27 *Gazeta Oficială*, no. 6 from 14/27 January 1919, p.1.

28 *Gazeta Oficială*, no. 16 from 27 February/12 March 1919, p. 3.

29 The territory of Solnoc-Dăbâca County has been divided among Cluj County (the center and the South, including the city of Dej), Maramureș County (the North), Bistrița-Năsăud County (the East) and Sălaj County (the West), [https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comitatul\\_Solnoc-D%C4%83b%C3%A2ca](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comitatul_Solnoc-D%C4%83b%C3%A2ca), accessed on 07.05.2021.

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## MULTILATERALISM, DEMOCRACY, CONCERT OF POWERS: RUSSIA'S RED LINES

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The debate for resettling the world is at its peak. Different states are proposing nuanced approaches and solutions that would enable a better grip on the global governance of their own interests. Concepts are relativized and revisionism is carefully hidden beneath respect for the international rules and commitments. As is the case with democracy, embraced by all international players and subject to numerous interpretations by several actors. Multilateralism does not seem to mean the same to different stakeholders and new initiatives are challenged from the positions of a raising fear to be let aside in the big debates about the future world. But the fact is that continuity will play a role, a sophisticated system holding all alternatives will be in place and privileging one or another form is just a matter of global choice, appeal and influence of a project or another, a model or the next. This multiple circles coexistence model could be challenge by the new initiatives and their influence, the number of participants and their geopolitical footprint at the global level.

**Keywords:** Concert of Powers; multilateralism; power politics; Big Power Politics; spheres of influence; limited sovereignty.

### Theoretical alternatives for ruling the world

The way that the international relations and global security are organized is a concern that last for ages. Actually, the whole debate about alternatives is the one depending on several lines of thinking, that created different doctrines. In theoretical terms, all models are equally interesting, with pluses and minuses. But in the real life, every model is dependent on the real situation in the world at a certain moment, quantifying the realities and power relations between the big players, the lines of thinking and the models considered close to the realities and following the trends and developments.

At the theoretical level, the models of managing the international relations sit on some very few options:

- *G0 world* – everybody for himself, No one's World<sup>1</sup>, a high level of anarchy with some local or regional rules introduced in areas where there is an important actor and it has essential interests, the will to manage and observe the rules and enough resources to make those rules enforced. Subject to a consequential challenge.

- *The Hegemonic world* – one dominant power, with enough force, resources, and determination to shape and manage the system. It is open to contests

from raising powers or alliances of different actors, and the system can work as long as there is cooperation with other big powers in the system or when there is enough capacity to enforce the rules imposed to the system.

- *Big Powers' Policies – Concert of Powers – Bipolarism* – are solutions from the same family, with nuances.

The Big Power Policy is translated into the inclination of two major actors, Big Powers, to grant one each other mutual respect and cut a deal in a Big Bargain at the expenses of other international actors instead of making war, when it is possible.

The Concert of Powers refers to the European Concert of Powers and means that some big powers, recognizing mutually their status and interests, are negotiating a common approach to the world, common rules of cooperation, imposed, afterwards to all international players.

*Bipolarism* is the situation when the world is divided in two, based on ideological differences and opposite models, and these rifts are creating two opposite blocks confronting each other without involving the two Big Powers that are the center of coagulation and matrix of the two blocks. The rules and deals come also from the negotiation of the two main actors, the only superpowers or big powers in the system.

*Multilateralism* – means the involvement in any international decision of all the states that are international actors, with an equal footing inside the debate – equal sovereignty – through individually

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expressed preferences, majority vote, democracy and universal debate.

All the theoretical models have clear conditions for being dominants and present in the international arena:

The *G0 or anarchic world* is the natural form of evolution of the world when every actor is inclined to follow its own rules and interests, accommodating its relations with another actor and its own preferences, without any dominant model or rules to be imposed by somebody to the system. It is the vivid reflection of the liberty in the system. It is what we usually have in the international arena.

The *Hegemonic world* needs to have a major power, with enough resources and will to manage the world, at a large respect, to impose its views and models, and enforce the rules it has created. There are references for the period after the fall of the Berlin Wall with US being the hegemon in the system. But the model is more common in the Roman Empire World, Greek World, the times of the big empires which covered the known world with their rules and military power, their capacity of projecting the power and the norms and to enforce them.

The *Concert of powers* seems to be the most natural form of arrangement when there is a conscience to provide one and avoid conflicts of high intensity, but it relies also on the level of geopolitical power of the main actors as well as to their will and determination to be involved more than to defend their immediate individual interests. We had a few attempts, but the model did not avoid war (except for short periods of time, less than a generation). And this is possible as long as the difference of potential between those big players, big actors, and those small ones is enough to impose the dominant agreed approach without too much pain and costs.

The European Concert of Powers from Vienna, 1815, the Yalta meeting between the US, Soviet Union and the UK as well as the permanent members of the Security Council, with a veto right, could be two models for seeing the Concert of Powers. Ribbentrop-Molotov secret Pact of 1939 and the Cold War period could be moments of bipolarism and mutually agreed spheres of influence, with Big Powers' Politics and Big Bargains at the expenses of other players.

Last but not least, the General Assembly debates of the UN and rules to vote non-binding resolutions are a reflection of the multilateralism.

### **Russia's red lines. A theory of enforcing the rules at the global international level**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of April, Russia's President Vladimir Putin presented an Address in front of the Federal Assembly<sup>2</sup> which became famous due to the references to the "red lines" not to be crossed. Criticizing the fact that "Western colleagues have been stubbornly rejecting Russia's numerous proposals"<sup>3</sup>, president Putin noted that "unfriendly moves towards Russia have also continued unabated. Some countries have taken up an unseemly routine where they pick on Russia for any reason, most often, for no reason at all. It is some kind of new sport of who shouts the loudest"<sup>4</sup>.

It is in this framework and context that President Putin made his famous statement:

"We really want to maintain good relations with all those engaged in international communication, including, by the way, those with whom we have not been getting along lately, to put it mildly. We really do not want to burn bridges. But if someone mistakes our good intentions for indifference or weakness and intends to burn or even blow up these bridges, they must know that Russia's response will be asymmetrical, swift and tough.

Those behind provocations that threaten the core interests of our security will regret what they have done in a way they have not regretted anything for a long time.

At the same time, I just have to make it clear, we have enough patience, responsibility, professionalism, self-confidence and certainty in our cause, as well as common sense, when making a decision of any kind. But I hope that no one will think about crossing the "red line" with regard to Russia. We ourselves will determine in each specific case where it will be drawn"<sup>5</sup>.

So the red lines invoked are linked, in Vladimir Putin's statement, to burning or blowing up relations – lack of communication or isolation of Russia in the international arena – provocations that threaten core interests on security of Russia. Russia will establish unilaterally those red lines and enforce them and those red line will be established in a case by case manner, involving a clear threat coming from Russian part for an *asymmetrical*,

*swift and tough response*. This approach could be easily presented as a direct threat for using the force in international affairs.

And we could see this in all the mainstream media in the West. BBC made the interpretation that Putin was warning the West<sup>6</sup> and President's Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov later described the "red lines" as "our external security interests, our internal security interests in preventing any outside interference, whether in our elections or other domestic political processes"<sup>7</sup>. On another point, discussing Russia's "asymmetric response" to Western actions is an old statement, but it is the first time we have the mention of existing red lines.<sup>8</sup> There is no mention of the substance of the red lines invoked, moreover, the statement allows Russia to make a moving target of those red lines, meaning to adapt them according to its own unilateral will. At the same time, without a clear definition of Russia's red lines how could they ever be observed by someone?

The origins of the Red Lines reference (the French have the yellow lines, for the same purpose – *les lignes jaunes*) comes from the 1928 July 31, named Red Line Agreement<sup>9</sup>, agreement between partners of Iraq Petroleum Company not to seek independently oil interests in the Ottoman failing empire. Do not cross the given arbitrary line established in dividing a space. In real terms, it means establishing a condition that should not be challenged, with the threat to the use of force and huge costs for those breaching this condition. Now, in the international law, the red lines are forbidden per se because this enshrines a unilateral condition and the threat of using the force against an international actor.

On another point, there is a second meaning, used, for instance, by President Barack Obama in relation with the Syrian use of chemical weapons<sup>10</sup>. It is linked to the respect of international law, international established rules and commitments of one's country and establishes a limit in time or an ultimatum to withdrew from such a position and come back inside the limits of an agreed position, behavior or rules, if not to face consequences. The two interpretations are at the opposite side since the last is the one aiming at making everybody respect international law and undertaken commitments, in good faith, *bona fides*, or face consequences – not implying necessary the use of force, the other being

a unilateral claim and related threat for the use of force.

So Russia's red lines are directly linked to a unilateral approach, illegal according to the UN Chart, condemned in the international law, including a threat to use force. The red line used by president Obama is related to enforcing the international law, the countries commitments and signature of an international treaty, being a part of the *bona fides* principle of respect in good faith of the commitments undertaken. From that point on we have an illustration of the antagonism between the law of the force, in the first case, and the force of law in the second.

### **Sergey Lavrov and "true multilateralism" in the UN Security Council framework**

A sort of clarification related to Russia's red lines invoked in Vladimir's Putin State of the Nation discourse on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2021 could be found in the statement of Sergey Lavrov at the online debate organized by China, in its position of chair in office of the Security Council, the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 2021. In that speech that should have focused on a debate about multilateralism, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation underlined<sup>11</sup> his own take and that of Russia on the "true multilateralism":

"It is clear that the prospects of the international community's sustainable and predictable development are directly connected with our ability to find effective solutions to common problems and our readiness to exercise collective leadership in order for true multilateralism to prevail"<sup>12</sup>.

The red lines, described by Lavrov and Russia are: all the international rules should be established in the UN framework, with Russia having a veto power in all issues, including the New World Order<sup>13</sup>:

"Russia, like the majority of countries, is convinced that such work must be carried out solely on the basis of universally recognized norms of international law (...). The United Nations must serve as the key platform for coordinating efforts: it is the backbone of the modern global order, where all independent states are represented. Today, its unique legitimacy and unique capabilities are especially needed. The core tenets of international law enshrined in the UN Charter have withstood the test of time. Russia calls on all states to unconditionally follow the purposes and principles of the Charter (...)"<sup>14</sup>.



Russia is keen to come back to Yalta agreements and Big Power politics of Big Bargain in order to settle the world of tomorrow, recalling Vladimir's Putin proposal of a reunion of the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council for this deal, or at least a US-Russia meeting to set the rules of the game in the future. But, at the same time, the limits of respecting the *status quo* are given by "a stable balance of interests" and "the new realities"<sup>15</sup> which could give way for revisionism under another label:

"It is necessary to preserve the internationally recognized legal basis for building a stable balance of interests that meets the new realities (...). What could be more natural than discussing the tasks of strengthening multilateralism at the UN? (...) This also reveals the West's true attitude toward multilateralism and the UN, which they do not regard as a universal format for developing solutions acceptable to everyone"<sup>16</sup>.

Russia rejects the concept of rules-based world and prefers to refer to the agreed rules, meaning only those established in a UN Security Council framework:

"The concept of the rules-based order is advanced as a substitute for international law. It should be noted that international law already is a body of rules, but rules agreed at universal platforms and reflecting consensus or broad agreement. The West's goal is to oppose the collective efforts of all members of the world community with other rules developed in closed, non-inclusive formats, and then imposed on everyone else. We only see harm in such actions that bypass the UN and seek to usurp the only decision-making process that can claim global relevance"<sup>17</sup>.

The equal sovereignty of the states – a principle directly extracted from the UN Charter – is rejected *de facto* since for Lavrov, Putin and Russia, only the Big Powers are qualified to discuss the future of the world<sup>18</sup>. With Russia in the forefront, at the table:

"The permanent members of the UN Security Council are called on to play a key role in fostering open and direct dialogue about the most pressing problems of our time. According to the UN Charter, they bear special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. President of Russia Vladimir Putin proposed convening a summit with the leaders of the five permanent members. We hope to make this idea a reality once the epidemiological situation in the world stabilizes"<sup>19</sup>.

For sure, any other reunion of sovereign states and all the agreements reached outside of the UN framework and permanent members' veto are rejected by Russia, including the Summit of Democracies and the Alliance for Multilateralism, since Russia is not present and does not hold a veto power in such framework. This breaches directly the right of the states to establish agreements and negotiate mutually convened rules and commitments, also granted by the international law. And the requirement to put all international institutions, norms and agreements under the UN and Security Council veto powers is an excess of interpretation, a claim never agreed on by the international community.

"The well-known idea to convene a Summit for Democracy proposed by the US Administration is in the same vein. The establishment of a new club based on interests, with a clearly ideological nature, has the potential to further inflame international tensions and deepen dividing lines in a world that needs a unifying agenda more than ever (...). Another initiative with the goal of global leadership that bypasses the UN is the French and German idea to create an Alliance for Multilateralism (...). New ambitious initiatives to create narrow partnerships are emerging all the time within the Alliance for Multilateralism, on issues that are already being discussed at the UN or its specialized agencies, for example, on cyber security (with 65 member countries), respect for the international humanitarian law (43 member countries), the Information and Democracy Partnership (over 30 countries), etc."<sup>20</sup>

### **The debate about multilateralism and the obvious need for a UN reform**

The real issue at stake in the idea of a multilateral system, with respect for the equal sovereignty of the states, is related to the rules of the decisions in the UN Security Council. The remains of the agreement coming from World War Two are still in place and any attempts to revise and reform the Charter in this respect have been rejected especially by the permanent members of the Security Council, in spite of the best arguments possible.

First, it was about the losing side in the WWII which did not make it in the Security Council, meaning first and foremost Germany and Japan. Then the idea of a geographically balanced presence

would have required India, Brazil and maybe South Africa to be permanent members. If the qualified majority for a reunion of representatives, even split between permanent members and non-permanent ones, is OK for the effectiveness of the decisions. But the veto right of specific countries is a big atavism that should be replaced. But it has been rejected at all moments, even the rule of abstention from using the veto on issues related to the member state at stake.

The need for revising the UN Chart, as well as the rules of the Security Council, first and foremost the veto right of permanent members, has been identified by almost all participants in the debate about multilateralism. Even Wang Yi, the Chinese representative, and Volkan Bozkir, the Turkish diplomat holding the position of President of the General Assembly, refer to this: "On many occasions, the Council has been divided, and unable to rise to the challenge. For most of those cases, the reason for failure is the differences between its members, in particular, its permanent members", he said. Mr Bozkir highlighted the need for reform, and a more representative, accountable and transparent Council, stating "I am conveying this, as the President of the most democratic organ of our system"<sup>21</sup>, an indirect reference to the less democratic Security Council and its veto rights which alters the direct vote.

State Councilor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, Wang Yi, discussed directly the reform of the Security Council, pleading for a better representation of the developing countries: "The UN needs to keep pace with the times and should improve its efficiency, emergency response capability, and transparency of its work through reform. Earnestly increase the representation and voice of developing countries and make the global governance system more just and equitable"<sup>22</sup>.

For sure, the US has its share in the multilateral debate, which prompted the reality by recalling the basic principles of the Chart and the original understanding of the signatories. State Secretary Anthony Blinken quoted President Harry Truman for challenging the relativisation and interpretation of minister Lavrov. Maintaining peace and security is the prime objective of the UN, but human rights are present from article 1:

"The most powerful countries bound themselves to these principles. They agreed to a form of

self-restraint – as President Truman put it, to deny themselves the license to do always as they pleased – because they recognized that this would ultimately serve not only humanity's interests, but their own. The United States did this, even though it was by far the most powerful nation on Earth at the time. It was enlightened self-interest. We believed other nations' success was critical to ours. And we didn't want less powerful countries feeling threatened and obliged to band together against us"<sup>23</sup>.

State Secretary Blinken underlined also that all the rules should be observed by the permanent members of the Security Council in the first place, and the fact that this status requires more from those members and does not grant impunity, the right to ignore the rules or taking decisions at the expenses of the smaller states. He also assumed the fact that the Chart is not for states first and foremost, but for the people, for their rights and freedoms as well:

"This bold endeavor, whatever its imperfections, has been an unprecedented achievement. And it's endured because the overwhelming majority of people and nations continue to see it as representing their interests, their values, their hopes (...). At the same time, we will continue to push back forcefully when we see countries undermine the international order, pretend that the rules we've all agreed to don't exist, or simply violate them at will. Because for the system to deliver, all countries must abide by it and put in the work for its success"<sup>24</sup>.

But the most important part of the statement is related to a reply to the "true multilateralism" and the system proposed by Russia, revealing, even though without naming, the most important problems and challenges at the international world order and the rules-based world coming from Putin and autocratic regimes. He challenged the reference to non-interference in internal affairs stating that "human rights are subjective values that vary from one society to another. But the Universal Declaration of Human Rights begins with the word "universal" because our nations agreed there are certain rights to which every person, everywhere, is entitled. Asserting domestic jurisdiction does not give any state a blank check to enslave, torture, disappear, ethnically cleanse their people, or violate their human rights in any other way"<sup>25</sup>.

Anthony Blinken also referred to another principle from the Chart, the principle of the sovereign equality of its member-states, accusing



once again Russia's behavior in the international arena:

"A state does not respect that principle when it purports to redraw the borders of another; or seeks to resolve territorial disputes by using or threatening force; or when a state claims it's entitled to a sphere of influence to dictate or coerce the choices and decisions of another country. And a state shows contempt for that principle when it targets another with disinformation or weaponized corruption, undermines other countries' free and fair elections and democratic institutions, or goes after journalists or dissidents abroad.

These hostile actions can also threaten the international peace and security that the United Nations Charter obliges this body to maintain.

When UN member-states – particularly permanent members of the Security Council – flout these rules and block attempts to hold accountable those who violate international law, it sends the message that others can break those rules with impunity".

### **The hierarchy of international institutions versus global freedom of association**

Those evolutions are crucial in seeing the way the new world order is to be settled and how each of the countries involved in the debate are positioning themselves. We already saw the idea embraced by the US that democratic countries are in direct rivalry with the autocracies, that US is interested in a real multilateralism<sup>26</sup>. This multilateralism involves to get together the full weight of all democracies, be it big ones, medium or small, in order to obtain the convergence of ideas and positions, the strategic weight and to obtain a dominant global majority to frame and propose the general rules<sup>27</sup> and to defend the application of the existing principles and commitments, not only the provisions of the UN Chart.

In fact, the idea of a hierarchy of the institutions of the international system and the subordination of all organisations to the UN, and to its veto rule in the Security Council is an expression of the lack of democracy, multilateralism and equal sovereignty of the states. On the contrary, the international system including the one established through the United Nations, is based on democracy, human rights and freedom, the freedom of countries for free association and on the rules of the democratic world

translated at the international stage. Supremacy of law, rule of law, sovereign equality of the states are part of the general *acquis* and any relativization of those rules, any rejection or limitation of the freedoms for states as for people, is a reach of this common understanding of the international law.

The fundamental anarchism of the international relations means also liberty of the states to associate the way they feel appropriate for their interests, but also in a sustainable manner, through observing the same set of principles and values – and this is the core of any agreement. The Concert of Powers has been overstated and embraced for its effectiveness<sup>28</sup>, since we are speaking about consensus between a few states. But the very experience and history of the Security Council prove that this consensus is as hard to reach as the one among a huge number of countries. On the other hand, the EU and NATO proved that if all members observe the convened rules and assume the same values and principles, you can have consensus among a relatively important number of actors.

In that respect, we have to look attentively to the new institutions for democratic cohesion. NATO has developed formats with global partners, beyond the transatlantic link, that worked in Afghanistan, and democracies could repeat this experience, with the common grounds of principles and values in the basic matrix of these organisations. The Community of Democracies is there to stay and develop, as the Summit of democracies prepared by the US could lead to a better coordination of democracies. The Alliance for multilateralism that France and Germany are preparing is another format that worth be considered. The new multilateral institutions could become instruments that could offer new instruments for monitoring the existing rules and norms, commitments and agreements, and to prepare the new rules for the needed technological developments, on cyber defence, on artificial intelligence, on space, on the Grand North and Arctic<sup>29</sup>, and so on.

A realist design of the New World Order should have in mind a more sophisticated approach than the one over-simplified that fetishizes one of the theoretical options to resettle the World Order. In fact, all options are there and all instruments are in place, some new approaches are on the way of being framed and constructed, and the reality would allow alternative mechanisms to be present

and useful as long as there is support for one or another at a certain moment, on given issues. In fact, all coexist and are superposed, but the states and people will refer alternatively to each of them and the most relevant with the most support will become the reference for the solution of a certain problem.

This does not mean that there are all perfect or that there will not be clashes and conflicts. But that is the way to avoid wars and open military conflicts and to discuss and cope with the problems of the world in a more adequate way that we have done during World War Two, with Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, using the military violence and power politics, with Yalta Concert of Power, the Cold War rivalries, Big Bargain, proxy conflicts and Big Power Politics.

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## RUSSIA'S GEOPOLITICAL DETERMINATIONS IN THE BLACK SEA

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The present paper analyzes the projection of Russia's economic and military power in the Black Sea region, seen both in terms of its huge resources and as a way of projecting military power in the coastal States and the Eastern Mediterranean. The energy perspective is important in Russia's geopolitics, and the Black Sea region is perceived by it as the point of confluence of several globalist interests, in which Russia desires not only to be a mediator, but the decisive pivot to impose regional policy. Creating an energy dependency of the West on Russian resources represents a well-defined political goal in the Russian strategy. Russian gas is thus becoming a Trojan horse, by which Russia can influence European policies, this energy instrument being complemented by other powerful instruments aimed at undermining or diminishing NATO's role in Eastern Europe. Russian interests are concentrating firstly on the desire to maintain different levels of political and economic influence in each coastal State, to maintain the Black Sea under control for oil or gas exports and other maritime transport through Novorossiysk port as well as preventing a security deficit toward NATO that could threaten the South-West flank of Kremlin. In pursuing these interests, Russia's strategy is based on the use of political, diplomatic, information and economic instruments, which are supported by an increasingly credible military capacity, analyzed and explained in this paper.

**Keywords:** Russian-Ukrainian war; Crimea; energy weapon; Black Sea.

### General observations

In order to analyze Russia's current conduct, motivation and geopolitical interests, we will take a look at Churchill's speech at Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri of March 5, 1946: "from what I have seen of our Russian friends and allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness"<sup>1</sup>. Churchill perfectly guessed the specific character of Russian politics, unchanged for centuries, expressing the opinion that Russia does not necessarily desire a war, but warning that Moscow wants the fruits of war and the undetermined expansion of its power and policies<sup>2</sup>.

Russia has the largest territorial surface area (17.125.191 km<sup>2</sup>), which stretches from Eastern Europe to North Asia on 17 time zones. European Russia is West of the Ural Mountains, and the Asian side is represented by Siberia, which stretches at East from the mountainous chain to the Bering Sea and the Pacific Ocean. By its size and complexity, Russia has a strong non-harmonious character. Although it covers an eighth of the world's habitable

land area, it is only the ninth most populated of the world's States. However, even if 75% of its territory is on the Asian continent, this region is populated with only 22% of the total population of the state. And although most of the territory is on the Asian continent, Russia having a common border with Kazakhstan, Mongolia, China, North Korea, including the sea border with Japan and the US, it is not an Asian power, but more an European power, given the fact it is an extension of Europe and that the most important part of Russian economic activity is concentrated in the West of the Ural Mountains. Even so, outside the traditional Russian territory established during Ivan the Terrible (1533-1584), a part of the Russian Federation's population is composed of other nationalities: Ukrainians, Bashkirs, Chuvash people, others. This population heterogeneity required a more strict control regime, situation which can be found including in the existence period of the Soviet Union. But, Siberia represents Russia's resourceful treasure consisting of enormous deposits of ore, oil and gas, meaning that Russia's preferred weapon being the energy one in the current global competition for resources. The projection of Russia's economic power in the Black Sea region, must be seen through its huge resources and less through its economic activity. This fact also gives its regional policy, sometimes aggressive, toward the West, and especially to states

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that are close to its borders. The energy perspective is important in Russia's geopolitics, and the Black Sea region is perceived as the point of confluence of several globalist interests, in which Russia desires not only to be a mediator, but the decisive pivot to impose regional policy. The restrictions imposed by international war laws and at the borders by the North Atlantic Alliance and the Western countries are limiting Russia's ancient right to impose itself militarily, but also economically. This is because the economic dimension of the Federation is not at the level it can impose itself, nor at the level where it can develop as during the cold War. Russia, however, is using energy resources to make them the most effective weapon through which it can impose its regional policy. Creating an energy dependency of the West on Russian resources represents a well-defined political goal in the Russian strategy<sup>3</sup>. Russian gas is thus becoming a Trojan horse, by which Russia can influence European policies, but only the energy resource is not enough to reaffirm Russia as a great regional power, unless it is accompanied by other means of force that undermine or diminish NATO's role in Eastern Europe. Thus, Churchill's vision of Russian politics, although issued at the end of the second world deflagration, is very real in our days.

#### Short history of Russian state formation

For Russia, the geostrategic factors of the Black Sea region have not changed since 1853<sup>4</sup>, NATO and the United States replacing individual European States as Russia's main geopolitical competitors. In the current regional geopolitical context, Russian gas is the poisoned apple for the West, Crimea being the basis for imposing military force, Turkey representing the pivot, and Turkish straits being the strategic yield. Thus, Moscow's final goal is the access and the military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, as a counterbalance to the expansion of the US and NATO to the East, as well as an expansion of power in the Aegean sea and central Mediterranean area, to extend the influence on the new road silk created by China that aspires to an universal hegemonic status.

The complex, conflicting, expansive and hostile nature of the Russian Federation could not be understood if we did not enter the sinuous history of this conservative, traditional, rigid and proud people. Russia, as a societal formation, dates

back to the 19th century when the Eastern Slavic tribes formed a proto-federation called Kievan Rus, made up of cities around Kiev and those on the Dnieper River, on the current territory of Ukraine. The invasion of the Mongolian in the 13th century, as well as their pressure on Kievan Rus, led to a migration to North-East and a concentration of the Russian ethnic population around Moscow. This concentration of the Russian population led to the formation of Moscow's Grand Duchy. Ivan III the Great (1462-1505) was the one that completed the centralization of the Duchy, by conquering the Russian regions of Novgorod (1478) and Tver (1485). He led a moderate expansion policy, extending the power by unifying the territories inhabited by the Russians, until the Golden Horde ceased to hold the Suzeran feudal power (1480), thus leading to an increase in the force, resources, population and territorial extent of the Duchy. But this territorial expansion had a critical vulnerability, because of the landscapes that did not provide an effective protective barrier against potential invaders, the principality could only be defended by Moscow surrounding forests. The lack of natural obstacles that would allow Russians to organize their defence was the main catalyst for territorial expansion. This policy, based on the *idea of attack as a defence*, was put into practice by Ivan 4th the Terrible (1533-1584), who claimed the merit of having laid down the foundations of the Tsarist Russia. During Ivan 4th, the Tsarist reached the natural barrier formed by the Ural Mountains in the East, the Caspian Sea in the South and the Arctic Circle in the North. In the next century, the Tsarist extends beyond the natural barrier of the Ural mountains, incorporating all Siberia to the Pacific Ocean of the far East. This territorial expansion allowed the Tsarist Russia to gain strategic depth to which it could turn in case of invasion. Such a large area requires a great logistical effort and a long supply line for the armies, which could exhaust any military force that would desire to take over Moscow. Under the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725), whose policy led to the emergence of the Russian empire (1721), as well as under the leadership of the Empress Ecaterina the Great (1762-1796), the Tsarist Russia expanded also to West and South, being protected by a huge ring of protection represented by the Arctic region, Baltic region, land of Ukraine, Carpathian mountains,



Black Sea, The Caucasus Mountains, the Caspian Sea and the Ural Mountains to the Arctic Circle. The endless stretch of Siberia, its poor and cold climate, the desert steppe of North Mongolia, represented a huge natural buffer zone against any attackers; it was the geography that assures the empire that no enemy could attack it from the East.

Russia's extensive geography has presented and presents two large hot regions over which its hostile actors have always created pressure. One is the plain of Northern Europe, which stretches from France to the Ural Mountains, and the second is the Black Sea region. Regarding the Northern Europe plain, it extends from the North-West of France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Northern Germany and all Poland. On the border with Russia, the Northern European plain, which joins with the Russian plain together forming the European plain, is 3200 km wide and represents a flat region beyond Moscow. It was precisely this flat landscape of this area that allowed large hostile troops to travel around them, relatively easy in terms of mobility, but extremely difficult in relation to large armies supply lines and unpredictable climate. From this plain over the last 500 years, the West has attacked Russia; the first time by Poles<sup>5</sup>, followed by the Swedish army led by Carol XII<sup>6</sup>, the Napolenian armies<sup>7</sup>, and the Germans in the two world deflagrations. Russia's endless expanse, the supply difficulties of the troops and the capricious climate, determined the French illustrious general A. H. Jomini, who accompanied Napoleon in the 1812 campaign, to leave the legacy of what many armies had to think of: "Russia is a country where you enter easily, but it is very difficult to emerge from"<sup>8</sup>.

A number of political, economic and military factors have determined Russian leaders to seek and maintain influence in the Black Sea region in order to take control of the region. From the end of the 16th century to the 20th century, the Russian Empire carried 12 wars with the Ottoman Empire<sup>9</sup>, which desired to increase the political and economic influence, especially in the Crimean Peninsula. A permanent base in Crimea would have allowed the control of the Kievan steppes, the Northern Europe plain, the Astrahan region and the Azov Sea. The Black Sea has also been of great interest to Russia, due to the need for military vessels to have access to a hot-water port, which does not freeze in the winter, and which offers free

access to major world<sup>10</sup> trade routes. The port of the Arctic Ocean (Murmansk) and the one of the Pacific Ocean (Vladivosok) are inaccessible for several months a year due to ice, which affects both trade while blocking the Russian fleet to act as a major global naval power. The lack of a hot port to allow free access to the world's oceans has become an important issue, being identified as a strategic vulnerability since Peter the Great period. Forcing access to the Mediterranean and from there to the Pacific Ocean, as well as access to the Indian Ocean through the conquest of Afghan lands, represented vital purposes for Russia's expansionist policy.

During World War II, the Soviets saw Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine becoming Nazi instruments, through which they tried to defeat the Red Army in southern Russia, in order to take control of oil fields in the Caucasus area.

During this time, the Soviet Union has expanded its influence in the Black Sea region through territorial changes (reannexation of Basarabia<sup>11</sup>) and support for the establishment of the communist governments in Bulgaria and Romania, which were forced to align with Moscow's policy. The establishment of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, as a response to the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, further strengthened the position of the Soviet Union in the region. The Soviet troops, which remained in Romania after 1945, were withdrawn only in 1958, but not after they became poor, they robbed resources and led a ferocious policy of economic subjugation of Romania, hidden by the seestablishment of joint companies called *SovRoms*. During the cold War, the Soviet Union enjoyed a political, military and economic preeminence from Burgas to Batumi. Russia's pressure on Turkey to take control of the straits led to Turkey's adhesion to NATO in 1952. This was compensated by increasing the US ability and of other allied forces to operate from military bases established in Turkey, thus imposing a regional balance of powers that Moscow had to recognize.

### Observations on current Russian geopolitics

Politically, the Soviets perceived the penetration of democratic capitalism in Eastern Europe as an existential threat to the Soviet Union. Its collapse deprived the Russian Federation of much of its influence and regional security around the Black



Sea. The political loyalty of the former allies at the Black Sea, proved to be fragile with the collapse of the USSR. Although by the Friendship Treaty signed with Ukraine on 31 May 1997, the Russian Federation maintained its Black Sea fleet in the military ports around the Crimean peninsula, the phenomenon of colored revolutions, of roses in Georgia (November 2003), the orange in Ukraine (November 2004) or the failed one in the Republic of Moldavia (April 2009), were perceived as an interference of the West in Russia's geostrategic policy. The full membership in NATO (2004) and the European Union (2007) granted to Bulgaria and Romania (former Warsaw Treaty Member countries), as well as the call of the US President George Bush<sup>12</sup>, urging other NATO leaders to declare that Georgia and Ukraine would join the military alliance<sup>13</sup>, worried the Russian Federation's authorities, feeling obliged to take action. The strong intervention in Georgia<sup>14</sup> (2008) has significantly damaged Russia's relations with the West and, in particular, with the United States. In fact, at the Munich Security Conference (2007), Putin had warned Western countries about NATO's expansion in the proximity of the Russian Federation<sup>15</sup>, criticizing what he called the US's monopolistic domination in global relations and "the almost constant use of force in international relations". Given the relatively rapid decline of Russian influence in the Black Sea region, Russia was forced to reconsider its role as regional power and to develop a new strategy to protect its interests there, even before 2014. The illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 forced Kremlin to adopt urgent measures in order to diminish the effects of Western disposed measures.

Given the intensification of the confrontation with the West, which began with the war in Georgia (2008) and escalated with the conflict in Ukraine (2014), it is important to understand how Russia perceives its interests in the region and the strategy it pursues to secure these strategic interests.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, 15 sovereign States were reborn out of the USSR. They can be grouped into 5 geographical regions:

- The Baltic area: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania;
- The Eastern Europe area: Belarus, Moldavia and Ukraine;
- The South Caucasus area: Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan;

- The Central Asia area: Kzakhstan, Kirkistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan;

- The Eurasian area: Russia.

Thus, geography replaced the Soviet ideology, the borders of sovereign States regaining their logical configuration, following the mountain, lakes, rivers and seas line. Traditional borders delimit spaces where peoples speak their own language and respect their traditions stemming from history. The exception is the '*stan*' that emerged from the old Persian empire, with the artificially drawn borders by Stalin, which sought to weaken the national power of States by intercalating national minorities in neighboring States.

These states detached from the former USSR can be divided into three categories, depending on Russia's influence on their policy:

- neutral States: Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. They are energy independant and are neither indebted to the West nor to Russia regarding the security and trade, which leads them to reconsider their national policies on their own. In an attempt to reduce neutrality and relative independence, Russia *planted* frozen<sup>16</sup> conflicts inside or close to them;

- pro-Russian States: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Belarus and Armenia. All of these States are economically interconnected with Russia, have Russian minorities well integrated into society, are part of the Eurasian Economic Union<sup>17</sup> (except Tajikistan) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization – CSTO<sup>18</sup> (also except for Tajikistan).

- pro-Western States are Ukraine, Georgia and Moldavia, which aspire to join both NATO and the EU but are under Russia's influence, which consider them included in the concept *almost abroad*, keeping on their territory, through enclaves or autonomous regions, which fuel frozen conflicts, military troops or pro-Russian militia.

In addition, the other States that were part of the Warsaw Pact are all in NATO and the EU<sup>19</sup>, namely: Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Albania.

Of all these States, coastal to the Black Sea are all the pro-Western, except for Russia. This explains why Kremlin intervened so brutally in Ukraine's politics, against the background of the political tensions escalation over the direction Ukraine was heading toward in 2013.



Prior to Georgia conflict (2008), the Black Sea was promoted as a model of naval cooperation between former cold War opponents. Joint naval activities (BlackSeaFor and Black Sea Harmony), as well as Russia's regular participation in NATO's Active Endeavor Operation, promised a future in which all Black Sea coastal States could work together to ensure a regional security climate, reducing threats such as smuggling or human trafficking. This cooperation climate deteriorated after the Russian-Georgian war, but elements were maintained until 2013 as a result of the combined efforts of Russian and NATO members – in particular Turkey. With the annexation of Crimea, the war in Donbas and the sharp degradation of relations with the West, the cooperative element of the Russian military strategy has turned to political and subversive confrontation with NATO as well as competition for military presence in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean regions.

I believe that Russia did not want and does not want a conflict with NATO, but the proximity to its border creates tension and concern to not react, especially as it was advantaged by factors that could allow hybrid aggression to be lightly launched, as: the presence of a significant Russian minority in Crimea and the eastern proximity of Ukraine, a tense and destabilizing climate, a significant military force in the vicinity of the area concerned, as well as a vulnerability of the institutional and administrative framework of the peninsula.

If Ukraine's leadership had been a pro-Russian government or at least a neutral government that did not join Western organizations, Russia would not have acted brutally because it would have been guaranteed to preserve a buffer zone in the Northern Europe plain and the Black Sea, that will protect the Russian Federation from possible aggression. It needed guarantees that the naval base in Sevastopol would not be affected by a pro-Western direction of Ukraine, also relying on the fact that its energy dependence on Russian resources was a solid counterargument that would keep it within the Federation's influence. Ukraine's entry on a pro-Western axis was a risk of proximity to Russia, which could have led to the transformation of the Sevastopol base into a NATO military base. The situation has become tense because the Ukrainian President, Viktor Yanukovich made the mistake of running on two fronts, in an attempt to obtain

economic and political advantages from both the West and Russia. This game attracted the animosity of the pro-Western population that triggered the EuroMaidan revolution, which finally led to the 2014 event. Yanukovich's dual policy was not unique, as this strategy was also found in Igor Dodon, Vladimir Voronin, Vladimir Plahotniuc, Aleksandr Lukashenko and the Armenian leader Serzh Sargsyan.

The idea of having a common border with a NATO or EU Member State is unacceptable to President Putin's policy. Establishing a NATO military base near a Russian one (Sevastopol) is inconceivable for Russian politics, which sees all this Western expansion as a formal aggression against Russian politics<sup>20</sup>. After the forced annexation of Crimea, no matter how we try to look in another direction, politically and militarily, what is happening in the Black Sea region is pivotal, not only for the States in the neighborhood, but also for the Western Balkans, the Middle East, The Baltic Sea area and even the far North. The strategic importance of the Black Sea is also given by the fact that Sevastopol is the only Russian sea port, with warm water, which greatly increases its economic and military potential. From this military port, Russia can exercise its control over the maritime traffic from the Black Sea region. But access outside this region is not easy. To exit into the Mediterranean is restricted by the 1938 Montreal Convention, which allows Turkey (NATO Member country) to control trafficking on the Bosphorus straits. Military vessels may only transit the area in limited numbers and tonnage and only in peaceful conditions. Even if they manage to pass through the Bosphorus, in order to enter the Mediterranean, Russian military vessels should be allowed access to the Aegean Sea. Further, the access to the Atlantic Ocean, from the Mediterranean, can only be achieved by allowing passage through Gibraltar straits. The Indian Ocean can only be allowed to pass through the Suez Canal, under the control of an MFO<sup>21</sup> multinational force. Another strategic difficulty is that the Russian fleet in Kaliningrad can only exit the Baltic Sea through the Skagerrak strait, which connects with the North Sea, controlled by Denmark and Norway (both NATO Member States). Even if Russian vessels were able to pass through this narrow corridor for access to the Atlantic Ocean through the North Sea, they



would have to pass through the corridor defined by Greenland, Iceland and the United Kingdom (GIUK corridor). All these restrictions limit Russia's potential to become a great naval military force and to aspire to a status of world hegemon. In this situation, Russian strategic interests in the Black Sea region are largely focused on security, political and economic influence reflecting the country's high-power status.

*Interests of the Russian Federation in the Black Sea.* In the field of security, Russian military forces in the region exist to protect critical areas to economic production, to ban illegal activity, to ensure safe navigation and to help carry out foreign policy actions in economically important maritime areas, joint applications or peacekeeping operations<sup>22</sup>. From strategic point of view, Russian forces in the region are intended to secure Russia's South-Western flank from an attack against the state, to intimidate and discourage the neighbors from pursuing policies contrary to Moscow's interests, even by force if necessary. The capacity of these forces to carry out operations in the Black Sea was demonstrated in the Russian attack on Ukrainian navy vessels and the detention of 24 sailors aboard near the Kerch Strait on 25 October 2018<sup>23</sup>.

In addition to its security interests, Russia pursues political interests on all coastal States in the Black Sea. Since Bulgaria and Romania are both EU members, and both as well as Turkey, are members of NATO, influencing their policies is more difficult in the post-cold War period. Recent history has shown that Russian political influence in Ukraine and Georgia is more efficient from Moscow's point of view, because they do not belong to Western or North Atlantic structures. The Russian policy consists in Moscow's attempt to support those who favor friendly relations with Moscow, together with the rejection of those who do not have a pro-Eurasian policy. Regarding Russia's economic interests, Turkey and Ukraine are Russia's largest trading partners in the region, with a larger trade than the other coastal countries. Thus, Turkey had a total trade volume of \$26 billion<sup>24</sup> in 2018 and Ukraine \$11,7 billion<sup>25</sup>. Russian exports to trading partners are primarily focused on natural resources (mainly natural gas), which is seen as an efficient economic weapon to influence other States' policy. However, it is not only the energy resource that is an instrument for

influencing other states, but also other marketed products or even tourism are used to influence the positions of sovereign States. Thus, at the end of 2015, Moscow imposed economic<sup>26</sup> sanctions consisting in limiting trade in agricultural products and restricting tourism in Turkey, following Ankara's shooting down of the Russian bombers Su-24, which entered into Turkish airspace.

A key element of how Russia perceives its interests in the region and how these interests can be threatened is the nature of Russia's relationship with the West. During the early years of Putin's regime, Kremlin sought to engage in a good cooperation with the United States and its allies. Even after the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to NATO (2004) and the EU (2007), there was a certain degree of security cooperation in the Black Sea region between Russia and the West. Until the deterioration of relations with the West and the United States, especially after the Georgian War (2008), Russia had not clearly defined its security, political and economic interests in the region, balancing between zero-sum or confrontation relations. After the crisis in Ukraine, the sharp deterioration in relations with the West led to a reconsideration of Russia's security policy, with the expansion of the EU and NATO perceived as a threat to the stability of the Russian state<sup>27</sup>. At the same time, Russia's position can be seen as an act of persuasion by displaying a minimum degree of influence that it believes should maintain in its neighborhood, regardless of the state of relations with the West.

Regarding the *objectives of the Russian Federation in the Black Sea*, the official strategic documents represented by the military doctrines and Russia's national security strategies, do not mention any significant details on the Russian geopolitical direction in the Black Sea region. But its policy can be deduced on the basis of Russian interests and behavior, showing the gap between desire and acceptance, respectively, what Russia would prefer, and what it would accept. Since Vladimir Putin came to lead Russia, it had *de facto* reprinted the status of great Eurasian power. This hegemonic quality claimed by Russia seems to mean that Russian leaders would prefer to benefit from a privileged influence by establishing a mechanism for the reintegration of the former Soviet republics into Eurasian structures, except for the Baltic



States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). In the Black Sea region, this reintegration project gives Russia greater security, political and economic influence in Ukraine and Georgia (as well as in Moldavia and Armenia). The final outcome can take a variety of forms, but Russia's main objective remains to maintain influence in Ukraine and Georgia and to prevent, by any means, their integration with Western and North Atlantic structures. Given the deteriorating relations with the West and the United States' reaction after the events of 2008 and 2014, Russia could continue to accept Western-oriented governments in Kiev and Tbilisi, as long as these countries reconsider their position toward NATO or the EU.

Regarding the policy of Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, which are already integrated into NATO, the prospects of drastically changing its geopolitical orientation are almost null and void, Russia not being willing to pursue this, which does not lead to any results. Russia's policy, however, betrays actions that are likely to undermine or counteract any anti-Russian policies perceived as coming from within the region, supporting any opportunity that promotes Russian interests in the Black Sea region. Kremlin's political goal is to support leaders, particularly in Ankara and Sofia, who stand tolerant for greater engagement with Russia and are willing to act on these inclinations, ideally in ways that resemble division and uncertainty in the West.

In essence, Russia desires that the governing regime in each NATO coastal country to respect Russia's status as a regional power and not to allow the development of a security situation that legitimately threatens its South-West flank. In Russia's opinion, a possible integration of Ukraine, Moldavia or Georgia into NATO and EU structures is seen as a long-term threat, which aims to undermine the Eurasian Economic Union by fueling Western political influence on Russia's borders. The perspective of a such integration would justify the promotion of Russian interests in all key areas that would at least affect the policies of the coastal States. This vision is underlined by Russian military interventions in both countries since 2008.

*The Russian Federation strategy at the Black Sea* consists in a combination of non-military and military instruments, whose content and application depend on the context and political

orientation of each country. Russia's regional policy strategy is adapting to a large extent to key factors such as history, culture, security considerations and currently geopolitical realities. Russia is emphasising on former Soviet republics, which, in addition to being part of "almost abroad" politics, have a significant Russian minority, are contiguous and share a common culture and history. In 2013, Russia made a sustained and targeted effort to discourage Ukraine and Georgia (and Armenia and Moldavia) from signing the association agreements in the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area – DCFTA with the EU. These steps led Armenia to unexpectedly abandon the pursuit of an Association Agreement in 2013, joining the Eurasian Economic Union. Russia has probably sought a similar reversal of the Western path in Kiev and Tbilisi, but did not manage to achieve this goal. Putin claimed in a documentary interview in 2015 that the West was deliberately trying to undermine Russia's so-called Eurasian integration efforts<sup>28</sup>. From Georgia's, Moldavia's and Ukraine's point of view, getting closer to the EU, more economically stimulating, was more attractive than joining the relatively poorer Eurasian Economic Union, which Russia sought to dominate for its own interests. In order to change the policies that Moscow considers unsatisfactory, Russia has engaged in a variety of political, informational, economic and clandestine activities in these countries and in other countries in the region. In Bulgaria, for example, Russia used elements of history, culture and religion to support Russian initiatives and to generate dislike to the West<sup>29</sup>. Kremlin also directly threatened the use of force against Romania in 2016 in response to Bucharest's decision to host the US missile defence infrastructure on its territory<sup>30</sup>. For Romania, the risk of hybrid aggression coming from the Russian Federation or its potential economic partners is growing, as there is no Russian or pro-Russian minority on Romanian territory and the fact that the country is in a geographic area in which Russia has the right to express itself. As a matter of fact, Romania is still trapped by the geostrategic decisions taken by the great allied military powers led by Napoleon and Alexandru I of Russia in 1807, through which the influence in Europe was divided. *The naughty document*<sup>31</sup>, as the percentage agreement is known, that ruled on the understanding between Churchill and Stalin of dividing Eastern



Europe in spheres of influence, in fact, it was merely a reconfirmation of the agreement in the Tilsit Treaty (1807) between the great Eastern and Western powers of the beginning of the 19th century, which were fighting for supremacy over Europe.

Given the changes in strategic direction in 2014, it is clear that Russia is rebuilding its military capacity around the Black Sea. The plan to reequip the Black Sea fleet and other forces in the Southern military district, however, preceded the annexation of Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine. Even if there had been no Euromaidan protest movement in Ukraine, Russia would have delivered modern weapons to its armed forces in relatively large numbers. This is because Russian leaders believe that in all geopolitical circumstances, Russia needs an army that credibly discourages potential foreign aggression and is strong enough to coerce regional actors if necessary. I believe that Russia had a well-established security strategy even before the crisis with Ukraine. In particular, the increased capacities for the Southern military district, which was part of the state weapons Program, which started in 2011, would have ensured the exceeding quantity of local soldiers and, to a certain extent, would have served as a discouraging factor against Western intervention in the event of a regional crisis. The strategic discouragement is primarily supported by Russia's strategic nuclear forces (strategic rocket forces, strategic naval forces, strategic aviation and tactical nuclear weapons), while the conventional discouragement against NATO in the Black Sea region could involve increased long-range attack capacity from surface and submarine combatants, A2/AD assets and other general-purpose forces in the region.

The annexation of Crimea and the corresponding deterioration of Russia's relations with Ukraine and the West have changed Russia's plan for its army in two ways. Firstly, the annexation of Crimea allowed the Russian Federation to relocate a considerable amount of military capacity 300 km West to increase the fleet and naval infantry that were already there. Given the current and likely future state of relations between Russia and the West, this increased capacity allows Moscow to threaten NATO beyond the Russian political center and potential theaters of military operations, such as Ukraine, the South Caucasus and, to a lesser

extent, Moldavia. This issue is possible considering the buffer territory with NATO border limit along all axes except the South-East. The other way the plan changed for Russia was to reposition and restructure a relatively large amount of fighting power along many Russian borders with Ukraine. In many respects, this repositioning does not cost Russia much, given that major security threats come today from western Russia, and forces along the border with Ukraine could be moved to the North in case of a crisis there (although perhaps Russia would accept a higher risk in Ukraine or maybe in Georgia, depending on the number of forces that have been redeployed). This statement will remain valid as long as there is no major friction between Russia and China regarding the activities in Central Asia or the far East, which may require Russia to rely on existing forces.

In the event of a crisis triggered elsewhere, the provision of the South-West flank would be more precarious for Russia than for the Soviet Union, which had a much larger human and financial resource at its disposal. The threshold for Russia that employs these new forces on the non-NATO territory adjacent to it is, of course, quite low. Historical evidence, recent Russian behavior and rhetoric suggest that the former Soviet area is essential to Russia's political, economic and security objectives. Russian leaders have explicitly stated on several occasions in their speeches, remarks and official strategic documents that the reintegration of the former Soviet Union States in one form or another is a key political objective<sup>32</sup>. Considering Russia's actions in Ukraine, since 2014 - which, at least to a certain extent, were linked to Russia's attempt to involve Ukraine in the Eurasian integration project - remains unclear Russia's availability to accept that Ukraine (as well as Georgia, Moldavia and Armenia) is outside these processes of Eurasian integration. What seems clear today is that Russia has recognized that some of its neighbors can sign association agreements with the EU. But Moscow will certainly oppose, by non-military as well as military means (excluding on NATO Member States), any formal political or military integration with the West, such as NATO or EU accession.

Historically, the potential loss of an ally, reoriented to the West, represented *casus belli* for Russia (and the Soviet Union), although this



did not always lead to military intervention. For example, neither the Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003 nor the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004 have led to clear military actions by Russia. More recently, the popular revolution in Armenia in 2018 - targeting Serzh Sargsyan, a Kremlin ally, who was ousted from power and replaced by the leader of the revolution – did not require a forceful intervention by the Russian army. On the other hand, the Russian war with Georgia in 2008 and the Russian intervention in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine took place in the context of the potential change of direction of these countries. They have become too Western for Russia's protective and expansive taste, although circumstances have been different in each case. In Georgia, Russia deployed troops to strengthen its control of South Ossetia, which the Saakashvili regime is threatening. In Ukraine, Russia sent forces to Crimea only after the Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, who was more friendly to Moscow's politics, fled the country and a pro-Western government was formed, potentially threatening Russian interests, including the navy base in Crimea.

Clearly, the decision to intervene militarily is much more complex than it seems at first sight and may depend on many factors and actions, some of which may not come from Moscow. There are certainly many aspects that are not public, about the decisions of Kremlin in relation to the aforementioned crises. However, it is known that neither the Soviet Union nor the Russian Federation deployed military forces in a NATO country with the intention of taking hold of the territory or of forcibly changing the political *status quo*. Several times<sup>33</sup> Moscow has deployed forces in areas of strategic interest only when there was little or no chance of intersecting with NATO forces.

As an exception, Russia's intervention in Syria in 2015 – where US troops were present and there was a declared US policy, however informal, against the continuation of the Assad regime – was, to some extent, a normal aspect. On the other hand, given the small number of US forces present in Syria, Moscow was probably relatively confident that the war with the United States is unlikely. Publicly<sup>34</sup>, Putin suggested that Russia intervened in Syria to prevent the spread of terrorism and to rule out an outcome – the fall of the Syrian government – which resembles with the Western actions in Yugoslavia,

Iraq and Libya<sup>35</sup>. In the light of future large-scale intervention in Ukraine or the South Caucasus, Moscow would probably study the possibility and ability of NATO to respond militarily, in addition to other military<sup>36</sup> forecasts. In general, a change (or possibility of change) in the political *status quo* to the detriment of Russian interests and in favour of the West remains a relatively reliable, albeit insufficient, indicator of possible Russian military intervention in the Black Sea region. But this does not exclude Russia from interfering with hybrid means and instruments, below the limit of detection or through third parties, in order to achieve the goals.

### Conclusions

When the Soviet Union collapsed, the Russian Federation inherited considerably less influence in the Black Sea region than its Soviet predecessor had, as well as fewer global resources to mitigate perceived threats. At the same time, recent history has shown that Russian interests in the region have remained largely unchanged, especially as regards the former Soviet republics. This dynamic added a degree of urgency and tension to the region which was probably less intense during the cold War because of Soviet influence in the capitals of coastal States and the larger maritime area controlled by the Russian military fleet.

Russian interests focus primarily on the desire to maintain different levels of political and economic influence in each coastal State, to keep the Black Sea under control for oil or gas exports and other maritime transport through Novorossiysk port, as well as preventing a security deficit toward NATO that could threaten the South-West flank of Kremlin. Russia's strategy to pursue these interests is based on the use of diplomatic, informational, political, cyber and economic instruments, which are supported by an increasingly credible military capacity. Moscow's calculation of the possible use of force in the Black Sea region is shaped by many factors.

Regarding the possible elements or implications of a Western compensatory strategy, there are at least two key aspects of the research contained in this article. Firstly, Russian interests in the region are not the same for all coastal States. Russia's relations with NATO members (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey) are secondary to its relations with Ukraine



and Georgia. Considering the future policy toward these latter countries, the United States and NATO must determine their own commitment, tolerance of risk and prioritization of the policy, while taking into account possible Russian reactions. Secondly, although it is not necessarily a hunch of future action, Russian behavior over the past two decades has shown that Russia is not seeking a military confrontation with NATO and will endeavor to avoid any scenario involving a large-scale deployment of its land forces. They are no longer structured to lead a long-term war, on a large scale, or supported by a large economy (as compared to that of the West). A large-scale military intervention in the Black Sea region, although unlikely, cannot be excluded, but Russia's aversion to expose a significant part of its land forces suggests that continuing and persistent demonstrations of NATO cohesion and political resilience in NATO partner countries could be key factors in deterring and coercion of Russians in the region.

Finally, I believe that the Russian position on security suggests three important ways in which Russian leaders look at the Black Sea region and Russia's strategy.

The Black Sea is not a single region important for the security of the Russian Federation, but it has its importance in relation to the confluence of interests between Asia and Europe. About the Russian national security thinking, the Black Sea is a distinct region, but its importance does not prevail over other regions of equal importance, such as the Baltic area. Certainly, the Black Sea has a unique geographical feature, with operation environment implications, including hot water ports. But treating the sea and surrounding nations as a single region risks imposing an inaccurate framework of Russian thinking.

The Black Sea and the coastal States do not occupy a certain discrete space on a general list of Russian regional priorities. More specifically, the area is a crossroad of several of Moscow's main national security concerns, varying in nature and intensity. The most important of these concerns are the places Russia considers to be close to home (*almost abroad*) and therefore integrated into Russia's own sense of identity and security. These areas include all Ukraine, Moldavia and Georgia, with Russia always launching pretensions on Crimea, Abkhazia and South Ossetia (including

over Transnistria), so those territories have a particularly deep resonance for the Russian spirit. Both Ukraine and Georgia as a whole are part of Russia strategy to control as many areas circumscribed to the extent area of the Black sea. Moldavia occupies a special, distinct place, because the launching of some aggressions in the region would involve the crossing of Ukraine, which would expose the Russian forces too much.

In a more practical sense, the Black Sea is important due to the projection of its significant power and access to Russia - in particular, access to global maritime trade and communication routes, opportunities for power projection at strategic distance as well as the expansion of air and coastal defence. The east-west axis crossing the Black Sea from the Caucasus to the Balkans is the strategic trade hub for trade between Asia and Europe.

Also, the reason for Russia's national security concerns is the closeness of NATO forces and its military operations to Russia's proximity areas. In Kremlin's view, the region poses risks to Russia's security. Any challenge for Abkhazia or Crimea - or for the rest of Georgia or Ukraine - directly and intimately affects Russia's sense of security. The claim of Russian Federation to be recognized as the great power in a multi-polar hegemony, partly on its roles as protector of Crimea, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, solution provider in Donbas, but also as a great power in the large part of the Black Sea, represents a risk for its stability in the situation if he fails to maintain his domination in this region.

#### NOTES:

1 <https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1946-1963-elder-statesman/the-sinews-of-peace/>, accessed on 17.03.2021.

2 <https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/05/march-5-1946-winston-churchill-warns-of-soviet-iron-curtain/>, accessed on 17.03.2021.

3 [http://cpc-ew.ro/pdfs/politica\\_energetica\\_a\\_rusiei.pdf](http://cpc-ew.ro/pdfs/politica_energetica_a_rusiei.pdf), accessed on 26.05.2021.

4 The Crimean War of 1853 between Russia and the alliance of the Ottoman Empire, the second French Empire, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Kingdom of Sardinia.

5 The Polish-Russian war from 1605 to 1618 was represented by a series of military conflicts between the Russian state and the Polish-Lithuanian union, which took advantage of the internal chaos generated by the frequent civil wars unleashed by the interim government of the country, after the tsar's, Fyodor I death in 1598, by transferring power



from Rurik dynasty (1598) to Romanov dynasty (1513), which was called at the time as the troubled times of Russia.

6 The Great Northern War, of 1700-1721, fought between Swedish troops and those of the coalition of Denmark, Poland and Russia.

7 Napoleon's campaign of 1812, which although it conquered Moscow, in reality became the greatest disaster of the Neapolitan campaigns. The military losses amounted to about 300,000 French, 70,000 Poles, 50,000 Italians, 80,000 Germans and probably 450,000 Russians. The French lost about 200,000 horses and more than 1,000 pieces of artillery.

8 <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/napoleon-wehrmacht-ul-si-capricioasa-vreme-din-rusia>, accessed on 18.03.2021.

9 1568-1570, 1676-1681, 1686-1700, 1710-1711, 1735-1739, 1768-1774, 1787-1792, 1806-1812, 1828-1829, 1853-1856, 1877-1878, 1914-1918.

10 The economic potential of the Black Sea region was first discovered by Greek settlers, later by Romans and Byzantines, the economic peak of the region being reached during the commercial expansion of the Italian Genoese and Venetian republics.

11 Initially annexed by Russia through the Peace Treaty of Bucharest of 1812, following the end of the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-1812.

12 [http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/news/story/2008/04/080401\\_bush\\_bucuresti.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/news/story/2008/04/080401_bush_bucuresti.shtml), accessed on 18.03.2021.

13 <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/04/20080402-2.html>, accessed on 18.03.2021.

14 [http://www.cpc-ew.ro/pdfs/razboiul\\_ruso\\_georgian.pdf](http://www.cpc-ew.ro/pdfs/razboiul_ruso_georgian.pdf), accessed on 18.03.2021.

15 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQ58Yv6kP44>, accessed on 18.03.2021.

16 Nagorno-Karabakh is a disputed territory, internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, but mostly governed by the unrecognized Artsakh Republic (formerly called the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR) since the first Nagorno-Karabakh War. This is a region without exit to the South Caucasus sea, located in the mountainous area of Karabakh, between Lower Karabakh and Zangezur, covering the South-Eastern part of the mountains of the Small Caucasus.

17 The Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), established on November 18, 2011, was conceived by Russian President Vladimir Putin as an alternative to the European Union market, but is far from offering its economic benefits. In addition to the 5 states mentioned, in 2019 Serbia also joined.

18 It is an intergovernmental military alliance that was established on May 15, 1992. Uzbekistan joined the organization at the time of its establishment, but left in 1997. It subsequently rejoined in 2006 but withdrew from the CSTO in 2012.

19 Except for Albania.

20 [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2014\\_07/20140716\\_140716-Factsheet\\_Russia\\_en.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_07/20140716_140716-Factsheet_Russia_en.pdf), accessed on 26.05.2021.

21 Peacekeeping force supported by the US-Egyptian-Israeli Government, established on August 3, 1981.

22 [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA300/RRA357-1/RAND\\_RRA357-1.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RRA300/RRA357-1/RAND_RRA357-1.pdf), accessed on 19.03.2021, Stephen J. Flanagan & others, *Russia, NATO, and Black Sea Security*, Published by the RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif, 2020.

23 <https://www.dw.com/ro/ucraina-starea-de-r%C4%83zboi-este-iminent%C4%83/a-46460018>, accessed on 09.03.2021.

24 <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/2019/04/09/turkey-russia-look-for-new-ways-to-reach-100b-in-bilateral-trade>, accessed on 26.05.2021.

25 <https://eurasianet.org/how-has-conflict-with-russia-affected-ukraines-trade>; and Stephen J. Flanagan & others, 2020, p. 49.

26 [https://www.economica.net/rusia-pregateste-sanctiuni-economice-dure-contraturciei-erdogan-vrea-indreptarea-erorilor-facute-de-ambele-parti\\_110874.html](https://www.economica.net/rusia-pregateste-sanctiuni-economice-dure-contraturciei-erdogan-vrea-indreptarea-erorilor-facute-de-ambele-parti_110874.html), accessed on 19.03.2021.

27 [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2017/578016/EXPO\\_IDA%282017%29578016\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2017/578016/EXPO_IDA%282017%29578016_EN.pdf), accessed on 26.05.2021.

28 Vesti, „Miroporyadok: Dokumental'nyi fil'm Vladimira Solov'eva [World Order: Documentary by Vladimir Solov'ev],” video, YouTube, 20 December 2015. Ca răspuns la o întrebare referitoare la relațiile dintre Rusia și Occident în ceea ce privește Ucraina și alte probleme, In response to a question about Russia-West relations regarding Ukraine and other issues, Putin replied: ”Regarding Ukraine and in general post-Soviet area, I am convinced that the position of our Western partners - European and American – is not focused on protecting the interests of Ukraine. But rather, (their position) is linked to an attempt to interrupt the attempt to recreate the Soviet Union and no one wants to believe that we have no purpose in recreating the Soviet Union. But there is the possibility of uniting (the former Soviet republics) in the modern processes of economic integration (I want to emphasize this word), which would undoubtedly make Russia and Ukraine more competitive in the global economy and which would allow Russia and Ukraine to take their rightful place in the modern system of division of labor in global markets. Even this possibility does not allow our partners to sleep soundly, and I believe that the main task (of the West) is to interrupt this joint effort... Why can the European Union be formed, but not the Eurasian Union?”

29 [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1700/RR1793/RAND\\_RR1793.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1700/RR1793/RAND_RR1793.pdf), accessed on 19.03.2021, Raphael S. Cohen and Andrew Radin, *Russia's Hostile Measures in Europe: Understanding the Threat*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019, p. 67, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1793.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1793.html)

30 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1U4E\\_QwWpg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1U4E_QwWpg), accessed on 19.03.2021. Following the activation of the anti-missile system, Putin warned: ”Now we are obliged to react in an appropriate manner and if yesterday those parts of Romania's territory did not know what it is like to be in the crosshairs... then today we will have to take certain actions to ensure our security.”

31 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/04/02/winston-churchills-naughty-document-written-stalin-go-display/>, accessed on 26.05.2021.



32 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sV-8RxtQtcw>, accessed on 19.03.2021.

33 Hungary –1956; Czechoslovakia -1968; Afghanistan – 1979; Georgia -2008; Crimea –2014; eastern Ukraine – 2014.

34 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ly2n94izbI>, accessed on 19.03.2021.

35 Vladimir Putin, *Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club*, October 22, 2015; Vladimir Putin, *Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club*, October 27, 2016.

36 Stephen J. Flanagan & others, *Russia, NATO, and Black Sea Security*, Published by the RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif, 2020, p.72.

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# OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS APPLICABLE TO AIR SPACE SECURITY IN THE LAND FORCES' AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INTEGRATION OF VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM AIR DEFENCE MISSILE SYSTEMS

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Airspace security is regulated at the level of each state according to the international treaties and conventions, in all possible situations, in times of peace, crisis or war, by integrating all the civilian and military air traffic control systems. The deep concern reaching the level of worry of the specialists in the field of airspace security is the reality of the complex operational environment of the land forces operations. In this context, due to the upgrades in the air space technology and the scale of the air actions at different altitudes, the need for the operational conceptualization of the air defence systems is well justified. For this, we redefined the airspace in the land forces area of responsibility from the perspective of two directions of research. The first direction of research is the threat and the aggression of a hypothetical air enemy, and the second direction of research is the conduct of the air defence response at different altitudes. In order to obtain results, in this article, we have developed several directions of analysis and conceptualization on the possibilities of integrating the VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM air defence missile systems. Through this scientific approach, we consider to have opened new series of possibilities of planning the air combat and of probabilistic configuration on the notion of event of the air defence response, in a manner which is appropriate to the new challenges arising in the current airspace.

**Keywords:** aerial threat and aggression; air defence response; air defence event; air defence probability; operational art.

## Conceptualizing the Negative Air Event in Redefining Airspace Security

The multidimensionality of the battle space is given by the resultant of the possibilities of employing a structure to counteract the means that a hypothetical adversary can use in a military conflict. In what the airspace security is concerned, this requires planning and implementing an integrated and interoperable airspace control system for all categories of forces. The purpose of such an airspace control system is to allow the actions of all the missile and air defence artillery structures to be synchronized with the operations of the other forces participating in the joint operation, in order to obtain the minimum level of operational risk. Establishing the security of any conflict environment is the first condition for achieving the freedom of action without the hazard of negative events caused by a hypothetical opponent. The definitions of the multidimensionality of the combat space and the expression of the notions of airspace security and

airspace control system underline the importance and role of *the concept of negative event*. The object of study of the probability theory, the notion of *event* (as a result of an experiment), highlights the laws that manifest themselves in the field of random phenomena having a mass character. For argumentation, we will refer to the fundamental concepts used in the probability theory<sup>1</sup>:

- *a random experiment* is performed in order to collect the data necessary to establish the presence or the absence of a risk factor or to determine a simple status: positive or negative;
- *the test* is the method by which the experiment is obtained on an entity from the analyzed set;
- *the event* is the possible result of a test (an elementary event if it appears as a result of a single test);
- *the probability* is the possibility of the event to occur after a test.

Therefore, in the practice of probabilities, events can be of three types: certain, impossible and possible, which is why we chose to express airspace security from the perspective of conceptualizing the negative event, due to the limited knowledge of

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the actions of a hypothetical opponent, respectively a knowledge based on the estimates of the situation in the modern combat space<sup>2</sup>. *The estimate* as a separate document, as it appears in the operational art, is specific to military action planning and has two components: of *certainty* and of *uncertainty*. For the first direction of research (a topic of this article) which is the threat and the aggression of a hypothetical aerial enemy, we conceptualized the notion of negative event to show the impossibility of acquiring full knowledge on the actions of a hypothetical opponent. The actions of a hypothetical enemy can be interpreted and deduced following the processing of the data base prepared in peacetime or during the (airspace) reconnaissance operations. The creation of the data base is the result of the intelligence preparation of the battle space and of the war game (a tool specific to the military operations planning) which help identifying which of the total possible events are certain, impossible or possible. Thus, we will identify as certain events those that will mandatorily occur as a result of performing the war game (in this case, the war game is performed similarly to conducting an experiment).

After going through the war game in planning military operations, a combat situation can be interpreted as an experiment repeated under the same conditions or by changing certain circumstances, through which we can obtain, each time, new visions of the states of a system of forces and means. By this, we expect to identify the possible events that, following the determinations, are subject to certain laws, also called statistical laws. By applying the theory of probabilities we can obtain a new knowledge on the reality of the operational environment in the sense that they will allow us to predict the development of possible mass events such as: the imminence and the way of conducting an air strike. By applying the formula:

$$P(A) = \frac{\text{Number of favorable cases}}{\text{Number of possible cases}}$$

where  $P(A)$  is the probability of occurrence of the event, we obtain a factual situation in which  $P(A)$  is in relation  $0 \leq P(A) \leq 1$ , which in other words means that the relative frequency of the event that we analyze is equal to the ratio between the number of the tests in which event A occurred and the total number of the tests (repeated trials). Therefore,

we will be able to express the state of affairs on the airspace security from a new perspective of the possibility of the occurrence of the negative event, which can be for example, a *surprise air attack*. The state of the airspace security, in this case, is expressed by analyzing three factors that give the resultant of the *air threat*, respectively: the composition, the disposition and the capabilities of the air enemy. Based on the three components of the air threat, we can build the model of the air aggression or the probable courses of action of the air enemy.

Therefore, we will express the state of the airspace security as the sum of all the possible negative events out of the totality of the possible events that can occur by the conduct of the air enemy's actions. Depending on the role and the destination of the means of air action, available to a potential aggressor, we can establish the multitude and the typology of the possible events that the enemy can achieve in the airspace. To provide an example, we shall refer to the action of the reconnaissance aircraft that can cause a negative event, namely, "disclosure of the friendly forces on the march or in the deployment area" or the actions of the attack helicopters that can cause the negative event from no. 68 by "hitting column 3 of tanks belonging to 22 Armor bat." and so on. The advantage of *conceptualizing the negative event* is that it establishes the state of affairs regarding the airspace security and offers the possibility to determine the number of negative events out of the total number of possible events that could occur in the airspace. Obtaining such a report on events or a report of the possible events of the enemy in relation to those of his friendly air defence forces, substantiates the determination of the balance of air superiority in an area of military conflict<sup>3</sup>. In other words, the expression of the level of security in the airspace is not only a regulation at the level of each state according to the international treaties and conventions through an integration of all civilian and military air traffic control systems, but rather, it can be expressed by the number of possible negative events in the airspace.

The air threat, as presented above, can be redefined as the sum of all possible negative events that an air enemy can generate at a given time. In this sense, we have decomposed the threat of a hypothetical enemy into three main



categories: the composition, the disposition and the capabilities. For clarification, we shall refer to the representation of each of the three levels, namely to their content expressed in terms of the negative event. *The composition of the air enemy* is the form of organizing the forces and means of action, leadership and logistical support necessary for planning and conducting an air event. In this regard, we have distinctly identified *the group of forces* and *the mission organization* which can consist of:

- manned reconnaissance means for gathering intelligence, surveillance, locating and engaging targets – fixed-wing (FW) and rotary-wing (RW) aircraft;
- ballistic missiles (BMs), weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and means of information warfare – currently developing complex weapons systems;
- unmanned aerial vehicles (U [C] AVs) – with low and easily amortized costs;
- air-to-surface missiles (ASMs), cruise missiles (CMs) and large-caliber missiles (LCRs);
- high precision striking systems – of more recent development.

A first observation consists in the fact that, regardless of the composition and organization for the mission, planning and conducting an event in the airspace are actually done by the physical presence of that aircraft in the studied airspace. As the presence in the airspace is a flight path specific to the aerial system, we can deduce that the set of possible events in the airspace is the geometric place of all the points in the airspace where at least one aircraft can be located. If the aircraft are hostile, by the nature of their actions, they have the potential to generate negative events. In this sense, we can reformulate and make the following statement: "if the aircraft has the potential to perform a hostile action, then the geometric place occupied by the aircraft in the airspace or through each position on the flight path, is a *negative event*".

The second observation is related to setting in time and space the negative event caused by a hostile aircraft carrying combat potential, on its flight path. This tells us that in order to suppress certain negative events that could take place in the air one can intervene on each of the points on the hostile aircraft's flight path, but no later than it can achieve its own mission (ideally the aircraft should

be destroyed on the ground or immediately after take-off).

The two observations prove that the conceptualization of the notion of *negative event* can be applied to expressing the state of security of the airspace. Based on this fact, we can reconsider the ways of developing risk management as a decision-making process which leads to expressing the situation estimates by describing the possibilities of the occurrence of the negative events and are closely related to the possibility of planning and designing air defence events.

### Conceptualizing the Airspace in the Land Forces Area of Responsibility

Due to the technical and tactical capabilities of the air defence artillery systems of the land forces, there is a certain *action dimensionality in the airspace*. We define action dimensionality in the airspace as the totality of the geometric places in the airspace where the air defence artillery structures can plan and execute actions of reconnaissance, tracking and classification, identification, engagement and destruction, as well as evaluation of these actions against hostile aircraft or types of ammunition launched by air. After expressing the definition of action dimensionality in the airspace and by correlating the two types of events, namely the *negative air event* and the *air defence event*, it is possible to express the state of security of the airspace of responsibility and implicitly to conduct risk management. We define the *air defence event* as the possibility of executing any air defence action planned and carried out by the air defence artillery structures of the land forces.

Each air defence action is the result of specific activities, which are planned and carried out by each subsystem of the air defence response system (the reconnaissance subsystem, the command and control subsystem, the air defence firing subsystem and the logistics subsystem). Depending on the time and space classification of the air defence response actions, the algorithm for fighting the air enemy results, on distinct stages, as follows:

- reconnaissance of the airspace as a result of the actions of all sensors in the visible, infrared and electromagnetic spectra, which depending on the technical and tactical characteristics of the optical electronic means and devices, namely the radar stations, results in a shape and dimensionality of

the air defence surveillance area (depending on the enemy's jamming possibilities, the relief features, the weather conditions and the light or dark times resulting in different detection distances in the area of responsibility of the military operations);

- detection and classification of air targets (fixed or rotary wing aircraft, different types of ammunition launched by air);
- continuous tracking and establishing the identification of the aircraft (friend or foe);
- decision-making on engaging hostile targets (a task of the command and control subsystem, in compliance with the rules of engagement and the weapons control status);
- engagement with air defence fire or the execution of air defence fire (depending on the technical and tactical capabilities the air defence firing areas and the launch areas for the air defence missiles, which determines a certain dimensionality of the airspace, to combat and to destroy – a task of the air defence fire subsystem);
- evaluation of the effects of the air defence firing, a mandatory sequence depending on the air defence system and respectively, its ability to react to the actions of the hostile aircraft);
- cessation or resumption of one of the stages of the air defence algorithm until the objective of the air defence response is achieved.

Due to the high speeds of the aircraft, the deployment of the air defence response sequences is very fast, which implies the development of new

algorithm as defined above, and the physical overlap of the firing areas and the launch areas is a *multiplication of the participation in performing the air defence event*. In other words, an air defence event may consist of the action of several air defence systems, but the intended objective is preserved in space and time, in the sense that the hostile aircraft will take countermeasures to achieve the negative air event. The major advantage of approaching the air defence response from the perspective of *the events occurring in the airspace* is the possibility of splitting the actions of the air defence response and thus achieving a significant economy of forces and means (of air defence potential). Splitting the air defence response actions means that all the air defence systems that achieve a dimensionality of the airspace take part in the air defence event singularly under the most optimal and favorable conditions for intervention to prevent the occurrence of the negative air event.

In the context of the joint achievement of the dimensionality of the airspace of several air defence missile or artillery systems, based on the principle of the common participation in the effort to carry out the air defence event, a series of specific lines result, as shown in Figure 1. Depending on the spatial positioning of the air defence systems, an air defence event, according to the practice of probabilities, is of three kinds: certain, impossible and possible. The description of the air defence response lines, as in Figure 1,

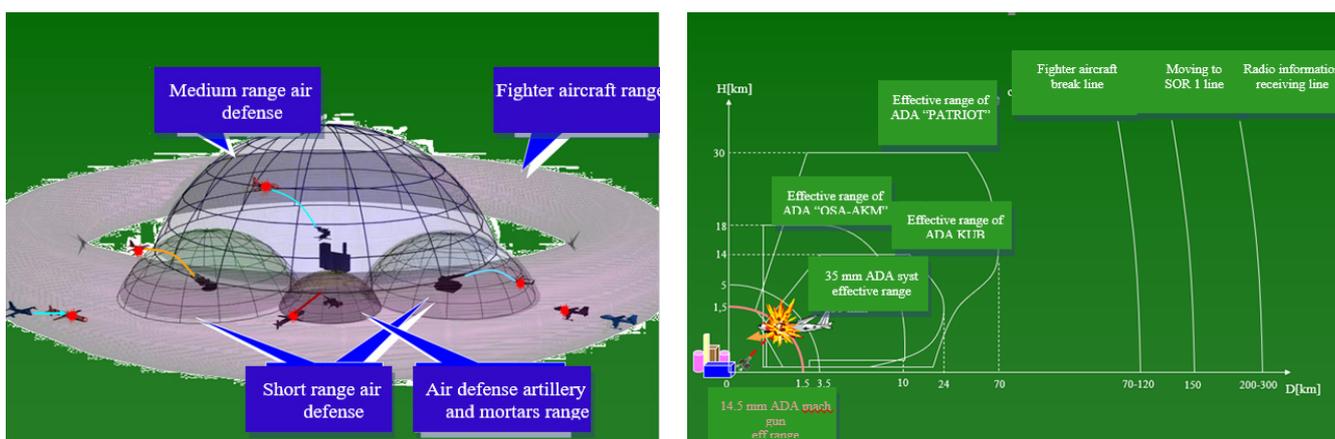


Figure 1 Schematic representation of the action dimensionality in the airspace of responsibility

technologies for informational connection of the air defence system subsystems. For clarification, we mention that each air defence missile or artillery system consistently covers the entire air defence

implies the successive activation and deactivation of the air defence systems for the realization of the stages of the air defence algorithm, depending on the evolution of the aircraft on its flight path or



the achievement of the air (negative) events. The disadvantage of activating and deactivating the corresponding stages on specific actions of the air defence systems, consists in the possibility of losing information about the evolution of the aircraft in the air, which causes a loss of precious reaction time to the negative air event. One solution to remedy this disadvantage may be to carry out air defence work in an air defence response network. The role of such an air defence network is to divide each sequence of the air defence response into discrete combat spaces in which only those systems that develop the maximum result per unit of air defence effort will operate. We define *the air defence performance* as the air defence end state pursued per unit of air defence effort. In other words, we aim to change in time and space the air defence efficiency depending on the contribution of each air defence system to the achievement of the air defence event. This means this can take place in a coherent expression of the contribution of each air defence system to the targeted event. Thus, for the same position and the coordinates of a hostile aircraft on the move in the airspace, the air defence

systems within all categories of forces: air forces, land forces and naval forces. This implies analyzing, planning and decision-making on the employment in combat of all the air defence response capabilities depending on the degree of threat and aggression of a hypothetical air enemy. Decoding the level of air threat requires knowing and understanding the composition, the disposition and the possibilities of air action of a hypothetical opponent. The overlap of the air threat models on the geographical format of the area of operations together with the possibilities of occurrence of the other factors influencing the military actions (the existence of important objectives in the category of critical infrastructure, or the implications of signing international treaties, etc.) may lay the foundation of the development of the air aggression model. The conceptualization of the notion of negative air event opens new perspectives regarding the analysis, planning and decision-making of the air defence action, according to a network model, as in the graphic representation shown in Figure 2.

Linking the two types of achievable events, namely the negative air event and the air defence

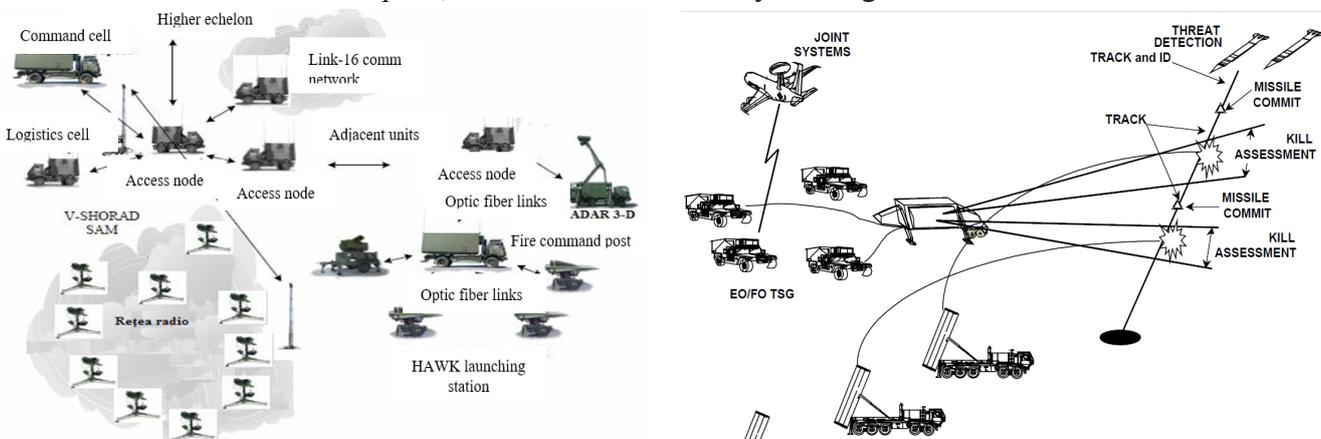


Figure 2 Simplified scheme for representing a negative air event and the conduct of the air defence event<sup>5</sup>

systems in the same dimensionality of the airspace, will simultaneously encounter the three event situations: certain, impossible and possible. In this context, in order to obtain the optimal solution to solve the problem of the negative air event, an integrative control unit according to the model of *the collaborative work network* is necessary.<sup>4</sup>

### Integrating the VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM Air Defence Missile Systems

The airspace defence involves the responsible joint action of the air defence missile and artillery

event, contributes to the creation of an air defence architecture based on an air defence algorithm, which is a correct and efficient tool for the air threat assessment and the activation of the TEWA<sup>6</sup> (Threat Evaluation and Weapon Allocation) weapons systems/ air defence forces and means of the land forces, air forces and naval forces alike. Based on the creation of such air defence architecture, a unitary integration of the actions of the VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM air defence missile systems can take place according to the model in figure 3. Expressing the statement of the

air defence problem by conceptualizing the notion of air/air defence event implies the development of more solving variants where each variant has its own distinct results. As represented in the diagram in Figure 3, the contribution of the VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM missile systems results in a new perspective of the operational art in the planning of air defence actions. In other words, there is a dissemination of the geometric locations of all the positions of the hostile aircraft on their flight path in the airspace, which implies a coherent activation/deactivation of the air defence missile systems, depending on the evolution of the air situation in the airspace of responsibility. Basically, a computer-assisted electronic ordering takes place in which successive missile launches are performed

reaching the level of worry of the specialists in the field of airspace security, we have developed a series of original ideas on the applicability of conceptualizing the notions of negative air event and air defence event. Following this conceptualization, against the background of the airspace technological development and the scale of the air actions at different altitudes, we have proven there is a justified need for the integration of the VSHORAD, SHORAD and SAM air defence missile systems in a collaborative air defence network following the operational model in Figure 3. For this, we redefined the airspace of responsibility of the land forces from the perspective of two research directions which we approached separately: the threat and the aggression of a hypothetical air

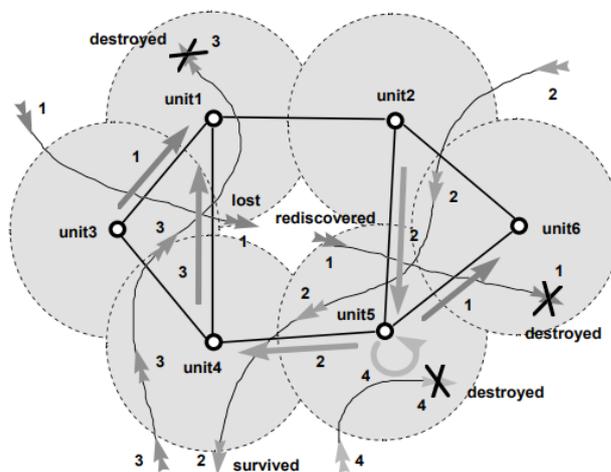
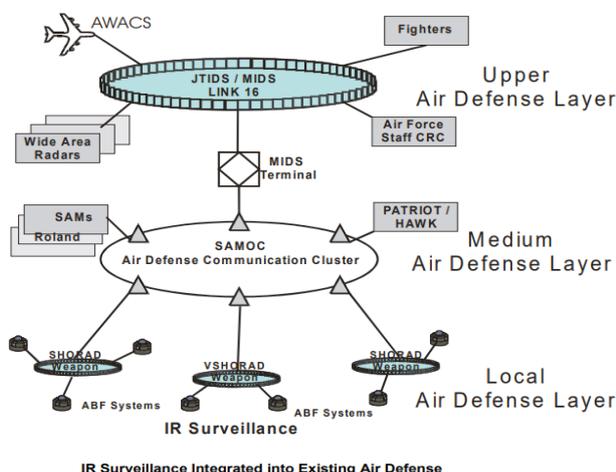


Figure 3 Variant of schematic representation of the air defence architecture<sup>7</sup> for the unitary integration of the actions of the VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM air defence missile systems<sup>8</sup>

depending on the air event decomposed for each launching area of the VSHORAD, SHORAD and SAM systems as shown in Figure 3.

The result of such a collaborative air defence network depends on the speed of disseminating the information on the position of the hostile aircraft in the airspace and is one of the models resulting from overlapping the launching areas, at different altitudes of threat and aggression in the airspace. The actual creation of a collaborative air defence work platform implies the joint work of the subsystems of the air defence response system, so that all the sequences of the air defence response algorithm are carried out under technical interoperability conditions.

### Conclusions and Suggestions

From the starting point of this scientific approach in which we tackled the deep concern

enemy and the conduct of the air defence response at different altitudes.

The first aspect resulting from the analysis of the airspace security is the redefinition of the *dimensionality of the airspace* and the possibility of a coherent integration of several air defence missile or artillery systems. Thus, new possibilities are opened for the creation of the air defence event through the selective participation of the VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM air defence missile systems corresponding to the combat possibilities in coordination with a series of specific alignments as shown in figure 1. Depending on the air defence formation, an air defence event can be, according to the mathematical expectation of the theory of probability, of three kinds: certain, impossible and possible. The advantage of such an approach is the achievement of a significant economy of forces



and means of the air defence response. Another advantage results from the perspective of splitting the air combat, a period of time in which the forces can maneuver in order to get out of the enemy's line of fire.

Another important aspect regarding the creation of a collaborative air defence response platform is related to the nature and manner of conducting negative air events, which results in an air defence structured on tiers and on heights, depending on the technical and tactical capabilities of the air defence missile and artillery systems. The strategy of such collaborative networks is to deal with threats through gradual countermeasures for various intervals of interception of the hostile aircraft. In this way, an air target is forced to gradually cross the air defence fire of several air defence systems, leaving little chance of achieving the air threat against the land forces. In a conventional battlefield situation, this air defence strategy can be successfully applied. If a coordinated air raid from a *previously known direction* is expected, then several medium-range air defence systems such as PATRIOT and HAWK can be deployed and massed in the area of the contact line, providing air defence in depth but also exposing these systems to the enemy artillery or infantry fire. The integration of SHORAD air defence systems with SAM surface-to-air missile systems, such as ROLAND or air defence cannon systems, such as GEPARD<sup>9</sup> (German air defence system) or ZSU-23<sup>10</sup> (Russian air defence system), can generate an air defence combat formation much more effective based on splitting the air defence algorithm and a much more organic self-defence. However, in the current operational environment of the military missions carried out mainly outside the militarized area or the deployment areas, the situation of the land forces structures becomes problematic from an air defence point of view. In the case of the forces deployed in regions with limited conflict and crisis, as well as in peacekeeping missions, the notion of contact line loses its significance and the hostile areas become arbitrarily distributed among the areas of responsibility of the allied forces. Based on a complete aerial image, as in the case of the collaborative network integration of the air defence systems, *the air defence actions can be carried out as previously planned missions.*

The two resulting aspects lead to suggesting that the communications technological compatibility of the VSHORAD, SHORAD, SAM missile systems should be identified in order to create a typical structure of collaborative air defence network (as in Figure 3). A second suggestion, arising from the first, is to design the procurement of air defence weapons systems in accordance with the principle of the technological interoperability. In this way, the modern short-range systems (VSHORAD), easily deployable and highly mobile in the tactical field, based on the information received from the SHORAD and SAM systems, can achieve a much more effective air defence response against the threat of the air enemy found in the vicinity of the friendly troops. This method aims to increase the value of the capability of the VSHORAD radar-based air defence systems to counter cruise missiles (CM) or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) which due to the use of terrain lines where the radar cross sections are quite weak, are impossible to detect on the radar (hence an impossible air defence event). Following the results of the analysis of the air defence response in the context of the new security environment from the perspective of conceptualizing the notion of negative air event, respectively air defence event, the arguments related to how an air surveillance system (the information subsystem) should be equipped to be able to meet the challenges of a future extremely dynamic battlefield, are as follows:

- it is necessary to create and provide a unitary real-time air picture in order to report without delay all the aerial surprise actions;
- it is necessary to conduct covert radar operation because many missions require surveillance in stealth mode to avoid detection by the enemy;
- the air insecurity situations should be solved through previously prepared plans based on anticipated negative air events, without the existence of a complete air picture, when a continuous 24-hour coverage is needed, during which air attacks can occur from anywhere and anytime;
- in order to ensure the quality of the air defence fire command/control data, the performance of the radar systems must be improved appropriately to each air defence system by data on the coordinates of the current position of the target detected in the air and its speed, respectively the future position coordinates of the air target.

In conclusion, although we have not expressed all the suggestions that may result from the conceptualization of the notions of negative air event or air defence event, we are convinced that the decision-makers' adopting an appropriate attitude on the implementation of the air defence response in the area of responsibility of the land forces increases the airspace security and limits casualties and property damage in the event of a contemporary military conflict.

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## OPERATIONAL APPROACH OF LAND FORCES IN THE HIBRID CONTEXT

Lt.Col.Assoc.Prof. Paul TUDORACHE, PhD\*

Visualizing the various operational contexts of recent Land Forces' employment, there were many situations where the nominated structures also faced unconventional adversaries, even though, initially, the nature of operation had been identified as having a conventional pattern. This particularity is perpetuated more and more aggressively, determining the conventional military structures of the Land Forces to operate in order to face both regular and irregular forces, even within the same AO. Based on these coordinates, the article triggers to identify the principles needed to adjust the operational approach of Land Forces, so that the organic structures can perform in engaging the adversary from AOs within current and future operations. Also, a subsidiary objective of the present research is to identify the mutations at the level of ACOAs based on which the adjustment of FFCOAs will be made.

**Keywords:** hybrid operational approach; ACOA, FFCOA; regular forces; irregular forces.

The various recent operational contexts have highlighted the fact that the approaches of participants to the military actions have undergone significant changes, the most conclusive being localized at the level of courses of action (COAs) adopted. It is not so difficult to understand how and why this formula was adopted, the justification being the opponent's intention to balance the combat power by diminishing the conventional advantages of friendly forces. Practically, friendly forces are determined to react to the permanent opponent's operational changes, the latter being able to correlate, optimally, actions of regular and irregular forces, even though in the same tactical area of operations (AO).

The reaction of the friendly forces has not taken long to appear, and in this sense the doctrines of different armies, out of the desire to improve their Land Forces' training, use the opposing forces (OPFOR), clarifying it, from theoretical view, as "a plausible, flexible, and free-thinking mixture of regular forces, irregular forces, and/or criminal elements representing a composite of varying capabilities ... (doctrine, tactics, organization, and equipment)"<sup>1</sup>. Organized and prepared to act in accordance with the opponent's doctrinal model, the usefulness of OPFOR is given by the possibility of understanding and combating opponent's tactics,

techniques, and procedures (TTPs) by developing and applying adversary COAs (ACOA), based on hybridization of his actions.

From the perspective of operational approach, the Land Forces have to rethink their options, either operating individually, which requires their own operational adaptation, or interagency, in close cooperation with other entities such as special operations forces (SOF).

### Mutations in the opponent's COA and TTPs

In general, ACOAs are determined by performing the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) which, according to APP-28, is renamed as intelligence preparation of the operational environment (IPOE), representing the "systematic process of analyzing the adversary (enemy), terrain, and weather in an area of interest to determine their (likely) effects on operations"<sup>2</sup>. Although these two concepts differ, the IPB focusing on a more detailed analysis of the specific elements, while the IPOE approaching them more comprehensively and generically, supporting the commander in "identifying the adversary's most likely intent and COA ... strategy, vulnerabilities, and centers of gravity"<sup>3</sup>, in essence, both comprise the same activities, as follows: "define the operational environment, describe environmental effects on operations, evaluate the threat, determine threat COAs"<sup>4</sup>.

Therefore, at the level of adversary's visualization, the most conclusive mutations appear related to the threat's evaluation, respectively

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ACOA's determination. The first variable, threat's evaluation, is pointed to "threat force capabilities and the doctrinal principles and TTP threat forces prefer to employ"<sup>5</sup>. Analysis of threat's evaluation highlights the fact that, until recently, the personnel specialized in intelligence from Land Forces (S2, G2) considered only the adversary's conventional component, somewhat omitting their correlation with unconventional capabilities and TTPs. As a result, at present, the threat's evaluation by S2/G2 should be much more comprehensive, including<sup>6</sup>:

- regular threats – probable hostile intentions of the opponent's conventional forces such as tactical military structures (battalion, brigade, and so forth) that have the ability to operate in a multi-domain manner; as a rule, the opponent's conventional forces are used when are created windows of opportunity, in other words, moments when friendly forces can be surprised;

- irregular threats – probable hostile intentions of terrorist/insurgent structures, transnational criminal organizations, nationalist entities, guerrilla elements, paramilitary structures, and so on, which exhibit an excessive degree of volatility in the use of their specific capabilities;

- hybrid threats – probable hostile intentions substantiated by correlating regular and irregular forces to generate effects and achieve common desired end states; as a rule, during the operation, the characteristic structures and entities complement each other.

Thus, in defining the adversary doctrinal model, S2/G2 personnel should capture the whole mixture of its forces and structures, starting from the regular ones to the irregular ones.

Regarding the determination of ACOAs, it is substantiated by integrating the threat's evaluation and developing event's template/matrix. Therefore, the adjustment of the threat evaluation, which as outlined above is an essential element, must also be transposed on the ACOAs' determination. More specifically, in the final form ACOAs must highlight very clearly the likely capabilities, intentions and actions of all entities involved, even if S2/G2 personnel may have difficulties in analyzing and estimating irregular forces. There are two possibilities for transposing all elements of the opponent: developing integrated ACOAs that picture all adversary's capabilities and probable actions; developing ACOAs dedicated to the

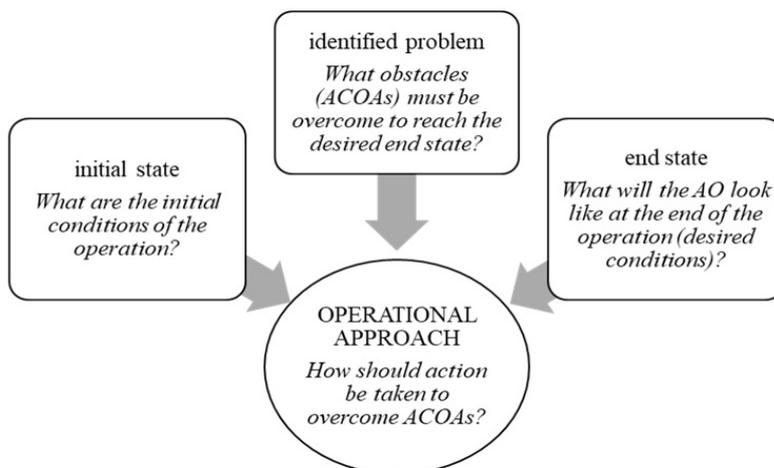
regular component as well as ACOAs specific to the irregular one. Although the first option is much more complex and demanding, the benefits of its applicability can be more conclusive, as it is much easier to visualize the likely conjugated effects on friendly forces COAs (FFCOAs).

Also, another pattern that should be taken into account in determining ACOAs is that of combining operational procedures specific to the regular forces such as area defence, deliberate offense and so forth, with irregular forces' TTPs. One such ACOA that somewhat follows the above pattern is the one used by the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) for Mosul defence, determined at that time as the center of gravity (COG) of ISIS forces in Iraq. Broadly speaking, ISIS COA was based on adopting the task of area defence fueled by hybrid TTPs, manifested in the form of: integrating the Mosul city into the combat formation; using the indigenous population (seized by jihadists) as human shield; emplacing on main avenues of approach of the entire range of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), most of them vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIEDs) in nature, to acquire counter mobility of friendly forces<sup>7</sup>.

Concluding on this first part, it can be appreciated that the opponent should not only be interpreted in a divided manner, but rather in an integrated one that captures all elements of generating the opponent's combat power, on the one hand, respectively the probable intentions to direct it, on the other hand.

### **Principles regarding the hybridization of friendly forces COAs**

Clarifying the issues related to the reconfiguration of ACOAs, further attention will be focused on analyzing the Land Forces' operational approach, in order to identify those elements that require interventions within it. First of all, taking into account the international military literature, the operational approach is understood as "a broad description of the mission, operational concepts, tasks, and actions required to accomplish the mission"<sup>8</sup>. From another theoretical perspective, the operational approach represents the head bridge which links initial state and desired end state, ensuring the overcoming of identified obstacles which are represented by ACOAs (Figure 1).



**Figure 1** The operational approach within Land Forces  
(Author's conception)

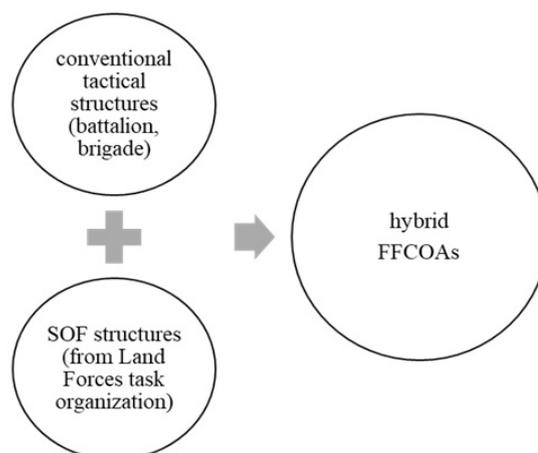
Identifying the answer to the question associated with the operational approach requires analyzing the issue of the FFCOAs' development specific to the Land Forces, so how they should be adjusted in order to ensure the overcoming of ACOAs. Representing "any sequence of activities that an individual or unit may follow... a scheme developed to accomplish a mission"<sup>9</sup>, FFCOAs, once developed and approved, must be able to "defeat all feasible adversary (enemy) COAs while accounting for all tactical activities"<sup>10</sup>.

By operationalizing the essential concept of the present research, the hybrid operational approach can be defined as a way to overcome ACOAs, correlating missions and tasks performed in the conventional, unconventional and/or hybrid spectrum by dedicated organic structures in order to create the conditions estimated for desired end state. Beyond the multi-domain operational support, focusing only on the action of maneuvering structures from designated AO, defeating ACOAs by the Land Forces can be done as follows:

- independently – it is more demanding, because it involves the prior preparation of organic structures to counter unconventional or hybrid actions;
- cooperating with SOF elements – involves a split of responsibilities, the Land Forces' structures engaging the conventional component of ACOAs, while SOF ensuring the desired effects on the unconventional one;
- cooperating with other elements responsible for carrying out the maneuver of the combat forces.

Thus, a relatively new constant to be introduced in the equation of the operational approach is

the employment of adversary unconventional component, the most convenient solution being the use of the SOF (Figure 2).



**Figure 2** Hybridization of FFCOAs specific to the Land Forces – combat tactical structures  
(Author's conception)

SOF structures can be an organic part of the Land Forces service, such as the American model, Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF), or a separate service, following the model of other armies. In order to facilitate the exercise of command and control (C2) and the development of operational cohesion, the first variant would be more appropriate (organic SOF), while the SOF, as a different service, is more likely suitable for operational and strategic objectives. In the above configuration, the SOF will have the "ability to operate in small teams and in friendly, politically sensitive, uncertain, or hostile environments ... unilaterally or with or through indigenous forces



and populations"<sup>11</sup>. Along with very well-known lethal actions, the SOF will support the Land Forces' conventional structures with nonlethal actions, aiming at modelling the local security forces and gaining the support of the local population.

Within the hybrid operational approach of the Land Forces, the range of SOF component, in terms of missions and tasks, is defined by<sup>12</sup>:

- unconventional warfare – creating/supporting the resistance movement, the insurgency, acting through or with hidden auxiliary or guerilla forces;

- counterinsurgency – combating insurgent elements in AO; for the economy of the mission a key variable is to obtain the indigenous population's support;

- counterterrorism – combating terrorist elements and their infrastructure, using hidden, clandestine or low profile visibility means;

- assistance of the security forces – supporting the local/regional security forces in the AO in order to outline the Land Forces' unified action;

- direct action – "short duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted with specialized military capabilities to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover, or damage designated targets in hostile, denied environments ..."<sup>13</sup>;

- special reconnaissance – intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) activities in hostile, denied environments, requiring specialized military capabilities;

- information support operations – usually psychological operations (PSYOPS) carried out in AO;

- civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) operations – engaging the local population and authorities for nonlethal effects;

- environment preparation – activities necessary for shaping the AO in order to create conditions for future operations; usually are information and security in nature;

- search, rescue and recovery – offensive activities issued to prevent, deter, preempt and respond to terrorist threats/acts that include the release of hostages, as well as the restoration of control over military and civilian capabilities and infrastructure.

The timely and effective fulfillment of the above missions and tasks by the organic SOF, will fuel the Land Forces with the ability to successfully strike the irregular elements of the opponent. Its conjugation with the action of conventional military structures

(battalion, brigade) will coagulate the Land Forces' capacity to simultaneously/successively engage all specific ACOAs' elements and capabilities, finally guarantying the achievement of all desired end state's conditions.

### Conclusions

The Land Forces, facing the changes related to the continuous reconfiguration and adaptation of the opponent's regular and irregular forces, or their mixture, are required to identify those operational strategies whose applicability will guarantee their success. Clarifying the ACOAs' typology, at present, the following variants can be defined:

- conventional – shaped by the use of opponent's regular structures, with a quite a low usage probability, being applied mainly for deterrence purposes;

- unconventional – configured by integrating irregular elements such as terrorist, insurgent, guerrilla, organized crime, resistance movements, and so forth; having a moderate to high usage probability, it makes sense in situations where the friendly forces' combat power is superior, the opponent seeking to diminish the operational advantages created;

- hybrid – coagulated by the mixture of regular and irregular elements, in which the following essential configurations can be identified: conventional accentuated - unconventional diminished (low to moderate usage probability); moderately conventional - moderately unconventional (average usage probability); conventional diminished - unconventional accentuated (high usage probability).

Of all these, the most demanding challenges for the Land Forces' structures are generated by those ACOAs configured by hybridizing regular and irregular elements, their applicability having as initial purpose surprising the friendly forces.

Such a variant of the opponent's configuration needs to be solved through a similar operational approach, in other words a hybridized one (hybrid FFCOAs). At the level of Land Forces, a suitable and perhaps the most recommended solution is to include and develop inside their task organization a SOF component, which reaching fully operational capability (*FOC*), will have the ability to engage unconventional targets, either lethally or nonlethally.



At the end, it can be concluded that the Land Forces, generally, and organic structures, particularly, will have to significantly change their operational mentality, planning, preparing and executing the operations in a hybridized manner in order to defeat an accentuated hybridized adversary.

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## STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGIES TO BE USED IN COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEMS

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With the diversification of risks and threats in the multidimensional operational environment, in variable geometry conflicts, state-of-the-art technology must be used at all times in the architecture of command and control systems. This will ensure optimal response conditions both at the planning level and at the level of the execution of the military operation/action. Real-time communication, horizontally and vertically, between tactical level forces, operational and strategic level command and support structures, and with other institutions with security and defense responsibilities can only be ensured and protected by using advanced technologies. Not to be neglected at all is the training of the human resource for an efficient use of equipment as well as the algorithms and processes for making an efficient decision-making process, in line with technical, technological and artificial intelligence developments.

**Keywords:** command and control; artificial intelligence; efficiency; technologies; Information Technologies.

### The impact of state-of-the-art technologies on actions/operations in multidimensional confrontation environments

Analyzing the impact of *state-of-the-art technologies* implemented in the architectures of command and control systems (C2), we consider it important to start from the fact that the current extremely complex, evolved conflict environments are characterized, in addition to technological evolution, by the power of information. Planning to achieve a common goal of the actors participating in the conflict involves the exchange of information, similar working methods and joint planning sessions, which, at the strategic level often prove to be difficult. Planning in a multidimensional environment and under the conditions of the specific risks and threats of conflict with variable geometry creates challenges for both civilian and military actors. The military situation and its evolution, together with necessary information, become available in a shorter time and create the possibility of a prompt response, absolutely necessary to the often-changing situations in the evolution of a modern conflict. We will bring up some of the innovations in the field, in order to present the

advantages obtained by their implementation at the level of command and control systems, having in mind that they have been developed at the tactical and sometimes operational level.

*The Advanced Command and Control System (AC2S)* developed by the Czech Defence University in 2017, is a concept of how to use modern technologies to increase the efficiency of decision-making (TDDS decision-making tactical support system) and military operations/actions. In addition, the number of military personnel and their equipment for the action/operation to be carried out may also be determined in accordance with the requirements of the mission.

The concept of Mosaic Warfare has a variant of the approach through *CONTEXT-CENTRIC C3'*. This concept assumes that during C2 processes, commanders develop a general approach to an operation that reflects their strategy and the intent of the upper echelon. The commander directs the machine-activated control system through a computer interface, assigns tasks to execute, and introduces estimates for opponents, force size, and desired effect. The machine-activated control system implements Context-Centric C3 by identifying forces (human or robotic/human, technical and weapon) that could perform the tasks but maintains a manageable control level for the commander. The commander then decides which forces will perform the tasks. This was driven by the idea that a modular force, capable

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of composing and recomposing rapidly, could offer several advantages: Rapid incorporation of new technologies and techniques, tactics and execution procedures, high adaptability of disaggregated forces, high complexity and great difficulty for the opponent regarding the evaluation of distributed and disaggregated forces to determine the intentions and effects desired by the opponent, increased efficiency in the decision-making process, increased area of action, and implementing an optimal operational strategy.

*Unmanned aerial vehicles* (UAVs/air drones) have also experienced rapid military development. Military drones are basically the future of military technology<sup>2</sup> which is why the list of military drone research and production companies is growing by the day. For example, Iran used extensively used Shahed 129 indigenous strike drones in Syria in military operations (2016), Azerbaijan used Israeli UAVs IAI Harop in Nagorno-Karabach, Iraq used the Chinese CH-4 drone and Turkey's own Bayraktar production drones. Turkey has successfully conducted drone operations in northern Syria. The United Arab Emirates used Chinese Wing Loong II drones in Yemen and Libya in 2018. In 2019, Russia used Orion drones in Syria, and France use UAVs in Mali. The American uses multiple drones, MQ-9 Reaper being the most visible. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia (2020) has best highlighted the success of drone operations. In less than 48 hours Armenia suffered lost 241 tanks, 4 S-300 installations, 2 SCUD installations, 39 tanks and 24 BMP were captured. The subsequent proliferation of military air drones in general – and attack drones in particular – has made it possible for the latter to be used more and more frequently in large-scale military operations.

At this moment, we are facing the accelerated proliferation of both state and non-state military aerial drone technologies, which will generate new risks and threats to regional or global security (40 states have acquired and hold military combat or ISR drones, while 28 states are developing UAV technologies). The "World of Drones" American statistics place the world's states in three main groups<sup>3</sup>: states that already use combat drones in military operations, states that possess military drones but have not used them (yet) in combat and states that develop technologies for military drones.

Drone units have gained particular importance in military operations with the armies of state actors. Combat techniques, tactics and procedures have been adapted and folded into the capabilities of drones to provide real-time information. UAVs are used independently or in coordination with attack groups or special forces units throughout the targeting process – target acquisition/identification, conducting fires and battle damage assessment.

A C5I2SR command-control system (command, control, communications, computers, cooperation, information, interoperability, surveillance, recognition)<sup>4</sup>, in addition to *current capabilities*<sup>4</sup> (force command & control, common operating picture and its interpretation, information, surveillance, reconnaissance, operational and tactical planning, air situation and missile defence, joint fire and management of air, naval and land targets, effects management, maneuvering and synchronization, information operations, force protection, resource coordination, healthcare, etc.) need to expand its interoperability, macro-surveillance and recognition at least at regional level if not globally or even in space, in all environments of conflict manifestation.

It is the moment when *artificial intelligence* comes into play which is increasingly found in the architecture of command and control systems. Cyber system systems that will emerge from integrated approaches to all conflicting experiences over time will be able to pre-generate in advance combined evolutionary conflict schemes that can be managed before real situations degenerate.

The development of IT technologies has implicitly also led to an increase in the number of cyber-attacks and increased crime rates. Individuals, corporations and governments have faced extremely varied threats and cyber-attacks. For example, in South Africa, crime operation run from the Deep Web segment with the Dark Web section (not accessible to the broad masses) a segment in surface Web, where normal search engines do not have access<sup>6</sup>. In this respect, multifunctional platforms which can fight against cybercrime are needed: the detection and proactive identification of destructive IT activities, the prevention and reduction of crime through the exchange of information and the protection of relevant users and stakeholders against emerging IT activities in the use of pro-active techniques.



However, the context of technological development does not exclude the human element. It remains the most important in the decision-making process supported by an appropriate command and control system. Also, through the personnel who serve these technologies with their capabilities, the information becomes available to decision-makers.

Another direction in technology development are the satellites. They can be used separately in all PMESII domains, but a group of cooperating satellites offers a wide range of advantages. Benefits include optimizing performance in mission execution and reducing or removing errors. Technically and technologically, while there are many benefits for the involvement of a large group of cooperating satellites in the command and control process, there are also many challenges. One of the challenges is to determine how cluster/group satellites manage to retain data on other satellites, knowledge necessary for cooperation, to respond promptly and effectively to emergencies/crisis (of any kind) and to optimize the resources needed for their efficient management. The U.S. Air Force Space Vehicle Research Laboratory (AFRL)<sup>7</sup> has researched these challenges and many others by developing prototypes and testing them within AFRL TechSat-21 program. In command and control macro-systems (developed at regional or global level by alliances), these technological components called satellites cannot be deprived of their highly developed location and communication capabilities of any kind and which can be equipped even with defensive or offensive combat and/or combat support systems when the cosmic operational environment is found among the conflict environments. The command and control approach using satellites provides the ability to integrate traditional approaches with artificial intelligence (AI) and non-AI. Problems related to the integration (knowledge and cooperation) of many components can be solved by applying solving techniques for subcomponents (intelligent agents) and integrating individual solutions to reach a final, complete solution.

We believe that in the concept of space warfare (ground-space operations – *ground attack of satellites*, space-space operations – *satellites attack satellites*, space-ground operations – *attack executed by satellites on ground* and combined devices) a *symbiosis of architectures* of the ground-

based and satellite control systems, in conjunction with the control part of the execution of military or non-military operations by disaggregated forces on the concept of mosaic *warfare*, may be the optimal solution for models of command and control systems extended at strategic level, with the possibility of rapid adaptation to the changing geometry of latest conflicts.

Any nation with space intelligence gathering capabilities, also has the possibility of optimal use of its high-performance ground attack installations (high-precision striking systems) and vice versa, the best-performing missiles become somewhat useless without observation and information from space.

Specifically, the results obtained in identifying the *impact of state-of-the-art technologies and artificial intelligence* on operations carried out in the multidimensional conflict *environment* will be presented through a brief SWOT analysis.

#### **Tech integration within the modular and flexible command and control systems**

*Integrated systemic approaches into the art of operational planning* capture the fact that up to date technologies ensure information flows at all levels (strategic, operative and tactical).

The starting point for optimizing conflict with variable geometry command and control systems is that they *must extend* their interoperability, macro-surveillance and recognition capabilities.

The equipment used is based on the latest technological discoveries and developments. For example, Network Enabled Ability (NEC), a term used at NATO level for the system designed to achieve greater military effect through integrated use of information systems, integrates all these equipment and technologies. Artificial intelligence is increasingly integrated into highly complex IT systems that are able to learn for themselves from situations that are managed with their help. Researches in this field have developed artificial intelligences to work on the same principle as the human brain. They can analyze algorithmically and synthetically and can generate quick solutions that are absolutely necessary in time sensitive situations in the decision-making process. The commander may be offered, in a relatively short time, already analyzed COAs, using variables that were previously fed to the system, and using a

**A. PROs (STRONG POINTS)**

**Developing the efficiency of decision-making process:**

- rapid (real-time) transfer of information;
- rapid, comprehensive, synthetic, analytical and objective analysis of specific situations in the field/area/region;
- automatic generation of COAs based on big-data access and analysis algorithms used by artificial intelligence embedded within C2;
- quick force task org set up, in accordance with the requirements of the mission (number of military and equipment) necessary to carry out the action/operation;
- optimizing/updating the organization of military systems as well as doctrines, primarily by changing the ratio of human resources and materials/equipment involved;
- The concentration of human resources will be on the really relevant/important/critical aspects.

**Development of response force capabilities:**

- Leading to increased speed of military operations:
  1. The huge amount of data available may increase the speed of decision-making, but if the decision-making process is overwhelmed with data/information it may decrease the speed of this process in the absence of adequate management tools.
  2. It increases the process's speed and boosts decision-making process;
  3. It increases the quantity and quality of processed information and products/processes, as well as the efficiency of processes /activities;
  4. It significantly/decisively contributes to increasing the level of understanding of the data provided by the multitude of sensors.
- disaggregated force (capable of composing and recomposing rapidly adapted to the specifics of the mission);
- reducing human losses by using advanced (robotic, automated) combat technologies;
- ergonomics in the use of forces and equipment by performing large-scale operations or surgical blows, as needed.

**Communications:**

- communications and portable technologies that communicate within networks at soldier level;
- different networks communicate with each other;
- facilitating the creation of tactical, operational, strategic information networks.

**Issues relevant to Command Points within C2:**

*CP mobility* is increased by using modular (container) infrastructure and mobile networks are build-up based on miniaturization of components and terminals, for use in heavy humidity conditions, etc.

*Secure wireless.* Currently, secure IP-based transmissions can only be made from static locations, but state-of-the-art technology will allow mobility.

*Cyber Security* – physical destruction can be caused by IT means (e.g. Stuxnet – destruction of Iranian centrifuges); use of troll factories in shaping public/social agendas and opinions at the level of a society (e.g. fakenews phenomenon, Russian troll factories)

*IT/network access* – building the common operating picture, access and processing of signals and images/maps, ISR integration systems, security, etc.; (one possibility is to access information stored in cloud – see US government contracts with IT giants for cloud capabilities). Low-altitude satellite networks and other civilian infrastructures can be used for military action by encrypting signals and data, as they make it impossible to completely destroy the system/multiple redundancy (similar to the STAR system).

**C. CONs (WEAKNESSES)**

- Partial replacement of the human factor in the decision-making process / how far certain tasks should be delegated to the AI (Ex: during the Cuban missile crisis, human decision-makers changed their minds about actions/attacks. AI would not have done so in the absence of actual data to generate this change);
- Possibility of decreasing or losing human control in the execution of missions using robotic weapon systems;
- The need for exponential growth of measures to protect information and artificial intelligence systems;
- COAs generated by artificial intelligence lose sight of military art elements, data and information analysis being algorithmic and may be overlooked essential human-specific analytical variables;
- Involves the error-free use and/or integration of automated platforms - robots, drones, etc.;
- Creates problems related to moral/ethical aspects as well as those concerning the legality of the use and actions of Artificial Intelligence; (not yet really debated /profound discussions on moral issues; morality and legality are determined by the power brokers/those who make the laws/leaders);
- Developing AI is a task in itself;
- AI is a real challenge – training an AI is done through real processes and activities, not simulated, such as training in a military range. Ex: in 2003 a Patriot system operating on automatic operating mode shot down an RAF (UK) aircraft, and a few months later, in another similar incident, a USAF aircraft was shot down.

*Communications:* it is necessary to secure portable devices for use in military networks (military personnel do not have individual secure tactical terminals); an increased need for IT specialists; processing speed and storage capacity are critical as the amount of data increases exponentially and the human factor cannot process them.



**B. OPPORTUNITIES**

**On the efficiency of the decision-making process:**

- instant access to specially designated or international databases, information;
- extremely fast processing of data and information (with an immeasurably higher speed than the possibilities of the human brain);
- the connection and interconnection of command and control systems in extensive multinational operations;
- the use of C2 modules in a rubic or mosaic mode (as a whole or in combination, according to the specifics of the operation and at the required level);
- architectural flexibility of the platforms used and C2 modules;
- simultaneous action with the response cells actions planning;
- can contribute to the construction/validation/verification of a context, a reality, in the military field of the Common Operating Picture / Situation Awareness.
- immense power in identifying and classifying various objects/equipment/threats/individuals, with an incomparable precision and speed higher than man.
- Building relevant databases can facilitate the success of military operations
  1. Example: based on databases with images of enemy equipment, a vector can prioritize its first attacks, in which impact zone can cause the most damage, make difference between friend or foe, etc.;
  2. Large enough biometric databases allow for the construction of diagrams/networks and the extremely rapid identification of critical elements/objectives in a human network – see Baghdad in the Gulf War, Afghanistan, criminal databases...
  3. Increased accuracy leads to a decrease in the likelihood of a misperception/mistake and an escalation of the security situation can thus be avoided.

**On the disaggregated, technological and robotic force:**

- Rapid implementation of new technologies and techniques, tactics and execution procedures;
- High adaptability of disaggregated forces;
- Complexity and great difficulty for the opponent regarding the evaluation of distributed and disaggregated forces to determine the true intentions and opponent's desired effects;
- Increased efficiency in decision-making process during the execution of the mission;
- Increase the area of operations by ergonomic use of force;
- Optimal operational strategies - exponential reduction of resource losses of any kind;
- By increasing the degree of automation, more robotic equipment will be integrated at the tactical level, while the human resource will be more engaged in the analysis and decision-making process.

**D. THREATS**

- the real factor of the databases used;
- neutralizing C2 systems or intelligent weapons systems through imminent cyber-attacks;
- the great influence of artificial intelligence on human decision-making (decision based on experience, knowledge and talent can be overlooked);
- taking control of weapons systems by artificial intelligence or the enemy through cyber-attacks on the infrastructure of poorly protected C2 systems;

**On communications:**

- Connectivity and traffic levels raise access/risk/vulnerabilities issues;
- The Internet of Things will generate huge amounts of data and metadata, and its control and access may be restricted or may generate disputes. E.g.: Some companies may be restricted from entering the market;
- Access to metadata can provide relevant data and if pieced together can lead to critical information. Ex: Cambridge Analytica scandal – Brexit, US election;
- Modeling/influencing the public opinion /a critical mass to have a desired reaction (action or passivity) E.g. elections won at thresholds below 5%, by presenting a small number of voters / electoral passivity. E.g.: Sun Tzi – "win a war without conducting it".

comprehensive database. The decision will be made much faster, whether a system-generated course of action or an intuitive or a combined course of action is taken. However, the human factor plays the most important role.

The integration and interconnection of subsystems and technologies necessary for the

operation of command and control is important in the decision-making process. Identifying and/or constructing tools to analyze the operational environment and to identify the procedures for action necessary for command-control, under the conditions of managing conflict-specific situations with variable geometry, becomes imperative.

The process of making forward-looking and correct decisions in these situations is conditional on adapting military action to real strategic situations and addressing all areas of conflict with variable geometry in planning and leadership. In this respect, the modularity of the command and control systems will lead to increased structural and actional mobility. The use of high-performance technologies will lead to a significant increase in decision-making and action capacity on: increasing the distance of action and precision that will make it possible to selectively and punctually engage objectives; the ability to choose the target effect from a wide range of non-lethal and lethal effects, which will give the military decision greater flexibility; achieving the state of confusion necessary to obtain surprise and victory through processes of psychological, informational warfare and misleading operations; increase responsiveness, optimizing management and achieving the viability of technical systems.

The result of the use of high-performance technologies, their integration and interconnection of the subsystems at C2 level will result in: significant increases in the mobility of systems and subsystems and decision-making capacity; increasing the potential of forward-looking; broadening the range of planned and conducted operations; diversification of decision-making and management procedures and management of military or non-military actions/operations; solutions for multidimensional protection of forces/objectives.

### **The role of information technologies and artificial intelligence optimizing decision process**

Information technologies developed to date in the military, ensure information flows within the forces command and control, obtaining the Common Operating Picture and its interpretation, in the field of intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, strategic, operational and tactical planning, air situation and missile defence, joint fires and management of air, naval and land targets, effect management, maneuvering and synchronization, information operations, force protection, coordination of resources, healthcare, etc.

In the face of the risks and threats of a conflict with variable geometry<sup>8</sup>, real-time communication between national or multinational forces, command

and support structures, as well as between strategic leadership elements or other elements with security and defence responsibilities, is a determining condition in achieving the desired effects throughout the execution of non-military or military operations. Information and communication technology have the lead position, both in terms of the number of innovations and their impact in the military field. At the command and control level, regardless of the structure, field or level at which it is conducted, cognitive systems will construct *scenarios based on relevant assumptions and contextual data*, offering decision-makers alternatives/COAs or, in certain situations, making their own decisions with direct impact on operations. This effect of the sharing data and information by computers and people is of most importance in the decision-making process. The next level is *to model data and information* and classify them semantically to reconstruct virtual possible scenarios from *reality*. It is the level to which all command and control systems used in the effective management of latest crises and conflicts tend, particularly of those whose geometry is constantly changing.

Information technology is defining but the human element gives it the shape we perceive. Digital development and new information technologies have led to significant changes in the preparation and use of the human resource involved at both decision-making (architecture, structures and infrastructure) and execution (technical and equipment, combat and armaments). The global military trend is to transform C2 architectures and models folded into the current requirements generated by the variable geometry conflict using the effects generated by new information technologies based on digital evolution. Artificial intelligence implemented in command and control systems will anticipate human intentions and provide options/variants/scenarios/COAs before we actually need them.

In the military field, information is managed by intelligence structures/units (Intelligence-INTEL). The role of INTEL units is to provide decision-makers with a complete picture of actors participating in the conflict and the conflict environment (or the operational environment – in a narrower understanding of the conflict environment). This image should include the actors' status (temporary objectives, strategy, doctrine,



tactics, composition, capabilities, weight centers, vulnerabilities, capabilities and intentions). INTEL must provide a complete picture on the enemy, its culture, traditions and history, shaping its societal and ethnic environment. An information process carried out in support of the decision-making process must be timely sound and accurate. This is based on the need for the rapid information flow from all sources available through state-of-the-art information technologies. The information shall be collected on the basis of the Commander Critical Information Requirement (CCIR) after it has been previously identified.

An information cycle comprises 4 stages – planning, collection, processing and dissemination of the finished product and information technologies are undoubtedly the component that ensures the accuracy and speed of the process and implicitly of the information cycle. The information thus processed ensures the Comprehensive Picture of the Operational Environment (CPOE) in terms of the development of the main characteristics of the operational environment (terrestrial, maritime and air) as well as of the political, military, economic, social, infrastructure and information fields of opponents, allies and neutral actors that may influence operations of any kind.

The complex and continuous process of planning, coordination, synchronization and conducting information activities in order to achieve the desired effects on the ability of understanding and perception, the will and capabilities of the opponent or other entities, in support of the achievement of military objectives, while at the same time the protection of their own is also supported and is based on state-of-the-art and ever-improving information technologies. This process consists of performing information operations (Info Ops).

Advanced information technologies are used in shaping operations, focused on changing or strengthening the perceptions and attitudes of the opponent or potential opponent, or in information protection activities, focused on maintaining freedom of maneuver in the information space by defending the data and information that support the decision-making process. There are also attacks of data and information systems that support the opponent or potential opponent and on those information systems, surveillance and target

acquisition systems (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance ISTAR) that use information to support the decision-making process.

Information technology generates developed capabilities, tools and techniques or key elements specialized in information activities. For example, information technology helps PSYOPS (different from public information), to have direct control over the content, dissemination and audience to achieve objectives of supporting the general interests of force, weakening the combative will of opponents or potential hostile target audiences, strengthening the beliefs of friendly or allied target audiences, attracting support and cooperation of neutral and undecided, supporting reconciliation and tolerance actions, promoting a positive image of military forces deployed in the theatre of operations and countering hostile psychological actions.

Operation security requires identifying and protecting critical information considered essential elements of information (EFI) and can only be achieved through state-of-the-art information technology. Information security ensures the confidentiality, integrity and accessibility of information through procedural, technical and administrative control based on unbeatable information technology.

Misleading the opponent is achieved by manipulating, distorting and falsifying information and applying both informational and traditional means and techniques and technologies. Electronic Warfare (EW) supports Info Ops by using advanced technologies so that critical information underlying the opponent's decisions and the systems that carry this information is affected, commanders can use EW activities in the context of influence measures, and prevent the opponent from exploiting these opportunities.

Information technology also supports the engagement of key leaders by facilitating bilateral discussions between commanders and their military and civilian correspondents at the same level of influence, speaking on various occasions, in the presence of the media and/or key decision-makers, in the preparation and dissemination of interviews, for a particular media segment, with broad coverage and a great influence on the targeted objectives, conferences prepared to address specific topics of interest, with potential for influence.



The opportunity and efficiency of computer network operations (NoCs) depend on the degree of dependence of the opponent on the information technology used and materializes through executed attacks on the opponent's computer networks and the defence of their own networks. Attacks are carried out by feeding flawed codes (computer viruses) and manipulating data for the purpose of modifying the characteristics and performance of devices or of disclosing the information contained therein by exploiting them. Maintaining the capabilities that support the decision-making process is essential for the execution of operations. A procedure is therefore being developed for maintaining a defensive attitude and using protective techniques to monitor and penetrate information systems also on the basis of existing and permanently developed information technologies. The aim is to identify and define the type of attack and to have an appropriate response through actions to limit/delay and/or wind up their effects.

The challenges of artificial intelligence in the field of security and defence are not few and must be taken into account on current conflicts with variable geometry or for future ones. On this date we are witnessing a major advance in the use of AI in all areas of life, this type of technology providing a more comfortable life for those who use it. But AI also has a strong negative social impact by reducing personal privacy and can lead to a climate of insecurity if not properly managed. High-performance computers AI has the ability to self-learn. This *contributes* to the redefinition of both the security and defence concept and strategy and the *operational planning process* where planning for a potential conflict campaign/operation is required. In this respect, the command and control structures at the strategic, operational and tactical level need to develop capabilities to anticipate potential attacks on national or regional security (in the context of a regional, multinational, extended conflict) and to the security of forces in the area of operations (for operational-tactical level).

AI can have beneficial effects (efficiency of decision, protection of force, reduction in the number of human victims, etc.) but also destructive (in the field of security, the future of humanity)<sup>9</sup>. This technology poses a major challenge for command and control systems and beyond. It is absolutely necessary in the conditions and situations created

during conflicts with variable geometry for timely management through analysis and informational synthesis of the rapid change in the geometry of operations carried out or even of conflict in general. At the moment we believe that it is irreplaceable in the architecture supporting national, regional, global or even space defence and security. The fight goes for supremacy in the field of information technology and artificial intelligence in order to have global control. However, the implementation of AI in *command and control systems* and *weapons systems* without clearly drawing its limitations in decision and control and without maintaining absolute control by the human factor over it, can have a destructive effect. The questions that need a quick answer are those such as how far should certain tasks be delegated to AI? For example, during the Cuban missile crisis, human decision-makers changed their minds about actions/attacks. AI would not have done that in the absence of real data to generate this change. Another question that arises is about moral/ethical issues as well as those concerning the legality of the use and actions of Artificial Intelligence (Development of AI is a task in itself and has not yet been actually debated/discussed in depth regarding its moral issues). A weapon system using artificial intelligence is initially programmed (target determination and destruction) later it will schedule itself on the basis of AI. How will these completely independent weapons be controlled? When and if an autonomous system kills, who is responsible for that action?<sup>10</sup> We all know that a soldier's mission is particularly dangerous, but certain missions that soldiers must carry out are extremely difficult, if we are talking about clearing a building where enemies are found or the deactivation of a bomb. What if we had the ability to send robots to carry out such missions instead of humans? If something did not go according to plan, we would just lose material resources. We see important benefits of this technology, but can we be sure that this approach will not completely change our way of life? A real challenge is *to train* an AI that is done through real processes and activities, not simulated, just like training soldiers in a range. For example, in 2003 a Patriot system operating on automatic operating mode shot down an RAF (UK) aircraft, and a few months later, in another similar incident, a USAF aircraft was shot down. The US successfully uses unmanned aircraft that carry out



surveillance missions and can launch missiles at targets<sup>11</sup>. The effectiveness is undeniable but there is controversy over the morality of these actions. While the drones are doing their job at a height, the enemy has absolutely no chance of defence (The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of September 2020 – Armenian losses: destroyed 241 tanks, 4xS-300, 2xSCUD and captured 39 tanks and 24 BMP all within 48 hours of the outbreak of the conflict and all as a result of drone action. Azeri losses - unspecified). In this scenario, a human operator will decide when that drone will open fire. The use of weapons systems or autonomous weapons requires thorough risk analysis, as technology can quickly replace the human factor due to information processing speed and algorithmic decision-making speed. Command and control, however, must not be delegated from the human factor to AI.

### Conclusions

The evolution of artificial intelligence and information technology in recent years is significant and unavoidable. Today, we are no longer talking about computers that are capable of generating solutions, following pre-defined algorithms, but we are talking about computers and devices that have the ability to develop their own learning capacity. With reference to the security and defence subjects and applicable in the military field, we believe that new information technologies in conjunction with AI will develop the *decision-making process* specific to operational planning developed using complex and modular command and control systems at all hierarchical levels. AI terminals will be found in all automated, robotic weapons systems within the disaggregated forces (with the possibility of rapid aggregation on the specifics of the mission to be executed) reducing the risk of human losses, increasing the level of force protection, increasing reaction speed and firepower, etc. Artificial intelligence has a potential role to play in reducing the use of factor and human resources in various fields, processes or activities, but this requires the use and/or integration of digital, automated platforms as well as robots, drones, etc.

In the sphere of communications, technology is evolving rapidly, the trend being to have communications and portable technologies that communicate within networks from the military structure level to the individual level. It is preferable

to have the possibility that different networks (belonging to or serving different structures) to be able to communicate with each other (tactical, operational, strategic). This level of connectivity and traffic (e.g. 5G) can, however, raise access issues, create risks and create vulnerabilities. Building the Common Operating Picture requires access and processing of signals and images/maps, ISR integration systems, security, etc. AI can have quick access to information stored in cloud (see U.S. government contracts with IT giants for cloud capabilities). For the human factor, the processing speed and storage capacity *are critical* as the amount of data increases exponentially and the human factor cannot process and store them. From this point of view, it is recommended to implement AI at the processing level data stored in macro exponentially growing databases.

Low-altitude satellite networks and other civilian infrastructures can be used for military action by encrypting signals and data, as they make it impossible to completely destroy the system with multiple redundancy (similar to our STAR system).

Therefore, *the impact of the state-of-the-art technologies* implemented in C2 systems is manifested concretely in terms of *data traffic, accurate analysis of information and its dissemination, efficiency of decision-making and optimizing<sup>12</sup> and achievement of common objectives for actors participating in the conflict<sup>13</sup>*.

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13 Through the fast exchange of information, similar working methods and an availability to joint planning sessions.

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## THE ARCTIC REGION, EUROPEAN UNION AND CLIMATE CHANGE, AS A GLOBAL THREAT TO SECURITY

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The Arctic region, on one hand, an area situated so far from the European Union and, on the other hand, an environment so hostile to life, is in the spotlight of the world's powers. The resources, so necessary for the nations, – the riches in the depths of the soil and in the ocean –, the potential of tourism and the importance of shorter transport routes aroused the interest of some actors in the region. The European Union has developed a policy for the Arctic region. Are the European Union's concerns strictly related to security and the economy or is there a much wider horizon of goals to be achieved?

**Keywords:** The Arctic region; European Union; globalization; climate change; threat; international security.

### Why is the Arctic region important for the European Union?

The Arctic, an extensive faraway region, located "at the northernmost part of the planet"<sup>1</sup>, despite very challenging conditions of life and climate, is arousing more and more interest globally. The Arctic region is characterized by extreme climatic peculiarities: very large temperature fluctuations, heavy snow, brief summers, large areas covered with ice, substantial discrepancies in terms of light periods. It is an extremely harsh living environment but to which both the fauna and the indigenous populations have managed to adapt<sup>2</sup>. Although it is an extremely tough environment which makes it difficult to explore, the Arctic region stores special natural resources.

Not only the important natural resources of the Arctic have generated an increased attention to this region from the countries of the world. According to the research activity realized for *Arctic Human Development Report. Regional Processes and Global Linkages* during 2004 (when the first report was published) - 2014 (when the second report was published) the authors state that "we have witnessed a dramatic increase in interest in the Arctic"<sup>3</sup>. This unprecedented interest of the international community was due on one hand to economic reasons and on the other hand to environmental reasons. In this order of ideas, it is necessary to mention the possibility of exploiting the enormous

natural resources as well as the opening of new navigation routes that would ensure a faster transport of goods in various parts of the world. Climate change, which is devastatingly affecting the region, is also a matter of concern to countries around the world, these being, also affected by climate change occurred increasingly intensified in the Arctic<sup>4</sup>.

According to the *Joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council. An integrated European Union policy for the Arctic*, the EU's concern about the Arctic refers to the fact that, first of all: "A safe, stable, sustainable and prosperous Arctic is important not just for the region itself, but for the European Union (EU) and for the world"<sup>5</sup>. This way, the importance of the Arctic is underlined not only locally but also for the EU and for the whole world. Consequently, given the importance of the Arctic region for the EU, it is natural that UE become an actor involved in issues related to the Arctic and international cooperation: "The EU has a strategic interest in playing a key role in the Arctic region"<sup>6</sup>. Secondly, "Eight states have territories in the Arctic: Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. Three EU Member States are therefore also Arctic states, while Iceland and Norway are members of the European Economic Area"<sup>7</sup>. With member countries with territories in the Arctic, the EU's interest in peace, stability and prosperity in this region is strategic.

The Ambassador for the Arctic, Michael Mann, summarizes the reasons why the Arctic

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region is important not only for the EU but also for the world as a whole, given that the effects of climate change are much more pronounced in the Arctic region than in other parts of the globe<sup>8</sup>. With three member states that have territories in the Arctic, the European Union perceives this region from the perspective of internal security rather than foreign security or foreign policy. So here is a first, extremely important reason that highlights the EU's interest in the Arctic. A second reason is that the Arctic is very important for the EU, for products like oil, gas, fish, and, in the long run, the exploitation of minerals is also being considered. The third reason is a paradox: on one hand, the EU, due to the developed industry, is one of the factors that causes the effects of climate change, and on the other hand, the EU is the main international player in the fight against climate change. Consequently, EU action to protect the Arctic seeks both to protect its own interests and to protect the planet.

#### **The global effects of climate change affecting the Arctic – a challenge for the European Union**

Over time, there have been two approaches to climate change: either non-existent or real, with devastating consequences for the environment and thus for humans. In March 2008, The European Union, through the voices of the High Representative and the European Commission, stated that climate change is not only real but already has effects on EU security and international security. Climate change is perceived as "a threat multiplier which exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability"<sup>9</sup>. In November that year, the European Commission stated that the Arctic region is essential for the planet's climate but at the same time exposed to the effects of climate change. Thus, a cause for concern is represented by the temperatures twice as high than anywhere in the world. In addition, the accelerated melting of the ice sheet on the soil but also of the ice that covers important parts of the ocean influences the entire globe by increasing sea levels<sup>10</sup>.

Arctic ice monitoring has revealed that the effects of global warming are much more severe than anticipated. Thus, the new data show that "the Arctic Ocean could be largely free of sea ice in summer as early as the late 2030s, only two decades from now"<sup>11</sup>. Also, contrary to previous estimates, "the recent recognition of additional melt processes

affecting Arctic and Antarctic glaciers, ice caps, and ice sheets suggests that low-end projections of global sea-level rise made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are underestimated"<sup>12</sup>. Satellite measurements revealed that "over the period 1979-2020, the sea ice area in the Arctic decreased by 33.000 km<sup>2</sup> per year in winter (measured in March) and by 79.000 km<sup>2</sup> per year in summer (measured in September)"<sup>13</sup>. The trend in terms of melting ice is a continuous acceleration which is having effects both in the EU and around the globe. Thus, only "the cumulative ice loss from Greenland from 1992 to 2017 was 3.900 billion tones, [...] contributed approximately 11 mm of the global sea level rise"<sup>14</sup>.

High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell, aware of the tremendous importance of the Arctic for the EU but also for the whole world, stated that "the European Union's engagement in Arctic matters is key for our foreign policy in many ways"<sup>15</sup>. That is why the EU is determined to help solve the problems that the Arctic is facing. In this sense, the Arctic policy has been continuously adapted and developed. In 2021, the EU Arctic policy provides three directions of action: "firstly, to preserve the Arctic as a region of peaceful cooperation; secondly, slow the effects of climate change; and thirdly, to support the sustainable development of Arctic regions to the benefit of future generations"<sup>16</sup>. This three key aims at both short and medium-term and long-term goals because actions to mitigate the effects of climate change and sustainable development can give future generations the opportunity to enjoy the legacy we have received from our forefathers.

#### **The EU role in addressing the environmental challenges**

The Arctic faces far greater global warming consequences than other regions of the globe. According to Josep Borell, "regardless of the current pandemic, climate change remains the biggest global challenge that humanity is facing. This is especially true for the Arctic"<sup>17</sup>. As the EU is directly interested in the Arctic being a protected region in all respects: from the point of view of global warming, the economy, the protection of natural resources, it has been concerned about issues affecting its security. Thus, since 2008, the EU has distinguished itself through various initiatives



on the Arctic region: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – The European Union and the arctic region<sup>18</sup>, EU policy towards the Arctic region<sup>19</sup>, Joint Staff Working Document – The inventory of activities in the framework of developing a European Union Arctic Policy – Accompanying the document Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council – Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps<sup>20</sup>, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council. An integrated European Union policy for the Arctic<sup>21</sup>. The last document, Joint Communication on an integrated EU policy for the Arctic, published by the European Commission and the High Representative on 27 April 2016 focuses on three priorities: climate change and the Arctic environment, sustainable development in the Arctic, international cooperation on Arctic matters.

Regarding the first priority, the EU is a leading contributor to Arctic research. On one hand, it funds research-related initiatives (40 million EUR under the 2016-2017 work program), on the other hand, it supports research projects such as the EU-PolarNet initiative. Also EU space programs will be used in research on the effects of climate change on the Arctic. Moreover, through the Paris agreement, another EU initiative to mitigate the effects of climate change, it aims to limit global temperatures below 2°C. To this end, the EU aims "to reduce its total greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 and by 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels"<sup>22</sup>. In addition, the EU is working "to limit emissions of short-lived climate pollutants such as black carbon and methane"<sup>23</sup>. Also, in order to protect the environment and implicitly the Arctic region, the EU respects its commitments under multilateral environmental agreements. In this regard, the EU envisages international cooperation in finding ways to protect biodiversity, in establishing marine protected areas in the Arctic, as well as measures against invasive alien species.

The second priority, sustainable development in the Arctic, is a necessity for people in such a hostile region in terms of temperatures and environment. The innovative technologies will generate great social and economic benefits. In the EU's vision "in addition to Horizon 2020, the

ESIF programmes provide funding for research and innovation activities in the European part of the Arctic"<sup>24</sup>. Investments are essential for development, so the Investment Plan for Europe can finance infrastructure projects in the Arctic: "Through this instrument and its existing lending operations, the European Investment Bank (EIB) could not only help to finance projects to improve transport connections over land, sea and air, but also telecommunications, energy efficiency projects and low-carbon technology"<sup>25</sup>. Also, the EU-owned space technology, the Copernicus program and the European Global Navigation System, will be used for security and environment monitoring purposes in the Arctic.

The third priority in the Arctic is primarily the involvement of the EU in collaboration with international organizations and fora, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and participation in the Arctic Council. Secondly, the EU is involved in regional and sub-regional cooperation. Thirdly, the EU maintains a constant dialogue with Arctic indigenous peoples in order to respect human rights and to cooperate in areas where it is considered necessary.

### Conclusions

According to Michael Mann, Ambassador for the Arctic, the European Union is in the Arctic. From this perspective, the EU has a strategic interest in the Arctic, both in terms of internal security and in terms of economics due to the various natural resources that are currently exploited (such as fish, oil) and those that will be exploited in the future (various minerals). In addition, the fragile Arctic environment is much more vulnerable than the rest of the planet to global warming.

That is why the EU, one of the most active actors involved in climate change mitigation, has created a policy for the Arctic that it has developed continuously because, from an EU perspective, a safe and prosperous Arctic is not just a benefit for the EU, but also for the whole world. The melting of the ice cap has effects not only in the Arctic region and does not involve severe climate change only regionally but globally. In addition, very low temperatures and the environment are characteristics of a daily life lived in difficult conditions for the indigenous populations.



All these issues, from global warming to the social and economic difficulties of indigenous peoples, are addressed in the EU's Arctic policy. The EU identifies many directions for action both for the sustainable development of the Arctic and for the global threat posed by climate change. However, the approaches to these issues, in order to generate satisfactory results, involved international cooperation. As an example, the EU's efforts to limit global warming alone are not enough to slow the evolution of climate change. As specified in many official EU documents, global challenges can only be addressed through global efforts.

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## THE PERSISTENT CONFLICT, A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CONCEPT OF APPROACHING THE HYBRID WAR IN THE EASTERN EUROPEAN OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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The Contemporary Eastern European operational environment is a complex system of actors, weapons and weapon systems, circumstances and conditions that manifest themselves in well-defined areas and that can directly influence decisions to use military capabilities. It may include both enemy and neutral or allied enemy forces and systems participating in the persistent conflict, as well as the culture of the population, the physical environment, local resources, the technological level, the political decision-maker and the executor. The lessons learned from the first part of this century convinced us that the Eastern European operational environment is quite conflictual; constantly changing at local and regional level, it falls into a dynamic, persistent and complex context, which, combined with energy blackmail strategies favor the emergence of hybrid dangers and threats to the stability and security of the Eastern European area. Through this article I want to give a firm and documented answer to questions related to: the conception of approaching the persistent hybrid conflict; the tendency of some actors to persist in tensions in the area of Eastern European insecurity and their concern to maintain the persistent conflict as a form of modern manifestation of Eastern European Community relations.

**Keywords:** operational environment; persistent conflict; hybrid threats; hybrid operating system.

In order to make a coherent analysis, we will start from the hypothesis that state actors present in the conflict environment can fit into a wide range of forces, starting from the structure of a regular force, which belongs to a state, to the level of non-state actors. such as non-governmental or governmental organizations that can act firmly to achieve their own goals. To this scenario, if we add various organized crime and/or terrorist organizations, we have the complete picture that constitutes the operational environment for conducting military operations. In this sense, we can consider that the operational environment extends beyond the geographical theater of conflict, being a military arena in which phase lines and objectives are lost or achieved by using lethal force or by using time in which the fighting force can recover and maintains the security and stability of the conquered objectives. Thus, all actors involved, enemies or allies, non-state or state, regardless of combat capabilities and military capabilities available, will

use all available tools (military, economic, political and information), in order to achieve the proposed objectives during operation planning.

The theory of US military science defines the main elements that can influence the planning and conduct of military operations specific to the persistent conflict, such as: globalization, demographic change, technological level, resource requirements, urbanization, natural disasters and climate change, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, failed or poorly governed states, etc. Thus, "the persistent conflict is the prolonged confrontation between state, non-state and individual actors who are willing to use violence to achieve political and ideological goals"<sup>1</sup>. The main feature of military actions in hybrid operational environments is that combat missions performed with unconventional means may be more numerous and persistent, compared to those performed with conventional means. Often, this aspect derives from the asymmetric configuration of persistent conflicts in the hybrid operating system, which may include components specific to all environments in which military operations can be performed: information environment, physical environment, geophysical environment, moral environment, etc.

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### The Eastern European concept of tackling the persistent hybrid conflict

The concept of approaching hybrid warfare became important in the Eastern European operational environment, it was implemented in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict (2014) and strategically supported by Russian officials. Thus, in his article entitled "The value of science in prediction", General Valery Gherasimov (Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Army) stated on September 1, 2015 that the rules of war will undergo significant changes in its persistence. In this regard, he argues that "the center of gravity of the methods applied in the conflict has shifted towards the widespread use of political, economic, information, humanitarian and other non-military means applied in coordination with the potential protest of the population"<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, he claims that, in the modern conflict environment, asymmetric actions will be present and particularly active, making it possible to reduce the advantages of conventional opponents, present in the theater of operations. Gherasimov emphasizes that an important part of the asymmetric actions will be carried out through the use of special operations forces (FOS) or through close cooperation with internal opposition forces, in order to maintain a persistent conflict situation throughout the territory of enemy troops. These actions will be more effective if they are carried out with improved information and technological means.

Thus, when we talk about the modern conflict, we understand that military officials no longer take into account separate threats, the approaches in this field being fundamentally different. The current doctrine of the Russian army places an important emphasis on the use of new tactics, techniques and procedures for action, combined with simultaneous action. Within the persistent conflict we can observe the trend of convergence of irregular threats, in which the actors in conflict resort to a comprehensive approach in order to achieve strategic objectives. "War is no longer declared, but, once it begins, it is carried out according to an unfamiliar model"<sup>3</sup>, added the head of the Russian army.

It is necessary to emphasize that there are major differences between the Russian approach strategy, applied, in particular, in Ukraine and the Western strategy. The aspects that differentiate

between these types of approaches are related to the fact that, in the Russian conception, conventional threats are missing from the combination. "One of the main objectives pursued by hybrid threats is to destabilize the government and the main institutions of the opponent, thus creating chaos and power vacuum"<sup>4</sup>, states Gherasimov. Seeking to gain some strategic advantage and achieve advantageous objectives or alignments, through unexpected tactics and procedures, or by violent means of attack, Russian military theorists have abandoned the use of traditional methods and the predictability of their actions, arguing that this is the sure way to achieve the planned military desideratum.

Moreover, the hybrid threat is invisible, difficult to justify and, consequently, cannot be demonstrated and amended by international legal structures, because state-of-the-art weapon systems, advanced technological means, unexpected tactics and innovative procedures specific to operations are used. In essence, the approach to the new concept of persistent conflict involves a concentrated use of key elements, able to activate the fighting spirit of the great Russian people, these elements being<sup>5</sup>:

- *carrying out actions under the cover of the law* – the central element of the Russian military strategy is the creation of perfectly legal aspects, in order to avoid any liability to international legal security bodies. In this regard, a relevant example is the illegal annexation of Crimea by occupying and subsequently simulating a referendum, without international supervision, by which Moscow managed to orchestrate the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and establish its status, outside the will of the local population and the sovereign state of Ukraine;

- *demonstrations of military force* – The Russian Army has deployed important military force structures, weapons systems and logistical means near the border with Ukraine, in order to prepare the offensive operation, invade the territory of the neighboring state and forcibly resolve a crisis situation, created at the level of Ukrainian political system;

- *the use of the "green men"* – Putin's masked ball – in order not to attract international political responsibility, on the territory of Ukraine, the Russian state used special forces from the Vostok battalion (without military insignia), which invaded

Ukrainian territory as local security, the correct purpose of these operations being to facilitate the intervention of Russian military structures in the area and not to protect the population of Russian nationality;

- *using the advantage created by local militias and the screen of tensions in the area* – Russia protected its Russian minority population before starting military operations, by supporting and grouping them, providing them with a shield of protection during the intervention;

- *propaganda, lies and systematic misinformation* – Russia was aware of the importance of the media both nationally and regionally or globally, for which it carried out a vast campaign of manipulation and misinformation of the masses, using several components of the war media that have turned information into a formidable weapon, as follows: humanitarian coverage (motivation of offensive actions with humanitarian arguments, in order to attract consistent support from the international environment); systematic and targeted misinformation in order to activate the fighting spirit of the Russian people (movement used by the Russians and against the Nazi invasion); credible denial - false arguments and bizarre explanations offered by Russian officials about the purposes of the invasion (in support of denying the green men belonging to Russia, Russian officials justified the fact that their uniforms can be bought from any second-hand store); New Russia – motivating aid given to Russian rebels in Ukraine motivated by invoking historical arguments.

In conclusion, the physiognomy of the persistent conflict was perfectly applied in the situation of the invasion of Ukraine (2014), a combination of actions being used simultaneously: political, economic, cyber, psychological and guerrilla, which caused chaos and created vulnerable and destabilized state public authorities.

### **The physical environment, the environment of using lethal force and resolving persistent conflicts**

*The physical environment* is the environment of physical spaces, conflicting entities, actions and effects that manifest in the theater of operations. It includes armed groups, military forces, civilians, infrastructure, natural resources, geographical area (air, land and sea), as well as meteorological

characteristics (weather, climate, etc.)<sup>6</sup>. By carrying out operations in the physical environment, the aim is to disorganize or prohibit the important activities of the opponent, by using lethal or non-lethal force and by performing maneuvers throughout the area of operations. Most persistent conflicts are resolved in the physical environment, mainly in the area of terrestrial space, as in this environment are placed most of the resources of the participants in the conflict. Usually, resources are most important in the balance of power, as they are the center of gravity of the operations planned in the scheme of the conflict. From here we can conclude that the effect of military actions, carried out in the physical environment, is decisive for destroying the opponent, or for blocking his access to the resources necessary to achieve the planned objectives or achieve the desired alignments / final state.

The military operations carried out in physical space of the persistent conflict have two spatial components (conventional and unconventional), which define the geometry of the operational environment in which the missions planned by the participants in the operation are fulfilled. We mention the fact that, in the conditions of past conflicts, not very far away, the geometry of the operational space, at operational and tactical level, was quite simplified, it was a geometry of straight lines, which defined contiguous areas. The operational environment of the present persistent conflict is a hybrid one, generated during the development of modern conflicts, with a complicated geometric aspect, in which the conflict areas are concentrated around areas with rich energy resources, or around objectives targeted by hybrid threats. From the perspective of analyzing the disposition of these objectives, using the principles of conventional conflicts, we can understand that it is a chaotic dislocation, in reality, the objectives pursued have a network configuration, and neutralizing an objective can affect the entire structure of the objective network.

The strategy of persistent threats also takes into account the geographical space of the actors in the area that generate the military force, even if the projection of the force and the conduct of operations are performed in an operational theater at a great distance from it. However, the concept of war theater, defined as "land, air and sea space which is or may be directly involved in the conduct



of major operations or campaigns requiring armed struggle<sup>7</sup>, has become quite complex, given the spatial dimension. of the hybrid operational environment, the strategic objectives pursued and the increased degree of technologizing information and communication systems.

In conclusion, we remain convinced that in any conflict, whether persistent or not, the decisive operation requires the presence and action of the instruments of force, and the maintenance in attention of the specific elements of the geometry of the operational environment is necessary.

### **The informational environment, the space of manifestation of the forms of persistent confrontation**

The information environment is an environment specialized in carrying out persistent military actions and processes, which performs the procurement, processing and use of data and information, being the link between the moral environment and the physical environment. In essence, this environment is the ideal space for the manifestation of the forms of persistent confrontation which have, as a central and integrating element, the information on the set of measures and actions carried out in order to achieve the objectives pursued. In this environment, non-destructive or destructive actions can be performed.

*Persistent non-destructive actions* can manifest themselves in order to distort collective or individual perceptions of the situation in the tactical field<sup>8</sup>. The targets of these actions are found either in the spectrum of the military system (interception, espionage, misleading, etc.) or in the spectrum of the civilian community (space of origin or space of deployment of forces), more importantly in the area of decision-making personnel, non-destructive actions can be channeled on psychological actions, providing false information, propaganda, manipulation, etc.

*Persistent destructive actions* can be carried out permanently, by hitting the structures and means in the composition of the information flow (of the elements in the composition of the command-control system: communication centers, command points, sensors, etc.), or by attacking information technology systems. (communication systems, computer networks, databases, etc.).

The modern information environment, the military structures, has two components: the

cybernetic environment and the electromagnetic environment.

The electromagnetic environment is an operational space in which all actions using electromagnetic energy can take place. Usually, these actions precede those performed in moral and physical environments, and the timely and successful accomplishment of some can decisively influence the success of others. Electronic warfare, as a form of persistent conflict, is the sum of offensive and defensive measures that take place directly in the electromagnetic environment, which can be exploited, modeled and used for attack and/or defence<sup>9</sup>.

The modern cyber environment encompasses "all systems designed to collect, process and distribute information in support of timely decision-making, command and control operations"<sup>10</sup>, the basic feature of which is that systems have telecommunications networks, integrated processors, computer systems and interdependent computer networks.

From the analysis of the Eastern European insecurity area, it results that the operations carried out in the cyber environment presented several peculiarities. Thus, they aimed at: destroying, banning, disorganizing and delaying the collection, processing and dissemination of information; the use of a wide range of actions specific to the information war (virtual or physical attacks on important information systems of the opponent); entering false or contradictory information into the system; diminishing the fighting power by prohibiting or distorting the opponent's access to the current situation, or by affecting his ability to lead actions; destruction or damage to the architecture of computer systems, information networks, databases and the Internet.

In conclusion, the Eastern European information environment has, for decision and execution, high-performance information products from its own sources, from related sources with internal, external, judicial responsibility, etc. It encompasses virtually all those information systems and open sources that operate in the environments of interest and facilitates the assurance of information superiority or supremacy, an essential condition for the domination of the battlefield. Through the effects achieved in the space of Russian-Ukrainian forces, it can be concluded that information operations,

conducted by Russian specialized structures, have exceeded the local borders of the crisis in Ukraine, gaining regional and international proportions.

### **The moral environment, the environment for carrying out persistent psychological operations**

The moral environment includes "attitudes, beliefs and determinations specific to individuals or groups of individuals, manifested by their desire to overcome fear and aversion and achieve unity of effort, necessary to achieve the proposed goals/objectives"<sup>11</sup>. The moral environment includes two basic components: the psychological component and the cognitive component. Manifestations of the psychological component are found in the emotional spectrum of the individual, such as: sense of ethnicity, patriotism, faith in which he fights, religious zeal, etc., and the level of education, judgment and issues related to indoctrination we will find in the cognitive component of the human individual.

In essence, operations of persistent conflict that take place in the moral environment aim to influence those behaviors and attitudes of management personnel, commanders, groups, organizations or individuals belonging to allies, partners, own forces, neutrals or adversaries, who manifest themselves vocally to achieve goals and objectives. own forces. The most important types of operations that take place in the moral environment are *media operations and psychological operations*.

In the psychological operations, carried out in the Eastern European operational environment, the groups of people from the field of action of the armed forces, the civilian population, the morale and the psychic citizen were targeted, using information, images and a specific language, it would hurt their attitude and will. Moreover, these operations had visible effects, targeted volitional, affective and cognitive processes, altered feelings, produced strong emotions and subjected the individual or collective will to the deepest levels of human emotion, in order to weaken psychologically and morally the opponent and cause significant losses.

### **The geophysical environment, the space for manifesting threats to the environment**

*Geophysical warfare* was experienced and developed in the latter part of the Cold War, when,

in the operational environment, new types of weapons were used, generically called geophysical weapons, with an effect against the environment. In Western literature it was called ecological warfare or meteorological warfare, while in Eastern literature the notion of geoclimatic warfare was used. The persistent conflict specialists claim that there are occult forces that can control the phenomena generated by tornadoes or hurricanes, using them as devastating weapons. They also said that the artificial influence of the weather, as a process of struggle, presented the potential danger of giving rise to uncontrollable destruction, with unforeseen consequences. The worst thing is the high probability that such destruction will have more serious consequences for the population than for the armed forces<sup>12</sup>.

*The technique of changing the environment* includes a set of techniques to change the structure or composition of the Earth (by deliberate manipulation of natural processes), including outer space, biosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and its atmosphere. With the onset of climate change, there has been increasing pressure to develop new technologies that could block the sun's heat or suck carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Many of the technologies considered can have unpredictable effects, they can get out of control, leading to pandemics with universal action, because they do not respect national borders. Often, critical civil infrastructure has been targeted in regional conflicts, and state and non-state actors have long experience in manipulating the environment for tactical advantage, the implementation of geoengineering technologies being a source of new threats to environmental security.

*Collateral damage* to the environment was considered an inevitable consequence of armed conflict. At the same time, there were examples of intentional manipulation of the environment by most warring parties, with the environment becoming a weapon of war. There are many examples, some very old, in which the conflicting belligerent forces have deliberately harmed the war environment. Thus, the scorched earth tactic is meant to destroy a certain area and deprive it of any value to opponents, their own troops or civilians. This action may include the destruction of critical civilian infrastructure, food and water sources, shelters, natural resources, etc. The Soviet army



used this strategy in its withdrawal from Ukraine in World War II in order to slow down the offensive of German troops.

*Deliberate deterioration of the environment* is a decision caused by a set of natural conditions or dangerous, irresponsible and harmful human activities or serious natural phenomena, with direct effects on the safety and security of the population, both at national and regional level; or global. Among them, we emphasize: natural disasters, severe geophysical or meteorological-climatic phenomena (floods, strong storms, prolonged drought, etc.), generated by global warming; sudden and radical changes in living conditions (landslides, earthquakes, etc.); industrial or ecological catastrophes resulting in heavy loss of life, substantial disruption of economic and social life and serious environmental pollution; the increasing probability of pandemics, the most recent example being the pandemic triggered by the A1H1 virus and Covid-19. These phenomena, in our opinion, give the analyzed factor an accentuated potentially conflicting character which, in the conditions of some unfavorable evolutions, can turn into persistent geophysical war.

*Actors who agree with the strategy of persistent conflict* often use critical infrastructure to gain a military advantage. This includes the use of environmental infrastructure for strategic purposes, such as some water networks (dams, watercourses, canals and lakes), as well as industrial facilities that are particularly dangerous for the environment. Such use is commonplace, but as societies have become dependent on environmental infrastructure for economic and social life, the consequences of using these arrangements against the warring parties become particularly severe (the reinforcement of water infrastructure provides such an example). Thus, dams, sewage treatment plants, pumping stations or pipelines may be the subject of a deliberate attack to endanger and subjugate the civilian population. The forms of water reinforcement are multiple, from disturbing or diverting watercourses to flooding large areas of land, with serious consequences for both combat forces and the civilian population.

### Conclusions

The analysis of hybrid threats shows that the spatial dimension of the operational environment in which such a persistent conflict takes place extends

far beyond the boundaries of the area of operations and even of the theater of operations;

The information operations are, day by day, a category of actions whose role and significance can no longer be neglected in the context of changes in the phenomenon of conflict characteristic of today's society, this trend being imprinted by the role assigned to information that has become a real weapon, embodied in concepts specific to persistent conflict (such as network-based warfare, effects-based operations, etc.), resulting from the need for effective operations, while limiting the loss of life and destruction of property.

The fact that, during armed conflicts, the environment has been continuously manipulated is not and will not be a surprise. Throughout history, the environment has changed in many ways and for many reasons, from changes in weather to physical changes in natural landscapes. In addition to armed conflict, environmental changes are generally implemented to mitigate environmental risks or improve access to natural resources.

The danger caused by earthquake-type climatic anomalies depends on the proximity of potential sources, their magnitudes and the occurrence rates expressed in probabilistic terms, smaller in magnitude and with short durations.

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## THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ENERGY POLICY, AN INSTRUMENT FOR RECONSOLIDATING THE STATUS OF HIGH POWER

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The disintegration of the USSR in December 1991 marked the end of the Cold War. Many foreign policy analysts were quick to point out that Russian Federation had ceased to be a threat to the Western world. Despite facing a multitude of economic, social and military problems, under the leadership of Vladimir Putin the Russian state managed to be reborn. Russian Federation's miraculous return was made possible by the successful implementation of a policy of economic centralization that overlapped with a period of rising global oil prices. Economic prosperity encouraged the Russian Federation government to return to the old practices of the Soviet period, succeeding in unbalancing the fragile states of Eastern Europe and once again endangering the peace of the entire continent.

**Keywords:** Russian Federation; Cold War; Crimea; hydrocarbons; conflict.

Even though, by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most politicians and academics saw Russian Federation as an old great power incapable of honoring its commitment on a global scale, the beginning of the 21st century gives us a very different picture of the initial perception. To understand Russian Federation's positioning in a multipolar world and its evolution in the first half of the 21st century, we must examine carefully the path it has taken over the past 500 years. It is interesting to note that the sinuous evolution of Russian Federation makes it difficult for specialists who try to anticipate its future course. During this time, the Russian State behaved atypically in relation to the experience of any other great power, managing to be reborn after each limit situation it had been through.

### Soviet heritage

With the dissolution of the former Soviet Empire, Russian Federation became the natural heir of the most important elements of its heritage (nuclear weapons and its place in the UN Security Council<sup>1</sup>). The huge nuclear arsenal deployed during the Cold War both in Soviet territory and in some European States was withdrawn by important international agreements on Russian Federation territory<sup>2</sup>. In the first phase of this process, many negotiations took place between Russia and the

former republics of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus, which wanted to preserve part of this arsenal on their territory. Being aware of the risk of nuclear proliferation, the United States supported the total withdrawal of these weapons in Russian Federation and, through the Memorandum signed in Budapest on 5 December 1994<sup>3</sup>, they guaranteed territorial integrity to the former Soviet republics and support in the event of a violation of its agreements<sup>4</sup>.

From an economic point of view, Russia remained the main power of the former Soviet Empire, having direct or indirect access to most mineral resources. The Russian State ranks first in the world in the natural gas production and eighth in oil production<sup>5</sup>, a position it merges by controlling deliveries of these resources extracted from the Central Asian States (the oil and gas pipelines that served the deposits of these states were interconnected only with the Russians, with no alternative for their export). Even though the role of coal has decreased in the functioning of new industrial capacities, from an energy point of view, it continues to play a key role. Russian Federation has had the second-largest coal reserve in the world, which, along with its hydropower potential, makes it the world's fourth-largest producer of electricity<sup>6</sup>. With the help of Gazprom, which exploits 94% of the country's natural gas resources<sup>7</sup> and holds significant stakes in European companies, Russian Federation has put European states in trouble whenever its geopolitical interests have called for

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it. The interruption of natural gas supplies in winter or even the total cessation of exports to some states have become common practice. In this way, the Russian Federation managed to obtain numerous economic or even political concessions. Very few oil-dependent states have taken a firm stand when the Kremlin political leader deliberately violated existing international treaties and regulations. There are even situations in which some European leaders such as the Prime Minister of Hungary, Victor Orban, have indirectly supported certain Russian Federation initiatives<sup>8</sup>.

### **Energy resources – the main asset of Russian Federation foreign policy**

Russia's post-cold war era proved to be winding, and the periods of normalization, escalation, and crisis in its relations with other members of the international community varied considerably. After the disappearance of the USSR, the Russian State went through a strong political and economic crisis which affected its international credibility. After the failed privatizations of the 1990s, many factories closed their doors, firing millions of Russians. The only areas that theoretically could still benefit were energy companies, which unfortunately had been taken over by an interest group known as oligarchs (former prominent members of the CPSU or secret services). The main financial losses weakened the centralized leadership and allowed these "investors" to govern the regions in which they operated, sometimes challenging Moscow leadership.

The attempt by the European States to emancipate themselves from Russian Federation energy control has proved difficult. In the early 1990s, the West supported a project aimed at liberalizing the exploitation of Russian energy resources<sup>9</sup>. On 12 May 1993, by Government Resolution No. 354, the two major state oil companies Yuganskneftegaz (which produce 11% of the oil extracted from Russian Federation) and Kuybyshevnefteorgsintez (extracting 9% of Russian Federation's oil) were merged into a single company Yukos<sup>10</sup> which, in 1996, was sold to Mikhail Khodorkovsky. The man behind this enterprise gained in very little time or impressive power, allowing him to influence many aspects of the Russian state's economic policies. At its peak, the Yukos produced 20% of Russian oil and could decide where and at what price to sell products, sometimes the political decisions

of the Russian government. This company can theoretically deliver its products to Western markets without responding to the Kremlin's orders. Aware of the risk of market liberalization, Vladimir Putin's new political leadership nationalized these companies. The movement of centralization of energy production began on 25 October 2003, with the arrest of the Russian oligarch for tax evasion. He was accused of embezzling the state with several billions of dollars, in 2004 his fortune was estimated by Forbes at about 15 billion US dollars<sup>11</sup>.

To reduce the losses of large companies, the Moscow government, under the new leader Vladimir Putin, has nationalized or increased its participation in many of the country's large energy companies. This, together with a period of rising oil prices, has allowed Russian Federation to reconsider its position at the table of great powers and come back into force to regain some of its former sphere of influence. Although initially political and economic analysts had serious doubts about Russian Federation's acceptance into the elite club of the world's most industrialized states, since 1997 it has been accepted in the G7 group which has become the G8<sup>12</sup> since then.

The restoration of Russian Federation's monopoly on its energy resources has given the new Kremlin leader Vladimir Putin the leverage necessary to regain high power. Because of their monopoly on the European energy market, negotiations on technology and additional funding for new investments have been difficult. This has forced the Western States to identify a new way of reducing energy dependence on Russian Federation<sup>13</sup>. Politicians have sought to promote a series of projects by which they would reduce dependence on resources imported from this state. Many funds have been earmarked for the development of the alternative energy sector (wind, solar, hydropower, etc.). In an ambitious medium- and long-term plan, the European Union intends to reduce the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> released into the atmosphere by 40% by 2030 and to increase the percentage to 60% by 2050<sup>14</sup>.

This aim cannot have immediate effects, so European countries need to develop other energy strategies. They also approved the allocation of funds for the construction of terminals for imports of liquefied natural gas to be used for imports of gas from Norway, Qatar and shale gas extracted



from the United States<sup>15</sup>. The most accessible and efficient project, achievable in a short time, was the construction of a network of pipelines competing with those of the Russian Federation, through which cheap natural gas could have been imported from central Asia. The construction of the Nabucco project, which is supposed to deliver cheap gas from the Caspian Sea<sup>16</sup>, to Europe, became the EU's zero priority and a series of impact assessments have been commissioned. The 3,900 km long pipeline was to be a joint project of Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria, which, through national companies, should have monitored a percentage of future business<sup>17</sup>. Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan should have become major suppliers of European countries that could have benefited from natural gas at competitive prices.

Unfortunately, this approach was easily canceled by Gazprom, which began the construction of two new competing North and South Stream projects, in which it could attract from the beginning several key Nabucco States (Bulgaria and Hungary), and the largest consumer of natural gas, Germany. Also, Russian Federation ensured that Georgia, one country on whose territory a significant part of the pipeline was to be built, goes bankrupt and even lose its sovereignty over important areas of its territory. Russian rulers reactivated one conflict frozen in the 90s and threw the State into an infinite civil war. In 2008, troops of the Russian Federation intervened directly against the Georgian State, tearing two autonomous republics of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia<sup>18</sup>, thus indefinitely delaying the construction of the pipeline.

Russian Federation's energy strategy has proved much more complex, considering many other options. From the very first moment, it adopted the decision to build a pipeline system to bypass the territory of Ukraine, and Russian Federation has tried to win the goodwill of some States of the European Union. The Russian geopolitical game was indirectly supported by Germany, which became the main importer and distributor of Russian gas later, two companies registered in that state became partners of the North Stream project (Wintershall Holdings and E.ON Ruhrgas owned 15.5% of the project)<sup>19</sup>. The other Member States of the European Economic Area took part in this project by participating with their energy companies in the pipeline's construction and

benefiting from significant benefits. Netherlands and France, represented by N.V. Nederlandse Gasunie and GDF Suez S. A., were registered as project partners and were rewarded with 9% of the actions<sup>20</sup>.

The strategic acquisitions allowed the Russian state to obtain even the indirect control of project Nabucco's future, through Gazprom Russia controls 30% of Austrian packet, named Baumgarten and 20% of Centrex Europe Strategy company, which were to be involved in the construction of the future pipeline<sup>21</sup>. In case Nabucco would become a reality, Russian companies already control directly or indirectly the Azerbaijan's gas production, purchasing with an overstated price the exploitation from Shah Deniz with a confirmed capacity of 15 billions of cubic meters every year<sup>22</sup>. Even more, Russia has secured an important part of the route of the future pipeline, concluding strategic partnerships with a part of Central Europe states. Hungary has become one of the main partners of the Russian state in this geographic area, benefiting of deliveries of natural gas at preferential prices and substantial gains resulting from the privatization of the state oil company MOL (through the company Surgutneftegaz, Russian Federation bought at a double price, compared to the listing on the stock exchange, an important package of actions of Hungarian company<sup>23</sup>).

### **Political blackmail and military intervention, an important part of Russian Federation diplomacy**

Even though Russian Federation managed to keep much of the international privileges of the former USSR, its geopolitical position has deteriorated significantly, especially as a result of the loss of territories that ensured the access to the planet's ocean. Russian Federation's exit to the Baltic Sea was reduced to only 6 nautical miles<sup>24</sup> wide lane near Saint Petersburg and another small part in the area of Kaliningard enclave, where most of the Baltic fleet was deployed (coastal areas adjacent to the former republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and Finland had requested the rising of territorial water's limits from 4 so 12 nautical miles). Russian Federation also lost most of its exit to the Black Sea in favor of Ukraine and Georgia, including the Crimean Peninsula which had been transferred by CPSU Secretary General



Nikita Khrushchev (Ukrainian in origin) in 1954 to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine<sup>25</sup>. The Black Sea fleet has been divided between the three successor states of the USSR, Russian Federation winning almost 70% of its ships. Because most of the port infrastructure was located in Crimea, in Sevastopol the two states signed a treaty allowing the Russian navy to stay in this port until 2017<sup>26</sup>. Taking advantage of the installation in the presidential chair in Kiev of the pro-Russian Victor Ianukovici, in 2010 Russia renegotiates the agreement to extend stationary of Russian troops for another 25 years.

The issue of the Russian navy stationed in Sevastopol is being re-discussed after the overthrow of the president Viktor Ianukovici and the installation in Kiev of a pro-Western government<sup>27</sup>. Ukraine initiated association and later accession talks to the two Euro-Atlantic structures NATO and EU. This severely disturbed the Kremlin leadership, which considered unacceptable the idea of having such a directly long<sup>28</sup> border line with the competing collective security organization. Russian Federation's response was not left waiting for long; with the voice of president Putin a hypothesis was launched that the border was guaranteed to another state, not to the one that asserted itself after the movement known as the Euromaidan<sup>29</sup>.

Even though after the dismemberment of the former USSR the international prestige of Russia had decreased significantly, the vast majority of international organizations created and coordinated by Moscow (Warsaw Pact, CAER) had dissolved, and the third world states revolving around it had sought new protectors, slowly but surely, Russian Federation managed to return to the table of great powers. Efforts to regain political and economic influence, including within the former Soviet empire, were significant.

On December 8, 1991<sup>30</sup>, shortly before the collapse of the former USSR, the Kremlin leadership set up a new economic cooperation organization called the Commonwealth of Independent States. The most likely source of inspiration had been the British Commonwealth, which had sought to preserve the single market of its former colonial empire. The CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)<sup>31</sup> had to play the role of a common market for the states from the former Soviet empire.

This organization was initially joined by 11 of the 15 former members of the USSR, to which Georgia<sup>32</sup> was added in December 1993 (the exceptions were the Baltic states, which had begun negotiations for their Euro-Atlantic integration). As in the case of the single market of the former British Empire, the CIS encountered great difficulties in functioning, especially as a result of the competition that other great powers had created in this space. Many of the Soviet enterprises operating with subassemblies produced throughout the former USSR diversified their suppliers and indirectly bankrupted some of the economic actors they traditionally<sup>33</sup> worked with. Morally used Soviet technology was replaced by the one produced in the West or in the South Asian states, with Russian Federation remaining a mere supplier of raw materials. Also in this interval, the Soviet economy suffered due to the loss of control of important energy suppliers in the Central Asian states. Initially, oil and gas producers in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan depended on transport infrastructure located on Russian territory. This benefited the Russian Federation, which could set the selling price of these products. Over time, China, directly interested in the exploitation of existing gas and oil in this area, invested considerable sums and created a system of pipelines that connected it directly to the oil fields of these states<sup>34</sup>.

Another sign of the Russian Federation's weakness in relation to its former Cold War competitor, the United States, was the loss of military outposts in territories considered to be of strategic importance to its national security. This happened not only in the territory of Eastern European states, but also in the territory of some former Soviet republics. The Baltic States were the first entities to express their desire to detach themselves politically and economically from the former USSR. In 2004 the three former republics joined NATO and the EU<sup>35</sup>, later managing to build a separate road from Moscow. Less well known to the public is the fact that Russian Federation's economic and military weakness in the 90s allowed the United States to move significantly closer to the oil area around the Caspian Sea.

After the outbreak of the global war against terror in 2001, the United States showed its willingness to cooperate with them in order to develop its own energy or military infrastructure. In this respect, the



US government approved several loans to Central Asian states, with Uzbekistan receiving 160 million dollars and Kyrgyzstan about 92 million<sup>36</sup> dollars. This gesture was not disinterested, as the US government was interested in developing a network of military bases around Afghanistan at the time. The United States negotiated several agreements with these states that would require the temporary installation of the US military in bases near the area of operations in Afghanistan. In 2002, the US military deployed about 2,000 soldiers to the Karshi-Khanabad military base in Uzbekistan. Under a similar agreement, Kyrgyzstan agreed to host up to 2,000 troops at an air base in Manas near the capital, Bishkek<sup>37</sup>, while all other former Soviet republics in the area had agreed to allow overflight of U.S. military aircraft.

The U.S. military in Afghanistan and neighboring states near the Russian Federation border grew rapidly, from about 25,000 troops in 2000 before the outbreak of the war on terror to no less than 80,000 a few years later<sup>38</sup>. The Russian authorities interpreted that as an attempt to encircle the oil area (the US military presence in the Persian Gulf had been established since the early 1990s following the conflict with Iraq), position from which the US could subsequently launch a military attack against any state or non-state entity that could have endangered its interests.

### Conclusions

Russia's political instability ended with the coming to power of former KGB agent Vladimir Putin. With the help of people from the intelligence and public order structures, he restored the Russian Federation government's control over all regions of the state and the country's most important companies. Through a particularly violent military action, Putin managed to pacify the Caucasus (ended the war in Chechnya) and directly supported the separatist movements in the former Soviet republics. The rich mineral resources to which the Russian state had access were a great geopolitical advantage. Through them, they were able to put pressure and obtain important concessions from European states and China.

Recovering even part of its revenues, Russia re-launched a series of military actions outside the national territory both within the former Soviet empire and at a great distance from its borders.

The most important conflicts assumed totally or only partially by Moscow were those in Syria and Ukraine. In 2014, Russia launched the most controversial political action since the post-Soviet era by invading part of its territory in neighboring Ukraine and producing the annexation of the Crimean province. This incident significantly contributed to the suspension of the Russian state from the G8<sup>39</sup> forum and the imposition of economic sanctions by the US and major EU Member States.

The military and political actions taken by this great power will continue to attract the attention of Western decision-makers and raise concerns among the governments of neighboring states.

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## MEDICAL PROTECTION, A KEY ELEMENT IN ENSURING THE CONTINUITY OF THE MILITARY CENTERS ACTIVITIES, UNDER THE CONSTANT PRESSURE OF CONTAMINATION WITH THE SARS-CoV-2 VIRUS

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In the event of a pandemic, the priorities for any commander must be focused on protecting their own personnel, maintaining combat capability and carrying out the missions. The personnel protection measures are implemented in a unitary and gradual conception depending on the pandemic evolution in the area of responsibility. The appearance of increasingly contagious viruses and the promotion of their rapid spread globally through the diversity and complexity of land, air and naval transport, forces us to reconsider our position on the following issues: training and recruitment of staff; making stocks; adaptation of protection measures, in particular of personnel; optimization of operating procedures based on clearly defined principles.

**Keywords:** military centers; planning; personnel protection; protection measures; circuits; risk areas.

After the declaration by the World Health Organization in March 2020 of the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of the sudden spread of infections caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the declaration of a state of emergency throughout Romania starting with 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2020<sup>1</sup>, every institution in the national security system, public order and national security has gone through difficult moments, understanding more or less the necessity to implement the minimum measures imposed by governmental and local authorities.

Regarding the aforementioned issue, at the military units' level, there was rightly felt a necessity to coordinate structures through orders, instructions, directives, realistic messages to present the situation at the global, regional, national and local level.

In my opinion, in the absence of coherent standard operating procedures, the commanders/managers applied the recommended measures in their own interpretation. For this reason, but also as a result of our success, at least so far<sup>2</sup>, to communicate *zero cases of infection with the new virus*, we intend to present the actions, activities and measures taken at the Argeş District Military

Center for analysis and also, as a guide of conduct in such situations.

Many claim that we were lucky, others say that we are too exaggerated, but we say that in addition to a gram of chance, our success was based on the observance of some principles: anticipation; adaptability; flexibility in applying measures; gradualism; economy of forces and means; concentration of effort; restrictive mobility (establishing priorities)<sup>3</sup>.

Even from the specifics of military centers to interact permanently with reservists, potential candidates during the recruitment process, countless actions of direct promotion of the institution in schools, military units, through stands organized at local events, interaction with war veterans through visits through the "visit the veterans at their homes"<sup>4</sup> program, the permanent collaboration with the police stations, the local public administration authorities, the economic operators and the structures from the area of responsibility, derived the bringing to the forefront of the issue.

### Establishment of risk areas and circuits

From the beginning, I must mention that before the pandemic, we were using waiting rooms for the public relations activities/events. The risk was assigned based on the assumption that its own staff and those outside the institution receive adequate protection.

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Our conception for establishing the risk areas was based on the physical delimitation of some areas depending on the threat, the potential dangers and vulnerabilities.

*The red area* represents the visible space to be limited and marked accordingly, where the initial interaction with an outside person takes place. In this perimeter the triage is made: the minor interrogation regarding the problem in question, the completion of the COVID-19 questionnaire, the body temperature measurement and the instruction regarding the access to the counter or the information-recruitment office are performed.

This area is classified as a high risk area, it can be an office where a contaminated person has been identified and which, prior to the contamination, was a green or yellow area.

*The yellow area* is outlined based on the spaces in which it relates to the public. The access to these spaces is made with the cumulative observance of some conditions: triage performed, protection measures in operation (wearing a mask, decontamination of hands/wearing surgical gloves, shoes decontamination, social distancing and flow circuit compliance). Daily, these areas are ventilated and decontaminated with ultraviolet rays and solutions, according to the product specifications.

*The green area* includes all the other spaces that have not been assigned the color yellow or green. Usually, the staff works in this area. The staff wears masks, the surfaces are decontaminated daily, including the communication equipment. When suspicions arise, ultraviolet decontamination can be conducted, but this type of action is focused on the yellow area.

At the same time, we established three circuits without intersection, focused strictly on the protection of our own personnel and the one we interacted afterwards, with the mention that the wearing of the mask was established from the beginning, by anticipating the evolution at the national level.

The routes established in *the first circuit* are addressed to our personnel, who at the beginning of the program, after parking the vehicles inside the unit, are tested for fever and questioned at the epidemiological triage performed by the designated person.

Then, they decontaminate the hands and shoes, and after signing the special register on the absence

of AURTI<sup>5</sup> or other symptoms that fall within the case definition of the disease (fever, cough, dysphagia, headache, rhinorrhea, etc.) Their access to the program is allowed. In case of manifestation/occurrence of symptoms, the person is immediately removed and sent for investigation, following the procedures established at national level.

That person has the obligation to inform the medical decision immediately and to provide a certificate stating that he or she is not at risk of being infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, sick leave or other health-related documents in order to take action.

We established *the second circuit* for public relations on issues concerning the military evidence. In this regard, the special space is designed to ensure social distance by establishing safety limits, and for proper communication with the petitioner a transparent protective panel has been installed.

Each petitioner that presents himself at the military center headquarters, after thermometry, is escorted and guided to complete a COVID-19 evaluation questionnaire established by our own operational procedure. Before entering in to the waiting room, the person is invited to carry out decontamination with hands and shoes sanitizers.

Subsequently, he will wait in the area specially marked to ensure social distancing, until he is picked up by the service staff at the counter.

The duty and the administrative staff were trained to disinfect the work surfaces after interacting with each person.

*The third circuit* and set of measures targets the candidates and the staff in the information-recruitment office. The arrival of the candidates at the military center headquarter, for their orientation or for the completion of the candidate file, is made through an appointment, in order to ensure social distance in the workrooms and in compliance with the restrictions established at the national level.

The candidates are constantly guided to follow the pre-established and properly marked itineraries. Before entering the hall of the information-recruitment office, the candidate and his companion decontaminate their shoes and hands with alcohol-based sanitizer or by washing with soap and water for 20-40 seconds. After completing the activity with each candidate, the recruiting staff performs the disinfection of the work/contact surfaces with materials and sanitizers provided by logistic staff.



The spaces designated for the service at the counter and the office were classified as yellow areas based on two main aspects the public and the desire to achieve a clear separation of the circuits.

In accordance with the approved daily work schedule, the decontamination with ultraviolet rays of the spaces designated for the execution of the service at the counter and for relations with the candidates is carried out daily.

### **Staff protection**

In order to make the protection actions of our own personnel more efficient we permanently focused on regular training, the provision of protective equipment and materials, the completion of stocks, the adaptation and improvement of the ordered protection measures.

Through regular training, we believe that we have succeeded in forming a noteworthy behavior, permanently based on dialogue, mutual trust, credible information and substantiated statements. The processing of compliance with protection measures, social distancing, wearing a protective mask, washing hands, disinfecting work surfaces, ventilating the premises, at the risk of transmitting the SARS-CoV-2 virus, even from asymptomatic persons was also performed by applying informative, explicit materials placed at the epidemiological triage point, at the public relations desk, in the restrooms and on each level.

At the same time, through the presence of the doctor and the psychologist that we are assigned to, we managed to maintain the staff's morale at a high level, verified by the specific tests applied even in the big trouble and identification of solutions to solve a community contamination at national level. The dialogue with employees about the measures taken, the constant pressure of contamination, can lead to the identification of people who need psychosocial support.

Also, a considerable percentage of our success is largely attributed to the implementation of orders received from higher echelons, which have permanently perceived solving the problem as a joint effort. The establishment of the shift work schedule or staggered shifts, but also the freedom of the commanders to adapt their measures, helped to avoid staff depletion.

For example, when achieving tasks where a sustained effort was required, we tried, as much as

possible, to avoid merging staff at the institution, by sending teams in several directions in the area of responsibility, managing to achieve the planned objectives. Such actions had a double purpose, on the one hand to reduce the possible inherent intra-personal tensions, generated by the stress that you can be contaminated by the one you interact with daily, and on the other hand the mental improvement by extraction from the oppressive bureaucratic environment, risk taken, awareness that you may be less exposed in this way.

The results of the measures taken were reflected in the health of the staff, which favored the execution of rest leave in full, but according to a rule derived from dialogue and analysis by which the person concerned had a recreation period of about one week, followed by spending the next 14 days in their home /safe area, during which time they could realize a possible contamination.

Breaking stereotypes may have been the most important element in our success to avoid infection with the new virus, managing to interact directly with over 160 economic operators, performing actions to promote the military profession in all educational institutions in the area of responsibility (206 middle schools and high schools), relating to about 2000 candidates, over 700 petitioners and to honor our war veterans as we know best, through the program "visit the veterans at their homes" with representatives of The Quality of Life Directorate and representative associations in the county.

The success in completing with military and material resources some military structures was the result of the synergistic actions of the own personnel, of the completed structure and last but not least of the personnel from the police structures.

Of course, these results are based on the remarkable inter-institutional collaboration relations with the local public authorities and the structures of the national system of security, public order and national security, consolidated during the over 50 years of experience.

However, it should be noted that depending on the incidence of cases at the local level, some activities were suspended or rescheduled when the situation was favorable, and others such as analysis, gatherings, including the preparation of local elected officials and economic operators took place by mail or via online<sup>6</sup>.



The continuity of the activity of the military center was supported by the inspections and internal controls, also those of the upper echelons through which a complete radiography was performed, tasks and new protection measures were outlined.

### Specific protection measures

For every manager, undertaking and applying all measures of prevention and protection against contamination with the SARS-CoV-2 virus must be not only a responsibility but also a moral obligation to minimize occupational risks. Infection of employees can have a negative impact on the performance of tasks, current activities and, implicitly, on the achievement of objectives<sup>7</sup>.

Conclusions from the behavior, characteristics and resistance of viruses to environmental conditions, incubation period, pathogenicity, contagiousness and lethality rate contribute to the adoption of certain measures<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, all the protection measures applied concerned, in particular, the health of staff and, in particular, the gain of time until the discovery of a vaccine.

Among the first measures adopted since the declaration of the pandemic were, in addition to those related to reducing the number of people in offices, those focused on information and training, initially carried out abroad, and later on the electronic training platform COVID-19, where the orders were posted and numerous information materials were received/transmitted.

Here we especially appreciate the constant support of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations within the Ministry of National Defence, which has always managed to give us a comprehensive and realistic picture of the evolution of contamination and some orders, data, statistics and information of interest, thus permanently knowing the share of threats and risks in the disposal area.

The installation of sanitation dispensers in areas easily accessible to staff and visitors, the promotion of a culture of hand washing and regular disinfection of work surfaces, common areas, are considered basic measures, which have led to awareness of the danger among employees, an important aspect in managing the situation.

The most pressing issues were those related to providing the necessary personal protective

equipment, biocides, equipment and specific materials. These needs have been prioritized and resolved in a relatively short time with the support of local authorities, the military unit that provides us from a logistical point of view and the upper echelons. From this point, it was only a step in establishing circuits and measures for disinfection and decontamination with solutions or ultraviolet rays.

The realized circuits follow some rules: *daily decontamination*, before the beginning of the program and whenever there is a suspicion, including with UV rays; *controlled access by thermometry*, wearing protective equipment (at least a mask), completing the COVID-19 questionnaire, decontamination of hands and shoes; *marked routes and information materials* for guidance, warning and awareness of the danger; *construction of work areas with low risk of infection* by reducing the number of the personnel, installation of protection panels, daily ventilation and decontamination, wearing a protective mask.

Ensuring social distancing by tracing the markings, including in the waiting rooms and on the sports base for practical-applicative meetings, assemblies or inspections, was also an effective measure in terms of decongesting crowds in enclosed spaces. This measure was completed with the installation of transparent protection panels in offices, at the counter and in the information and recruitment room. Each recruiter was assigned a personalized work point, personal protective equipment (surgical masks, gloves, visors), materials and solutions for disinfecting work surfaces after each interaction with the candidate.

Considering that RBC decontamination is planned and carried out in order to maintain / restore combat capability, reducing contamination to a negligible risk, so as to ensure the continuity of activities and the accomplishment of missions<sup>9</sup>, the disinfection of outdoor spaces, with a focus on the red zone, was carried out in the first part of the pandemic with the logistic unit support. Subsequently, after receiving the specific equipment, by the staff of the administrative structure, through a prior training of its and of the entire staff of own structure.

The activities performed in the area of responsibility were carried out in compliance with measures to prevent contamination with

SARS-CoV-2 virus, based on careful planning (algorithm establishment, check list, phone calls, clarification messages, reconnaissance, etc.). Several seemingly elementary rules have contributed to our success in reporting *zero contaminated COVID-19*, by reducing the exposure / interaction time with each economic operator, police station, veteran usually less than 15 minutes, to replace protective equipment and perform minimal hand decontamination. The vehicles were equipped with disposable wipes, plastic bags and products needed to disinfect hands and surfaces with which they frequently come into contact.

The phasing of the program, the sequential program (14 working days, 14 recovery days), the provision of workspaces with equipment and materials, the reduction of congestion and through missions performed simultaneously in several directions, the merging of rest periods contributed to ensuring protection of its own staff.

Through protection measures adapted to the specifics of the structure, we managed to gain the necessary time to make the vaccine. Given that all staff want to be vaccinated and that three types of vaccine are approved at EU level, we believe that the war against an unseen enemy will end with the acquisition of immunization as a result of the recall.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the prospect of the cyclical evolution of the virus oblige us on the one hand to be vigilant and cautious, and on the other hand to continue and develop new protection measures to "increase the capacity to manage such a crisis", especially in terms of increasing the resilience of structures<sup>10</sup>.

### Conclusions

All actions and protective measures applied must be scientifically substantiated, based on relevant analyzes and a rigorous planning process that includes an ongoing assessment of the risks, threats and dangers in the vicinity of the disposal area to identify the best solutions to avoid, limiting and eliminating cases of contamination in the pandemic situation generated by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

As a conclusion, when a COVID-19 pandemic occurs, stress management, continuous assessment of risks, threats, dangers and vulnerabilities, the identification, adaptation and gradual application of protection measures can be a successful algorithm.

With the information related above, we want to be a starting point for the leaders of military institutions and not only, in managing a situation like the one addressed, maintaining the functionality of the structure, designing and carrying out specific activities.

In a world of overwhelming development of information technology, the establishment of recognized levels of protection, at least at national level, the creation of interinstitutional databases that can be queried about infected people, supplemented by the support of specialists for "understanding how to transmit of the pathogen, the degree of virulence and the lethality of the contamination at local, regional or global level"<sup>11</sup> are aspects that can contribute to ensuring adequate protection.

### NOTES:

1 The act signed by the President of Romania, Mr. Klaus Werner Iohannis, regarding the establishment of the state of emergency on the Romanian territory of March 16, 2020.

2 March 4 2021, the date of sending the article for verification and publication in the Bulletin of "Carol I" National Defence University no. 2/2021.

3 \*\*\* *CBRN protection Field Manual*, Bucharest, 2015, 2015, p. 18.

4 The program was initiated by The Quality of Life Directorate within the Ministry of National Defence.

5 Acute upper respiratory tract infection.

6 \*\*\* *Romanian Government Decision no. 969 of 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2007 on the organization, conduct and management of training for the defence of persons with managerial responsibilities in the field of public administration, at central and local level*, Art. No. 1.

7 <https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public>, accessed on 22.02.2021.

8 Ion Mitulețu, "Are we ready to deal with a biological crisis?", *Journal of Military Chemistry*, no. 18/2020, p. 9.

9 Ion Mitulețu, Alexandru Herciu, *Apărarea CBRN în operația brigăzii mecanizate*, "Carol I" National Defence University, Bucharest, 2014, p. 88.

10 [Presidential administration], *The National Security Strategy of Romania for the period 2020-2024*, Bucharest, 2020, p. 8.

11 Ion Mitulețu, "Are we ready to deal with a biological crisis?", *Journal of Military Chemistry*, no. 18/2020, p. 9.

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## RELEVANT PRINCIPLES IN THE ECHR AND CJEU JURISPRUDENCE REGARDING NATIONAL SECURITY

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The European system ensuring the protection of human rights is nowadays one of the most advanced in the world. However, there are also areas of activity where clarification and improvement are constant demands. Counter-terrorism measures considered or adopted in Europe, in particular those that increase mass surveillance, the collection and storage of electronic information or the protection of personal data are such areas. Some of these measures give more intrusive powers to the intelligence services to channel decisions in the direction of the executive branch, without the necessary judicial guarantees being established in a state governed by the rule of law.

**Keywords:** community law; ECHR; CJUE; national security.

Electronic surveillance by national law enforcement authorities is inherently linked to the right to privacy and the protection of personal data. Such rights are enshrined in EU law, which requires compliance with the principles of necessity, proportionality and subsidiarity. Legal issues arising from electronic surveillance, which may affect the rights of individuals, are not subject to review by the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU), which has jurisdiction to rule on cases brought against States or institutions for failure to fulfill their obligations under EU law, in which case the state that has not fulfilled its obligations is obliged to take measures to put an immediate end to the violation of the legal norms. Injured persons, after exhaustion of national remedies, can apply to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) for a final decision. Therefore, the decisions of the two international courts form the jurisprudence that can lead to a change in the internal procedures according to which the competent state authorities operate to protect the national security.

After September 2001, mass electronic surveillance experienced an unprecedented evolution in response to the aggressiveness with which the terrorist phenomenon began to manifest. Precisely because of the urgency with which they had to act to meet the obligation to protect their citizens throughout the European Union, the work

of intelligence services was supported by national governments by measures that allowed for greater easiness in assessing how information gathering takes place mostly in regard with the technical and technological means employed.

The intelligence activity to identify, prevent and counter threats to national security, in particular that carried out through large-scale surveillance, may interfere with fundamental rights and freedoms, in particular the right to privacy and data protection which may lead to disruption of the rule of law and the respect of the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens.

Following the revelations of NSA analyst Edward Snowden<sup>1</sup> and those of the press regarding the mass electronic surveillance by US intelligence services more or less with the agreement of several EU Member States<sup>2</sup>, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the US NSA Surveillance Program, supervisory bodies in different Member States (EU) and their impact on the fundamental rights of EU citizens.

In this context, the CJEU and the ECHR have developed a set of legality tests transposed into principles that are compatible with the rule of law.

Thus, in the Digital Rights Ireland Ltd Case<sup>3</sup>, the CJEU annulled the EU Directive<sup>4</sup> which required states to ask telecommunications providers to keep metadata for a period of six months (minimum) and two years (maximum) and to make it available to criminal investigation and investigation bodies in case of investigation of serious crimes. The directive left it up to states to establish safeguards to regulate access to metadata and prevent abuse of power.

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However, the case has not led to a standardization of investigative practice in criminal or national security matters in the EU Member States, who prefer to consider liability, at least in the field of security, to be exclusively national.

In October 2015, in the Schrems case<sup>5</sup>, the CJEU invalidated the EU-US agreement called The Umbrella Agreement<sup>6</sup>, which replaced the Safe Harbor Agreement<sup>7</sup> and allowed private companies to transfer personal data to EU citizens in the US, ruling that, in light of the Snowden disclosures, it was reasonable and pertinent to argue that the law and practice in force in the US did not ensure adequate protection of personal data, finding that monitoring the content of emails, phone calls and text messages, as well as extracting large amounts of metadata about the location of the mobile phone, internet browsing, e-mails, e-mail address books, etc., was not protected against illegitimate surveillance. The CJEU found that EU countries were not free to transfer data to third countries, unless those third countries provided for data protection standards equivalent to those applicable in the EU.

In December 2016, in the case of Tele2 Sverige AB<sup>8</sup> concerning Directive 2002/58<sup>9</sup> laying down the rules applicable to the processing of traffic and location data generated by the use of electronic communications services, as well as the anonymization or deletion of such data, except in criminal and national security, the CJEU found that the guarantees of safeguarding and access that must exist are under Community law. In this respect, the CJEU ruled that access to metadata must be conditional on the prior approval of a court.

The CJEU noted that discriminatory storage of traffic and location data, in order to combat serious crime under national law, can be accepted as a precautionary measure when „In order to satisfy the requirements set out in the preceding paragraph of the present judgment, that national legislation must, first, lay down clear and precise rules governing the scope and application of such a data retention measure and imposing minimum safeguards, so that the persons whose data have been retained have sufficient guarantees of the effective protection of their personal data against the risk of misuse. That legislation must, in particular, indicate in what circumstances and under which conditions a data retention measure may, as a preventive measure,

be adopted, thereby ensuring that such a measure is limited to what is strictly necessary (see, by analogy, in relation to Directive 2006/24, the *Digital Rights* judgment, paragraph 54 and the case-law cited)<sup>10</sup>. Also, „in regard to the material condition to be met by national legislation which allows, in the fight against crime, the preventive storage of transfer data and location data, in order to ensure that it is limited to what is strictly necessary, it must be shown that, although these conditions may vary depending on the measures taken to prevent, investigate, detect and prosecute serious crime, data retention must always meet objective criteria that establish a relationship between the data to be kept and the purpose pursued. In particular, such conditions must prove, in practice, capable of effectively delimiting the extent of the measure and, consequently, of the relevant public.”<sup>11</sup>.

In October 2020, the Grand Chamber of the CJEU gave two rulings<sup>12</sup> on data retention, national security and fundamental rights prohibiting EU Member States from enacting legislation designed to undermine the scope of its confidentiality obligations in the field of traffic and location data unless it respects the general principles of Community law, in particular the principle of proportionality, and the fundamental rights enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

In the related cases C-511/18 and C-512/18, the situation regarding the legality of national legislation requiring communications service providers to transmit to users traffic data and location data to a public authority or to keep such data was brought to justice, given in a general or non-discriminatory manner. National courts referred cases to the CJEU to clarify whether: the activities of national security services – as opposed to criminal bodies – fall within the scope of EU law and whether the non-discriminatory retention of data for national security is compatible with EU law.

The CJEU decided that automated analysis and real-time collection of traffic data, location data or real-time collection of device location data is permitted if: automatic analysis is limited to cases where a Member State faces a serious threat, authentic and present or predictable for national security, and real-time collection is limited to persons validly suspected of being involved in

terrorist activities. In both cases, the seriousness of the threat and the danger posed by the suspect must be subject to prior verification by a court or an independent administrative body whose decision is binding.

Finally, the CJEU analyzed the situation where it is possible to temporarily maintain the effects of a national provision that infringes EU law in order to avoid legal uncertainty and to use data previously collected and stored. On this issue, the CJEU considered that the Directive, read in the light of the Charter, does not allow a national court to temporarily apply a provision of national law that would otherwise be incompatible with EU law. In particular, the CJEU has prohibited national courts from applying a national provision requiring providers to keep traffic and location data in a generalized and non-discriminatory manner, even if the purpose of the contested provision is to protect national security and prevent serious crime.

The CJEU ruling has an important role to play in regulating national security and intelligence activities in EU Member States. In this regard, Advocate General Campos Sanchez-Bordona, in his Opinion delivered in January 2020<sup>13</sup> on the above-mentioned cases, argued that there was a distinction between intelligence work carried out to protect national security and legislation adopted to protect national security obligations that affect their Community rights. This relative novelty is reflected in the EU legal framework, where national security, despite European integration, has explicitly remained the responsibility of the Member States.

The ECHR also plays an active role in ensuring respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms against the arbitrary use of state power. In this regard, the ECHR has ruled on the interception of communications of any kind that when a State takes surveillance measures it is possible that the persons concerned may be treated in a manner contrary to Article 8 of the Convention without them being aware of it, and, therefore, without being able to obtain an appeal at national level or before the institutions of the Convention. The Court has therefore accepted that a person may, under certain conditions, claim to be the victim of an infringement caused by the mere existence of secret measures or legislation permitting secret measures, without having to claim that such measures were applied to him. The

relevant conditions must be established in each case in accordance with the provisions of the Convention or the allegedly violated rights, the secrecy of the contested measures and the link between the person who considers himself injured in his rights and those measures. The Court also noted that the possibility of secret surveillance of certain citizens is permitted under the Convention only to the extent strictly necessary for the protection of democratic institutions. „Noting, however, that democratic societies nowadays find themselves threatened by highly sophisticated forms of espionage and by terrorism, with the result that the State must be able, in order effectively to counter such threats, to undertake the secret surveillance of subversive elements operating within its jurisdiction, the Court considered that the existence of some legislation granting powers of secret surveillance over the mail, post and telecommunications was, under exceptional conditions, necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security and/or for the prevention of disorder or crime”<sup>14</sup>.

Therefore, this judgment, reflecting the conventional provisions, establishes the principles of the legality test on the implementation of temporary restrictive measures of fundamental rights and freedoms, namely the right to privacy, freedom of expression, access to justice and the right to a fair trial, as well as their correlative rights.

The Court ruled that the storage of data relating to the privacy of a person by a public authority constitutes an interference with the right to privacy, regardless of the subsequent use of the information or whether or not the information collected has harmed the data subject<sup>15</sup>. Including public information collected and stored systematically by the authorities falls within the scope of privacy, especially if the information concerns a person's distant past and some of this information has been declared false and is likely to harm the concerned person's reputation<sup>16</sup>.

According to the case law of the Court, the requirement that any interference be in accordance with the law is met where the contested measure must have a basis in national law and the law in question must be accessible to the person concerned and have foreseeable consequences<sup>17</sup>. In the case of *Rotaru v. Romania*<sup>18</sup>, the Court examined the Romanian legislation on secret surveillance



measures related to national security and concluded that the legislation on the collection and storage of information did not provide the necessary guarantees. The court reiterated this finding in its decisions regarding the cases of Dumitru Popescu against Romania, no. 2, 2007 and the Association „21 December 1989” and others against Romania, 2011.

The State's interest to protect its national security must be proportionate to the seriousness of the interference with the person being monitored in respect of his or her privacy. Thus, in the case of *Kennedy v. The United Kingdom*, the Court held that the power to institute oversight of citizens was tolerated only in accordance with the provisions of the Convention in so far as it was strictly necessary for the protection of democratic institutions, in other words that there were adequate and effective safeguards against abuse.

### Conclusions

The activity of the CJEU and the ECHR formulates the democratic framework for carrying out the intelligence activity at legislative level, also as a result of the constitutionality control, but especially of Romania's membership in the EU, at executive and judicial level. If in 1990 the intelligence activity carried out for the achievement of national security was shrouded in secrecy and inaccessibility, today and certainly in the future it will have as coordinates the observance of human rights and the jurisprudence of the community courts.

The importance of the two sources of regulation of some of the working methods of the intelligence services is enhanced especially if the rules and tests established by jurisprudence were to be taken as the performance standards of the mentioned activity. For example, in order to prevent terrorism, States may take measures that, for example, interfere with the right to privacy, freedom of expression or association, or the right to free choice. However, the rule of law does not give states a free hand to interfere with the rights of those in their jurisdiction. Governments will always need to demonstrate that the measures they have taken to counter threats to national security have been justified in the light of the text of the Convention and the interpretations of the two Community courts by its judgments.

### NOTES:

1 Edward Snowden, North American whistleblower who made public the classified mass surveillance program conducted by the US.

2 *European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2014 on the surveillance program of the US National Security Agency (NSA), the surveillance bodies of the various Member States and their impact on the fundamental rights of EU citizens and on transatlantic cooperation in the field of justice and security of Internal Affairs (2013/2188 (INI))*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014I.P0230&from=RO>, accessed on 12.03.2021.

3 *Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber)*, 8 April 2014, *Electronic communications - Directive 2006/24/EC - Publicly available electronic communications services or public communications networks services - Retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of such services - Validity - Articles 7, 8 and 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union In Joined Cases C-293/12 and C-594/12, Requests for a preliminary ruling under Article 267 TFEU from the High Court (Ireland) and the Verfassungsgerichtshof (Austria), made by decisions of 27 January and 28 November 2012, respectively, received at the Court on 11 June and 19 December 2012*, <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?num=C-293/12>, accessed on 12.03.2021.

4 *Directive 2006/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 on the retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of publicly available electronic communications services or of public communications networks and amending Directive 2002/58/EC*, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L\\_.2006.105.01.0054.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2006%3A105%3ATOC](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2006.105.01.0054.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2006%3A105%3ATOC), accessed on 12.03.2021

5 *Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber) of 6 October 2015. Maximillian Schrems v Data Protection Commissioner. Request for a preliminary ruling from the High Court (Ireland). Reference for a preliminary ruling - Personal data - Protection of individuals with regard to the processing of such data - Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union - Articles 7, 8 and 47 - Directive 95/46/EC - Articles 25 and 28 - Transfer of personal data to third countries - Decision 2000/520/EC - Transfer of personal data to the United States - Inadequate level of protection - Validity - Complaint by an individual whose data has been transferred from the European Union to the United States - Powers of the national supervisory authorities. Case C-362/14. Digital reports (Court Reports - general) at <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?num=C-362/14>, accessed last 12.03.2021.*

6 *Council Decision (EU) 2016/920 of 20 May 2016 on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, of the Agreement between the United States of America and the European Union on the protection of personal information relating to the prevention, investigation, detection, and prosecution of criminal offences*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32016D0920>, accessed on 12.03.2021.

7 *2000/520/EC: Commission Decision of 26 July 2000 pursuant to Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament*

and of the Council on the adequacy of the protection provided by the safe harbour privacy principles and related frequently asked questions issued by the US Department of Commerce (notified under document number C(2000) 2441) Official Journal L 215, 25/08/2000, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32000D0520>, accessed on 12.03.2021.

8 *Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber)* of 21 December 2016. *Tele2 Sverige AB v Post-och telestyrelsen and Secretary of State for the Home Department v Tom Watson and Others*. Requests for a preliminary ruling from the Kammarrätten i Stockholm and the Court of Appeal (England & Wales) (Civil Division). Reference for a preliminary ruling - Electronic communications - Processing of personal data - Confidentiality of electronic communications - Protection - Directive 2002/58/EC - Articles 5, 6 and 9 and Article 15(1) - Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union - Articles 7, 8 and 11 and Article 52(1) - National legislation - Providers of electronic communications services - Obligation relating to the general and indiscriminate retention of traffic and location data - National authorities - Access to data - No prior review by a court or independent administrative authority - Compatibility with EU law. Joined Cases C-203/15 and C-698/15, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:62015CJ0203&from=EN>, accessed on 12.03.2021.

9 Directive 2002/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 July 2002 concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector (Directive on privacy and electronic communications), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32002L0058&from=EN><https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32002L0058&from=EN>, accessed on 12.03.2021.

10 *Tele2 Sverige AB (C 203/15)*, para. 109.

11 *Ibidem*, para. 110.

12 *Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber)* of 6 October 2020 *La Quadrature du Net and Others v Premier ministre and Others* Requests for a preliminary ruling from the Conseil d'État (France) and Cour constitutionnelle (Belgium) Reference for a preliminary ruling – Processing of personal data in the electronic communications sector – Providers of electronic communications services – Hosting service providers and Internet access providers – General and indiscriminate retention of traffic and location data – Automated analysis of data – Real-time access to data – Safeguarding national security and combating terrorism – Combating crime – Directive 2002/58/EC – Scope – Article 1(3) and Article 3 – Confidentiality of electronic communications – Protection – Article 5 and Article 15(1) – Directive 2000/31/EC – Scope – Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union – Articles 4, 6, 7, 8 and 11 and Article 52(1) – Article 4(2) TEU Joined Cases C-511/18, C-512/18 and C-520/18, <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=232084&pageIndex=0&doclang=RO&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=6166350> and *Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber)* of 6 October 2020 *Privacy International v Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and Others* Request for a preliminary ruling from the Investigatory Powers Tribunal

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13 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62018CC0511>, accessed on 12.03.2021.

14 *Case of Klass and others vs. Germany*, 1978, para. 34 and next, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22dmdocn%22%3A%22695387%22%2C%22itemid%22%3A%22001-57510%22%7D>, accessed on 13.02.2021.

15 *Case of Amann vs. Switzerland*, 2000, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22%3A%22001-58497%22%7D>, accessed on 13.02.2021.

16 *Case of Rotaru vs. Romania*, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#%7B%22itemid%22%3A%22001-148906%22%7D>, accessed on 13.02.2021.

17 *Case of Kennedy vs. UK*, 2010, para. 151; *Case of Rotaru vs. Romania*, 2020, para. 52; *Case of Amann vs. Switzerland*, para. 50; *Kruslin vs. France*, 1990, para. 127; *Case of Malone vs. UK*, 1984, para. 67 and 68; *Case of Leander vs. Sweden*, 1987, para. 51, etc.

18 *Case of Rotaru vs. Romania*, <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/25965>, accessed on 13.02.2021.

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## UKRAINE BETWEEN PEACE AND WAR WITH RUSSIA

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After the Crimean Peninsula was invaded and the amplification of conflicts in South-Eastern Ukraine, it has become obvious that Russia's policy is concentrated on preserving its influence and strategic control over the decisions and political directions taken by the States from the former Soviet bloc. To understand the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the West, as well as to anticipate and counteract a possible future evolution of similar events not only in geopolitical risk states such as Moldavia, but also even in NATO members such as the Baltic countries, Romania or Bulgaria, it is worth paying attention to the geopolitical consequences of the loss of Crimea and the South-Eastern provinces by Ukraine. The article analyses the reason, mechanisms and stakes behind the Russian-Ukrainian war, from both a geopolitical and historical perspective. To understand the way in which different hybrid instruments can be used by the Russian Federation to influence the States in its proximity and, in particular, how their combination leads to effective satisfaction of the aims, it is useful to assess and address the systemic risks and vulnerabilities of States in the concerned areas of Russia and the West in recent years.

**Keywords:** Ukraine; Russian Federation; Crimea; Russian-Ukrainian war; hybrid warfare; limited warfare; maskirovka.

Ukraine is a sovereign state in the Eastern Europe, the second largest on the continent, after Russia, with an area of 603,634 km<sup>2</sup>. The capital city of Kiev is located on the Dnieper River, in the North-Central of Ukraine. It is bounded by Belarus to the North, Russia to the East, the Azov Sea and the Black Sea to the South, Moldavia and Romania to the South-West and Hungary, Slovakia and Poland to the West. The Kerch Strait, connecting the Azov Sea with the Black Sea, separates Ukraine from Russia in the South-East region.

Ukraine's history is a complex one, its origin starting from the establishment in the 9th century of the first Eastern Slavic state called Kievan Rus'. In the 10th and 11th centuries, it became the largest and strongest state in Europe. Since the 11th century, weakened by many internal conflicts and the invasions of Mongols tribes, Kievan Rus' has been incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and later into the Polish-Lithuanian State union. In the middle of the 17th century, following internal riots against Poles, a new Ukrainian state called the Cossack Hetmanate emerged, and managed to remain autonomous for more than 100

years. Since the end of the 18th century, most of the ethnic Ukrainian territory has been embedded in the Russian empire, the western regions of this territory (Galicia and Transcarpathya) being absorbed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The fall of the Tsarist Empire (1917) allowed Ukraine's independence from 1917 to 1920. During 1921-1991, Ukraine was a republic of the Soviet Union. Thus, a completely independent Ukraine was only born at the end of the 20th century, after long periods of successive domination of the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom, Poland, Lithuania, Grand Duchy of Moscow, Russia and the USSR. At the collapse of USSR in 1990-1991, the Ukrainian SSR legislature declared sovereignty (July 16, 1990) and then absolute independence (August 24, 1991). The independence was confirmed by popular approval in a plebiscite on December 1, 1991, with the dissolution of the USSR.

Ukraine's short history points out that the current Ukrainian territory has been occupied by various countries over the centuries, the borders being changed several times. Some regions that are currently part of Ukraine belonged in the past to other countries such as Austria, Poland, Moldavia or Russia. The modern territory of Ukraine hosts a variety of ethnic groups (Ukrainians, German, Polish, Russian, Ruthenic, Tatars or other ethnic group) and religious (Catholics, Greek Catholics,

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Lutherans, Russian orthodox, Jews, Muslims or other confessions). During the peak of the USSR, an intensive policy of forced migration of the population was pursued, the ethnic Ukrainians dropping from 77% in 1959 to 73% in 1991. This trend of ethnic depopulation reversed after Ukraine regained independence, reaching at the beginning of the 21st century to account for more than three-quarters of the country's population. The Russians continue to be the largest minority, although they currently occupy less than a fifth of the population. The rest of the population includes: Belarusians, Moldavians, Bulgarians, Poles, Hungarians, Romanians, Roma (gypsies) and other groups. The ethnic group represented by the Crimean Tartars, who were deported by force to Uzbekistan and other Central Asian republics in 1944, began to return in large numbers to Crimea after 1989; at the beginning of the 21st century, they were one of the largest minority groups that were not Russian.

Ukraine's importance for the West increased with the importance granted by Russia to this state. The inability of the West to comprehend the significant role of Ukraine in tempering the expansionist policy of Russia created the grounds of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict emergence. This is not the case for Kremlin too, the Russian decision-makers considering that the Eurasian Union is not complete without Ukraine<sup>1</sup>. Thus, the Russian policy, especially after 2000, turned to the reconversion of Ukrainian geopolitical status by reconsidering it as a buffer zone between the West and the Russian Federation, in its membership of the Eurasian space. As the annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation, through its abusive occupation in 2014, caused a surprise to the Western governments, it reflected either a poor understanding of the nostalgic Russian spirit of the historical greatness under the leadership of Peter the Great, of Catherine the 2nd or Alexander the 1st, or an unacceptable underestimation of Russian ability to reinvent and revive the warrior spirit of the old Cossacks.

An area of strategic interest, both for the Russian Federation and for the West, is the Crimean Peninsula; a land of 27,000 km<sup>2</sup>, extending into the Black Sea, which has been the gateway for the Greeks, Romanians, Byzantine, Mongols and Turks, to the northern Black Sea lands and to the vast fertile land of the North European plain.

Located on the northern shore of the Black Sea and on the western coast of the Azov Sea, Crimea is almost an island being connected to the continent only by a strip of land of about 5-7 km wide represented by the Isthmus of Perekop. A large part of the natural boundary separating the continental region of Ukraine (Herson) from the Crimean Peninsula is characterized by a geographical set of interrelated lakes and lagoons on the west coast of the Azov Sea.

In addition to the continental link through the Isthmus of Perekop, Crimea is linked to the Hencesk district of the Herson region through bridges crossing the Chohar and Henicesk Straits. The eastern end of the peninsula, represented by Krasnodar region, is made through Kerçi Strait, connecting the Black Sea with the Azov Sea, being 3-13 km wide.

With little human and economic potential, only 1,967,200 inhabitants in 2014, the peninsula does not have the political force to play a geopolitical role on its own, but, together with a great power, it becomes of great geostrategic importance for all the surrounding regions. This was also the reason for the historical dispute, among the great powers, Crimea being regularly taken over by successive administrators (Greek, Romanian, Byzantine, Mongols, Turkish or Russian) through bloody wars. Like in the past, today's Crimea is a region torn apart by the interests and geopolitical competition between the current great powers, the European Union, Russia, the US and China.

From a geostrategic point of view, I believe that Ukraine is the natural hinterland of the Crimean Peninsula; therefore, through its geographical position, as a country that includes the northern shores of the Black Sea, Ukraine is predestined to rule over this region. But history shows us that the geostrategic interests of the great powers have determined that several times strategic important territories were disconnected from their geographical connections, entering under the influence of neighboring powers (Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and so on) or colonial empires (Gibraltar, Singapore, the Panama Canal, Gdansk, and so on).

To understand why some strategically positioned territories have presented great interest for the major powers, we have to analyze the very essence of the theory of geopolitical pivots. For one

of the founders of the Ukrainian<sup>2</sup> geopolitical forces, which has faced the extremely important problem of defining Ukraine's geographical borders, its geopolitical importance lies in its expansion into the Black Sea, in close proximity to the Middle East. This geographical reality makes it into a real bridge between the West and the East. The importance of this region is not recent, as it has been discovered since the Hellenistic period, the Greeks being the first to establish commercial ports located on the northern Black Sea coast. The Romanians continued the Greek trade policy, followed by Byzantine and Italian republics. In fact, the Venetian commercial empire has been strengthened at the expense of trade in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, bringing an important contribution to the development of regions located at north of the Black Sea. The region's geostrategic potential has generated misunderstandings between the Ottoman and the Tsarist empire, intensely disputing their supremacy over Crimea. From the end of the 16th century to the 20th century, no less than 12 Russian-Turkish<sup>3</sup> wars were held, each side seeking to increase the political and economic influence on the peninsula.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Ukraine was seen as a communication hub to which all the shipping routes between Asia and Europe converge. Ukraine's geographical position on the northern Black Sea coast, linked it to Russia's expansion route to the Balkans and the entry area of European influences to the Caucasus, Iran and Turkmenistan. Thus, an independent Ukraine protected a number of nations in Eastern Europe and neighboring areas of Asia from Russian imperialist expansion and became a strategic stabilizing factor. Rudnicki concluded that the main direction to be followed by the future state, in order to build independent Ukrainian statehood, had to be on the Black Sea direction, on a north-south axis, which was meant to unite two different cultural elements: Cossacks and Galicians<sup>4</sup>. According to him, positioning on this vertical axis was a constructive Ukrainian response to the Russian policy of treating the Ukrainian area as a buffer zone for the Eurasian region and as an area of own influence and expansion for the German policy aiming at the Middle East. The focus on this vector was a Ukrainian geopolitical strategy to prevent its division into Eastern and Western power areas.

The opinion of the Anglo-Saxon geopolitical school, through its representative and founder<sup>5</sup>, supported the Heartland theory, whereby the geographical region of Ukraine is considered one of the most important territories in the world. In his view, the geostrategic importance of the world is given by the interior of Eurasia, considered the hub of Heartland, of which Ukraine is also part. Mackinder claimed that inner Asia and eastern Europe (the heart) had become the strategic center of the "World's Island" as a result of the relative decline of maritime power against land power and the economic and industrial development in Southern Siberia<sup>6</sup>. Mackinder did not give a precise definition to Ukrainian territory, but he identified this region of Eastern Europe as a fertile ground for expanding the world powers over which Anglo-Saxons should have thought, in order to be able to preserve a balance between the powers fighting for the control of Heartland.

In the 1900s, when the Heartland theory was released, the World's Island population represented almost 90% of the world's population<sup>7</sup>. The World's Island covered a large territory composed of: Europe, Asia and Africa, which also had similar proportions in the world economy. It included demographic, commercial and colonial empires such as: England, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Japan, China, Spain, Portugal, Germany, the Ottoman Empire or Italy. According to Mackinder's theory: "Who rules Eastern Europe commands Heartland; Who rules Heartland commands the World's Island; Who rules the World's Island commands the World"<sup>8</sup>. Based on his observations, Mackinder concluded that the majority of the world's population lived in the Eurasian and African land region and the control over this "world's island" would lead to a possible global dominance. This island could be best controlled from the pivot (heart) area, which would guarantee food self-sufficiency for the country that dominates the region, and the protection of the permeability of the pivot area at sea by controlling access to the Black Sea would provide a formable defensive barrier<sup>9</sup>. The pivot area was only vulnerable to ground attacks through the plains in Eastern Europe, which points out that this region included a part of Ukraine, particularly the Crimean Peninsula.

Another successor of the Anglo-Saxon geopolitical school is Z. Brzeziński, one of the most



important theorists of contemporary globalism. Creator of geopolitical pivots' theory, he pays particular attention to Ukraine, reconsidering the importance of this state through its important geographical location and the effects of potential political instability on geostrategic behavior. As a geopolitical hub, Ukraine can allow access to strategic areas or can provide a defensive shield for an important actor or even a region. For this reason, an important aspect of America's global geostrategy, whose interests are represented by Z. Brzeziński, is the identification and protection of the States (including Ukraine) that play the role of geopolitical pivots. "Ukraine, – an important new area on the Eurasian chess table, is a geopolitical hub, because the very existence of an independent Ukrainian state is helping to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire: it may still try to achieve imperial status, but it would then be a predominantly Asian empire, constantly drawn into ruined conflicts with the recently sovereign nations of Central Asia, that would not reach an agreement on the loss of independence and would be supported by colleagues from Islamic countries in the south. [...] If Moscow, however, regains power over Ukraine, along with fifty-two million citizens, huge natural resources and access to the Black Sea, it will automatically regain the possibility of becoming a powerful empire that connects Europe and Asia together"<sup>10</sup>.

In the 1920s, the German geographer Karl Haushofer used the geopolitical theory, proposed by the Swedish political analyst Rudolf Kjellen in 1905, to support Germany's invasion of neighboring States, which he regarded as an "expansion". K. Haushofer is the creator of the term "Lebensraum", meaning the German influence and the way in which the Slavic East was organized, which was to be under the exclusive sphere of influence of Nazi Germany. The geopolitical theory was used to justify a state actor's attempts to expand on the basis of his own needs. Haushofer claimed that densely populated countries such as Germany should be allowed and should have the right to expand and acquire the territory of less populated countries.

The outline of Ukraine's ethnographic and territorial area can be found in Fryderyk Neumann's book "Mittleuropa", published in 1915<sup>11</sup>. Neumann's

analysis argues the German influence exercised in Eastern Europe, based on the principle of so-called "productivism" theories. In the view of the German geopolitical school, Ukraine was to join the "German productive area", to become a buffer zone of Western civilization, a space for German expansion in the Middle East and hydrocarbon deposits in the Caucasus, Germany's agricultural and resource base, an agricultural and industrial region (the so-called "ancillary economy") and a cheap but qualified reservoir of workforce.

An ardent contestant of Z. Brzeziński's theory and, in particular, of the entire Anglo-Saxon geopolitical school of today is Alexander Heli Dughin<sup>12</sup>, who also has the status of Putin's personal adviser. In its view, Ukraine is an essential state for the establishment, consolidation, imposition and expansion of the Eurasian Union. Dughin has repeatedly stressed<sup>13</sup> that Ukraine is entering the final phase of its independent political existence. From a geopolitical point of view, he considers that Ukraine's stability and unity has been fragile from the very beginning of its existence, and is now entering the final phase of its independent political existence. Dughin believes that, in fact, Ukraine unites two nations with diametrically opposed policies. A Christian nation – the "East", which has a common destiny with the Great Orthodox Russia. The second nation - the "zapadniacki" - which lives in a past linked to the Polish state and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, with a pro-Western cultural and political orientation. He warns that if the two nations succeed in reaching an agreement between them, establishing a balance-sharing consensus between Europe and Russia, and not joining NATO and the EU, Ukraine will be able to maintain its independence and survive as a single political body. Dughin is a supporter of the Eastern Europe Sea project, by reconsidering and reorganizing Heartland, also considering that without Ukraine, Russia appears to be insufficient both in space-strategic, demographic or political terms<sup>14</sup>. Practically all geopolitical analyses point out that Ukraine is connected to Russia, the latter being vulnerable, incomplete and without the geostrategic potential of Ukraine's territory, with a Ukraine included in Western structures. A Western Ukraine, which can also host a NATO naval base, is unacceptable to Russian politics, as it is perceived as a direct threat to the security, stability



and integrity of the state and the entire Russian tradition.

In this geopolitical context, Russia appears to be an undeniable leader of the Eurasian integration structures representing materialized versions of the Dughin ideology. The Eurasian Community and now the Eurasian Economic Union are the means to strengthen the Russian regional leadership and imperial renaissance, considered the means to counterbalance Western influence, the main task of the Russian leadership being to ensure Ukraine's membership in such organizations.

Due to international circumstances, generated by the growing economic competition, Ukraine has found itself in the middle of geopolitical turbulence arising from the chain of competition between the great powers. In other words, it is in the middle of a competition cyclone, geopolitical gravity and civilization rupture caused by its position at the crossroads between the West and East, which gives it a status of a victim of geography. Today we see an increased competition for influence in Eurasia through the collision of two integration European paradigms (market economy, democracy, Western civilization) and Eurasian (oligarchic authoritarianism, corruption and autocratic administrative power).

Considering Moscow's policy of recovery of the Russian Sea and the fact that it sees NATO expansion to the East as a real threat to the security of the Russian state and identity, all States with a common border with Russia, having a pro-Western attitude, are condemned to be reconsidered and become buffer zones for it. In this respect, in the last years, Russia led a propaganda for the determination of Ukraine's political factors to give up the Euro project and finally opt for Russian Eurasian. Such political pessimism was reinforced in 2013 by the refusal of president of that time, Viktor Yanukovich to sign the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement, largely due to promises of economic support from the Russian Federation.

After V. Yanukovich's withdrawal as President of Ukraine, following the Euromaidan protests in the winter of 2013, Russia lost its main means of maintaining Ukraine under its geopolitical influence<sup>15</sup>. After his flight to Russia and following the events in Ukraine, which followed the takeover of power by a pro-Western political elite, Kremlin started to implement the scenario

of Crimea annexation and the Southeast region of Ukraine. In this respect, Russia has supported the separatists in these regions, which led to a more widespread amplification of the conflict. Ukraine has thus become a safe victim of the great powers' geopolitics, due to the interests and political confrontations between Russia, the EU and the US. As a result of the conflicts that have been triggered on its territory, I believe that Ukraine is trapped in the struggle of the Russian system for survival, as well as the inability of the West to protect the international legal space.

Changing Ukrainian state borders, by annexing the Crimean Peninsula, and fueling this conflict, by maintaining tensions in the southeastern Ukrainian regions hosting a major Russian and pro-Russian community, was a challenge by which Russia has shaken the Western world and the global order in general. The conflict in Ukraine opened a new page of Russian foreign policy, its international relations and the formation of security strategy. Russia's reaction was forced by the transformation of the political regime in Ukraine, which was taken as a challenge to its status and a geopolitical threat from the United States.

According to most Western and local military analysts, Russia, taking advantage of the uncertainty and lack of Western reaction, is trying to "freeze" the conflict, forcing the emergence of separatist regions identical to those in Georgia or the Republic of Moldavia, or to end it under favorable conditions, that would guarantee the preservation of Russian cultural identity in Southeast Ukraine by officially confirming the Russian language as the second official language of the state. These aspects will guarantee that Kiev will no longer join NATO and the EU in the future, weakening the Western rigidity that Kremlin is feeling acutely.

Despite the fact that Ukraine claims to be a geopolitical bridge between Europe and Eurasia, it primarily fulfills the role of a strategic border between the EU and Russia. Speaking about Russia's geostrategy, I believe that Ukraine is the last bastion in the way of Western democracies, for Kremlin and Russia itself. By supporting the Ukrainian conflict, Russia is trying to stop the expansion of the EU and NATO to the east, to maintain its influence in Eurasia. For Kremlin, Ukraine represent only one piece on the great geopolitical chess board, in confrontation with the USA, along with other



playing pieces such as Syria, Iran or Venezuela, its victory in the Ukrainian war being perceived as another US defeat.

Russia's hostile actions in Ukraine have intensified the interest of military strategists in the concept of hybrid warfare. For many Western analysts, the "hybrid" concept represents the easiest way to describe the complexity and combination of tools and methods used by the Russian Federation during the annexation of Crimea, as well as support for separatist groups in eastern Ukraine. Whether it is argued or not, in the plan and with the means of any geopolitical faith, ideology or strategy, the Russian-Ukrainian hybrid warfare is the natural way of imposing power relations, by persuading Kiev to accept the Kremlin's conditions and vision for a system designed to guarantee Russia's advantages and dominance.

What stands out in the conflict in Ukraine in relation to the hybrid warfare is the focus on non-military methods and, in particular, on the information warfare, which is essential for Russia's successful campaign in Crimea in 2014. The Russian strategy included and includes a traditional combination of conventional (classic military actions) and unconventional (undercover operations) combat techniques, but also support for political protests, economic constraints, cyber operations, all complemented and supported by an intense and aggressive campaign of disinformation. At tactical level, the electronic war (EW), the psychological war and cyber sabotage, also found in the Russian-Georgian conflict in 2008, have diminished the capacity of Ukrainian authorities to respond, while wider media manipulation and exploitation techniques have diluted the boundaries between truth and lie, creating alternative realities for observers who agreed to the Russian press's position on the events.

Russia has used intensive information and propaganda operations to influence and shape public perception, exploiting existing societal vulnerabilities, undermining the perceived legitimacy of the Ukrainian state, and weakening government and state institutions. In Ukraine, Russian propaganda has adapted to exploit conservative, Orthodox and nationalist feelings, aimed at increasing the opposition to the integration with the rest of Europe, by speculating the high level of cultural conservatism, strong opposition to

LGBT categories and the integration of religious minorities. The information warfare promoted by Kremlin in the Ukrainian war, exceeds the propaganda which promotes various veridical realities, aiming by aggressive and insistent propaganda, at the creation of parallel realities that alter or influence Ukraine's foreign policy, security and defence decisions<sup>16</sup>. The alternative realities promoted in this conflict, through a subversive propaganda that perverted the objective truth, pursued and follows the distortion of the perception of a target audience.

The manipulation of the Russian, Ukrainian or pro-Russian Western collective mind shall be carried out in the visible, concerted, planned, integrated and step-by-step spectrum by achieving the following objectives:

- Direct promotion of Russia, of its leaders and its official narratives that are presented in a nationalist, patriotic, conservative, grandiose historical light, loyal to the Russian spirit and Orthodox Christian values;

- The increase of uncertainty, the amplification of dilemmas, the subtle inoculation of false truths. This is achieved by subtle propaganda that generates emotions, by activating centers of personal sensitivity. The purpose is to extract from the population a mass of maneuver that has a weakness and appetite for conspiracy theories, and practices suspicion as a rule and is highly critical to any element of internal decision or construction;

- The identification of the common enemy, through the construction of which the cohesion and the preservation of the unity of the Russian society, around the leaders is imprinted;

- Building a mood based on fears and uncertainties. This objective overcomes the preparation of moods, the conditioning of reactions and the activation of certain previously conditioned reflexes at one time;

- Construction of a human instrument that can be activated at the right time. At this stage are identified, recruited and ready for activation, the losers, supporters, contestants, useful idiots, support groups and maneuvering masses. The most important part of this component is the identification, selection, training and conditioning of persons convinced of alternative narratives, by rewriting perceptions from the individual mind. They are prepared to become conscious



manipulators, obedient disinformers, consenters of the information warfare.

Planning the information warfare was carried out on three levels: global, regional and local. Thus, against the background of the deterioration of Russian life and the internal economic situation, Russian authorities withdrew, being able to distract both Western population as well as Ukrainian and Russian ones from social problems, relying on exploiting the nostalgic thesis of Russia's special characteristics. In this respect, the spiritual center of the Orthodox Church is promoted as a last Orthodox defence against a hostile environment represented by the depraved West<sup>17</sup>. In addition, attention is distracted from all domestic problems and tensions in Russia by promoting the obedient media and propaganda, which attempts to show that US policy is moving toward the isolation and destruction of Russian sovereignty. Thus, one of the main components of Russian policy is the creation of an enemy to help build the confidence and cohesion of the society surrounding the regime and the leader.

However, popular and political support for the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine should be seen as an attempt by the Russian elite to keep Putin's authoritarian system in the face of recession and imposed sanctions. Successful Europeanization and prosperity of Ukraine would question the effectiveness of anti-democratic regimes, extrapolating the effect on many post-Soviet countries, including Russia. The fiasco of the successful transformation strategy in Ukraine would serve as a clear example of the democratic revolt of a large Orthodox country for Russian society. Therefore, Russia's limited military intervention in Ukraine is primarily aimed at preventing pro-Western reforms in Kiev. We can also assume that Russia's strategy is aimed at economic collapse, the withdrawal of popular support and the administrative collapse of Ukraine, not through large-scale open military intervention and the subversion of the state challenge, but at increasing the dissatisfaction of the population and removing the pro-Western authorities.

The use of special troops was obvious in the 2014 conflict, although their engagement is not a new strategy in Russian military thinking. Known as *Spetsnaz units*, these forces were once designed, in the second half of the 20th century, to carry

out "special recognition" missions (acquiring information about major economic and military installations and either destroying them or taking them out of action; carrying out punitive operations against rebels, conducting propaganda; training insurgents' detachments and so on), in order to undermine the political, economic and military potential and the morale of a probable or real enemy. In Crimea, *little green men* were deployed to take control of public institutions, government institutions, and important infrastructure objectives. To legitimize Russian action, Spetsnaz forces facilitated and supported the arming of the separatist militia. After the surprise caused to the west by the shock of the Crimean invasion, the Russian hybrid aggression against Ukraine has slowly but surely turned into an interwar training phase. Thus, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has become an internal war based on the civil conflict that has been triggered and fueled from the outside, in which an aggressor participates insidiously and secretly by subversive troops and local militias, as well as by "volunteer formations", groups of foreigners and mercenaries. Throughout this time, by promoting intense black propaganda, the Russian government promoted uncertainty and confusion, repeatedly denying Russia's involvement in the conflict.

Other instruments and techniques of hybrid warfare have been used to demoralize, demotivate and intimidate Ukrainian troops. They included large-scale military exercises with conventional troops on the Ukrainian border, cyber-attacks on Ukrainian government systems, electronic war that disrupted Ukrainian media stations, a diplomatic offensive and intense media to undermine the legitimacy of the new Ukrainian government. The ultimate aim of this type of "war" is to apply psychological pressure to cause the collapse of the target state from within, so that the political objectives of the conflict can be achieved without a fight – identical to the area of strategic abilities found in Sun Tzu's Art of War.

Many of the methods and tools used by Russia in the Ukrainian conflict date back to the Soviet era by the application of *Maskirovka*<sup>18</sup> (disguising, camouflage, diversion or military deception). *Maskirovka* uses methods of actions/intentions camouflage, denial of actions/intentions, manipulation and disinformation, which are executed during war as well as during peace. In the



21st century, ICT progress increased the efficiency and scope of Maskirovka, allowing the Russian government to use state-scale media propaganda and disinformation<sup>19</sup>. They have been used to support the government's foreign policy in Russia and to lead a more effective "information warfare" against Ukraine and the West. The efficiency of the information warfare promoted by Kremlin is given by the post-truth culture of the 21st century, which directly influences those who fall victims to the followers of disinformation. Thus, virtual space is becoming a real battlefield aimed at inoculating alternative realities into the minds of the victims. Russian Maskirovka is taking advantage of an ever-expanding ecosystem in which people confuse false news with the real ones, even more as they are promoted and amplified through social media and the Internet. The cascade effect by which the misinformant becomes disinformant is exactly what the Russian trolls are after to pervert the truth and promote alternative realities.

One of Russia's preferred means, extracted from the hybrid toolbox used in the Ukrainian war, is the energy lever. In general, Western experts and analysts agree that the energy war is a phenomenon of the post-Soviet space, Russia using energy policy with great preference to keep the former Soviet Union countries under its influence. In fact, given the Kremlin's appetite for this exotic instrument, it would be wrong to believe that this strategy cannot be applied to other EU or NATO Member countries. In this respect, based on Ukrainian experience, I believe that one of the hybrid instruments that Kremlin uses to force the regime from Ukraine is the energy component. In fact, in recent years, Russia has used the gas resource intensively as an energy weapon against EU members. As an example, we can recall the reduction in oil supply for the Czech Republic in 2008, in order to sanction Prague because it signed an agreement on the deployment of the US missile defence radar on its territory; in 2007, Russia sanctioned Estonia by suspending oil and coal deliveries for a month, stating that it is a logistical problem; in 2015, Russia reduced oil transit through Lithuanian ports by 20%, without explaining the reason. Taking advantage of huge hydrocarbon resources, Russia is using it as an energy tool to achieve geopolitical goals. In the Russian-Ukrainian war, Russia's particular attention to critical Ukrainian energy infrastructure

is due to the fact that a possible sabotage of it does not cause significant economic losses only to Ukraine, but also threatens the energy security of European countries. Thus, the hybrid warfare in Ukraine is becoming global. Taking advantage of the Ukrainian state's total dependence on Russian energy, in all energy sectors, after the annexation of Crimea and the escalation of fights in south-eastern Ukraine, Kremlin launched the energy attacks against it, using the energy factor in a three-dimensional format: political, economic and information.

*The political dimension* – Russia uses energy policy as a tool to achieve its foreign policy objectives. Since 2015, the Russian government has been insistently supporting the termination of the Russian-Ukrainian transit contract, the Russian gas transit route to Europe through Ukraine will be closed as of 2019<sup>20</sup>. At the same time, Russia announced the promotion of several possible projects for the delivery of Russian gas to Europe, bypassing the Ukrainian route (North Stream 2, South Stream, Turkish Stream).

*Economic dimension* – in April 2014, Russia unilaterally established a price of 485 dollars per thousand cubic meters for gas supplied to Ukraine, while European countries bought the gas on average with 360 dollars per thousand cubic meters<sup>21</sup>. Since June of the same year, Russia has stopped gas deliveries to Ukraine<sup>22</sup>. At the same time as the natural gas deliveries were stopped, about 80% of the coal mines, in the Donbas and Donetsk mining basins, in the area controlled by the Russian separatist forces, were taken out of operation, while the railways and bridges were destroyed. The impossibility of supplying coal from occupied Ukrainian regions has led to an energy crisis on the eve of the 2014/2015 heating season<sup>23</sup>. In order to avoid energy lack and emergency situations, power cuts have been implemented for the people of Ukraine and some energy-consuming enterprises have started to work overnight, the Ukrainian Government seeking coal suppliers worldwide. The lack of coal has become a long-term challenge for Ukraine's energy security, affecting the functioning of Ukraine's entire energy system. After the annexation of Crimea, Moscow gained control of Ukrainian oil facilities located in the administrative region of Crimea. According to the statements of the Ukrainian Ministry of



Energy and Coal Industry, after the annexation of the peninsula, the costs of energy installations in Crimea, including offshore reserves, were estimated at \$300 billion<sup>24</sup>. As a result of this aggression, Ukraine has not only lost the energy installations on the territory of Crimea, but also the control over the oil fields of the Black Sea continental area. Out of these natural gas deposits, a volume of 2 billion cubic meters has been appropriated by Russia every year.

*The information dimension* – Energy has become a Russian propaganda tool through which it creates psychological information pressure on Ukrainian society and the global community in general. Moscow has repeatedly accused Kiev of unauthorized extraction of transit gases destined for European consumers at the beginning of the conflict in Crimea. The purpose of the false accusations was to denigrate Ukraine's image in the eyes of Western partners, being described as an untrustworthy supplier in their eyes and, respectively, to cultivate distrust in Ukrainian authorities. Transformation in the energy market and reform of Ukrainian national energy policy have often been used by pro-Russian organizations as an information opportunity for critical assessment of government action and acceleration of social psychosis<sup>25</sup>.

At the same time as Russia's hybrid instrument in the Ukrainian war was used, the conflict developments have reanimated the issue of limited war. The concept of limited war has an even longer history than that of crisis management, but it has become visible with the emergence of nuclear weapons that have introduced in the equation the zero stake of an armed conflict. The concept is based on the idea that the warriors may opt not to fight at full capacity, so that a conflict does not gain in intensity or extend in space and time. This is different from the acceptance of those natural limits imposed by resources and geography, and also from the circumstances in which a strong state uses only limited forces to deal with opponents with lower capabilities. Complete victories can be achieved against lower opponents with limited effort. In order to be a "limited war", the limits must be accepted by both parties. This is exactly the situation in the Ukrainian war, where the confrontation has turned into an inter-state war with high stakes, in which one of the party is a great nuclear power and the other is under the protective, soft-power-type wing

of a military alliance with an impressive nuclear arsenal. The great armies of the parties, bearing in mind the risk of an escalation of the military conflict, have not moved against each other, their capacities being held in reserve and diplomatic communications continued throughout the conflict. It is certain that NATO did not want and did not have the necessary levers to get directly involved in the fight, but had to consider whether and how it could get involved. This involved assessing Russian targets, advising Ukraine on how to react and examining the implications for any conflict that may arise between Russia and a NATO member in the future.

### **Conclusions**

After the illegal annexation, Crimea has become an important outpost for Kremlin's policy; from this region Russia can undisturbed use its influence in the warm waters of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. With maritime access to these areas, Russia is maintaining and intensifying the tensions in Libya and Syria, demonstrating its ability to destroy all Western projects related to stabilization, energy security or economic security. All this strategy, which also demonstrates Russia's inability to build something sustainable globally, is intended to impose Russia as a global player that counts in determining the direction of geopolitical challenges between the West and the players from the Middle East and MENA States.

After the invasion of the Crimean Peninsula and the escalation of conflicts in Southeast Ukraine, it has become clear that Russia's policy is focused on preserving its influence and strategic control over the decisions and political directions taken by the States from the former Soviet bloc. Kremlin has adopted several strategies to maintain control over former regions, by attracting States to Euroasiatic alliances and unions (for example, Belarus), by facilitating frozen conflicts in certain separatist regions disconnected from the state of origin (e.g. Ahazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria, Nagorno Karabakh) or in cases deemed to be of extreme necessity, by enclosing and annexing regions of the States of origin (for example, Crimea). All these strategies have a common catalyst: the Russian minority. In countries where there is no significant Russian minority but which has a geostrategic interest to the Russian Federation, it adopts other



non-conventional or hybrid strategies, usually below the detection limit, using hybrid instruments such as black propaganda, energy, diplomatic, cyber, information policies or corruption of leaders.

The confrontation between Russia and the West, which led to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, has raised important questions about NATO's credibility as a guarantee of European security. The successful deployment of hybrid instruments in Ukraine demonstrated the complexity of the next generation war led by Russia. Instead of engaging a classic military invasion into Ukraine, which would have led to unprecedented sanctions for the Russian Federation, it adopted an insidious and subversive strategy, which consisted in a mix of ingeniously mixed instruments and tactics that facilitated the achievement of the Kremlin's political goal. So, in annexation of Crimea, Russia deployed special military and paramilitary forces, sustained information campaigns, media propaganda, cyber and electronic aggression, economic, energy or political constraints. The geopolitical problem that the West will have to address is how NATO could react to similar developments, especially if the aggressed state could be a member of the Alliance. Russia's ability to implement hybrid and subversive tactics makes redundant the need to use conventional means of war.

The West's dilemma is whether the hybrid aggression of the Russian Federation against NATO Member States can be anticipated and can trigger a response from the Alliance by removing the threshold of action against it. It is therefore important to study Russia's strategy of using hybrid tactics with the aggression in Georgia or Ukraine as case studies. To understand how different instruments can be used by the Russian Federation to influence the States in its proximity and, in particular, how their combination leads to an effective satisfaction of the aims, it is useful to assess and address the systemic risks and vulnerabilities of States in the disputed areas of Russia and the West in recent years. It is clear that this is not only relevant for the States at the borders of the Russian Federation, globalization and fierce competition for resources and influence, reversing on other States in various alliances, economic and military organizations or unions with the affected States. I believe that although the effects associated with the hybrid tactics carried out by Russia are naturally felt much

more acutely in pro-Western countries, but which are not part of the EU or NATO, such as Ukraine, Georgia, Moldavia, Azerbaidjan, the use of similar tactics or elements of such tactics could also be extended against existing members of NATO or the EU.

In order to be able to understand the effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the West, as well as to anticipate and counter a possible future evolution of similar phenomena, in countries with geopolitical risks such as Moldavia, but even NATO members such as the Baltic countries, Romania or Bulgaria, it is worth paying attention to the geopolitical consequences of the loss of Crimea and southeastern provinces by Ukraine. For the Russian Federation, the Crimean Peninsula is a convenient basis not only for the Black Sea, but also for launching military operations in the Mediterranean Sea and the Middle East. In fact, the economic potential of the Middle East, and the competition for resources that has caused a problem between the interests of the major world powers such as the United States, China and Russia, has turned it into the most important geostrategic regions on the ground.

The strategic takeover of the peninsula by the Russian Federation led, among other things, to a decrease in Ukrainian military capacity in the Black Sea, with Russia taking over control of maritime trade routes to the Bosphorus. The access to Transnistria with subordinate Crimea would allow Russia to become stronger in the Black Sea basin, finally, bringing Turkey back from the US influence and create the conditions for solving alternative sources and supply routes to Europe by strengthening its position in the Caspian region in the future.

The annexation of Crimea has automatically changed the poles of power in territorial waters and waters belonging to Russia's exclusive economic zone, which in the Azov Sea means the blockade of Ukrainian ports by Russia. The annexation has led to the restriction of Ukraine's access to important trade routes, to Crimea ports, access to oil and gas resources from the Black Sea continental area under the control of Russian trainers. Ukraine's exploitation of these deposits would have guaranteed energy independence for a long time, which would have diminished Russia's ability to control Ukrainian politics. From a military point

of view, Russia's takeover of Crimea has allowed Kremlin to increase Russian military potential in this area, which is at the border with the European Union and NATO, creating military pressure on Ukraine, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

From geostrategic point of view, Russia's presence in Crimea, control of Transnistria, fueling separatist emotions in eastern Ukraine and strengthening the military alliance with Belarus, enclaves Ukraine by condemning it to a forced change of political direction. Ukraine's fundamental problem is that it does not belong to any military bloc, this unfavorable circumstance causing it to be able to rely only on its own forces in the event of a threat. The red line represented by Crimea - Transnistria - Belarus - Kaliningrad strengthens the Russian Federation's position toward NATO, allowing Russia to launch a military offensive against Alliance member states, from several directions at the same time.

The success of the annexation of Crimea has brought a propagandistic victory to Western supporters who sympathize with Russia's politics. Understood as *lumen ex oriente*, it is perceived as a defender of traditional Christian values, of the family and of a healthy moral marriage between a man and a woman, in front of the modern views of the man promoted by the institutions of the European Union.

#### NOTES:

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## THE CHARACTER OF INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN ISR STRUCTURES FOR LAND UNITS AND THOSE OF AIR AND NAVAL UNITS

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Connecting ISR structures from Land Units with ISR structures of Air and Naval units, represents a real challenge, for assuring the whole information cycle in a flexible, robust, and complex architecture in order to create a common known image and to assure support for the commander of the Joint Forces Group in taking the best decisions. The importance of achievement interconnection between ISR structures at all level of hierarchy and from all categories of forces is determined by unpredictability of operational environment, and the necessity of shortening response time during decisional process.

**Keywords:** intelligence; reconnaissance; surveillance; Land Forces; Air Forces; Naval Forces; Joint Forces Group.

The constantly changing operational environment, technological developments and unprecedented ISR means made us analyze the possibility of using ISR capabilities in a timely, prioritized manner, in an optimal ISR architecture, to obtain as much information as possible in support of operations, but also to avoid overcrowding with irrelevant, outdated or inaccurate information.

ISR collection capabilities can operate in all operational environments, and can be characterized as terrestrial, airborne, naval, space, cybernetic, environmental.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian language, interdependence means "the connection and mutual conditioning between processes, things, phenomena, etc."<sup>2</sup>. Currently, the effective cooperation of sensors of the Land Forces with the sensors of the Air Force and the Naval Forces, can determine the increase of efficiency of joint operations, by achieving a common objective, in a clearly determined space and period of time.

The execution of military operations in the land, air and naval confrontation environments allows "simultaneous interception of targets and achievement of the recognized common image"<sup>3</sup>.

The experience of the latest conflicts shows that the success of military operations is determined by the participation of at least two categories of forces. None of them can win alone. An eloquent example

of this is the Gulf War in which the Multinational Coalition was organized from structures belonging to all means of confrontation, constituted in a group of joined forces.

The synchronization of means of gathering information from all categories of forces and from all hierarchical levels is an important part of the ISR process. The data and information received from an ISR collection medium in the LF can be supplemented with products received from the other means of collection within the NF or AF.

Starting from the definition of ISR architecture that represents "the totality of organizations, processes, relationships and systems that connect the collection elements, databases, services, applications, analysis structures and beneficiaries in an operational environment"<sup>4</sup> we can understand that the interrelation and the inter-connectivity of all sensors in LF, NF and AF, is a subsystem of the entire architectural information system.

Moreover, we can say that the applicability of the principles of ISR architecture management (inter-connectivity, flexibility, compatibility, mission adaptation, centralized control)<sup>5</sup> is common to all ISR structures in the Land Forces, Naval Forces and Air Forces.

Unlike the specialized collection capabilities in Land Forces (HUMINT, OSINT, IMINT, GEOINT, ACINT, MASINT)<sup>6</sup>, in the Naval Forces we find OSINT, IMINT, SIGINT, RADINT, water location capabilities that include coastal and wide systems, capabilities on CBRN situation, research capabilities within the Marine Regiment and the Naval Group

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of Special Operations Forces<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, through the Joint Doctrine for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, we can complete the list with collection capabilities such as CYBERINT, TECHINT, EW, MPE<sup>8</sup>.

We can observe that, in accordance with the Romanian doctrine, there are some similar collection capabilities, which can determine a high degree of cooperation, but also different collection capabilities that can generate a complete volume of information and implicitly a "comprehensive" overview at meeting level.

From a doctrinal point of view<sup>9</sup>, collection systems can be arranged on the ground, on aerial/space platforms and on maritime platforms. Electronic and infrared surveillance, electronic optical and radar research and surveillance are common to all three collection systems in the Land, Air and Naval Forces.

Moreover, the collection systems arranged on the aerial platforms have hyper spectral and multi spectral imaging equipment as well as the detection of magnetic anomalies. On the other hand, collection systems arranged on naval platforms include acoustic detection means, such as ground collection systems. Human capabilities (HUMINT) capabilities are obviously specific to ISR structures in the Land Forces.

From the perspective of IMINT (Imagery Intelligence)<sup>10</sup> the platforms carrying sensors (image capture and analysis) are terrestrial, airborne and naval.

From a terrestrial point of view, we can talk about static platforms (lighthouses, towers or even higher gazebos), which are marked and visible to ensure area air management, but nevertheless have low visibility possibilities. We can also talk about mobile platforms, less known and called unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs), which can provide short-distance images; these are not expensive, but can be easily captured, or may be damaged during the mission.

On the other hand, the aerial platform<sup>11</sup> can be with or without human crew on board. Crewed platforms can fly at high altitudes, over long distances, with very good autonomy and can transmit photos, recordings and data in almost real time, but they have the disadvantages of the risk of losing crew members and are very expensive. Unmanned platforms have the advantage that

they do not take the risk of crew losses, they can transmit photos and recordings in almost real time, they can be used several times, they are operated from the ground, but they must be included in the air control system. Both aerial platforms depend on weather conditions.

The UAS control station can be installed on land, naval and air forces; it ensures the planning and execution of missions, implements the communications system, ensures the processing, exploitation and dissemination of information to beneficiaries<sup>12</sup>.

Naval platforms can provide images both from the marine environment and from coastal or port areas and these can complement the "recognized common picture". Naval platforms can be with human crew on board or without human crew on board. Naval platforms without human crew on board can be surface, semi-submersible, or underwater (autonomous or remotely controlled by an operator). The mobile aerial platforms may be launched from ships with human crew on board<sup>13</sup>.

The supervision of the operations area by sensors ensures the informational supremacy over the opponent as well as the possible adaptation of the operations to complex situations, of the mode of action, but especially of the imposition of one's own will<sup>14</sup>.

According to specialists in the field<sup>15</sup>, surveillance by observation of air, land and naval space is performed for the execution of the mutual exchange of data and information by identifying and reporting the main characteristics of land, air and naval means, as well as the modalities of action and of executed maneuvers.

Also, the landing places of the sea and air landing elements, used by the opponent of the CBRN means, are determined, the evaluation of anti-aircraft strikes is performed, as well as the observation and reporting of meteorological phenomena and climate changes in the area of operations.

The exchange of information between ISR structures of Land Forces and ISR structures of Air Force obviously contributes to the mutual support of the two categories of forces in the joint operation. However, for the efficiency of air support against the opponent and for the success of joint operations, a number of factors must be taken into account<sup>16</sup> such as weather conditions, terrain,



tactical rules of joint operation areas, difficulties encountered during ground transport, the existence of airports in the area of joint operations.

In order to carry out the air denial operation on some targets (usually fixed) from the depth of the adversary combat layout, an operation that requires deliberate planning, ISR structures from the Land Forces can infiltrate the adversary combat layout. After infiltration, they can provide vital information about the adversary such as command points, elements of logistics system, sectors, phase lines, as well as the effects of blows on the adversary (battle damage assessment).

The infiltration of ISR elements from Land Forces into the depths of the opponent's combat layout can be achieved both with the support of Naval Forces and with the support of Air Force. Infiltration with the support of the Naval Forces is carried out with the help of surface ships or by immersion, and infiltration with the help of the Air Force is carried out by parachuting or landing.

Both processes have advantages and disadvantages depending on many factors such as: operation type, adversary disposal, time and fighting area. Moreover, the ISR structures of Land Forces are obliged, in my opinion, to have specialized personnel such as paratroopers, divers and specialized personnel for the elementary navigation necessary for landing in both hostile and less hostile areas.

Within the ISR system of the Naval Forces, the processing, integration and dissemination to authorized beneficiaries of the "recognized unique naval image" is carried out through the Integrated Black Sea Research and Observation System (SCOMAR).<sup>17</sup> The system can ensure the transfer of information to all the hierarchical levels (strategic, operative and tactical) from the Naval Forces and, if necessary, to other categories of forces from the Romanian Army.

Through this system, situational awareness is achieved both from a naval and aerial point of view, as well as for avoiding strategic surprise and ensuring indices and early warning. The system ensures the exchange of information regarding the identification of partners/opponents, the discovery of surface ships and submarines, air targets but also the situation in the electromagnetic spectrum.

According to some military specialists<sup>18</sup>, radar, lidar and sonar represent sensors with "the highest

applicability in aerial surveillance and detection of moving bodies in terrestrial, maritime and aerial environments".

The ISR Structures of Land Forces may cooperate with the ISR Structures of Naval and Air Force in the field of open source information (OSINT). Open source information can be complementary to other collection disciplines, can confirm certain data, can significantly contribute to the joint preparation of operational environment information (JIPOE).

At a joint level, OSINT can provide information about the adversary capabilities, intentions, locations, characteristics of the environment from the social, political, economic, military and cultural point of view in which the operation takes place. Also, by monitoring all open sources, ISR structures specialized in OSINT can contribute to the identification of indices and the issuance of warnings about threats to the security environment. At the same time, they can contribute to the targeting process (identification and prioritization of targets), as well as to the evaluation of losses in operation and avoidance of collateral damage<sup>19</sup>.

In this sense, the speed of collection and transmission of information by ISR structures and especially the dissemination to the beneficiary is important. Coordination is accomplished through Intelligence Requirement Management and Collection Management (IRM&CM), so that information collected from open sources by ISR structures in the Land Forces can reach both the Air Force and the Navy in a timely manner and vice versa.

For the mutual connection of sensors in LF, AF and NF in terms of unclassified information, certain Internet networks can be used such as: *World Wide Web, Deep Web, Dark Web*.

On the *World Wide Web* the connection is made using a standard code called *HTML/Hyper-text Mark-up Language*. On the *Deep Web* the network content is not accessible through standard common search engines, includes private sites, involves subscribing and registering operators. The *Dark Web* is a component of Deep Web, it is intentionally hidden and only accessible through encrypted networks<sup>20</sup>.

Another means of interconnection could be a tactical secured data network, called Internet Protocol/IP. In NATO, it is called the NATO



General Communications System (NGCS) which consists of NATO systems and subsystems at all hierarchical levels. For securing the network and avoiding sharing to unauthorized persons, NGCS is accessorized with an encryption device to limit access to information, called a "boundary protection device"<sup>21</sup>.

A system used within NATO that proves its effectiveness today through theatre of operations, which can be used by ISR structures is "Blue Force Tracking". This assures the connection of all "blue forces" in an area of operations, is interoperable and can provide a complete picture of the disposition of its own and allied forces and contributes decisively to the avoidance of fratricide.

In the American doctrine<sup>22</sup> we find the concept of "Distributed Common Ground System" (Army/DCGS-A). The system provides decision makers with the ability to receive data and information from the field but also to send messages, tasks, information to all sensors in the area of operations. The system also meets the information requirements at all hierarchical levels.

In the future, it is necessary to adhere to a common data link management strategy within NATO (NATO Bi-Strategic Commanders Data) Link Management Strategy/Bi-SC DLMS). This is useful in order to improve automatic link management, to reduce duplication of information, to design a common message format, to standardize reporting<sup>23</sup>.

### Conclusions

The interconnection of ISR structures of Land Forces with the ISR structures of the Air and Naval Forces, can be essential in the information support of the Joint Forces Group and can contribute decisively to the success of any operation.

I believe that it is necessary to continue in this direction of research, because it has represented, represents and will represent a real challenge for the coming future. We have to admit that the interconnectivity to all sensors is difficult to realize. The topic is a reason for debate not only for the Romanian Army but also for other NATO member armies.

Working with information in a collaborative environment, with a high level of interconnection, with obeying two principles that have become classic, "the need to know" and "the need to

distribute", we can avoid the appearance of vital information that will be much delayed.

I believe that we need to train more together, experience more information exchange, and understand, as history has shown countless times, that a decision made today (even if is not the best) is much more valuable than a decision taken tomorrow but too late.

The experience can be gained by intensifying joint exercises between ISR structures belonging to all categories of forces in the Romanian Army, increase cooperation, interconnection and why not, even of mutual trust.

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## PROMPT PHYSICAL AVAILABILITY OF THE MILITARY – CONCEPTS, PRINCIPLES, COMPONENTS

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Endurance (the ability to sustain activity), strength (the ability to overcome endurance) and motor skills (the functional application of force and endurance to react operatively to stimuli in the form of effective movement) are essential features for the physical performance of the military and, on a larger scale, for their success in the military system. Prompt physical availability is the ability to meet the physical requirements of any service or combat situation, in order to fulfill the mission or continue the fight until victory is achieved. Looking ahead, the multi-field approach in military operations identified the need for the military to be constantly physically prepared so that they would be available to fight in extreme environments of dispute and difficulty. Both tactical and physical training will remain a key component of combat training, and military physical education specialists must find solutions to integrate physical training into tactical field training exercises.

**Keywords:** prompt physical availability; concepts of training; physical training; workout; military physical education.

The military physical education system creates for the military the daily opportunity to hone their motor skills and abilities necessary for the accomplishment of missions. The specific physical training is rooted in the principles of sports training and its general methodological requirements, designed to build an athletic military, including training activities that directly support the combat tasks of the entire spectrum of operations.

The general objective of the training program of prompt physical availability is to prepare soldiers who are physically able to perform their own tasks or missions, both during physical training and in real combat situations. To achieve this goal, physical activities in the training program must address the following aspects: the development of sufficient strength to perform the necessary tasks and adequate endurance to sustain activity over a long period of time, the development of adequate muscle tone, correcting and maintaining an optimal body weight and improving certain basic motor skills and utility-applications that are essential for the safety of personnel and for effective performance in combat.

Military leaders around the world have always recognized that the effectiveness of the military depends largely on their physical condition. Full-

spectrum operations (combat, stability and support or peacetime operations) place a special emphasis on the qualities, skills and motor skills of the military, components on which largely depends the final victory or even the lives of combatants. To march long distances with cargo (equipment and combat armament) equipped to travel a varied terrain and fight effectively on arrival in the battlefield, to lift and transport heavy objects, to drive high-speed military vehicles on rugged terrain, to storm enemy positions by sprinting and crawling long distances, to jump or climb certain obstacles, to dig trails, to fill sandbags or to remove residual materials, and to make a quick move several hours without a break – all these acts of war and many more require prompt physical availability from the military.

### General aspects of prompt physical availability to the military

"Physical training aims to satisfy the physical requirements of the armed struggle from the perspective of the military for the performance of duties or missions received"<sup>1</sup>. The physical training of the military has evolved over time based on interdisciplinary scientific approaches (military and civilian) in the field of physical education. This historic research as well as contemporary concepts influence the scheduling of physical activities in the army. Physical training programs must be designed to meet the training objectives of the military, the subunit/unit and, by extension, the army. Even if there are similarities with the physical

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training programs in civilian life, in the military system the specifics of the fight and the dangers of the profession require a different approach. This approach can be called *prompt physical availability* (DFP) and refers to the quality or condition of the military to be permanently physically trained, integrating old training concepts, such as:

- *Low intensity training* – is a program of cardiovascular exercises in which the military performs aerobic activity at a low to moderate intensity for a long and continuous period of time. Once the intensity is reached, the exercise can continue as long as the soldier can maintain his heart rate in a prescribed training area<sup>2</sup> (a level at which the heart is trained, but not exhausted), and his energy continues to be available;

- *Tempo training* – is a comfortable run, for a longer period of time (20-30 minutes), at a pace set for a certain distance or at a certain level of perceived effort for a certain time<sup>3</sup>. It is simply the level of effort at which the body is able to eliminate an amount of lactic acid (a byproduct of burning carbohydrates) equal to that produced. This means that the sensations of heavy legs or weak arms will no longer be installed. If this type of training is performed intermittently, then it will be similar to interval training;

- *High Intensity Interval Training* – is based on a fundamental principle: the alternative repetition of a short period of high intensity resistance training with a longer recovery period. It can be performed using traditional exercises that stimulate aerobic effort (running) or relying mainly on intensive use of muscles in various regions of the body (plyometric exercises). In addition to the fact that it contributes to improving the health of the military, interval training creates a superior state of well-being among those who perform it, who want to practice this type of training in the future;

- *Circuit training* – is a popular and very effective training method over time, an excellent way to improve cardiovascular capacity and muscular endurance. It will raise the heart rate and keep it high throughout the circuit due to short recovery periods, large muscles worked at the same time and a combination of exercise that requires the whole body. Circuit training is an excellent choice for the physical training of the military, especially if the training time is short, if they get bored quickly or if they do not like to train alone, things that make it ideal for group training in a limited space;

- *Cross training* – is a method of fitness that involves several different types of exercise, which will be rotated in different ways during the program of a week or during a training session. It does not have to be very intense because, in essence, it is about combining workouts that will support each other and require more muscle groups, improving agility and facilitating participation in a variety of recreational sports. Cross-training limits the stress that occurs on certain muscles, as different activities use the muscles in slightly different ways. In addition, Cross Training reduces boredom and keeps the military motivated;

- *Push-pull training* – generally refers to strength training sessions centred around muscle groups that perform similar actions, alternating between agonist and antagonist muscles. Thus: the "pull" training will train the muscles of the upper back, biceps and forearms, while the "push" training will train the muscles of the chest, triceps and shoulders. This training session should also include a training session for the lower limbs and abdomen, thus creating one of the most effective programs for increasing muscle mass;

- *"Upper-lower" training* – refers to strength training sessions in which the major muscle groups of the upper body are worked alternately, in separate sessions, then those of the lower part. This will allow you to perform workouts on successive days, as there is no overlap between the required muscles in two consecutive workouts. This type of training offers an opportunity for diversity, because the military is not limited to certain muscle groups for each training, but can choose from a wide range of exercises. Thus, they can perform completely different exercises in each workout, a variety that will help them stay involved and avoid boredom;

- *"agonist - antagonist" training (Superset)* – is a form of strength training in which two opposing muscle groups are worked, moving quickly from one exercise to another, without taking a break for rest between sets (at most one short rest for hydration). Supersets can be used as a way to do more exercise in a limited amount of time, because by not pausing, the muscles that have been required in a series of exercises will recover during the next set in which they are not involved. Supersets focus on endurance (as well as skill), as the lack of physical recovery between sets can be extremely challenging.



### Principles of prompt physical availability of the military

The DFP principles of the military are *accuracy, progression and integration*. These principles ensure that the military can accurately perform all the physical exercises, motor skills and abilities contained in the structure of a physical training program. They will progress physically and form their combat skills specific to each weapon/service and military specialty much faster. From a psychological point of view, the principles of DFP will develop the ability to work in a team, discipline, self-control, will support the automatic fulfillment of duties in difficult situations and will initiate an instinctive response to orders given by commanders.

*Accuracy* refers to the fact that precise movement depends on the structural and functional capabilities of the body, adequate mobility and suppleness, tolerance to bear extra weight, body composition and connection of the brain to muscles. All these motor patterns will allow the military to learn what the standard is and to perceive the difference between right and wrong techniques. The quality of the movement is as important as the high weight, the number of repetitions performed or the speed of execution and the formation of motor skills of the movements will develop through repeated executions and through the deliberate practice of physical activities.

Repetition, using mental images, can help refine precise movement patterns without exerting special physical effort. The principle of precision ensures the development of perception and awareness of body position in space ("the ability to feel, without visual participation, through deep sensitivity, movements passively imprinted on various body segments"<sup>4</sup>), to improve training parameters, evaluation results and performance in the field.

Progression refers to the proper dosage of physical effort, taking into account its fundamentals (volume, frequency, intensity and complexity) and the type of exercise needed to progressively stress the body, without causing the process called overtraining. Its purpose is to develop physical capacity to support the mastery of professional and combat-specific tasks. Pregnancy analysis includes the physiological requirements of the pregnancy and the potential performance problems

or injury hazards that the military may face<sup>5</sup>. The correct progression of the basic parameters in the development of the effort and the variety of exercises used will evolve from the initial phase, to the improvement phase. The training performed in the initial phase of physical training will create a basic physical condition, which the military will use to progress safely to higher levels of operational physical capacity. Therefore, it is important to remember that the ability to move will require a consistent review of the basics before and after each progress to a higher level.

The principle of integration focuses on the activities and physical exercises performed by the military to enable them to fight and achieve victory. The army prepares the military and its units to fight and win, using a specific list of combat skills needed by all soldiers (regardless of rank, weapon or military specialty). These are a collection of individual motor skills related to the ability of a soldier to shoot with all categories of weapons, to walk in various terrains, to survive in extreme conditions and dangerous locations, to communicate with other soldier partners, to provide first aid in case of need, etc. The motor skills needed in a fight are those group skills designed to teach a unit to react and survive in various tactical combat situations. Being regularly supported by military physical education specialists (by training), all commanders must ensure (by testing) that their soldiers can perform all these skills.

Soldiers who follow these principles will become more physically prepared, as this is not a recreational fitness recipe. This physical training aims to develop physical capacity to support all military specialties and combat-specific tasks. Once the military achieves a high level of physical training in the initial phase, they must continue to build this basic training, along with the physical development of the military in accordance with the essential requirements of the mission to be fulfilled.

This doctrine (consisting of the three principles of DFP) integrates physical training with non-physical training (areas that integrate with the fitness plan). The objectives of the training must take into account the ability of the military to perform physically and mentally demanding activities (in environments with extreme variations of heat, cold and humidity) at the same time as carrying



heavy personal protective equipment. The recovery program between training sessions must be trained, measured and scheduled, and military physical education specialists must manage all obstacles that arise in the way of achieving the objectives (over-training or stagnation of the level of performance). Consequently, military training sessions must take place at regular intervals, determined by the peak of the phase of adaptation of their body to the requests of the previous meeting<sup>6</sup>.

### Components of prompt physical availability of the military

The set of military physical education exercises used to get in good physical shape is usually divided and measured into parts. They have often been labelled as components that have evolved with advances in exercise science and technology. The military must train in all components of fitness in order to meet an infinite range of operational challenges and physiological requirements.

Structural requirements are physical and cognitive characteristics that underlie increased work capacity. They allow the increase of work capacity through the systematic participation in physical training sessions, which create: a healthy body composition (the ratio between fat and muscle mass), an optimal ratio between weight and height, a high bone density (strong bones), a flexibility good statics (which will also help improve balance and coordination), a fast reaction time and an improved perception of body position and movement. In short, the military needs these structural requirements to begin training and complete as many duties as possible. "The success of the forces engaged in the conflicts depends to a large extent on the value of the motor performance and the level of mental qualities of the personnel serving the armament, equipment and fighting technique"<sup>7</sup>.

The physical training system must be designed so that the military can progress through training (regular and gradual in intensity and complexity) that will develop to the maximum their *mental toughness*<sup>8</sup> and combat skills. Some may achieve higher individual levels of performance, inspiring others to want the same, but the maximum physiological functional capacity of the entire subunit (ease of performing physical tasks in daily life) is the aspect that must be met. It is primarily interested in a commander, not the outstanding performance of a single soldier.

When a soldier has to lift a weight of 50 kg and his maximum force is 150 kg (this refers to the largest load he can handle at a time<sup>9</sup>), this effort is relatively easy. His high level of muscle strength will allow him to use relatively less effort to complete the task, thus conserving his energy for the next effort. The same weight will be much heavier and the effort much more intense for someone whose maximum strength is 75 kg. The closer the weight of the material to be handled to the maximum force of a soldier, the greater the risk of injury. The leaders of the activities must differ and individualize the physical training program of the military in order to improve the absolute workload and to avoid the occurrence of injuries. Those who will understand and apply the concept of maximum strength by quantifying the physical training sessions starting from its value, will strictly individualize the trainings in accordance with the requirements of the mission to be performed.

The prompt physical availability of the military must include in particular the following components: *muscular strength, functional muscular hypertrophy, muscular endurance, aerobic endurance, anaerobic endurance and muscular power.*

*Muscular strength* is the amount of force that a muscle or group of muscles can generate through the tension they exert during muscle contractions. Examples of exercises and situations when muscular force is mainly used: hanging on the fixed bar with the arms flexed and the chin above the bar (minimum time of 20 seconds), pushing from lying with the dumbbell, kneeling with the dumbbell at the nape of the neck, straightening with the dumbbell or extracting a wounded soldier through a tower hatch. However, the most useful way to measure muscle strength is the 1RM test (a maximum repetition) which determines the maximum weight that a soldier can handle.

The high levels of force that are reached during missions can certainly be achieved without maneuvering maximum weights endangering the bodily integrity of the military. In fact, specialists must take into account the results obtained by the military in the 1RM test and set tasks for subordinates, so that they use about 80-90% of their values. In this sense, the formula for calculating the value of a maximum repetition can also be used:



$$1RM = (0.033 \times \text{number of repetitions performed} \\ \times \text{value of handled weight}) \\ + \text{Value of handled weight.}$$

Therefore, regular testing to determine the maximum value of muscle strength is important to monitor progress and to modify the physical training program according to individual needs. "The level of development of this quality, together with the resistance in particular, directly conditions their capacity for effort, an essential factor in the successful fulfillment of the entrusted missions and, at certain moments, in the very survival of the combatant or his comrades"<sup>10</sup>.

*Functional muscle hypertrophy* ("usable muscle pathway") is a complex process of increasing muscle size, which can be achieved through specific (hypertrophic) training in which sessions of developing muscle strength and muscular endurance are combined. The term functional refers to the fact that the military must train so that they can perform physical activities at the highest possible level, both in the military environment and in everyday life. To trigger muscle hypertrophy, the military should use moderate and heavy loads (between 65 - 85% of 1RM), a higher number of repetitions/training, short breaks between sets of exercises and a variety of speed of movement.

*Muscular endurance* is the ability of a muscle or muscle group to sustain an effort (to repeatedly perform contractions against a force) for a long period of time. It refers to the number of repetitions in a single exercise that a soldier can perform without having to stop for rest. The greater the muscular endurance, the greater the number of repetitions that the military can perform. Examples include: lifting and placing materials in a truck, loading a cannon with projectiles or performing calisthenics exercises at the fixed bar. In combination with aerobic and anaerobic endurance, muscular endurance is needed to withstand the transport of heavier and heavier loads, in varied terrain, over long distances and at higher speeds. The counter-time buoyancy test<sup>11</sup>, part of the half-yearly assessments in military physical education, is a test often used to measure the muscular endurance of the upper train.

*Aerobic endurance* is the ability to activate large muscle groups for a longer period of time

(over two minutes), depending on the functional state of the cardiovascular system (which provides oxygen and nutrients to the muscles). Although aerobic training is low intensity, a large volume without proper dosing (series, repetitions, weight, frequency) can cause overtraining. If the same rhythm is maintained, the large loads transported during aerobic activities tend to change the fitness component from aerobic to anaerobic. The military, regardless of their level of physical training, will begin to slow down when carrying heavy loads, which will significantly reduce the effect of aerobic training and increase the risk of injuries. Examples of aerobic efforts by the military: running in various terrain and fast long-distance travel, marches, patrols, etc.

*Anaerobic endurance* refers to the ability to sustain intense, short-term physical activity (about one minute). At this type of effort, the muscles with rapid contraction are the biggest contributors. The fuel for this type of intense exercise is derived mainly from energy sources that are already present in the body (such as the breakdown of glycogen into monosaccharide's, such as glucose). Anaerobic endurance is finite and is therefore associated with complete fatigue. The high level of anaerobic resistance is essential for the transport of heavy loads. Examples of anaerobic efforts made by the military: sprints, jumping over various obstacles, lifting weights, hand-to-hand combat with or without individual weapons, rapid movement carrying a heavy weight, etc. "Increasing physical and mental demands, specific to the modern battlefield, make endurance a particularly important factor by which the military can overcome the early onset of fatigue, both intellectually, sensory, emotional and physical"<sup>12</sup>.

*Muscular power* is the ability to move a weight (including body weight) as fast as possible (applying force over time). Muscle strength is the result of both strength and speed requirements imposed by performing an activity, which can be described as the rate of work per unit time. The duration of training for the development of muscle strength is measured in seconds (or fractions of a second) and is characterized by maximum effort. Specific training will include explosive strength exercises (4 - 6 repetitions/series) performed with difficulty or resistance and followed by long rest intervals. If practiced consistently in training, they

can improve the physical performance needed to carry out combat actions and reduce the risk of military injuries during activities involving explosive movements of force, speed and power with rapid acceleration. Examples of activities in which muscular power is used: throwing hand grenades at a distance, long jumps over obstacles, evacuating the wounded, pushing a vehicle stuck in the mud, etc.

### Conclusions

Things that the military focuses on tend to have a positive effect on their career trajectory. When the military learns to pay more attention to their health and fitness, the condition of the body will be better and their level of physical training will be higher. They are able to create new neural pathways and, implicitly, new habits that will change their ways of reacting, deciding and behaving.

In military structures where the choice of a healthy lifestyle is appreciated and encouraged, its members have a greater capacity for self-control needed to make the right choices. When the military learns to focus on positive events, they are more likely to overcome negative moments, which we all tend to see first. In order to successfully physically prepare a subunit, the military physical education specialist must have the ability to give three times more positive/appreciative feedback than negative/critical feedback.

The military has their own perspective on physical education, consisting of personal life history, lived emotional experiences and received education. Changing perspectives requires deliberate hard work, both on their part and on the part of commanders and specialists in the field of military physical education, to guide the training, teaching and mentoring of the physical training of the military. Focusing on DFP concepts, principles, and components can have a positive impact on the military's vision of the military organization.

I believe that the modern obsession with performing training sessions with a constantly high intensity and rapid development of excessive muscle mass in order to have a beautifully proportioned body is detrimental to health and normal life. There are many lessons learned from the experience of previous generations that we need to keep in mind, especially the true meaning of military physical education. The systematic performance of effective

physical activities for several years, avoiding the risk of injuries caused by physical overload, in order to improve the motor skills necessary for fighters (however complex they may be), should be the ultimate goal in creating a physical availability to the military.

### NOTES:

1 G.C. Ciapa, *Physical training of the Romanian Army soldiers in modern conflicts*, "Carol I" National Defence University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018, p. 56.

2 <https://www.romedic.ro/ritmul-cardiac-in-timpul-antr-enamentelor-fizice-0C34797>, accessed on 05.05.2021.

3 <https://www.andreirosu.org/2014/04/elucidarea-misterului-alergarii-in-tempo>, accessed on 06.05.2021.

4 <https://www.revistagalenus.ro/dictionar-medical/kinestezie>, accessed on 20.04.2021.

5 <https://muhaz.org/universitatea-din-bacu.html?page=7>, accessed on 21.04.2021.

6 <https://www.escalada.verticon.ro/antrenament/principii.htm>, accessed on 24.04.2021.

7 A.D. Pelmuș, *Development of the motor capacity of the military personnel*, Publishing House of the Technical-Editorial Center of the Army, Bucharest, 2021, p. 118.

8 It refers to any set of positive attributes that help a soldier cope with difficult situations.

9 "1RM" (one maximum repetition).

10 M.C. Istrate, "Strength – a driving quality with an essential impact in the military activity", *Bulletin of "Carol I" National Defence University* No. 3/2020, Bucharest, p. 210.

11 Female soldiers will perform floats with knee support (semi-floats).

12 A.D. Pelmuș, *op.cit.*, p. 69.

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## CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING BUILDING MOTOR SKILLS SPECIFIC TO MILITARY PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

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In its first part, the article addresses issues related to the concept, characteristics and typology of motor skills. Subsequently, some evaluations related to the mechanism of building motor skills are revealed and their stages highlighted, insisting on the methodical ones. Throughout the article, opinions are also expressed about the complexity of the motor skills training process applicable in the military system and their special importance in combat training.

**Keywords:** motor skills; military training; formation; consolidation; improvement; complexity.

The sphere of skills is not limited only to motor activity. Most of the skills we use on a daily basis include elements performed on the background of operations previously formed in school or family. In everyday human activities we encounter intellectual, sensory, work, artistic, sports skills etc.

Therefore, skills are ways of action, execution techniques in various activities that, consolidated and improved through multiple repetitions, become automated components of these activities. Military training is the process in which a lot of skills are needed, the motor ones occupying a special place.

Regarding motor skills, their problem is widely treated in the literature, being devoted to numerous studies. In order to elucidate the problem of motor skills, there are still difficulties due to their treatment from several points of view, nuanced and interpreted according to the authors' specialty, as follows: physiological, psychological, pedagogical, sports or physical education theory.

Motor skills are human motor actions, which occur and are formed throughout individual life, through conscious and systematic exercise. They are formed either as a result of human evolution or as a result of participation in organized training processes, as is military physical education. Unlike especially organized training processes (physical education, sports training, military training, etc.), in life practice can often acquire wrong motor skills as a mechanism of execution, which are subsequently difficult to remedy.

The formation of motor skills is a conditioned reflex activity, based on the repetition of the interaction between different excitations (kinesthetic, visual, auditory, etc.) transmitted to the cerebral cortex in the same order and with the same intensity. The reflexes thus acquired unify the components of the action, establishing a chain of multiple and complex connections between analyzers, sensitive and motor areas of the cortex, systematically organized by means of the second signaling system.

From the multitude of definitions of motor skills encountered in the literature, Whiting's approach seemed to me the most conclusive and complete: "... a series of complex and intentional motor actions, involving a chain of sensory, central and motor mechanisms that by the learning process has become organized and coordinated, so that they allow the achievement of objectives, with maximum security"<sup>1</sup>.

From this point of view but also from the considerations of most authors, it is found that motor skills are seen as behaviors aimed at achieving certain goals through minimal energy expenditure and can be acquired only after practice, which leads to increased perfection of the movements performed, their realization with ease and precision.

In the superior phase of acquiring motor skills, when we can speak of perfection (or "motor excellence", a term encountered in the field of physical education and sports), certain complex sensations are formed, which are expressively called "senses" (we can talk about the sense of the ball, the sense of the racket or paddle, the sense of water or snow, the sense of the bar, etc.)<sup>2</sup>.

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Therefore, motor skills are a process that includes both practice and other means of a complex psycho-pedagogical nature. Psychologist Mihai Epuran highlights the following main characteristics of motor skills: they are part of human voluntary conduct, gaining ease and accuracy based on voluntary effort; they are included in various "movement families", belonging to clearly defined motor behaviors; they are integrated into "movement systems" as simpler units; they act as systems that have corrective feedback, every time when in their execution inaccuracies intervene; they imply an increased capacity for fine differentiation of movements, based on sensory-perceptual information; even if they are executed in variable conditions, they have a relative stability, which determines their imposition in the motor behavior (it is important that the skills are formed correctly from the beginning, as the subsequent correction is very difficult); they cover all the particularities of the subjects who perform them, so that, at higher levels of learning and application, one can discuss "style"; their building process is conditioned by certain objective and subjective factors (skills, motivation, attitude, ambience and educational conditions, self-esteem capacity, etc.)<sup>3</sup>.

In the literature we find many criteria according to which the types or categories of motor skills are established. From the multitude of criteria, for this article we chose the following:

a) Depending on the level of automation:

- *basic motor skills*. They are fully automated, being made up of a chain of phasic movements, which are repeated in the same sequence (cyclic movements such as walking, running, swimming, cycling, etc.);

- *complex motor skills*. These are partially automated, consisting of basic skills and some non-automated or incompletely automated movements (skills in sports games and other branches or acyclic sports such as gymnastics, combat sports, jumping, throwing, etc.);

b) Depending on the finality of use:

- *basic and utilitarian-applied motor skills* – are used mainly in everyday life in human development, but also for the practice of sports / application tests (walking, running, jumping, throwing, catching, crawling, climbing, escalation, traction-pushing, transport weights / objects etc.);

- *motor skills specific to sports branches* (specific technical elements and procedures).

c) Depending on the level of participation of the nervous system in their formation and capitalization:

- *proper motor skills*, which are performed very often (dynamic stereotypes, such as elements and technical procedures specific to gymnastics, skating, platform jumping, etc.);

- *perceptual-motor skills*, in which the environment influences their formation and capitalization (specific skills of skiing, „oina”, baseball, shooting, etc.);

- *intelligent-motor skills*, in which the competing partners and opponents influence their formation and, especially, their capitalization (skills specific to sports games, combat sports, fencing, etc.)<sup>4</sup>.

In the military training process, the mentioned categories of motor skills are learned in the activity of physical education and sports, but the complexity of military actions involves the formation of a wide range of skills, such as: basic motor skills and utility-applications adapted to the battlefield (march, running in various terrain, throwing grenades, crawling with weapons and equipment, climbing various obstacles in the field, climbing steep slopes, transporting specific equipment and materials or injured people, jumping in length, depth, height, etc.); motor skills specific to military branches and specialties; perceptual-motor skills (firing with different types of weapons being a skill that must be acquired by all soldiers); intelligent-motor skills (we meet them, mainly, in the training process for close combat, with or without the weapons and equipment) etc.

Therefore, we can say that motor skills are the qualitative characteristics of learned motor acts and actions. The formation of motor skills (in some cases reformation or reconstruction) is the fundamental goal of physical education, sports training, physical therapy or other socio-professional fields, including, as we have seen, obviously military training.

The main physiological mechanisms and processes involved in the formation and consolidation of motor skills are the phenomena of development and strengthening of temporary connections, irradiation, concentration and induction of fundamental nervous processes (excitation and inhibition). Following the continuous organization and systematization of

nervous processes, a dynamic stereotype is formed. The leader's instructions and assessments during the exercises complete and clarify the sensations, perceptions and representations of the soldier, the knowledge and the image about the action, mobilize him and direct his effort to achieve the most accurate executions.

The building and consolidation of motor skills is done gradually, through numerous repetitions. The process of forming and perfecting the dynamic stereotype that underlies motor skills goes through several stages. The time required to develop this stereotype and each stage differs from individual to individual or from one motor action to another, depending on: the complexity of the movements that are part of the skill to be learned; previous motor experience of the performer; the level of development of the required motor qualities; the level of development of coordination capacity; the interest, the motivation of the participants in the respective action, which determines the concentration of attention, the conscious-active participation, the mobilization, all supported by the effort of will.

Regarding the stages of motor skills formation, the literature in the field presents their number and name differently, depending on the field that treats them, even if, analyzing them carefully, these all lead to the same conclusions. In this sense, I chose to briefly present, without describing them, the psychological and physiological stages of the formation of motor skills and, in more detail, the stages from a methodological point of view.

Thus, psychology presents four stages (phases) of the formation of motor skills, as follows: the initial stage, in which the performer orients himself and becomes familiar with the action; the stage of acquiring each element of the action; the stage of unifying the elements of the action acquired separately; the automation stage. From a physiological point of view, in the formation and consolidation of motor skills, we distinguish the following stages: that of unnecessary movements that are performed in a rude manner, without coordination; the stage of movements performed in accordance with the purpose of the action, but through excessive muscle contractions; the stage of actual acquisition, fixation and stabilization of motor skills<sup>5</sup>.

According to the methodology of physical education and sports, motor learning is achieved through the following stages with their main objectives:

- *the initiation stage ("primary learning")* laying the technical foundations for the execution of that movement. The main specific objectives of this stage are: the formation, through explanation and demonstration, of a representation on the skill to be learned; formation of a cursive rhythm of execution; disassembly of that skill, if possible and if necessary, into component elements that are practiced analytically separately; the prevention of typical execution errors or their correction. Predominant for this initial stage is the volume of physical effort;

- *the stage of consolidating the motor skill*, which has as main objectives the following: the completion of the technique of execution of the movement, in accordance with the optimal spatio-temporal characteristics; creating the premises for the execution of the skill in various conditions, by strengthening the temporal ties, as a result of the fact that it is practiced in relatively and predominantly constant/standardized conditions; correction, with priority, of possible individual execution errors. It is the phase of increasing the role of the intensity of the physical effort, of the control or self-control of the execution level;

- *the stage of improving the motor skill*. The main objectives in this stage are: to increase the number of variants of execution of the respective skill, by performing the specific technical procedures at a higher level; practicing it in conditions as varied as possible and similar to those encountered in real life, mainly in competitive sports activities; the inclusion of the respective skill in a series of other motor skills and the execution of the resulting combinations with ease, fluency, precision and efficiency. The specificity of this stage is given by the complexity of the physical effort, which intervenes with a substantial contribution to the achievement of the proposed finalities<sup>6</sup>.

Within the process of forming motor skills, especially those with military specifics, transfer phenomena are identified, the previously acquired skills influencing favorably or unfavorably the elaboration of new ones. The favorable or positive influence is called transfer, and the unfavorable or braking influence is called interference (negative transfer).



The transfer occurs when there are common or similar elements between the skills previously formed and those being acquired. The transfer cannot be limited to the simple mechanical association between the identical elements of the old and new skills, but must be the result of a process of analysis and synthesis, of conscious generalization of the motor experience. In order to favor this process, the military must be helped by explanations, as precisely as possible, able to highlight the similarities and differences, to outline exactly the structure, nature and characteristics of the elements that make up the new action.

With regard to the negative transfer, the "loan" overlaps, replacing a new non-acquired element with a known element with another motor structure. In this case, the process of developing the new skill is difficult, slowed down. Negative transfer or interference may also occur from a new, consolidating asset to an old one that has not been sufficiently fixed.

Given that we are dealing with the absence of physical exercises or their repetition at long intervals, there is certainly a weakening of motor skills, a loss of accuracy and ease in performing component movements. This phenomenon is due to the inhibition that acts in the sense of extinguishing the temporary connections, the motor skills being conditioned reflexes with a lower degree of stability.

Regarding the skills formed against the background of defence reflexes, which abound in the military environment (skiing, swimming, combat sports, etc.), cases of forgetfulness or complete loss are very rare, even impossible. This aspect is explained in terms of the fact that the second signalling system (the basis for the building of verbal and logical thinking about the world around, the imagination in human memory) has the opportunity to update temporary connections in the absence of practical executions. Although the character of automation is lost, under the control and guidance of consciousness, the movements can be performed with relative ease and precision.

As we mentioned, in the military environment, basic motor skills such as walking, running, jumping, throwing, weightlifting, climbing, etc. are transformed into specific utilitarian-applicative skills, as follows: crossing the different paths with obstacles; lifting and transporting weights (materials and equipment); close combat; crossing

watercourses with military equipment and weapons; crossing mountain slopes, winter or summer, with and without skis and other specific equipment, etc.

In this manner, combat training sets its actions on the results obtained from the instructional process of military physical education and sports, and this activity, in turn, studies the structures of all training actions, the nature and duration of efforts to be made, the environment and place of missions in which the military is involved.

In conclusion, motor skills, aptitudes and knowledge are acquired following an extensive training process oriented and scientifically conducted to achieve the proposed objectives. The development of a vast baggage of motor skills and mental abilities, in accordance with the requirements of modern military conflicts, is becoming increasingly important. The mental stress caused by the multitude of demanding factors specific to the operational environment, as well as the decrease in physical effort capacity cannot be removed, but their effects can certainly be reduced by forming skills necessary to perform the full range of missions in which the military is engaged. In other words, the success of the forces engaged in military conflicts depends to a large extent on the value of the motor performance and the level of mental qualities of the personnel serving the armament, equipment and combat technique. The aptitude-motor level represents the essential element of the operational value of the military structures in the composition of the army.

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## HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT WITH OR WITHOUT PORTABLE ARMAMENT – FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS FOR THE TRAINING OF THE MODERN MILITARY

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Despite technological advances, hand-to-hand combat with or without portable armament remains a necessity in the contemporary operating environment, especially given the ambiguity of urban warfare and the close and regular interaction of the military with various adversaries (combatants or non-combatants) a wide range of situations in which force is used. Being a commitment between two or more people, in a confrontation in which ammunition is not used; training the military on hand-to-hand combat seems an important component that the military must consider in the physical preparation of the military for future conflicts. Cultivating courage to increase self-confidence is one of the most important benefits that hand-to-hand combat training can have. In a tense situation, having trained fighting skills in this regard can mean the difference between opening fire and escalating conflict, on the one hand, and avoiding disputes through a self-control approach to the factors that cause pain and fear, on the other hand.

**Keywords:** hand-to-hand combat; portable weapons; technical procedures; specific training; physical training; military physical education.

Hand-to-hand combat consists of a physical confrontation, simultaneously between two or more soldiers, empty-handed or using portable weapons (without ammunition) or equipment such as: pistol/submachine gun, pistol, bayonet, shovel small infantry, etc. The training of motor skills in the military in this mixed form of martial arts must be one of the fundamental components of modern military training models. It is about the ability of a soldier to think about his next move, being aware of the conditions or environmental changes that have occurred and considering the procedure he could use against his opponent.

The military must be prepared to use different levels of force, given that the intensity of a conflict can only change in a few moments. Many military operations (such as peacekeeping missions or evacuation of non-combatant civilians or non-essential military personnel) will be carried out using intentionally fewer weapons and ammunition. In these situations, if an unexpected confrontation occurs, mastering hand-to-hand combat procedures with and without portable weapons can save the lives of the military, because the automation of these motor actions also helps to develop courage and

self-confidence. With the formation of these skills comes the understanding of controlled aggression and the ability to stay focused during a constraint. The training program to strengthen the skills of hand-to-hand combat with an opponent will also include a harder component of specific physical training, which is, at the same time, both physically exhausting and mentally demanding. The general objectives of these types of training must include, in addition to educating the entire basic or specific motor qualities specific to self-defence, and building personal courage, self-confidence, self-discipline and "body spirit"<sup>1</sup>.

The training of the military to fight hand-to-hand, with or without the portable armament provided, is carried out in order to form action skills specific to the situations that arise during the fighting, as well as during the performance of independent combat missions the firearm of the individual weapon cannot be used.

### **General aspects regarding the specific preparation for hand-to-hand combat with or without the portable armament provided**

A recent study found that the US military, which conducted missions to theaters of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan (between 2004 and 2008), reported (19%) that they had used a technical process at least once, of hand-to-hand combat, in

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a variety of circumstances and contexts (during the handling of prisoners, crowd control or access to the base of people at the checkpoint, etc.). This supports previous research that has shown that, despite technological advances, hand-to-hand combat has remained a persistent aspect of modern warfare.<sup>2</sup>

At the base of all self-defence techniques there are some essential elements, which any soldier must apply to defeat an opponent in hand-to-hand combat. Their progressive and systematic learning will instill in the military some fundamental aspects on which self-defence is based, such as:

- *calm attitude and mental balance* – during a fight a soldier must keep his ability to think lucidly and must not allow fear or anger to control his actions;

- *situational awareness* – things that often happen around the military that are involved in a hand-to-hand combat could have a direct impact on the end result of the fight. This principle refers to the efficient use of existing objects in the vicinity (so-called "weapons of opportunity"<sup>3</sup>) or to receiving possible helps from other soldiers joining the fight;

- *suppleness technique* – a soldier cannot rely on the assumption that he is bigger and stronger than his opponent. Therefore, he should never try to oppose the enemy by a direct attempt at force. The use of the opponent's force, by applying articulation techniques and dodges made by pivots, can be a way and a fighting strategy to overcome a superior force;

- *support base* – refers to the adoption of a stable body position, from which to move quickly in attack or defence (depending on the situation). In general, a military man must maintain the stability of his body by lowering his center of gravity and increasing his support base;

- *dominant position of the body* – refers to the positioning of the body of the fighting soldier in relation to his opponent. When fighting, before applying any technique to take the opponent out of battle, a vital principle is to gain and maintain control over the enemy by maintaining a dominant body position (especially in ground combat);

- *optimal combat distance* – each technical procedure has a distance from the opponent from which it must be initiated in order to have the highest efficiency, taking into account the time

required to cross this space, the angle and pace of the attack<sup>4</sup>. To control the fight, the fighting soldier must control the distance between himself and the opponent;

- *physical balance* – refers to the ability of the military to maintain balance and remain in a stable upright position;

- *joint techniques* – a military fighter must use his body parts to create an advantage, using techniques aimed at blocking or twisting the opponent's limbs at the joints. Using joint levers, a soldier can reach a dominant position over an enemy with a much heavier body weight.

A specific training program for hand-to-hand combat with or without portable armament should be especially designed to train as many soldiers as possible, to become effective fighters, in the shortest possible time and in the safest way possible. In this regard, several general safety measures and precautions must be taken:

- technical combat procedures should be learned and strengthened in a certain order, gradually assimilated from simple to complex, and those considered more dangerous (as well as combinations) should be trained after the military has become familiar with the dynamics of general techniques. This will result in fewer serious injuries caused by more dynamic movements;

- the training of the military must always be carried out under the proper supervision of a qualified instructor, as the technical procedures involved have a potential danger;

- most workouts should be performed on a soft combat surface (such as a grassy or sandy area), thus reducing stress on the joints of the lower limbs (such as the ankles and knees);

- strangulation (suffocation by choke) is the best way to end a fight and the most effective way to immobilize an opponent in just a few seconds. These procedures are safe enough to apply to training just like on the battlefield;

- joint dislocations – to get an enemy out of battle, attacks must be directed against his larger joints (such as the elbow or shoulder). These joints are very painful long before their injury occurs, which allows the military to train by practicing technical procedures in conditions very close to the real ones, without a significant risk of injury. Exceptions are attacks on the wrist (which is very easily injured) and on the knee (twisting it becomes



painful when it may be too late). Therefore, these attacks should be learned very carefully and should not be allowed in sports competitions, but rather used only in a real confrontation with an enemy;

- blows are those powerful and effective attacks carried out on the enemy, with part of the body or with the portable armament provided, in order to destroy him and capture his weapon. These are an important part of an overall fighting strategy and can be very effective in a confrontation, as it often puts the opponent in an unfavorable situation. During training, blows can be practiced using various protective equipment (helmets, bustiers, shins, vests, dental / genital protections, etc.) to ensure the prevention of serious injuries. Military training should continuously focus on situations that may arise in a real battle.

Vocational training is the key to success in training the military to fight hand-to-hand with or without portable weapons. Military physical education instructors / teachers must be physically trained and extremely skilled in demonstrating and putting into practice the technical elements. Confidence, enthusiasm and assessment of technical skills are essential to succeed in teaching hand-to-hand combat techniques. The military instructor's assistants (sports or military instructors designated by him to assist him in the instructive-educational process) must also be properly trained to participate in the supervision and demonstration of technical procedures. Given these aspects, the selection of sports instructors is a first step in establishing an effective training program.

In order to perfect the different hand-to-hand techniques, it is necessary to make an uninterrupted effort, to reach the instinctive application of the movements and to teach others how to execute them safely. The following responsibilities of military physical education instructors/teachers are the core of the planning and execution of training for the formation of hand-to-hand combat skills with or without portable armament<sup>5</sup>:

- achieve maximum efficiency with minimal effort, working continuously to reduce unnecessary explanations, movements and activities. Training must be simplified without compromising its content, efficiency or safety;

- to increase the level of sportsmanship by developing mobility and flexibility, as well as by controlling and managing stress;

- reinforce the details of each technique and provide constructive feedback (justified and anchored in a certain context), using occasional humor to motivate the military, but avoiding denigrating or offending them;

- to ensure that the materials used for training are present in sufficient quantities for all military personnel, that the training areas are well maintained and that there are no dangers of injury;

- prepare theoretically and practically before all training sessions, conducting training sessions of at least four hours per week, in order to maintain a high level of qualification;

- to train a competent sports instructor among the military (for each platoon level subunit) and to encourage their training, even outside of working hours;

- to improve the performance of the military, providing clear directions of work;

- to require all military personnel to observe strict discipline.

The safety of the military must be the main concern of the military physical education instructor / teacher and his / her assistants. In this regard, the best safety measures are constant checking and surveillance. In order to prevent injury to the military, the military physical education instructor / teacher should consider and process the following safety measures for all military personnel before conducting specific hand-to-hand combat training with or without portable armament, as follows:

- all practical training sessions must be closely and constantly monitored; so never leave a group unattended;

- systematically acquaint the military with each procedure through a complete explanation and demonstration before they attempt the movements;

- do not allow the military to exceed their duties or violate the instructions received;

- during the stages of learning or improving certain combinations of technical procedures, the training partner must not resist, in order to allow their correct assimilation by the practitioner;

- ensuring an adequate space between the military during all practical works (at least 9 meters<sup>2</sup> is recommended for each pair of military);

- checking the soldiers for emptying their pockets, removing all jewelry and personal identification<sup>6</sup>, before training begins;



- blows to vital points (such as: head, neck or groin area) should only be simulated, not executed. The military may use light blows on other vulnerable areas (such as the abdominal area), but must be careful at all times during the execution;

- the military must know how the physical touches are performed and what are the verbal signals to indicate to the partner when to stop performing certain technical combat procedures (strangulation, dislocation, fixation, etc.);

- the military must perform the warm-up program and stretching exercises at the beginning of the practical sessions;

- learning and practicing falls will be done before making the designs or reaping;

- in order to avoid injuries, the soldier to be disarmed must not keep his finger inside the trigger guard;

- when practicing the procedures for disarming the opponent who attacks with the bayonet, the military must keep it in its holster (whether or not it is mounted on the weapon) or use rubber bayonets;

- the surface where the workouts are carried out must have a safety buffer zone, of at least 3 meters from the surrounding walls or objects, in particular for workouts involving throwing or fighting on the ground. It must be inspected for any foreign objects that may cause injury;

- putting and removing the bayonet is performed only at the command of the activity leader;

- weapons and materials should be placed on the ground when the military is given explanations or demonstrations;

- the training area should be a flat surface that does not become slippery when wet;

- left-handed soldiers should be put to work with each other to prevent injuries when certain complex movements are performed;

- when the weather is bad, gloves should be worn in combat training attire.

An advantage of specific hand-to-hand combat training with or without the portable armament provided is that they can be performed almost anywhere, with little preparation of the training area. A flat, grassy field, in the open air, without obstacles on it, is suitable for these training sessions. The instructors will use as working groups the pairs of two soldiers, established according to their height and weight, who will be positioned face to

face and who will keep a minimum distance of 3 meters from the other groups.

The bayonet assault procedures offer the commander a unique training opportunity, allowing the military to put into practice the motor skills of handling the portable armament in the conditions of a simulated fight. To increase realism, it is recommended to create a fighting atmosphere by using pyrotechnic effects and by simulating the real sounds of war. The training objectives of bayonet assault procedures include:

- consolidation / improvement of hand-to-hand combat skills with or without portable armament;

- developing the capacity to act in complex conditions of effort with the application of procedures and counter-procedures specific to attack and self-defence;

- increasing the level of physical training of the military as a result of the aggressive execution of technical procedures;

- developing strength, speed, coordination and accuracy;

- carrying out realistic physical confrontations, in conditions similar to those encountered on a battlefield, using the portable weapons provided;

- the development of the will and the increase of the psychic resistance to the military, necessary aspects in a hand-to-hand combat;

- providing opportunities for subunit commanders to develop their own command, command and control system.

Before starting training, the military must be prepared for the physical demand that will follow. In this sense, the execution of a warm-up program will gradually increase the heart rate and internal body temperature, and stretching will prepare the ligaments and tendons for training, thus reducing the chances of injury. After this initial warm-up, the simulation of movements in the technical procedures of hand-to-hand combat can be used to continue and diversify the warm-up. This allows the maximum use of training time, combining part of the warm-up with building muscle memory and perfecting basic techniques.

A well-executed demonstration of hand-to-hand combat techniques by a professional teacher / instructor in the field is crucial for the military to succeed in learning, and unconvincingly presented movements can immediately destroy the credibility of the training. In this sense, in order to be effective,



taking into account the size of the subunit to be trained, "the demonstration must be performed at the model level either by the specialist (also called direct demonstration<sup>7</sup>) or by another soldier from the training group, whose technical training allows it to do so (also called mediated demonstration<sup>8</sup>)".<sup>9</sup>

In order to show and explain a certain process, military physical education instructors / teachers must use a sequential demonstration, dividing the technical execution into several steps, so that the military can clearly see how the movement is performed from beginning to end. Sequential execution gives the military a way to observe the mechanics of each technical process. This teaching method allows the instructor to explain in detail what the sequence of movements is, while the instructor's assistants can move freely on the spot among the practicing military, intervening (if necessary) to correct execution errors.

When the instructor becomes confident that the soldiers who are being trained have become adept at sequentially performing a technical procedure, he must proceed to complete it. Gradually increasing the speed of execution to that used in combat (which does not always mean very fast), the military will notice how effective each technical procedure is. This will produce a sense of security that will allow them to develop a clear mental image of the principles behind the technique and give them confidence in their ability to apply technical procedures during a real confrontation.

Training pillows and personal protective equipment (helmet, waistcoat, shin guards, etc.) are recommended for use in training, as they protect training partners, even when the blows are performed with maximum force. Although blows are a very important part of a hand-to-hand fight, they are not the most effective way to end a fight. In training, instructors should encourage the aggressive spirit of the military so that they feel the effectiveness of hitting techniques and develop their hitting strength.

During hand-to-hand training, the leaders of the activity must maintain control throughout it. It is very easy for an unruly soldier to go beyond the regulatory limits imposed, especially when he becomes frustrated by his poor training. Therefore, it is recommended that he knows what is expected of him and what the repercussions are for committing inappropriate actions. In this sense,

the most important control measure that a business leader can have after starting the training program is a means to stop the action (this can be a simple whistle, whose audible signals must be clear and easy to be heard by all the military).

### **Basic hand-to-hand combat techniques with and without portable weapons**

Basic hand-to-hand combat techniques with and without portable armament can be classified into the following five broad categories: *ground combat, grounding, striking, weapon handling, and dominant position control.*

The basic techniques of ground fighting are built on a fundamental understanding of the dominant body position, which should be the main goal of most specific training, before moving on to the more difficult techniques of sitting. On the ground it is the place where the technique can be most easily used, not taking into account too much the size and strength of the opponent.

Before applying any disarmament or killing technique, the soldier must first gain and maintain a dominant body position, which will allow him to defeat an opponent stronger than himself. To become a competent fighter, it is fundamental to always appreciate what this dominant position in combat is, because it depends on the many technical combat procedures existing in martial arts. If a decisive attack technique is performed from a dominant position and fails, the military can simply try again, and if it is performed from a position other than the dominant one and fails, this will usually mean defeat.

Dominant body positions will be learned / consolidated / perfected on the ground, in order and according to priority, these being encountered in the technical procedures of immobilization (fixing) and strangulation most used in martial arts. In order to better understand these procedures, at this stage they are mastered as well the ways out of an immobilization or strangulation and the movements that lead to the end of the fight (repeated blows in vital areas, dislocation of joints, etc.). After the military has advanced in acquiring the basic elements of ground combat, they will systematically teach other complex ground fighting techniques (possible combinations and chains with other known procedures), important in the training of competent fighters.



Before learning the techniques of bringing the opponent to the ground, the military must know some basic rules to annihilate the shock caused by body contact with the ground, to have a "smart fall" (the impact with the ground to be minimized). Each fall that is repeated (forward, backward, sideways - left/right) is an opportunity for the training partner to perfect various grounding procedures. These elements must always be "refreshed" before training, which is easily done by introducing them into the sequence of preparation of the body for effort.

In order to have control of a fight you have to control the distance between you and your opponent, this being much more dangerous when he is at a distance. Therefore, the goal in a confrontation is to avoid this interval, and when you train, the main goal should be to instill the courage to reduce this distance to take a convenient grip or to hit the opponent. Most ways of taking the ground involve making shots on the opponent, these being included in competitive fighting techniques in various styles of martial arts, but in a real fight, all of them know no bounds (throwing, harvesting, overturning, etc.). If you have difficulty gaining control over the enemy, a good technique is to push him back against a wall first.

In most cases, blows to the arm or foot are not an effective way to quickly end a fight (except for those applied to vulnerable points of the body). However, they are encountered in most hand-to-hand combat, and the military must know and master the optimal distance from the opponent ("refers to the approach required for the most effective use of a technique, executed at the correct angle of impact with target area")<sup>10</sup>. It is important to remember that, while you are in the opponent's range, you are prone to a counterattack on his part.

The key to developing effective hitting skills is to understand the optimal distance that is recommended to be taken from an opponent, knowing the effective techniques based on this distance and controlling the transition between various intervals. The technical procedures will be taught individually, even if they will almost never be used in this way. They must be approached as part of an ensemble (as part of a general combat strategy), taking into account that an effective hit is not something that can be taught / learned overnight.

Arm strokes (with the fist or elbow) must be performed in combinations to be effective and must be practiced to become automatic, especially in the stress of a fight. Particular attention should be paid to withdrawing the arm after each shot, always reaching a defensive position, as the opponent can counterattack at any time. During hand-to-hand combat, the simplest and most effective kicks are the low ones, as the military is usually burdened with boots and combat equipment. The degrees of joint mobility and muscle flexibility of the military are usually low during a hand-to-hand combat with an opponent, being subjected to additional high stress. Therefore, they need to rely on raw motor skills and strokes that do not require complicated movements or much prior training.

Effective handling of portable weapons can provide a significant advantage during a fight. For the military to be well trained in their use there must be connectivity between strengthening the technical procedures of armed and unarmed combat. As the military progresses in the training program, the portable handgun combat techniques must merge with the other technical elements of hand-to-hand combat learned, producing a fighter capable of performing a range of technical and tactical combinations.

In most combat situations, the individual weapons and hand grenades are the only weapons a soldier has at hand. In any case, in some scenarios, the military must fight the enemy in narrow areas (trenches), closed spaces (building rooms) or in places where they are present and non-combatants. In these situations, when you run out of ammunition or do not have time to reload the weapon, the bayonet can be the ideal weapon to capture the enemy. The military must immediately and instinctively use appropriate technical procedures, depending on the situation and the weapons at hand.

The principles used in skirmish combat with the portable armament provided (usually the submachine gun with bayonet-dagger mounted) are similar to the principles of knife fighting, using the same angles of attack and similar body movements. The principles of synchronization and distance remain paramount, the main difference being the greater distance provided by the length of the weapon. It is necessary for the soldier to fight hand-to-hand with the portable armament provided, using the biomechanics of his whole body (not



just the upper train) encountered in all technical procedures and to develop the mental attitude that he will survive the fight. He must constantly evaluate every moment of a fight to determine his options and advantages/disadvantages over his opponent.

Even if the equipment is always improved and the combat tactics is constantly revised, the firepower only will not always be enough to annihilate the enemy. He will often remain in his place of defence until he is determined to engage by force in a close, skirmish battle. The role of the military, especially in the final phase of the assault, remains relatively unchanged. Its mission is to get closer to the enemy's position and get him out of the fight, this being the ultimate goal of any individual training. The handling of portable weapons during hand-to-hand combat is one of the final means in the action taken in an assault to defeat an opponent.

The bayonet is a weapon available to any soldier, being silent and recommended for use during infiltration missions at night when silence must be maintained or when the situation does not allow loading or reloading the pistol (lack of ammunition or blocking the weapon). Despite the limitations, the bayonet has many other non-combat utilitarian uses (sounding mines, cutting vegetation or wires, etc.), and is a means of training to raise the morale of combatants and increase the aggressiveness of fighters.

To become a good fighter with portable weapons, a soldier must be in very good physical and mental shape. A well-designed physical training program will increase the military's chances of surviving a skirmish with an opponent. Improving mental alertness will increase the ability to quickly detect and repel an opponent's attack, no matter which direction it comes from. Traits such as aggression, accuracy, balance and speed are essential in both training and real fighting situations. They will develop the confidence, coordination, strength and resilience of the military, qualities that a fighter with portable weapons must have. Hand-to-hand combat techniques can undergo slight technical changes depending on the morph functional features of the human body, as long as they become more efficient.

The bayonet (held in the hand or mounted on a weapon) is an effective weapon if used aggressively;

any hesitation in its handling can mean death. The soldier must attack the opponent in a constant assault, until he is eliminated or disarmed and captured. At the same time, he must be careful to take advantage of any area of the opponent's body left uncovered. If there are no such areas, the military must create one using counterattack procedures, respecting the following principles:

- the attack must be made on the vulnerable points of the body (face, neck, chest, abdomen or groin area);

- both in training sessions and in a real fight, the soldier who uses a bayonet weapon must use an aggressive battle cry; it will instill a sense of confidence in one's own abilities and will intimidate the opponent;

- the ability to fight instinctively using a bayonet weapon is formed to capitalize on the agility and combat technique of the soldier (precisely learned movements should not be a stress factor during training).

Hand-to-hand combat with the portable armament provided is learned in the following sequence: attack (guard) and relaxation (rest) positions, movements (forward/backward step, forward / backward jump), turns (change of front), stabbings, blows, defences and disarmament; and as the procedures are mastered, they will be combined into complex exercises.<sup>11</sup>

In order to survive in battle, the military must be able to cope with any unforeseen situation. Their ability to use any nearby object to be transformed into a weapon, in a situation of life and death, is limited only by their ingenuity and inventiveness. The following materials that are accessible to most soldiers can become weapons for attack, counterattack or defence against an opponent: small infantry shovel, Kevlar helmet, radio antennas, pens / pencils, various ropes, sticks, stones, sand or liquids thrown in the eyes of the enemy, etc.

A soldier cannot rely on the fact that every physical confrontation with an opponent will start from a dominant position. Therefore, in order to survive, he must master the basic techniques of getting out of a deficient position, followed by taking control of his battle plan. When an unarmed soldier faces an opponent armed with a knife, he must be mentally prepared for the likelihood of being severely cut, which is lower if the fighter is well trained in defending against knife attacks.



Most hand-to-hand combat on the battlefield will involve more fighters, and whether there are more comrades or enemies or whether some parties are armed or not, the military should fight according to a well-established plan and general strategy. The fundamental truth of hand-to-hand combat is that the winner will always be the one whose comrades appear first with a weapon. Given the modern equipment that has emerged and the complicated tactical scenarios (and taking into account the two seconds available to make life and death decisions), the military must be permanently armed with practical and viable solutions.

The most common mistake when fighting and being part of a team is to get into a confrontation without having devised a tactical plan. Failure to do so will result in uncoordinated actions, and teamwork will often fail. Only through practice will the military be given the necessary confidence (in themselves and in their colleagues) and will the ability to think and act together be developed, under the conditions of stress during a hand-to-hand fight with opponents.

### Conclusions

In order to achieve their objectives, hand-to-hand combat training sessions with or without portable armament must be included in a complex training program. The proper choice and implementation of the mastered technical procedures must be instinctual, which can only be achieved by integrating hand-to-hand combat into a scenario. The process of developing the scenario is a difficult and demanding one, the military having to be aware of the fact that the war is hard, and the reality of training for war is just as harsh.

Training the military in the proper use of skirmish techniques involves detailed planning of training sessions by a military physical education specialist, as the risk of accidents must be mitigated by controlling both the scenario and the conduct of the exercise itself. When planning a scenario that includes hand-to-hand combat with or without the portable armament provided, several factors must be taken into account. A detailed and well-thought-out scenario will tell the military what type of technical procedures are most appropriate, depending on the mission to be performed. It must be explained to the military in detail (the events leading up to the scenario, as well as the immediate

tactical situation) so that the appropriate motor actions come naturally from them, respecting the rules of engagement that give the military a clear understanding of the appropriate actions.

Every military man should have theoretical knowledge and motor skills on technical hand-to-hand combat procedures with or without portable armament, as a situation can change in a split second. Skirmish combat is common in contemporary military operations, which justifies the priority in training these skills in the military. They will be used in a variety of tactical environments, providing an excellent example of the need for military adaptability in modern warfare.

### NOTES:

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## COMMON VALUES OF THE MILITARY ORGANIZATION AND OF THE FIELD OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT

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The military organization, due to its fundamental role in defending and maintaining the sovereignty and security of any state in the world, has undergone a natural evolutionary process. In this process man plays the main role. Thus, the continuous transformation to which the military organization was and is still subjected to, being permanently conditioned by the constantly changing threats and challenges, was achieved simultaneously with human evolution, under the impact of all discoveries and technologies developed and implemented by it. In this article, we will analyze two important areas of human activity, military organization and sports, focusing on finding common values for the two areas and generating relevant answers to the question: Is a sports team equivalent to a military structure?

**Keywords:** military organization; physical education and sports; common values; connections.

The fulfillment of the specific missions of the military organization is based on a unitary process, very complex training, in which all its component elements (theoretical, tactical, technical, psychological, etc.) have well-established roles, being closely linked and interdependent. The key element that makes the connection between all these components of the military training process is, of course, the human resource. Therefore, simultaneously with the structural, conceptual and methodological transformations to which the military organization is subjected, the main emphasis must be on the development of human resources, on finding viable solutions for the training and instruction of valuable fighters, capable of any sacrifice, with qualities, skills, abilities and practical skills needed to meet challenges of any kind. Thus, in order to fulfill the main mission of the military organization, "achieving supremacy and victory in any type of armed confrontation"<sup>1</sup>, we consider that the modernization and reform of the current military physical education system is one of the most viable and easily accessible solutions, taking into account the fact that military physical education is "a fundamental component of the instruction /

education process that systematically capitalizes on all forms of collective or individual activity, which takes place in order to train, develop and maintain motor capacity, contributing to improving physical and mental health of army personnel"<sup>2</sup>, and by practicing physical activities, man develops on all levels, their benefits being unanimously recognized both by specialists in the field and by the medical world.

### Historic aspects of the connection of military education with physical education and sport

There has always been an indissoluble link between the military organization and physical education, the two being institutions whose activities have been permanently intertwined and even confused. The interference between the military organization and the field of physical education and sports, a field that includes a wide range of systematic activities of physical training, physical education and sports competitions, goes down in the mists of time, to ancient times, especially in Greek civilization, which was very concerned with the cultivation of physical and moral beauty, virtues, followers of competitions, the cult of city heroes, heroes - winners of the Olympic Games or winners on the battlefields<sup>3</sup>.

The connection between the military organization and the field of physical education also results from the fact that, in the past, there

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were significant periods of time when all disputes were resolved by force, armed conflict, and the strength and physical endurance of fighters was decisive, tipping the balance of the final victory to one side or the other. Therefore, the military commanders were always interested in the training and physical condition of the soldiers they had available. Moreover, with a few exceptions, kings, emperors or rulers of different cities, state entities or even empires of those times had to prove that they were strong, that they completely mastered the technique of weapons, their attitude and qualities being the psychological factor that determined the armies to sometimes follow even to the ultimate sacrifice. They prove that, throughout history, throughout its development, physical education has had a military and political determination and thus, has been highlighted by a strong military character, integrating perfectly into the training process necessary for training and the conduct of the war.

Gradually, with the development of modern society, at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the transition was made from empirical exercises, not very organized, to complete physical education systems, organized on a scientific basis and on general pedagogical conceptions adapted to the political realities and social characteristics of the states of that period. Basically, by setting up specialized institutions in this field (*Gymnastics Society* in 1799, respectively *the Institute for Military Gymnastics* in 1804 in Copenhagen – Denmark, *the Royal Gymnastics Institute* in Stockholm – Sweden in 1813, *the Durdan Institute* in Paris in 1817, *the Amateur Athletic Club* from London – England in 1866) they signed the birth certificate of the modern system of physical education. The vast majority of those who, through their work and efforts, reformed this activity, came from the military organization or had a close connection with it (Spanish Colonel Don Francesco Amoros y Ondeano in France, Friedrich Ludwig Jahn in Germany – participant in the liberation war as a volunteer in the Prussian army, Franciscus Nachtgall in Denmark – professor and director of the *Institute for Military Gymnastics*, etc.). These illustrious promoters of physical education fully understood the fundamental role that good physical training plays in the development of societies and

nations as a whole, thus succeeding in introducing this discipline into curricula and thus contributing to the education of the younger generation which represents the future of any nation.

In our country, too, physical education developed with the contribution of career soldiers: General Dr. Carol Davila, officers Justin Mărginean and Virgil Bădulescu, supported by His Royal Highness Prince Carol and the military commanders of those times (General Grigore Crăiniceanu – Minister of War, General Constantin Herjeu – Chief of the General Staff, etc.). Of all those who militated and participated directly in the development of this activity, the founder of the modern system of physical education in our country, unanimously recognized, is General Virgil I. Bădulescu. He, in addition to the deeds of bravery he performed with mountain troops in the First World War (he founded and commanded the first battalion of mountain troops in the Romanian Army at the head of which, he won resounding victories in the battles of Cosna and Cireșoia<sup>4</sup>), dedicated his entire career and life to physical education.

The contribution he had to the development of this activity is impressive: he brought and implemented in the education system of our country one of the most complete physical education systems at that time, namely the Swedish model; participated directly, coordinated and led the establishment of the first bodies and institutions specialized in this field (*Military School of Fencing and Gymnastics* – 1913, *National Office of Physical Education* – 1922, *National Institute of Physical Education – the first university institution* – 1922, *Military Institute of Physical Education* – 1929); he was the initiator of the first project for what would become the first law of physical education in Romania, *the Law for physical education* – 1923 and later, he contributed to its improvement which was transformed in 1929, into *the Law of physical education*; effectively contributed to the development of the material base and the construction of the first facilities specific to this activity (the first stadium in Romania – the ONEF stadium, the ONEF training ground, the sports complex and the swimming pool in the Eforie resort, etc.); he wrote the first specialized instructions, manuals and regulations, edited the first physical education magazine "Izvor de energie" in 1921<sup>5</sup> and had a truly remarkable contribution to the development of scientific research in this field.



Thus, eloquent for the connection between his two passions, namely military organization and physical education, he said: "In all times and everywhere these two notions have been mistaken one for the other and could not be separated from each other without taking a step backwards or representing a danger"<sup>6</sup>.

In conclusion, the historic aspects presented in the first part of our study highlight the need and importance of physical education and sports and military education, the two areas having historical connections, intertwining and complementing each other, both helping to achieve educational goals and to obtaining beneficial results for the human being.

### **Is a sports team the equivalent of a military structure?**

After this period of beginnings, of searches and settlements, the physical education system followed its natural course, nowadays reaching a high level of development, the research and promotion of this field no longer being the exclusive prerogative of the military. However, the influence due to the military origin of physical education and the specific elements of this origin will not disappear, and the link between the military factor and the physical education system will last forever. In other words, and in the context of our research, between the military organization and the specific field of physical education and sports there are many similarities and common elements, starting with the organization of activities and reaching the common values that both promote.

Within the physical education class, which represents the "main organizational and functional unit of the instructive-educational process"<sup>7</sup>, the way of organizing and carrying out the activity kept the typical military character. Thus, the workings *in line in threes, in line in a row, in columns one by one*, etc., as well as *the positions, front movements and front and training exercises* with which the physical education lesson usually begins are largely the same as in military training. The same characteristics of the coat of arms wear part of the terminology and commands used by the teacher or instructor during the physical education class.

The organization of the activity in workshops is another common element, each workshop being coordinated by a person in charge (instructor). This

person in charge is well trained before starting the activity by the physical education teacher, respectively by the subunit commander in the case of the military organization, throughout the activity also bearing the responsibility for its development in good and safe conditions.

There is also a similarity between respecting the rules of employment in the case of military actions, rules provided in International Humanitarian Law and sports fair play, both promoting a fair relationship between combatants: respect for fundamental human rights, cultivating respect for oneself and opponents, compliance with laws, regulations and customs, as well as setting clear limits during the conduct of these activities. Moreover, in sports activities we find most of the elements characteristic of military art, military tactics, forms of action specific to conducting military operations such as attack, defence, counterattack, harassment, through which the military seeks to successfully complete combat missions and athletes achieve goals. performance and competitive ones.

A sports team is equivalent to a military structure. Thus, the choice of a good strategy by the commander (coach or manager in sports), its permanent adaptation according to the opponent's response, as well as the observance exactly by the military (players) of the tactical plan, are solid premises for victory. Moreover, both on the battlefield and in the sports arena, the fighters constantly aim to dominate their opponent, to knock him to the ground, to defeat him. The major difference is that unlike sports confrontations, at the end of which opponents stand up and shake hands and congratulate each other, in the case of military confrontations, things are not the same, many of the fallen no longer having a chance to get up.

The specific activities of this field, in addition to biological purposes, positively influence the psychological and social sphere, educate the character traits and will of individuals (courage, firmness, ambition, honesty, emulation, perseverance) and their social qualities (team spirit, commitment, solidarity, tolerance, camaraderie). All these qualities and traits of individuals enhance the specific values of the military organization, such as body spirit and cohesion, increase the morale and motivation of the military, essential elements for success in combat. In military structures where the degree of cohesion is high, the military fights



and coordinates much better, is trained to high standards, cooperates and coordinates very well, does not give up mentally so easily and endures stress for a long time<sup>8</sup>.

The fundamental role that the activities specific to the field of physical education and sports have within the military organization is underlined in the Concept of physical education and sports in the Romanian Army. Thus, "military physical education is the starting point of the entire process of preparation for combat, the pivot of the other components of training, which determines the performance of the military in carrying out combat missions and the efficiency of peacetime activities"<sup>9</sup>.

### Conclusions

Throughout history, military education and physical education and sport have evolved together, inextricably linked, as two intertwined areas, sometimes confused because both concepts had multiple similarities and promoted similar values;

Throughout its development, physical education has had military and political determinations, has been highlighted by a strong military character, integrating perfectly into the training process necessary for training, planning and conducting war;

It is unanimously acknowledged that the field of physical education and sport is one of the most important components of lifelong learning, with a special contribution to the training and education of people of all ages, in their growth, personal development and professional completion;

The activities of the field of physical education and sports contribute to the amplification and consolidation of the values of the military organization, as well as to the education and improvement of the physical and mental qualities of the military;

The military origin of physical education and the specific elements of this origin will not disappear, because the connection between the military system and the physical education system will last forever.

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