



GEOSTRATEGIC PULSE

Bilingual-monthly publication of political analysis

Motto: "Opinions are free, but not mandatory" I. L. Caragiale

The Failure of the Multinational Model

A country's strategy for G-Zero

Russian Federation Projects in the Crimean Peninsula Infrastructure

Iran-Israel, the New Frontline of the Middle East?

Digitals

Recommended Reading:

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons of the Twentieth Century

Geostrategic Pulse Board

(in alphabetical order)



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Geostrategic Pulse Board

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I. EDITORIAL

5 President Trump and the USA's position in the new world geopolitical order
- **Corneliu PIVARIU**



II. The Current Geostrategic World-wide Outlook

6 A country's strategy for G-Zero
- **Vasile PUȘCAȘ**

9 The failure of the multinational model
- *interview with dr. Jonathan EYAL - RUSI -London*

19 The United States was a standard bearer for so long...
- *interview with dr. Nicolas REDMAN - IISS -London*



25 Putin's Secret Services. How the Kremlin corralled the FSB
- **Andrei SOLDATOV**

28 Russian Federation Projects in the Crimean Peninsula Infrastructure – Geopolitical considerations and propaganda reasons
- **Adriean PÂRLOG**

33 Once again, the EU summit will ignore Europe's greatest threat

- **Giles MERRITT**

34 Between Donald Trump's "america first" and Ms Angela Merkel's united Europe

- **Dinu COSTESCU**

36 "Europe will be muslim, insha'allah" or our identity versus their identity

- **Dumitru CHICAN**

39 Retreating construct of the contemporary international relations

- **Amel OUCHENANE**

43 Defuse this explosive migration summit with a strategic EU study

- **Giles MERRITT**

III. The Main Factors of the Middle East Situation

46 CONSIDERATION

The Middle East - quo vadis?

- **Corneliu PIVARIU**

47 Africa 2018: a paradise of foreign military bases

- **Dinu COSTESCU**

51 Towards a conciliation between the arabs and the jews?

- **Dinu COSTESCU**

54 Iran – Israel: noua linie de front a Orientului Mijlociu?

- **Dumitru CHICAN**



IV. Economic Horizon

58 The second Trianon. Hungary and the stake of the Black Sea gas

- **Dan DUNGACIU**

63 The crude math of geopolitical risk. The price of oil isn't arrived at rationally

- **Geopolitical Futures**

V. The Secret Services of the 21st Century and Security Issues

73 About ISIS, IT and beyond

- **Paul SÂNDULESCU**

77 Digitals. Digital born killers? The history of an error

- **Vasile DÂNCU**

VI. Military Technology and Equipments, New Weapon Devices

85 More military robot systems (Russia)

- **Cornel VAIDA**

86 Some aspects on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

- **Cornel VAIDA**

VII. Leading Articles, Studies and New Analyses

87 On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons of the Twentieth Century, author **Timothy SNYDER**, presented by **Cornel VAIDA**



88 The management of risk in the context of security crises, coordinators **Mircea BOȘCOIANU** și **Dorel BADEA**, presented by **Cornel VAIDA**

Motto: "Opinions are free, but not mandatory"—I.L.Caragiale

EDITORIAL

President Trump and the USA's position in the new world geopolitical order



Corneliu PIVARIU

This middle of July, president Donald Trump paid an important visit to Europe starting with the NATO summit in Brussels, the meetings with Queen Elisabeth II and prime minister Theresa May, then in Helsinki with the Russian president Vladimir Putin.

A few valuable comments and analyses were published until these lines were sent to press, especially in what concern the summit between the American and Russian leaders as receiving some signals from behind the closed doors are more probably further expected.

The NATO summit in Brussels had, indeed, a special importance and the Brussels Summit Declaration is worth studying attentively yet the space of this article is not sufficient for such an endeavour. We took note of the resolve for continuing the improvement and the adaptation of the alliance with regard to the threats it is confronted with as well as for accepting new members when they are meeting the conditions pertaining to the accession. Georgia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukraine (in a distinct partnership with NATO) are among the countries that are taken into consideration. Concerns for developing the cooperation between NATO and the EU and the energy security are mentioned. The problem of complying with the threshold of 2% of the GDP for military expenditure was defused by president Trump who proposed a new level of 4%. It is certain that Washington is disgruntled, for good reason we would say, by the fact that many member states do not observe their own commitments assumed on the occasion of previous summits with regard to these expenditures.

From president Trump's stances it is clear he has little trust in the effectiveness of alliances yet he has a different position in what concern NATO and considers it an important vector of strength. This assessment is covered by the decisions the USA made during the last year with regard to its deployment in Europe.

The USA relations with Great Britain will further unfold within the known parameters with the satisfaction of Trump Administration about London's decision of leaving the European Union (for the matter, kidding...or not, France was urged to follow the same path). Certainly, we read these positions as being adopted through the prism of the pragmatic American businessman who sees in the EU more of a strong economic competitor than a partner with whom he should find a way of cooperating beneficial for both sides.

The summit in Helsinki between the presidents Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin generated a fusillade of criticism from the opponents of the American president on the other side of the Atlantic, unprecedented for such a meeting and positive judgements for president Putin from Moscow media.

Certainly, the discussions behind closed doors are known by limited circles of both sides and its results will come out in time and will be most likely amended during other meetings at the same level. The fact that the summit did take place is a positive one and naturally president Putin benefited most from it especially that in spite of all difficulties the Russian Federation is confronted with, Vladimir Putin by his personal performance succeeded in positioning it at the level of a "competitor" of the USA.

The issue of Russia's meddling in the presidential elections in the USA was dealt with too much to no avail for both sides and, as it was expected, the issue of bilateral economic cooperation will be the subject of a "bilateral working group to be set up at the highest level". It goes without saying that the great ones get along on the expense of the small ones.

The Trump-Putin meeting in Helsinki that ended without any document being signed does not represent a significant element in the evolution of the world geopolitical situation. A president Putin's smile during the first summit with Barack Obama in Moscow comes to my memory.

The Current Geostrategic World-wide Outlook



A country's strategy for G-Zero

Vasile PUȘCAȘ

A columnist for the biggest daily in the US capital has recently (11 May 2018) wrote that only God can save the world. Important concerns are also being

expressed by the political, economic, financial organizations and institutions on the planet. The main reason is the fact that the expectations of the post-Cold War period in terms of the transformation of the international system in order to reach a rational outcome and for the relations between all the global players to enter the stage of stable and predictable design have no longer been fulfilled for almost three decades after the proclamation of the end of the era of conflict bipolarity. Now it is said that the seriousness of the issues on the international agenda, as well as from the domestic agenda of many countries would originate in the conduct of the leader at the White House, but also in the rise of liberalism, populism, nationalism etc. Personally, I think it is a huge hypocrisy of the contemporary political leaders to show only reasons that are in fact consequences of some attitudes and actions. This is because we remember that Ian Bremmer has warned since the beginning of this decade that the international relations have already reached the stage of "each nation for itself", the aspects of interstate cooperation and decision being subsumed only based on short-term interest, the electoral interest and beyond, as marked by the top leaders of the major world powers. In the United States even President Obama has initiated a withdrawal of the country from the world affairs, so before the Trump Administration when it is being done downright in a merchant manner, as said by the politicians in Washington D.C. In Europe, President Sarkozy wanted to exceed the classic French pride regarding his personal merits in international politics, while Prime Minister David Cameron has tried to give a tight (individual and party) elec-

toral content to the European affairs and to his country's positioning on the international scene. We also mention here President Barroso of the European Commission who visibly subsumed the European interest to the corporate and personal interests.

It is easy to empirically find that we are still in a stage of transition to a new arrangement formula of the international system. And perhaps the duration of this period of transformation will be longer than a decade. The same Ian Bremmer referred to such a transitional period with the phrase "G-Zero" which means that the changes will occur without the input or leadership of any great power or any group of powers. In other words, we are exposed to a context which is still expected to create a structural change, but without knowing the direction, which is unclear even to the main decision-actors of the international system involved in this transformation. When writing about these views, Bremmer was still optimistic, hoping that a G+ would quickly replace the G-Zero, but today I think he would warn that we have entered a phase of a G-Sub-Zero. With leaders wanting opportunity, which have been calling themselves "pragmatic leaders", but which are merely utilitarian in reality, a confusion was created between leadership and management, the preference for short-term action, overheating individual abilities of decision makers, taking to irrational idiosyncrasies, all wrapped in a sensational and emotional communication facilitated by social media, creating momentary attitudes. So the question is: Is there no longer need for strategic thinking?

My answer is that a country, a serious company, even creative individuals are in great need for the development and implementation of appropriate strategies. We can be sure that when the international system will be reset, the ones to firstly cross the finish line will be those who are deliberately building their course, while the

losers will abandon or will be diverted from the road or they will incidentally and tiredly find open doors to the new world. Those who prefer passiveness and expectation, aspiring to survival on the short term instead of taking collaborative and constructive actions, separate from the system, for a medium and long term, can be convinced that they are part of the group of losers. Therefore, in order to meet the challenges of the current phase of development of the world and get on the podium of renewals, the need for change is to be understood and accepted. But not only that – states, companies, all the political, social and economic players will have to join this race, not by maintaining privileges, but by pursuing innovative institutional, organizational projects, better rules and competitive standards. Remember that Fukuyama has argued, since 2003-2004, that there was need for a reconstruction of nation-states, for the strengthening of their role in the international system.

Neither anarchy, nor the chaos in the international system should inhibit or censor the strategic thinking of states and companies. We can already see that Washington's decisions, which are pursuing exclusively American purposes, have boosted the appetite for internationalization and taking the initiative in the globalization process of some states aspiring to become global powers. Some leaders of the EU countries have understood that the organization must become more cohesive, coherent and effective, so as to be able to cope with the growing aspirations of their citizens and with the changes in the world. But, anchoring in the management of multiple interdependencies, interconnectivity, technology and an increased speed of change requires a constant strategy of the international market players and especially of the states pursuing these goals. Advocating for such a strategic approach to the portrayed realities, including for the existence of a country's strategy, we want to push participation in the above mentioned process of change, calling for a reasonable attitude, constructive, collaborative and peaceful instead of a chaotic, random attitude, possibly generating conflicts.

The dynamics of the current socio-economic processes along with the complex global interde-

pendence and unpredictable international system induce a permanent sense of crisis to states and market operators. Which is why public and private managers are mainly focused on the current situation, they are absorbed by analyses and cost-benefit strategies. In most cases, political leaders or government policy makers do the same. It is particularly the case of those who do not perceive the crisis as an opportunity, but only as a threat, so that they are dominated by defensiveness and overlook prospective analyses. In such situations, it is recommended to pursue both adaptive strategies and strategies of realignment to some possible paths of evolution. This presupposes the existence of a functional perspective on the content and process of change. The history of the instability stages indicates that fear and uncertainty to the possible foreign impulses of change can occur, as well as concern that short-term operations could lead to unintended effects or even consequences that would affect positive development on the medium and long term. Therefore, it is necessary to have a strategy of change that would be continuously monitored and improved along the development of events, according to the methodology of the "alive strategy". The effort to realign creates strategic implications that the leaders and managers must take into account.

Both adaptation and realignment involve an effort to enhance and strengthen the potential to act on the market or, in the case of countries, to provide internal support and mobilization to face regional and international challenges. Such actions are often accompanied by the search and development of alliances and partnerships. There may frequently occur the need to enter ad-hoc coalitions. Or, in such circumstances, the "alive strategy" proves to be very successful, standing at the basis of the entire process of realignment. In short, this kind of strategic approach involves the construction or existence of a concept on the positioning and action in an alliance/partnership, which would mean that the future can be imagined. At the same time, leaders and/or managers must have a realistic understanding of the differences in capabilities and distances that separate players. Based on the

present potential and on the predicted one, as well as on the perception of opportunities to network with other players/partners, a map of the changes that are going to happen in the organization and system/subsystem can be imagined, which allows leaders and/or managers to establish the necessary resources and commitments to be included in the process of change. And, of course, it makes it possible to draw up the catalog of actions that must be taken for an efficient achievement of objectives. Because such strategy processes do not follow some mechanical schemes, it is understandable that their originators and makers will have to consider the socio-human aspects involved. This means that those responsible for these strategies must redefine the role and responsibilities of departments and employees, prepare them to assume changes, create new criteria and standards to be assessed and, eventually, even implement changes at the organizational/institutional/state level etc.

David E. Apter claimed that being modern means seeing see life as alternatives, preferences and choices. For some people, however, moder-

nity means only keeping up with the current trends or even simply imitating the style that appears to be the most strident. As far as we are concerned, we believe modernization means both improving the selected conditions and carefully selecting the best mechanisms leading to the most beneficial choice. Including in times dominated by turmoil and uncertainty, a true leader does not give up looking for his country's or company's optimal development course on the medium and long term, as he is responsible for its fate in front of the citizens or shareholders. Therefore, I think the losers of the G-Zero phase will be only those who refuse to see the reality of the complex process of changing the world or those who will not have a viable strategy to restructure or even rebuild new institutions, rules and standards to promote development and societal modernization.

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The failure of the multinational model

**Exclusive interview for Geostrategic Pulse
With dr. Jonathan Eyal – International Director RUSI**

The prevailing current international context

The events that took place on the American stage and internationally since the current US president took office were characterised directly and indirectly by a quite different mindset and political action as compared to what we were accustomed before with regard to the behaviour of the great political leaders of the democratic world. I am taking into account the controversial issues Donald Trump generated and had to manage within his White House staff as well as those with significant impact on the American society on the whole and on the American actual international foreign and security policy. Even if the analysts interpreted all that on the background of the unpredictable nature of his personality and of his reflexes typical to business environment, we find out in spite of this that such type of policymaking is already beginning to produce effects. Practically, it is easy to identify a wide and diversified range of consequences both in the USA and internationally so that we can say now that on the panoply of the American presidents a "Trump phenomenon" of global amplitude starts to take the lead.

On this introductory background, we would like to have, for the Geostrategic Pulse's readers, your opinions on the following questions:

Geostrategic Pulse (GP): It is possible that Donald Trump, by his still entirely unrevealed abilities, succeeds in winning his second term. **Question:** in such a case, could we really speak of a "Trump era" that, as of now, imposes major unpredictable shifts in what concern the essence and layout of a new architecture of the international geopolitics? What would be the main supporting pillars of that architecture which might be identified in his strategic pro-

jects?

Dr. Jonathan Eyal (J.E.): As long as Donald Trump has only a four-year mandate one may speak of Mr Trump as being a sort of a totally distinct phenomenon and not a part of a tendency or of a political trend in the United States. Yet if we reach a situation whereby Mr Trump wins the elections for another mandate, namely he is the President of the United State for a eight-year period, then I really think the shifts in the United States' world position will be massive. And they will be massive from certain points of view:

- first of all, a total abandon of the idea of coalitions and alliances as the United States' base system for the world security. Mr Trump is the first president of the United States, probably since 1920s, since Calvin Coolidge who simply does not believe in alliances. He sees the alliances as a burden for the United States' security and not a force multiplier as it is called, not a multiplication of the United States' strategic options. It is a radical different position from the American political class, at least after the WWII. And, from this point of view, if Mr Trump wins the second electoral campaign, then we have to acknowledge that the United States changed probably irrevocably. We will be witnessing not a country vanishing from the world stage, I think people are wrong, namely those who say that Mr Trump cancels in a way the United States' position on the world stage, not at all. On the contrary, Mr Trump will be more aggressive internationally, he will be much more clearer in imposing the United States' position on the issues of the international security. Nevertheless, he will



Mr Trump simply does not believe in alliances

be very selective, namely the idea that the United States is a main pillar of a security and international law order as it was conceived in 1945 will vanish. In this respect it seems to me that the next presidential elections in the United States will be of major importance.

G.P.: *How do you see the developments on a medium and long run of the current European and Euro-Atlantic alliances (EU and NATO) in the light of the ever increased adversity between Germany and the USA? We bear in mind the policy steadily promoted by Ms Angela Merkel of dismissing the USA's political influence in Europe, on the one hand, and, on the other, the open economic war of the USA vs. the EU. At the same time, the amplitude of Russia's destabilizing actions today are no longer an unknown for the developments of the two alliances.*

J.E.: Immediately after Great Britain voted to leave the European Union, there was a relief feeling at the level of the European Union, as the idea was that Great Britain was a hurdle for the European security structures and once Great Britain exits we can now proceed with edifying the necessary structures. Truth is that nothing happened and nothing will happen. There are certain very important questions to be answered to before one can seriously discuss of a purely European defense structure. Clearly, the number one problem is obvious (for me it is not obvious) that the governments which were not ready to contribute more to the common NATO will be all of a sudden extremely ready to spend more on a purely European structure. A second problem is that for a purely European structure to work it is clear that a differentiation among the small and big states be made. It is impossible for a 28-state structure to make unanimous decisions during a major crisis. If we look at the undercover struggle on the security structures in Europe, it is essential that one of the disputes is exactly over the share the big states will have in comparison with the small states in this European structure. And, the third issue is how will the vacuum existing in the defense structures will be filled if the United States vanishes as supreme

Russia is looking more towards the south

guarantor of the European security. This is so big and so difficult to compensate that we can probably speak of decades until we will succeed in filling it. For me, the danger in the coming years is not that an European structure will overshadow NATO, I don't think this is important, the main danger is that we could fall in a very dangerous zone a period of several years whereby the **guarantee of Art, 5 of the Washington Treaty of the North-Atlantic alliance** is not considered any longer as being applicable due to the doubts raised by the president of the United States while, at the same time, the European structures cannot match the necessities of the continent. And, if we think well, that would be the president Putin's greatest triumph as he would reach the discreditation of the North-Atlantic Alliance without having in front of him any serious structure of European security. So, my fear is not that NATO will collapse, but if NATO continues to exist without substance while at the same time an European security structure without substance will emerge on the stage. This seems to me the most dangerous and probably the most realistic scenario for the coming years.

G.P.: *How can the defense of the European member states' independence and sovereignty be achieved against a potential and declared threat of the current political leadership in the Kremlin ?*

J.E.: I think we should be:

- first of all, aware that the main problem we have is not the so-called Northern flank of the Alliance but the southern flank. We hear all the time discussions of the danger threatening the Baltic countries. I do understand very well that, the Baltic countries are small and vulnerable. So, I do not deny the fact they need defense structures and much more serious defense yet at the same time I have to mention that all the challenges to the European security that have taken place during the last years were on the Southern flank and not on the Northern flank of the alliance. Here we have the 2008 attack against Georgia, the 2014 invasion of Ukraine, the 2015 Russian military intervention

in Syria and all took place on the Southern structures of the North-Atlantic Alliance without mentioning even an open war or an overt confrontation between Turkey and Russia which took place also on the Southern flank of the alliance. So, first of all, if we want to create a structure to deter Russia, we have to keep in mind the geographical position. Russia is looking more towards the South currently than to the North;

- secondly, we should not be afraid of our shadow. The

danger is not a massive invasion of Russian tanks and troops into the heart of the European continent as the scenario went during the Cold War. The main issue is a Moscow's very concentrated and well organized policy of discrediting the North-Atlantic Alliance and the European Union. The conclusion drawn from the crisis in Ukraine is that the European Union is considered by Moscow as being the same type of enemy as NATO. Therefore, the main point is to maintain the joint security guarantee we have within the North-Atlantic Alliance that means that although we will have more disputes with Trump's Washington, more disputes with the United States, we have to do everything possible to avoid any response to this challenge and of continuing of having full confidence in the North-Atlantic Alliance. I do repeat, I can't see a purely European structure that may compensate in any way the military capacities the United States can offer and more than that, I think the transfer, if we reach this point, from a NATO defense structure to a purely European structure, will be the invitation for Moscow to try a new initiative for adventurism and to try to see how much he can get.

G.P.: *Can the European Project and the alliance with the United States be still saved from Russia's anti-Western media propaganda?*

J.E.: Yes, and I am much more optimistic here from several points of view. Firstly because in the end the structures or what Moscow offers as vision does not tempt our youth and if we think well and ask any youngster in Europe, in any country in Europe, where he would like to live,

where he would prefer to go, where he would prefer to study, very few of them would say they would go to Russia. Therefore we are not in the 1920s - 1930s when certain persons were wrongly believing that Moscow represents humanity's future. From this point of view, I do not think that what Mr Putin can offer is so attractive propagandistically. What they do, what they did since more than 100 years, what the Bolsheviks did from the very first day they took over power in Russia in 1917, namely

slanders, lies and propaganda with the main purpose of destroying the credibility of the European credibility. I think France in the electoral campaign of president Macron showed very clearly that there is the possibility of responding very energetically to these initiatives of undermining the electoral systems for instance and of having a very clear in media terms. I think that what is happening in Moldova, such as terminating the possibilities of some TV channels in Russian of continuing their propaganda on Moldova's territory does not seem to me extremely democratic yet it seems to me very justifiable having in mind the circumstances of this state. So I think in general we should fear less the so-called censorship, we have to have a clear position and yes, we have to invest, too, in the propaganda effort. I think that after the Cold War we are all running away from any propaganda effort, the radio and TV stations remained totally in the hands of the market forces and there is no political structure to think of these subjects. I think we should reanalyze this situation. Many of the greatest gains Russia and the Russian propaganda obtained were exactly because we let them seize the media system believing that everything can be left at the market hand. And I repeat there are many possibilities of responding and I think if we reach the stage of an ideas war we win as we won the Cold War because in the end what Mr Putin has to offer is not attractive to the majority of the Europeans.

P.G.: *If the American voters' reaction rejects the "Trump era" (a second term), could that trigger major shifts in in what concern the USA's political*

future on a medium and long run?

J.E.: I think it is possible, all depends as always on what the conclusions will be in the United States, why Mr Trump lost an attempt to win a new mandate. Namely if he loses because he was opposed by a leader who articulated a new United States' idea, who returns to a system of international alliances and to rigorously defend the international law, then it is possible that history remembers Mr Trump as being a four-year occurrence rather than being a new tendency in the United States. Yet if the result is that Mr Trump simply loses in front of an American president who more or less continues with the same ideas, then it is possible that the personalities change has not too much of a significance. Let us not forget that certain tendencies existed during the period of president Obama, the so-called great internationalist, so much admired by the center and the left circles in the world. It remains the reality that Mr Obama did not do anything for the conflict in Syria, and more than that he threatened to do something and then abandoned his threats, something few American presidents did before and then, when the conflict in Ukraine occurred, Mr Obama began by declaring what he will not do rather than saying what he will do in that conflict. For instance saying that he will not intervene militarily in any case, but what he will do positively. Therefore, there are certain isolationist tendencies in the United States for a longer period. Everything depends on who will replace president Trump. So, for the time being, the issue remains open, whether Trump's policy is a tendency for a longer period or it is merely an electoral nonsense.

G.P.: *The idea according to which the current international geopolitical kaleidoscope made that what the West won at the end of the Cold War it is losing now as a result of the internal discord and the rise of illiberal platforms is already taking hold among many analysts in the Western world. Moreover, the obvious rising to power in Eastern and Central Europe and the enhancement of more and more aggressive, illiberal and defiant groups/parties that reject the observance of European and Euro-Atlantic democratic norms,*

values and principles once considered non-negotiable may create even the premises of quitting the coordinates of the democratic system and the rule of law. Question: Could these aspects mark the permanent end of liberalism?

J.E.: I think that the liberal idea, as idea, is presently under siege not because the liberal traditions or the liberal opinions were discredited but more because we witness once more a seriously enough dispute on the system of values of our society, the fairplay feeling and the existing access to the common resources. More than 25 years passed since the fall of communism, a period of important economic growth which nevertheless raised new questions about the social order, about the existing social justice. And from this point of view, I think we are witnessing a general European crisis which is not linked only to certain parts. There is, at the same time, a beginning of a new Europe's division, with certain countries of Central and Eastern Europe showing a new attitude, maybe more authoritarian of the governance system, namely a general idea that a strong hand is important for governing a state. That is seen at Warsaw in Poland, and is seen in Hungary and there are certain elements in Romania, too, with certain xenophobic nuances and maybe anti-semitic which appear such as for instance the Soros campaign, as Soros became a sort of boo-boo for all this area. I think, nevertheless, that these are not tendencies that will become permanent, I think there are big differences among the positions of the right wing parties in Poland and the positions of the right wing parties in Hungary due to historical reasons. Poland's history is very different from Hungary's. I am worried of what it is going on in Hungary because the things that happen in Hungary are not happening in other states, a kind of total seizing of the electoral system by a party, a sort of total writing off of an active opposition, as the only serious opposition to Mr Orbán is an extreme right party, a more extremist one than his party. The traditional subjects which see the Hungarian nation as an eternal victim of history, the state which is continuously victimized, non-understood, and

Hungary is presently too small a country

unjustly treated by the neighbours are perpetuated. I do not think the history repeats itself exactly the same way for the simple reason that Hungary is presently too small a nation, although Mr Orban tries to recreate the old alliances with Austria or with Germany, yet we are not going back to the 1920s – 1930s and I think that the revisionism of the traditional style as it was conceived during the inter-war period cannot come back again. Yet there is a serious problem, namely the problem whether the governance system in the former communist countries will become one exactly similar to the governments of the Western countries or we assist here to the creation of a new political system totally different in the respective area. I think it is too early to draw conclusions, we see tendencies in both directions. Paradoxically, I am optimistic in Romania's case. I think there is a problem with all these states, which is a purely electoral problem: a massive migration towards the western countries took place in all these states, mainly young people and people of certain professions. The majority of these people does not have a real right to vote in their original country, for instance the Romanian citizens outside Romania can elect 5-6 deputies in the Chamber of Deputies only, a pittance for 3-4 or maybe even 5 million of Romanians in diaspora. Something manifest and very clear from the very beginning that banned a group of Romanians from the electoral system. The remaining people in Romania are destitute, older people, people with less financial possibilities representing now the majority of the electorate. The result is the creation of a dependent political system through which the ones who are elected are those who promise higher pensions or better social improvements than those who promise a more developed society, a society for the XXI century, a society with new economic initiatives. This outcome is visible in Hungary, in Poland and in Romania, therefore an electorate somewhat older and with less material possibilities than the traditional national average would be. And that has consequences, it is very good for center left parties or populist center right parties but it is not good for a healthy democracy in

the future.

Paradoxically, I am optimistic in Romania's case

P.G.: *We kindly ask you to comment the Islamic radicalism by relating the radical movements to the state of provence and to the relations with the political power and seen as a current of a national, regional or global ideological horizon.*

J.E.: I think there is a certain restraint especially in the western countries or an attempt of being politically correct of not mentioning the factor of Islamic radicalism for not creating a permanent danger. Yet the truth remains that the problems we have in Europe with the Islamic radicalism are at the end of the day problems of the failure of the multinational model. We never had in Europe a multinational structure, we had nations that developed separately. That is we had 3, 4, 5 representatives of nations in Great Britain that evolved separately, with very little in common. Therefore the multinational structures which were so well rated in the 1970s-1980s, the years with high immigration, created in fact the closed ghettos in France and various slums at the outskirts of the towns in England where minorities and emigrants only live although everybody speaks all the time about how multicultural the British society is. Nevertheless we must remember that the number of those who are adepts of violence is small, if we speak of percentage is less than 0.1% of all Muslims in Europe. What seems more problematic to me is the fact that many of them have social tendencies which are still far away from those of the general society. In a way Mr Orban in Hungary was right in a sense, namely that in a serious discussion about the European values and if these values are applicable to all citizens living on this continent, such a discussion is very necessary and it must be an open one and without taboos, a discussion whereby we have to be very clear and say that 100 years passed since struggling for the equality of women and should we accept in the XXIst century that women walk on the street wrapped like mummies and their eyes hidden, is that what we have struggled for? We struggled 100 years for an open educational system and oriented towards scientific progress and

ended up sending our children to religious schools where boys and girls are kept in separate seats? I think the French have a clearer explanation and Mr Macron speaks of obscurantism which seems to me a very clear explanation since obscurantism could be in all religions. And yes, obscurantism as an idea should be countered in my opinion in all European countries.

How big the terrorism problem is it is difficult to say. It is obviously a problem and I am sorry to say that more people die in road accidents than in terrorist attacks so we have to keep a certain proportion when analyzing what is going on. It is not true that Europe is completely ablaze and that every street you go may be blown up, it is true there is danger, it is true our life has been changed. All searchings taking place at every public place you go remind you how much our life has changed. All these are true. But it is also true that the chances a person in Europe be killed in a terrorist attack are much smaller than dying in a car accident. What seems to me a much bigger problem is the problem of immigration in the future and the possibility of keeping the European borders and here we are in a dangerous situation as nobody, no European leader was courageous enough to approach the problems of immigration as they bare. It is a problem that probably will linger on for another 100 years and it is a problem that in the end we will have to close the borders of the continent not because we are racists but precisely because to remain at the point whereby we can assimilate the ethnical groups we have on our territory.

P.G.: *How do you see the possible evolution and the perspectives of the evolution of the situation in Ukraine?*

J.E.: Personally I think that for the moment Mr Putin continues to believe he won, in the sense he controls the initiative, he may escalate this conflict and if his initiative fails he may de-escalate rapidly without paying a price. That is we did not reach the situation whereby we convince the Russian president that if he makes another manoeuvre in Ukraine he will have to pay an irreversible price. From this point of view, the

initiative of escalation in Ukraine remains in the Russians' hands in a way and, although everybody denies that resolutely, a new frozen conflict emerged, a frozen conflict including an important part of Eastern Ukraine which paralyzes Ukraine exactly as Putin wanted from the beginning. Putin's idea is that on a long run the West will simply get tired of a Ukraine unable to reform itself, unable to advance economically and will abandon this state and leave it to the Russian sphere of influence. Surely this is Putin's calculation on a long run. I think he is wrong as Crimea's annexation eliminated more than 2 millions Russian speaking voters of Ukraine. So, I don't see how from a purely mathematical point of view a chance of a pro-Russian president be elected in Kiev because two million citizens who would have voted a pro-Russian president are no longer there. In a way, Russia's aggression guaranteed a Ukraine that will be Russia's enemy for all eternity and that will not accept to stay in Russia's sphere of influence. The question is if this Ukraine will remain permanently a kind of buffer state between the West and Russia, a kind

A new frozen conflict emerged

of no man's land or if we will succeed, after a period of time, in incorporating it into the European security structures and economic prosperity. For the time being I do not have great hopes looking at the way the political class in Kiev acts and seeing that many times they are unable to accept to escape their historical patterns, for instance the relation with Moldova, the security cooperation with Moldova is almost completely missing and that allows Moscow to play a game in Transnistria and another game in Donbass for instance and to harass both states at the same time. While for instance the Transnistrian problem could have been easily solved through a close cooperation between Moldova and Ukraine during the past 25 years. It did not happen and did not happen as a result of the lack of vision of the men who ruled in Kiev and it is not happening now either. The problem of the serious injury in Ukraine's body is the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of Donbass, I do understand it, yet if they remain obsessed with this issue, if the parliament in Kiev spend all their time only discussing

how to recover these lost territories and do not think at all of economic reforms and all the other things that should be done, they do not do anything but playing into Russia's game. I am very pessimistic about future evolutions in Ukraine yet I am very optimistic about one thing, that no pro-Russian government will ever be in Kiev, but I am not optimistic at all about what the outcome of Ukraine's problem will be.

P.G.: *Speaking of the Middle East, we find out a dynamic concern of both the Arab community and the State of Israel for rethinking the security alliances and the political evaluations to the effect of a coming closer and normalization of the relations. The Arab monarchies in the Gulf and Israel are evoking, for backing this regional status-quo, the threat the offensive and expansionist policy the Iranian theocratic regime is promoting. What are, in your opinion, the chances and how close are they that, after 70 years of hostility and war in the Middle East a real, just and durable peace be instated, including between the Palestinians and the Israelis?*

J.E.: The Middle East changed during the last years especially since the so-called 2011 "Arab spring" – the so-called spring because it turned into a winter – yet new situations were created in the sense that there is a new alliance in the area. In a way, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is not the most important conflict at the moment, there are other more important conflicts, in principal the conflict between Iran and the Arab countries but also a conflict between the traditional countries, traditional monarchies and countries that are more radical from this point of view in the area. Mention should be made of two things: the first one is that the main question will be if we have a change of government in Iran allowing Iran to become a normal state in the area, a state that can cooperate with the neighbours, as it was during the Shah's time. We forget the fact that the Shah was not a friend of the Arab countries, there were rivalries and confrontations all the time during the respective period yet the rival-

ries were kept in a certain frame and the Shah knew very well when he should not cross the line, something we do not see now. The question for me is whether we will have a change of government, which is in my opinion possible in Iran. The domestic contradictions, the social disputes, the economic disputes taking place there, the economic crisis have a factor. I know people tell me all the time such a thing will never happen yet they are sometimes the same people who said communism will never fall in Europe and that lasted as long as the regime of ayatollahs in Iran if we analyze it from a time perspective. So, nothing is impossible from this point of view, it is possible a change of government happens. If not, the question is whether there will be a military direct conflict between the United States or a coalition of states led by the United States and Iran. I think that the chances are even, of 50%, there is a very real likelihood for a military conflict.

Saying these things I think it is a mistake on the part of the Israeli leaders to believe that a kind of de facto alliance between them and the Arab monarchies means that the Palestinian problem is solved and should be further ignored for a un-

limited period. I think they make a big mistake if they imagine they will reach such a situation. What happened is the fact that Israel is more and more defended by fences, by anti-missiles shield and is threatened from everywhere. So it is probably safer as a state than it ever was. Yet paradoxically the people, the population is less safe today from a personal point of view than it was much time before. I do not think one can live on a long term with neighbours attacking you with missiles and with troubles at the frontiers from all points of view, all the time, permanently. Israel makes a big mistake of not using the current situation for progressing in the issue of an arrangement with the Palestinians; there are nevertheless chances of having such an arrangement now. But I repeat, for the moment the main problem will be Iran and maybe the Russian position in the area. Mention should be made that Russia's reentering in the area is not a repetition

of the USSR position in the 1970s. Mr Putin was very skillful this time by not making an alliance of anti-western countries, he has good relations with Iran and Saudi Arabia, with Turkey and Israel. Therefore, with all the countries; it is a completely different position than the position the Soviet Union had in the 1960s-1970s and Mr Putin was very smart in playing these cards since more time and obtained a much more important position



for Russia in the Middle East. Proof is that in case of Syria, Russia is paradoxically a better interlocutor for Israel than the United States – presently, something very strange at first sight. So we see a much different Middle East, very different of what it was during the last 10 years, practically not as we did expect when the young people emerged on the streets in 2011 and we believed it is a kind of repetition of the 1989 miracle year in Europe.

P.G.: *During July 7th-12th, a new NATO summit will take place in Brussels where the president Donald Trump will attend. What will be in your opinion the results of this summit on the background of the White House's discontent concerning the non-allotment of 2% of GDP for defense by an important number of NATO states? In the same context, how do you see Great Britain's further contribution to the European defense after Brexit?*

J.E.: We should do everything for avoiding a dispute such as the one we had in Canada among the allied countries. That is it does not depend on us only, it depends on the president Trump, too. Yet I think it is indisputable that rich countries such as Norway for instance or Germany, with massive yearly fiscal surpluses do not pay their dues for the common European security. It is not about lack of money, it is about lack of will. So I am still optimistic in the sense that the president of the United States was let say rather

tough, let us say less conventional in the way he expressed his opinion yet the truth remains in the sense that countries such as Romania were awakened from their sleep by the American criticism and performed their duty. It is real that when president Trump took office there were four countries only in the alliance allotting 2% of GDP for defense and now 8 states, maybe 9 will reach that level, so double after one year in office of president Trump, something that seems to me worth of con-

sideration. Nevertheless, at the same time we should remember that in spite of all the criticism expressed by Mr Trump, up to now the American Pentagon has more troops in Europe today than it had during the Obama mandate, the amounts the United States spends in Europe increased, so the American Congress voted larger funds for the European Union. In practical terms, the United States' investments in the European defense increase during Trump period. Maybe Mr Trump is not aware of that yet it is a good thing and this is the truth. I do not remember a period of the history of the alliance whereby the alliance decided during a summit to reposition troops and which, after a year, was fulfilled exactly. Multinational forces were deployed in the Baltic countries a year after the respective decision, that thing happened and continues to happen. So we have now troops deployed in three countries plus Poland, plus Romania, we have military drills, military manoeuvres taking place now, we have researches on the logistical problems for deploying new troops. So NATO is doing now things it did not do since many years on and that happens daily. Therefore, I would say let's be optimistic a bit, I do acknowledge the issue of military budgets is an acute problem, I do acknowledge the United States president's criticism should be taken extremely seriously, I acknowledge there is a small danger the NATO summit becomes another dispute point among the members of the alli-

ance yet, at the same time, I want to say that never in the history NATO moved so cleverly and so rapidly as it did in the last few years and responded to threats, to the Russian danger much more skillfully, much more flexible than as it ever did in the past. I would therefore say the glass is half full, not half empty.

P.G.: *What about Great Britain?*

J.E.: As far as Great Britain is concerned, there should be no change in theory. As the Britons use to say all the time, we leave the European Union but do not leave Europe. Nobody speaks of an isolation policy, and those who voted for an exit from the European Union did not suggest for a moment an issue of isolation. More that that, there is a national consensus that Great Britain will continue and try to be a power internationally and to maintain its initiatives. Let us not forget as well that our state, as permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations depends nevertheless on the possibility of having an international presence in military issues. I think the question will be how the cooperation structures in Europe will be created after we leave the European Union. What we have to find is a system in which Great Britain will obviously not be at the negotiations table of the European Union yet it should remain in permanent consultations with the European Union because if the European Union thinks it will decide how to respond to a crisis in the future without consulting Great Britain and after that goes to London and ask for Great Britain's support for a position decided within the European Union without consulting Great Britain, this won't work. So, we have to be very clear. I do acknowledge, the initiative of leaving the European Union is ours, a personally recognize that as being a mistake but once the decision was made, I think it is in the common interest of all Europeans to minimize as much as possible the strategic impact of this unfortunate decision and I think it is not difficult to devise a security system whereby this reality is present. What it would be very tragic is to witness once more the coming back to the conflict, to the competition between the European Union and NATO on which is the more beautiful structure in Europe. That was mere nonsense

and a waste of time. I hope we succeed in avoiding such a situation.

For compliance, interview taken by Corneliu PRIVARIU, in London, on 10th of July, 10 2018. Title and subtitles belong to Geostrategic Pulse.

Jonathan Eyal

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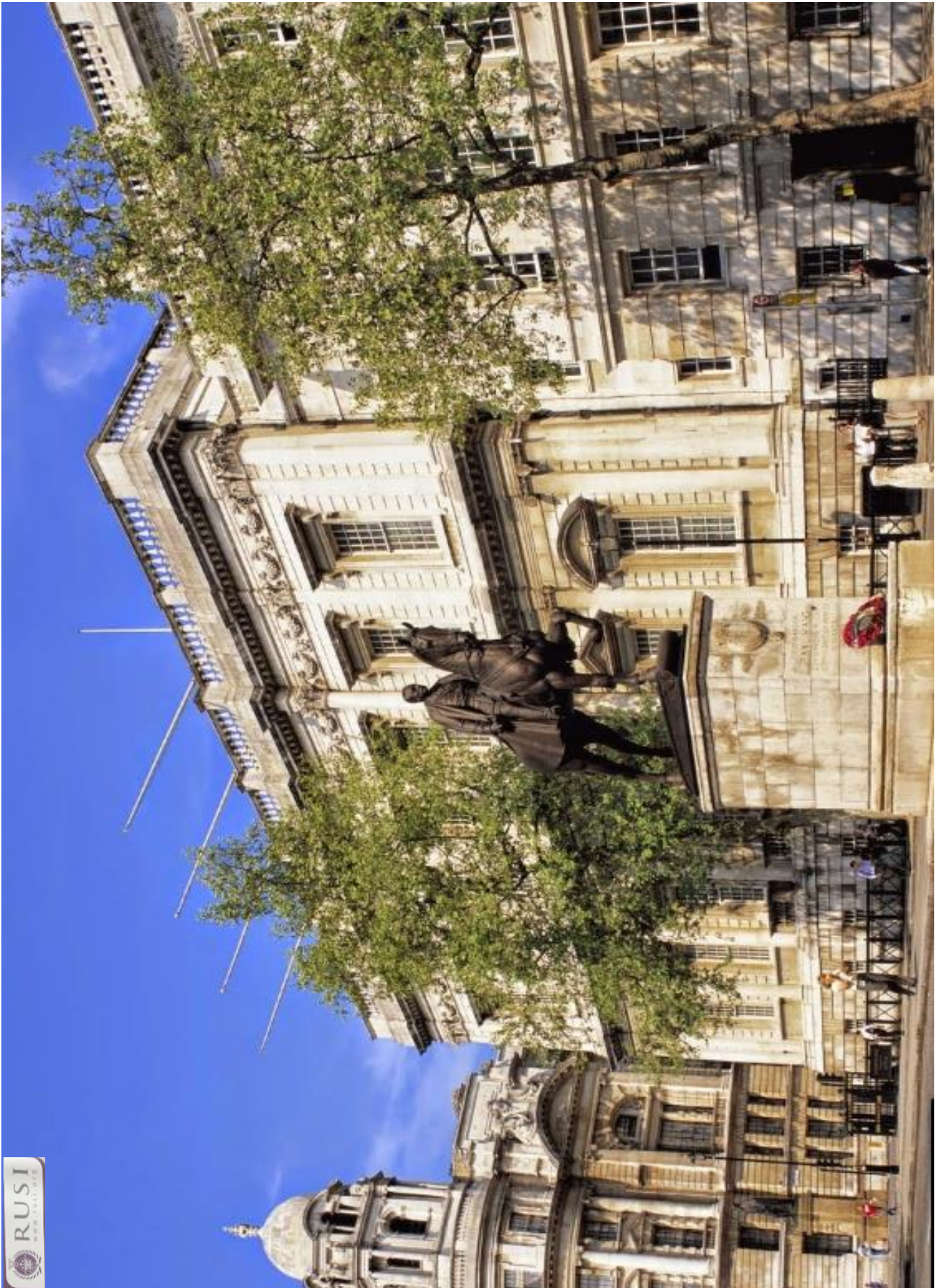
He was born in Romania, but has lived most of his life in Britain. Educated at Oxford and London Universities, his initial training was in International Law and Relations, in which he obtained both his first degree and his Master's with a Distinction. His Doctorate, completed at Oxford in 1987, analysed relations between ethnic minorities in Eastern Europe since the end of the First World War.

After teaching at Oxford for three years, Dr Eyal was appointed a researcher at RUSI. Since 1990, Dr Eyal has been Director of Studies at the Institute, and also serves as a Senior Research Fellow and Editor of the *RUSI Newsbrief*.

Dr Eyal has completed books on military expenditure in the former Warsaw Pact and a published a study on military relations in the Balkans during the time of Communism. He is a regular commentator on East European affairs for *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Times* dailies and the *Observer* newspaper on Sundays.

He has also given evidence to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee on the conduct of British foreign policy in Eastern Europe, and the teams of experts which contributed to the peace plans for the former Yugoslavia. He has acted as an adviser to the European Union's studies on the process of dividing the assets of the former Yugoslav state, and has published two studies on the errors committed by the West in handling the Balkan conflict since 1991.

He is fluent in English, French, Romanian, Italian, Hungarian and German.



The United States was a standard bearer for so long...

Exclusive interview for Geostrategic Pulse

With dr. Niclolas Redman – IISS - Londra

The prevailing current international context

The events that took place on the American stage and internationally since the current US president took office were characterised directly and indirectly by a quite different mindset and political action as compared to what we were accustomed before with regard to the behaviour of the great political leaders of the democratic world. The American president seems so far to undermine the rules-based international order. We see a split with the Europeans, the prospects of a "deal" on the Israeli-Palestinian issue is pure fantasy and Iran is more likely to restart uranium enrichment than embrace democracy. The rules-based international order turned into one of trade wars, nuclear proliferation, fractured alliances and regional conflicts. America's truthworthiness was damaged by the "master negotiator". His trade policy is a relentless assault on multilateralism as the trade system will be unable to enforce new rules or forge new ones.

Question: The term "America first" applied on the letterhead of the Trump Administration's foreign policy vision generated already primarily conflicted effects and reactions from part of the international community and mainly from America's European allies such as the European Union, G7 or the Arab world community. And the sparks that ignited this state of affairs are to be found mostly in Donald Trump's decisions of recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's sole and indivisible capital, of unilaterally terminating the 5+1 Treaty signed with Iran in 2015 or imposing protectionist tariff barriers to foreign partners, especially from Europe. In what horizon – pessimistic, uncertainty or hope can be the future of these relations be placed? Will we witness a commercial and political "casus belli"? And what are the leverages the European community has

for maintaining its unity and for asserting at the same time the identitarian solidity? What are the chances that "America first" turns into "America alone"?

Answer: It took more than a year for the president to assemble a team properly in his image. The first one in particular took a year or more to find its feet. We have had signals from the very first day, namely the Trans Pacific Treaty, then a very early move of imposing a travel ban for some nationalities, the notification concerning Paris Climate Agreement, Jerusalem, trade wars. A pessimistic horizon? It depends on what happens in a couple of years, whether it is



a one-term presidency or a two-term presidency. We are not there. We cannot say yet. In what concern the trade war, the European approach this time around is different from the position the Europeans and Japan took in

the early 1970s when Richard Nixon imposed import tariffs. It is possible the Europeans have less appetite to negotiate most standing on principles than it was the case in the 1970s, although it would be easiest for everyone if the president did not do anything. I think the European calculations of negotiations abiding by the rules in a set way as we see them acting now in the EU27 approach to the negotiations with the UK and they are strong enough to get precisely the deal they want. In terms of negotiating with the US on trade I wonder if a slightly more accommodating from part of the Europeans might save us trouble down the line. But we won't know that for a while. We will witness a commercial and political casus belli going down but we are not at the point we can't say for a while this is the time a trade war happened but we are looking at tariffs being traded now than rather simply goods and I'm not sure where that ends. I suspect that the consequences of that would be that at the mar-

gins there will be less trade, sometimes some goods will not be traded much cross-borders and more production will be used domestically in the United States and possibly some trading partners will take out the United States which will be trading less while Europe and China will still trade quite a lot with each other for instance.

I think the EU will be united not only in the trade relations with the United States and I really don't see any significant eruptions within the EU 27 mainly on question of the trans-Atlantic trade, maybe indicative Poland, maybe, but I suspect not, and the weak link is the UK but it must decide first what kind of trading relations it wants with the European Union and then it can determine how much freedom it has to strike a deal with the rest of the world and as you have been in the country during the last 24 hours you have seen that everything is up in the air.

America is just more than the principal decision-maker in the world and it is quite interesting to look at the Paris Climate Agreement and you see that in spite of the president's decision, America is one of the few countries that is actually on course of hitting the 2025 target and a lot of trade is going to take place between the United States and the rest world and a lot of Western countries in particular hope it will be a one-term presidency and thereafter there could be some sort of a way back to normal relations as we have seen prior to 2016. The United States is still very, very deeply implanted to the alliance systems around the world and it is not easy for anyone to overturn now, so I don't think America Alone but America First is going to persuade a number of countries. We have seen it already in Europe, we've seen in Asia to think more about what a world in which one cannot rely on the United States looks like. And that's I think the downside for American power, for American primacy what Donald Trump is doing. There is something that interferes that some of his predecessors overextended the country and weakened it and we can debate versions but it is also important to prospect how a country standing can be weakened by inaction or by disarray or by prevarication or by sending out signals that your commitment to

allies is less complete than previously was supposed to be.

Question: The "master negotiator" seeks trade terms that will force supply chains to move to America. ***What will be the consequences of such a move?***

Answer: I think there will be some consequences, some things will move, some activities on the margin might move but there is a lot of these value chains actions that simply do not make economic sense in the United States. And the overall effect will be total level of global trade and the volume I think is likely to fall. In some way is right to say that if you're running a large trade deficit you cannot lose a trade war. But that is if you think in terms of your trade balance rather than of overall volume of freight and the gains of your consumers make at the expense of your producers.

Question: Last year, when Vladimir Putin was speaking before a significant group of German businessmen, he said: *"Despite all existing challenges in the political field, the economic relations with Germany are very good"*. The commercial exchanges between Russia and Germany in 2017 increased indeed by 25% as compared to the previous year although, we would add, not only the USA but also Europe issued a significant package of economic sanctions against Russia as a result of the aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea. That could be as well, more or less accepted, a tolerable "political logic" of the executives in the field of international relations. ***Question: Nevertheless, how do you explain the fact that this "political logic" is enforced by an opinion poll carried out in December 2017 by the Koerber Foundation and cited by Reuters according to which the Germans consider Donald Trump a more serious problem than the leaders of Russia, North Korea or Turkey?*** This opinion is second on top of threats after the inflow of the asylum seekers and exceeds the "political logic of the governance" in Berlin as it derived from "the perception of an important segment of the German people", something that may induce a great concern.

Answer: There is a dichotomy between close commercial relations between Europe and Russia and the political disjunction. I think the first thing to say is that expectations in the United States in Germany are different than towards the other countries so why is Donald Trump's prospective visit to London potentially more of a public order issue than that of say the king of Saudi Arabia, given the respective level of human freedoms in the two countries. It comes down to the fact that the United States was a standard bearer for so long and so a higher standard is always expected and always needed and that is a recognition that Donald Trump can cause perhaps more damage globally than the other leaders can. For Europeans, North Korea is a long way away and if you ask Japan you will get a different answer to the question. I think in Europe is a sense which is beginning to gather and ironically you see it in places like Italy rather than in places like Poland or Estonia, which have closer economic ties with Russia and there is something disproportionate in the fact that the United States and Europe altogether sanctioning Russia because the Europeans pay a much higher economic price for this. Well, the astonishing thing when you look at the relationship between the United States and Russia, given the size of their economies, both in top ten economies in the world by PPP, is actually how little trade and investment there is between them even if Russia has some properties, something very small, as result of which there is little stop for politicians for reaching for quite tough measures in dealing with the other and there is not much of an American lobby in Moscow or of a Russian lobby in Washington and there is the residual Russophobia in the US Congress which is a long running feature if you look how long the Jackson-Vanik amendment was applied to Russia after all restrictions on Jewish emigration disappeared. So there is something about that relationship that is quite a difficult one. The Europeans find themselves much more affected by the sanctions than the United States are. I think there is a flip side of it and in some European countries there is a feeling that because of energy supply dependency on Moscow they can't take a tough policy towards Russia. That is probably in the psycho-

logy and it's interesting that it's not most necessarily in percentage terms of supply dependent countries that feel the most vulnerable. In Germany's case there is also an element that is a bit of reconciliation which obliges them to adopt a slightly more understanding approach to Russia – allies in fact – but they have also very powerful business lobbies which are very effective for the relations with Russia.

Question: *How can the defense of the European member states' independence and sovereignty be achieved against a potential and declared threat of the current political leadership in the Kremlin ?*

Answer: This is really a good question. So, what are the threats to independence and sovereignty? I would put it down what is going to be in the information sphere where Russia has proved to be quite adaptive using social media, all sort of media media and entities it has in the country that are touching Western states to sow discord and confusion. Then we have a more direct impact on the political process through Russia's funding of some European political parties, French National Front being an excellent example and it is now very well established that there is a direct interference of elections as well that started with the Dutch referendum on Ukraine's EU Accession Agreement and since then. It is this domestic aspect that is probably the most troubling and there is for some there is the question of a Russia feeling of being under threat and therefore it is defending itself and trying to deter others in ways which are in turn threatening for Eastern member states in particular. How we deal with that? Now NATO has and I don't know how NATO summit goes and will deal with that but I think NATO has responded in a measured but sensible way it is indicative resolve but it is not sort of match anything like match Russia man for man on either side of the Eastern frontier but this year we're due to see a huge increase in US funding for European presence, for NATO European operations. So we'll see if that survives the summit. Militarily I am not quite so worried but there is also the risk of miscalculation and that is I think militarily side of the things is very well done but the border

point is we have a Russian leadership that feels under assault, believes that the European states and the United States in particular wish to effect regime change in Russia, will not abide by any of the standards they publicly proclaim. Moscow's foreign policy first goal is the creation and maintenance of external conditions which are conducive to the perpetuation of the current government in Russia and to extend the field threatened that make Russia a difficult actor to play with. If we want to have a new relationship with Russia we have to define the questions in a different way. My feeling is that a change in sanctions regime I think that personal sanctions against people actually has nothing to do with the Ukraine's decision but nevertheless are close to Putin. I think that sanctions can affect people, send a signal that the West is wishing for a regime change in Russia. I would say, without advising, remove those sanctions, remove the sanctions on Russian politicians, so no impediments from our side to dialogue, I think talking is important and talking isn't a concession, you should make clear what exactly you want, but I would keep the essential sanctions in place. Let's make a comparison with China for a moment. After Tiananmen Square, the United States imposed an arms embargo on China and sat on the Europeans to maintain that ever since. China's record as a disruptive power in the last 10 years is actually very limited. It has been an island building in the South China Sea and declared an air identification zone that is thought to impede at various points freedom of movement of some foreign military vessels, naval vessels, and there was a dispute with Japan over the East China Sea and Sakaku Daiwan in South China Sea. Nevertheless it's quite a limited chart sheet. Russia's by contrast, is significantly bigger, its partition of two of its neighbours, Georgia and Ukraine, it is engaged in nuclear threats of the type we didn't even hear from Khrushchev, we see interferences in Western elections and if the British government is correct, it is also a question of assassinating foreign nationals on our own territory. So, in that sense Russia has demonstrated a greater inclination to cause trouble and therefore the justification for keeping sanctions on Russia's financial sector which is one of few sectors which is still

the bedrock of its economy, and not only Julius technology, is actually a prudent measure by European states to curb Russia's ability in that regard. Now, I expect it is difficult because the main essence of these sanctions increases in Moscow's sense the Western states are out to get Russia. But I think the problem at the moment is if those sanctions are eased, without any sign that the things they were supposed to be linked to which is basically the Minsk Agreement in Ukraine, without any sign of progress in Ukraine, it would be interpreted in Moscow not as an act of goodwill and an act to reset relations, but as a sign of European weakness that would invite further behaviour the kind the Europeans don't want.

Question: *Can the European Project and the alliance with the United States be still saved from Russia's anti-Western media propaganda?*

I think it can in that the EU looks reasonably in a way that Brexit forced them closer together and the European-US alliance, yes, I think so and I look, my confidence is beyond the White House, because if you look at the US Congress, which I have to mention is a very Russophobic institution, they are very strong still on NATO, very strong on Russia's threats to the US national security, Russia's challenging US preeminence, Russia's interfering in the elections, so when you look beyond this White House you don't see much appetite for demanding NATO and given the institutional quality around NATO, the fact that its structures have been built up over many years, they have a whole decision-making structure, it would be actually very difficult for one administration to pull it apart. My concern is not so much that Russia might pull the Europeans and Americans apart, it is more over time it could be a difference of opinion over China. For the United States, China looks like the only credible peer and competitor. China has made it very clearly that it sees, even if it takes 30 to 40 years to achieve it, that what it wishes to do is to push the United States out of the Western Pacific. For Europeans that is not as much of an issue. For Europeans, Russia is more of a question. I think it is interesting to look 30 years down the

line if we can look ahead that far if within the United States will people start to question whether is prudent of giving in that China is the big challenge, or perhaps the hostile relations with Russia. I think for the Europeans, ironically, Russia is a nearer term problem that ultimately they cannot turn away from even if they would like to. But there is a core of US strategists who will



argue on that just as Nixon went to China and brought Mao on side in order to contain and ultimately defeat the Soviet Union. So, the smart strategic move is a deal with Russia that allows the United States to isolate China and concentrate on dealing with China. And I just don't see the Europeans sharing that approach, for the Europeans, China is a more benign force than Russia, that's my worry for the trans-Atlantic alliance. But actually interests, perceptions and priorities are going to move.



Question: On July 16th, in Helsinki, a new USA – Russia summit will take place. How do you estimate this summit will unfold and mainly its consequences on the future development of the relationship between the two countries and the possible influence on the world geopolitical situation in different regions of major interest: Europe, the Middle East (Syria), Asia. How do you think the relations between Donald Trump will unfold in the coming years?

Answer: I think is very difficult to predict. Particularly for this will follow the NATO summit and might in some way reverse whatever has been said about NATO summit. I think that the Siris's problem is now less easy for them to agree. It was much more easy when ISIS was a large, viable and immediate force, but now ISIS in Syria is not much of a player. If we set back two years when we thought what kind of a US-Russia deal would be it was mainly around Syria and I think Trump would actually give up US position on Ukraine because it wasn't worth the trouble. But there was always a problem on the Iran nuclear deal, there was always a problem of the North Korea where Trump sticks completely opposite of Putin so I thought that it was possible they could have a couple of things they may agree on and then they would bump up against issues that they wouldn't agree on where they are fundamentally opposed. And in fact actually we have pretty much skipped over those first two wings which go directly into problems they simply can't agree. So, I don't see much of a substance happening. And if you look at the president's National Security team, Bolton, Pompeo,

there is also the spokesman and the specialists on Russia, we may have some more words that for Putin is good to keep the option open of talking, he tends to surprise us, there are times when he is specific, then he is going to do something quite firm, sometimes when he is on the row he will take a moderating action. He would like to see sanctions some way eased, lifted really it is impossible. He has to see what he can trade with Trump now. I don't know, I think it is really difficult to see any kind of progress on Ukraine for it needs so much from the Russians and what they feel is that they have to do is wait. No Syria because it is difficult. What they'll do? To emphasize that terrorism is bad, they would probably agree that it is wonderful for North Korea and the United States to talking. That would be the smart thing to do to flatter Trump's ego and then you can see if there is maybe one thing you can get out of him but it is difficult for me to predict what that would be.

For compliance, interview taken by Corneliu PIVARIU, London 10 July 2018. The title belong to Geostrategic Pulse

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Before joining the IISS, Nicholas was the editor-in-chief of the country risk service, ViewsWire, at the Economist Intelligence Unit, as well as a senior analyst for Russia and Eastern Europe. Previously, he worked for the consultancy Oxford Analytica and as a lecturer at the Department of War Studies, King's College London. He has a DPhil in International Relations from St Antony's College, Oxford.



Putin's Secret Services

How the Kremlin Corralled the FSB

Andrei SOLDATOV

In April, a series of protests hit the Moscow region. They were neither overtly political - citizens were protesting toxic landfills in their neighborhoods - nor very numerous, comprising, at most, a few thousand people in a region of over seven million. At their peak, people took to the streets in nine towns surrounding the city.

The protests, however, seemed well coordinated, and in some towns, the city authorities supported people and granted them permission to protest. Even for officials, it was difficult to ignore the awful smells emanating from the landfills, or the furious mothers and fathers of poisoned children. One of these cities was Serpukhov, some 60 miles south of Moscow.

One week after the protests started, an official from the Serpukhov district, Alexander Shestun, was invited to the Kremlin. There, he met with Ivan Tkachev, a general from the Federal Security Service (FSB), Russia's powerful intelligence agency and the successor to the Soviet-era secret police, the KGB. Apprehensive about the meeting, Shestun decided to secretly record the conversation, which he later posted on YouTube.

In the recording, Tkachev threatens Shestun. "You will be steamrolled if you don't resign," he says. "You will be in prison. Like many before you, you don't understand, it's a big [purge]." Intimidating that he was receiving orders from the Kremlin, Tkachev then lists several top-level officials who had already been jailed, including a general from the interior ministry and two governors. Tkachev even suggests that Andrey Vorobyov, governor of the Moscow region and former chair of the ruling party United Russia, could be the next target.

The FSB's clumsy attempt to silence Shestun

was not an isolated incident. Rather, in its intimidation and selective repression - directed by the Kremlin and carried out by the FSB - the episode was a revealing example of the new governing model developed by Russian President Vladimir Putin over the last three years, and the role of the intelligence services within it.

THE NEW NOBILITY

From Putin's ascent to power in 2000 until quite recently, the FSB enjoyed the status of a "new nobility," in the words of its former director Nikolai Patrushev. The agency was generously funded, immune from oversight, and free to act against the real and perceived enemies of the Kremlin. It also provided human resources - generals and colonels - for filling important positions within the state and state-owned corporations. For a period of time, the FSB became, as Irina Borogan and I described in 2010, the true elite of the country.

During his early years in office, Putin, himself a former KGB officer, had worked to reverse the decentralization of Russia's intelligence services that had occurred in the 1990s - a task that largely involved concentrating power within the FSB and allowing its personnel to amass wealth and political influence. This, Putin hoped, would make the intelligence services into something like a new class - one loyal to the Kremlin, with a stake in the stability of the regime and able to serve as a check on the ambitions of Russia's powerful oligarchs.

For many of Russia's newly empowered nobles, the temptations of power were too strong to resist.

Yet for many of these newly empowered nobles, the temptations of power and lack of oversight were too strong to resist. By the mid-2000s, Putin's secret services - including the

FSB, the Federal Drug Control Service (FSKN), and the Presidential Security Service - were at each other's throats, fighting, spying on, and jailing one another in competition for spoils. Many, in fact, had turned into mercenaries of the oligarchs they were supposed to oversee. In 2007, Viktor Cherkesov, the chief of the FSKN and a close friend of Putin, complained that "the warriors" of the intelligence services had "turned into traders" after his deputy, General Alexander Bulbov, was jailed by the FSB for illegal eavesdropping. Because Cherkesov had complained in public, he lost his job.



Putin's trust in the FSB, moreover, proved to be misplaced. The agency failed to predict the massive protests that struck Moscow in 2011, and once the protests started, it was powerless to respond to the demonstrators' use of social media to mobilize and organize. When the FSB sent a request to Russia's most popular social network, Vkontakte, to take down pages used by the protestors, it did so by fax. During the initial stages of the 2013 - 2014 crisis in Ukraine, Moscow sent an FSB team to help its ally, President Viktor Yanukovich. For the Kremlin, Ukraine was the most important country among the former Soviet republics, and keeping it within Russia's sphere of influence was paramount. But not only did the FSB officers fail to help Yanukovich hold on to power, they failed to even see him losing his nerve, and were taken by surprise when he fled from the capital in February 2014.

LABOR DISCIPLINE

Following these mounting failures, Putin began, around 2015, to change the scheme. He got rid of old friends who were proponents and beneficiaries of the enlarged role of the secret services. In August 2015, Putin ousted his former ally Vladimir Yakunin, an ex-KGB officer, from his position as head of Russia's state-owned-railroad monopoly. Then in 2016, he dealt with the two Iva-

novs, dismissing Viktor and dissolving his agency, the FSKN, in May, and downgrading Sergei, his chief of staff, in August. Around this time, Putin also ceased using the FSB as a recruitment base for important positions in the government and economy.

The goal of these changes was not to make the intelligence services less important; it was to reduce their autonomy. Putin was abandoning the search for a stable post-Soviet system of governance, in which the new nobility was supposed to play a crucial part. Instead, he was making it clear that what he needed was an instrument, pure and simple, for protecting his regime.

The new model is familiar from the late Soviet Union, when the Politburo called the shots and kept the intelligence services on a short leash, with minimal room for independent action. The KGB, in turn, kept elites off balance (and intimidated the population) through selective repression - a strategy that Putin's most cherished Soviet leader, Yuri Andropov, had called "improving labor discipline." And improving discipline is exactly what Putin has started doing. Governors and officials found themselves in prison for corruption; film directors, scientists, and ordinary people were thrown in jail, accused of helping Ukraine. The FSB played a major role in these crackdowns, but never on its own initiative. Now Putin, ruling through the Presidential Administration, calls the shots, filling the Politburo's shoes.

A crucial part of this new model is to keep everybody off balance, including law enforcement and secret services. Last year, the FSB was struck by purges in its Moscow directorate and its cyber unit, the Information Security Center, whose head, Andrei Gerasimov, was forced into retirement. Two deputy heads were prosecuted - Sergei Mikhailov wound up jail, while Dmitry Pravikov got a case last year against Major-General Vladimir Podolsky, a former commander of the FSB's legendary special forces unit,

Vympel, who was charged with fraud and sentenced to four years in prison.

Some understood pretty quickly that the country was returning to a Soviet model. In a December 2017 interview on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Cheka, the notorious predecessor of the KGB, FSB Director Alexander Bortnikov found some warm words for Lavrenty Beria, Stalin's chief hangman, and praised aspects of Stalin's Great Purges. Others have kept a low profile. Russia's military intelligence agency, the GRU, is reducing its public presence, and the recently formed National Guard has abandoned its ambition to obtain surveillance powers.

FLYING BLIND

Putin's new model suggests little room for interagency rivalry and feuds. All of Russia's bureaucrats, from ministers to FSB generals to regional officials, now face the same uncertain future. This should keep the elites of the country well under control, as everyone is afraid of making an unauthorized move. To achieve

this security, Putin is even ready to sacrifice the capacity for long-term planning— nobody expects fearful bureaucrats, or even spies, to plan for the future.

Yet this new model has another fatal flaw. Putin saw the late Soviet model from his position as a low-ranking KGB officer in a regional department in Leningrad, and, later on, in East Germany. He was too far from the center of power in Moscow to see for himself the failures of that system, which was able neither to predict nor to prevent the Soviet collapse.

The key problem for the late-Soviet model was that the information services, including the KGB, eventually ceased supplying critical information to the top for fear of telling their bosses what they didn't want to hear. It is, ironically, a problem that Putin never understands. He already saw his secret services failing him in moments of crisis, as during the Moscow protests. But with his method of fixing them, Putin is opening himself up to even more disastrous consequences.

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Russian Federation Projects in the Crimean Peninsula Infrastructure - Geopolitical considerations and propaganda reasons

Adrieaen PÂRLOG

**"A ruler that has but an army has one hand,
but he who has a navy has both"**

Peter the Great

A question: Why is Crimea important for Russia?

Among other things, because it minimizes naval the geo-climatological limitations and ensures permanent operability for some Russian ports; thus implicitly for The Black Sea Fleet. The Crimean Peninsula is also important because it is placed in an intersection area of commercial flows and of some antagonistic politico-military options. The use of the Crimean naval bases by The Russian Federation also allows the monitoring of the US and NATO military presence in the Black Sea as well as of Turkey, Ukraine, Moldova, Caucasus, the transit through the Turkish Straits, to and from the Mediterranean Sea, Danube mouths and the Constanta - Vienna - Rotterdam waterway. Last but not least, by controlling this Peninsula, Moscow can have a strategic position for the projection of the Russian Armed Forces in the Eastern Mediterranean basin. At the same time, it can also help to streamline the efforts for the exploration, exploitation and transport of identified hydrocarbon resources in the area.

After the annexation of Crimea in the spring of 2014, many international relations analysts have expressed their skepticism about Moscow's real potential of "absorbing" the complex situation that comes with its new territorial entity with a population of about 2 million inhabitants and with an area of over 26,000 sq. km.

Immediately after the referendum in March 2014, Russian Economic Development Minister Alexey Ulyukaev said

that Moscow will allocate about \$ 4.5 billion a year to the Crimean development. Most of the funds were to be redirected from the cancellation of Taman port development projects in the Krasnodar region, which were of minor relevance compared with what Sevastopol would represent. The Kremlin wanted to highlight Ukraine's lack of preoccupation for the modernization of the Peninsula's infrastructure. In fact, the complex issue of Crimea and the post-annexation sanctions issued by the West against the Russian Federation, were the main coordinates of Moscow's internal and external propaganda to support Vladimir Putin's re-election as president. However, the subject of reunification, despite the mobilization and determination of Russian political leadership, creates serious problems for the federal economy, sometimes being used as justification for some investment syncope in Russia.

The main Russian projects, announced to be carried out in the area of the Peninsula infrastructure to raise the economic and social level and its strategic relevance, are found in the Fed-



Marea Neagră – porturi la ape care nu îngheață

eral Target Program "Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol till 2020", and are related to the construction of two thermoelectric power plants in Sevastopol and Simferopol, a new international airport in the capital Simferopol, the "Tavrida" highway to link the major cities of Crimea - Sevastopol, Simferopol, Kerch - to the bridge over the Kerch Strait, which dispart the Black Sea from the Azov Sea, and the bridge - which represents Russia's desire of over 100 years - links the Russian Federation to the annexed Peninsula. To these you should add, according to projects announced by Moscow, the investments in food and water supply - a severely deficient resource in the Crimea - but also projects in the field of strategic minerals - especially titanium.

It is estimated that all major investment projects in the Crimea will have an important impact in the political, economic and social fields, especially in the military, plus a propagandistic dimension that prefigures the new status that the Peninsula will enjoy.

The Sevastopol power plant, which will be connected to the electric power system, probably in June 2018, will have an installed capacity of 470 MW, and will ensure not only the domestic needs of the population but also the civilian and military ports of the city, thus contributing to the elimination of social tensions between civilians and soldiers, who often both have had to accept energy distributions below their everyday needs. The second power plant, Simferopol, of the same capacity, will come into operation later. Both plants benefit from two turbines supplied by Siemens. Initially, the four units were destined for another power plant in the Taman area in the Krasnodar region but were relocated to the Crimea, and generated a strong international scandal as a result of the fact that it was considered on the one hand to be in breach of the international sanc-

tions imposed upon Russia, and on the other hand in breach of the sovereign rights of Ukraine, which is obliged to accept investments on its own territory without its acceptance. The construction of the two energy objectives, the cumulative cost of which amounts to \$ 1.2 billion, was meant to be the Moscow current replica after the Crimean Peninsula had serious electricity-related problems, especially after Ukraine gained its independence, which wasn't able to find solutions after abandoning in 1989 the construction of the nuclear power plant in Shcholkin, a town located near Kerch.

In the near future, Crimea is expected to receive about 4 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year in the Kuban area. The cost of the pipeline system is estimated at over \$ 340 million. Construction of the two power plants and the Kuban-Crimea pipeline will be carried out by firms owned by Putin's close associates, Sergey Chemezov, respectively, Arkady Rotenberg.

However, problems will continue, at least for a while, in both the electricity supply, and the supply of domestic and industrial water. Sea water desalination is expensive and solutions are sought which include even the possibility of re-connecting to the traditional Ukrainian sources.

The Taurida highway, which is likely to become operational by the end of 2018, has a length of about 280 km and is estimated at about \$ 2.2 billion, but also of strategic military importance,



Traiectul autostrăzii Tavrida

linking Russia to the Peninsula.

The Simferopol International Airport, designed by a South Korean company, Samoo Architects & Engineers, was built in nearly two years. The airport cost more than \$ 520 million and can secure



Aeroportul Internațional Simferopol



Aeroportul Internațional Simferopol - vedere aeriană

the transit of 10 million passengers annually. At this time, it is considered one of the most modern in the world, and the Russian propagandists consider it a real *cosmic airport that can assist flies to Venus and Mars*, but until then this summer it will link Simferopol to 41 domestic and foreign airports. The airport has a 3,701 m runway and allows large aircrafts to operate.

The Crimean Bridge (also known as The Kerch Bridge or Putin Bridge) is the longest bridge in Europe, overlooking the famous Vasco da Gama Bridge - Portugal – by 2 km. The project was an effective argument for Russian propaganda to

present the decision of Moscow to turn the takeover of Crimean political and administrative control into a success.

The bridge, with two lanes each direction and a double railway, has a length of about 19 km, and a projected capacity of 40,000 cars and 65 pairs



Strâmtoarea Kerchi – schema simplificată

of trains /day. It was technically inaugurated (only for cars) in May this year, in the presence of Vladimir Putin, who personally drove a heavy-duty truck in a machine column that tested the mechanical strength of the new objective. The railway will be partially operational in 2019, and in 2020 the first trains are expected to link the Simferopol to Krasnodar.

The new bridge, from a historical point of view, represents the completion of a real Russian obsession, which began in 1870, immediately after the first telegraph line linking England to India. The imperial leaders of those times made public their intention of linking London to Calcutta with a railway line, too. One of the greatest challenges of the project was represented precisely by the crossing of the Kerch Strait. Its increased difficulty led to the abandonment of the idea. A second attempt was initiated by Tsar Nicholas II in 1903, who gave up the idea due to financial reasons, generated by the preparations for the Russian-Japanese war. In 1943, Hitler ordered the construction of a bridge with a transit capacity of 1,000 tons / day to connect the Crimea with the North Caucasus for operational and lo-

gistic needs of the German army. The bridge, made of wood, was especially useful in the case of the withdrawal of the Nazi Army Group from the Don River Bend area, and was subsequently blown up due to operational reasons. In order to ensure the Red Army's mobility in the region, the bridge was repaired by the Russian engineers over a length of 4 km, immediately after the release of Crimea in 1944. The built military bridge could not resist the winter and the floes, which destroyed it.

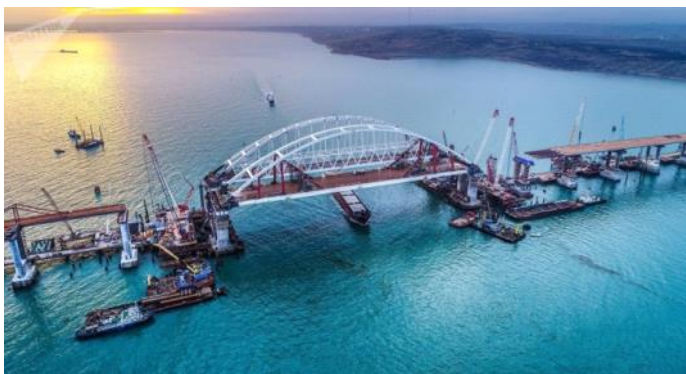
Between 1960 and 1990, Kremlin Communist leaders repeatedly postponed the start of construction for financial reasons, too. In 2010, Russian and Ukrainian leaders, Dmitry Medvedev and Victor Yanukovich, signed a bilateral agreement on the construction of the bridge, but this document was denounced in 2014 after the referendum that led to the break-up of Crimea.

Immediately after the Russian Parliament approved the annexation of the Peninsula, Vladimir Putin urged Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to identify the financial resources needed to build the bridge. In an effort justified by the need to design a propaganda image, the Prime Minister immediately announced that the government allocated the equivalent of \$ 3.4 billion to bridge

tribute to lower transport costs to and from the Crimea, which are now mostly secured by ferry-boat lines, strongly dependent on the weather. In this regard, the Moscow government appreciates significant increases in the number of tourists in the Peninsula resorts, which are estimated at around 6 million per year, and the Crimean Gross Domestic Product has registered nominal increases of about 10%. As a result of these investments, the value of the properties in the Peninsula, especially around Yalta, increased significantly, mainly due to the relocation of many civil servants and military personnel to the Peninsula. The Kremlin has announced that for the housing program for civil servants have been allocated over \$ 380 million, respectively over \$ 100 million for military personnel in the new operating units. The program started in 2017, and is scheduled to be completed by 2020.

Although the Russian projects in the Crimean Peninsula's overall infrastructure are considered to be significant, the most relevant initiatives are those in the military infrastructure domain, designed to represent a true strategic bridgehead, designed to control the wider Black Sea basin.

Jokingly or seriously, the connoisseurs of the area appreciate it is outlining the change in the



Podul Crimeea - zona de traversare vapoare



Podul Crimeea, zona auto finalizată și zona CF - în construcție

construction, and in January 2015 the bridge construction contract was awarded to the Arkady Rotenberg, a childhood friend of President Putin, both of them being part of the same judo team in Leningrad. The real estimated bridge costs are actually around \$ 5 billion, being suspected of illegal spending.

The bridge and highway are expected to con-

tribute to lower transport costs to and from the profile of the Peninsula from the predominantly touristic region, with important contributions to the federal budget, in a large, resource-intensive, operative military base. The former Belbek civil airport has already been turned into a military air base. So are things with Novofedorivka airport, respectively Dzhankoy, too.



Baze militare în Crimeea

If by March 2014 tourists could visit the Crimean Soviet Fortified Coastal Defense System for \$ 50 per person, nowadays this is no longer possi-



Crimeea: Object 100 – Simferopol / lansare rachetă

ble because the Russian Army has gone to de-convert it for re-operationalization.

The famous touristic objectives Object 100 – Simferopol, and Balaklava - Sevastopol, during the Ukrainian administration, have become forbidden and protected military areas.

In November 2017, General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, appreciated that the Russian military

presence in the areas of major strategic importance for the Federation attained at least the levels during the USSR.

Among them, along with the Kaliningrad region, there is also Crimea, where Moscow has made a significant redistribution of forces and means, which are found in 18 military bases, which employs about 33,000 soldiers. In the Crimea, an Air interdiction system A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area-Denial) has been made operational, similar to what has already been done in Kaliningrad and Syria (Lattakia - Alep). The Crimean A2 / AD system features two S-400 Triumph missile divisions deployed in the Feodosia and Simferopol areas, to which are added missile and anti-aircraft artillery units, equipped with TOR M-2 and Pantsir-S1 systems.

Also in the Peninsula a naval base, an army corps, a mixed aviation and anti-aircraft defense division were modernized and operationalized.

The Black Sea Fleet, based in Sevastopol, has

The Black Sea Fleet, based in Sevastopol, has



Balaklava - Sevastopol - intrare în baza navală fortificată

undergone a major modernization process, currently having 6 submarines, 2 frigates equipped with Kalibr cruise missiles and 3 divisions equipped with Bal and Bastion coastal defense missile systems.

Another military system of high complexity that the Russian Federation has redeployed to the Peninsula after 2014 is the Murmansk-BN electronic warfare system designed to carry out cyber security missions. It can forbid radio and other communications on a circular area with a radius of 3,000 km, and is also effective against HFGCS - High Frequency Global Communications Systems. It adds to a Voronezh-SM early-warning radar system, capable of monitoring two directions simultaneously (south and west) and a "151 meter" type radio antenna dedicated to radio-TV broadcasts across the Peninsula, but in southern Ukraine, too.

Also in Crimea, a mixed aviation division with three naval aviation regiments and two air force regiments are fully operational, all five having the best combat aircraft in the Russian Federation's Air Force.

The Crimean air defense is complemented by anti-aircraft missile and artillery divisions equipped with S-300, Pantsir-S1, Buk, Tor-M2 missiles. Although there are no records at the moment to prove their presence, Iskander-M missiles may also have been deployed to be included in a more extensive A2 / AD system.

Analyzing the whole of the Russian investments described above and the military potential Moscow has in Crimea, it can be concluded that the Russian Federation has integrated capabilities that can develop informational, cyber, psychological, propaganda, electronic warfare, and also ground, air, anti-aircraft or naval classic military

operations, which can give substance to the obvious strategic capabilities of the Peninsula.

Once again, the EU summit will ignore Europe's greatest threat



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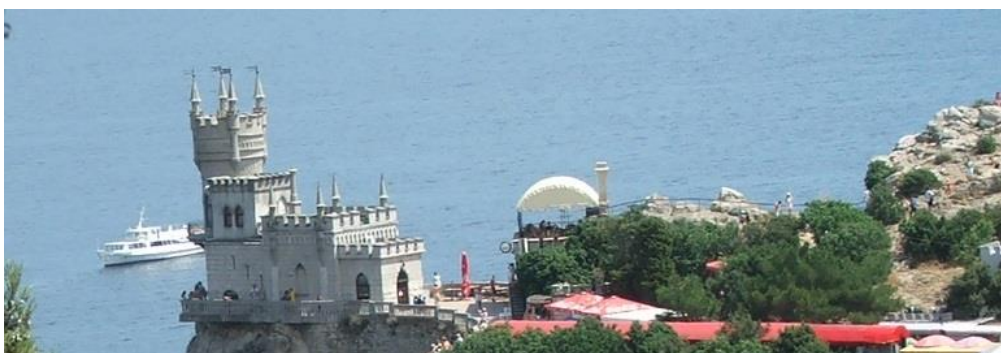
With this summer's European Council just a month away, now seems a good time to ask "what's the summit for?" At first glance, the EU leaders' agenda suggests that's a stupid question because it's dominated by the unending nonsense of Brexit, the North-South deadlock over eurozone reform and how the EU should respond to the Trump Administration's trampling of the bonds that hold our unruly world together.

But these are not the issues that heads of government ought to be addressing; they are matters their ministers should thrash out. Wolfgang Schüssel, who as Austria's chancellor from 2000-2007 was a European Council stalwart, no doubt speaks for other national leaders when explaining why the focus of EU summits is so often wrong.

The diminished role of foreign affairs ministers, he reckons, means that when they fail to resolve problems they kick them upwards. The European Council, Schüssel commented to me a few years ago, thus becomes "a forum of late deciders", exacerbating the EU's slowness and inefficiency.

EU summits lack the strategic vision they were originally intended to provide. Their focus is on tactical responses rather than the far greater challenges that confront Europe.

The ageing of European society and the pros and cons of an EU-wide



immigration policy to compensate for shrinking workforces raise huge questions that only national leaders can answer, yet they are relegated to ministers far down the pecking order.

Perhaps the implications of Europe's demographic decline are too awful to contemplate for the prime ministers gathered at a European Council. Unless EU countries start to plan ahead, its effects could be catastrophic. Looming labour shortages and the ineluctable pressures of ageing on pensions and healthcare will increase Europe's need for immigrant workers, with populist backlashes threatening the political integrity of the EU, and possibly its survival.

There's nothing new about alarming demographic projections. Ageing coupled with low birth rates -- the EU average is now about 1.5 children per couple -- have led to countless warnings by the European Commission and international agencies like the IMF and OECD. All were greeted by "a deafening silence", comments a recent report entitled "'Demographic Suicide" ' by the Fondation Robert Schuman. This Paris-based think tank warns that 2050 will see the EU's present 240m-strong active workforce reduced by 49 million people.

No one can yet tell whether AI and robotics will somehow make up for shrinking workforces

The combination of infertility and longevity is a time bomb that will start exploding in 2030. By then, Europe's over-65s will constitute four-tenths of the population, while the numbers of younger people coming onto the labour market will be down by a third. The pensions outlook is a nightmare because by mid-century the proportion of working age people to pensioners will have shrunk from today's ratio of 4:1 to just 2:1.

This adds up to a re-landscaping of Europe's political economy. No one can yet tell whether AI and robotics will somehow make up for shrinking workforces, but it's hard to see how they can compensate for lost taxes and greatly reduced consumption.

Above all, there's the immigration issue. So far, the migrant crisis of 2015/16 has divided EU countries against each other and within them-

ves. And that concerned just a million-plus Syrian and other refugees, whereas a report almost a decade ago by former EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana suggested 100 million newcomers will be needed by mid-century to bridge Europe's demographic deficit.

These are the big questions the European Council should be discussing. Solutions may not come readily to hand, but at least the focus of an EU summit could trigger the constructive debate that Europe's policymakers have been avoiding.

BETWEEN DONALD TRUMP'S "AMERICA FIRST" AND MS ANGELA MERKEL'S UNITED EUROPE

Dinu COSTESCU

Coming to an end of almost fifty years of Cold War that followed the second most heated world conflagration which ended with the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the crumbling of the Marxist ideological system, from the depth of the waters returning to the creek of peace the first signs of conflicted sediments between the two shores of the Atlantic begun to resurface, namely between the former American and Western European allies on the fronts of of the war against Nazism and Fascism. Signs which did not cease to get clearer and more consistent and witnesses a short period of lull under the impulse of human compassion and solidarity brought again to an ephemeral life by the terrorist attacks of September 11th and which were received only as a dramatic defiance to America but also as an existential threat to its civilization and its system of fundamental values and principles.

In a context dominated temporarily by the monopolar supremacy of the United States and the crossroads between it, on the one hand, and the prefiguration of a new multipolar world order, on the other hand and under the circumstances in which the states of "old Europe" were more and more evident moving towards the achievement of the continental unity, theories and philosophical currents built on the base of the competition apprehension towards an European construction looked at as an active competitor

ready to question the American individualization as sole world power after the Cold War or, at least a undesired aspirer to share the power on the new map of the balances and centers of power and influence from the perspective of entering the new millenium did not delay to appear at the level of American political and ideological thought. The compassion and affectivity of the 11th of September faded away and left room to competitive and divergent approaches of the political, security, strategic and economic future of the world. The European-American rifts related to the American military intervention in Iraq in the spring of 2003 were, in their profound essence, the expression of a race of taking an advanced as possible place in the hierarchy of power and influence on the new world geostrategic and geopolitical chessboard as well as the disagreement more or less expressed of the main European powers towards America's unitarist individualism and with the authoritarian manner in which the Administration in Washington understood to ignore both the spirit and the letter of the bilateral American-European conventions as well as other principles and moral or juridical commitments in the general plan of global policies.

Consequently, it was natural that the thought schools and analyses, research and reflection circles remained cold in front of these conflicted realities and even diametrically opposed and two main orientations or theoretical and speculative "schools" imposed themselves. A first such school grouped the supporters of the idea the western community is more and more marked

by a conflicted fracture between the European political thought and the one beyond the Atlantic – a gap that expressed an inconsistency between the philosophical thought and the cultural identity that has the potential of making permanent and an acute up to the conflicted state of the existing structural and functional contradictions. On the other hand, the second orientation has as defining coordinate the preoccupation of identifying and highlighting the elements of complementarity existing in both "camps" and which have the potential of supporting the common interests and the solitary cooperation in countering the defiances and threats aimed at both sides to an equal extent. And this community potential was clearly highlighted by 9/11 when the Europeans proclaimed, each of them, "I am American, too!", when the European leaders were the hosts of the White House as bearers of the solidarity feelings and when, for the first time, NATO activated Article 5 of the constitutive chart that says that any aggression against a member state will be treated as an aggression against all member states. Not many weeks passed until the discontents and dissensions returned to the daily discourse. Critical books have been written about the "American hegemony" and the European leaders and politicians continued to criticize the American policy of "simplification" and "trivializing" the international problems and some analysts – both Europeans and Americans – went so far as to proclaim the "death of the Atlantic Alliance" and the prophecies of Francis Fukuyama about the end of history and the victory of the value paradigms

of the West were contradicted by other prophets who preached exactly the end of this system of values.

Fukuyama was asking himself disillusioned whether one may further speak of values on which base the concept of "West" was built and if this very West was still existing in reality. In



"Policy Review" magazine, the American neo-conservative analyst Robert Kagan published in 2002 an ample article titled "Power and Weakness" which was later amplified in the book "Paradise and Power. America and Europe in the new world order" whereby the author unequivocally stressed that "time has come when the rhetorics according to which the Europeans and the Americans have in common the same vision on the world or even live in the same world should be ended!... The American and European points of views, Robert Kagan said, that are further away for while the Europeans are heading towards an illusory world of peace, with its own principles and laws, the United States plunges in Hobbes's world where the international laws and principles are no longer credible and where military strength and its use represent the only credible argument. The Americans seem to come from Mars while the Europeans look at Venus. The Americans and Europeans agree on very few things and get along less and less".

This year, when the European community celebrates six decades since the signature of the first unionist treaties, the European Union passes through what Jean-Claude Juncker himself called a multiform "existential crisis" both domestically and in the field of foreign relations: the moral crisis, the crisis of the system of values, the rise of the most opportunist populisms, the crisis of the migration phenomenon, the crisis of the unified currency, the crisis of the internal unity and cohesion, the crisis of the nationalistic nostalgias, the crisis caused by the more and more corrosive incongruity between Donald Trump's "America first" of whom the British daily The Guardian said is in full swing of establishing an "American caliphate" and the need of European unity at any cost proclaimed by chancellor Angela Merkel. The aggravating circumstances caused by "Brexit syndrome" that adds new frissons concerning the perspectives of the evolution of the "poli-crisis" the European community goes through should be added to the above list.

"Our future depends on Europe's cohesion", "Europe cannot count on the United States any longer for its protection, the time of confidence in the USA is over" declared, not once, Frau Mer-

kel seconded by Jean-Claude Juncker's diatribes who believes that "the European Union should replace America on the international stage" and that "America gives up multiculturalism with a ferocity that surprises us. At this stage, we have to replace America which, as international player, lost some of its vigor and influence on a long run with something else".

Rhetorics is not enough for generating solutions. And that "something else" the president of the European Commission spoke of cannot be found either on Venus or on Mars but on a very close planet simply named Europe.

"EUROPE WILL BE MUSLIM, INSHA'ALLAH" OR OUR IDENTITY VERSUS THEIR IDENTITY



**Ambassador prof. Dumitru
CHICAN**

"Those who still believe we have forgotten the lands from which we withdrew one hundred years ago in tears are wrong. We have repeated and repeat that Syria, Iraq and other places on the geographic map of our hearts are not different at all from our motherland. We are fighting so that no foreign flag waves over places, no matter where they are, where the muezzins call for prayer". These are the Turkish president Recep Teyyip Erdogan's words, reiterated in various forms and styles in the doctrinary phraseology of the Justice and Development Party which, more and more focused on the European continent, can be synthesized in a single sentence as controversial as it is lightly treated: "Europe will be Muslim, by Allah's will (*Insha'Allah*), sooner or later".

In terms of the profound significance this idea disseminates, one may ascertain – apparently pessimistically – that the 2018 Europe is not any longer, at least from a sociological perspective, the one that existed at the middle of the last century and it is characterized rather by a very dynamic religious and sectarian pluralism dominated more and more obviously by an offensive

Islam in a western and Christian environment which secularity and identity go through a crisis that cannot be either denied or ignored any longer.

At the same time, Islam is, in its turn, fragmented into a multitude of currents and dogmatic and jurisprudence schools and most of them have mutual adversity and competition relations for imposing, each of them, as "the sole and true Islam" entitled to be recognized as such and to rule the state, the society, the private universe of the individual, a fact that obliges the community to rationalise and to position itself as against some questions (and answers) as provocative as possible.

First of all, the following important question should be considered: how many Muslims are now in Europe and what is the possible trajectory the statistical reality evolves on?

If in 2016, on the whole of the European continent (the European regions of Turkey and the Russian Federation included) there were 53 million Muslims of whom 16 million people of the Islamic community in the states of the European Union, namely 4% of the population, some demographic prognosis foresee that this percentage of Muslims will increase to 8% in 2030 and between 11% and 14% in 2050. The figures and estimations contains a dose of relativism having in mind that in some states of the European Union legalised the interdiction of registering, in the identity documents, the confessional appartenance of the individual and that on behalf of secularity and the respect of the religious privacy.

A second relevant question is the following: what is the origin of the Muslim nationals living today on the territory of the European Union? The answer is as follows in a numerical decreasing order.

- The Maghreb and the Mashreq of the Arab world;
- Turkey, Russia, the Caucasian area;
- Cenral Asia and the Far East, namely Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Indonesia;
- Black Africa ;

- The Balkans, respectively the Europeans Islamised during the Ottoman rule;

- The native Europeans converted to Islam during the modern and contemporary history.

Thirdly, it is about the fact that, in principle, Islam as religion is unique and unitary and the manner it is accepted, interpreted and understood has important variations from an area to another one of the political and spiritual geography of origin of the "European Muslims" such as:

- Societies and regimes which inherited the secular system of governance applied during the colonial period – Africa and, partially the Levant;

- Societies in which Islam impregnated totally the society, the institutions, the family and the person (the Arab world, Central Asia);

- The Sunni Turks oscillating between the religiosity impregnated by the feeling of national identitarian belonging as "Turks", on the one hand, and the secularity inherited from Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, on the other hand;

- The Iranians who left their country after the 1979 Islamic revolution, visibly secularised and, those more reduced as numbers who came more recently to Europe and who are attached to the twelers Shiism and less marked by the spirit of the Khomeynist revolution.

What attract attention when we speak of the Muslims in Europe is the reality that, beyond the mosaic of currents, perceptions or attitudes of the Muslim communities, liing in a "foreign" society generates, for the Muslim man, the need of certain identitarian references, of re-creating in miniature of the original environment and that translates usually in returning to the "origins" which, in this case materialises in the two fundamental sources of religion – the Quran and Sunna (the prophetic tradition) – and that means either a "rediscovery" of the religious factor or an exacerbation of the living and by that the perception accepted as justified of the anti-social, violent, anti-institutional upheavals.

The Islamologues who studied and inestigated this aspect make a non-productive error when

they try to reduce everything to sociology by ignoring or treating superficially the very specific of the Muslim identity which makes man in general and not only homo islamicus – be treated above all as a product of culture where the religion and faith are inseparable components. But the analytical preeminence of sociology means, from the very beginning, a secularising assumption of research which does not allow the correct coverage and understanding of the Islamic reality which is built on Islam's absolute character - religious, spiritual, cultural, political and social – as it was codified in the founding scriptures.

The rather difficult question was raised often of finding a reasonable answer to whether there may exist an "European Islam" a question which, in other words, refers to the no less controversial issue of integrating the Muslims into the host societies and cultures. Being fully European means – at least in the definitions formulated so far by western researchers – the acceptance by the Muslim individual and his adherence to a system of values alien to the Islamic doctrine, law and moral. Pragmatically, he should manifest himself by at least three attitudes which are at least prohibitive for a Muslim, no matter his particularities in what concern the confession, philosophy and identity:

1. The fundamental change of the respective individual's relating with divinity incorporated in the Quran and Sunna. But the representation the man has about transcendence and the close link between the creative divinity and the created man was and continues to be one of the main anthropological conditionalities of the individual's life and social community he belongs to. From this point of view, Islam has dispositions, criteria and norms incompatible with with the values which foreshadowed the European traditions and identity. And renouncing to all these implies a volitive decision which would deconstruct the very motive of the Muslim man of being the bearer of this identity.

2. Limiting up to the elimination of the tutelar dependency on the states and societies of origin. The supporters of the conditions for the ac-

cess to the quality of "European Muslim" understand by that the achievement of a social, material and cultural independence making futile the financial and religious assistance (building mosques, providing the religious staff – imams and preachers – who, most of the time ignore the realities, the customs, the laws and even the language of the destination country etc.)

3. Accepting secularity – a demand and a concept unheard of in Islam for which there is no separating line between the political power and the religious one and which, for many Muslims, is a flagrant synonym with atheism. Moreover, the very source of the Muslim political sphere lies in Shari'a canonic law.

One may easily find out that all mentioned pre-conditionalities reminds, in last analysis, of what the Christian or the colonial mission work achieved, namely an astute process of proselytizing which led to a total deculturalization of the targeted societies, particularly in Africa and the "Latin" America, and, in the end, the identitarian, national and ethnic disappearance of the societies subjected to such a brutal and not a few times violent proselytism. And the maximalist, populist and out of touch with reality imagination continues today. A petition signed and published last April by around 300 personalities – intellectuals, politicians, artists with extreme right or extreme left orientations of the French political and ideological range asking no more and no less than the eliminations of several verses and even original chapters of Qur'an stirred up heated reactions of condemnation from state and Islamic religious institutions. There were well-known names among the signatories such as the former president Nicolas Sarkozy, the two former prime ministers Emmanuel Valls and Jean Pierre Raffarin, the singer Charles Aznavour, the academic and philosopher Bernard Henry Lévi, the actor Gérard Depardieu a.s.o. In his reply, the rector of the Great University Al-Azhar in Cairo, Ahmad El-Khatib, underlined that such extremisms do nothing but undermine the inter-confessional dialogue – which is already shaky and shy – and encourage in the Islamic world the radicalism and, ultimately, the brutal terrorism.

Retragerea constructivismului din relațiile internaționale contemporane



Amel OUCHENANE

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989 indicated the end of the Cold War. The surprising end of the Cold War shifted not only the world order but also debates in international relations theories. It was unexpected by current international relations theories. Without any large conflict and war exploded furthermore without any transformation in the world system (anarchical), for instance, neorealists predicted that the world's bipolar order would persist. Neorealists also claimed that international institutions did not have any effect to make war away because International institutions is a matter of material power challenge between states which are not only worried about the unlimited gain, but also relative gain in cooperation and integration.

After the Cold War, international relations discourse provided more diverse approaches to understand and analyze world politics. Constructivism theory is one of the models of the progressing emergence of international relations theory. Rather than diminishing other major theories, according to its holders and proponents, constructivism theory provides wider illumination a larger explanation for determining the dynamic and the function of world politics.

While realism and liberalism concentrate on material factors like power or corporation, constructivist theory tends to focus on the influence of ideas. Rather than considering the state for granted and claiming that it totally aims to survive, constructivists consider the identity and interests of states as an extremely flexible output of special historical processes. Moreover, the constructivists focus is on the predominant discourse in society. This is because discourse shows and changes interests and beliefs, and sets accepted values, norms of behavior. Thus, constructivism is mainly interested in the main

The history of the relations between the Christian West and the Islamic East is a conflicted one and remanent as such in the collective memory. And Islamophobia, the mercantile populism and the false prudery in approaching the contemporary problems do not offer solutions. And one of the errors the European political elites continue to make is a communitarist approach of this subject and not as it would have been more natural to treat the issue on individual and personified principles. The Muslim, be he a last wave immigrant or be he naturalized in the host countries, should be considered as such from the perspective of the individual and his human rights, and not as member of a community which traditions and community identities are incompatible with the values of the European civilization. Giving in to community claims on behalf of tolerance and for the sake of a props multiculturalism means accepting an abstract and conflicts generating generosity. The assimilation argued through biblical citations and through paternalistic attitudes has no constructive value when a Muslim of size such as the Turkish president Recep Teyyip Erdogan could declare from the very tribune of the parliament in Berlin that "assimilation is a crime against humanity".

It is, at the same time, a duty of European global dimensions that of paying more attention and consideration, through the educational and school system, too, to the history of the continent and to each nation which is part of Europe. When the former French president Jacques Chirac said with a high tone that Europe "has both Christian and Muslim roots" he was forgetting that, except for the cultural values of the ancient Greece which from Spain to the Muslim Sicily were made available to Europe by Islam, the European consciousness was created to a great extent by its confrontation with Islam.

And when Recep Teyyip Erdogan declared that "Europe will be Muslim by Allah's will", he knew that, as a rule, in the Islamic consciousness this "Insha'Allah" does not express as much a hope as it expresses a certainty of an accomplished fact. A truth the Europeanism should not ignore.

sources and roots of alteration and this approach has broadly substituted Marxism.

Constructivism, especially state identity theory explained by Alexander Wendt and Peter Katzenstein, has become far from the almost particularly rationalist mainstream of international relations theory. The constructivist theory, mainly seen as the most significant challenge to rationalist dominance, argues that the theoretical framework focusing on the concept of state identity, can provide an important alternative and option to rational choice theory. State identity is mainly about the non-material factors such as values, culture, norms, ideas etc, studied by the constructivist scholars. It provides very important causal links to support the basic arguments of constructivist theoretical framework.

The term Constructivism was adopted by Nicholas Onuf in 1989 and introduced as "people and societies construct or constitute each other". The main assumption of constructivists is that the fundamental structures of international politics are social and these structures shape actors' identities and interests. Therefore, the world is structured by both knowledge and material factors, according to constructivists the main important relation is between agents and structures. Moreover, constructivists adopt a common concern when understanding and explaining how international structures are defined by ideas and how identities and interests of the states and non-state players are influenced by the structures.

The post-Cold War era played a significant role in legitimating constructivist approach because both liberalism and realism were unsuccessful in predicting this event and had difficulties explaining it. On the contrary, constructivists had an explanation based on ideas and norms; for example, the idea of "common security," adopted by Gorbachev. Furthermore, constructivism theory argues that we live in a period where ancient values and norms are being challenged, limits and boundaries are fading and matters of identity and culture are becoming more prominent and outstanding. Unexpectedly, researchers have been drawn to theories that put these is-

ues front and center. In the post-Cold War era constructivism emerged into the stage of debates in international relations theories. However, some researchers and scholars criticize that constructivism "remains a method than anything else, according to them constructivism does not offer an essential theory of world politics. Moreover, it provides a research approach that can be employed to understand and explain international political economy. Therefore, Constructivism should operate with other theories from different disciplines and branches like comparative politics, social psychology..etc.

On the other hand, constructivism has demonstrating itself as an effective theory in understanding and explaining world politics, especially after Alexander Wendt published his article, *Anarchy is What States Make of It*, which developed the basis of constructivism approach. It focuses more on the nonmaterial world and considers that material world changes are changed by the social world. Thus, the distribution of power and State's military power do not automatically construct an international social structure. Even without any central governance which has authority over all states in the world, the international system does certainly become a "competitive security system".

From a constructivist approach, the main problem in the post-Cold War world is how various groups visualize their interests and identities. However, power is not unrelated. Constructivism focuses on how ideas, norms, values, and identities are created and constructed, how they develop, and how they change the way states comprehend and react to their situation. Thus, it matters whether the US adopts or denies its identity as "global policeman and whether Europeans realize themselves mostly in national or continental terms. Constructivist approaches are highly varied and do not provide a unified group of expectations on any of these matters.

Constructivism varies itself from neoliberalism and neorealism by emphasizing and highlighting the ontological reality of intersubjective knowledge. It does not mean that constructivism neglected the material world because intersub-

jective knowledge and material world interact affect and influence each other. Furthermore, both the material world and intersubjective knowledge are not independent and not separated. They have relative autonomy.

According to Constructivism theory, the material world does not completely define how people, or states, behave. It only limits the chance of interpretation and the intersubjective world that people can build. Moreover, material body enforcing is restricted to social structure. Thus, constructivists do not mean the unlimited possibilities of social structure. However, people have the capability to interpret, as they cannot easily interpret the social world and their own material world. There is restriction of interpretation of the social world, that the material world changes and is changed by the social world.

Constructivism theory discusses the issue of anarchy in the international system, at a simple conceptual level, Alexander Wendt claimed that the realist conception of anarchy does not explain why conflict occurs between states enough. The main thing is how anarchy is understood, and Wendt argues that "Anarchy is what states make of it." He also argues that transnational communication and shared civic values are weakening traditional national obeisance and make an extremely new genre of political alliances. Furthermore, Constructivist theory focuses more on the role of norms, claiming that international law and other normative principles have decreased mainly the notions of sovereignty and changed the legitimate purposes for which state power may be used.

Constructivism theory recognizes the significance of nonmaterial power (culture, ideas, language, knowledge, and ideology) as well as material power because the two powers connect and interact to build the world order. For instance, nonmaterial power works through creating and recreating intersubjective meaning. It clarifies how the material structure, states' identity, interactions and relations between states, and any other social facts should be realized and comprehended.

The end of the Cold War came as a surprise to

the classical dominant theories, who failed to predict or explain the changes in global politics. However, it provided the opportunity for more evolution of critical thoughts, which started since the mid-1980s. The Realist approach in international relations was criticized largely for their materialistic approaches by constructivism, which speedily boomed and was known as a theory that focuses on the social dimension of international politics. This improvement towards the chance of change helped the theory to catch significant elements of the world's relations: the many factors of mainstream presumptions and norms in world politics, which were threatened and challenged by constructivism.

Constructivism defied the theory of power politics, especially dominant perception of the threat and conflict in global politics and picked a fully different approach in studying the construction of the threat through their fundamental focus on the social dimensions of international politics, therefore, it recognizes them as socially constructed elements in the process of identity formation under the influence of the norms and shared values of society.

Discussing the Euro-Med theatre in his 'Geopolitics–Energy–Technology' book, for example, prof. Anis H. Bajrektarevic states: "The MENA theatre is situated in one of the most fascinating locations of the world. It actually represents the only existing land corridor that connects 3 continents. Contributing some 6% to the total world population, its demographic weight is almost equal to that of the US (4,5%) and Russia (1,5%) combined. While the US and Russia are single countries, the MENA composite is a puzzle of several dozens of fragile pieces where religious, political, ideological, history-cultural, economic, social and territorial cleavages are entrenched, deep, wide and long. However, the MENA territory covers only 3% of the Earth's land surface (in contrast to the US' 6,5%, coverage and Russia's 11,5%). Thus, with its high population density and strong demographic growth, this very young median population (on average 23–27 years old) dominated by juvenile, mainly unemployed or underemployed, but socially mobilized and often politically radicalized (angry)

males, competes over finite and scarce resources, be they arable or settlers land, water and other essentials.

Competition in this theatre, that has a lasting history of external domination or interference, is severe, multiple, unpredictable, and therefore it is fluid and unsettled on the existing or alternative socio-economic, ideological, cultural and politico-military models, access, directions and participatory base."

As we see, the work of constructivists was established around their aim in explaining the changes in world politics in the period towards the end, and after the Cold War especially when dominant international relations approaches and theories failed to predict the sudden change in the global politics. Moreover, this transformation raised the question about social construction and the methodology of international relations theories and their involvement and effects in the production of international power.

The main dominant international theories were unable to explain the collapse of Soviet Union, especially the theories which focus on material power, and nuclear weapons. This is because, despite being a nuclear power, the Soviet Union collapsed. Neorealists tried to provide a simple explanation by telling the decline of Soviet power. But, the explanation focused more on domestic politics and economy than on the material structure of world's distribution of power. Thus it could not explain enough why the Soviet Union and Gorbachev adopted decisions which could endanger its national security and survival and stop it from increasing its hegemony and power, However, neorealists were still certain about the significance of neorealism.

Another explanation was given by Democratic liberals who tried to stress the people's aims for freedom and objections to communism. Neoliberalism and the market economy favorably forced their hegemonies to the world and increased the validity of tyranny and command economy. However, while this evidence could explain the decline of communist ideology in the Soviet Union, it could not explain why such transformation and change happens in the

1980s. However, Neoliberals provided another explanation. Liberalism and communism interacted across political borders, especially the new way of thinking among top political leaders decreased the hegemony of communism and made the Soviet Union collapse. Therefore, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War presented a significant challenge for constructivists to understand. Wendt said that "material structure can have special impacts.

The distribution of power, anarchy in international relations and military power do not fix states' identities and relations. State military power can be understood as a threatening power as well as protecting power for other states.

In addition, a nuclear weapon is a matter of perception. For instance, nuclear weapons in the hands of United States has a different meaning for Taiwan than a nuclear weapon in the hands of China. Therefore, considering states "like billiard balls of varying size" is not enough to explain and understand reality. Military capabilities of any state and the distribution of power in the international system are interfering elements but they are not able to understand relations between states. For example, two enemy or allied states can be divided by defining the material military structure. However, the states identification and social structure are important elements which define relations between states. Constructivism theory (actually rather an ontology) argues that common identities and a long history of alliance and cooperation between two states can be a strong ground of cooperative security system. On the other hand, other identities and a long history of conflict and struggle can build a competitive security system based on conflict and wars.

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Defuse this explosive migration summit with a strategic EU study

Giles MERRITT Founder and Chairman of Friends of Europe

If ever an EU summit seemed doomed, it's this week's immigration showdown. Three meetings of EU interior ministers have deadlocked this year on refugees and migration, there was the week-end's inconclusive mini-summit and now the full-fledged European Council looks set to make a fifth.

Tempers are frayed over beggar-my-neighbour national immigration controls, and the burning question is how to avoid a bust-up. Immigration has become so toxic that it risks poisoning intra-EU relationships for years to come.

What is sure about this summit is that EU leaders won't come up with a miracle solution; there's no silver bullet for such a complex problem in such a fraught atmosphere.

The "get out of jail" solution is to launch an independent study by high-level politicians and experts to review the myriad aspects of the problem. Their brief should go far beyond placing limits on immigration and include all the demographic and social factors.

If ever an EU summit seemed doomed, it's this week's immigration showdown

Europe needs a strategy to stretch to mid-century. The more immediate aim should be to re-set public opinion and soften hardline attitudes. The study should show that there is much more to the immigration question than has so far met the public eye.

Many EU governments -- that of Germany, too, now that An-

gela Merkel's coalition is so wracked by the issue -- have been aggravating tensions by bowing to anti-migrant pressures. They have done so for largely electoral reasons, yet have made themselves more vulnerable than ever to the populists.

Until mainstream political parties can point to common policies that reassure voters, populist politicians are able to use fears of mass immigration to wrest power away from them. They will pick responsible EU governments off one by one whenever elections come around.

Much more than domestic politics is at stake. The nationalism preached by anti-migrant populists spells the end of EU solidarity. "Immigration remains the Number One concern of Europeans," warned the EU Commission when it reported recently that only a fifth of the people surveyed still see immigration positively, while almost two-fifths say it's a serious problem.

The number of people now living in an EU country where they weren't born has increased sharply from 34m in 2000 to 57m today, representing more than 11 per cent% of the 512m population. A third are 'free movement' EU citizens, and two-thirds are non-European. At the same time, argument rages over the extent to which Europe's ageing means it needs more workers.

The nationalism preached by anti-migrant populists spells the end of EU solidarity



In both 2015 and 2016, some 1.2m refugees and economic migrants arrived in Europe. That influx slowed to 650,000 people in 2017, but was nevertheless three times as many as in 2007.

Governments like to imply that the 'migrant crisis' is at an end. In truth, it's just starting. Legal immigrants -- as distinct

from refugees and irregular economic migrants -- have been arriving since 2010 at the rate of 1.75m a year, and family reunifications, students and the recruitment of qualified workers suggest that's sure to rise. On top of that, climate change and conflicts are sure to push many others to seek a new life in Europe.

Without a common EU-wide approach there will continue to be much illegal immigration that creates criminalised communities and untaxable black economies.

The mishandling of refugees' asylum applications has been making matters worse. The core problem is the Dublin Regulation of 2003, which stipulates that refugees fleeing persecution must seek asylum from the EU country they first arrived in. Southern EU countries say this is an unfair burden, but it's one others refuse to share.

A substantial majority of refugees are deemed really to be economic migrants, and are refused political asylum. Many evade repatriation homes, and become trapped in limbo to swell the ranks of Europe's undocumented 'illegals'.

The deepening migration controversy is paraly-

sing EU-level attempts to create a common asylum system as well as a long-term approach to migration.

What is sure about this summit is that EU leaders won't come up with a miracle solution

With no obvious solution to hand, the European Council should sidestep the various rows involving Italy, Germany, the four Visegrad countries and others by mandating an independent top-level body chaired by a respected figure to review the many complex aspects of immigration.

Its wide-ranging brief would span economic and social issues within Europe as well as external development policies, and it should submit its recommendations to EU leaders before next year's European Parliament elections.

Immigration is re-landscaping the EU's political terrain, and threatens eventually to tear it apart. A broadly-based and objective analysis of the complex geopolitical shifts taking place is essential, for without it there can be no durable policy solutions.





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CONSIDERATION**The Middle East - quo vadis?***Corneliu PIVARIU*

The so-called "Arab spring" has thrown the Middle East and North Africa in a mess which evolutions in perspective are difficult to anticipate, especially as a result of the global geopolitical situation that does not allow yet to contemplate what the coming world order will be.

Today's main conflicted situation in the Middle East is the one between Iran and Israel. Whether since the emergence of the State of Israel it succeeded in winning all the wars with its Arab neighbours and to sign peace treaties, too, towards the end of the last century with Egypt and then with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the relations with Iran did not evolve at all towards normalization but, on the contrary, new tense and dangerous elements emerged for Israel and for the the peace in the Middle East. The breaking out in 2011 of the protests against Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria seemed to solve the last threat from the close vicinity of Israel by eliminating one of the last dictatorship regimes in the Middle East, the one in Damascus. Turning those protests into a civil war led to escalations and contrary evolutions of which the most important were the Russian intervention in Syria and Tehran's regime direct military involvement for backing Bashar al-Assad, the Tehran's ally ever since the ten-year war between Iran and Iraq.

The situation in Syria got complicated, too, as a result of the mistaken foreign policy pursued by the Obama Administration, of the increased differends between Saudi Arabia and countries in the Gulf (first of all Qatar), of the weakness of the regime in Cairo, the situation in Iraq and the developments in Turkey.

The ayatollahs' regime in Tehran exploited these situations to its own interests for expanding and strenghtening their influence towards the east on the Baghdad-Damascus-Beirut line but also in the Gulf by developing the relations with Qatar and the involvement in the conflict in Yemen. The support they granted to the Palestinian movement Hamas especially in Gaza represents another element through which Tehran achieves its foreign policy in the Middle East.

President's Trump withdrawal from the nuclear accord with Tehran and his hardening the sanctions against Iran, the military strikes carried out by Israel against some Iranian military objectives in Syria as well as Tehran's maintaining its unyielding position in what concern Israel are the main evolutions that made the likelihood of a new military conflict in the Middle East breaking out increase. We consider now that there is an important likelihood, close to 50%, that the USA gets involved in a conflict for overthrowing the regime in Tehran alongside its main allies, Israel and Saudi Arabia. A direct military conflict with the involvement of the American military forces is less probable but not impossible and it depends not only on the Iranian position but also on the relations among Washington, Moscow and Ankara as well as on the domestic position of president Donald Trump. An assessment such as that the ayatollahs' regime in Tehran is unshakable represents an exaggeration and history proved several times the weaknesses of the regimes that considered themselves immutable and then vanished as a result of not being able to adapt themselves to the geopolitical shifts and to the evolutions of the human society. Or, the weakness of the regime in Tehran comes exactly from inside, from the lack of will for reforming.

The developments in the Middle East will be influenced by the situation in Turkey, too, where two years exactly passed since the so-called failed coup attempt (more than 70,000 people arrested and over 110,000 people dismissed from the state administration) and after president Erdogan won a new presidential mandate with increased constitutional powers.

So, the Palestinian issue remains on the background of the concerns in the Middle East and a new peace, vaguely durable in this area, will mean that globally, too, things move towards a new world order which architecture is still difficult to anticipate.

The Main Factors of the Middle East Situation

AFRICA 2018: A PARADISE OF FOREIGN MILITARY BASES

Dinu COSTESCU

powers involved in this strategic game on the chessboard of the African continent.

Since the end of WWII, the African continent did not witness such a concentration of foreign military presences which is, today, from the standpoint of the dimension and of the number of state-actors is higher than the one recorded during the peak periods of the Cold War.

Not the least, on the list of the causal reasons of this phenomenon of geographic expansion of the non-African military presence is the emergence and the dissemination of the jihadist-Islamist phenomenon institutionalized through groups such as Islamic State or its indigenous franchises, the organisations Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) or Boko Haram in the Sahel (Niger, Nigeria, Tchad and of Western Africa). The anarchy, the institutional state dissolution and the serious economic crises most of the sta-

Almost 40 foreign military bases, support points, facilities and permanent or temporary access facilities were inventoried in Africa during the last years and their presence was justified in most of the cases by the imperatives of fighting the terrorism phenomenon, of fighting the maritime piracy, of groups of organized crime and, more recently, in the Horn of Africa, by the tensions created by the civil war in Yemen, by the splits that emerged within the sub-regional organisation of the Gulf Cooperation Council and by the tense climate in the relationship between the Arab Sunni monarchies of this part of the Middle East and the theocratic Shiite regime in Tehran, on the one hand, and between the latter and the United States plus Israel, on the other hand. Yet this ascendant dynamics of the interest for the "black continent" is, at the same time, the effect of an acerbic competition for economic and strategic influence and expansion among the great global and emerging powers, a context in which the role and the opinion of the African states matter less and more, or first of all, the programs and the interests of the



Africa. Political and administrative map

tes and the governments on the continent are confronted with impose another approach of the foreign interest for this region of the map of the world in the sense that the security and economic problems are making up an acute thereat to the economic interests of the industrialised countries seen through the prism of the huge natural resources the African states dispose of among which primarily the energy and mineral resources such as crude oil and natural gas, gold, uranium, diamond, phosphates, bauxite, plutonium, manganese, cobalt and the list may continue. A reality which attracts yet at the same time leads to powerful competitive rivalries as those existing between the United States and France. From this point of view, the need of setting permanent bases is of securing the access of the respective countries to the energy and of other nature resources provision.

On the other hand, one should not ignore another reality not alien at all to the attention the great players pay to the African continent and materialized in the maritime piracy which became a malignant phenomenon in the international waters around the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Djibouti, Eritreea), of the middle eastern part of the continent, disrupting most dangerously and harmfully the navigation on one of the most important maritime routes linking the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea through Bab El-Mandeb Strait, to the Suez Cannal and through the Mediterranean to Europe. Bab El-Mandeb Strait, with a width of 29 km only, allows the daily transit of at least 60 large commercial ships, of which the crude oil accounts for 5mill barrels daily. Yet, at the same time, the passage from the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea is surrounded by a extremely volatile and conflicted vicinity, be it the devastating war a mini-coalition led by Saudi Arabia wages in Yemen against the Houthis separatist rebels backed financially and militarily by Iran, or the insecurity and the instability on the



The Horn of Africa and Bab El-Mandeb Strait. Source IISS

left shore where Somalia and Eritreea are primarily the suppliers of Islamist terrorism or maritime piracy. Nevertheless, during the last period only military bases of Saudi Arabia, the Unied Arab Emirates, Turkey, China and Israel were set up alongside the existing western ones, which we will be mentioned in some other part of this article.

It is obvious that speaking of the "race for Bab El-Mandeb" we do not have in mind the abovementioned competition between Washington and Paris. At the beginning of this year, the former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson declared literally that "the Chinese penetration in Africa threatens not only the natural resources of the continent but also its political and economic stability on a long run". America's worry and also of the Western European community is understandable when since 2009 China became Africa's first commercial partner as the commercial exchanges between Beijing and the African markets amounted in 2016 to \$149.2 billion and China was, at the same time, one of the top investors in different fields of the economic structure and African infrastructure. Therefore it is not surprising that in 2017 China inaugurated

the first military base in Djibouti, not far from the base of the American expeditionary corps "Camp Lemonnier" and the new Chinese location will be ready to receive, by 2026 around 10,000 troops.

India is not absent either from the competition for Africa as it has important commercial exchanges which, from \$1 billion in 1995, raised to \$65 billion in 2015 and also by securing now a military presence through a telecommunication interception station placed north of Madagascar and a naval military base in Seychelles Archipelago with the double purpose of fighting the maritime piracy and of surveillance of China's military activity and presence in the Indian Oceans waters.

In its turn, the Russian Federation listed among its priorities of foreign affairs policy dynamizing the relations and its military, economic and commercial presence relations on the African continent - an objective the head of the Russian diplomacy Serghei Lavrov emphasized recently during a tour of African contacts that included Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Central Africa with which Moscow concluded an agreement for endowing and equipping two battalions of the Central-African army and for deploying 200 instructors of the Russian elite forces for training the profile units in Bangui.

*

As it is now, the foreign military presence in Africa offers the following morphology, whereby the forces and the facilities acting under the UNO's flag or of other multi-state structures made up in their great majority of African units and of non-African preparation teams or of logistical support.

I. France

1. **Djibouti:** The French forces deployed in Djibouti (FFDJ): the most important contingent of the French forces stationed in Africa, with 1,450 militaries, an armoured regiment, a light aviation unit, the 188 Aerial Base with 2000 Mirage planes, C160, Transall and Puma helicopters, a naval base, a training center for waging war in desert conditions.

2. The French forces in **Ivory Coast** - a battalion of marines with missions of operationally securing the areas of strategic interest. 900 military are deployed in 4 centers situated in Abidjan and Toumoudi

3. The French forces in **Gabon:** 350 military deployed in two campuses, namely Camp de Galle with marines and Guy Pidou Aerial Base for attack helicopters and logistics as well as an instruction center for fights in difficult geographical and climatic conditions.

4. The French troops in **Senegal**, with main missions of French interests and nationals, logistical support for operations carried out in the region. They have 350 military in the small town of Ouakam and in the military port of Dakar.

5. The "Epervier" (Falcon) French Forces in **Tchad:** 950 military deployed in four locations. They dispose of a military base in N'Djamena international airport and coordinate the operations carried out on a larger area including Tchad, Niger, Burkina-Faso, Mauritania and Mali.

The French Army has similar permanent bases in Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, Mali, Central African Republic, Guinea Bissau.

II. The United States

It has 21 military bases in **Burkina Faso** (informative surveillance in Sahel region), **Cameroon** (base for Predator drones, around 300 military), **Djibouti** (around 4000 troops), it hosts the American military commandment for the international forces AFRICOM), **Gabon, Ghana, Kenya** (base for the drones used in Somalia and Yemen), **Seychelles, Niger, the Central African Republic, Congo Democratic Republic** (temporary base), **Senegal** (temporary), **Somalia, South Sudan, Tchad** (operational base for Predator and Reaper drones), **Algeria, Egypt, Eritrea** and **Tunisia**.

III. China

As of 2017, China disposes of a military base in Obock port in Djibouti, on the Red Sea which, in 2026, will receive 10,000 military and will turn this emplacement into a China's military outpost

on the African continent.

IV. Great Britain

Great Britain has in **Kenya**, a permanent support base in Nanzuki, 200 km north of Nairobi and it has to deploy in **Mali** an echelon of special forces and a Chinook helicopters squad for anti-terrorist operations in Sahel region.

V. India

A first listening station was installed by India in the northern part of Madagascar in 2007 for the surveillance of the maritime routes in the Indian Ocean. In the Assumption island in the **Seychelles Archipelago**, India is under way of setting up a navy base at the Indian Ocean under the apparent reason of fighting the piracy yet with a

real mission of supervising China's maritime regional activities.

VI. Germany

It has in Niger a military base for air transports to Niamey international airport and uses a detachment deployed in Gao area in Mali with aerial reconnaissance missions, intelligence gathering and logistical support.

VII. Turkey

It has a military base in Somalia used initially for military training and preparation of the Somali army.

VIII. Japan

It has a contingent of around 200 troupes in Dji-



American permanent and temporary bases, USA's facilities in Africa

bouti.

IX. Italy

A military base (400 soldiers) at Missurata, in central Libya and a naval base in Tripoli. Italy has got the right of military access to Libya's aerial space and maritime territorial waters. At the beginning of this year, an Italian military mission was dispatched to Niger (470 military) for supporting the indigenous authorities in their control of the illegal migrationist flow towards Europe.

X. The Russian Federation

As of the beginning of 2018, 200 instructors of the Russian special forces were detached to Bangui, in the Central African Republic, for training and military instruction of the Central African army.

XI. Saudi Arabia

Negotiations are going on for the creation of a Saudi military base in Djibouti, especially for supervising the Iranian navies while Riyadh and Tehran are engaged in a war on the Yemeni territory.

XII. The United Arab Emirates (UAE)

After a failed attempt of setting up a permanent military presence on the Yemeni Soqatra island in the Indian Ocean, the authorities in Abu Dhabi are exerting efforts for building a military base in Somalia (in the Somaliland independentist area) where a mixed aerial and naval base is to be set up at Berbera. The UAE has also a limited military presence in Eritrea and in Libya. The Yemeni ports of Mokha and Hodeida are consi-

dered as well as possible destinations of new Emirati presences or a stable Emirati-Saudi presence.



TOWARDS A CONCILIATION BETWEEN THE ARABS AND THE JEWS?

Dinu COSTESCU

The modern history of the Middle East means, in the historical context of the XXth century, a history of the conflict between the Arab world and Israel. Since the Emergence of the State of Israel on the map, on May 14th, 1948 to the first act of peace in this region 30 years had to pass – a period of time blood tainted by four major wars which left behind more than 52,000 dead – Jews and Arabs -, hundreds of thousands injured, orphans, refugees, huge material destructions, painful reconfigurations of the political geography and especially the feeling that this "Arab-Israeli conflict" or "the Middle East conflict" is not just an acerbic confrontation for survival for one side, and for liberation and dignity for the other side, there is the feeling that beyond the politicianist and populist rhetorics, the great Arab-Israeli conflict is more than a military conflagration and manifests itself as a war between two histories, two cultures and two civilizations.

Since the first armed confrontation in 1948, seven decades passed this spring and 30 years had to pass until the achievement, in 1978-1979, of the first act of Arab-Israeli conciliation following the historical visit paid to Israel by the former Egyptian president Anwar El-Sadat and the conclusion, on March 26th, 1979 of the Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt. For this "treason of Arab unity and solidarity", Egypt was excluded from the Arab League which headquarters was moved from Cairo to Tunis and Anwar El-Sadar was killed on October 6th, 1981 by the bullets of



the Islamist fanaticism.

14 more years passed until September, 1993 when on the lawn of the White House the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Yasser Arafat and the Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin signed "The Declaration of Principles on interim arrangements of Self-Governance", currently known as "The Oslo Agreements" meant to open the way to a gradual transition to a Palestinian autonomy and to finally setting up a Palestinian state. The signatories were awarded the Nobel Prize and paid with their lives too, – Yizthak Rabin was shot by an Israeli fanaticist on November 4th, 1995 and the Palestinian leader died on November 11th, 2004 under suspected circumstances which were not elucidated until this day.

Another year passed until the peace between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was sanctioned by "Wadi Araba Treaty" (Arava in hebrew) signed on October 26th, 1994.

All these three documents of bilateral relations were the results of armed conflicts the signatory states were engaged in.

The only political demarche towards peace from and on behalf of the Arab community which was not the immediate consequence of a military conflict is to be found in the so-called "Arab Peace Initiative" which was drawn up by Saudi Arabia and presented at the Beirut Summit of the Arab League in 2002. The initiative, backed and assumed by the Arab League proposed, for the first time, a global solution to the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, the recognition of the State of Israel right to existence and the normalization of the relations with the Arab world based on Israeli withdrawal from all Arab occupied territories and the creation of an independent Palestinian state having Jerusalem as its capital. The Arab initiative had no practical results whatsoever.

Today, we witness in the Middle East an important shift of paradigm concerning the very conception of the Arab-Israeli relating, a process in which some analysts identify a genuine sudden change of the interest of gradually giving up, even if slow, the traditional hostility between

these two belligerent camps in favour of a plurimorphic and peaceful coming closer. From the famous syntagms of "throwing the Jews into the sea" and of "wiping out the Zionist enemy from the geography" other forms of unequivocal, discursive and practical of expression of the will both the Israeli side and the Arab community (or, for the time being, part of it) manifest and the place of the old rhetorical patterns was taken by circulating new possible paradigms among which "conciliation", "coming closer", "normalization" or "the common existential and security interests" are to be found.

The attempts and demarches of extending bridges between the Israelis and the Arabs are not new and modern and contemporary history of the region witnessed not a few of them: commercial relations, various forms of Israeli representation especially in the Arab Maghreb states, semi-official dialogues at government level a.s.o. yet lacking an appropriate environment having at the base the idea of global peace between the Arab world and the Jewish state they had rather the characted of good offices more or less temporary and kept away from public opinion and media information.

The political and military developments the region witnessed during the last years generated profound conceptual, strategic and security revisions starting with the interventionists wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the dramatic overturnings caused by the "Arab spring" up to the political and military coalition of the global international community against the institutionalized jihadism in the destructive form of the "new Islamic caliphate" and the emergence and development of new security equations, of new competitions for influence and expansion among the new poles of the regional equation, the deterioration to the extreme limits of the sectarian and hegemonic tensions as it is the case of Iran and Saudi Arabia, the perpetuation of the Syrian civil war and the direct meddlings of the great global players in the regional conflicted developments – all these generating inevitably the insecurity feeling and, implicitly, the need of new alliances, of new security approaches under the sign of defending the national security interest etc.

Today, the Arab standard bearers of the idea of coming closer and normalizing of their relations with Israel are preferentially Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates seconded more discretely by the other hereditary monarchies in the Gulf area.

The relating between these Arab states and Israel witnessed during the last ten years a unprecedented head start that determined the Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to declare that "the Arab states in the region are not any longer looking at Israel as an enemy but rather and more and more as an ally", while the sovereign of the tiny Kingdom of Bahrain broke a taboo and proclaimed "the right of the State of Israel of defending itself" against the Iranian security threats. When the monarch Hamad Bin Issa Al-Khalifa pronounced these words, he sent a double message: that one of the fundamental reasons of the new Arab orientations is to be found in what the monarchies in the Gulf consider to be an "existential threat" Iran represents for their security interests, on the one hand, and that the Iranian theocratic regime is the common enemy of both the Arab countries and Israel something that, logically implies a common Arab-Israeli alliance for counteracting these threats.

In 2015, the United Arab Emirates authorized the opening in Abu Dhabi of an Israeli representation in the field of renewable energy and participates to joint military exercise with the Israeli army. Signs from the Saudi side are also visible for opening and coming closer materialized in unpublicised contacts of the foreign affairs ministries and of the intelligence services and in consultations on issues such as advanced technologies, in authorizing the civilian Israeli air company El Al to fly over the Saudi territory towards destinations in the Far East and the Indian sub-continent etc.

For its part, the Israeli government succeeded in making president Donald Trump an active spokesman of the Jewish state besides the Arab chabcheries and particularly besides the shores of the Arabic-Persian Gulf.

In the framework of this triangular relation Tel-Aviv – Riyadh -Washington, a question arises:

who needs more whom? And the answer refers undoubtedly to Israel whose prime minister pursues since many years a priority objective, namely normalizing the relations with the Arab "moderate Sunni" countries and achieving, under very advantageous circumstances, an Israeli-Arab conciliation without that being preconditioned of an Israeli-Palestinian peace. Or, in the new context, solving the Palestinian file is brought back to timeliness by Saudi Arabia as bargaining chip and transaction for normalizing the relations with Israel. In fact, for Riyadh it is not the solving the Palestinian issue or implementing the "2002 Arab Peace Initiative" a "priority of priorities" but the extent to which this file serves its national interests in the "existential" conflict between the Saudi Sunni leadership and the Iranian Shiite expansionism.

The adventure of conciliation does not lack traps. The Israeli flag brandished on an Israeli embassy in the heart of "the House of Islam" (*Dar Al-Islam*) would bring back to the collective memory the ideological reason for which Ossama Bin Laden set up his terrorist "Base" (an accusation brought to the Saudi monarchy of allowing that the holly soil of Islam be desecrated by the boots and the caterpillars of the "unfaithful Crusaders" while a green flag enscribed with the fundamental text of the confession of faith brandishing over a Saudi embassy in Jerusalem might have dramatic outcome in the Arab and Islamic world for the Wahhabite regime self-titled "custodian, depository and servant" of Islam's sacred places.

Any beginning is difficult. It is important it is not obliged, by the very collocutors, to be heading towards a lamentable end.



IRAN - ISRAEL: THE NEW FRONTLINE OF THE MIDDLE EAST?

Ambassador prof. Dumitru CHICAN

Summary

The conflicted status characterizing the Middle East region witnesses now an ascending rivalry between two important camps engaged in an acerbic competition for domination and for strengthening their own security within the regional security system. It is, on the one hand, about the coalition which, alongside the Islamic Republic, as state actor, there are state and non state entities aligned around the regime in Tehran. On the other hand, it is about an adverse camp made up of traditional regional allies of the Western community led by the United States of America, as Israel, Saudi Arabia and the assembly of the hereditary Arab monarchies in the Arabic-Persian Gulf and having as a functioning vector not exactly the structure of a strict sense alliance or coalition but a consensual approach of a conflict considered mutually, by both camps, as an existential and security threat. The trajectory advanced by the confrontation between these two belligerent groups is the one tracing today the red line which violation, by one or the other of camps, threatens to throw the Middle East region in a heated conflict with major geopolitical consequences.

The hostility among the mentioned players is not new and the dynamics of conflicted type of the relations between Saudi Arabia and Tehran represented, mainly during the last ten years, one of the defining elements for the political and military climate of the Middle East and of the sub-regional area of the Gulf and the diversity of the fronts, of the alliances and extra-regional involvements made that the rivalry between the Sunni Wahhabism and the Iranian sectarianism increased lately up to a level whereby any local accidental spark would have the energy of igniting a regional conflagration much more dangerous as it may attract the main global players equally hostile to each other – the United States and the Russian Federation. The recent decision

of Donald Trump's Administration of unilaterally withdrawing from the 5+1 agreement reached with Iran in 2015 for settling the disputes linked to Iran's nuclear concerns and programs has to be added to the already existing risks and that had consequences not only in increasing the mutual tensions between the main players but also bringing the nuclear armament race back to the forefront.

Iran and the "Refusal Front"

The Khomeynist doctrine of "revolution export" to the regional environment materialized, for the Iranian theocratic regime in setting up the so-called "Resistance and Refusal Front" based on the political use of sectarianism, on promoting a regional expansion policy and creating an alliances system with state actors (Iraq after the removal, in 2003, of Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime, even during the period when it was ruled by the secular regime of general Hafez Al-Assad) or non state actors (the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the political and military movements "Amal" and "Hezbollah" in Lebanon, Hamas movement as a Palestinian branch of the the "Muslim Brotherhood", the Islamic Jihad in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories or, for a time, even the radical Islamist network Al-Qaida). From the initial declared objective – the rejection of the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and of recognizing the existence of the State of Israel as well as rejecting any defeatist solutions or negotiations imposed by America and by its Israeli ally, the Islamic Republic redirected itself towards the expansion of its own influence into the Levant and the Mediterranean Sea and raising Iran to the statute of regional power and keeping and increasing at the same time the hostility towards Israel and the United States, on the one hand, and undermining Saudi Arabia's same aspirations of regional influence and power of the Sunni Kingdom. On this background, the theocratic Iranian regime's doctrine starts from the idea that the military superiority of any other actor of the "adverse camp" is circumscribed to some plans aimed at overthrowing the regime and the order instated by the 1979 revolution, a fact that imposed the idea that obtaining at least a deterrence equilibrium

if not a military superiority against its enemies is achievable by developing programs that bring Iran to the situation of disposing of a nuclear arsenal. On the other hand, the Iranian deterrence doctrine and of strengthening its own presence and influence in its geographical proximity rejects *de plano* the very idea of instituting in the region of an order and system of forces excluding Iran one way or another. And, from this standpoint, the military strength as leverage of achieving political interests may constitute an essential factor in the overall geopolitical and geopolitical approaches of Tehran's decision-makers. On this basis, the Islamic Republic exploits any strategic opening and opportunities that may appear and which, combined with an indisputable ability of using the non-state actors in preventing or using to its own interests conflicted situations secure to the regime a remarkable capacity of resilience even in spite of dysfunctionlities and troubles existing at a certain time on the domestic chessboard. The war in Yemen – relatively less costly for Tehran as compared with the "Arab alliance" initiated and led by Saudi Arabia offers, from this point of view, an as telling as possible example. In the same line, no less significant is the way in which Tehran explored the fault line produced between the State of Qatar and the other Saudi Arabia's satellite monarchies for weakening both the credibility of the monarchy in Riyadh and the cohesion of the sub-regional organization of the Gulf Cooperation Council and, on the other hand, the rapid adaptation to the situation created within the European Union in the relations between Brussels and Washington after Trump Administration's unilateral withdrawal from the 5+1 treaty.

The anti-Iranin front

Despite some common interests backed by Trump Administration, setting up a new viable and active front against Iran remains yet a debatable objective. It is true that the United States, Saudi Arabia, the Uited Arab Emirates and Israel share a common aversion towards the Iranian regime, these states are far from constituting together a pragmatic anti-Iranian coalition. While the Jewish state and the Arab monarchies in

the Gulf are sending mutually encouraging signals for a coming together or even for a normalization of relations among them, there is a series of obstacles confronting this aspiration which, no one of the interlocutors has either the availability or the capacity of transcending and, among these, before anything, they haave the Gordian knot of the Palestinian file and, in this context, the impossibility of thinking of the presence of a Saudi diplomatic mission for instance in Israel when th prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself let it known that, after Donald Tump's step, any new embassy opened in the State of Israel should be in Jerusalem.

The abovementioned regional players have in common as well the conviction that, under the current circumstances, the only way of obtaining and maintaining the superiority over Iran is the recourse to force, as the diplomatic kit was, from this point of view, as inefficient as it was dangerous to the extent that, on the one hand, no diplomatic effort will determine the Iranian regime to make a minimal concession in front of the listed adversaries and, on the other hand, for the recourse to the diplomatic leverages would be seen in Tehran as a sign of weakness and, moreover, in case of a failure of the diplomatic advances, the arrogance and the inflexibility of the theocratic regime would increase. With regard to the vision of the current Administration in Washington that strength is the only way of approaching the Iranian file is due to Donald Trump's conviction that, once the danger Islamic State represented was eliminated, Iran will remain the only disturbing and threatening factor of the order in the Middle East. Or, from the standpoint of the Sunni Arab states in the Gulf, this American manner of seing things offers a good opportunity of "containing" the Iranian strategy and of pressures which, during Barack Obama's mandate would have not been possible. Donald Trump Administration itself starts from the idea that achieving a strong anti-Iranian front in the region would allow the preconditions of creating, in the future, of a new security architecture serving the security interests of Israel and of the Arab regional allies, would facilitate the efforts aimed at normalizing the relating

between Israel and the Arab states in the Gulf and, in the end, would encourage the efforts aimed at finding a solution for the Palestinian problem. From this perspective, the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman is considered an appropriate partner for edifying a bridge of relations between the Arab Gulf and the Jewish state going through the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Israel – perceptions, analyses, projects

For the Israeli decision-makers, Iran represents, at least at the time being, the greatest security threat if not even existential, and such a perception is shared without reserves at the planning and decision level of the military institution and intelligence services. From the Israeli analysts' and politologists' point of view, the Iranian threatening sources are in the possible development of the nuclear arsenal, in supporting terrorism, undermining the regional regimes and policies, the intense manufacturing of ballistic missiles and the ideological and sectarian influence. The assessment of the Israeli decision-making according to which the Russian intervention in the Syrian civil war, coupled with the involvement on the front of the Lebanese Hezbollah formation in support of Bashar Al-Assad's regime contributed to the increase of the threats aimed at the security of the Jewish state. By limiting its involvement in Syria to occasional raids in the Syrian air space, to missions of humanitarian assistance and to backing - yet not officially confirmed - certain groups of the Syrian active armed opposition in the Golan Heights, Israel was not engaged as part to the diplomatic negotiations on Syria's future. Under such circumstances and in the light of Donald Trump Administration's regional policy, the Arab Sunni states and particularly Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt intensified discretely the security cooperation with Israel, the intelligence service included. Such a security cooperation with Israel of the main Sunni states in the region combined with the anti-Iranian policy of Donald Trump Administration could dynamize and speed up the process of coming closer and, finally, normalizing the Israeli-arab relations based as well on the common assessment of the

threats the Iranian policy generates. Confronted with the Iranian project of achieving a "Shiite arch" on the Iraq-Syria-Lebanon - the Mediterranean Sea axis, Israel is vitally interested in the creation of an alliance with the Sunni monarchies in the Gulf for counteracting Tehran's expansionist ambitions and to compensate the relative distance the United States took as far as the Middle East problems were concerned and which was fundamented and promoted by the former Barack Obama Administration and to create a propitious climate for approaching a favourable solution of the Palestinian file.

Implementing the Israeli strategic vision is not lacking impediments and hurdles especially in what concern the objective of eliminating Iran and any of its military presence on the chessboard of the Syrian war. First of all because this presence means around 60,000 fighters Iran commands in Syria. Lately, the exchange of belicose threats between Tehran and Tel-Aviv intensified yet given the existing situation, it is difficult to make a net separation between rhetorics and real intentions to say nothing of the fact that without a clear backing of Donald Trump of the Israeli regional aims, Benjamin Netanyahu can not push things beyond a limit whereby a unpredictable reaction of Vladimir Putin may come. Under such circumstances, it is not precluded that the Israeli government take into consideration a re-gauging of its objectives, scope and priorities in what concern Iran and the war in Syria and make recourse to an alternative use of the open and confidential military capacities with a "cordial" diplomacy with the regional and international players. It is premature for the time being to speak of a conflict of a dimension of least the 1973 one be it for the reason that Israel would be in an open conflict with the Russian Federation - a non-Arab power -, without common borders with the Jewish state and without the possibility of controlling the reactions of the pro-Iranian, non-state players such as the Lebanese Hezbollah or the Islamic Jihad in Ghaza. And the consequences would be, certainly difficult to assess.



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The second Trianon. Hungary and the stake of the Black Sea gas

Dr. Dan DUNGACIU –

There are two deafening silences in Bucharest's foreign policy. One relates to Chişinău (we turn a blind eye to an episode which would equate to Putin's invalidating Navalnîi's victory in the contest for Moscow's mayorship) – in fact a higher court in the Republic of Moldova invalidated last month the election of the opposition and pro-European candidate although the international observers reported officially that there were no irregularities in the process - , the other one relating to Budapest. The latter silence has a theory also: if we speak publicly of what Budapest does/says we play according to Budapest's rules.

It is exactly what the Hungarians are waiting for, namely this mistake of reacting for thus they would reach the aims of their provocations and would undoubtedly win.

The theory is staggering. Because if you take two steps back, you realize immediately its absurdity: what else could Budapest win if it won everything so far? It humiliates Romania by its refusal of attending the National Day, prime minister Orbán does not meet the officials in Bucharest, the Democratic Union of the Hungarians in Romania – DUHR - (an ethnic political(?) party) became a "subsidiary" of FIDESZ in Romania, it already set aside the Black Sea gas, the Danube is blocked out in Budapest, Romania's trade deficit with Hungary is almost equal to Romania's deficit with China.

The Hungarian minister of Foreign Affairs poses in Washington as Europe's defender, Budapest is gradually becoming a regional hub for Romania, Bucharest is sitting on the OECD sideline due to the very neighbour whom we claim we have "a perfect friendship". And many more.

What else could it win if Romania would react?

Actually, this thesis is the extent of our today's helplessness: the relationship with Budapest is not a matter of adjectives, it is a matter of projects. A project that Hungary has and Romania has not.

Frozen in their own misunderstanding, the Romanian politicians leave the feeling that 1918 or the Treaty of Trianon did not take place yet in their minds. Nothing of the potential of those milestones (i.e. the Centennial) does not vibrate in their consciences. Romania is defensive, silent and irrelevant. And the official declarations are strictly the result of public pressures and of the apprehensive questions. They are reactive, without vision, without stake, without consequences.

We are on the way of recording the profound and irrepressible failure of a decision-making class that will go down in history as the political generation who missed the Centennial. Let's take it in turns. **Hungary under the sign of trauma. "The greatest injustice in the world's history".**

Hungary has already chosen a country trade mark for the Centennial of Romanians' union and in the 2020 perspective. And that is trauma. We are a nation traumatized by WWI, by (the Treaty of) Trianon and you all have to understand that. And the trauma is ours, ours only, it is unique and unrepeatable. Budapest declared itself the winner by far of the contest of suffering in Central and Eastern Europe.

We are the champions of suffering. Look at our wounds! They are still open, purulent, obvious. And, if they are not, we will do whatever needed to become so! Such "wounds" are abundantly displayed in Budapest and in Brussels, on streets and boulevards, in exhibitions and museums. It is a showed off, ostentatious and uncensored suffering. Wounds should not be healed but dis-

played, exhibited. Sympathy is requested, not assistance. We do not want to solve or overcome the trauma, we want to highlight it. We are in the region the image of "the suffering righteous". We are an Eastern Europe's Job...

There is no natural step towards resolution. Any suggestion would be an insult; a genuine attempt to the Hungarians' national identity as seen by today's political leaders. They do not want to cure themselves because trauma is too precious. If the trauma is solved by a miracle, what is left thereafter? A question no one wants to ask seriously...

Trauma or the feeling of trauma is claimed, too. And on behalf of trauma we claim the right to react, to commiseration, to assistance. Janos Lazar, the prime minister Viktor Orban's director of cabinet and second in power in Hungary told that frankly to the Europeans in a speech delivered on the occasion of the Day of National Cohesion which was celebrated – how else? – the very day they commemorated the signing of the Treaty of Trianon in 1920: "It is high time that our neighbours and Europe's leaders admit and adjust their policies accordingly: the Hungarian nation is the victim of the Treaty of Trianon and not its initiator or offender. It is unacceptable that the only thing the leaders of the neighbouring countries can say is that it is time the Hungarians override their old claims. The Hungarian nation should receive if not material reparations at least moral reparations for the greatest injustice of the world's history". Did you read? "The greatest injustice of the world's history".

Vladimir Putin is a modest fellow, he limited himself to a century. For him, the collapse of the USSR was "the greatest catastrophe of the XXth century". For the Hungarians, Trianon is no more and no less "the greatest injustice of the world's history".

This is actually the background noise or the scenery on which the bilateral relations are unfolding. Hungary still wants a rematch after Trianon. As there is no possibility for an actual war, Budapest wants nevertheless to fight once more in the WWI.

And to win it.

The relations between Romania and Hungary in terms of the ethnical and identitarian aspect

Budapest's ethnical and identitarian gesticulation was abundant and it is difficult from where to start. Institutions of commemoration and of managing the memory have been set up by government decree such as the Research Institute VERITAS which has three objectives of which the most important is Trianon and its consequences. A good part of the Hungarian irredentists abroad are present there and are warming-up for 2020.

We recorded in 2017 the obstinate and defiant refusal, without precedent at the European level, of the Hungarian diplomats to attend the National Day of Romania. Even after that no confirmation came that things may change to the better in spite of the humiliating gestures made by the officials in Bucharest. Moreover, the prime minister Viktor Orban ignores totally the Romanian officials whom he does not meet.

Insistent visits of the Hungarian historians to Romania start almost concomitantly in order to reopen a dialogue on matters pertaining to WWI, consequences and retrospective evaluations and the first aimed at institution was the Academy of Romania.

An essential institution belonging to the Romanian arsenal of foreign policy had an even more bizarre idea: a reunion of several European historians boarding on a boat in Budapest who were to keep discussing the consequences of WWI up to Sulina (the easternmost port of the European Union on the Black Sea). In the end, they would have disembarked with fresh conclusions to be presented on the eve of the Centennial.

To its credit, the Academy of Romania was prudent. For very good reason. What has Romania to debate/clarify about the consequences of WWI? What is unclear? What is "debatable"? Mere calling into question the consequences has obviously a political, not a historical objective.

In the first place, Hungary as a national state is not the Austro-Hungarian empire and not even

its successor, the entity which, after the war did not pass, alongside other empires, the judgement of history which proclaimed ever since as supreme political principle the "principle of nationalities" based on national majorities, not on imperial minorities. This is how the national state of Hungary was born.

The Hungarian officials or semi-officials do not realize today in what schizofrenia some of them are in: on the one hand, they abhor president Woodrow Wilson's "pax americana" and the Treaty of Trianon and, on the other hand, Hungary has a leader who is the perfect embodiment of the spirit of Trianon (he even exceeds it sometimes), namely the idea of a national state based on ethno-national majorities!

Yet if there was something debatable, it would have been the manner the Hungarian delegation led by Count Appony who tried as much as possible, in Paris, in 1920, to adjourn the signing of the peace treaty that was to lead to Transylvania's Union with Romania. The Hungarian delegation's justification is astounding and it would be interesting whether the Hungarian historians in Budapest, bent today on retrospective conversations, debate that issue.

There is no surprise that the documentation presented by Count Appony denied the Dacian-Roman continuity, that the Romanians' history in Transylvania was strictly distorted in accordance with Roesler's theory (the Romanians came from the Balkans during XIV – XV centuries) or that they were a "disturbing factor" of the Hungarian order and efforts were needed to civilize the "semi-nomadic shepherds".

What is really shocking is the entrenched endeavour to prove to Europe and to America, i.e. to the "civilized world", the "inferiority of the Romanian race". No more, no less. We pick almost at random: "Intellectually and economically, Transylvania is one hundred years more advanced than Romania so that annexing it to Romania would have a baleful influence on its development and might cause as serious as possible troubles"... Or: "The superiority of the Hungarians and the Saxons of Transylvania is neither due to the protection of the Hungarian state, nor

to a system of oppression based on violence. This is a supposition denied by statistical data that prove that the inferiority of the Romanian race is manifest in a striking manner whenever they have room for private initiative"... "The backwardness of Romanians' civilization and economic development should not surprise anyone, it is a certainty that the Romanians, living in a state alongside other peoples, do not succeed and did not succeed in becoming equals to these peoples (...)"

It is a clear argumentation of an empire which considers its subjects inferior racially. Yet the Hungarian academic circles, nostalgic about pre-Trianon situation, do not want any longer to discuss about it today when visiting Bucharest.

The relations between Romania and Hungary in geopolitical terms

It is not any more the case to rerun the arguments about the consistent and dangerous cooperation between Budapest and Moscow. The irony is in some other place. The recent episode with the declarations in unison of the Hungarian officials about the Black Sea gas and the "Romanian sabotage" reached, beyond the irreverent tone, unimaginable aspects.

The position Romania is placed in is staggering. In the first place, the main message was conveyed from Washington (synchronized with the message from Bucharest), on the occasion of a world conference dedicated to energy where Romania had no representative.

Secondly, it is about a representative of a state notorious in the region for three things:

- a). Hungary sabotaged the European project Nabucco which was to bring natural gas through Turkey from the Caspian Area and Central Asia to Europe in order to avoid the dependency on Russian gas;
- b). Viktor Orban builds Paks nuclear plant with Russian technology and loans amounting to \$10 bil. which is, according to some voices, one of the biggest corruption scandal;
- c). Budapest discontinued unilaterally the Eu-

ropean project of BRUA (Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria) pipeline which was to bring gas to Austris. BRUA does nor exist any longer due to Budapest, not to Bucharest.

Nevertheless, we arrive today to a genuine and ridiculous reversal of roles. Things are clear. Hungary's project is to become regional leader/hub and by that to minimalize and remove Romania from the map.

Stopping the gas at Budapest is the consequence of this project as well as the future connection with Turkish Stream or prolonging the contracts with the Russians. Budapest plays today the Euro-Atlantic card – as it did yesterday with the Russian card – for its own ends for maximizing its position in the region and marginalising Romania.

At the last minute, Bucharest has to understand that if Romania has had towards Hungary an assumed and explicit policy of appeasement, Budapest has had towards Romania a genuine policy of containment.

The relations between Romania and Hungary in political terms

Politically, Bucharest has towards Budapest a concessive attitude and avoids to confront Budapest with the consequences of its acts considering that if it let Viktor Orban to take one thing too far, he will calm down and that will quench his thirst of provocations.

There is an English word with profound implications on the international arena – appeasement.

The classical example is the policy of the British government led by Neville Chamberlain, illustrated by the 1938 Treaty of Munich. The appeasement policy did not prevent in any case the war, although this objective was the justification of the assumed concessions. On the contrary. Encouraged by this ceding that was perceived as a weakness, Hitler went on the offensive and invaded Poland. As the cynic fox Winston Churchill said: "An appeaser is someone who feeds a crocodile hoping he will be the last one

to be eaten".

That was and still is Bucharest's policy. Romania accepted and swallowed everything, further feeding the crocodile. Today's Hungary is based on 70% extremist vote (illiberal vote plus extreme right vote) with a single untainted spot, namely the liberal one, around Budapest. Hungary is today an illiberal regime, a construction based on a sophisticated legislative/constitutional evolution that modified fundamentally the societal and political cornerstones of the neighbouring state and affected, as some voices say, the anti-totalitarian resistance pillars of the Hungarians.

In spite of this reality, the moral superiority is claimed. And the paralyzed Romania made unconceivable cedings. Politically, DUHR became FIDESZ's "subsidiary" in Romania, and the blackmail of this party has not only a domestic political component, but also a geopolitical one. The concessions made to DUHR are requested by Budapest, including for "taming" its position with OECD. Romania has the hands tied. Budapest grasp the impossible situation and cannot help itself to banter it.

In a show broadcasted on June, 4th by the Hungarian TV ECHO, the Hungarian vice-prime minister Zsolt Semjén made a series of amazing statements: "We have to wear the black armband for Trianon, we have to be proud of surviving and we have to present the historical justice. It is important to underline that no successor state has too many reasons to celebrate. Considering that the 1918 Alba Iulia National Assembly (when Transylvania declared its union with Romania) was not legitimate juridically (as it was still under Austro-Hungarian rule at the time), the "toughest" issue is represented by Romania as these days Transylvania is not the main issue in Romanians' conscience, but the fact that the Romanians living in the Republic of Moldova, in Bessarabia, on the territory between the rivers Prut and Dniestr and the Danube Delta do not want to unite with Romania. Due to tha fact that Romania did not annex the Republic of Moldova, it suffered its first great defeat in its history, something the Romanians cannot accept

anymore. The second issue is the possible separation of the Romanian Moldova region from Muntenia (the southern part of Romania) and that represents a permanent fear in the Romanians' and Romanian politicians' national conscience". These are the words of a vice-prime minister of a state Romania has "a perfect friendship".

The relations between Romania and Hungary in economic terms

Romania's trade deficit with Hungary was 2.7 bil. euro in 2017 (the deficit with China was almost 3 bil. euro!).

Hungary proclaims itself Romania's regional hub, it is interlinking with the West, pursues a regional policy (the Western Balkans) and a global one (see MOL's recent investments in Pakistan), far beyond its dimensions. Budapest plays the "Three Seas Initiative" and pursues its economic interests when no Romania's convincing economic projects in this format have emerged yet.

Romania is blackmailed and is kept in check at the OECD, where Hungary is working hard to set political criteria as prerequisites for accession (countries such as Russia or Colombia that received the "road map" were not confronted with political criteria).

Hungary's objective with OECD is in fact geopolitical and geoeconomic as is the case with the Danube's blockage, strangled in Budapest, so that its enormous transport potential cannot be capitalized on and implicitly minimalizing Constanta Port's potential. Budapest does not want a strong Romania, therefore it does not want a Romania as OCDE member state. And if it will accept, the price will be enormous.

Moreover, another tendency worth mentioning here emerged recently. Economically, Hungary "sells itself" abroad as a 12 million consumers market, not 10 million as Hungary's population is supposed to be. The extra millions come from the so-called "The Szekler Land" Budapest presents as part of its economic zone, namely the market controlled by Hungarian companies

(hence the DUHR's transformation into a "subsidiary" of FIDESZ).

The story of Black Sea gas is just an episode in this ample picture. The Romanian gas (leased) is on its way of arriving to Budapest and until the Romanian diplomacy succeeds (how?) to turn BRU into BRUA, the gas will be distributed, managed and allocated by Hungary. At the time the Romanian gas in the Black Sea will be exploited, Romania's stake is to keep an as big as possible quantity for its own development.

Experts are pointing to three directions:

- a). Connecting households to gas (35% in Romania compared to 95% in Hungary), that may be achieved including based on European grants or state aid;
- b). Gas-fired power plants (not coal-fired or predominantly coal-fired power plants);
- c). Relaunching the petrochemical industry which has a favourable restarting basis, the older platforms with the necessary facilities of Oltechim, Borzești Onești, Pitești (electricity, transport infrastructure, work licences etc.).

Yet in the mean time, Hungary is digging its own and others' tombs. Because the collateral victims of the Hungarian officials' contemptible and irresponsible behaviour might be... Exxon-Mobil and OMV, the corporations with operating licences of the Black Sea gas and which are hurrying up, for good reason from their point of view, to sell it.

They are not interested to whom to sell, yet when Romania has no plan to absorb the gas, it will go to the one who booked it already, namely to the Hungarian companies. Here the political defection may occur. In its contempt to the Romanians, the official Budapest opens a public debate in Romania about the Black Sea gas which was avoided so far. Namely, it further politicizes the issue.

And the following issue is raised: why must Romania extract now untimely its Black Sea gas when it cannot possibly exploit it, sell it to a Hungary – a Trojan Horse of Putin's Russia – which humiliates, banter and blackmails Bucharestc?

Isn't it better to wait until it can capitalise itself on?....

The proverbial Hungarian haughtiness risks to play tricks this time, too, to Budapest, as it did many times in history.

The concensus of silence. Who's afraid of Viktor Orban?

There are no conclusions, just questions without answer. The silence hanging over the Hungarian issue is today, unfortunately, unanimous in Romania, no matter of the parties' colour or position (be them in power or in opposition). Budapest's projects is known to us. The Romanian one is unknown to us.

Hence a question summarizing all of them: When will we have a Romanian politicians' and state's coherent position on this issue whereby the subjects be calmly and efficiently put on Bucharest's national, European and Euro-Atlantic agenda?

Not clarified in due time, the Hungarian issue is a time bomb.

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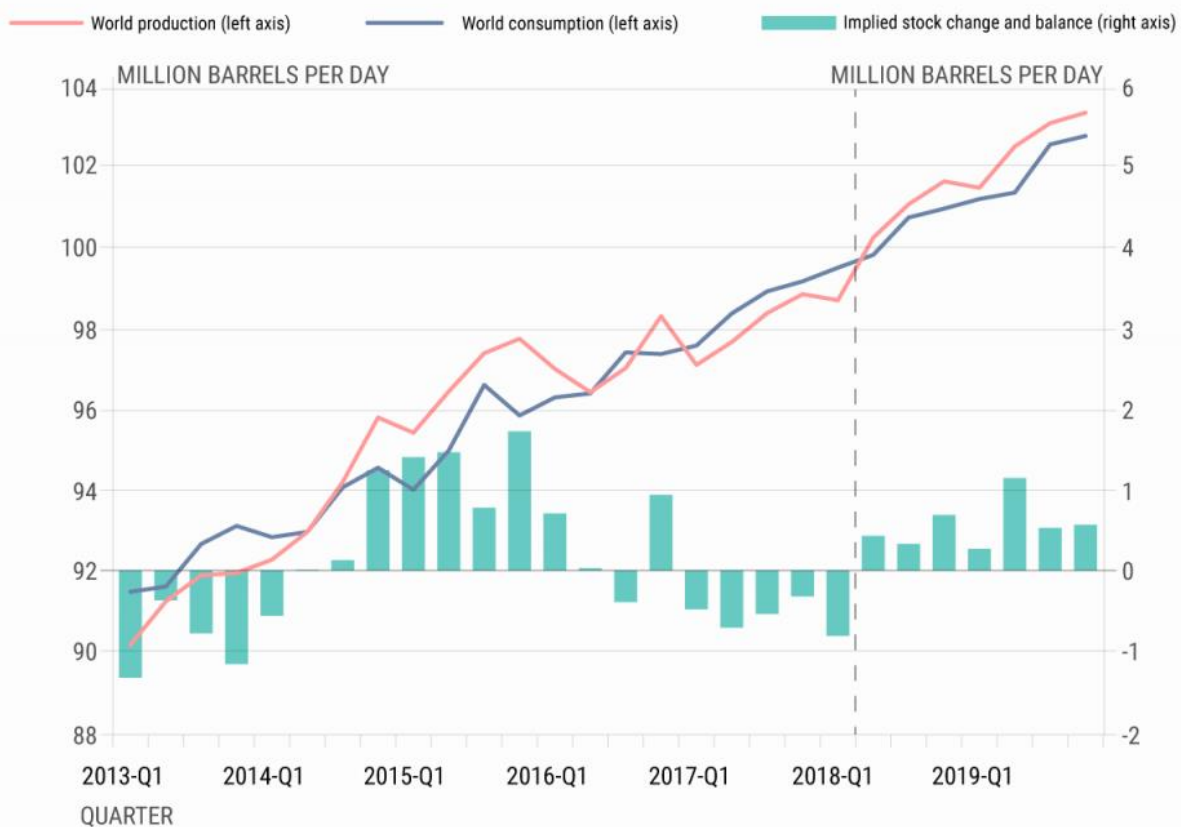
The Crude Math of Geopolitical Risk
The price of oil Isn't arrived at rationally

Geopolitical Futures

Summary

Electric vehicles may be the future, but oil is the present, and so long as the world runs on its production and sale, it's a commodity that we'll monitor. We've laid out our thesis on oil before: In a nutshell, shale oil, with its ever-decreasing break-even costs, has established a long-term ceiling on prices. That's bad news for countries that depend on oil reserve for government reve-

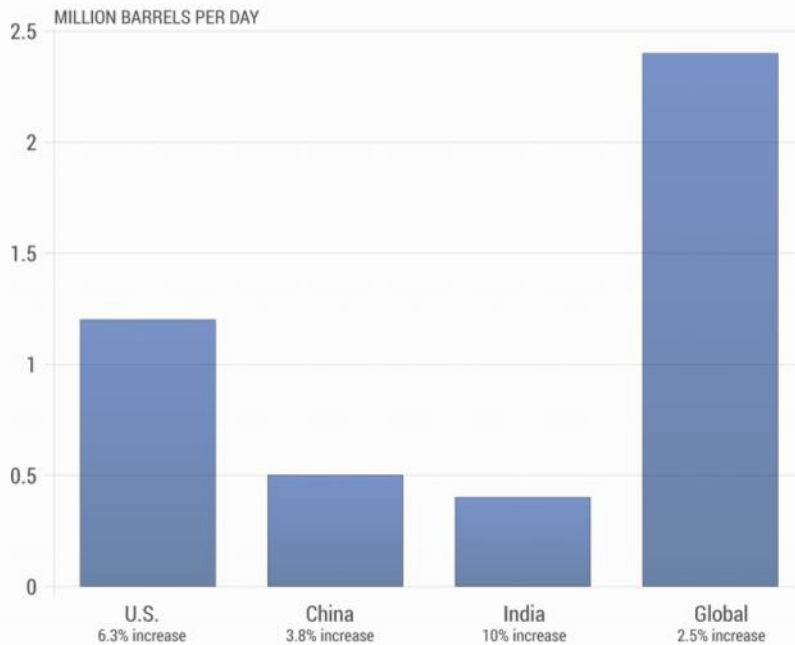
Global Liquid Fuels Production and Consumption Balance



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

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Increase in Oil Consumption, 2017-2018



Source: US Energy Information Administration

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to analyze oil prices: fundamentals, as determined by supply and demand, and premiums generated by sometimes ambiguously defined uncertainty in oil-producing parts of the world. This should help us answer a fundamental question: If prices stay high enough, long enough, what would it mean for Russia and Saudi Arabia, two major countries that need the capital to transform their economies and militaries?

Supply and Demand

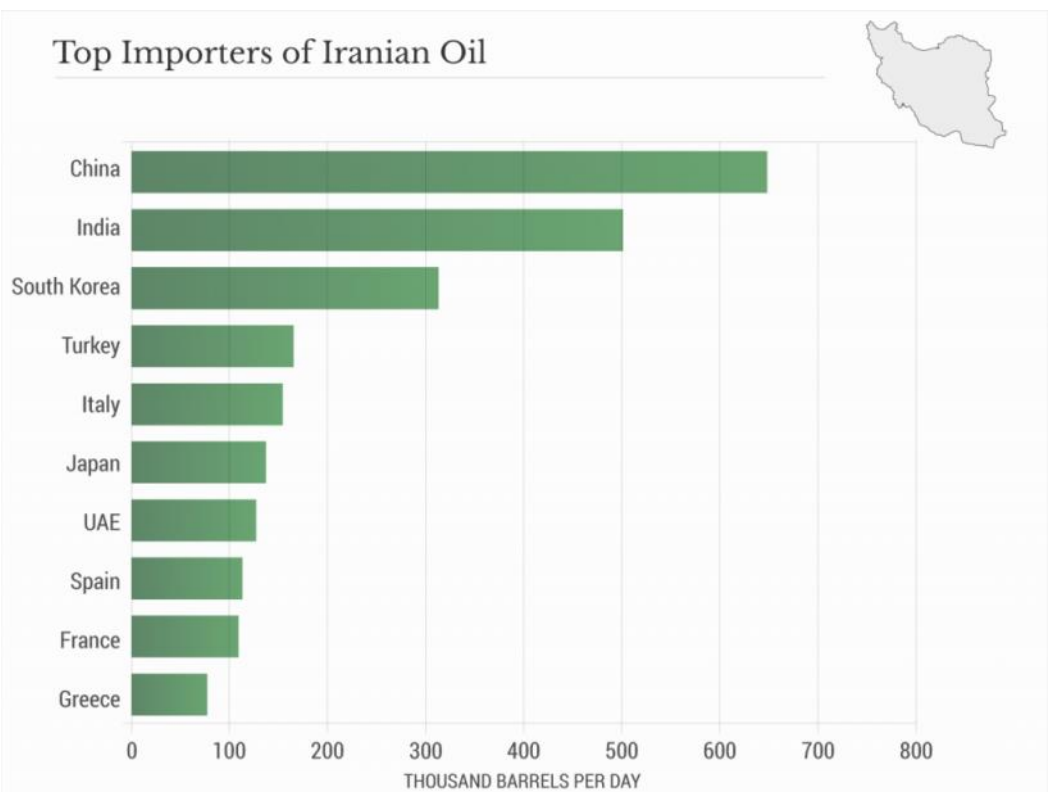
nue, especially Saudi Arabia and Russia.

But oil prices are now at highs not seen since 2014. Iran and Israel have exchanged blows in Syria, spooking the market in the process. And two of the world's major oil producers, Venezuela and Iran, are facing domestic unrest (Venezuela) or domestic unrest and foreign threats (Iran) that put their ability to produce and export in doubt.

We're still not in the business of forecasting commodity prices, but given these developments, it's time for us to revisit our thesis. In this Deep Dive, we'll expand upon two ways

Global oil consumption has outpaced production since the beginning of 2017, a result of lower supply due to OPEC cuts and a dip in U.S. production. (The low oil prices of 2015-16 drove

Top Importers of Iranian Oil



Note: Average from November 2017 to April 2018
Source: Bloomberg

Graphic redesign by Geopolitical Futures

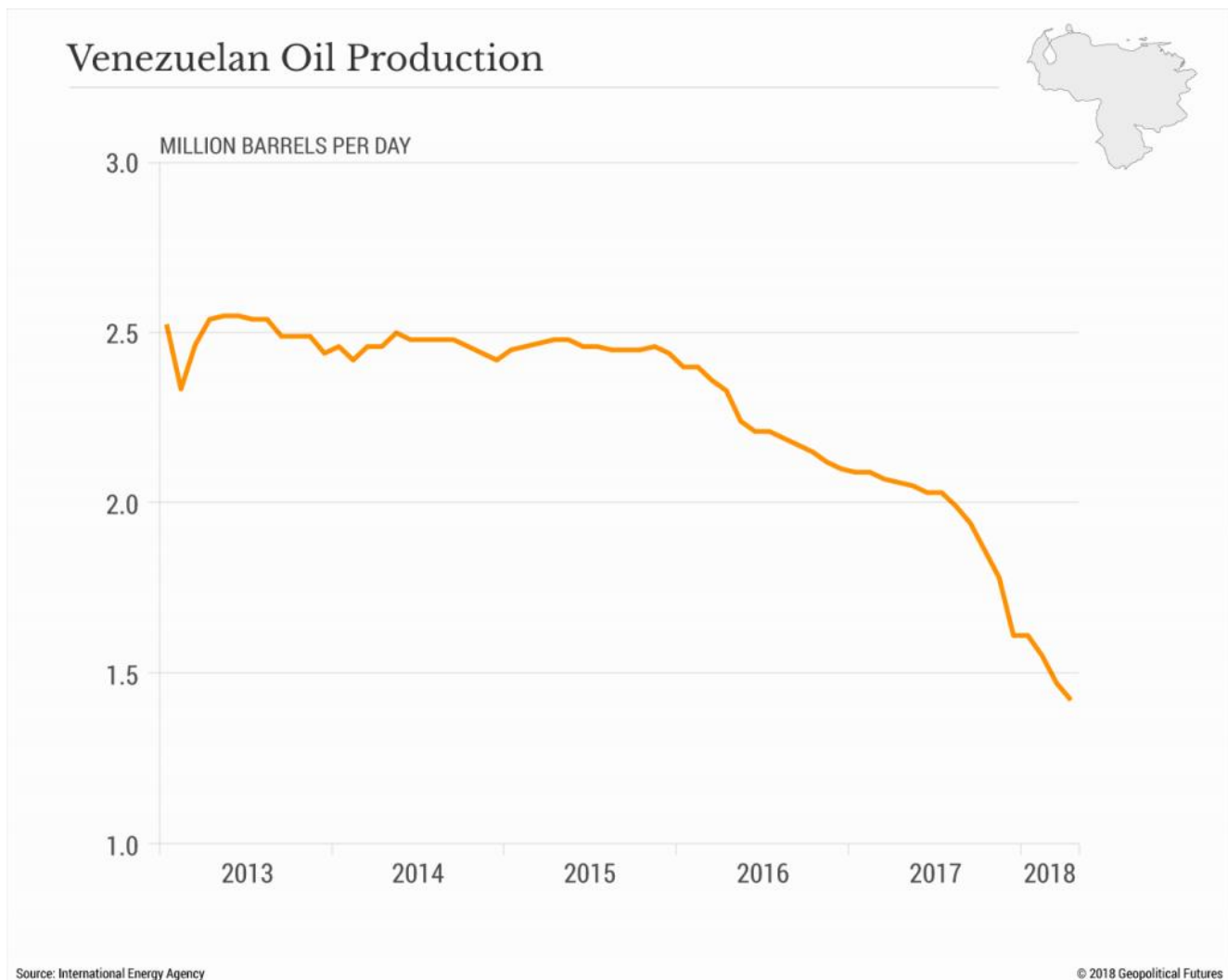
many U.S. shale drillers out of business and forced others to forgo drilling at wells with higher breakeven points.) In the first quarter of 2018, global consumption stood at 99.52 million barrels per day, and production was 98.71 million bpd. The U.S. Energy Information Administration does not expect this trend to last, however. This is in part because U.S. shale oil production is on the rise again, a topic that will be discussed in greater detail below.

Consumption has also grown, primarily because of greater demand in North America and Asia – especially China and India. The net effect has been a decline in global inventories, which have fallen to 20 million barrels below the five-year average, a figure that OPEC uses to gauge its level of supply.

The trends are established and clear, but two situations could upset the balance: the effective

termination of the Iran nuclear deal, and the quasi-anarchy in Venezuela. We'll look at both in turn, but ultimately the amount of oil production at stake is not enough to radically decrease the global supply long enough to create a serious shortage.

Iran produces some 3.65 million bpd of crude oil and exports 2.4 million bpd. Some sources estimate that the reimplementation of sanctions could cut its exports by 1 million bpd. This time, however, the sanctions lack a united front, and some countries are looking for creative ways around them. One of Iran's biggest customers, India, has effectively said it does not plan to stop buying Iranian oil, sanctions or not. Almost half of all Iranian oil exports go to China and India, so for the sake of establishing a baseline estimate, let's assume that Iran's production declines by 50 percent, from 2.4 million to 1.2 mil-



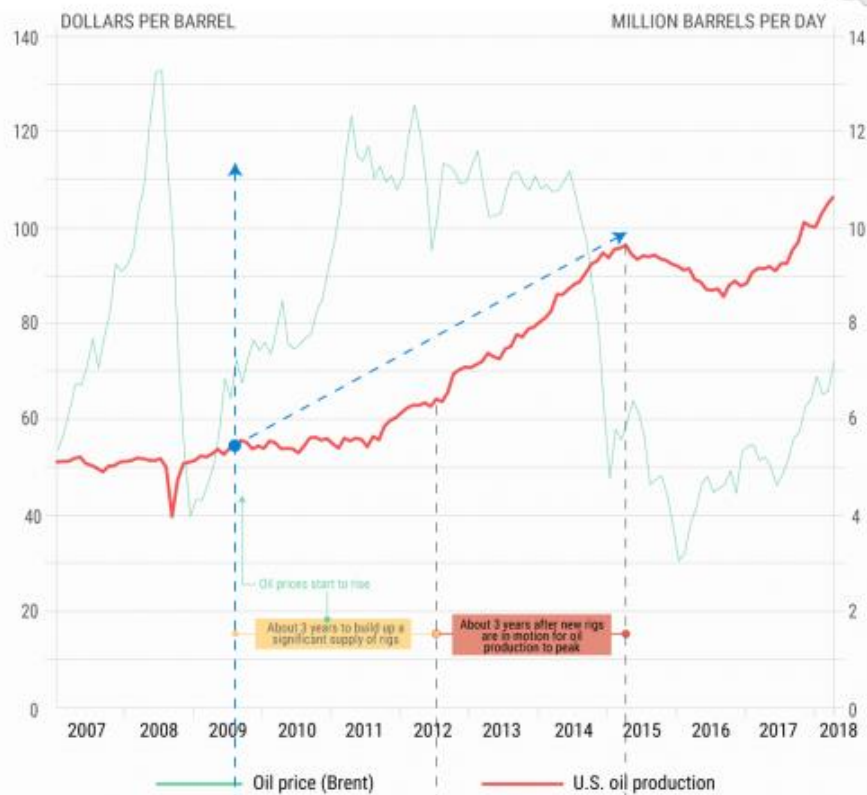
lion bpd.

Venezuela produced approximately 1.4 million bpd of oil in April 2018. This represents a 32 percent drop from last April, and some reports anticipate that, with its domestic unrest and its decrepit machinery and production facilities, Venezuela's production could fall by another 500,000 bpd. Together with Iran, that means a roughly 1.7 million bpd decline in global oil production is possible within the next year.

Now that we have an estimate of the potential losses, to truly gauge the effect on prices we need an estimate of potential production increases. And one of the regions that is poised to increase oil production most rapidly is the United States.

The U.S. produces approximately 10.7 million bpd of crude oil, about 84 percent of which comes from shale. (The remaining 1.65 million bpd comes from offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. This is the most the Gulf has ever been recorded producing, and that

Oil Price vs. U.S. Oil Production



Oil Price vs. Number of Drilling Rigs



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

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figure is expected to increase through 2019.) Global production of liquid fuels (all liquid petroleum products, which include crude oil and refined products) is expected to rise by 4.67 million bpd between April 2018 and December 2019, according to the EIA. Increases in U.S. production will account for about two-thirds (roughly 3.11 million bpd) of this growth, followed by Canada (650,000 bpd) and

Growth in U.S. Oil Production



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

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OPEC (330,000 bpd). Total OPEC crude oil production is actually expected to decrease by 80,000 bpd over this time, but liquid fuels production is projected to climb by 410,000 bpd.

Because of the rise in oil prices, more rigs are being deployed in the U.S. to drill new wells. Historically, it has not taken long for U.S. shale producers to drill more wells when prices increase. And once new rigs are in motion, it doesn't take long for oil production to climb.

That said, the U.S. faces short-term obstacles that will limit how quickly it can increase production, the most substantial of which is that U.S. pipelines are almost at capacity and are expected to max out by mid-2018. In lieu of pipeline transport, producers of Permian and Midland crude have had to use rail or road transport. (Road is more expensive than rail, which is more expensive than pipelines.) Delivery delays and the increased transport cost force producers to offer their crude at a discount, reducing the price of Permian crude by nearly \$11 per barrel and of Midland by up to \$16 per barrel.

These constraints won't last. A substantial amount of investment capital has been pouring into oil transport infrastructure in the United States. Petrochemical Update, a publication that covers the downstream industry, estimates that nearly \$11 billion will be invested in pipeline infrastructure construction between May 2018 and May 2019 alone. The result will be a major increase in pipeline capacity by the end of 2019. Three of the largest pipelines under construction – Cactus II, Gray Oak and Epic – will add another 1.9 million bpd in transport capacity in the U.S. by the end of next year. Other estimates expect even more capacity – up to 2.5 million bpd – to be added over the same period. Meanwhile, the EIA projects U.S. crude oil production to grow from 10.7 million bpd to 12 million bpd by the end of 2019. In other words, based on the new pipeline capacity estimates, transport constraints should effectively be eliminated for new production by then.

It is worth noting that the EIA has often underestimated how much U.S. shale oil production will increase. Since 2010, historical growth in

U.S. oil production has regularly been above 10 percent annually (and up to nearly 20 percent in a couple of years). The only time U.S. production experienced a sustained decline on an annual basis was during a period lasting a little over a year from late 2015 to early 2017. Past performance does not guarantee future results, but 10 percent annual growth for another two years would put U.S. production at closer to 13 million bpd by mid-2020.

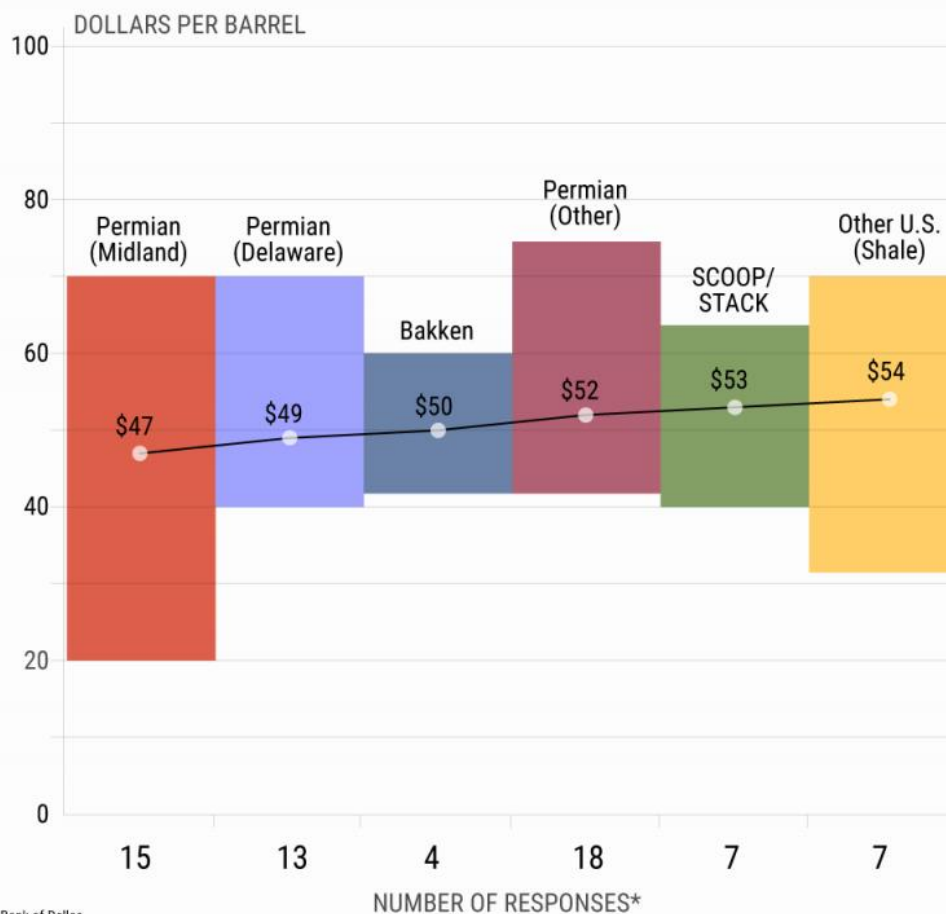
What this means is that the growth in U.S. production alone should be enough to compensate for the potential lost production from Venezuela and Iran by the end of 2019. And this does not even account for increases elsewhere. Inventory levels in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries have fallen below their five-year historical averages – a figure that OPEC often uses to gauge whether to cut or in-

crease supplies – which means OPEC may also increase its supply of oil to the market in 2019.

Besides transportation issues, the other notable constraint on the growth of U.S. production is break-even prices. All this new oil pouring into the market should push prices down, and at a certain point it is more expensive for producers to extract the oil than it is for consumers to buy it, leading producers to stop extracting. But for U.S. shale oil, break-even prices continue to decline, due in part to technological advances that have increased the oil yield per new well drilled. Though break-evens vary widely depending on the region and company, several U.S.

For Saudi Arabia and Russia, the world’s other top producers of crude oil, the calculus is much more complicated than break-even prices. Saudi Arabia can produce a profitable barrel of oil for around \$10-15, but its political needs go far be-

Break-Even Prices for New Wells



Source: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
 NOTES: Line shows the mean, and bars show the range of responses.
 *Responses to a survey conducted by the Dallas Fed of different oil drilling companies

yond profit. To be able to continue supporting its social programs and subsidies, Saudi Arabia must generate enough profit to balance its fiscal budget, and its fiscal break-even price per barrel is far higher – around \$84 in 2017, according to the International Monetary Fund. Russia claims that its fiscal plans are based on a price of \$40 per barrel, but our own estimates place its fiscal break-even higher, closer to \$70 in 2016. The key difference between Russia and Saudi Arabia compared to the United States, however, is that when oil prices fall below the break-even point of production in the U.S., the oil industry becomes less profitable; when oil falls below the fiscal break-even price in Russia and Saudi Arabia, the fates of the countries’ regimes are at risk.

Geopolitical Risk and Uncertainty

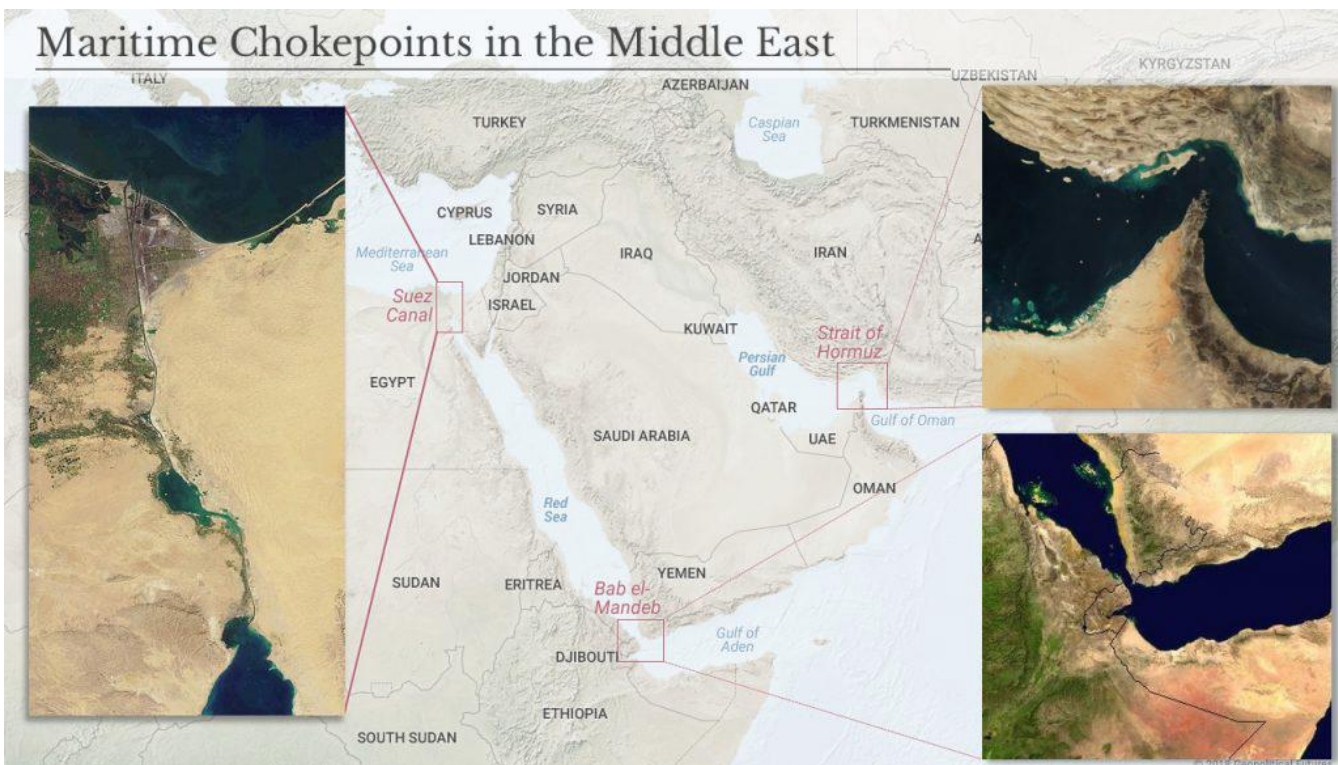
Though it is possible to make coherent predictions about the balance of supply and demand for oil, it is far harder to guess how markets will react to a particular development. Uncertainty worries markets, and when events in oil-producing regions increase uncertainty, the price of oil goes up irrespective of supply and demand. This is often vaguely described as “geopolitical risk.” The reinstatement of sanctions

against Iran and the chaos in Venezuela are geopolitical risks, but the impending increase in production from the U.S. can match those countries’ contributions to the global supply. The place where it could go awry – the true geopolitical risk – is Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is the largest oil producer in the Middle East. Any situation that disrupts the production or export of Saudi oil – whether due to unrest inside the country or conflict outside of it – would increase oil prices. The likeliest of these highly unlikely scenarios is a military coup.

Since Mohammed bin Salman was named crown prince last June, a rift has been widening between his reformers and religious conservatives. When heavy gunfire was reported outside the Saudi royal palace in late April, news outlets were quick to call it a coup attempt. (The government said the disturbance was caused by the downing of an unauthorized drone, but doubts remain.) In the event of a coup, oil exports may decline or be shut off for a time but would return quickly after the military regime came to power because it, too, would depend on oil revenues for its survival.

Another potential type of unrest would be the complete degradation of the Saudi monarchy.





This is very unlikely in the next five years, but if reforms fail and the country's foreign exchange reserves run dry, it could create a ground swell of disenfranchised young men who are angry at the regime. This would provide an opportunity for the Islamic State or another version of Islamist fundamentalist insurrection to take hold. After all, Saudi Arabia was formed by a religious uprising. If such an uprising toppled the regime or kicked off a civil war, Saudi oil exports would be in doubt. A civil war in particular could hurt oil production for a long time. Were an Islamic regime to come to power, it would no doubt also want oil revenue, but it's unclear whom the regime would be willing to sell to and which countries would be willing to buy.

Then there is the risk of interstate conflict, whether between Saudi Arabia and Iran or just generally in the region, most likely between Iran and Turkey. No one seems ready for war just yet. Saudi Arabia and Iran do not share any borders, although they could always confront one another in Iraq or the Persian Gulf. Iran's recent backing down from escalations against Israel is one indication that it does not feel prepared to take on another nation-state directly at the moment. Turkey, meanwhile, has enough problems at home with its mounting debt and falling lira.

Any confrontation with Iran also risks dragging in the United States. Iran has threatened in the past to mine the Strait of Hormuz if it's attacked

– a move that would hurt Middle East oil exports. This is a deterrent against a U.S. strike, but it is not a particularly convincing one. The U.S. Navy would not tolerate a blockade of the strait and would respond with de-mining operations.

Either way, the strait is not the only path through which Saudi Arabia exports oil – it can also export from the Red Sea through the Bab el-Mandeb strait to the south or the Suez Canal to the north. What really matters, though, is that Iran's mining of the Strait of Hormuz would invariably spook markets and raise the price of oil, probably

substantially.

The other threat posed by hostilities with Iran is that Tehran would retaliate by activating Shiites in the region. For example, Iran retains a potent fighting force in neighboring Iraq via its Shiite militias. If Iran were to order its militias to march on Basra or other oil-producing regions of Iraq, it would reignite hostilities in Iraq and decrease the available supply of oil, risking a spike in prices. Iran could also attempt to stir trouble in oil-producing Shiite areas within Saudi Arabia.

Fallout

Each of these events is unlikely, but if one were to occur it would have global implications. For one, if the U.S. were dragged into any sort of confrontation with Iran that forced it to redeploy forces and again get bogged down in the Middle East, Russia would benefit financially from the inevitable bump in oil prices and geopolitically from U.S. overextension. In the event of a Saudi civil war or military coup, the whole of Russian economics would change. Oil prices would stay high for at least as long as the fighting lasted, and possibly longer, allowing Russia to accumulate greater wealth, which it could invest in its own reforms or to upgrade its military. Our forecast on Russia's decline is based on deep structural weaknesses that go beyond simply the price of oil, but if one of the largest oil-producing countries in the world was taken offline, it

would seriously challenge that forecast.

Moreover, countries that try to avoid intervening in the Middle East but that depend on Iran or Saudi Arabia for their supply of oil would be forced to make some difficult choices. China, India and Japan are all major consumers of Iranian, Saudi and Iraqi oil. A regional conflict that risked shutting down their supply could paralyze their economies. This could be the moment Asia gets involved in the Middle East.

Oil prices have reached highs not seen since 2014, but there has not been a fundamental shift in the dynamics of the global oil market. As expected, shale oil drilling and production have already begun ramping up in response to higher prices – so much so that existing distribution infrastructure in the U.S. is



nearly tapped out. This has forced U.S. producers in some regions to heavily discount their oil while they ship via road or rail until new pipelines come online in 2019. Once that happens, if Iran and Venezuela are unable to export as much oil as they have been, U.S. production will make up the difference.

But pricing oil is more complicated than just looking at market fundamentals. It's not enough to say that "geopolitical risk" is responsible for higher prices. We've mapped out some of the likelier geopolitically risky scenarios, but ultimately, Saudi Arabia should be stable enough not to affect production in the short term, and a prolonged war in the Middle East that severely disrupts exports appears unlikely for now. The markets' biggest fear is fear itself.





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About ISIS, IT and beyond

Paul SĂNDULESCU

For any human activity, communications are the most vulnerable link and therefore very hunted by those interested, be it governmental security services, intelligence, counter-intelligence, police, media, private companies, industrial espionage, jealous partners, simple curios, whoever else you may wonder, and of course the criminal organizations. Yes, criminal organizations also intercept police communications (which is why they use coded language), and all of those of interest for them.

The same or even worse is done by the media. Notorious is the 2011 scandal, in which it became public that employees of News International, a subsidiary of News Corporation, the world's fourth-largest media group, created and controlled by Rupert Murdoch, hacked phone calls of politicians (among them former Prime Minister Gordon Brown and former Prime Minister Tony Blair), British Royal Family members, celebrities, British victims of 11 September 2001 terror attacks, family members of victims of the "7/7" bombings on London's transit system, family members of British troops killed overseas, Milly Dowler, a 13-year-old missing British girl who was later found dead, actor Hugh Grant and a lawyer representing the family of Princess Diana's lover at the inquest into her death, and many others. All with Rupert Murdoch full knowledge.

Interesting is the Wikileaks case. Although it is said that the secret documents released to the public were not hacked by the organization, they were nevertheless stolen from their legal owner and passed to it. But, due to the way they work and the anonymity of their sources, it is not excluded that part of the information has been obtained by hacking.

Due to the opportunities made available by the electronic communications, every person who

has access to the net is hunted. There is a vast array of entities interested in ordinary people. Companies, political parties, religions, the media, all want to know what their preferences are and they all want to influence their decisions to get something.

Being extremely aware of the importance and vulnerability of communications, the criminal networks, particularly terrorist networks, pay close attention to their concealment and security. In constant search for new ways, methods, applications, they are always one step ahead of those who hunt them, because the hunters can only act reactively. Firstly, they have to see by what means the terrorists communicate, find out that they have communicated, which communication and application services they have used, and only then can search for means of intercepting, obtaining and decrypting the information being circulated. True is that once they get into the criminal networks communication system, the "good guys" make notable successes, but until then the terrorists enjoy full conspiracy. By often changing the ways and means of communication, the latter can earn enough time to carry out their actions.

Dzhokhar Dudayev was killed in 1996 when his phone conversation with Konstantin Borovoy was intercepted, and hence his location was detected. Osama bin-Laden was known not to use phones after 1998, when the U.S. had launched missile strikes against his bases in Afghanistan by tracking an associate's satellite phone, using courier communications instead. But couriers can be tailed (in the case of bin Laden it was about Ibrahim Saeed Ahmed, aka al-Kuwaiti, who died together with the Al Qaeda leader), which led to his localization and liquidation in 2011.

Beyond the strength of its message, ISIS's success was largely due to the fact that its members could - and are still able to - communicate unhindered, and in secret when it was needed. The

Western liberal environment (which places a very high emphasis on human rights - but which are totally not taken into account in the Islamic countries, where *sharia* is ruling), the Internet, the social media, the IT applications, the mobile telephony look like they are pre-eminently designed to support the criminal activities, especially terrorism. For a terrorist who desperately wants to commit suicide to inflict the greatest losses on the infidels, the freedom of movement, his liberal (but also Western) human rights, the means of social communication, which all enable him to accomplish his purpose, are heavenly manna. They are also used with great success for large-scale jihadist operations, not just for punctual ones. An example: it seems that by **Twitter** and **Facebook**, 30,000 Iraqi soldiers were determined to lay down their weapons and abandon Mosul in 2014, to only 1,500 jihadists. Through **YouTube** and **Facebook**, and through sharing services such as **archive.org** and **justapaste.it**, ISIS also successfully broadcasted propaganda such as the Jihadist song "*Salil as-sawarim*" and mobilizing images, including of the fight on the battlefield and the horrific executions of the infidels.

The efficacy of the online social networks inciting is extremely clear from the hysteria created in India by the spread of the **WhatsApp** application of a fake video showing the kidnapping of a child that resulted in the lynching of at least 14 men and women, from April till now, only on the suspicion created by their mere presence. But when we talk about the spreading of a radical belief and the calling for jihad, the efficiency of the social networks increases exponentially. According to Reuters, 10% in Iraq and 70% in Syria of the Caliphate fighters were foreigners. In September 2015, CIA estimated that 30,000 foreign fighters had joined the Caliphate troops, but there were estimates that their number could be up to 100,000. The Islamists have always actively responded to the calls to jihad. They immediately joined the fighting against the Soviet troops in Afghanistan, the Kosovo conflict, Dudayev's call in Chechnya, and so many other Islamic conflicts. They just have to be called and the message to reach to them!

In early 2015, ISIS had developed a 34-page manual on securing communications, based on a Kuwaiti firm's manual on cybersecurity. The most suitable applications, considered safe to use, were **Mappr** (which allows changing the location of a person in photographs) and **Avast SecureLine** (facilitates the achievement of similar goals, but masks the user's real IP address in other fake locations in totally different countries). They also advised using non-US companies such as **Hushmail** and **ProtonMail** for email correspondence.

However, Hushmail CEO Ben Cutler acknowledged the company is fully cooperating with the authorities via valid legal channels. Proton Technologies AG CEO Andy Yen said that besides ProtonMail, terrorists likewise made use of Twitter, mobile phones, and rental cars.

For phone calls, the ISIS manual recommends the use of the German **CryptoPhone** and **BlackPhone** services, which guarantee secure message and voice communications. **FireChat**, **TinCat** and **The Serval Project** provide communication even without access to the Internet, by using Bluetooth.

For encrypting files, **VeraCrypt** and **TrueCrypt** are recommended.

In order to send messages, the terrorist recommended **Telegram**, a cloud-based instant messaging and voice over IP service developed in 2013 by Pavel Durov. However, due to the pressures exerted, it blocked 78 channels used by terrorists, which made them to seek a replacement for this messaging service.

Telegram representatives claimed that their messaging service is the safest in the world in terms of communication security due to the use of end-to-end encryption. However, Telegram has some weaknesses, in particular due to the vulnerability of the SS7 network through the authorization via SMS, which makes it possible to access chats. Secret chats cannot be hacked by unauthorized users, but you can initiate any chat on behalf of the victim. Another deficiency is that Telegram developers violated one of the main principles of cryptography - not to invent new protocols independently if protocols with

proved resistance assessments that solve the same tasks already exist. Thirdly, the use of the usual Diffie-Hellman numerical protocol and the lack of metadata security, so that you can track message transfer on the server, add any number from the messaging service's client to the Address Book, and find out the time a person came online.

WhatsApp looks more reliable because it uses end-to-end encryption for all chats and generates a shared secret key using the Diffie-Hellman protocol on elliptical curves. Because of this, the service is used by many terrorists, although the jihadists are still skeptical about it. In January 2016, an IT security expert who supports the jihad, Al-Habir al-Takni, published a survey of 33 applications for smartphones, separating them into "safe", "moderately safe" and "unreliable". WhatsApp was ranked last, mainly because it was purchased by the Israeli Company **Facebook**.

Terrorists have created their own application, **Alrawi**, uncovered online in January 2016 by the *Ghost Group* (which specializes in the fight against terrorism). Alrawi is available only on the Dark Web and took the place of **Amaq**, which is providing access to news and propaganda videos, including videos of executions and of the battlefields. Unlike Amaq, Alrawi possesses complete encryption.

Ghost Group noted that after the prominent cybersecurity specialist Junaid Hussain was killed in the summer of 2015, the cyber Caliphate's effectiveness declined dramatically.

As I was saying in the beginning, like hackers, jihadists are often a step ahead of the authorities, who are almost always acting reactive. Terrorists tend to be the first users of new online platforms and services, earning time ahead of those who want to combat their actions. They are becoming more and more experienced in modifying their own communication strategies. If once took them years to adapt to a new platform or a new media, now they do it within months.

Jihadists use dozens of other services besides WhatsApp or Telegram. The authors of the arti-

cle "*Hacking ISIS: How to Destroy the Cyber Jihad*" list dozens of them. For example, **Signal**, the favorite app even for Edward Snowden, has open source code, reliably encrypts information, and allows you to exchange messages and calls with subscribers from your phone book. According to the Indian authorities, Abu Anas, member of ISIS, also used Signal. Another messaging service, set up in 2014 by a group of cyber security specialists, is **Wickr**. It destroys messages not only on smartphones, telephones, and computers, but also on the servers through which correspondence passes. The program has a function to erase the entire history, and after it has been used the messages can no longer be restored by any means.

Other messaging services are **Surespot**, **Viber**, **Skype**, **Kik** and **Threema**. The last one received 6 out of possible 7 points for security from the *Electronic Frontier Foundation*. **Silent Circle** also appears on the list of jihadists' preferred apps, but after learning this, the creators of the application collaborate with government and intelligence agencies.

For laptops and PCs, other applications are used. Such as **Tor** or **T.A.I.L.S.** (*The Amnesic Incognito Live System*), a Debian-based Linux distribution, created specifically to provide privacy and anonymity on the net. All outgoing T.A.I.L.S. connections are wrapped in the Tor network, and all non-anonymous ones are blocked. The system leaves no trace on the device on which it was used. It was also used by Edward Snowden to exposing PRISM, the US State Program which purpose was the mass collection of information sent over telecommunication networks.

The story doesn't go down with that. It does not start or end with the use of the net by terrorists. The damage is much broader and it affects us all, it affects the entire human society.

There is a duality, which I consider criminal, in the policies of large social media and social networking service companies regarding to user data. Firstly, driven by profit, they compete and are making a title of glory in ensuring absolute security for their user communications, and refuse to cooperate with authorities, even in the

case of the terrorists, and even when there are final court decisions, binding them in this respect. Edifying is the case of Apple, which refused to help unlock an iPhone used by Syed Farook, one of the two shooters in the San Bernardino attack in December 2015, killing 14 people and injuring others 22. Is that justified? Is it preferable not to help the authorities in dismantling criminal networks - which may result in other attacks and other casualties - just to show that data security for people is more important than their lives? How horrible dual this hypocrisy is!

Not only the IT giants do refuse to assist government agencies in documenting the terrorists and organized crime activities, they even do their job knowingly! Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's president and CEO, declined in 2016 to take action to prevent terrorists from using Facebook to do propaganda, and do their job, which resulted in loss of life. In an internal memo (which eventually was leaked to the public), Andrew Bosworth, one of Facebook vice-presidents said at the time that death and terrorism are justified for Facebook's growth, and that what matters is communication, not life!

As a small intermission - but that is showing how important the social communication giants are to the human existence - Mark Zuckerberg admitted that "The world feels anxious and divided® and Facebook may be contributing to this. But he does not seem disturbed at all about it. About how baleful Zuckerberg is maybe I will write a separate article.

Private companies collect and sell personal data, locations, preferences, dislikes, desires, anxieties, interests of their clients,

without them being able to oppose it. They know where we live, where we work, and permanently where we are, although they didn't get our grant for it. As an example, in the summer of 2014, Jean Yang, on holiday in Europe, made many photos. On her return, she was surprised to find that in her Google+ she had an album of carefully selected photos, organized on the title "Trip" created by Google's Store and Auto Awesome apps. The photos were neatly collated, summarized, annotated according to her route, with locations, dates, hours. In November 2017, it was found that the Strava fitness application automatically gathered and then leaked information (more than 3 trillion individual GPS data points) that revealed the location and staffing of military bases and spy outposts around the world.

The Facebook and Google algorithms, for example, know our program, know where we are, what we like, what we do not like, what our program is, with whom we communicate, how often, how do we look, what our education is, how we are speaking, who are our friends, what are our political options, our sexual preferences, the religious ones, what habits we have, what causes us anxiety, what passions do we have, what we hate. Based on these, they make our complete profile and based on it, they can predict almost all our actions, who we are going to vote for,



what we will buy, how we will do it, what we want to see, what we do not want, and know exactly how to proceed to trigger our anxieties, desires, preferences. In a word, they know how to determine our future actions! Already are notorious the revelations about **Cambridge Analytica's** influence on the US presidential election in 2016 by using personally identifiable information of up to 87 million **Facebook** users, as well as influencing the vote in the 2016 Brexit and other elections.

Are all these things in the peoples interest? Slowly, politicians are waking up to reality, but that doesn't help. It's already too late. They have no chance against the communication giants, first of all because they hardly understand what is all about, what are the consequences of the developments and that they are always acting reactively. Mark Zuckerberg was summoned to the US Congress and the EU Parliament. But, what are the consequences? Zilch! The EU adopted in 2016 the EU's General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, which entered into force on May 25, 2018. But it does not seem to have any consequence, because after a small kerfuffle among the companies that aggressively use the Internet, they returned to the old practices.

Digitals. Digital born killers? The history of an error



Vasile DÂNCU

Young people today probably cannot imagine their lives without the internet.

An article written 17 years ago launched the digital native phrase and was quickly associated with a movie that appeared at that time, *Natural*

***Born Killers*, directed by Oliver Stone and written by Quentin Tarantino. *Natural Born Killers* which appeared in 1994, considered a highly violent movie, was a film that stigmatized television, but it could also be a label for an entire generation. "Digital Natives" or Net generation becomes a concept that makes the mind skate to the end of the world. It is as if we are entering into post-humane or, worse, as if it's the end of humanity. How will we educate the new generation? An era of mutants is approaching.**

Apocalyptic speeches

Many of the researchers studying today's generation of young people say an interesting thing: beyond the slow, normal evolution, there was a rupture, a moment of discontinuity that Prensky¹ (2001) calls "singularity", an event that radically changes things. Prensky characterized this generation with out-of-the-box technological skills, claiming the need for a different education than the traditional one, since the exponents of this generation would have the ability to process the information in a multitasking manner, prefer the image of the text, for them emotion being more important than information. This characterization had a limited theoretical base and few systematic, scientific observations, but has also spread very rapidly in the field of social sciences. What we see, however, in recent years, following research that seeks to verify this dogma is that many of these "truths" are not verified because this generation is not homogeneous, most of its members do not have such a deep knowledge of technology, even if they are more or less frequent users. Studies conducted on youth cohorts² show that this technological skill is not equally distributed, but it is dependent on family status, income, residence, or education. These intragenerational fractures can also turn into inequality of access. As Sonia Livingstone wrote in 2010³, exaggerations led to the postulation of a new "race" of young people, seen al-

1. Prensky M., 2001, Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, On the Horizon, MCB University Press, Vol. 9 No. 5, October 2001

2. Balleys C., 2017, Socialisation adolescente et usages du numérique. Revue de littérature, Rapport d'étude de l'INJEP, Paris

3. Livingstone S., 2010, Digital learning and participation among youth: critical reflections on future research priorities, International Journal of Learning and Media, no2, vol. 2-3, p. 1-13.

most as an alien generation. In fact, it was about one thing and I think the following observation is still valid: a serious lack of research on youth culture has led to these exaggerations. Then the mass media has always delivered spectacular things, most of them negative, and all of them have fired the fears of parents who have exaggerated, extrapolating adolescent identity crises or generational conflict, and putting everything into the forefront of a new style of consumption and the use of technology. More than two decades later, even the inventor of the "born digital" formula recognizes that he was not based on data but rather on inspiration, so appreciation over an entire generation is exaggerated.

Virtual socialization

Adolescent socialization is a complex process that does not reduce to technical influence. Adolescents seek to distance themselves from childhood, but also from references from this period: parents. Also now, and when they did not have access to advanced technologies, adolescents always look for ways of presenting themselves in everyday life, looking for models and means of expression to respond to social constraints, through adaptation or revolt. The most important psychosocial process is the construction of social identity, so the way social media is used derives from a relational need, that of obtaining confirmations, social feedback, and technology is just a mediator, a technical support for meeting some identities. Always, with or without smart technology, identity construction is a meeting, interaction process. In essence, we have a continuous process of self-enunciation and opening up to another (Amri et Vacaflor, 2010, p. 2), we have in this case a kind of expressive individualism, a process of presentation and continuous reconstruction of the self, a digital personalization and many research shows that the response

that young people expect from others is weak and incomplete⁴⁵⁶.

Subjects of sociological research complain that their social value is seldom recognized in virtual environments, with some studies showing that network interactions fail to create strong, stable and autonomous identities. Young people always seek approvals and likes, a popularity among peers that must always be confirmed, and the syncope creates despair or dissatisfaction. As Giddens says⁷, a great importance for young people in terms of socializing is sharing privacy, as an essential dimension of social bonding. This is done very well by means of texts and images, of passworded contents or the social networks discussion groups. These types of exchanges and appreciations are easier to achieve today, as in the past were intimate journals shared as intimate messages or the so-called "oracles" or diaries in the adolescence from other generations. There are many authors who link the issues of depression or obesity to the misuse of the mobile phone, just as there are recent studies showing that family life gains consistency through the use of new technologies. The smartphone and the tablet help to create common memories, supporting family blogs, remote communication on skype between parents, grandparents and grandchildren, in general, exchanges are accelerating, and the dynamics of family relationships grows.

Inequality of chances and digital citizenship

When we talk about "net generation", we invariably observe the fact that it is not a homogeneous generation, that also in this generation, economic and social fractures also generate inequality in access to technology, so a digital fracture. Even if the spread of the smartphone is growing, when we talk about understanding or using information resources, the level of education and

4. Amri M., Vacaflor N., 2010, Téléphone mobile et expression identitaire: réflexions sur l'exposition technologique de soi parmi les jeunes, Les enjeux de l'information et de la communication, no 1.

5. Allard L., Vandenberghe, F., 2003, Express yourself! Les pages perso. Entre légitimation technopolitique de l'individualisme expressif et authenticité réflexive peer to peer, Réseaux, no 117, p. 191-219

6. Granjon F., 2011, De quelques pathologies sociales de l'individualité numérique. Exposition de soi et autoréification sur les sites de réseaux sociaux, Réseaux, no 167, p. 75-103.

7. Giddens, A., 1992, The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies. Cambridge : Polity.

of parents' education is definitive. Contrary to a fairly widespread idea, new technologies are not a pretty powerful element to leap over the cultural condition of the family. In addition, many studies on negative stereotypes show that virtual social networks reproduce content generated by real social networks.

The picture of young people's use of technology and new ways of socializing by parents, journalists, or educators is overly perceived as a moral panic⁸, regarded as a serious social threat, as a social risk, basically exaggerations, by association, the effects of fears of risks that they cannot master amplified by the "dramatizations" in the media. All the time, however, these images merely hide the potential positive influence on young people and adolescents. Even if we live in a society of risk, or, as Ulrich Beck says, in an internet galaxy where the reference to risk is omnipresent, and hyperbolic anxieties lead to true collective depression, it is necessary to look at the full side of the glass, at least as a potentiality.

Addiction?

Apart from some pathological cases, as an American sociologist says, adolescents are not addictive to these technological means and they are addictive to each other, and we are wrong when we relate especially to the time spent using these means and we are less giving attention to the type of activities that they do during this time: chat with friends, play, communicate on networks, inform themselves, otherwise normal, socializing activities. There is still a scientific debate about accepting compulsive addiction when it comes to these technologies. Many studies show that after the age of 16 the frequency of compulsive consumption is decreasing, and what we call cyber-addiction is, in fact, meeting some interaction needs that are no longer easy to achieve today in real life, including due to dangers related to urban delinquency. Further-

more, these technical means help young people to be more involved civic and political. If traditional forms of participation are no longer successful, due to the traditional institutional play of representative democracy that insists on indirect representation, on participation in social media debates, or on a greater concern for the future, they are increasingly seen in young people's behaviour and attitudes. A researcher⁹ recently speaks of the new types of political engagement through the term "solosphere", meaning participation in homogeneous fields of beliefs, values, and attitudes, given the fact the difference is the answer. Even though the Twitter network is increasingly populated by politicians, some authors find that this network is not creating popularity but is just a visibility enhancer for notoriety in other environments, in other words, the democratic potential is very low. However, new forms of civic participation are seen in the emergence of a participatory culture¹⁰ that can gain consistency in electoral mobilization or new political practices.

We must not separate the digital activities from the other social and interactive activities they are connected to. Even if they connect at first glance with individualistic tendencies, information technologies allow for better connectivity to social realities and a faster and more intense individual or social expression of the individual at a time when individualism and isolation of the individual or consumerism did not occur along with the digital, but long before.

Hyperconnectivity is not a danger

It's true that hyperconnectivity brings another speed and a "culture of immediate", a confrontation with situations or messages like a bomb attack, in which there is not much reflection time but more reflective acts. Influence is direct, fast, but this does not mean that manipulation is easier and resistance to manipulation impossible. Digital natives are not naive or easy to manipu-

8. Cohen, S., 1972, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics. The creation of the Mods and Rockers*, MacGibbon and Kee Ltd, London and New York

9. Boyd, D., 2014, *It's Complicated. The Social Life of Networked Teens*, Yale University Press, New Haven/Londres

10. Jenkins, H., 2009, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*, MacArthur Foundation, Chicago

late because it is pretty hard to attract their attention, to get them out of the flow to which they are connected or to their communication habits. What happens to their brains? Some believe radio waves and electromagnetic fields fry their fragile brains. Studies show that this is not the case; instead, through different cognitive adaptations, adolescents are faster coupled to reasoning, are more responsive, and can make faster decisions. Perhaps they no longer have the ability to write long texts or speeches, but they can do more tasks at the same time, because the new type of activity increases the brain's plasticity, so there are not many arguments to panic. My experience with students and PhD students shows a number of gains and qualities: a conviviality that better blends study groups, research and work teams; a high potential for teamwork and joint tasks; greater sensitivity to solidarity gestures; greater participation in prosocial actions. Their brains are not different but they are differently wired and perform different tasks differently. Neural architecture is the same for both adults and children born in the Facebook era. Many authors have theorized after 1990 the addiction for video games, but today the impact among young people and adolescents is no longer so important.

Romania – from the mioritic land to the digital land

A survey by IRES on a sample of over 4.000 people, of which 2,895 adult internet users and 327 juvenile users between 12 and 18 years of age¹¹, in May 2017, helped us make an eloquent picture of how the Romanians integrated into the new digital trend. Interest in the internet has varying intensity depending on generations, ranging from 59% across the entire population, to 57% for the adult sub-sample, reaching 84% for the children's sub-sample. Internet use is reported by 67% of the population, which is a percentage close to Western European countries, with a peak of 97% of the sub-sample of chil-

dren. The most common explanations of those who do not use the internet are: old age, lack of time, lack of knowledge, lack of interest or need. A significant percentage also mentions the lack of finance or services or equipment. 75% of adults say they use the internet daily, while children use it in proportion of 90%.

As concerns the children, 18% say they stay on the internet over 5 hours a day, 15% between 3 and 5 hours, 41% between 1 and 3 hours on a regular day. In adults, navigation time is narrower, but rather high: 12% over 5 hours, 11% between 3-5 hours, 28% between 1-3 hours, 30% between 30 minutes and one hour, 18% under 30 minutes. The prime time for the internet is between 18.00-22.00 when between 43 - 50% of the Romanians are present at the keyboard. Regarding the place where they use the internet, 70% of children do this at home, as do 50% of adults. In equal proportion, 25% use the internet on the phone.

In adults, 91% of the motivation for their behavior is the desire to stay informed, followed by socializing and talking with friends (79%), followed by music (71%) and email (65%). In children, music (98%) fills the first place, followed by socializing and talking with friends (97), informing (94%), watching movies (73%), and reading (72%) (53%)

Somewhere around 20% declare to be addicted to the internet, in which case they would not last for more than a day without internet.

Romanians who cannot imagine their lives without the internet

Even though it is not a clinical indicator of addiction, 29% of Romanian internet users say they cannot imagine life without internet, with children the percentage being 36%. At the same time, 83% of children and 76% of adult Romanians think the internet is addictive, and most adults and children believe that parents

11. Studiul „Românii și internetul: atitudini, comportament și obiceiuri de utilizare”, realizat de IRES, în perioada 4 - 16 mai 2017, pe un eșantion de 4.328 de persoane cu vârsta de peste 12 ani, din România. Eșantion copii 12 - 18 ani - 327 subiecți, eșantion utilizatori de internet: 2.895 subiecți. Eroarea maximă tolerată: eșantion total: ±1,5 %, subeșantion utilizatori internet: ±1,9 %, Copii: ±5,5 %.

should reduce children's access to a maximum of one hour a day. But we are best aware that the Internet has a strong integrative function of facilitating communication in a world where people are increasingly separated and isolated from adherence to the statement "If I did not socialize on the internet, I would be more sad"- 32% of adults and 38% of children. It's similar when it comes to their perception on the others, it is believed that "People who socialize on the internet are happier than others", 31% of children and 32% of Romanian adults.

Although only 9% of Romanian users say they have a personal blog, 44% of respondents know other people who have a personal blog, 80% of Romanian users being fascinated by YouTube. In this regard, 37% of Romanians have accounts on You Tube, and 27% of them have uploaded on the platform at least one movie made by them.

Does technology influence cognition?

Greenfield (2009)¹², based on the fact that over the last 100 years intelligence tests results have continuously increased as a consequence of the rise in general education, urbanization or technology, wonders to what extent new technologies will keep the same trend. The research question is interesting because in the last years of the 20th century there has been and still is a decrease in the use of abstract language and a quantitative reduction of the basic language as well as a decrease in the general reading behavior under the massive impact of television. The basic finding is that other components of cognition have improved: understanding the iconic, spatial visualizing, or spatial orientation. Today's video game players have a greater capacity to perform multitasking activities. However, little has been done to compare the achievement of simultaneous tasks and the same tasks performed in a consecutive manner, so we don't have a full theory and high accuracy results at this moment.

Children of convergence. A hope?

A 2006 work by Henry Jenkins¹³ launched an interesting paradigm, but which, although known in the science of communication, failed to impose itself in mainstream culture environments or in social sciences, it is the paradigm of the culture of convergence. The American author starts from the observation that today we are living a stage where we have reached a culture based on interactivity, on a territory of transmedia, where the media contents erase their borders, consumers are no longer captive, but participate in the improvement of content, moving from one medium to the other, or simultaneously receiving multiple messages, but which is conveyed simultaneously from different channels. By convergence, the author understands media streams that go through several media platforms, cooperation between many media industries, and public migration behavior. The environments coexist, do not break apart, and rather resonate. For example, by means of smartphones we watch TV, listen to the radio, watch movies, transmit product content to consumers, and interact directly with live shows. But convergence is not only technically determined, it is more than that, having to be seen from the cultural perspective of the birth of participatory communities. By distributing media contents, commenting on them or evaluating them with likes, you can see how consumers and broadcasters can change their places.

In these new communication environments, adaptive individuals move naturally and become, inadvertently, creators and participants in communities that create special, sometimes original, identities. If we analyze today's increasingly serious sociological studies on Internet users, we can see that Jenkins' five logic innovations, anticipated more than a decade ago, have been confirmed: the logic of entertainment, the logic of social connection, the logic of the expert, the logic of immersion and the logic of identification. All this lead, in Jenkins' view, to the emergence of a new domain - Transmedia Story-

12. Greenfield, P. M. (2009). Technology and Informal Education: What Is Taught, What Is Learned. *Science*, Vol. 323 n 5910 p. 69-71

13. Jenkins, H., (2006), *Convergence culture: where old and new media collide*, New-York, NY University Press

telling - at the intersection of three important social phenomena: media convergence, culture of participation and the emergence of a surprising collective intelligence.

Today, if we don't look with enough lucidity, we are in a position not to understand this collective intelligence and by individually evaluating our young research subjects, hyperconnected to the screens, we may not see the outlines of these new forms of intelligence, socially born, a kind of not seeing the forest because of the trees. Because convergence is not happening at the level of disorienting technologies, but at the level of brains of individual consumers in social interactions with others, building up chains of virals that give sense to everyday life. This way of creating collective sense may in future be able to influence major phenomena such as education, the economy, but perhaps it could change substantially also politics.

The biggest issue is not young people, whether born digitally or not, net generation or emogeneration, but the power mechanisms and influence behind the state, politics or big corporations. This media convergence, which becomes a great social convergence, confuses the forms of hegemony with which power centers have become accustomed from centuries in every society. Political formations, the state or the informal power structures will hardly accept that these coagulations of collective sense born out of the free media users' participation develop without any control. The recent scandal called generically Cambridge Analytica aims to control the informational context that creates opinions, preferences, or beliefs in the audience connected to social media. As long as it was only about publicity and economic persuasion, the institutions and bodies dealing with national security (a process that should be defined more precisely, being widened more and more in recent years in the world under the pressure of real threats) did not seem too disturbed because the economy was part of the large industrial-electoral complex. Now social networks are anathematized because they use profiling techniques, targeting groups, although the process is not new at all, and no study has so far been able to convince



that political options can be massively changed by this personalized informational bombing technique. In a chaotic politics like the Romanian one, the research we have done over the last few years has highlighted that over 60% of Romanians have changed their favorite party or candidate in a decade, not because they were bombed by institutions like Cambridge Analytica, but because they found that their favorites did not follow the government's program and the electoral promises.

What we see today is that only outside the political families or the structures of the state institutions, forces can be coagulated, social or political projects can be made, a part of the collective sense can be born.

Digital born killer?

Of course, we cannot underestimate the dangers that come from networks used for war purposes, but let's also look at the good side: democracy is making a new attempt to get above ground, like the grass that runs through the asphalt. Digital generation force its way to regain individual liberties, and state or corporate absolutism will oppose it because things seem to get out of control.

We don't know if political directions can coagulate through this convergence, but surely a new culture is born, and its actors are not digital born killers, except if we are talking about killing a past and an old way of life.

Beyond the way the debate is going on today, it

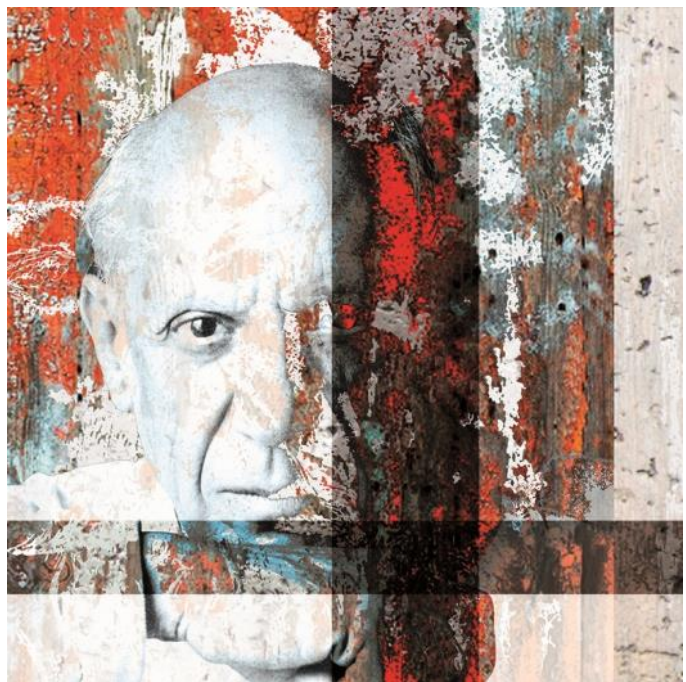


ers, they are not the fifth column for non-state entities that could control states and societies. It is true that the establishment always finds rationalizations for failures of governance or for its own abuses when proven, but we have to go beyond stereotypes and build analytical centers in universities and other civic areas to study the evolution of society and the emergence of a new generation that we hurried to label it as different, extraterrestrial, alien to our way of life.

is hard to believe that the American elections have been diverted by the messages of the trolls in Macedonia or Râmnicu-Vâlcea and that the fake-news has determined the Brexit. Facebook is not a manipulable or manipulated agora competing with the accredited public sphere, no such thing. It is a mirror of fragmentation, impulsiveness and egocentrism that characterize today's sense of crisis. It does not have the power to change society, as you can see, its presidential candidates, champions on the network, do not even pass the electoral threshold in many situations¹⁴. The image of the Facebook society should worry the decision-makers in education, politics or culture. Facebook or Twitter has brought the speed of communication and the feeling, for some, that they are participating in the emergence of major trends born from likes, but the number of hearts and angry puppies is overwhelmingly greater than that of the concepts conveyed.

To stigmatize a generation that is obliged to adapt to the new world, learning life without a teacher, is not right and not profitable for the future. They are neither victims nor execution-

Digital generation can save a tired civilization or it can deepen the chaos to speed up collapse. The others, the non-digitals, the human, the intelligent, the supreme, what do we do?



14. Cazul Monica Macovei la alegerile prezidentiale din România, 2014



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Military Technology and Equipments, New Weapon Devices

More military robot systems (Russia)



sonal and detonating itself. The mini-robot features high maneuverability and low observability - it can sneak up on the enemy utterly silently.

The Nerekhta has been put on the list of promising robotic systems earmarked for entering service with the Russian Armed Forces. The Nerekhta is based on a light chassis with rubber tracks. It looks like a mini-tank, with the turret replaced by a container stuffed with high explosives. The robot is clad in armor protecting it and the high explosives against small-arms fire and fragments.

Uran-6 is a multi-functional, mine-clearing robotic system manufactured by JSC 766 UPTK for the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

The demining robot can be deployed in mine reconnaissance and area clearance operations to detect and remove explosive ordnance and anti-personnel / anti-tank mines. It also minimises risks caused by unexploded ordnance and other dangerous objects.

Uran-14 multi-purpose unmanned ground vehicle (UGV), developed by JSC 766 UPTK, is currently operational with the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

The robot is designed primarily to extinguish fires in explosive atmospheres and / or difficult to reach areas such as burning military warehouses, ammunition dumps, and petrochemical plants. It is also suitable for missions such as breaching and clearing minefields, surveillance and engineering reconnaissance.

The Russian advanced robotic system Nerekhta will be able to destroy heavy armor and fortifications all by itself by driving up close and per-

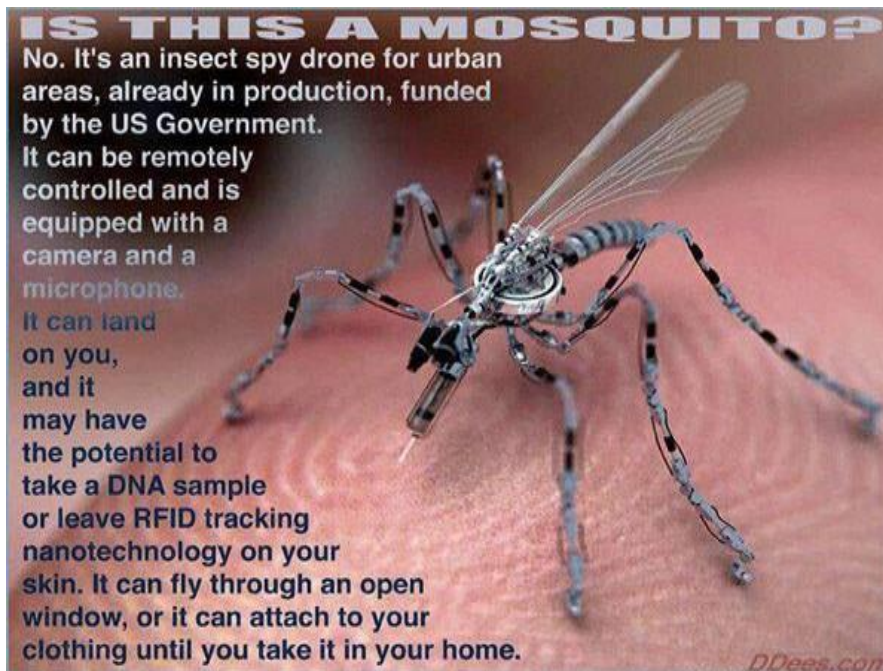
the robot can noiselessly haul several hundred kilograms of high explosives at a speed of 11 km/h, propelled by its electric motor.

The operating principle of the robot's guidance system is simple enough. Prior to a battle, the battlefield map and the grids of the targets subject to elimination are downloaded in its memory. In battle, commandos only need to push a button on their control console to select a pre-set target. After receiving the radio command, the Nerekhta will move to the target on its own and destroy it.

The Nerekhta is a combat robotic system whose platform is fit for reconnaissance, fire, fire adjustment and cargo carriage. The robot mounts 7.62-mm and 12.7-mm machineguns and, according to the source, may well be equipped with a new machinegun to be developed specifically for it. In addition, the Nerekhta has recently received the organic TB-29B unmanned helicopter and SAU-9.0 vehicle and weapon automatic control system.

Presented by Cornel VAIDA

Some aspects on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles



Fly-on-the-wall' surveillance would take on a whole new meaning if suspects could be followed unobserved through any landscape by lifelike robot insects capable of infiltrating buildings and navigating their own way around inside.

It may sound like the stuff of science fiction, but it has been the goal of real-life military research for decades, arguably beginning in earnest in the 1970s with the CIA's attempt to perfect a gas-driven robot dragonfly – the 'insectohtopter' – to help its covert intelligence gathering operations. Although that project ultimately came to nothing, forty years on new developments in microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) and DARPA's recently announced Fast Lightweight Autonomy (FLA) programme mean that robotic spy-flies are now closer than ever to becoming a reality. Nevertheless, there are still some challenges ahead.

While the strides taken in solving the mechanics of micro-robot flight are undeniably impressive, there is more than this to producing a truly deployable spy-fly. One concern, at least for the moment, is the question of an onboard power

source; even the relatively advanced RoboBee currently remains firmly tethered to the ground by a wire. Looking beyond that, there remains a more recalcitrant conundrum to solve: How do

you provide the necessary sensing and computing capabilities to enable robot wings to be used autonomously, when the payload of insect-sized aerial vehicles will always be tiny?

DARPA hopes its FLA programme, launched with a call for proposals just before Christmas last year, will go some way towards answering that question. The programme aims to create a new class of algorithms that will allow small UAVs to navigate independently around rooms, corridors and stairways and through obstacle-filled environments, quickly and efficiently –

at up to 20m/s – without the need for remote pilots, GPS data or information from external sensors.

The DARPA brief specifies a UAV small enough to fit through an open window – not something insect-sized, or indeed insect-shaped – and the difficulties of achieving even bug-like levels of situational awareness, never mind the cognitive abilities of a bird, in a drone that small are already well documented.

Even if it takes as long as 50 years to produce functional robotic insects, it would still be just the blink of an eye in terms of the time it took nature to develop the original models. According to the findings of an international study published in a recent issue of *Science*, although real insects appeared a lot earlier than was first believed – about 479 million years ago – it still took them a further 73 million years to develop their remarkable powers of flight.

The evolution of robo-insects is looking positively speedy by comparison.

Presented by Cornel VAIDA

Leading Articles, Studies and New Analyses

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons of the Twentieth Century**Author: Timothy SNYDER****Publisher: Trei, 2018**

Timothy Snyder is Professor of History at Yale University, where he teaches at the Bird White Housum department. He is the author of several important works dedicated to the history of Eastern Europe, nationalism, totalitarianism and the Holocaust, which include "Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin" and "Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning". Snyder is a member of the Committee on Conscience of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in the United States and a permanent member of the Institute of Human Sciences in Vienna.

Timothy Snyder writes in his book: "America's Founding Fathers have tried to protect us from the threat they knew, the tyranny that has defeated ancient democracy.

Today, our political order is facing new threats, no different from the twentieth century totalitarianism. We are not wiser than the Europeans who saw democracy fell prey to fascism, nazism or communism.

Our only advantage is that we can learn from their experience. It is now the right time to do that".

In an overall analysis, this book wants to convince us that history gives us lessons on time so that things related to the establishment of tyranny do not worsen, considering that there are still countries, in particular non-Western

democracies, or states close to democracies, which tend to authoritarianism under various forms.

The book includes a Prologue: History and Tyranny and 20 Lessons of the Twentieth Century, on how to prevent a tyrannical regime: Do Not Obey in Advance; Defend Institutions; Stay Away from One-party State; Take Responsibility for how the World Looks Like; Respect Professional Ethics; Fear Paramilitary Troops; Balance Things if You Need to Carry Weapons; Stand Out; Be Nice to our Language; Believe in the Truth; Investigate; Look People in the Eye and Talk to Them; Be Present in Politics; Have a Private Life; Bring Your Contribution to Good Causes; Learn from Your Colleagues from Other Countries; Recognize Dangerous Words; Keep Calm when Unimaginable Things Occur; Be a Patriot; Be as Brave as You Can; Epilogue: History and Freedom.

I quote from Lesson 19: "Be a patriot, especially since this feeling is believed (to us) to be history: A patriot (...) wants the nation to live up to its

ideals, and therefore asks us to be the best version of us. A patriot must be concerned about the real world, the only place in which his country can be loved and supported. A patriot has universal values, standards by which he judges the nation, for which he always wants the best. A patriot wants his nation to progress".

"Snyder is a rising intellectual, a voice in the public life, fearless and daring to make connections between the past and the present". - New York Times.

Presented by Cornel VAIDA



The Management of Risk in the Context of Security Crises

Coordinators: Mircea BOȘCOIANU and Dorel BADEA

Publisher: "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy Publishing House

Sibiu – 2017

The book is a collection of analyses for a better understanding of the concept of risk or extreme risk, of unconventional risks, whose nature has become more and more terrorist, transnational and has been requiring multinational, multidirectional reactions based on consistency, mobility and opportunity.

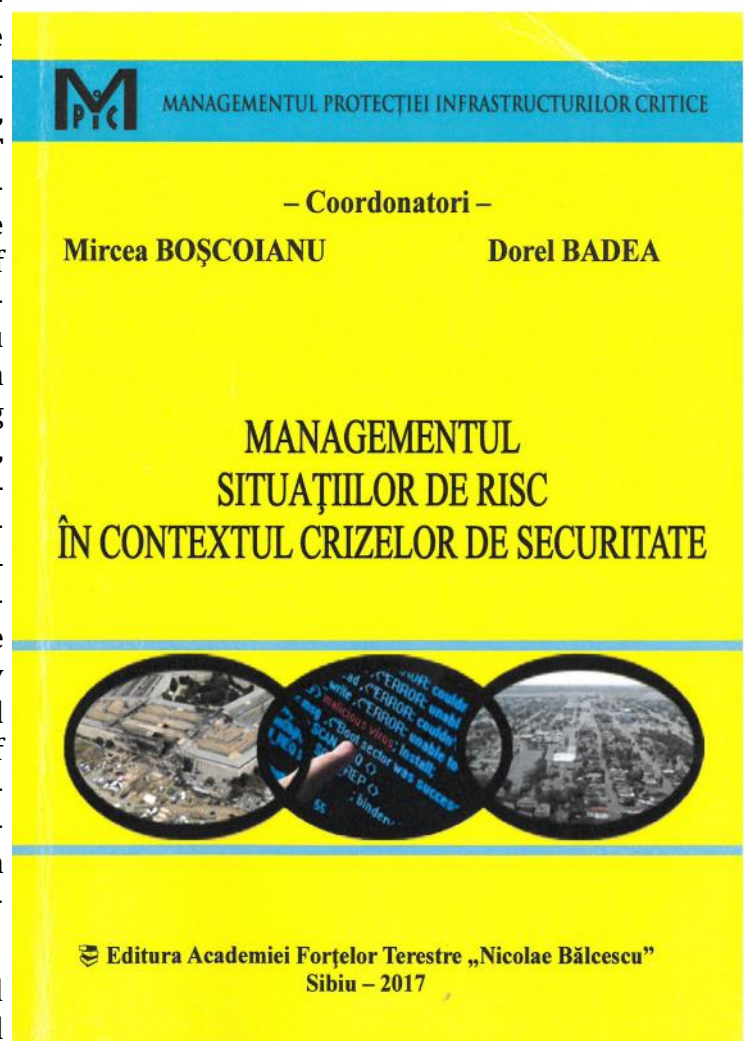
The work is also a coordinated selection of nine materials produced by eleven authors: Conceptual Connections Between Security and Risk, author: Olga Maria Cristina Bucovețchi; Development Trends in the Architecture of the International Security Environment - Threats and Challenges to Global Security, author Gabriel Raducanu; The Role of OSINT in the Management of Terrorist Crises, author: Catalin Cioacă and Mihail Loghin; The Psychological Profile of Cyberwarfare and of the Non-state Hacker Based on the Poliheuristic Decision Matrix, authors: Florin Ogîgău-Neamțu, Hotațiu Moga and Elena-Corina Boșcoianu; Interstate Cyberthreat Modeling Using Poliheuristic Decision Assessment, authors Florin Ogîgău-Neamțu, Hotațiu Moga and Elena-Corina Boșcoianu; Communication Strategies in Crisis Management – The Impact of Online Platforms, author: Diana-Alexandra Dumitrescu; Highlights of the Comprehensive Approach of the Emergency Situations' Management, authors: Dorel Badea and Gabriel Răducanu; The Role of Resilience in the Protection of Critical Infrastructure, author: Alin Cîrdei; Space Vulnerabilities and Risks - Critical Infrastructure in the Era of Globalization, author: Marian Coman.

Professor, Ph.D. Traian Anastasia, referred in the Preface to this book as a whole and

said: "The work, while not wishing to be exhaustive, is an overview of the two types of cyberattacks, but also an assessment of them in terms of economic costs (...) and of the radio-electronic and information strategies used in warfare today. Thus, depending on the economic costs (...), we can deduce what kind of attack the player will develop, what kind of electronic-information warfare strategies or what kind of learning strategies the player will implement in the arena of international relations".

In case of emergencies, the theoretical approach is followed by solutions and by a brief analysis of what became urban security and in the case of critical infrastructure, a study on space infrastructure - these are elements not only to be taken into account, but also used to further the horizon of knowledge.

Presented by Cornel VAIDA





Corneliu PIVARIU - Director and Editor-in-Chief of the *Geostrategic Pulse*
President-General Director of INGEPO Consulting

Author of books on strategic intelligence, terrorism and the situation in Iraq, of other studies and articles on the strategic information and the current geopolitical developments. Training on regional security at Harvard University-Kennedy School of Government. Member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies—London.



Dumitru CHICAN

Ambassador, University Professor,
Director for the Middle East at the *Geostrategic Pulse*

An entire active career in the Romanian diplomacy, with permanent missions in numerous Arab countries. Other special missions abroad, such as Envoy of the Romanian Chief of State. One of the Romanian best experts in the Arabic language, the Arab culture and world. Author of several works and translations in and from Arabic, published in Romania and abroad. One of his latest books appeared in the UAE and was declared the best editorial issue at the International Book Fair in Sharjah and the best book



Dr. Octavian DUMITRESCU
Director for the Black Sea Wider Area at the *Geostrategic Pulse*.



Cornel VAIDA - Director INGEPO Consulting

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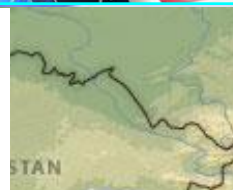
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