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SUMMARY

Dr. Ben HASSINE Hafedh: Quand Napoléon Bonaparte tourmente le Bardo	1
Dr. Vira RATSIBORYNSKA: United together against hybrid threats: EU-NATO-Eastern Partnership countries (2014-2021)	15
Dr. Radu CARP, Dr. Mihaela Daciana NATEA, Dr. Lucian SĂCĂLEAN: Could digital diplomacy help combating disinformation? The impact of Romanian's Digital diplomacy in the Eastern Partnership countries.....	30
Aliona BALAN: EU Competition policy and the European integration of the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe that acceded to the European Union	42
Dr. Sergiu-Viorel BORȘA: Education 4.0 and the need for Competitive Intelligence in University management	51
<i>Romanian Diplomacy and European Geopolitics</i> by Dr. Maria Costea (Reviewed by Dr. Nicoleta VASILCOVSCHI)	59

Quand Napoléon Bonaparte tourmente le Bardo

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Abstract: *To understand the position of Tunis on the Euro-Mediterranean scene during the Napoleonic Wars and the Egyptian Expedition, it is important to analyze the positioning of Bey Hamouda in relation to the international situation. How would he act in the turmoil of Napoleon's conquests? The French Diplomacy in Tunis, touched by this crisis, sought to remedy the evil but in vain. The French "Nation" of this city and the diplomatic corps saw the disastrous consequences of a failure for the political and commercial interests in this Regency. The dexterity of the French diplomat with the Bey was exercised without respite to face the enemies of France, the English and the Russian. In this context, it is noteworthy to grasp how the Bey of Tunis tried to stand out from his neighbors and even from the Sublime Gate.*

Key words: *Napoleon Bonaparte, Egypt expedition, diplomacy, Hammouda Bey, Tunis, Hostility, Ottoman*

Résumé: *Pour comprendre la place de Tunis sur la scène euro-méditerranéenne lors des guerres napoléoniennes et l'Expédition d'Égypte, il est important d'analyser le positionnement du Bey Hamouda par rapport à la situation internationale. Comment allait-il agir dans les tourmentes des conquêtes de Napoléon ? La diplomatie française à Tunis touchait par cette crise, cherchait à remédier le mal mais en vain. La « Nation » française de cette ville et le corps diplomatique apercevait les suites funestes d'un échec pour les intérêts politiques et commerciaux dans cette Régence. La dextérité du diplomate français auprès du Bey était exercée sans répit pour faire face aux ennemis de la France, anglais et russe. Il est important de saisir dans ce contexte comment le Bey de Tunis tentait de se démarquer de ses voisins et même de la Sublime Porte.*

INTRODUCTION

La guerre de Sept Ans¹, entraîna un conflit majeur entre les puissances de l'Europe moderne (Autriche, Espagne, France, Grande-Bretagne, Prusse, Russie...) et retraça les limites géopolitiques de l'Europe si ce n'est du monde. C'est dans un climat tendu qu'il fut signé, le 10 février 1763, le traité de Paris², il met fin à cette guerre. Ce sera peut-être l'un des facteurs les plus sérieux, si ce n'est le plus important, dans un processus pour partager le monde entre la France et la Grande-Bretagne. La couronne anglaise bien qu'elle est affaiblie par la guerre d'Indépendance américaine, paraît victorieuse et dominait les océans et les mers jusqu'à la fin du XIX^{ème} siècle. La France cette puissance coloniale, n'est pas aussi chanceuse que sa rivale ; elle est au bord de la faillite, perd des territoires en Amérique.

Il n'est pas étonnant donc qu'elles lorgnent déjà vers la Méditerranée et le Levant, où se concentrent les duels de prépondérances territoriales et de concurrences économiques. Lorsqu'un événement fortuit survient : la Révolution française, les perturbations qui en découlent étaient importantes, la crainte hante les souverains de l'Europe. Ils furent tourmentés par cette révolte, en particulier l'Autriche et l'Angleterre, qui étaient alliées jusqu'en 1796. Un tel événement avait bouleversé totalement la carte européenne sur le plan politique et même idéologique.

Les guerres napoléoniennes qui se sont éclatées après la Révolution française ont eu des effets sur toute l'Europe et la Méditerranée. Alors que l'Europe a ressenti les effets directs de la guerre à

¹ La Guerre de Sept Ans, 1756 à 1763, cf. Jonathan R. Dull, *La Guerre de Sept Ans : Histoire navale, politique et diplomatique*, Rennes, Les Perséides, 2009.

² Philippe Joutard, *Vers un nouveau monde atlantique : Les traités de Paris, 1763-1783*, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2018.

partir de 1796, les pays méditerranéens comme Tunis, Alger, Tripoli et l'Égypte ont subi, presque immédiatement, l'onde de choc de ses conflits³.

Les pays, suzerains du sultan ottoman, sont directement touchés par les bouleversements de la carte européenne. Ils subissent de plein fouet le préjudice de l'expansionnisme napoléonien, comme ils doivent faire face à d'autres enjeux liés à la guerre.

À la même période, l'Empire ottoman, a une place considérable en Europe et en Méditerranée. À la tête de ce pouvoir, le Sultan Selim III⁴, est monté sur le trône juste trois mois avant la Révolution française. Il fut le premier sultan à établir un ambassadeur, Morali Seyyid Ali Efendi⁵, en France.

La France est la plus vieille amie des Ottomans ; les deux pouvoirs n'ont jamais été en guerre face-à-face. Ces deux réalités fondent cette amitié franco-ottomane qui a été scellée par des Capitulations, après la défaite de François I^{er} à Pavie et lors de sa captivité par Charles Quint.

Une entente était traduite par les actes accomplis et les circonspections engagées sur le plan politique et diplomatique. Une diplomatie qui traduit la volonté d'entretenir l'entente entre les deux pouvoirs et qui était rarement interrompu malgré les soubresauts de l'histoire ; et les inéluctables différends qui pouvaient naître entre les interlocuteurs. Une entente était traduite, même, dans les rapports entre la France et les provinces de l'Empire, le cas de Tunis est le plus éloquent.

Cette entente était exprimée dans une lettre⁶ de Hamouda Bey⁷ à Napoléon⁸ (6 octobre 1797), il le complimentait de sa libération aux huit Musulmans qui étaient sur une prise, d'un bâtiment de la Régence, sur les côtes de Livourne⁹. Également il lui était reconnaissant au soutien qu'il avait obtenu de l'agent de la République française en résidence à Livourne. Pour Hamouda, l'intervention du général était une preuve de l'entente et de l'amitié comme elle était une ouverture diplomatique. Cette gratitude à Napoléon s'inscrivait, aussi, dans le nouvel état d'esprit qui animait Hamouda. En effet, il était face à une nouvelle situation internationale trouble, que nous allons décortiquer, pour percevoir la place de Tunis sur l'échiquier du conflit franco-ottoman à la fin du XVIII^e siècle. Il est important d'entrevoir la déchirure de Hamouda un Bey éclairé entre son amitié à la France et son appartenance à l'Empire du Grand seigneur. Comment allait-il agir dans les tourmentes des conquêtes de Napoléon ?

À partir de 1792, la France est en traine à accomplir des conquêtes en Europe : Belgique, Hollande, etc. Le projet de l'expansion française en Italie est sur la table d'un jeune général nommé Napoléon Bonaparte. En effet, en 1796, l'Angleterre et l'Autriche sont en guerre contre la France quand Bonaparte est désigné à la tête de l'armée d'Italie (1796-1797) pour aller attaquer les Autrichiens qu'il bat à Lodi, Arcole et Rivoli.

En effet, Napoléon ne recule devant rien, pour accomplir ses projets en Italie, il finit le 2 mai 1797, par déclarer la guerre au vénitiens. Au bout de deux semaines ses armées occupent la ville.

³François ARNOULET, « Les Français en Tunisie pendant la Révolution française (1789-1802) », manuscrit dactylographié, 1989, fonds Bibliothèque de l'IRMC, Tunis. Christian WINDLER, *La diplomatie comme expérience de l'autre, consuls français au Maghreb (1700-1840)*, Genève, Droz, 2002.

⁴Michèle Madar, *Le destin de Selim III : Le sultan des Lumières - À partir de 12 ans*, Paris, Editions L'Harmattan, 2020.

⁵Morali Seyyid Ali Efendi, est le premier ambassadeur ottoman en France (1797-1802). Voir à son sujet, Stéphane Yerasimos, *Deux Ottomans à Paris sous le Directoire et l'Empire. Relations d'ambassades*, Paris, Sindbad-Actes Sud, 1999.

⁶La lettre est aux Archives nationales (France), AF/ III/ 74, f^o 52. (Relations extérieures, Porte ottomane). La correspondance est citée par Eugène Plantet, *Correspondance des beys de Tunis et des consuls de France avec la cour, 1577-1830*, Paris, F. Alcan, 1893, t. III, p. 326.

⁷Hamouda Pacha Bey (1759 -1814), bey de Tunis de 1784 à 1814. Voir, Azzedine Guellouz, Mongi Smida, Abdelkader Masmoudi et Ahmed Saadaoui, *Histoire générale de la Tunisie : Les temps modernes*, t. III, Paris, Maisonneuve et Larose, 2007, p. 273.

⁸Napoléon Bonaparte, en 1797, est le commandant des armées de la République française en Italie.

⁹Le 27 Juin 1796, c'est l'occupation de Livourne par les Français (Toscane). Cf. Silvia Marzagalli, *Les Boulevards de la fraude : Le négoce maritime et le Blocus continental 1806-1813*, Paris, Presses Universitaires Septentrion, 1999, p.86 ss.

Selon les coutumes diplomatiques lors de l'annexion d'un territoire, le diplomate de l'Etat conquérant doit informer les autres puissances que ce territoire est passé sous la souveraineté de son maître.

Effectivement, au mois de novembre 1797, le consul général de France à Tunis, Devoize¹⁰ grâce à son expérience, s'est acquitté de ses obligations dans l'affaire de Venise avec sérieux. Il a notifié au Bey que cette République¹¹ est mise sous le pouvoir de la France. Comme il ajoute qu'un émissaire ne tardât pas de passer à Tunis pour renouveler les traités. Mais cette mission n'est pas une réussite dans sa mise en œuvre, vu qu'elle a été contrariée par la position de la Municipalité de Venise. En sus d'une ancienne déclaration beylicale de guerre aux vénitiens, Hamouda refuse de reconnaître au consul sa légitimité de traiter cette affaire.

En effet, dans la tourmente des événements Devoize se trouva appelé en France, blâmé par le Directoire¹². « *M. Devoize se conforma aux ordres qui lui étaient transmis et partit aussitôt pour Paris, afin de s'y justifier des accusations absurdes et calomnieuses dont il avait été l'objet.* »¹³ A Paris il n'a pas eu de peine pour défendre sa cause.

LE RETOUR TANT ATTENDU

En 1797, Devoize est réhabilité. Le Directoire¹⁴ lui offrit d'intégrer son poste, après avoir été convoqué, pour s'expliquer de sa conduite à Tunis. Au mois d'octobre de la même année, la frégate "La Sérieuse" a débarqué le consul général de France à la Goulette. Le Bey ne retenait pas sa joie de le revoir et pour lui faire oublier les désagréments, les soucis et les peines qu'il avait essuyés dans ses Etats, s'efforçait de régler chaque difficulté selon ses désirs. Il est reçu avec tous les honneurs dus à son rang de diplomate. Il a pris audience publique du Bey, là où il a présenté ses lettres de créance.

L'environnement international et les guerres de la France ne laissent pas de répit à Devoize. Dans le laps de temps qu'il a pris les affaires en mains, il s'est rendu au Bardo à maintes reprises. Le principal objectif des visites consistait à informer le Bey des annexions entreprises par la France en Italie et son protectorat qui chaque jour s'y étendait davantage. Les petits États de la Péninsule italienne, aux dépens desquels s'enrichissaient les corsaires barbaresques, passant sous la domination française, étaient en cette date, soustraits à leurs prises. Les Régences durent reconnaître le pavillon des Républiques ligurienne et étrusienne. Des litiges devinrent fréquents et parfois fort délicats, où l'ascendant et la dextérité du diplomate Devoize eurent à s'exercer sans répit.

Les données sur le terrain, en 1797, les îles Ioniennes étaient passées à la France¹⁵ lorsqu'à la fin de l'année, l'équipage et les passagers du brigantin "Les Gracieuses-Jumelles", arborant pavillon

¹⁰ Jacques-Philippe Devoize, vice-consul à Tunis de 1776 à 1781, commissaire extraordinaire, puis consul général et chargé d'affaires à Tunis à partir de 1791. († 1832). Rachida Tlili Sellaouti, « Un modèle du fonctionnaire public : Jacques Devoize-Voiron, consul de France à Tunis », in, Jean-Pierre Jessenne (dir.) *Du Directoire au Consulat 3. Brumaire dans l'histoire du lien politique et de l'État-Nation*, Lille, l'Institut de recherches historiques du Septentrion, 2001, p. 465-482.

¹¹ A la suite de ses victoires en Italie, Bonaparte, qui marche sur Vienne, signe un armistice avec l'Autriche et décide brusquement de s'emparer de Venise. Voir, Amable de Fournoux, *Napoléon et Venise : 1796-1814*, Paris, Ed. De Fallois, 2002.

¹² Au sujet des intrigues révolutionnaire voir, Mehdi Jerad, « Étienne Famin, « chargé d'affaires américain » à Tunis : entre enjeu identitaire et logique clientéliste (fin XVIII^e-début XIX^e siècle) », *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, n°94, 2017, p.285-304.

¹³ Alphonse Rousseau, *Annales tunisiennes : ou aperçu historique sur la régence de Tunis*, Alger, Ed. Bastide, 1864, p. 235.

¹⁴ Le Directoire est le régime politique que la France a mis en place durant la Première République, du 26 octobre 1795 (4 brumaire an IV) au 9 novembre 1799 (18 brumaire an VIII). C'est un régime directorial.

¹⁵ L'annexion des îles Ioniennes -possessions vénitiennes- par la France (juillet 1797) lors de la signature du traité de Campo-Formio (octobre 1796). Voir au sujet de l'annexion, Amaury Faivre d'Arcier, *Les oubliés de la liberté : négociants, consuls et missionnaires français au Levant pendant la Révolution, 1784-1798*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2007, p. 184.

vénitien et muni d'une lettre de libre circulation émanée de la municipalité de Corfou, furent interceptés dans le golfe de Tarente et conduits à Tunis. Les passeports des voyageurs étaient visés par le consul de France et par le général Anselme Gentili¹⁶.

Selon Devoize, cette prise n'était pas légale. Il faisait valoir que ce navire équipé par des corfiotes devenus Français est français, en conséquence de quoi il doit être restitué à la France¹⁷.

Le Bey répliquât négativement,

- Car il eut dû hisser vos couleurs et non pas celles de Saint -Marc.

Devoize répondit :

- Mais nous nous sommes substitués aux Vénitiens dans l'Adriatique.

La réponse du Bey fut :

- Il est possible. Toutefois, je n'en sais rien officiellement sur la situation internationale dans ces parages. Je m'en tiens aux dispositions du traité de Campoformio qui m'a été régulièrement notifié. Les modalités ultérieures qui sont, me dites-vous, venues et dont il ne m'a pas été fait part dans les formes du droit public, je les ignore. Ma capture est valable et je la garde"¹⁸.

Devoize est dans l'impasse, observa en diplomate averti la situation bien confuse. Fort de sa réputation d'habile négociateur amadouer les esprits les plus récalcitrants et niveler les principaux différends.

Au mois de décembre 1797 l'amiral Brueys¹⁹ détachait à Tunis trois frégates, "la Justice", "la Sérieuse" et "l'Artémise". Villeneuve²⁰, à la tête de cette flottille avait vingt prisonniers tunisiens à échanger contre les Vénitiens. Il en fit au Bey une proposition : la remise préalable de ceux-ci avant le débarquement de ceux-là. Hamouda-Pacha, offensé de cette méfiance, déclina l'idée, puis il accepta de libérer les captifs nés dans les pays rattachés à la France : le nombre en était restreint, il ne dépassait pas quatre ou cinq.

Il devenait de la plus haute importance, surtout depuis que la division navale avait témoigné avec persuasion, l'intérêt que les Français attachaient de ne pas laisser cette négociation finir en dérision. La négociation est l'activité principale du diplomate.

Devoize sentait le préjudice que pouvait causer la résistance manifestée par le Bey, surtout que dans les îles et dans toute l'Italie la gloire de Napoléon bat son plein. Le diplomate apercevait les suites funestes d'un échec pour les intérêts politiques et commerciaux dans ce pays. La France désirait se maintenir et fixer sa "nation" serait, entre autres bienfaits, celui d'une meilleure administration, d'une sécurité croissante et plus soutenue. Il n'était pas envisageable de manquer à cette attente.

Villeneuve était désespéré d'avoir si peu obtenu. Il accepta, sans difficulté, sa nomination par Napoléon pour jouer le rôle de son "chargé d'affaires". Celui-ci expédia les "esclaves" à Tunis et se rendit ensuite accompagné du consul au Bardo. Il fit comprendre à Hamouda-Pacha comme était indigne de sa notoriété de séquestrer plus longtemps des "Français" parmi lesquels se trouvaient des enfants, des femmes et des vieillards. Il parvint à l'attendrir.

Aussitôt que le consul le vit touché il sollicita de Villeneuve d'écrire un billet au Bey. Il est vrai que toute négociation diplomatique est longue et alambiquée. Villeneuve qui a pu avoir audience

¹⁶ Le Général Anselme Gentili, est nommé « gouverneur des Sept-Iles », le 5 juillet 1797. Cf. Nikos E. Karapidakis, "Département de Corfou, 1798; les troubles", in, Tassos Anastassia dis and Nathalie Clayer, *Society, Politics and State Formation in Southeastern Europe during the 19th Century*. Athens, by 2011 Alpha Bank, 2011, p. 236.

¹⁷ Dans une lettre de Devoize à Talleyrand, du mois de novembre 1797, le premier informe son supérieur de ses activités auprès du Bey, à qui il a notifié, que la République de Venise est sous la protection directe de la France.

¹⁸ Archives Nationales (France), A. E. B/III/201. F^o. 6.

¹⁹ François Paul de Brueys d'Aigalliers, (1753 -1798).

²⁰ Ducrest De Villeneuve (Alexandre-Louis), (1777-1852), contre-amiral. Cf. Prosper Levot, « Ducrest De Villeneuve, contre-amiral », in, *Revue des provinces de l'ouest, Bretagne et Poitou : histoire, littérature, sciences et arts*, Volume 1, Nantes. Éditeur, A. Guéraud, 1853, p. 130.

du Bey, l'entend dire : "*Ils m'appartiennent tous, mais je ne veux pas donner une demi preuve de mon attachement pour la République Française*" et se tournant vers l'officier de la marine : "*Je vous les remets sans distinction*". L'auditoire de Hamouda était important. Devoize dit :

"Le citoyen Villeneuve s'est livré à une grande sensibilité ; elle a été partagée par le Bey même et tous ceux qui étaient présents. Il en est résulté une scène très touchante. J'aurais désiré qu'elle eût pour témoins ceux qui déprécient sans pudeur Hamouda-Pacha qui ont toujours affecté de méconnaître les marques d'intérêt qu'il nous a données, les services qu'il a rendus à la République pendant la Révolution. Ils l'ont accusé d'extorsion. Qu'ils sachent donc qu'en moins de deux mois, ce Prince a affranchi gratuitement et par pure amitié pour la France quarante-quatre individus dont il avait le droit d'exiger la rançon."²¹

Nonobstant les entraves opposées aux opérations de Bonaparte et les provocations anglaises, mais aussi, grâce à Devoize, dont le Ministre Talleyrand louait à bon droit la cordialité et l'enthousiasme déployé dans ces négociations difficiles, le Bey restait fort favorable aux français. En effet, s'accordait-il, dans le même temps, au chargé d'affaires, pour tous les ressortissants français une réduction des droits de douanes qui de 5% descendait en leur faveur à 3 %.

DEVOIZE ENTRE L'AMITIÉ ET LA RUPTURE²²

Le Directoire avait cru que l'expédition de Bonaparte en Egypte, sur laquelle il s'était amadoué et qu'il avait apaisé la Porte ottomane pour qu'elle n'eut senti nulle alarme, ne susciterait, à plus forte raison, aucune inquiétude aux Régences Barbaresque, ni même le moindre mécontentement, Surtout qu'une circulaire en déterminant le but et expliquait qu'il n'est question que.

"De punir les Beys et les Mamelouks de leurs vexations et outrages, mais le Directoire ne veut point s'emparer de l'Egypte pour la République. Il a ses réparations à exiger. La Porte n'ayant pas la force suffisante pour nous faire rendre justice, nous nous la rendons nous-mêmes ; nous occuperons l'Egypte pour les Turcs et serons dans la même position vis à vis d'eux qu'étaient les Beys"²³.

Les adversaires de la France étaient plus forts à Istanbul qu'à Tunis, la Russie et l'Angleterre firent signer au Sultan une alliance offensive et défensive contre la France. La Sublime Porte prit les armes et essaya de mobiliser les provinces pour la guerre. Tous les Français de la mission diplomatique furent emprisonnés aux Sept-Tours. Talleyrand écrivit aussitôt aux consuls généraux de Barbarie à ce propos :

«Je ne doute pas, que les premières démarches de nos ennemis combinés ne tendent à nous alénier les Régences de Barbaries, et que, s'ils n'ont pu déterminer la Porte à les engager à s'unir avec elle dans la guerre qu'elle vient de nous déclarer ils n'emploient directement tous les moyens en leur pouvoir pour les faire déclarer contre nous »²⁴.

Le Ministre instruit Devoize de la situation et tenta de lui faire comprendre que le Bey pourrait être sollicité par les ennemis de la France ou même par le Sultan. Sa mission consistait à sensibiliser Hamouda à son amitié pour la France. Il fut requis diplomatiquement pour plaider auprès du gouvernement de Tunis la cause de l'expédition de Napoléon en Egypte²⁵. Son rôle fut de convaincre

²¹ Archives Nationales (France), A. E/B/III/201. F^o. 22.

²² Au sujet de la rupture des relations franco-tunisiennes en 1799, voir Ahmed IBN ABIDHIAF, *Ithâfahl-zamân bi-akhbâr Mulûk Tûniswa' Ahdal-amân*, Tunis, Maison tunisienne de l'édition, 1989, t. III, p. 45.

²³ Archives Nationales (France), A.E., Mémoires et documents, France 519, ff. 19-20. Voir aussi Eugène Plantet, Correspondance, t. III, *op. cit.*, p. XXXIX.

²⁴ AF/ III/ 116. Circulaires imprimées.

²⁵ Voir : Jamel BEN TAHAR, « Les stratégies de la Régence de Tunis durant l'expédition d'Égypte », *Égypte/Monde arabe*, II^e série, n^o 1, 1999.

le Bey que l'armée française n'avait pas eu pour objectif la conquête d'*Eyālet-i Mısr*, mais un passage vers l'Inde pour y affronter les Anglais. Enfin, il est important de rappeler au Bey que si le Sultan, aurait dû ouïr le plénipotentiaire envoyait par le Directoire pour négocier la paix, avant de se décider à une rupture, il n'aurait eu que satisfaction. Il reste au diplomate, de persuader le Bey que cette rupture, d'une relation si ancienne, et la coalition avec la Russie sont antagonique aux intérêts des Ottomans. En conséquence, l'entente ne peut pas être garantie ni perpétuelle, alors que l'amitié avec le Directoire est immuable. Les recommandations du ministre à Devoize était d'assurer le Bey que les commençants Turcs résidant en France, ainsi que l'ambassadeur ottoman Morali Seyyid Ali Efendi étaient bien traité. Qu'un Envoyé Extraordinaire du gouvernement passa au courant de l'année 1798 pour Istanbul dans le but de prouver au Sultan que la France restera son amie de toujours. Le diplomate Devoize a pour mission de faire déterminer le Bey de rester fidèle à la France et de lui faire sentir comme il sera nuisible à "*ses sujets en se brouillant avec la République qui leur est une source de commerce lucratif*"²⁶.

Bonaparte appuyait un peu plus tard ces raisonnements de considération propres à les rendre plus persuasifs mande-t-il à Devoize :

"Je vous préviens, que l'armée de la République est en possession depuis deux jours de la ville et des deux îles de Malte. Le pavillon tricolore flotte sur tous les forts. Vous voudrez bien faire part de la destruction de l'ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem et de cette nouvelle possession de la République au Bey près duquel vous résidez... laissez-lui entrevoir que la puissance qui, en trois jours, a pris Malte, serait dans le cas de le punir s'il s'écartait un moment des égards qu'on doit à la République"²⁷.

Au même temps, un firman avait été apporté de la Sublime Porte. Il enjoignait aux Régences d'interdire le trafic et arrêter le commerce avec la France. Ils sont libres d'employer tous les moyens pour nuire aux préparatifs entamés à Toulon pour une expédition contre les Mameluks. Les ordres du sultan, à ce sujet, abondent clairs, précis, sans équivoques : "*de s'emparer des transports maritimes, de saisir les dépêches dont ils seraient porteurs, d'envoyer cette correspondance à la Sublime Porte, de garder les Français en otage et d'unir leurs forces navales à celles de la Turquie*"²⁸. Il est évident que le sultan essaye d'exercer son hégémonie sur les provinces ottomanes. Le firman ne laisse pas de doute, c'est une déclaration de guerre. L'expédition d'Égypte fut un baromètre pour mesurer l'unité de l'Empire à la fin du XVIII^e siècle. C'est un test de sa résistance aux menaces des envahisseurs convoitant les provinces arabes. En effet, une trentaine d'années après ses évènements, Alger est devenue française.

Hamouda-Pacha, au début, n'avait pas tenu compte des réquisitions sultanesques. Devoize ne s'abusait pas sur la gravité de l'heure. Il était trop averti pour ne pas juger exactement de la situation à Tunis. Dès la nouvelle de l'entrée de Napoléon en campagne il avait prévu de "*grands embarras [à venir,] des réclamations de six cents Tunisiens commerçants avec l'Égypte [se faisaient entendre]*"²⁹. Des actions hostiles contre les Français lui donnèrent à craindre pour leur vie, et sans attendre les instructions que le ministre préparait à ce sujet, Devoize avait pris les mesures de sécurité dont se pouvait aviser sa prudence. Quelques officiers des janissaires avaient audacieusement menacé. Certes, le Bey avait ordonné silence à tous, sa résolution de protéger les Français semblait incontestable, il en avait informé le diplomate confidentiellement, mais, celui-ci se demandait : "*pourra-t-il le faire bien efficacement dans une ville [...] où dominent les corsaires, [ses] ennemis mortels ?*".

²⁶ *Idem*.

²⁷ Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/4. F^o. 35.

²⁸ Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/1. F^o. 22.

²⁹ Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/1. F^o. 3.

LA GUERRE

D'intrépides individus ravivaient les tensions contre les Français. L'agent du Dey d'Alger à Tunis, Mamet-Brady, avait d'importants intérêts au Caire. Il était, par conséquence, fort touché par cette guerre et extrêmement exacerbé. Il est vu, journellement, sur la grande place voisine du Fondouk des français, appeler les passants, former des rassemblements et s'exprimer dans les termes les plus injurieux sur le compte du général Bonaparte. Il est entendu faire appel au "fanatisme", expliquant que la présence d'une armée de mécréant sur la route de la Mecque est une profanation, le lendemain, affirmant que cette armée à qui la défaite d'Aboukir ferme la mer est plus que décimée par le fer des Mameluks et que son chef a péri lui-même par le supplice le plus infamant. Enfin, il s'était armé d'audace pour inciter, les "maures", à l'assassinat des Français en cachette et au pillage du Fondouk.

Entre-temps, un *Capidji* survint porteur d'un deuxième firman très impératif. Les Régences sentent bien que déferer aux ordres de la Porte c'est reconnaître leur vassalité ; soumises à l'autorité spirituelle, encore intacte en sa toute-puissance, au Grand Seigneur, « Calife » omnipotent. Il est non moins difficile à Hamouda-Pacha sans courir à une sédition du peuple et des soldats du palais, de refuser son concours à une guerre où il est réclamé pour chasser l'infidèle d'une terre de l'Islam envahie. Le Dey d'Alger s'était incliné ; il avait pris le parti de suivre l'étendard du Prophète.

Au mois de septembre 1798, un Envoyé ottoman est arrivé à Tunis, donné lieu à une vive effervescence. Des "Turcs" surexcités sillonnaient les rues et indiquaient les maisons des Français domiciliés hors du Fondouk. Un conseil secret était tenu au Bardo. Le moment était critique. Une déclaration de guerre eut été le signal du pillage et peut-être d'un massacre. Un mot du Bey appela le consul auprès de lui et l'invita à se présenter seul, après avoir mis à l'abri ses papiers les plus importants, celui-ci partit à cheval, accompagné d'un seul janissaire, Sur sa route, pour le Bardo, on le dévisageait, mais sans autre insolence que celle des regards.

Ce n'était qu'une fausse alerte. Il fallait deux mois encore à Hamouda-Pacha pour qu'il cédât à une pression devenue insoutenable. Le 2 janvier 1799, de très grand matin, il avertissait personnellement et de vive voix le diplomate français, de l'ouverture des hostilités. Ses regrets d'être forcé à rompre les liens d'amitié que, depuis son avènement au trône, il lui avait été si agréable d'entretenir avec la France, étaient sincères. Alors, Devoize le brusquait, pour comprendre pourquoi cette rupture à laquelle il est opposé :

"Si vous vous prononcez contre la République par soumission à un firman de la Porte, vous avouez votre dépendance envers elle. Les puissances qui ont des traités particuliers avec vous n'y verront plus de solidité ; vous les invitez à imiter l'Empire, la Prusse et la Russie qui ont méconnu votre souveraineté en stipulant dans leurs capitulations avec le sultan sa garantie contre les faits barbaresques"³⁰.

Ces raisons touchaient profondément Hamouda-Pacha. Seulement il n'était plus maître de sa politique ni de son action il disait :

Qu'il "avait résisté tant qu'il avait pu aux ordres de la Porte ; mais qu'ayant été informé que le roi de Maroc marchait à la tête de soixante mille hommes contre Bonaparte, le Chaouch de la Porte lui ayant intimé de nouveau l'ordre du Grand Seigneur et l'invitation menaçante des autres Régences, il n'était point en état de faire la chouette à tant de monde"³¹.

Insister d'avantage eut été pénible et vain. Le Bey prodigua les bons procédés au diplomate. Afin de le protéger contre toute insulte sur la route qu'il devait suivre pour rentrer, il le laissait

³⁰Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/3. F^o. 76.

³¹Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/3. F^o. 42.

reconduire jusqu'au consulat par Mohammed Khodja, son ancien ambassadeur à Londres et à Paris et par cinquante cavaliers commandés par deux aghas.

PRISONNIERS ET BONNES PRISES

Le matin même le mat de pavillon fut abattu. Tous les Français furent rassemblés dans le Fondouk. Les chevaux de Devoize, mesure de protection ou rétorsion furent guidés dans les écuries du palais beylical. On opposa ces scellés sur ses papiers et sur sa bibliothèque, et pareillement sur les comptoirs des négociants dont les fonds furent toutefois, laissés libres, leurs armes leur ayant été retirées. Au consul général seul on ne s'est pas permis d'enlever les siennes. Le jour suivant les navires français en rade et leurs équipages étaient de bonne prise. Liberté entière fut donnée aux corsaires tunisiens qui déjà se vantaient de débarquer sur les côtes de Provence.

Les premiers jours de cette captivité ne furent pas trop durs. La garde turque qui la fait observer, constituée de soldats choisis entre les plus paisibles, se conduisait bien. Ainsi qu'en temps de paix, les portes n'étaient fermées qu'à la nuit close. La permission de sortir pour ses affaires accordée à quiconque la demandait, faisait pour beaucoup, d'un emprisonnement, oppressif sans ces échappées, une claustration à demi consentie. Les étrangers et les sujets de la Régence qui s'annonçaient comme ayant à parler au consul ne lurent jamais repoussés, et c'est avec eux un peu de liberté qui entraît. Enfin, des jeunes gens ont imaginé, pour échapper au désœuvrement et à l'ennui, de dresser un théâtre et de jouer la comédie deux fois par semaine ; et nulle entrave n'a été mise à ce divertissement.

Le Bey s'efforçait de tenir l'engagement qu'il avait pris d'avoir pour les Français "*tous les égards qui ne le compromettraient pas envers la Porte*". Mais son entourage le plus proche était farouchement hostile aux Français. Assurément Sidi-Mustapha demeurait fidèle à son amitié, et son dévouement aux français et à leur cause ne se démentait pas. Mais son influence déclinait alors que n'avait pas cessé de grandir celle du Saheb Etabaâ, dont l'aversion envers les Français se manifestait plus ardente que jamais. Il n'était pas seul.

Des courtisans avaient été sottement persiflés et raillés par des Français imprudents et tenaient toute la nation en horreur ; ils lui voulaient du mal. Mustapha-Agha, qui avait accompagné à Paris Mohammed Khodja, gardait un affreux souvenir de l'avilissante curiosité, des offensants empressements, des rires mal étouffés et des sarcasmes devinés, il s'en vengeait en s'exprimant sur les Français avec mépris, ainsi qu'un homme qui arrive des lieux dont il parie, qui a vu et qui sait en témoin. Et la guerre déchaînant sa haine, lui offrit l'occasion attendue de se satisfaire.

En outre, Hamouda-Pacha avait à sa solde, dans Tunis, six à sept mille Turcs et leurs officiers. Cette garde, en de telles conjonctures n'était pas sûre. Elle l'effrayait. Il se précautionna contre un attentat de leur part en faisant étrangler le fils du Bey détrône en 1756. La disparition de ce prince dont l'avènement eut donné à une révolution de Palais. Quelque caractère de légitimité la rendait, supposait-il moins tentante à ceux, en grand nombre, qui soucieux de ne pas laisser au Dey d'Alger le temps d'intervenir, la voulaient prompte et facile.

Cependant la mort d'un successeur éventuel n'était pas pour le rassurer entièrement. Il restait dans une large mesure à la discrétion sous la peur de ses prétoriens ottomans surexcités. Pour leur complaire, resserra la captivité des Français et la rendit plus dure.

Le Fondouk était à peine suffisant pour recevoir les français en résidence dans le capital. On y jeta tous ceux qui habitaient dans la Régence ou qui s'y trouvaient de passage.

Ils y entraient dépouillés de tout, écrit Devoize, on y a amené tous nos ressortissants de Bizerte.

« Plusieurs oui ne vivent que de leur travail journalier restent sans ressources. Ils me demandent des secours et je ne puis ni ne dois les repousser ; mais où prendre le nécessaire ? Ce tableau de la misère

de tant de citoyens, devient encore plus déchirant sur l'impuissance ou je me trouve de les assister avec des moyens proportionnés à leurs besoins »³².

L'été vint et ses chaleurs aggravèrent le supplice d'être entassé, avec des malades, en un étroit espace dans un profond dénuement. Les marins des avisos "Requin" et "Assaillante", ainsi que d'autres, de bâtiments de commerce en relâche à la Goulette, faits prisonniers et envoyés au bagne, subissaient un pire sort. Les officiers, astreints, diverses fois à la Manouba, à cueillir des fleurs, des olives et des oranges, ne se plaignaient pas très fort d'une occupation qui ne présentait rien de pénible ni de dégoûtant. Ainsi fit, puisqu'on les soumettait aux travaux publics, ils ne souhaitaient pas d'autre tâche que celle-là. Ils eussent aimé seulement à ne pas y être conduits par des surveillants armés.

Ce traitement assez doux ne dura guère. Bientôt on les obligea, mêlés avec les forçats, à enlever les ordures des cours du palais ou à transporter à dos des tuiles et des gravats. Un enseigne de vaisseau reçut une fois la bastonnade sur l'ordre du Bachi mamelouk. Le Saheb Etabaâ, surprenant un autre jour quelque matelots excédés de fatigue et qui prenaient un peu de repos à l'abri du soleil les meurtrissait à grands coups de canne.

En ces circonstances, le dévouement du diplomate Devoize ne fut jamais las, écrit à Talleyrand : *"Notre situation ; elle n'est supportable que par la confiance que nous inspire la sollicitude du gouvernement, et la consolation que nous trouvons dans l'idée que nous appartenons à une grande nation"*³³. Ce sentiment, enraciné en lui et si intense, le rend inébranlable. Il sut le communiquer aux dolents. Jamais une imploration ne transparait dans sa correspondance avec le Bey. Que ses lettres visent à constater des services ou à élever une protestation, toujours elles sont exemptes de faiblesse.

Tout sincère qu'eût été d'abord sa répugnance à se séparer de la France, Hamouda-Pacha avait promptement supputé les avantages que pouvait lui apporter l'état de guerre. Il en voulait tirer les moyens de développer sa marine et ses ressources militaires et, sous le couvert de préparatifs ostensiblement dirigés contre Napoléon, se donner la liberté d'armer, à la dérobée, contre le Dey. Mais ce calcul n'entraînait pas avec soi et n'expliquait pas la persécution longue qu'il infligeait aux Français : *"Je cherche [lui écrivait le consul], à pénétrer quel fruit vous en pouvez retirer, quel motif de politique vous fait agir ainsi et je me perds dans mes réflexions"*³⁴.

Il fut évident pour lui qu'on obéissait, au Bardo, à un « ignoble » mobile. C'est par une arrière-pensée de :

« sa cupidité et de son avarice que ce souverain s'obstine à nous tenir entre quatre murs, et les captifs aux travaux les plus rudes, afin que les souffrances inspirent à ceux qui en ont des facultés, l'idée de se racheter. Le Bey ne peut avoir d'autre but dans sa conduite atroce à notre égard »³⁵.

La perspicacité de Devoize ne s'égarait pas en découvrant cette intention de chantage, mais peut-être l'irritation qui trouble les plus clairvoyants et les porte à l'exagération passait le but en portant trop haut.

Le Prince, dont il faisait naguère un éloge empreint d'une émotion, si vibrante, auquel il rendra dans la suite encore pleine justice, était-il vraiment devenu capable de l'indignité dont il le soupçonnait ? Avait-il en si peu de temps, sous l'empire de préoccupations nouvelles, dépouillé jusqu'à ce point cette générosité dont plus d'une fois et non sans risques il avait donné des preuves irrécusables ? N'est-il pas plus probable que Saheb Etabaâ, cherchait à s'enrichir et ces ambitions,

³²Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/1. F^o. 12.

³³Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/4. F^o. 21.

³⁴Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/3. F^o. 82.

³⁵Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/4. F^o. 37.

combinaient à la reconnaissance la crainte et rendaient Hamouda-Pacha faible envers Sidi-Youssef, qui jadis son sauveur, lui versa plus tard le breuvage empoisonné dont il mourût.

A quiconque appartient la pensée de cette avanie il n'était pas dans le caractère de Devoize de souffrir qu'elle pût se réaliser. Il en assura le Bey expressément qu'il est de son devoir de :

« tirer les Français de la fâcheuse situation où ils se trouvent en Barbarie que ceux qu'il a dans sa puissance, dès que les circonstances le permettront, et que jamais un Ministre de la République ne me chargera de négocier la liberté des Français pour de l'argent. »³⁶.

Un peu plus tard, au printemps de 1800, il écrivait encore :

"Il y en a plus seize [mois] que les Français sont libres à Alger ; ils l'étaient aussi à Tripoli. L'Empereur du Maroc n'a même pas déclaré la guerre. Par quelle fatalité, arrive-t-il que votre Excellence, dont je n'ai cessé de louer la sagesse et la justice, se soit distinguée des autres souverains de la Barbarie par une sévérité qui fait bien des malheureux sans aucun avantage pour la Régence ? Si nous avons commis quelque crime, il serait plus qu'expié par un long emprisonnement. Notre expédition d'Egypte a été le motif de la guerre que vous avez déclarée à la République : La cause a cessé, l'effet doit cesser aussi. Veuillez donc mettre fin aux humiliations dont sont abreuvés les Français et rendre aux prisonniers du Fondouk une liberté dont ils sont privés depuis trop longtemps et dont ils ne sauraient abuser »³⁷.

COURTE ARMISTICE

Le 22 juillet 1800, un officier vint de la part de Hamouda rendre visite à Devoize, Il lui annonça que lui et ses administrés pouvaient dès cet instant sortir de l'enceinte, où ils étaient parqués, pour aller et venir selon leur plaisir, sous la restriction d'y rentrer immédiatement après le coucher du soleil. Cette autorisation soumet le représentant de la France à l'obligation de se constituer prisonnier tous les soirs sous la garde de soldats beylicaux.

Sa réclusion a-t-elle empêché de ravitailler Malte et de nouer par la Tripolitaine des intelligences en Egypte ? De subvenir aux besoins les plus essentiels de ses "concitoyens" ? Point dès lors, il ne s'abaissera pas à supporter une restriction ; il refusa la liberté conditionnelle qu'on lui offrait.

Le ministre était impatient de secourir Devoize dont il admirait le courage et le dévouement. Il lui écrivait : "*Votre pénible situation est sans cesse présente à mon souvenir et à celui du Directoire. Je le seconde de tout mon zèle dans le but de mettre un terme aux rigueurs de votre sort*"³⁸. Talleyrand ajoutait dans une dépêche : "*Hélas ! Je n'ai pas et le gouvernement ne peut pas me donner les moyens qu'il y faudrait*"³⁹.

Après le 18 brumaire, Devoize avait sollicité une démarche "bien énergique" du Premier consul, Bonaparte. Mais un grand état s'avilit si, ayant exprimé ses exigences, il n'est pas résolu ou pas prêt à les imposer par la force. Toute menace doit être suivie d'effet immédiat dans le cas où il n'y est pas défère au terme assigné. Un ultimatum eut mené trop loin. Le gouvernement ne pouvait et ne voulait pas recommencer à Tunis l'expédition d'Egypte.

Talleyrand découvrit le plus sûr parti : la présentation de nouvelles lettres de créance mettrait Hamouda-Pacha en demeure aussi bien qu'une sommation comminatoire, ménageait son amour propre et tenait le meilleur compte de sa position particulière et de la situation générale. Signées de Napoléon Bonaparte, elles furent expédiées et Nyssen, fit sentir au Bardo l'opportunité qu'elles offraient pour une réclamation.

³⁶Idem.

³⁷Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/4. F^o. 26.

³⁸Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/4. F^o. 32.

³⁹M. A. E. correspondances consulaires, Tunis, vol. 30, f^o. 28.

Le Bey n'avait plus à apprendre que le Maroc était resté en paix avec la France. Malgré les sollicitations les plus pressantes, le sultan, Slimane ben Mohammed n'avait pas voulu prendre part à la guerre de la Porte contre la France. Persuadé par les assurances du diplomate français, en qui il avait beaucoup confiance, que les intérêts de "l'islam" n'étaient aucunement engagés dans l'entreprise française contre les Mamelouks, il avait calmé l'effervescence qui s'était élevée parmi ses sujets.

Le 27 août 1800, un armistice ouvrit toutes grandes les portes du Fondouk à tous les Français. Bonaparte, qui n'abandonnait pas l'Égypte, comptait pouvoir communiquer avec elle par les Barbaresques. Il lui importait donc beaucoup de les détacher de la coalition puis de les amener à des arrangements nouveaux avec la France, et il avait ordonné au diplomate de négocier à cette fin. Mais cinq mois plus tard rien n'était conclu.

C'est que, dès la nouvelle de la cessation des hostilités, l'Angleterre s'était plainte du Bey à la Porte. Son ambassadeur l'avait pris de très haut avec le Reis-effendi ; il écrivait :

"Mon maître, épuise son trésor, verse le sang, de tes sujets pour défendre la cause du Grand Seigneur contre les Français, cependant ceux-ci ont su se trouver dans les puissances de Barbarie des allies fidèles qui favorisent jusqu'à leur expédition pour l'Égypte"⁴⁰.

Et il citait un aviso, "l'Osiris", parti de Toulon pour Alexandrie chargé de six mille fusils, de poudre et de boulets, et qui, échoue en décembre 1800, sur la côte de Tunis, avait reçu de la Régence tous les secours nécessaires pour se remettre en état de continuer sa mission. Le consul de France n'avait pas eu longtemps à chercher un bateau pour remplacer "l'Osiris", s'il le fallait, plus de dix lui auraient été présentés.

Hamouda avait fait embarquer Mamet-Reis, en qualité d'Envoyé extraordinaire et plénipotentiaire, pour porter au Sultan des explications sur les motifs qu'il avait eu de rénover avec le Premier consul. Il l'avait muni de riches présents à faire agréer par sa Hautesse, Cet ambassadeur, arrêté à Smyrne sur l'ordre du grand-vizir, n'arriva à Istanbul que pour être maltraité par le capitain-Pacha, puis jeté dans une maison de force, la corvette tunisienne qu'il montait avait été saisie.

Le 5 janvier 1801, un chaouch entra à l'audience du Bey et intimait aux Régences d'avoir à reprendre l'état de guerre. Hamouda, manifesta de la colère et de l'indignation, mais sa réponse fut digne. Puis, avant six jours il avait cédé. Il rompit l'armistice.

Toutefois, au lieu de mettre les Français sous les verrous, il les renvoya dans leur pays. Le 11 mars 1801, le consul et tous les Français prenaient la mer pour Marseille. Les intérêts français demeuraient confiés au représentant de la République batave, Antoine Nyssen.

Devoize resta à Marseille⁴¹ jusqu'à la convention d'El Arish⁴² par laquelle la France fut obligée d'évacuer l'Égypte. Il revint à Paris pour débattre d'une réconciliation avec Tunis qui ne devait plus rencontrer d'obstacles.

Or, le temps presse et la diplomatie française est inerte, quand Napoléon ordonna le Devoize de retourner à Tunis, le chargea d'une lettre pour le Bey dans laquelle il lui témoigna une amitié et exprima l'aspiration qu'il a de revoir la paix et la stabilité régner entre les deux pouvoirs. Les ordres qui lui furent remises sont les renouvellements et la confirmation de tous les traités antérieurs et particulièrement celui de 1742⁴³; et d'ajouter que la nation française devait être observée et traitée comme la nation la plus favorisée. Ainsi, en France comme à Tunis, un traité fût élaboré et signé le

⁴⁰ Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/4. F^o. 41.

⁴¹ Devoize écrit de Marseille une lettre à Talleyrand (10 avril 1801) dans laquelle un passage attire notre attention au sujet de la clairvoyance de Hamouda: "*Le Bey, qui me parle avec assez de franchise et de confiance, ne m'a pas dissimulé qu'il regardait le démembrement de l'Empire ottoman comme très prochain...*"

⁴² La convention d'El Arish, un accord, entre la France et la Porte, est conclue le 23 janvier 1800 décidant l'évacuation de l'Égypte.

⁴³ Voir notre article, « Les relations franco-tunisiennes d'après le traité de 1742 », in, *Archives-Histoire*, N^o 1, 2014, Publication Archives Nationales de Tunisie, p. 7-16.

23 février 1802. Signalons à ce propos qu'il y eut échange de quelques missives de simple courtoisie entre Hamouda et Napoléon. Cette bonne entente était déjà en phase de s'exprimer par des actes. Au retour de Devoize à Tunis, la cérémonie de réception diplomatique était orchestrée sans aucune fausse note. Lors de son audience publique, le consul, avait présenté au Bey la lettre de Napoléon ainsi que sa nouvelle lettre de créance. La prise en considération des « enjeux profonds » mis en œuvre dans les relations internationales, a répondu rapidement à l'exigence de la diplomatie des deux interlocuteurs.

En cette période d'entente et de bonne harmonie, Devoize œuvra fermement pour obtenir le plus de privilèges pour ses "concitoyens". Il était animé par une volonté de faire participer chaque citoyen Français aux décisions qui l'intéressent. Il parvenait même à organiser le plébiscite concernant le sénatus-consulte, en accord avec l'arrêté des consuls, en date du 20 floréal (11 mai 1802), et des ordonnances pour sa réalisation émanaient de Talleyrand ministre des relations extérieures ; des registres sont ouverts à la chancellerie, pour recevoir leurs votes sur cette question : "Napoléon Bonaparte sera-t-il consul à vie ?" Les registres des suffrages ont été expédiés par le diplomate en France. À Tunis les citoyens étaient unanimes en faveur du Consulat à vie, Napoléon a obtenu les mêmes résultats en France.

Cet événement heureux poussa Hamouda, souverain ami de la France, à complimenter Bonaparte. L'étiquette diplomatique nécessita du Bey l'envoi d'un émissaire au pied du trône napoléonien. Au mois de septembre 1802, les mesures ont été prises pour faire passer un ambassadeur à Paris, muni des présents d'honneur. Le choix est tombé sur Mustapha Arnaout⁴⁴.

Il résulte que la "conjoncture internationale" créa progressivement une situation propice à la mise en œuvre des mesures extraordinaires pour épier la diplomatie beylicale. Devoize disposait d'un réseau d'informateurs bien introduit dans les cercles du pouvoir. Au mois de janvier 1803 il dépêcha à Talleyrand des renseignements concernant des pourparlers secrets entre Tunis et le Portugal pour négocier la paix. Le diplomate pensa que le seul but du Bey est "*d'ouvrir le passage du détroit à ses corsaires, pour courir dans l'Océan sur les bâtiments des Puissances du Nord auxquelles il médite de déclarer la guerre. La Suède et les Etats-Unis sont les premières avec lesquelles il a le projet de rompre.*"⁴⁵ De plus, les efforts de Devoize axés sur la diplomatie tunisienne s'inséraient dans un cadre beaucoup plus large et devaient être étroitement coordonnés avec les opérations menées sur d'autres fronts.

"Le péril vient de la mer", la flotte anglaise, sous les ordres de l'amiral Nelson⁴⁶, bloque Toulon. Celui-ci "requit" au Bey que si les corsaires de la Régence effectuassent des prises sur les navires anglais et français ne pussent être conduites aux ports de Tunis. Sur un ton très assuré, le diplomate avait signifié à son interlocuteur d'observer les coutumes et les traités. Le Bey affirma à l'amiral qu'il s'attachait aux us "de la vente libre", là où il le plaira de vendre ses prises, comme il autorisait les puissances en paix avec la Régence de faire de même.

Il apparaît clairement que l'instabilité en Méditerranée représente la plus grande menace que Tunis ait eu à affronter depuis que Napoléon est sur la scène. À cette époque, la confiance dans les accords et la diplomatie avait atteint un point historiquement bas. Le consul traduit cette situation par son désespoir d'avoir la moindre chance d'obtenir satisfaction du Bey. Il se montre intraitable et vis-à-vis de n'importe quelle affaire inébranlable.

⁴⁴Mustapha Arnaout, envoyé du bey de Tunis à Paris pour complimenter le Premier Consul nommé à vie, est arrivé à Paris le 18 novembre 1803 et parti le 30 avril 1804.

⁴⁵Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/6. F^o. 14.447-448.

⁴⁶Horatio Nelson, (1758-1805) est un amiral britannique. Cf. Roger Knight, *L'Amiral Nelson*, Lille, Edit. Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2015.

Dans ce contexte de marasme diplomatique les nouvelles provenant des "gazettes étrangères"⁴⁷ alarma d'avantage le Bey. Des bruits atterrants courent au sujet du départ hâtif de l'ambassadeur de France à Istanbul le général Guillaume Brune⁴⁸, et de l'éventualité d'une nouvelle rupture avec les Ottomans. La pire crainte de Devoize était "le retour à la case départ", et que les hostilités reprissent. Il appréhendait une déclaration de guerre de la part de Tunis et qu'elle aurait pu être à son avantage. De son point de vu, la solution idéale ee serait une lettre "énergique" de Napoléon, pour rappeler le Bey à l'ordre. En effet, les éventualités et les suppositions sont nourries par les faits, Hamouda mît ses commerçants fortunés à l'abri. En 1805, le Bey, "*a donné ordre à deux Juifs qui ont des fonds considérables à Marseille de les retirer, et au premier, qui est un personnage très important à Tunis, de rappeler son fils qui se trouve en France...*"⁴⁹ Hamouda était doté d'une intuition politique rare. Effectivement, Devoize avait plus d'un tour dans son sac, ses intrigues prolifèrent dans le cabinet de Talleyrand prévoyant la "rupture avec la Porte". Pour lui, il serait judicieux d'embastiller les Tunisiens en France et de confisquer leurs biens.

En toute discrétion, Talleyrand chercha à blanchir l'image de la diplomatie française à Tunis. Est-ce bien logique que cette polémique prenne tant d'écho, il engageait Devoize pour couvrir le rappel de son supérieur d'Istanbul. Sujet délicat, la raison du rappel de l'ambassadeur pose des problèmes aux politiciens. En effet, quitter son poste est souvent la conséquence d'une situation politique en crise, et demeure donc "délicate" à expliquer. Le ministre des Relations extérieures ordonna son consul à Tunis de dissiper toute inquiétude en ce domaine et de rappeler les fondements de l'amitié entre les deux Empires. Mais nous savons que la réalité est toute autre.

Au même moment que le Sultan était engagé dans une guerre sur le Danube une Troisième coalition (1805) était conclue entre la Suède, l'Autriche et la Russie contre la France napoléonienne. Face à la complexité des défis, la diplomatie était appelée à jouer un rôle plus important que jamais. Les instructions avaient été dépêchées à l'ambassadeur de Brune, sa mission est de persuader le Sultan à serrer ses rangs et faire obstacle à la Russie dans la région.

Les dernières années du XVIII^e siècle, les relations bilatérales entre la Porte et l'Angleterre ont connu une évolution remarquable grâce à l'élargissement des privilèges et des alliances. En même temps, on sait combien Sélim III était bienveillant envers l'Angleterre. Alors que la France perdait insensiblement de son éclat et de son autorité en Orient. Et, de fait, les sanctions turques ne se font pas attendre. Inutile de dire qu'en ce moment l'ambassadeur Brune notifia au Sultan l'avènement de Napoléon au Consulat à vie. Une notification comme tant d'autres, elle fût reçue avec une certaine froideur. Un silence abyssal règne au *Topkapı Sarayı* au sujet de cette élection. La Porte avait ignoré royalement l'événement, même pas un message pour complimenter Napoléon. Brune a brandi la menace de quitter son poste d'ambassadeur, contestant la position du Divan ottoman. Ce dernier après des excuses prononcées du bout des lèvres, laissant la voie libre devant le diplomate pour quitter Istanbul.

En conclusion, la situation dans laquelle s'est trouvé le Bey est indéniablement très grave, ne faut-il pas renoncer à une amitié solidement formée ? Oui, sans doute, il est obligé. Le contexte de guerre dicte la nécessité de dénouer les liens de l'amitié. Pour lui, il n'est pas question de rompre avec la France. Mais étant donné qu'il est contenu dans un espace géopolitiquement conflictuel, sa résistance aux exigences du sultan, n'avaient pas d'explications. Cette disposition met en lumière assez distinctement la question de la souveraineté et de la suzeraineté de Tunis. En effet, les rapports du pouvoir beylical avec le sultan sont dorénavant des rapports de « dépendance ». On remarque,

⁴⁷La Gazette d'Amsterdam, connue également sous les noms de Gazette d'Hollande. Voir, John Christian Laursen, *New essays on the political thought of the Huguenots of the Refuge*, Brill : Leiden, 1995, p.73.

⁴⁸Guillaume Marie-Anne Brune (1763-1815), est un maréchal d'Empire, nommé ambassadeur à Constantinople en 1802.

⁴⁹Archives nationales (France), Fonds Devoize, 327ap/11. F^o. 8.

« l'apparence » d'une reprise d'un pouvoir, de la reconstruction d'un ordre impérial en Méditerranée et au Maghreb. Le rétablissement des Karamanlis sur le trône à Tripoli n'est qu'une preuve de cette volonté de survie.

Il est, de toute évidence, que l'expédition d'Égypte a mis à nu la déficience de l'État ottoman. Sa débâcle à Aboukir traduisait la faiblesse de l'armée. Le coup de force de Napoléon n'est qu'une épreuve parmi d'autres, en effet, la prise d'Alger en 1830 fut la consécration de cette politique coloniale entamée avec Bonaparte.

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United together against hybrid threats: EU-NATO-Eastern Partnership countries (2014-2021)¹

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Abstract: *The EU, NATO and the Eastern Partnership countries are facing a range of security challenges and risks. Hybrid threats are a permanent feature of today's security environment and a part of the current EU, NATO, and the Eastern Partnership countries security landscape. In a period of rapid changes in the security environment and external pressures, it is important to intensify cooperation between the EU, NATO, and the Eastern Partnership countries and to make further progress on common collaborative approaches against hybrid threats. The paper focuses on different areas of the EU-NATO cooperation against hybrid threats and argues that shared resilience against shared threats can lead to a better synchronization of efforts in countering hybrid threats. A case study on the Eastern Partnership countries is introduced in this research and is examined in the paper.*

Keywords: *Resilience, hybrid threats, EU, NATO, Eastern Partnership countries, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova*

In a period of geopolitical shocks, intensifying competition, regional shifts, external pressures, and rapid changes in the security environment, it is important to pay attention to instability drivers and threats that can affect the EU and NATO and their partners.

The existence of hybrid threats is recognized by the EU, NATO, and their partners. These threats undermine governance, leverage indirect forms of power, erode trust in government institutions, create systemic vulnerabilities and societal polarization and affect decision-making processes.

The EU Security Union Strategy adopted in July 2020 and the NATO reflection report "NATO 2030: United for a New Era" published in November 2020 acknowledge the destabilizing nature of hybrid threats and their evolving nature. The EU and NATO also recognize the importance of further cooperation and coalitions between nations and partners in countering hybrid threats and they stress the need for a reinforcement of links between Allies and partners to make further progress on common collaborative approaches and policy toolkits against hybrid threats.

From the EU and NATO perspective, shared resilience, the identification of key vulnerabilities and a shared risk assessment demand a synchronization of efforts between partners, member states, civil and private sectors, and the EU-NATO institutions to contribute towards the deterrence against hybrid threats. As a first line of defense, shared resilience requires a shared understanding of security threats as well as a shared awareness and assessment of joint vulnerabilities and security risks. It also demands flexibility, institutional adaptability, responsiveness, strong leadership and cooperation, knowledge transfer and a rapid, agile, and efficient decision-making process.

Considering that hybrid threats may be directed at an adversary's vulnerabilities across the full spectrum of diplomatic, informational, military, economic and financial, intelligence and legal dimensions, the tripartite EU-NATO-partners cooperation itself would help to reinforce political legitimacy within state boundaries and to create resilience against malign influence.

This paper will elaborate on effective EU-NATO collaborative approaches against hybrid threats and will present a case study of the Eastern Partnership countries. The Eastern Partnership countries (EaP)² constitute a focal point for Russia's power projection spectrum as grey areas that

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² The Eastern Partnership program is the EU's initiative to improve its political and economic relations with the post-Soviet states of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. EU-Eastern Partnership countries relations were

the Kremlin will use in its hybrid activities against European countries.³ The Eastern Partnership region as a whole can be considered by the defence community as a contested area of influence between Russia and the West which requires thorough attention from the different international players, in particular the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

One of the EU-NATO objectives or the strategy to counter hybrid threats in wider Europe and the Eastern Partnership region itself can be resilience. The research work presented here includes recommendations on how to diminish the hybrid security risks in Europe through models of EU-NATO security cooperation and an enhancement of resilience against hybrid threats in the Eastern Partnership region. Particular attention should be devoted to a strategy of minimizing security risks from Russia's hybrid threats to Europe itself; to the strengthening of Euro-Atlantic cooperation and to developing the EU-EaP-NATO cooperation focusing on strengthening the region's societal resistance and operational resilience against Russia's hybrid warfare tactics and on facilitating peace solutions. To better counter Russia's hybrid threats and to achieve greater stability of the Eastern Partnership region, an optimal balance of military deterrence, non-military measures, and cooperative tools is required.

RESILIENCE FROM THE EU'S AND NATO'S PERSPECTIVES: FROM DECLARATION TO ACTION

Resilience has become a central concept of EU and NATO security policies since 2016. Such important strategic documents as the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy (2016), the Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats (2016), the Joint Warsaw Summit communiqué (2016), the Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats (2018) as well as the NATO 2030 Expert Group's Report "United for a New Era" from 2020 refer extensively to the concept of resilience.

Resilience is defined by the EU as "the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, cope, adapt, and quickly recover from stresses and shocks such as violence, conflict, drought and other natural disasters without compromising long-term development".⁴ In many NATO documents, resilience refers to a "combination of civil preparedness and military capacity" where civil preparedness is described as "all measures and means taken in peacetime, by national and Allied agencies, to enable a nation to survive an enemy attack and to contribute more effectively to the common war effort".⁵ NATO documents also state that resilience "can be measured by the ability to retain credible forces and conduct successful operations in spite of surprise or strategic shock".⁶

In 2016 the Heads of State and Government of NATO countries at the Warsaw Summit made an explicit commitment to enhance resilience. The members of the Alliance agreed on commitments for seven so-called baseline requirements that reflect the nations' view on resilience. The seven baseline requirements are the "assured continuity of government and critical government services; resilient energy supplies; ability to deal effectively with uncontrolled movement of people; resilient

to be promoted through trade and economic agreements such as the Association agreement, but also through democratic institution-building and multilevel cooperation between the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries.

³ Research paper is limited to Russia's hybrid activities in the Eastern neighborhood, no reference to Chinese hybrid activities in the Eastern neighborhood.

⁴ European Commission, "Building resilience: The EU's approach", Factsheet, 2016, available here: https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/EU_building_resilience_en.pdf

⁵ Civil-military cooperation center of excellence, "Resilience through civil preparedness", Haque, 2017, available here: <https://www.cimic-coe.org/resources/fact-sheets/resilience-through-civil-preparedness.pdf>

⁶ NATO, SACT, Framework for Future Alliance Operations, August 2015, pp.19-20, available here: <https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/media/doclibrary/ffao-2015.pdf>

food and water resources; ability to deal with mass casualties; resilient civil communications systems and resilient civil transportation systems”.⁷ The progress achieved in meeting these resilience commitments is supported by NATO’s Resilience Advisory Support Teams that help the countries in building this requirement.⁸

Furthermore, a principle of resilience is embedded in article 3 of the Washington Treaty that requires all NATO Member States to “maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack”.⁹ According to the reflection report “NATO 2030: United for a New Era”, “building resilience across Allied populations is the primary responsibility of Allies themselves” and NATO plays a supportive role and “could offer a surge capacity to individual countries whose capabilities may be overwhelmed by e.g. a terrorist attack involving non-conventional means including chemical, biological, or radiological substances”.¹⁰ The NATO Allies are maintaining civilian preparedness as a blueprint for collective defense. Nations are constantly intensifying civil-military cooperation which is essential for addressing any crisis and are adapting their deterrence and defense posture to ensure readiness and to respond to security challenges. Within collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security (NATO’s three core tasks) resilience is an underlying condition “for a robust defensive posture”. Resilience is an enabler “for an appropriate engagement of multiple challenges” before any crisis occurs (crisis management) and a “support development of partners’ resilience” (cooperative security).¹¹

Looking at resilience and the common EU-NATO approaches to resilience and countering hybrid threats, resilience requires “preparation, prevention, protection, promotion and transformation policies”, as well as an involvement of institutions and citizens.¹²

After the EU and NATO have analyzed an institutional imperative to build up resilience against hybrid threats, at the Warsaw Summit in 2016 they agreed on the Joint Declaration. This included the identification of more than forty proposals in seven areas of cooperation such as hybrid threats, operational cooperation including maritime issues, cyber security, defense capabilities, industry and research, capacity building and exercises.¹³ The 2018 EU-NATO Joint Declaration then stated that the EU and NATO had “increased[.]ability to respond to hybrid threats” and common institutional work was conducted on reinforcement of preparedness for crisis and resilience, disinformation and cyber security.¹⁴ Parallel and coordinated exercises (PACE) between the two organizations with the participation of NATO and EU Member States have been taking place every

⁷ *North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Commitment to enhance resilience issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016, available here: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133180.htm?selectedLocale=en*

⁸ Allied Command Transformation, Building resilience. Collaborative proposals to help nations and partners, June 2017.

⁹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the North Atlantic Treaty, Washington, April 1949, available here:

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm

¹⁰ NATO 2030: United for a new era, Analysis and recommendations of the reflection group appointed by the NATO Secretary General, November 2020, available here:

https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf

¹¹ NATO, “Building resilience across the Alliance”, HQ SACT, pp.5, January 2016

¹² European Commission, JRC, Building a scientific narrative towards a more resilient EU society, 2017, available here: https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC106265/jrc106265_100417_resilience_scienceforpolicyreport.pdf

¹³ Council of the European Union, EU-NATO Joint Declaration, 8 July 2016, available here:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/07/08/eu-nato-joint-declaration/>

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<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/eu-nato-joint-declaration/>

¹⁴ Council of the European Union, EU-NATO Joint Declaration, 10 July 2018, available here:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/07/10/eu-nato-joint-declaration/>

two years since 2016.¹⁵ The exercises also identify lessons to support partners in security and defense capacity-building.¹⁶ Based on the outcome of these exercises, a methodological revision of the EU operational protocol for countering hybrid threats (EU Playbook) was conducted.¹⁷

Since 2016 the Member States have agreed to monitor security risks related to hybrid threats and “identify indicators of hybrid threats, incorporate these into early warning and existing risk assessment mechanisms, and share them as appropriate”.¹⁸ Special emphasis was given to the improvement of situational awareness and enhancement of a comprehensive approach on hybrid threats between the different organizations and bodies. The “EU playbooks” have outlined cooperation with partner organizations as necessary to improve information sharing and enhance situational awareness. A Joint staff document from 2019 has reported on progress achieved in countering hybrid threats and resiliency aspects. These aspects include an allocation of additional funds to a network of practitioners handling hybrid threats, the development of hybrid threat-related indicators and vulnerability indicators for the resilience and protection of critical infrastructure, the work in progress for identifying new mechanisms on the EU Foreign Direct Investments Screening Regulation, a further development of the Rapid Alert System to fight against disinformation and election interference.¹⁹

Some tangible progress has been achieved by the EEAS Task Forces (East, Western Balkans, South) who are working on the monitoring of disinformation, the enhancement of citizens’ awareness and media literacy campaigns etc.²⁰ The EU is also building up societal resilience against disinformation through the EU’s strategic communication campaigns “InvestEU” (a Europe that delivers), “EUandME” (a Europe that empowers) and “EU Protects” (a Europe that protects).²¹ The EU is also in process of implementing new initiatives that were incorporated in July 2020 EU Security Union Strategy. Such initiatives include a “set up of the EU resilience baselines to improve the preparedness, protection and recovery of critical sectors from hybrid attacks”.²² This initiative is important as the EU resilience baselines can provide a model for strengthening national resilience of the Member States.²³

Reflecting upon the future of NATO in 2030, the reflection group appointed by the NATO Sec Gen has advanced a proposal for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Democratic Resilience dedicated to providing support to individual Allies, upon their request, for strengthening

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ EU and NATO, Fifth progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017, 16 June 2020, available here:

https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/6/pdf/200615-progress-report-nr5-EU-NATO-eng.pdf

¹⁷ European Commission, Report on the implementation of the 2016 Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats and the 2018 Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats, May 2019, Brussels, p. 23.

¹⁸ European Commission, “Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats”, Brussels, 6 April 2016, paragraph 2, available here: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52016JC0018>

¹⁹ European Commission, Report on the implementation of the 2016 Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats and the 2018 Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats, May 2019, Brussels, available here:

[report_on_the_implementation_of_the_2016_joint_framework_on_countering_hybrid_threats_and_the_2018_joint_communication_on_increasing_resilien.pdf](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52019JC0018) (europa.eu)

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² European Parliament, SEDE-INGE Joint meeting, 25 February 2021, available online:

https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/sede-inge-joint-meeting_20210225-1030-COMMITTEE-SEDE-INGE_vd

²³ Ibid.

societal resilience to resist interference from hostile external actors in the functioning of their democratic institutions and processes”.²⁴

In terms of energy security and vulnerabilities in the energy sector, a diversification of energy supplies and an engagement of the Member States on the development of the Southern Gas Corridor, East Med Gas and US's LNG imports to Europe constitute a top priority for the EU and NATO communities. The EU institutions are also investing in the protection of critical infrastructure and have funded different projects through Horizon 2020 such as DEFENDER and SECUREGAS.²⁵ Furthermore, the “European Program for Critical Infrastructure Protection” also covers the protection of civilian infrastructure like airports and ports. The EU Space Programme as Copernicus “provides situational awareness through satellite images” which contributes to the situational awareness of the Member States with regard to the protection and monitoring of critical infrastructure.²⁶ NATO is focusing on the operational side of energy risk identification and assessment, the enhancement of the protection of critical energy infrastructures and the reduction of energy vulnerabilities.²⁷

In cyber security there is an ongoing cooperation of the Computer Emergency Response Team for the EU (CERT-EU) that shares threat assessment memos on the topics of the cyber, energy or digital domains with the national Computer Security Incidents Response Teams and the Computer Incident Response Capability of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NCIRC). The EU institutions are massively investing into different pilot projects on cyber security under Horizon 2020 and are also addressing cyber defense education through the Cyber Education, Training, Exercises and Evaluation platform. Cyber Europe 2018 and Cyber Coalition 2019 events between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's staff and EU staff also have largely contributed to strengthening the capacity of Member States to deal with hybrid threats in the cyber domain.

Moreover, an ongoing close cooperation between the European Center of Excellence for countering hybrid threats and NATO Centers of Excellence, the Hybrid Fusion Cell of the EU intelligence and situation center and the NATO Hybrid Analysis branch provide Member States with additional platforms for sharing best practices and enhancing shared efforts in dealing with hybrid activities. The countries are constantly addressing hybrid threats through DIMEFIL²⁸ and are paying attention to the identification of “areas of interests or critical functions that a state should ensure are resilient against hybrid threat activity”.²⁹

This constant work in progress and the success of the EU and NATO in achieving resilience to and capacities to deal with hybrid threats rely not only on the resilience of their Member States but also on their partners, i.e., the Eastern Partnership countries, who deal with a wide spectrum of hybrid threats on a daily basis.³⁰

²⁴ NATO 2030: United for a new era, Analysis and recommendations of the reflection group appointed by the NATO Secretary General, November 2020, available here:

https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf

²⁵ Ibid, p.7.

²⁶ Ibid, p.10

²⁷ V. Ratsiborynska, “Russia's hybrid warfare in the form of its energy maneuvers against Europe: how the EU and NATO can respond together?”, NATO Defense College, 2018

²⁸ Spectrum of specific powers such as Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic, Finance, Intelligence, and Law Enforcement.

²⁹ European Commission, Hybrid CoE, The Landscape of hybrid threats: A conceptual model public version, November 2020, available here: <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Conceptual-Framework-Hybrid-Threats-HCoE-JRC.pdf>

³⁰ NATO, “Building resilience across the Alliance”, HQ SACT, January 2016

CASE STUDY ON THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP REGION AND THE EVOLUTION OF HYBRID THREATS

As recent events in the Eastern Partnership region demonstrate, Russia's hybrid warfare is constantly evolving and adapting. These events include the evolution of Russia's cyber security activities against Europe and the Eastern Partnership countries, the build-up of military bastions inside the territories of the Eastern Partnership countries, the development of anti-access area denial capabilities and information warfare with increasingly influential content. Russia is also intensifying its military presence in the Eastern neighborhood while exerting external pressure on the EU and the international community.

As of the end of 2020, a Russian presence has been identified in all six Eastern Partnership countries.³¹ In 2020 Russia demonstrated its ability to assert its military posture in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and presented itself as one of the successful and credible security guarantors and mediators in the conflict between these parties.³² Russia has also deepened its military ties with Belarus by conducting several military exercises with Belarus in 2020 and also re-emphasized its discourse towards a bigger integration in the military domain.³³ All these moves are accompanied with an economic and political acceleration towards a completion of the Union State integration.³⁴

In the Eastern part of Ukraine Russia pursues its low-cost asymmetrical approaches and at the same time devotes a significant attention to the militarization and nuclearization of the occupied Crimean Peninsula and to the modernization of the Black Sea Fleet.³⁵ Furthermore, the Kremlin focuses on the Black Sea region as a maritime logistics, trade and energy hub that connects Russia's Southern and Western areas of interest. The littoral states that belong to the Eastern Partnership regional framework i.e., Ukraine and Georgia as well as those that are located nearby i.e., Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, and Belarus are of vital importance for Russia's security, energy, and trade interests. Russia is also striving to achieve its national strategic security objectives in the energy domain which are aimed at controlling energy export routes to the EU. Moscow is seeking to finalize its vital energy project Nord Stream 2 that undermines national interests of Ukraine and also puts Europe at a security risk.

All these Russian actions demonstrate to the international community that the Eastern Partnership region represents one of Russia's regional areas of interest where it executes its power projection role and where a high spectrum of military and non-military means as well as new capabilities across multiple domains are simultaneously applied. Russia's actions and its creation of grey zones in the Eastern neighborhood prevent the Eastern Partnership countries from accession to NATO and significantly minimize their ability to absorb European norms and values.

³¹ V. Ratsiborynska, "When Hybrid Warfare supports ideology: Russia Today", *NATO Defense College*, Rome, 2016

³² N. Melvin, When the chips are down: Russia's stance in the current Azeri-Armenian confrontation, RUSI, October 2020, available here: https://rusi.org/commentary/when-chips-are-down-russias-stance-current-azeriarmenian-confrontation?utm_source=RUSI+Newsletter&utm_campaign=b605f43c71-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_09_10_09_43_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0c9bbb5ef0-b605f43c71-47838786

³³ VPK, "The unification of Russia and Belarus will begin with the creation of a single army", September 2020, available here: https://www.ng.ru/armies/2020-09-13/2_7962_army.html

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Foreign intelligence service of Ukraine, White Book 2021, January 2021, available here: <https://szru.gov.ua/download/white-book/WB-2021.pdf>

And UNIAN, Russia deploys Bastion coastal defense missile system in Crimea, January 2021, available here: <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/unian-russia-deploys-bastion-coastal-defense-missile-system-in-crimea.html?cn-reloaded=1>



Figure 1: Territorial conflicts in the Eastern periphery of the European Union³⁶

EVOLUTION OF RUSSIAN FUTURE STRATEGIC THINKING AND HYBRID THREATS

In different publications the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia Valery Gerasimov has stated that the successful execution of hybrid warfare requires modernized and upgraded military capabilities combined with non-military means. General Gerasimov writes that “work on the question of preparation of information and conduct of actions of information character is the most important task of military science”.³⁷ In the current military discourse Moscow prioritizes principles of interconnectivity between military and non-military methods while paying attention to “traditional environments as land, sea, air, space and cyberspace, but also to new ones such as social, digital, energy and others”.³⁸ Moreover, Russia’s strategy of limited actions in the execution of hybrid activities abroad is directed towards a more inclusive approach which aims at integrating non-

³⁶ S. Pugsley and F. Wesslau (eds.), *Life in the Grey Zones – Reports from Europe’s breakaway regions*, European Council for Foreign Relations, original map, adapted by the author.

³⁷ V. Gerasimov, *Vektory Razvitiya Voennoi Strategii*, *Krasnaja Zvezda*, March 2019, <http://redstar.ru/vektory-razvitiya-voennoj-strategii/>

³⁸ Arms expo, “Alexander Smolovy: "Generator of breakthrough ideas and proposals", January 2021, https://www.arms-expo.ru/news/novye-razrabotki/aleksandr-smolovoy-generator-proryvnykh-idey-i-predlozheniy/?mc_cid=d7f9ed37f6&mc_eid=fed21c605f

military tools with C4ISR³⁹, digital technologies, robotics, unmanned systems, and electronic warfare under the control of the Russian National Defense Management Center.⁴⁰ Moscow is continuously improving its military capabilities by shaping its forces into expeditionary forces based on a coalition of partners. Expeditionary warfare and coalition-based hybrid warfare have become a part of the military adaptation of Russian forces in its future strategic thinking.

Domestically, the Russian Federation has begun making changes in its defense organization and the National Guard has been created to counter “the trend of military dangers and threats shifting into the informational space and domestic sphere of Russia”.⁴¹ President Vladimir Putin has stated numerous times that Russia will take all necessary actions to improve the potential of its strategic nuclear forces, to consolidate its military forces, to strengthen its abilities to “adequately respond” to a potential technologically advanced state-level adversary.

As demonstrated, Russia’s strategy and its policymaking regarding the use of its hybrid warfare tools and methods are progressing towards a more deterrent approach that successfully combines different hybrid warfare tactics causing uncertainty and unpredictability in an international security environment. A synergy between conventional and unconventional means as well as Russia’s strategy of limited actions that “defend and promote national interests” outside of Moscow’s borders also provides a sophisticated basis for a modern development of Russia’s current and future paradigm of modern warfare.⁴² Since uncertainty, unpredictability and strategic surprises prevail in Russia’s actions in the Eastern Partnership region, security challenges and risks remain critical points of the EaP-EU-NATO cooperation.

The Kremlin’s hybrid warfare and its dynamic character represent a serious challenge to the international order and are undermining the EU’s security. Russia’s bastion strategy and the cyber security and military trends that Moscow is developing in its hybrid warfare strategy against the Eastern Partnership region show that these questions urgently need to be studied and analyzed to be able to elaborate an efficient counterstrategy and to develop possible prospects of conflict resolution in the region.

Resilience has become one of the means to address hybrid threats and to strengthen the institutional capacities of the Eastern Partnership region’s governments to deal with a wide range of hybrid threats. Moreover, resilience can become a driving force for an adaptation towards security risk reduction and one of the comprehensive mechanisms for a strong institutional cooperation or for sharing best practices on questions of hybrid threats and security risk assessment between the Eastern Partnership countries, the EU, NATO, and their Member States. Shared resilience is the core element of a first line of defense.

Shared resilience is a driving force for adaptation and a base of defense that helps to identify a threat, allows to come out with a proactive approach and limits the impacts of hybrid threats in such a way that the EU, NATO and the Eastern Partnership countries become powerful enough to respond in a coordinated and comprehensive way. In the best case, resilience is already preventing such attacks and forms part of the deterrence by denial which intends to convince the adversary “that an attack will not achieve its intended objectives”.⁴³ The main components of operational resilience should include agile and adaptable military forces reinforced by all other capabilities for countering

³⁹ C4ISR, acronym stands for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance.

⁴⁰ Andrew Monaghan, *Dealing with the Russians*, 2019, p.p.121.

⁴¹ RSInsights, *Moscow’s Strategy of limited actions*, 28 January 2021

⁴² V. Gerasimov, *Vektory Razvitiya Voennoi Strategii*, *Krasnaja Zvezda*, March 2019, <http://redstar.ru/vektory-razvitiya-voennoj-strategii/>

⁴³ W. Roepke, H. Thankey, *Resilience: the first line of defense*, NATO review, February 2019 available here: <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2019/02/27/resilience-the-first-line-of-defence/index.html>

hybrid threats and should be combined with soft power elements such as institutions, strategy-making, training, and exercises etc.

As an essential base of credible defense, resilience also requires a strong military and civilian connectivity and synchronization to deter hybrid threats. Since hybrid warfare exploits vulnerabilities of governance and targets civil society, a permanent interaction between governments, people and the civil-military interface is needed to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged at a state and individual level to counter threats and to respond to future security challenges.

EU AND NATO COMBINED APPROACHES: THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY AND NATO'S 'PROJECTING STABILITY' TO THE EASTERN NEIGHBORHOOD THROUGH DIFFERENT MEANS WITH RESILIENCE AS A CORE

The Warsaw Summit communiqué from 2016 makes a reference to partner countries and states that “NATO’s resilience can be enhanced [...] by strengthening the resilience of partner countries in the Alliance’s neighborhood” and that “if NATO’s neighbors are more stable, NATO is more secure”.⁴⁴ The EU has similar objectives in its European Neighborhood Policy launched in 2004 and focuses on stabilizing its neighborhood in political, economic and security terms, “promoting key EU interests of good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights, and facilitating cooperation at regional level”.⁴⁵ Creating synergies with partner countries regarding risk reduction, fostering stability, security and prosperity in the neighborhood are important priorities for the EU’s European Neighborhood policy and NATO’s ‘Projecting stability’.

Formalized at the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO’s ‘Projecting stability’ is recognized as a set of activities “coherently articulated and comprehensively developed, which influence and shape the strategic environment to make it more secure and less threatening”.⁴⁶ NATO’s “Projecting Stability” toolkit in the Eastern neighborhood revolves around the reduction of security threats, promoting internal stability, the anticipation of crises in the immediate neighborhood and ensuring that the Eastern Partnership neighbors become security providers for themselves.⁴⁷ It includes building security capacity and improving capabilities through education, training, exercises, providing advice on institutional reforms in the defense sector, strengthening interoperability and institutional capacity and developing partnership programs in the defense and security sectors to enhance the quality of governance and resilience of neighboring states.⁴⁸

The EU and NATO’s well-developed policies provide the Eastern Partnership countries with a set of tools and instruments that enhance the partners’ own national capabilities and make them more agile, adaptive, and resilient.

With regard to countering hybrid threats in the Eastern Partnership region, the EU-NATO tools and instruments combine situational awareness and information sharing, training and exercises,

⁴⁴ Meyer-Minnemann, “Resilience and Alliance Security: The Warsaw Commitment to enhance resilience”, *Forward Resilience: Protecting Society in an interconnected world*, p.3, available here: <https://archive.transatlanticrelations.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/resilience-forward-book-meyer-minnemann-final.pdf>

And NATO Heads of State and Government, “The Warsaw Declaration on Transatlantic Security”, 9 July 2016, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133168.htm

⁴⁵ European Commission, European neighborhood policy, available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/european-neighbourhood-policy_en

⁴⁶ NDC Research Paper, “Projecting Stability: Elixir or Snake Oil” edited by Ian Hope, Research Division, December 2018

⁴⁷ NATO, Partnerships: projecting stability through cooperation, June 2020, available here: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_84336.htm

⁴⁸ Ibid.

confidence-building measures, building interoperability for operational purposes, security capacity-building and reassurance instruments, and reinforcement of common institutional cooperation. The EU and NATO are devoting resources and expanding the partnership toolkits on resilience questions. This leads to a better synchronization of common efforts in the detection, prevention, and response to hybrid activities in the EaP region. Common work on shared resilience with the Eastern Partnership countries contributes to a better stability in Europe and leads to a better understanding of the common operational picture between the Eastern Partnership countries. Hybrid risk surveys with Georgia and Moldova are identifying key vulnerabilities and contributing to a better development of indicators for improving the resilience of different sectors.

Looking at the diverse instruments that the EU and NATO are applying to counter hybrid threats, it is important to stress the complementary nature of the EU-NATO means. In the *domain of information*, NATO and the EU are working closely with the EaP countries to share best practices on how to identify fake news and disinformation. Media literacy campaigns, twinning⁴⁹ and exchange programs on these questions are available to the EaP countries through the European Neighborhood Policy instruments. The European External Action Service's East StratCom Task Force established in 2015 to counter Russian disinformation campaigns is helping the Eastern Partnership countries' citizens to "develop resistance to digital information and media manipulation".⁵⁰ Monitoring of the information environment, exposing facts and countering disinformation, support of free independent media, situation awareness, sharing best practices, and credible public communications are the most common EU-NATO instruments to deal with hybrid threats in the domain of information. Diverse public diplomacy campaigns that engage different audiences in the Eastern Partnership countries, especially media professionals, the young population, opinion makers, and civil society can strengthen the EU-NATO approaches in dealing with disinformation in the EaP countries.⁵¹ Recognizing disinformation and improving mental preparedness against disinformation in the EaP countries combined with media literacy and risk management culture are the key factors that are needed to foster resilience in the domain of information and where further support from the EU and NATO is required.

In the *cyber domain* the EU provides numerous financial resources to the EaP countries such as the 'Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)', the 'European Neighborhood Instrument', and 'Capacity Building and Cooperation to enhance Cyber Resilience' that help to create a cyber-resilient environment in the EaP countries. The EU4Digital program is aimed at enhancing the cyber-resilience and criminal justice capacities of the Eastern Partnership countries and at combating cybercrime. Through this program the EU is intending to improve the EaP's critical information infrastructure resilience and to "decrease the risk of disruption or failure of network information systems".⁵² Through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace and under the EU4Digital initiative, the EU institutions are reinforcing the cybersecurity of elections in the EaP countries by providing different types of training and exchanges between cyber experts of the EU Member States and representatives of the EaP countries.⁵³ There are different pilot projects under

⁴⁹ Twinning is a European Union instrument for institutional cooperation between Public Administrations of EU Member States and of beneficiary or partner countries.

⁵⁰ EUvsDisinfo, available here: <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/about/>

⁵¹ Interview with EU official, Chatham House rule, February 2021

⁵² EU4Digital, Cybersecurity guidelines for the Eastern Partner countries, June 2020, available here: <https://www.euneighbours.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2020-12/Cybersecurity-guidelines-for-the-Eastern-Partner-countries.pdf>

https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/c_2018_8184_f1_annex_en_v1_p1_1000418.pdf

⁵³ EU institutions, EU4Digital: Cybersecurity East, available here : <https://eufordigital.eu/discover-eu/eu4digital-improving-cyber-resilience-in-the-eastern-partnership-countries/>

development that aim at amplifying the cyber capacity building and security sector reform of the EaP countries.

NATO's Communication and Information Agency (NCIA) and the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership are collaborating on the further development of technical cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries. For example, Ukraine's signature of the Memorandum of agreement with the NCIA in 2015 has facilitated the process of the implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Trust Fund on Consultation, Command, Control and Communication.⁵⁴ The NCIA is strengthening its cooperation with Ukraine and Georgia to help modernize their Command, Control, Communication and Computer capabilities. Building robust and resilient CIS capabilities is important for these Eastern Partnership nations who aspire to join NATO and need to meet NATO's standards. Furthermore, the NCIA provides technical advice in the domain of cyber security and enhances the national capabilities of the EaP countries. At the end of January 2021 for example a new Cyber Incident Response Capability for the Moldovan Armed Forces was established to increase cyber defense capabilities and Moldova's capacity to respond to cyber threats.⁵⁵ Different workshops and conferences on cyber security and defense with a participation of the EaP countries, NCIA and NATO's Cyber Incident Response Center and NATO-Industry Cyber partnership contribute to operational awareness on cyber security and foster knowledge transfer on cyber threats and information security. Further development of the network of relevant institutions dealing with cyber domain and the incorporation of the Eastern partners into threat information-sharing platforms can promote information sharing further, mitigate security risks, and enhance cyber resilience to better respond to cyber-attacks.

With respect to *energy security*, the EU regulatory framework provides further diversification, market liberalization, energy efficiency, the integration of European energy networks. Through the EU's strategy of diversifying suppliers, the Union is becoming less dependent on Russia's gas and is creating an interconnected and transparent gas market. The EU ensures compliance with the EU's internal market rules according to the principles set up in the Energy Union package and "A framework strategy for a resilient Energy Union with a forward-looking climate change policy".⁵⁶ The EU's focus in the Eastern Partnership countries is on diversification, the development of unconventional sources of energy, on the promotion of alternative energy projects and on the modernization of energy infrastructure.⁵⁷ NATO pays special attention to the protection of critical energy infrastructure in the EaP countries, energy risk assessment, situational awareness and identification of lessons learnt from energy supply disruptions. A better energy risk identification and a transfer of NATO's resilience guidelines knowledge from NATO member states to the Eastern Partnership countries will improve synergies between institutions and the EaP partners and maximize resilience efforts in energy security matters.⁵⁸

Exercises and training with the EaP countries as well as the EU's Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) and twinning programs lead to a better transfer of knowledge, an enhancement of institutional capacity and to a better analysis of weaknesses in certain operational areas. NATO incorporates hybrid elements in its trainings with the EaP countries and lessons learnt from exercises improve strategic thinking on how to deal with the new spectrum of hybrid threats

⁵⁴ NCIA webpage, <https://www.ncia.nato.int/about-us/newsroom/natoukraine-agreement-paves-the-way-for-further-technical-cooperation.html>

⁵⁵ NATO, Cyber Incident Response Capability established in the Republic of Moldova with NATO support, January 2021, available here: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_180758.htm?selectedLocale=en

⁵⁶ V. Ratsiborynska, Russia's hybrid warfare in the form of its energy manoeuvres against Europe: how the EU and NATO can respond together?, NATO Defense College, June 2018.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Interview with NATO official, February 2021

that has become the new normal in today's security environment.⁵⁹ Different types of exercises with the participation of the Eastern Partnership countries enhance the effectiveness of these countries' decision-making capacity to deal and to respond to the complexity of hybrid threats and contribute to the efficiency of crisis management response procedures. "Civil-military education, training for hybrid warfare [...] with a focus on [rehearsing hybrid style attacks and how to match them, including the full integration of cyber and information warfare], joint conferences, joint working groups, and a maintaining of a balanced force for multiple responses" are essential to successfully deal with hybrid tactics.⁶⁰

The *knowledge hubs* such as the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, the NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence, or the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence, the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence provide a venue for the EaP countries to increase their awareness of hybrid threats, to share, inform and further engage on resilience and hybrid threats. Further *outreach to the like-minded community of partners* can lead to innovation and to better preparedness to face a wide array of hybrid threats. Creation of synergies between different organizations can increase national capacities of partner states. Fostering cooperation with like-minded organizations engaged in the questions of rule of law and democratization in the Eastern Partnership countries such as the Council of Europe, OSCE, UN and others can ensure better complementarity with the EU-NATO approaches and can support local governance's efforts in achieving a better level of institutional readiness and preparedness to deal with hybrid threats.

On policy the EU's *sanction-based policy* towards Moscow is further *increasing costs* for Russia's actions in the EaP countries. In its messages towards Russia the EU calls for the cessation of violations in the Eastern part of Ukraine and for restoring the territorial integrity of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova.⁶¹ At the same time the EU is pursuing its policies of dialogue, mediation and conflict prevention and is engaged in multilateralism and regional cooperation with the Eastern partners. The EU is supporting the EaP's reform processes that include anti-corruption measures, energy sector reforms, strengthening of the rule of law and efficient local governance etc. The EU's solid *macro-financial assistance programs* to the EaP countries and increase of trade deals constitute a basis for a further intensification of economic and political relations with the Eastern Partnership countries. The EU's framework for the *screening of investments* from non-EU countries focuses its efforts on the protection of critical infrastructure against foreign investments that can be used as part of a hybrid campaign in Europe. Nowadays growing emphasis is given to areas such as cyber security, the strengthening of institutional governance and institutional capacity, the fight against disinformation and the protection of critical infrastructure in the EaP countries. Furthermore, according to the 2020 policy guidance 'The Eastern Partnership beyond 2020: Reinforcing resilience-an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all', the EU institutions continue working with the Eastern Partnership countries for more resilient, sustainable, and integrated economies; for the rule of law and accountable institutions; toward environmental and climate change resilience; digital transformation; and for fair and inclusive societies.⁶² From NATO's side a dual-track approach of

⁵⁹ NATO, London Declaration, December 2019, available here:

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_171584.htm

⁶⁰ Written interview with Prof. Dr. Robert Johnson, Director of the Oxford Changing Character of War Centre, University of Oxford.

⁶¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/european-council/president/news/2021/03/03/20210301-pec-visit-georgia-moldova-ukraine/>

⁶² EEAS, Joint Communication: Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020: Reinforcing resilience- an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all, March 2020, available here: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/76166/joint-communication-eastern-partnership-policy-beyond-2020-reinforcing-resilience-%E2%80%93-eastern_en

deterrence and dialogue towards Russia and a continuous capacity-building of the EaP countries provide a set of means to empower the EaP partners and to ensure persistent NATO support to them.

FURTHER ACTIONS AND WORK IN PROGRESS FOR THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP REGION

As indicated by numerous security experts from the EU and NATO, the EaP governments should increase their efforts to better include civil society into resolving resilience issues and countering hybrid threats and to incorporate them into civil preparedness planning. Fostering societal resilience puts a strong emphasis on the capacity building of civil society and on a shared understanding of risks amongst different stakeholders, including the private sector.⁶³

The private sector plays an important role in identifying different external threats and should be included in a list of priority stakeholders when dealing with hybrid threats, especially in the cyber and energy domains which requires public-private cooperation and effective counter strategies. Local authorities from the Eastern Partnership countries are other stakeholders that need to be integrated into a list of priority in capacity building as they deal with the hybrid spectrum of risks and vulnerabilities on a regular basis and often form the basis for building up resilience at a state and community levels.⁶⁴

A development of complementary and cross-cutting cooperation between civilian and military actors, between national and local governments, EU and NATO institutions, public and private sectors, academia, and civil society will provide a broader spectrum of tools to use against hybrid threats.

A tailored communication and outreach campaigns to these audiences on hybrid threats and security risks associated with them is highly necessary and can help to form a better public awareness of hybrid threats. Effective operational cooperation and communication between the EU, NATO institutions and the Eastern Partnership countries will further raise public awareness and readiness to face external pressure. A regularly updated risk assessment process, analysis, and monitoring of indicators of hybrid actions should improve communication and address gaps in understanding the nature of hybrid threats and their evolving character amongst different stakeholders.

Improving institutional governance and the rule of law, capacity building of local communities, intelligence services and anti-corruption authorities are crucial in the EaP countries to enhance social resilience and to create a climate of public trust of democratic norms, values, and key democratic institutions. Building on local demands from these groups and empowering them, further investing in institutional capacity-building as well as providing more twinning to these actors are important drivers for structural reforms and for fostering EU-NATO-EaP cooperation.

“Restructuring the Eastern Partnership” to further “differentiate between partners with signed Association Agreements” will address ambitions of different EaP partner states in a better way. Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova are showing their determination to continue economic, social, and political reforms in line with their European aspirations. The country reports from the EU institutions on Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova indicate that more progress should be achieved in integrity building of their institutions, countering corruption, judicial reform legislation, and ensuring accountability of their local administrations. The EU and NATO are playing transformative powers for those partner countries and create a degree of interdependence that difficult to reverse as they have an impact on all reforms undertaken by them. Different pilot initiatives and programs within the EU and NATO cooperative instruments are offered to the EaP countries that address systemic governance vulnerabilities and offer a framework of Europeanization.

⁶³ Interview with security experts, March 2021

⁶⁴ Interview with security experts, March 2021

Further upgrading the EaP policy with security instruments in the coming years will be necessary to make the EU a more assertive geopolitical and security player in the Eastern neighborhood.⁶⁵ The recently adopted financial instrument ‘European Peace Facility’ is a right step on the path of the EU’s geopolitical and security repositioning in the immediate neighborhood as it allows the EU not only “to support partner countries bilaterally in military and defense matters but also to provide military equipment to increase partners’ defense capabilities”.⁶⁶

The development of strategic security partnerships with key neighbors in the East and the creation “of a security compact for the Eastern Partnership, comprising targeted support for intelligence services, cyber security institutions, and armed forces” will be beneficial to the Eastern Partnership countries and provide them with more reassurance.⁶⁷

NATO’s further adaptation and a “revision of NATO’s mandate to deal with conflict in the grey zone” as well as fostering partnerships and networks on hybrid threats and boosting current initiatives in the Eastern neighborhood will further foster shared resilience between NATO, the EU institutions, and the Eastern Partnership countries.⁶⁸

CONCLUSIONS

Hybrid threats are a permanent feature of today’s security environment and a part of the current EU, NATO, and the Eastern Partnership countries security landscape. NATO, the Eastern Partnership countries, and the EU have a common interest in working closely together in reducing their strategic, operational, and tactical vulnerabilities in different domains of national power and in maximizing their shared resilience efforts to respond to the current challenges of the security environment. A common adaptation to future challenges will mark a shift to a better common security vision and will reinforce their strategic thinking on shared security threats such as hybrid threats.

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⁶⁵ Iulia Joja, “The EU’s East: A way forward”, Middle East Institute, March 2021, available here: <https://www.mei.edu/publications/eus-east-way-forward>

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⁶⁶ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/46286/questions-answers-european-peace-facility_en

⁶⁷ Nicu Popescu and Gustav Gressel, “The best defense: Why the EU should forge security compacts with its eastern neighbors”, *European Council on Foreign Relations*, November 2020, available here: <https://ecfr.eu/publication/the-best-defence-why-the-eu-should-forge-security-compacts-with-its-eastern-neighbours/>

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Could digital diplomacy help combating disinformation? The impact of Romanian's Digital diplomacy in the Eastern Partnership countries

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Abstract: *Living in the "digital era" to ask ourselves how we communicate is a matter of vital importance for the public dimension, with the acknowledgement that most questions are born in relation to communication methods, the transmission mechanisms of the desired message and the impact that communication strategies have on message recipients, especially in the political-diplomatic environment. If in the private sector the freedom of expression using modern communication means is considerable, in the public institutions case things are drastically different, as they are subjected to various constraints, either political and legislative in nature or related to the peculiarities of their activity. In matters of diplomacy the entire spectrum of sending a message is even more complex, due to the international implications that any act of communication may generate. The study analyses the digital communication policy of the Romanian embassies in the area of the EU Eastern Partnership, respectively in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine - OSCE Member states as well. Our analysis had as objective a double dimension, on the one hand the evaluation of the activities promoted on the internet page and in the social media by Romanian embassies in these states and on the other hand the impact of the messages on young people. As a research method for the second part, we have used the interview applied to 80 respondents, in order to estimate the impact and expectations of young people regarding the public communication policy of the Romanian embassies in three countries - Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus. Starting from this experience we argue that OSCE needs to adapt to the new international realities generated by disinformation and to adopt a more intensive and individual driven communication strategy in order to have a greater impact in its mission.*

Keywords: *e-diplomacy, digitalization, Eastern Partnership, European Union, OSCE*

1. INTRODUCTION

The fall of communism and the readjustment of the international political geometry at the beginning of the 1990's marked the political geography of the world by the reconfiguration of Eastern Europe map. The political and ideological changes, the end of the Cold War, the disintegration of USA's traditional enemy, the Soviet Union, and the onset of a unipolar international system convinced the famous philosopher Francis Fukuyama to affirm, in Hegelian terms, that mankind is witnessing the "end of history"¹. The American philosopher with Japanese roots had in

¹ Fukuyama, F., 1989. The end of History?. *The National Interest*, Volume summer, 1-18.

view the instauration of a period of tranquility in a history seen in a linear dimension², generated by the triumph of liberal democracies, that appeared to send the world in the direction of “eternal peace”³. The theory raised controversial reactions in the literature, starting from the philosophical aspects⁴ and ending in ample historical and international relations debates, regarding the transfer of international conflicts from the ideological aspects into the civilizational one, identifiable in the rim zones of different cultures meddling⁵. The Eastern expansion was perceived by some authors, in accordance with previous projects, as a means of defending the first line of Christianity, the *antemurale christianitatis* limit of Catholic Europe, proposing a differentiated treatment of former Communist states⁶. The expression of these politics in the 1990's was the use of the concept of Central and Eastern Europe when referring to former Communist states, which are part of the Central Europe - the Visegrad Group, (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary), more advanced on the reforms route and the South-Eastern ones, Bulgaria and Romania⁷. But gradually, authors differentiated their approach⁸ due to political realities, new threats⁹, the international dynamics¹⁰ and the prevalence of the economic dimension of the EU expansion to the East.

For Eastern Europe it became a priority to reorient its external politics towards the West, by accessing Euro-Atlantic structures, generating the “return home” ideal. Thus, states in Central and Eastern Europe rushed into sealing partnerships with the EU, opting for the Western European model, connecting the national politics to the new priorities that would bring national warranties of political security¹¹ and economic stability. These countries had the opportunity to choose their development model based on the best practices in other countries¹². The process of joining NATO unfolded as a supplementary warrantee, military in nature, to the threats occurring in the region, which gives asymmetric status to Eastern European states, forming a puzzle of security policies and interests in the area¹³.

In this context the OSCE developed its policies and build upon national narratives of independence and security, in order to strengthen regional security.

2. ROMANIA AND ITS REGIONAL PROJECTS AS AN EU MEMBER STATE

For the Eastern Europe states, accession to the EU became the miracle solution for all the problems generated by the fall of the statist economies, interethnic conflicts, unemployment, and crimes, phenomena that characterized the first years following the fall of communism.

The Copenhagen Conference in 1993 opened the accession path for Central and Eastern Europe. Accession waves reached the former communist states one by one, Czech Republic, Estonia,

² Fukuyama, F., 1992. *The end of History and the Last Man*. New York: The Free Press.

³ Adem, S., 2002. *Anarchy, Order and Power in World Politics*. London: Routledge.

⁴ Derrida, J., 1994. *Specters of Marx. The state of the debt, the work of mourning, and the new international*. New York and London: Routledge.

⁵ Huntington, S. P., 1996. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

⁶ Longworth, P., 1997. *The Making of Eastern Europe. From Prehistory to Communism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

⁷ Naumescu, V., 2018. O sută de ani de periferie. România, în căutarea garanțiilor: 1918-2018”. In: *România, marile puteri și ordinea europeană 1918-2020*. Iași: Polirom, 24.

⁸ Fukuyama, F., 1995. Reflections on the End of History, Five Years Later. *History and Theory*, 34(2), 27-43

⁹ Kampmark, B., 2002. Fukuyama down under: Revising the End of History after 9-11. *AQ: Australian Quarterly*, 74(6), 33.

¹⁰ Kissinger, H., 2015. *World Order*. New York: Penguin Books

¹¹ Föhrenbach, G., 2001. Security Implications of EU Enlargement. *Baltic Defence Review*, Volume 6, 1-3

¹² Paul, A., Popovici O. C., Călin, C. A., The attractiveness of CEE countries for FDI. A public policy approach, *TRAS* no. 42 E/2014, 156-180.

¹³ Katchanovski, I., 2010. EU and NATO Enlargement Puzzles. *SSRN Electronic Journal*

Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and Romania¹⁴. The process of EU accession generated a series of projects and political programs in order to harmonize states interests in the region, respectively the Eastern Partnership, the Black Sea Synergy and the Northern Dimension (EU, Norway and Iceland) - financed through specific EU programs¹⁵. The EU intends by all these initiatives to improve its external action, based on a mix of political and public management approaches¹⁶.

Romania, along with Bulgaria and Greece, initiated the *Black Sea Synergy*. Part of this political project are also Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine¹⁷. Officially started at the beginning of 2008, the project aims at generating cooperation in the strategic area of the Black Sea¹⁸, a heterogeneous space with complex economic, social and political issues¹⁹. The main policies regard the increasing cooperation in the region aimed at stimulating economic and democratic reforms, increasing stability and promoting growth, common projects and peaceful resolution of conflicts through cooperation and joint actions²⁰. To implement these objectives, strategic policies and partnerships were developed such as: Integrated Maritime Policy, Environmental Partnership under the Synergy, Energy, Transportation, Citizen's mobility and improving security; Research, science and education networks; Democracy, Civil Society and Youth, Tourism and cross-border cooperation²¹.

Romania's active involvement was emphasized by the initiatives it proposed, such as the *NGO Forum in the Black Sea Region*²², in close cooperation with the Federation of NGOs for Development (FOND), which periodically organizes meetings aimed at developing collaborations, finance projects and disseminate good practices in aspects of social and political aspects²³.

The Eastern Partnership is the second political project addressed to the Eastern Europe, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

As a part of the neighborhood policy of the EU, it has the role to increase cooperation and stability in the region by generating a space with common principles and values based on democracy,

¹⁴ European Commission, 2015. *Enlargement*. [Online]

Available at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5c93a9e3-f5b7-4567-88aa-eea55451a0a1> [Accessed 24 01 2022].

¹⁵ European Union, 2018. *Neighbours East*. [Online]

Available at: <https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/east/stay-informed/projects/support-regional-programmes-eastern-partnership-black-sea-synergy-and> [Accessed 24 01 2022].

¹⁶ Naumescu, V. Administrative and political perspectives of the EU's reform: focus on permanent structured cooperation, *TRAS special issue* 2018, 60-74.

¹⁷ Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018. *Black Sea Synergy*. [Online] Available at: Sinergia Mării Negre, - <https://www.mae.ro/node/1502> [Accessed 24 01 2023]

¹⁸ EU External Actor, 2018. *Black Sea Synergy*. [Online]

Available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/black-sea-synergy/346/black-sea-synergy_en [Accessed 24 01 2022].

¹⁹ Vladova, G. & Knieling, J., 2014. Potential and challenges for the Black Sea regional cooperation. *Eastern Journal Of European Studies*, 5(1), 47-48.

²⁰ EU External Actor, 2018. *Black Sea Synergy*. [Online]

Available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/black-sea-synergy/346/black-sea-synergy_en [Accessed 24 01 2022]

²¹ European Commission, 2015. *Joint Staff Working Document Black Sea Synergy: review of a regional cooperation initiative*, Brussels: s.n.

²² Black Sea NGOs Forum, 2018. *Black Sea NGOs Forum*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.blackseango.org/forums/forum/forum-1/> [Accessed 24 01 2022].

²³ FOND, 2018. *NGO Federation for Development Romania*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.fondromania.org/despre-noi> [Accessed 24 01 2022].

prosperity, stability²⁴. These principles are part of the project ‘20 results by 2020’²⁵ who develops four priority development axes: stronger governance, stronger economy, stronger society, and better connectivity.

In this context, Romania, a state on the border of the EU, has the interest of playing an important role in regional politics, because some of these states are in its vicinity, because of the interests that are common with the Republic of Moldova, as well as due to the regional dynamics which directly affect its state security.

Romania’s strategic objectives, as defined in the National Defense Strategy 2020 - 2024 are “consolidating the security in the Black Sea region, as well in the Balkans” and “projecting the Romania’s profile as stability factor and the promotion of EU values in the region, by supporting the European course of the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans states”²⁶.

One of the commitments made by Romania over the presidency of the EU Council is the consistency and effectiveness of the EU action in the Eastern Neighborhood (The Incoming Romanian Presidency of the EU Council, 2018). This aspect is strengthened by the Government's commitment to focus on policies to update the “*Black Sea Synergy*” and “*making stronger connections in the Eastern Partnership*”.

These objectives are underlined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which states Romania’s commitment to the continuous development of the cooperation within the political project Black Sea Synergy, especially in the context of increased uncertainties in the region²⁷. To this end, Romania pleads for a resizing of EU politics in the Black Sea area, by increasing involvement in the development of resilient societies and good governance together with security policies²⁸ from a multidimensional perspective.

As a result, the policies towards the member states of the Eastern Partnership and Black Sea Synergy represent priorities in the development of Romania’s external politics in the region, and within the European Union.

3. SOFT POWER, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, AND DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

From the initial definition of soft power offered by Joseph Nye, who described it as being: “*the capacity to obtain what you want by attraction more than by coercion or payment methods. It is born from cultural attractiveness of political ideas and the politics of a state*”²⁹, the practical application of the concept has witnessed many variations. The author himself returned to the definition several times, trying a stricter delimitation³⁰ and adaptation to the realities born from its application.

Regardless of the shape the definition takes, soft power is primarily a means of communicating politics, culture or ethical and political values with the international environment, the desire to win by persuasion and not force. In Eastern Europe, Western soft power politics meant a dream for

²⁴ European External Action Service, 2018. *Eastern Partnership*. [Online]

Available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/eastern-partnership/419/eastern-partnership_en [Accessed 24 01 2022].

²⁵ European Commission, 2017. *Eastern Partnership - 20 Deliverables for 2020 Focusing on key priorities and tangible results*, Brussels: s.n.

²⁶ Romanian Presidential Administration, 2020. *Strategia Națională de Apărare a Țării pentru perioada 2020-2024*, s.l.: s.n.

²⁷ Horrell, S., 2016. A NATO Strategy for Security in the Black Sea Region. *Atlantic Council*, Volume 10, 1-8.

²⁸ Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018. *Black Sea Synergy*. [Online]

Available at: Sinergia Mării Negre, - <https://www.mae.ro/node/1502> [Accessed 24 01 2022]

²⁹ Nye, J. S., 2004. *Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics*. USA: Public Affairs.

³⁰ Fan, Y., 2008. Soft Power: Power of Attraction or Confusion? *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4(2), 147-158.

citizens living the reality of dictatorial regimes, a dream of freedom, prosperity which contributed to the desire for emancipation. Possibly, the most adequate example of soft power is the way in which American culture penetrated these states with political and social systems strictly controlled and won the hearts of the youth by music and films³¹.

Soft power politics develops in parallel with public diplomacy³² seen by Hans Tuch as “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies”³³. But as Jan Melissen points out, the concept evolves due to the development of vectors used in communication, context in which public diplomacy is like an “old wine in a new bottle”³⁴. The new bottle is certainly very modern, when we speak of the Internet and online communication. Thus, concepts such as e-diplomacy, cyber-diplomacy or digital diplomacy slowly find their place in the professional language giving rise to serious taxonomical issues³⁵. States have easier access to the international public, but in this path the success of a policy is based on a totally different approach³⁶, that country must learn to master.

To connect with the new trends, states have developed digital diplomacy projects, by creating an online communication space with the public through official internet pages and social media pages. To avoid the phenomenon of cyber-squatting, states and official institutions³⁷, have received priority right in the use of domain names and the management of CCTLD (Country Code Top Level Domain)³⁸.

4. METHODOLOGY

For states, the use of new communication techniques is essential to achieve objectives of external politics. Most countries use them, trying to achieve their political agenda by addressing citizens or by presenting their own system of values. In this regard states need to build communication strategies and measure their impact periodically in order to adjust them to the public and its specific needs.

Our research is focused on Romania’s digital diplomacy politics in the non- EU Member States that are included in the OSCE. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine are the case - studies. Romania’s communication policy inside the EU must follow other principles and mechanisms than with non-EU countries. At the same time, the Russian Federation is excluded as Romanian public politics to this country presents special characteristics and sensitive topics on the bilateral agenda. In the context of the 2019 Romanian EU presidency, studying the aspects of digital diplomacy in the region is needed, because the image and communication capacities of Romanian in the area have a direct impact on the success of such an EU policy over the coming 6 months.

³¹ Petra Ramet , S., 1994. *Rocking the State: Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia*. s.l.:Oxford - Westview Press.

³² Nye, J. S., 2008. Public Diplomacy and Soft Power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* , Volume 616, 94-109.

³³ Melissen, J., 2005. The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice,. In: Jan Melissen, ed. *The New Public Diplomacy Soft Power in International Relations*, London.:Palgrave Macmillan, 11-12.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p 3.

³⁵ Olubukola, A. S., 2017. Foreign policy in an era of digital diplomacy. *Cogent Social Sciences*, Volume 3.

³⁶ McClory, J., 2017. *The Soft Power 30. A Global Ranking of Soft Power. 2017*. Portland: USC Center on Public Diplomacy, pp. 25-26

³⁷ ICANN, 2018. *ICANN Policy*,. [Online], Available at: https://www.icann.org/policy#what_is_policy [Accessed 24 01 2022].

³⁸ WIPO, 2018. *ccTLD policies*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.wipo.int/amc/en/domains/background/index.html> [Accessed 24 01 2022].

Starting from the model developed by Kent and Taylor based on five pillars: dialogic loop, the usefulness of information, the generation of return visits, the ease of the interface, conservation of visitors³⁹ we formulate four research questions:

RQ1 Do Romanian embassies in these states have Internet pages and if yes, how easy is it to use them and how useful the information is?

RQ2 Do Romanian embassies in these states have social media pages: Facebook, Instagram or Twitter?

RQ3 If yes, how heavily accessed are they and what type of information is published?

RQ4 How is the activity of embassies perceived on social media by the youth of the respective state?

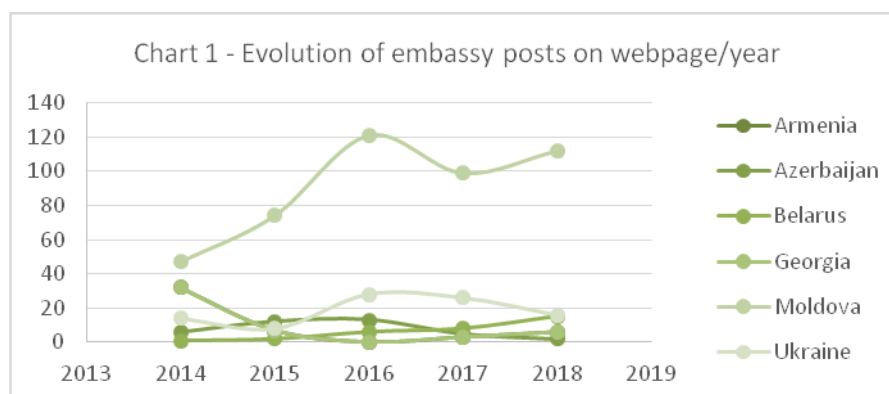
RQ1 Do Romanian embassies in these states have Internet pages and if yes, how easy is it to use them and how useful the information is?

Through this question we try to look upon the existence of the page and its content. We followed the page activity, to see if it is dedicated only to the embassy or if it has special subsections for consulates and cultural centres, what type of information is found, what type of information is missing. Following the research, we found that all six embassies have web pages that show only the embassy. The consulate or the cultural centre, if available (Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), are simply mentioned, with no active links or subsections. All of them offer information in Romanian, most of them in English and in Belarus and Ukraine, the page can be read in Russian too. Only the embassies in Azerbaijan, Moldova and Ukraine offer information on economic and commercial aspects; the first two give detailed qualitative information, while the latter have a business guide for the respective state. No page offers information regarding study opportunities and scholarships available in Romania for the citizens of the respective states and how they could be accessed.

Country	Type of diplomatic representation			Web page				Language
	Embassy	Consulate	Cultural Center	Political information	Visa	Economic	Exports	
Armenia	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	Ro En
Azerbaijan	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ro EN
Belarus	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	Ro En Ru
Georgia	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	Ro En
Moldova	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes.	Ro En
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ro Ru Ua

As regards the number of posts, we can see from Chart 1 that their evolution in the news section fluctuates from year to year; in some states, such as Georgia dropping from 32 in 2014 to 0 in 2016, with 6 posts in 2018. An interesting fact can be seen from the analysis of the data, that in the year Romania celebrated its 100 years' anniversary no significant change in the number of posts can be identified, except in the Republic of Moldova. This may indicate a certain passive attitude in communication regarding the events organized during this year.

³⁹ Kent, M. & Taylor M., 'Building Dialogic Relationships through the World Wide Web', Public Relations Review, vol. 3, no. 24 (1998), 321-334.



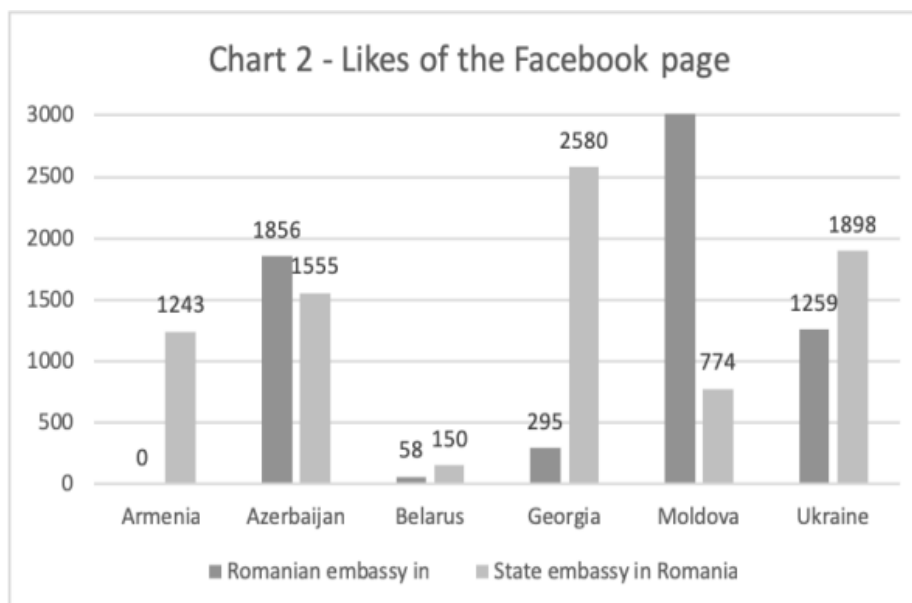
RQ2 Do Romanian embassies in these states have social media pages: Facebook, Instagram or Twitter?

Romanian embassies opened Facebook pages, with only one exception of the Romanian Embassy in Armenia. None of the six embassies can be found on Instagram or Twitter. At the same time, we can notice in Table 2 that all pages, except for the Romanian Embassy in Republic of Moldova, were opened after the homologous embassy.

Country	Romania Embassy to...	State's Embassy to Romania
Armenia	-	27-Dec-17
Azerbaijan	23-Sep-16	24-Nov-14
Belarus	15-Oct-17	31 May 2016
Georgia	28-Sep-16	02-Oct-13
Moldova	27.Nov.2014	29 Jan 2016
Ukraine	5 Sept. 2016	29-Feb-12

RQ3 If yes, how heavily accessed are they and what type of information is published?

Emphasizing the number of likes, we made a comparative analysis of the numbers of Romanian embassies in the Eastern Partnership states and those of the Eastern Partnership countries in Romania. By doing this, we have tried to analyze how followed they are in terms of page interactions. The results are debatable from case to case. There are significant differences in the case of Georgia, which can be explained by an increased interest in the evolution and situation of the country in the post-Soviet Union era. Another interesting case is the significant difference of page likes between the Romanian Embassy in Moldova (6400) and its counterpart in Romania (774). The situation can indicate a higher interest manifested by Republic of Moldova citizens over Romanian politics, values, and the advantages it offers and a low interest of Romanian citizens towards the official discourse presented on the page of the Embassy of the Republic of Moldova in Romania.



RQ4 How is the embassy's activity perceived on social media by the youth of the selected state?

Our research approached 80 young people, aged 19 - 30 years, students at various levels: BA, MA, PhD. Out of the 6 states we chose to apply the study on Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Belarus. We made this choice for practical reasons connected with the length of interviews and the choice of a relevant sample. The reason for selecting Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova is linked to Romania's economic and political interest, as well as an ethnic one, due to the Romanian minorities living in those regions. Belarus is a state with a low Romanian diaspora, but an area of interest for regional development. We selected this state to follow the way in which Romanian digital diplomacy policy is perceived at the opposite pole in terms of diaspora and direct interests.

From the questions addressed, interesting qualitative data emerged, regarding youth interaction with the on-line and social media pages of the Romanian Embassy in their country. What was gathered in the number of responses and percentages, due to the number of respondents, offers an image over a certain trend that can be corroborated in a form or another with the results we have got in the first 3 research questions. First, the interest is different depending on the country - the highest interest can be found in the case of the Republic of Moldova and the lowest in Belarus. We asked first if they follow news about Romania and if yes, in which area. This question is relevant in order to establish their interest in the country and who are the subjects they find relevant. Most of the respondents in Republic of Moldova and in Ukraine follow news about Romania from different areas, mainly on social aspects, which is relevant for 38,8% of the respondents, followed by international relations 35%, politics 32,5%, and education 27,5%.

We inquired also about the source of their information, when they wanted to find out certain aspects regarding Romania. This data is quantified in percentage, in order to establish an order in their preferences. The overall data presented in Chart 3 points towards online media as the main source with 48,6%, followed by social networks - 42,9%, TV - 28,6%; only 20% acquired the information from an official website of a Romanian institution. Consequently, their intention to follow the official pages is low and if a communication impact is sought, then the official communication should be backed by media coverage and a social media activity.

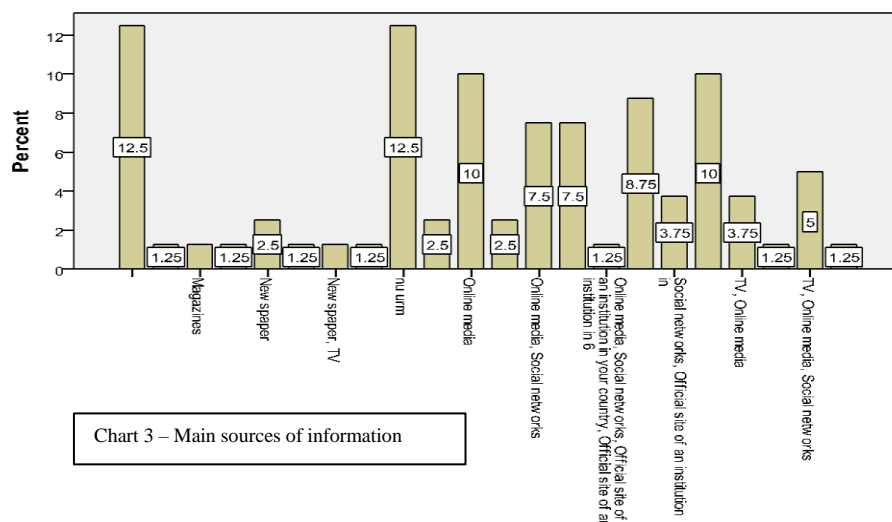


Chart 3 – Main sources of information

This data is relevant because when asked if they used the official on-line page of the Romanian embassy in their country most of them answer that they either do not use it or they do not remember using it. From the respondents that accessed the page, most of them are occasional users, who search for specific information and most of them described the content as being satisfactory in terms of information and ease of use.

For the social media we tried to see if they follow the Romanian embassy in their country, and if yes what type of information they seek. We also asked if they follow Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as a control question as Romanian embassies in these countries have pages only on Facebook. From the overall respondents, only around 30% like/follow the embassy page on social networks, which they find good in terms of information, but most of them indicated that they would like to find more information about tourism in Romania, scholarships, economic aspects, or political news. We shall emphasize that some said they follow the Twitter or Instagram page which indicate that they are not familiar with the activity of the Romanian embassy on social media.

5. DISCUSSION

From the four research questions some conclusions emerge. As regards the website, the information presented is linked to the core functions of the diplomatic mission, such as visa information or documents and other procedures that address Romanian citizens living in that country. Some information can be identified in terms of economic developments and little to non about tourism or educational opportunities. As regards the content, the most active Romanian embassy is the one in the Republic of Moldova, followed by the one in Ukraine.

As regards social media, we state that the communication in this area is a new approach and there is much to be done in order to get a relevant impact. From the interviews, in terms of desired content, the main two preferences of the respondents are tourism and educational information. The social page of Romanian embassies in Republic of Moldova and Ukraine offers information on tourist aspects, with regular posts about the traditions or touristic areas of Romania. In this context, some question marks shall be raised about the fact that the respondents indicated tourism as a desired content, which could mean that they do not really follow the activity on the page or that they do not relate with the way the information is presented. The outcome is different when an official information is presented *per se*, or when this is adapted to the social media public, which is informal and more accessible to the young reader. Regarding scholarships on the social media page, in these two cases, some announcements are made related to the opportunities to study in Romania. They are

mainly formal announcements, so they may not reach the interested public. In the case of the rest of the embassies the posts are few, with limited content.

A stronger communication policy should be developed, not only in terms of what should be done but also with whom. Specialized employees with competences in international relations and communication should be in charge with the on-line policy of the embassy, because creating content and communicating efficiently cannot be done without training the personnel in charge and the correct strategy.

When considering a strategy, the impact of the web and social media page are important but not enough, because as shown in Chart 3 they should be doubled by blogs, mass media interviews and other means of communication on-line.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Romania has a strong interest in the area covered by the EU Eastern Partnership where one can find OSCE countries as well from a political and economic perspective and this interest shall be reflected in its policy on the region, political partnerships, common projects, economic ties, etc. If Romania wants to play a stronger political position in the region, public diplomacy shall be a priority, because without effective communication it cannot gather strong legitimacy related to the policies it promotes. Addressing the young is crucial, and the on-line environment is the key in shaping a positive attitude, but this shall be done in a consistent and constant manner.

Starting from this example, it is important to understand that even greater efforts need to be done at international organizations level, as there are numerous cultural, historical and political aspects which need to be addressed in order to generate greater impact.

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EU Competition policy and the European integration of the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe that acceded to the European Union

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Abstract: *The historical development of the EU competition policy has been instrumental for the structure of the Member States' competition regimes, as well as for the legislative framework in the field of competition of a large number of countries beyond EU borders. This paper analysis how the provisions of the EU's competition policy have been gradually adopted into national competition systems, either by voluntary convergence, or by preconditioning the access to the internal market of the Central and Eastern European countries pursuing EU accession to the alignment and harmonisation of the national legislation on competition to the EU competition provisions.*

Keywords: *EU competition policy, countries of Central and Eastern Europe, European integration, accession preparation strategy, internal market, enlargement.*

INTRODUCTION

As an integral part of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, competition policy is one of the first few supranational policies where the Union has exclusive competence. From a historical perspective, the EU competition policy has played an essential role in the process of European integration as it facilitated the creation of the single market with free competition among enterprises.

This article aims to present that over time, the EU's competition policy has shaped and guided the socio-economic development and economic integration of the bloc, by establishing the rules of the single market, furthermore contributing to the completion of the internal market and to a broader economic integration of national markets with the historic Eastern enlargement of the European project.

In the 1990s' the relationship between the EU and the Central and Eastern European states has been based on a new generation of association agreements such as the case of IP law shows², which in turn replaced the trade and cooperation agreements concluded as a first step in the late 1980s. This article finds that the adoption of the EU competition laws by the associated countries with economies in transition, apart from the economic importance attached to those laws, was largely due to the prospects of EU membership as well as with EU's conditionality. The EU's imminent enlargement to the East coincided with a major reform of the bloc's competition policy. At the stage of the accession to the EU of a group of countries of Central and Eastern Europe in 2004, the enforcement of the competition rules represented a challenge for the European Commission, therefore pushing the European elites to carry out a radical reform of the EU competition policy.

The first section of the article begins with a brief discussion of the concepts of Europeanisation and European integration, as well as the EU's conditionality in the context of the transition to the market economy of the post-communist Central and Eastern European countries. The aim of the second section is to explore the role of the competition policy in the accession preparation strategy

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² Natea Mihaela Daciana, *IP rights and political reconstruction in the '90*, in “*Studia Universitatis Petru Maior Historia*”, 2018, Bolos Mihaela Daciana, *Marcile si indicatile geografice in sistemul relatiilor internationale*, Bucharest, Ed Universul Juridic, 2013

and assess to what extent has the EU used its conditionality in order to “export” its competition model to third countries. Finally, the last section considers how the perspective of the EU’s 2004 enlargement has influenced the debate around the major reform of the bloc’s competition policy.

EU’S CONDITIONALITY TOWARDS THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: FROM TRANSITION TO A MARKET ECONOMY TO THE PRE-ACCESSION STRATEGY

The European integration process of the Central and Eastern European countries commenced with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, a historical event that marked the fall of communism in Europe. The reform movements in East Central Europe, now called Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), brought about revolutionary changes that culminated with the end of the communist regimes and with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. Henceforth, in their quest of joining the EU, the newly emerging democracies started to undergo the process of transition to market economies.

In the late 1980s, the EU’s broader strategy on Eastern Europe was based on trade and cooperation agreements. Between 1991-1993, the EU’s policy towards Eastern Europe continued with the conclusion with a majority of the CEE countries, namely Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, except for Slovenia and Baltic countries, of a new generation of association agreements, called “Europe” agreements. The more detailed agreements introduced a political dialogue between the parties, providing for the gradual establishment of bilateral free trade areas. Economic, financial, and cultural cooperation between the parties was also fundamental. Therefore, the new association agreements have updated the EU’s bilateral relations with these states that were aspiring to join the EU. In addition, the treaties provided, *inter alia*, for efforts to align to the EU rules and procedures and included provisions on the approximation of the EU body of law³.

The European states that have the overall goal to become EU members, have to undergo the “Europeanization” process. In particular, this implies structural transformative measures while ensuring the necessary administrative capacity for the development or restructuring of national administrative authorities, legislative and regulatory approximation, and adoption of required standards and policies in the view of satisfying the conditions of accession to the Union.

The literature on Europeanization answers a number of questions about how and why European integration affects the governance of Central and Eastern European states. In Western Europe, European integration leads to limited convergence of existing administrative models. Some authors argue that the EU encourages candidate countries to join the convergence process by adjusting their administrative structures to certain institutional models to a greater extent than was required from the states that joined the EU in the 1980s and 1990s. The convergence process of the administrative structures is due to start with the accession negotiations and is sought to be part of the European integration process.⁴

Within the context of the Eastern enlargement of the Union, European integration and Europeanization are conceptualised as “two different but intertwined processes of the interaction of the CEE countries and their elites with the EU.” The case of the European integration, the bottom-up approach, is described as the transfer of authority from national institutions to the supranational European level. Europeanization, the top-down approach, which goes along with the European

³ Bolos Mihaela Daciana, *Marcile si indicatile geografice in sistemul relatiilor internationale*, Bucharest, Ed Universul Juridic, 2013

⁴ Heather Grabbe, *How does Europeanization affect CEE governance? Conditionality, diffusion and diversity*, In “Journal of European Public Policy”, vol. 8, no. 6, 2001, p. 1014, Natea Mihaela Daciana “EU political projects in Eastern Europe. Impact on intellectual property.” in *Studia Universitatis Petru Maior, Series Oeconomica*, 2018

integration is sought to have started long before accession took place.⁵ This article adopts the above-stated working definition of Europeanization and European integration processes.

E. Semenova, M. Edinger, and H. Best point out that the most identifiable form of Europeanization is the EU's "conditionality" for membership in the case of the CEE countries, laid down at the 1993 European Council in Copenhagen. The Copenhagen European Council agreed to open the prospects of accession to the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that desired to join the EU. To this end, a set of detailed membership criteria, known as the "Copenhagen criteria", were defined. According to the set of criteria for EU accession, the candidate countries were required to "(1) ... guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the ... protection of minorities; (2) the existence of a functioning market economy and the ability to cope with competitive pressure and market forces in the Union; and (3) the capacity to assume the duties of a member, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union."⁶ The Copenhagen criteria set up political, legal and economic preconditions, including competition law, as essential for the EU membership. On top of that, at the Copenhagen European summit the objective of membership was established, agreeing at the same time to gear the future cooperation with the associated countries towards it.⁷

The EU's conditionality was further present in the programs and instruments that were linked to the Copenhagen accession conditions, be it the PHARE programme, or the European Commission's Opinions on the eligibility of the candidate states for commencing accession negotiations. Moreover, the EU has used its policy of conditionality towards the region before the enactment of its membership criteria in Copenhagen, namely since the conclusion of the agreements with the CEE countries (trade and cooperation agreements)⁸ following the signing of the Joint Declaration by the EEC and the CMEA in 1988.⁹ Papadimitriou and Phinnemore explain that the conditions imposed towards the CEE countries by the EU in the enlargement "have been the main driving force behind the Europeanization of these countries."¹⁰ Even though the official EU accession criteria were the "most complex and extensive set of conditions" that had ever been established in relation to non-EU countries, they were in fact partially addressing transformation challenges and weaknesses of the applicant countries,¹¹ as well as the fears of the EU to maintain the proper operation of the internal market after the enlargement.

EU'S COMPETITION REGIME AS A PREREQUISITE TO MEMBERSHIP

The literature argues that the major geopolitical actors from the West, mainly the USA and the EU, have intensively promoted the development and adoption by the transition countries of national competition laws and established relevant public authorities while proving great interest in influencing these countries to align their competition systems to either the US or the EU competition models.

⁵ Elena Semenova, Michael Edinger, & Heinrich Best (eds), *Parliamentary Elites in Central and Eastern Europe Recruitment and representation*, Routledge, Oxon, 2014, p. 14

⁶ European Council in Copenhagen, *Conclusions of the Presidency*, Copenhagen, June 21-22, 1993, p. 13

⁷ *Ibidem*

⁸ Antoaneta Dimitrova, *Enlargement, Institution-Building and the EU's Administrative Capacity Requirement*, In "West European Politics", vol. 25, no. 4, 2002, p. 175

⁹ Dimitris Papadimitriou, *The EU's strategy in the post-communist Balkans*, In "Southeast European and Black Sea Studies", vol. 1, no. 3, 2001, 69-94, p. 69-71

¹⁰ Dimitris Papadimitriou and David Phinnemore, *Europeanization, Conditionality and Domestic Change: The Twinning Exercise and Administrative Reform in Romania*, in "Journal of Common Market Studies", vol. 42, no. 3, 2004, 619-39, p. 622

¹¹ Antoaneta Dimitrova, *op.cit.*, p. 175

In countries with economies in transition, the fundamental rules and enforcement mechanisms of most competition laws “substantially reflected the influence of Western models”, mainly the EU-type competition provisions. It is noteworthy that the new competition laws adopted in the process of the transition from central planning to a market economy, in most cases dealt with all types of anti-competitive behaviour defined under the Western antitrust case law, giving implementing powers to public bodies that were independent of the Government. There is a large acceptance of the fact that the EU has used its bilateral agreements with non-EU countries to “export” its competition model.¹² This suggests that the EU’s strategy of exporting its competition model can be easily identified in the context of the pre-accession of the Central and Eastern European countries that have joined the EU.

In their efforts to modernise their post-communist economies, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, have each enacted the early 1990s antimonopoly laws and have set out competition offices. Although the antimonopoly laws were similar to the antitrust law in the United States, and certain provisions reflected the influence of the laws of certain EU Member States, the CEE countries’ competition laws were generally designed based on the EU model. Since all of the antimonopoly laws in those four countries were passed prior to the signing of the Europe agreements, they did not copy entirely the EU competition rules and format as provided for in the agreements.¹³

A momentous step towards the European integration of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe was the endorsement by the Essen European Council of December 1994 of the “strategy to prepare the countries of Central and Eastern Europe for accession” presented in July 1994 by the European Commission for approval to the Council.¹⁴ The essential element that had been deemed to be “at the heart” of the strategy was the progressive preparation of the associated countries for the integration into the EU’s internal market through the gradual adoption of the internal market *acquis*.¹⁵ The Essen European Council spelled out the fundamental role of competition policy for the integration into the internal market in the context of the established accession objective. Nonetheless, the Essen Council acknowledged the progress achieved by the majority of the applicant countries in terms of the adoption of national laws on competition and in what regards the establishment of competition authorities.¹⁶ As requested by the Essen European Council, in May 1995 the Commission presented the “White Paper on the Preparation of the Associated Countries of Central and Eastern Europe for Integration into the Internal Market of the Union” which was designed to assist the CEE countries in their phased economic transition to the rules of the internal market. In the White Paper, the Commission explained the importance of competition law in ensuring the proper functioning of the internal market and in achieving the objectives of the Union. The importance attached to the competition policy in the EU’s accession preparation strategy and its implementation in the associated countries was confirmed first at the 1993 Copenhagen European Council, whilst its “special importance” and “particular importance” at the Essen European Council in 1994, and respectively by the European Commission’s White Paper and its detailed annex of 1995.

Furthermore, in the view of including the Baltic States and Slovenia in the accession preparation strategy, the Essen European Council requested the Commission and the Council to ensure that Europe agreements can be concluded with these four states under the French Presidency

¹² Anestis S. Papadopoulos, *The international dimension of EU competition law and policy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, p. 95

¹³ Carolyn Brezezinski, *op. cit.*, p. 1132-1133

¹⁴ Commission of the European Communities, *The Europe agreements and beyond: a strategy to prepare the countries of Central and Eastern Europe for accession, Communication from the Commission to the Council*, COM (94) 320 final, Brussels, 13 July 1994

¹⁵ European Council in Essen, *Conclusions of the Presidency*, Essen, 9-10 December, 1994, p. 11

¹⁶ European Council in Essen, *op. cit.*, p. 12

in 1995.¹⁷ European agreements between the EU and the Baltics and the EU and Slovenia had been signed by mid-1997. The latest agreements included a commitment to eventual EU membership and defined the political and economic cooperation between the EU and the associated countries. The Europe agreements concluded with all the CEE countries incorporated a separate chapter in Title V on “Payments, Capital, Competition and Other Economic Provisions, Approximation of Laws”¹⁸ dedicated to competition policy and provided for deadlines for agreeing on implementing rules. The competition rules of the Europe agreements reflected directly the competition provisions of the Treaty establishing the European Community, including articles 85, 86 and 92 (art. 101, 102 107 TFEU).¹⁹ These agreements required the associated states to further adapt their legislation on competition to the law of the Union, whereas for the integration and participation in the single market, the implementation of the laws on competition was considered to be a precondition.²⁰

Nonetheless, the competition systems set out in the CEE states pursuant to the provisions of the Europe agreements did not stipulate any commitment for the associated countries to institute a fully integrated regime based on the EU model. The focus was predominantly on the intensification of bilateral trade relations between the parties as a prerequisite to the integration into the single market, and presumably into the EU.²¹ As compared to the EU agreements with the other CEE countries, a key novelty of the Europe agreements between the EU and Slovenia and the EU and the Baltic States was the reference to the pre-accession strategy, as the latest were concluded following the 1993 Copenhagen European Council.²²

The EU has converted the Europe agreements into means by which it has been able to pressure the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in complying with its conditions. In practical terms, the EU has insisted that the countries pursuing accession approximate their national laws to the Union’s internal market acquis in order to “narrow the gap”²³ in return for their access to the single market. This meant the development of free trade between the parties and deeper economic integration of the associated states with the EU that would have, eventually, accelerated their economic transition. From the EU’s perspective, harmonisation with the EU law, “in the first instance with regard to distortion of competition,”²⁴ was part of complex processes that needed to be fulfilled for the purpose of preserving the general interest of the Union. In particular, the EU’s main concern and focus at that time was the prevention of the “erosion” of the internal market²⁵ that could be ensured by functioning market economies in the candidate states. In this regard, consideration was given to the development of the candidates’ capacity “to take on the obligations of membership,” respectively the internal market legislation, norms and standards.

¹⁷ European Council in Essen, *op. cit.*, p. 4

¹⁸ Michelle Cini & Lee McGowan, *Competition Policy in the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1998, p. 210, Bolos Mihaela Daciana, „IP rights protection and international trade”, *Procedia Economics and Finance*, nr 3 2012, pp. 908-913

¹⁹ Carolyn Brezezinski, *op. cit.*, p. 1153

²⁰ Michelle Cini & Lee McGowan, *op. cit.*, p. 210

²¹ Michelle Cini & Lee McGowan, *op. cit.*, p. 211

²² Peter Van Elsuwege, & Merijn Chamon, *The meaning of 'association' under EU law - A study on the law and practice of EU association agreements*, European Parliament, Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Brussels, 2019, p. 26, available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/supporting-analyses>

²³ European Council in Essen, *op. cit.*, p. 4, Bolos Mihaela Daciana, „Trademarks Applications in Romania Before and After Joining the EU”, *Globalization and Higher Education in Economics and Business Administration (GEBA)*, 2011, pp. 287-289

²⁴ European Council, Conclusions of the Presidency - Copenhagen, June 21-22 1993, p. 15

²⁵ Pelkmans, Jacques, Gros, Daniel & Ferrer, Jorge Núñez, *Long-Run Economic Aspects of the European Union’s Eastern Enlargement*, Working Documents W 109, WRR Scientific Council for Government Policy, The Hague, September 2000, p. 25

In the view of the approximation of national laws to those applicable in the EU, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary have formulated amendments to their national antimonopoly laws enacted in the early 1990s. The incorporation of these amendments into the laws on competition was due to the conclusion of the Europe agreements with the EU pursuant to which the associated countries had the obligation to harmonise their legislation with the EU *acquis*, including EU competition provisions and trade law, whilst the main driver behind the institutional efforts of these countries was the perspective of accession to the EU.

The European Commission has easily succeeded in persuading Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which had already adopted antimonopoly laws and had concluded Europe agreements prior to the definition of the Copenhagen criteria, to amend antimonopoly laws in line with the EU competition model, merely after four years of their existence. In fact, that period was characterised by a stricter application of the existing EU competition rules, namely the State aid rules due to the implementation of the single market. In this context, the Council conferred on DG Competition the power to investigate mergers by adopting the Merger Regulation (No 4064 of 1989). At the same time, the gradual and voluntary approximation of national competition legislation to the EU competition law and policy had been communicated. Hence, the EU competition rules were “exported” to third countries with accession perspectives as part of the conditionality of approximation of laws in the associated countries to those applicable in the EU.²⁶

On one hand, it would be wrong not to outline that the governmental elite of the CEE candidate countries did not oppose at all the obligation to take over the principles of the Union’s competition policy in the context of their decision to accede to the EU. On the other hand, the post-communist governmental elite in the CEE states had to take over the obligation of adapting their national laws, rules and administrative procedures to the Union’s policy in order to ensure the implementation and enforcement of the EU competition model, without having had sufficient time to build institutional and administrative capacity similar to those of the EU members, and with no prior extensive expertise or profound knowledge about the functioning of the free market economy and, consequently, of free competition.

THE 2003 REFORM OF COMPETITION POLICY PART OF THE EU’S PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIFTH ENLARGEMENT

Eventually, all the Europe agreements concluded with the CEE countries were replaced by accession treaties to the EU. Upon the fulfilment of the membership criteria, the doors to the long-awaited full membership status for the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe were finally opened. At the Copenhagen European Council of December 2002, the EU agreed that ten candidate countries met the required conditions for joining the EU. Therefore, ten states officially acceded to the EU on 1 May 2004.

A crucial step in the development of the EU competition rules was the recast of the Regulation No 17 of 1962²⁷ by Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty, which entered into force on 1 May 2004. The adoption of Council Regulation 1/2003, called the Modernisation Regulation, marked the rapid modernisation of the EU competition policy. The new Regulation introduced a new framework for the application of art. 81 and 82 EC Treaty (art. 101 and art. 102 TFEU) with the aim of creating a more effective enforcement regime across the European

²⁶ Claus-Dieter Ehlermann, *The contribution of EC competition policy to the single market*, In “Common Market Law Review”, vol. 29, no. 257–82, 1992, p. 258

²⁷ Note: Council of the European Economic Community, *Regulation 17: First Regulation implementing Articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty*, Official Journal 013, 21/02/1962, p. 204 - 211

Union. The European Council chose deliberately 1 May 2004 as the date of entry into force of the Modernisation Regulation, namely to ensure the new EU Member States with the time needed to transpose the legal act into the national legal order.

A debate on the comprehensive reform of EU competition policy was launched with the Commission's White Paper of 1999 that suggested more options for reforming the system of enforcement of competition rules as provided for in Regulation 17/1962. The need to radically reform a system with a history of almost forty years of application without any change to the procedural rules²⁸ was mainly driven by rather urgent challenges, amongst which were the overloading of the Commission's DG Competition that had a scarcity of human resources needed to manage the growing caseload owed to the internal market accomplishment and the progressive integration of the market, including after several accessions. Withal, the pressure was coming from the not-so-far perspective of the future enlargement due in May 2004 that would be contributing to the increase in the potential number of cases subject to the Union's law,²⁹ coupled with concerns regarding the management of mergers. At that stage, the need for the modernisation and decentralisation of the competition rules in the view of ensuring an efficient operation of the policy was more than clear. Once in practice, the reform as proposed in the 1999 White Paper, would allow the Commission to attain its objective of eliminating the administrative burden caused by the centralised system of prior authorisation and concentrate on the most serious and complicated cases of Union's competition law infringements.

The next step in the reform was the European Commission's proposal for a "Council Regulation on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty" presented in September 2000.³⁰ The wide-ranging debate on the modalities of reforming the EU competition policy resulted in the adoption of Council Regulation No 1/2003. The changes to the enforcement of the EU competition policy introduced by the Regulation No 1/2003 were manifold, with a direct impact on the national competition authorities and courts. It provided for the decentralisation of the enforcement of rules on competition by empowering the competition authorities and national courts of the Members States to apply entirely the competition rules (art. 101 and 102 TFEU) that were prior applied exclusively by the European Commission.

CONCLUSIONS

In the context of its Eastern enlargement, the EU has advocated for the use of bilateral association agreements that included provisions on competition. To a certain extent, it can be stated that the EU has conditioned the associated states to adopt EU-type competition laws, thus extending its competition regime beyond the EU borders. For the countries of Central and Eastern Europe that had the overall objective to become full EU members, it turned out that the adoption of laws compatible with the internal market was a conditionality not only for accessing the EU's internal market but also for the aimed EU membership. To this end, the Europe agreements were turned into instruments by which the EU has been able to impose requirements on the associated CEE states pursuing accession. In the case of the preparation of the CEE countries for accession, the EU was

²⁸ European Commission, *White Paper on Modernisation of the Rules Implementing Articles 85 and 86 of the EC Treaty*, Commission Programme No 99/027, Brussels, 28.04.1999, p. 12

²⁹ European Commission, *White Paper on Modernisation of the Rules Implementing Articles 85 and 86 of the EC Treaty*, Commission Programme No 99/027, Brussels, 28.04.1999, p. 11

³⁰ European Commission, *Proposal for a Council Regulation on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty and amending Regulations (EEC) No 1017/68, (EEC) No 2988/74, (EEC) No 4056/86 and (EEC) No 3975/87 ("Regulation implementing Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty")* / COM/2000/0582 final - CNS 2000/0243, Official Journal C 365 E, 19/12/2000, p. 0284 - 0296

mostly concerned and interested in the fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria by the associated countries in the view of maintaining the proper functioning of the internal market upon its opening. Consequently, the pre-accession strategy was conceived in a manner that would ensure the strengthening of the candidates' capacity "to cope with competitive pressure and market forces in the Union." Thus, the CEE countries had to adapt to the EU competition model and provide for the implementation and enforcement of the EU competition provisions. Nevertheless, the Europe agreements signed with Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary prior to the 1993 Copenhagen European Council did not embody any explicit pre-accession reference or guidelines. Therefore, it can be stated that the Europe agreements have been practically transformed into pre-accession instruments. The first versions of the Europe agreements were initiated as an alternative to accession, and only in the aftermath of their political reorientation by the EU's political decision established at the Copenhagen European Council that the associated CEE countries could become member states once the political, economic and legislative conditions were met, did those agreements become important means for pre-accession.

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Education 4.0 and the need for Competitive Intelligence in University management

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Summary: *Unprecedented challenges determined by globalization and the booming development brought by Industrial Revolution 4.0 determine changes that impose a redrafting of skills and abilities requirements necessary on the job market. "Education 4.0" will have the role to provide a new set of such capabilities, but also train adequate attitudes in a super technological and interconnected environment in which new technologies focus on innovation, on identifying and promoting talents, on the capacity to understand and interconnect information from various fields in order to find innovative solutions, on the capacity to adapt to different cultural environments or to work remotely in virtual teams, and the higher education is the most important supplier of highly qualified personnel who is fit to integrate quickly in the Industrial Revolution. In order to do this, we need to reset the academic and administrative management of the educational institutions. They have to understand that their role in the context created by Industry 4.0 is similar to that of a "company with innovative technology" regardless of the area it forms and develops skills. A competitive intelligence type of approach in education and university management would respond to the challenges and would offer instruments for collecting, processing and capitalization of useful information in their ascent in the top of international elite universities but, most importantly, would connect and function in tandem with the new technological generation and society.*

Key words: *Globalization, Industry 4.0, skills, Education 4.0, Competition, Competitive intelligence*

INDUSTRY 4.0 AND THE NEED FOR NEW QUALIFICATIONS AND ABILITIES

We live in a society that is going through major changes, that has to quickly identify and face unprecedented challenges determined by globalization and the booming development brought by Industrial Revolution 4.0 that influences all the economy branches, the geopolitical relationships, the social relationships as well as the other day to day issues.

These two aspects are in a tight interdependency as in both situations comes in the interconnectivity, a quick access to information as well as a common language in decoding, interpreting, correlation and transmission of information. Interconnectivity of certain data and information from different areas, the use of artificial intelligence, of digitalization and automation in the most diverse array of activities allow for the links between organizations, economies or countries to become more and more complex and extended.² The diversity of thus formed links forces the governments, companies and other forms of organization to be capable to possess the necessary knowledge and qualifications set that will allow their integration in different areas, to quickly

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² Costea, Simion; Michel Labori, *Le Management des Politiques de l'Union Européenne/ The Management of EU Policies*, PARIS, Ed Prodifmultimedia, 2011; Costea, Simion, *Ideea europeană și interesele statelor/ The European Issue and the States' Interests*, Cluj-Napoca, Napoca Star, 2005; Costea, Simion, *România și Proiectul Briand de Uniune Europeană, /Romania and the Briand Project of European Union*, Targu-Mureș, Petru Maior University Press, 2004; Costea, Simion (coord.), *Culture, Elites and European Integration, Volume IV – International Relations and European Union Interdisciplinary Studies*, PARIS, Editions Prodifmultimedia, 2011; Costea, Simion; Costea, Maria (coord.), *Integrarea României în UE: provocări și perspective/ Romania's Accession to the EU: Challenges and Perspectives*, Iași, European Institute, 2007; Costea, Simion (coord.), *For a Stronger and Wider European Union*, Cluj-Napoca, Napoca Star, 2005; Costea, Maria (ed.), *Diplomatia Romaniei si geopolitica europeana / Romania's Diplomacy and the European Geopolitics*, Iasi, Institutul European, 2019; Costea, Maria; Costea, Simion (eds.), *Diplomație și actori geopolitici în epoca interdependenței complexe / Diplomacy and geopolitical actors in the age of complex interdependence*, Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Napoca Star, 2021;

assimilate new working and communication techniques and methods, to understand and be able to satisfy the necessities and requirements of collaborators, clients or community in general. These changes require a redrafting of necessary skills and abilities requirements that can be provided to a small extent in companies by adopting a new coaching strategy for employees but which on the whole have to be quickly drafted, provided and developed by educational institutions by an adequate and methodical training of the generations that prepare to enter the work force or other society sectors.

According to some studies, the work force faces an excess of workers but a deficit of talents and this is caused by technological changes that generated changes in manufacturing and operations and lead to the low skill workers not being needed anymore; the imbalance between geographical areas - in some of them new workplaces are being generated but it's difficult to cover them (USA and Western Europe), and others do not have any new work places opportunities and have the highest unemployment rate (Africa, Asia); the job offer for high skill workers which is still low on a global scale.³

Along with the unprecedented technological development brought by Industry 4.0 a new set of abilities of the future have been identified that will also be required by any organization when selecting future employees. To identify the necessary qualifications in the current context of challenges faced by the society, *The Institute for the Future*⁴ established a set of six drivers of change which come with their own skills. The six main drivers of change aim at:

- *Increase lifespan*, but which interferes with the decrease of birth rate, especially in developed countries. Thus, the job market will require a new approach where the employees will stay active longer than the age of 65 years old which will need a proactive approach to lifelong learning and to change in the field of activity.⁵

- *Rise of smart machines, equipment and systems* which will overtake a big part of repetitive and routine human tasks which will have to develop useful skills in order for the human-man relationship to function.

- *Working in a computational word of data* that will be processed, stored and rendered by "machines" which will demand the development of relevant data selection abilities, abilities to interact with data, make data-based decisions and use data to design for desired outcomes.

- *New media ecology*, a concept that transforms the way we communicate through video production, digital animation, augmented reality, sophisticated media editing etc. This new "ecosystem" with access to millions of devices can exert an enormous influence on culture.

- *Superstructured organizations* – the large scale access to social networks leads to a reorganization of collaboration and added value in organizations. The use of collective intelligence, possibility of communicating and connecting outside of traditional organizational boundaries contributes decisively to working, innovating and leading organizations.

³ RAȘCĂ Lavinia, *The positive employees experience - Solution for reducing the talent deficit in Industry 4.0 (Experiența pozitivă a angajaților – soluție pentru reducerea deficitului de talente, în cea de a patra revoluție industrială)*, Quality-Access to Success, Vol. 19, S3, October 2018

⁴ IFTF is an important foresight global organization. For more than 50 years the enterprises, governments and social impact foundations have been considering the IFTF global foresight, including personalized research and perspective training regarding complex changes in order to develop strategies with a global impact. The IFTF methodologies and sets of instruments offer correct opinions on transforming possibilities in all the branches that work together towards a sustainable future.

⁵ According to the last international studies, a new approach is necessary in order to keep the talents in companies for a longer period of time because motivation and satisfaction will no longer suffice. In order to attract and keep the valuable employees in their company, Deloitte created and promoted the concept of "Positive employee experience" that includes the well-being in all the areas of their life and connecting with the company, superiors and colleagues' values. - from RAȘCĂ Lavinia, *op.cit.*

- *Globally connected world* - The globalization can have a long term influence, reestablishing a new balance on the monopoly held by the European developed countries and United States on influencing the workforce market, innovation, political and economic power, but determines changes as well in the large companies' strategy that wish to remain competitive. The poorly developed countries will have a bigger role, not just as talent providers, but also as an outlet which will develop the need to form a global team and develop abilities to cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication.⁶

Using these drivers of change, *The Institute for the Future has defined the skills that will be critical for success in the workforce:*

1. **Sense-making** – the ability to determine the deeper meaning of what is being expressed and other complex aspects in order to be expressed in computer programming or data processing which cannot be codified or processed by a computer.
2. **Social intelligence** – the ability to network, to connect to others in a deep and direct way.
3. **Novel & adaptive thinking** – the proficiency to adapt to various situations and come up with innovative solutions.
4. **Cross-cultural competency** – the ability to operate in different cultural settings.
5. **Computational thinking** – the ability to translate data and information into abstract concepts and understand data-based reasoning.
6. **New media literacy** – the ability to critically assess important aspects of communication and translate it into new media content in order to leverage these media for persuasive communication with collaborators.
7. **Transdisciplinarity** – literacy in and ability to understand concepts across multiple disciplines and adapting them to specific situations.
8. **Design mindset** – the ability to understand and quickly adapt to work processes necessary for carry out processes for desired outcomes.
9. **Cognitive load management** – the ability to filter relevant information and attach to them cognitive functioning necessary for desired outcomes.
10. **Virtual collaboration** – the ability to adapt, drive engagement and work productively as a member of a virtual team.⁷

Education 4.0

These skills will have to be learned by those already active on the job market by using lifelong learning and for the young still in training it's very important for these skills to be delivered by the educational system specifically, on time and continuously adapted to change which thus becomes and important partner in transforming the members of society. But, in turn, educational institutions must adapt to the new requirement of external environment, to study its “behavior”, to know its expectations, to transfer to those who study the knowledge and skills required by the community.

The approach that must be promoted by the educational institutions shows a new concept, an “Education 4.0” which will have the role to provide a new set of skills and abilities, but also train adequate attitudes for a super technological and interconnected environment in which new technologies focus on innovation, on identifying and promoting talents, on the capacity to understand and interconnect information from various fields in order to find innovative solutions, on the capacity to adapt to different cultural environments or to work remotely in virtual teams, and through its institutions, the higher education is the most important supplier of highly qualified personnel who is

⁶ http://www.iff.org/uploads/media/SR-1382A_UPRI_future_work_skills_sm.pdf

⁷ Ibidem

fit to integrate quickly in the Industrial Revolution. The responsibility of universities as a skills supplier specifically adapted to the requirements of the technological revolution accentuates their importance in the economy and community, but at the same time gives them the status of organizations that are in competition with each other in order to meet the requirements of the job market and the rate of development in technology, innovation and society in general. Despite the fact that apparently the technological development influences only or first of all the technical specializations in education, actually its powerful influence in society asks for a new approach from a sociological, psychological, cultural, health, environmental knowledge and protection point of view, basically covering all the learning areas provided by universities and other educational providers.

A study performed by the company Deloitte together with Global Business Coalition for Education shows in a report on “Preparing tomorrow’s workforce for the Fourth Industrial Revolution” that almost two billion youth worldwide stand to be left behind in the work force in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.⁸

According to these new approaches, it would be necessary for all the higher educational institutions to self-assess its capacity to deliver new necessary knowledge and skills and reform those methods of teaching, researching, developing and innovating that do not meet the requirements in economical or technological environments or society as a whole anymore. The quicker this action will come to fruition, the more competitive universities will become, growing into a serious and credible partner, integrated into the technological revolution process and benefiting from the necessary head start to establish its position on the international educational market. A real challenge for the universities as well as a sincerity and integrity test towards themselves and the society will be identifying and recognizing their own shortcomings - teaching and researching staff - according to the industrial revolution and quickly adapting to change. Thus, the competition between the educational institutions starts to resemble more and more the one in the economic world, requiring a good knowledge of necessities and expectations of the most important actors in areas directly involved in or affected by the Industry 4.0.

EXCELLENCY IN EDUCATION

On a different note, the exponential growth of the degree of interconnectivity between fields, regions or continents increases the level of globalization and diversity, practically contributing to the disappearance of physical or virtual borders, job market included. The free movement of workers, the use of virtual means for remote work increases the need to cover the necessary skills on international market but also a harmonization of educational and training systems that would provide these skills. This tendency towards internationalization requires referring to some reference systems known at European or international level, with general or specific to the area of education quality criteria or standards amongst them. Thus, the skills, specializations or trainings acquired in different educational institutions should have a common base resulting from the increase of interinstitutional collaboration, student mobility, diploma recognition, resulting from the main lines of action of the concept of quality assurance in higher education, regulated since 1999 by the Bologna Declaration, later developed through Salamanca Convention of 2001, respectively through reunions in Berlin in 2001 and Bergen in 2005.

⁸Deloitte, « Studiu Deloitte: Două miliarde de tineri riscă să devină inadaptați la piața muncii în cea de-a patra revoluție industrială », 29 noiembrie 2018
<https://www2.deloitte.com/ro/ro/pages/about-deloitte/articles/studiu-deloitte-doua-miliarde-de-tineri-risca-sa-devina-inadaptati-la-piata-muncii-in-cea-de-a-patra-revolutie-industrial.html>

Based on this idea at European level, the European Council for Education reunited on May 22nd 2018 proposed the idea of “European universities”, a concept that must be implemented until 2025 in order to “significantly enhance mobility and foster high quality and excellence in education and research, by strengthening the link between teaching, research and innovation and knowledge transfer, by demonstrating the benefits of multilingual learning, the recognition of qualifications and by developing joint education and research programs and projects”. In European Commission’s opinion, this initiative represents a “major step in cooperation between all types of high education institutions in all European regions and on all organizational levels in all areas of activity, from teaching and learning to research and innovation.”⁹

By bringing together as many European universities as possible a long-term education strategy wants to be achieved that will facilitate the connection with research and innovation and society as a whole. The idea of interconnection will be possible in various forms, allowing direct or virtual student and post-graduate collaboration, as well as teaching or auxiliary staff in order to “study, train, teach, do research, work, or share services in any of the partner institutions”. And to keep up with the ongoing technological development new **interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral** approaches together with new innovative teaching methods will be implemented that will be integrated in the newest digital technologies.¹⁰

This community of “European Universities” should play an important role in the European Educational Space in order to promote excellency, the continuous growth of European higher education quality and competitiveness and to promote it internationally. It is worth mentioning that in order to obtain grants from the European Union in order to form university alliances, quality assurance must be an “embedded component to ensure that European Universities successfully deliver the expected results and achieve an impact going far beyond the impact an individual partner organization could achieve.”¹¹

In the context of globalization, World Trade Organization (WTO) introduced certain policies regarding trade services, consequently each member nation according to educational services requirement must “permit foreign institutions to grant degrees and diplomas, recognize degrees and diplomas granted by other member nations, advocate studying abroad, support the international flow of professionals, reduce restrictions on immigrants and decrease financial subsidies to its own educational institutions.” These policies are intended to build a unified and open educational market so that educational institutions can compete with one another equally both at home and abroad.¹²

According to this context, the universities face multiple challenges:

- reforming the internal background by overcoming certain traditional customs especially in “historical” universities where rites, rituals and myths can hardly integrate a modern concept of approaching the educational and research act;

- accepting the idea that the educational act is actually a service provided for the education “consumers” in the conditions of a market economy . This service must of course preserve its training character and quality standard of the transferred information but at the same time it must assimilate the management rules and especially marketing in order to promote education institutions on at least two levels: in competition between universities, as well as in business, politics, social world, offering exactly what it is required in economic and technological areas as well as community in general;

⁹ EC, Erasmus +, Brussels, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/book/export/html/2290_ro

¹⁰ Ibidem. https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/book/export/html/2290_ro

¹¹ Ibidem, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/book/export/html/2290_ro

¹² **Chunmao Liu, Charles Oppenheim** , Competitive Intelligence and the Development Strategy of Higher Education in Tianjin, China, March 2006 Information Development 22(1):58-63, DOI:10.1177/026666906060091 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240713962_Competitive_Intelligence_and_the_Development_Strategy_of_Higher_Education_in_Tianjin_China

- continuous adjustment of study programs and research themes on a technological level that are advancing at a staggering speed and which lead as well to an evolution of new skills suitable for the new technologies.

It's worth knowing that in all university ranking systems that assess universities' performance in terms of educational and research act, in order to rank them, the criteria are focused on the approaches and resources provided by the university for the student. The criteria and assessment indicators for quality assurance in education that underpin the receiving of the national or international accreditation are similarly devised by the universities. There are indeed also criteria which concern employability and the continuous postgraduate education of graduates, but according to the external environment demands it seems that they are not enough.

It seems though that universities began to understand that in addition to the regulated framework imposed for a national or international accreditation educational system it is extremely important for everyone to navigate and ensure a personal development environment in order to grow the level of internationalization or globalization and to increase the share of activities dedicated to research in relation to the theoretical training of the students. This approach also results from "critical points" identified by studying the answers the students usually give when attempting an international classification of universities. For example, in a study carried out by Times Higher Education for students in Japan, they gave out pretty low scores (between 4.79 and 6.9) to questions regarding their belief that the University allows them to apply what they have learned in school in the "real" world, that they are challenged to find solutions to "critical" situations, that they are making connections with other areas, etc.¹³

These low scores can be found at other universities as well and present an opportunity as well as a challenge because the young finally begin to understand that they need abilities and skills that would allow them a quick adjustment to competitive environment requirements of the work force, that practice should prevail comparatively to the volume of theoretical concepts, that parallel with the basic skills they also need to develop performing digital skills as well as entrepreneurship skills and that there is a need to reset the academic and administrative management of all educational institutions. Educational institutions have to understand that their role in the context created by Industry 4.0 is similar to that of a "company with innovative technology" regardless of the area it forms and develops skills. And extrapolating, understanding that education and research are contributing significantly to the competitiveness of a country, they have to occupy a fundamental role in a country project that would ensure the internal and international competitiveness.

COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE AND STRATEGIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL ACT

In this context, a competitive intelligence (CI) type of approach in education and university management would respond to the challenges and would offer instruments for collecting, processing and capitalization of useful information in their ascent in the international elite universities top but, most importantly, would connect and function in tandem with the new technological generation and society. The use of the competitive intelligence can benefit reaching the development goals of higher educational institutions and the theory and CI methods offer a shortcut for the optimization of this strategy.

The biggest challenge the educational institutions have to face in order to successfully register is to combine the traditional principles which are guiding most of them with the market principles, to learn to build a personal strategic direction that will face the external competitive pressure, but will also bring the expected benefits. In order to do this, the educational institutions must also learn

¹³Bothwell, Ellie, "Japanese universities 'improving on internationalisation'", March 27, 2019
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/Japanese-universities-improving-on-internationalisation>

or turn to those that already have the necessary skills to permanently monitor the internal and external environment, as well as the competition's behavior in order to identify the opportunities as well as risks in regard to the established strategic objectives.

An example of good practices when it comes to competitive intelligence in order to develop the strategy for a higher education connected to the current requirements is the one applied to the 18 universities and colleges in Tianjin, China. In this case the need to adapt the strategy in educational institutions appeared as a result of China entering WTO and the fact that it has to meet the requirements of educational services in the context of the trade the country became part of.¹⁴

A University's competitive strategy document should comprise six parts:

1. the background;
2. the formation of aims and objectives;
3. the choice of actions;
4. criteria of success;
5. statements of how the strategy will be developed and communicated; and
6. the required functions of the organization.¹⁵

The reference analysis to draft a competitive strategy for universities, tied to the specific competitive environment as well as the requests of technological, political, social and cultural environments must take into account the following aspects:

- knowing the personal internal circumstances as well as external;
- knowing the reference content in order to base the collected data and information on it;
- choosing the reference object that will lead to drafting of the strategic objectives in order to increase competitiveness and ensure its appropriateness to the competitive environment;
- gathering and analyzing data;
- determining the type of actions;
- drafting a plan and an appropriate assessment.

A CI type of analysis will approach the higher education institution as a player on the market that will adhere to the rules of competition between service providers. Thus, the analysis data should focus on:

- external environment, in terms of political, economic, social, cultural, technological and environmental factors (PEST analysis) to identify opportunities and threats in relation to the competitive environment;
- internal environment by using the SWOT analysis in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses, educational, scientific and management skills resources and needs for improvement;
- ranking the priorities based on the identified opportunities and threats;
- the strategy of tackling the priorities based on their importance.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, in the current context of globalization and technological development, the higher education institutions and especially universities and affiliated research institutes should adopt a new approach - as an innovation provider with a suitable market and marketing strategy. In order to deal with competitors as well as associate with universities that have common or complementary interests they need to know very well and keep on updating the competitive and market environment in which they operate. In this context, establishing a competitive intelligence type of structure in each

¹⁴https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240713962_Competitive_Intelligence_and_the_Development_Strategy_of_Higher_Education_in_Tianjin_China

¹⁵ Chris West, „Competitive intelligence”, New York, Palgrave, 2001, p. 33-49

university would benefit information gathering, selection and processing that will ensure a strategic decision making suitable for the current moment and purpose of those institutions.

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ROMANIAN DIPLOMACY AND EUROPEAN GEOPOLITICS

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Diplomatic activities and geopolitical interests are shaped by the fast global changes and challenges of international relations.

The book under review, *Romanian Diplomacy and European Geopolitics*, edited by Dr Maria Costea, includes a complex set of historical analyzes of different authors, scholars and diplomats, from Europe and Asia.

This volume is published in Romanian language¹ and promotes valuable interpretations of the diplomatic, historical, geopolitical and economic subjects of the European and the world's transformations during the contemporary history.

This volume is dedicated to the great Romanian historian Viorica Moisuc and to her contributions to the research in the field of international relations' history and geopolitics. Therefore, the in the book's introduction, Dr. Maria Costea and Dr. Simion Costea² present the role of the historian Viorica Moisuc concerning the development of international relations' history and geopolitical studies in Romania. Then, Professor Dr Ion Calafeteanu describes his work with Professor Dr. Viorica Moisuc, in Romania and abroad, showing different patterns that they followed to providing authentic research concerning Romanian history. Professor Dr. Viorica Moisuc has guided many scholars, with her knowledge, and her authentic historical research, to develop new scientific contributions to the history of international relations.

The first part of this volume, *Romanian Diplomacy and Geopolitics Dynamics in the first half of 20th century*, presents different aspects of Romanian diplomacy during World War I and World War II, including seven chapters, written by Dr. Virgil Coman, Dr. Constantin Iordan, Dr. Maria Costea, Dr. Carmen Irene Atanasiu, Dr. Constantin Cheramidoglu, Dr Nechita Runcan, and Dr. Valentin Ciorbea. Their studies analyze the particularities of the Romanian diplomatic relations during that period.

¹ Maria Costea, (ed.), *Diplomatia Romaniei si geopolitica europeana*, Iasi, Institutul European, 2019. 252 pp.

² Costea, Simion; Michel Labori, *Le Management des Politiques de l'Union Européenne/ The Management of EU Policies*, PARIS, Ed Prodifmultimedia, 2011; Costea, Simion, *Ideea europeană și interesele statelor/ The European Issue and the States' Interests*, Cluj-Napoca, Napoca Star, 2005; Costea, Simion, *România și Proiectul Briand de Uniune Europeană, /Romania and the Briand Project of European Union*, Targu-Mures, Petru Maior University Press, 2004; Costea, Simion (coord.), *Culture, Elites and European Integration, Volume IV – International Relations and European Union Interdisciplinary Studies* (Preface - dr. Nicolae Paun), PARIS, Editions Prodifmultimedia, 2011; Costea, Simion; Costea, Maria (coord.), *Integrarea României in UE: provocări și perspective/ Romania's Accession to the EU: Challenges and Perspectives*, Iași, European Institute, 2007; Costea, Simion (coord.), *For a Stronger and Wider European Union*, Cluj-Napoca, Napoca Star, 2005; Natea Mihaela Daciana, „Politica de diplomatie publică între comunicare și manipulare”, in *Elite politice și securitatea națională a României*, Natea Mihaela Daciana, et. all (coord.) Ed ProUniversitaria, 2018, Natea Mihaela Daciana, Communication through Digital Diplomacy and the Impact over National Security, Luminița Chirean, Cristian Lako, Cristina Nicolae (coord.), Humanities in the Spotlight, Lambert Publishing, pp. 188-194

The second part of this volume, *Romanian Diplomacy during the Cold War. Significant Moments in Promotion of an Independence Policy*, includes the articles of Dr. Cezar Stanciu and Dr. Traian Hristea. The first one presents the Romanian position during the Cold War and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of the Nuclear Weapons. The second includes a description of the Romanian diplomacy during the negotiations with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), showing its particularities in 1975, the author pointing out here important aspects of the Romanian unique diplomacy called "the human dimension" in Europe, "before and after Helsinki" (Traian Hristea, p. 159).

The third part of this volume, *Diplomacy and Geopolitics Interests in the Multi-polar International System*, includes new contributions of Dr. Traian Hristea, Dr. Andreea Paula Ibănescu and Dr. Dorel Bușe. They describe new aspects of Romania's diplomacy to the OSCE, and show different interests from Iran, Russia and Turkey in the area of Caucasus.

The fourth part of the volume, *Identity Conflicts, State Institutional Construction and Economic Diplomacy in the Contemporary International System*, includes the contributions of Catinca Onescu, Dr. Mihaela Osorio and Dr. Nicoleta Vasilcovschi. This section starts from a presentation of Lebanon's Geopolitics, continues with the analysis of the historical changes in Bosnia, between 1914 and 2014, and ends with a analysis of the global role of the Economic Diplomacy in the 21th century.

The book's chapters are organized in a chronological order, starting from different aspects of the World War I and World War II, that impacted Romanian diplomacy, and continuing with analyzes of Romanian Diplomacy during the Cold War. The third and the fourth parts of this volume outline different methods used to promote diplomatic and geopolitical aspects in a global challenging context. The third part insists on the role of Romanian diplomacy in Central Asia, and the changes after the Cold War of the geopolitical interests of Turkey, Iran, and Russia in the Caucasus. Then, the fourth section starts with valuable details about the Lebanon's geopolitics and international security problems, continuing with a short description of the historical challenges of Bosnia Herzegovina, between 1914 and 2014, and with a presentation of the strategic content of the economic diplomacy of the 21st-century, and its importance in the global context. The different decisions made over the time in the diplomatic and geopolitical contexts are analyzed. Seven chapters are included in the first section, proving a focus on history, while the last three sections, together, are consisting of seven other chapters, focused mainly on geopolitics and economic diplomacy. In the "Argument" of the book, the historian Maria Costea provides a complete explanation for each section, helping future readers to discover relevant aspects of each chapter.

In conclusion, this volume honors the great Romanian historian, Viorica Moisiuc, following and further developing major directions of her research. A captivating approach can be identified in this volume concerning the presentation of general aspects of diplomacy with particularities of Romanian diplomacy, and a description of the strategic geopolitical games played by different countries.

This book can be explored by all researchers that are looking to find an analyses of Romania's diplomatic relations, the structure of geopolitical interests in Europe and worldwide, and the role of the economic diplomacy in shaping global decisions nowadays.³

³ See also Maria Costea, Simion Costea (eds.), *Diplomație și actori geopolitici în epoca interdependenței complexe* [Diplomacy and geopolitical actors in the age of complex interdependence], Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Napoca Star, 2021.

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