

## CINEMA AS A TOOL FOR INFLUENCING HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN INFORMATION WARFARE

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**Abstract:** *The article analyses the techniques and methods used to influence historical consciousness through the cinema. The strategy of using cinema in the modern information environment as a tool of psychological influence on the consciousness and subconscious of the target audience is described. Cinema is considered as an integral part of a comprehensive system of influencing the target audiences, including such an essential part of it as historical consciousness. The effectiveness of modern means of providing feedback on the watched films, particularly in the form of audience reviews, as a part of a complex strategy of information exploitation is highlighted.*

*The phenomenon of the interaction of prosthetic memory with the collective one while forming and consolidating the beliefs necessary for the initiator of information influence is studied. The advantages of cinema as a tool for creating prosthetic memory are given, such as imagery, the effect of presence in the events of the past, the identification of the viewer with the film characters, the simplicity of the material presentation.*

**Keywords:** *Cinema, Information warfare, historical consciousness, Russia, Ukraine, prosthetic memory.*

**Rezumat:** *Cinematografia ca instrument de influențare a conștiinței istorice în războiul informațional ruso-ucrainean. Articolul analizează tehnicile și metodele utilizate pentru a influența conștiința istorică prin intermediul cinematografeiei. Este descrisă strategia utilizării cinematografeiei în mediul informațional modern ca instrument de influență psihologică asupra conștiinței și subconștientului unui grup țintă. Cinematografia este considerată parte integrantă a unui sistem cuprinzător de influențare a publicului, vizând un element esențial al acestuia, respectiv conștiința istorică. Este evidențiată eficacitatea mijloacelor moderne de a oferi o reacție la filmele vizionate, în special sub forma recenziilor din partea celor care le-au vizionat, ca segment al unei strategii complexe de exploatare a informațiilor.*

*Este studiat fenomenul interacțiunii memoriei protetice cu cea colectivă, în timpul formării și consolidării credințelor necesare celui care generează influența informațională. Avantajele cinematografiei ca instrument pentru crearea memoriei protetice constau, prin intermediul imaginilor, în efectul aducerii în prezent a unor evenimente din trecut, identificarea privitorului cu personajele filmului, simplitatea prezentării producției cinematografice.*

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most effective modern methods of achieving political goals is information warfare. According to the Russian researcher Sergey Rastorguyev, information warfare is a struggle between states using information weapons, i.e. overt and covert purposeful information influences of systems (states) on each other to gain an advantage in the material sphere, where information influences are exerted by means, the use of which allows achieving the intended goals.<sup>1</sup> The Russian-Ukrainian information warfare itself is a set of measures that are continuously implemented in the information space of Ukraine, Russia, as well as in the global world information space. The implementation of these measures aims to gain strategic and political advantages by demoralizing or misleading the enemy and countering the actions of the other party.<sup>2</sup>

Information warfare is a multifaceted concept and includes a significant number of complex dimensions. Martin C. Libicki – a well-known theorist of information warfare – compares the attempts to understand all aspects of the information warfare concept to the efforts of blind people to perceive an elephant: someone touches a leg and calls it a tree, someone touches a tail and calls it a rope, but to comprehend the whole nature of this phenomenon is extremely difficult.<sup>3</sup>

One of the components of information warfare is information expansion. According to the Russian researcher Andrey Manoylo, it represents "activities to achieve national interests by conflict-free penetration into the information sphere to make gradual, planned and invisible to the societal changes in the system of

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<sup>1</sup> С. П. Расторгуев, *Философия информационной войны* [Philosophy of information warfare], Москва, Московский психолого-социальный институт, 2003, с. 123.

<sup>2</sup> See: Olexander Lysenko, Svetlana Pavlovskaya, Valerii Hrytsiuk, *The Soviet Special Propaganda in the Second World War. Target: the Romanian Army*, in "Codrul Cosminului, XXV, 2019, No. 2, pp. 341-368.

<sup>3</sup> Martin C. Libicki, *What is Information Warfare?*, Washington, National Defense University, 1995, p. 3-4.

social relations modelled on the source of expansion; wiping out the national ideology and the national value system and replacing them with own values and ideological guidelines; increasing the degree of influence and presence, exercising control over strategic information resources, information and telecommunication structure as well as national mass media; increasing the presence of own media in the information sphere of the object of penetration, etc."<sup>4</sup>

Under such conditions, defining the objects of information confrontation becomes very important. An object of information confrontation is considered any item in relation to which it is possible to exert information influence, resulting in the modification of its properties as an information system. Accordingly, an object of information confrontation can be the following segments of information and psychological space:

- the collective and individual consciousness of citizens;
- socio-political systems and processes;
- information infrastructure;
- information and psychological resources.

The psychological resources include the following components of the information space:

- the system of values of society;
- psychological tolerance of the value system (stability of the value system concerning external or internal destructive influences);
- individual and collective (public) consciousness of citizens;
- psychological tolerance of citizens' consciousness (resistance of consciousness to manipulative influence and involvement in illegal activities);
- mental health of citizens;
- mental health tolerance of citizens (resilience of mental health to external and internal destructive influences).<sup>5</sup>

An essential component of both collective and individual consciousness of citizens is the historical consciousness, which is, according to the Russian researcher Zhan Toshchenko, a set of ideas, views, beliefs, feelings and attitudes that reflect the perception and evaluation of the past in all its diversity and it is

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<sup>4</sup> А. В. Манойло, А. И. Петренко, Д. П. Фролов, *Государственная информационная политика в условиях информационно-психологической войны* [State Information Policy in conditions of Information and Psychological Warfare], Москва, Горячая линия-Телеком, 2009, с. 75.

<sup>5</sup> А. В. Манойло, *Государственная информационная политика в особых условиях. Монография* [State information policy under special circumstances. Monograph], Москва, МИФИ, 2003, с. 280.

inherent in the society as a whole, in various socio-demographic, socio-professional and ethno-social groups, as well as individuals.<sup>6</sup>

From the standpoint of sociology, Yuriy Levada considers that historical consciousness encompasses all the variety of forms that have developed spontaneously or have been formed by science, in which the society recognizes (perceives and evaluates) its past – or rather, in which society reproduces its movement in time.<sup>7</sup> The essence of historical consciousness is the collection, accumulation, storage and daily use of historical knowledge gained through theoretical analysis and from the experience of practical life in the past for reproducing the ancestral life of the human community. In other words, historical knowledge is needed by the current generation to take a step forward on its basis. Historical consciousness is a mechanism that comprehensively rethinks the events of the past and conveys historical knowledge in the right perspective for the present.<sup>8</sup> Historical knowledge can be transmitted in various ways; now, it is done through learning or under the media's influence. Given the possibility of influencing the process of disseminating such knowledge through the media, the enemy gets the opportunity to adjust society's development in a favourable direction.

Accordingly, one of the most effective methods of achieving specific goals in such a confrontation is using the pre-planned, comprehensive, and variable impact on such an element of social consciousness as historical consciousness. A widely used tool to implement this informational influence method on historical consciousness through the media is the cinema in all its modern manifestations. Thus, the analysis of manipulation of historical consciousness as an object of information confrontation, including the cinema, is one of the priority tasks facing the modern academic community.

The issues of cinema influence on the public consciousness, including such an integral part of it as historical consciousness, are widely studied by the Ukrainian academic community, particularly in the works by Heorhiy

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<sup>6</sup> Ж. Т. Тощенко, *Историческое сознание и историческая память: анализ современного состояния* [Historical consciousness and historical memory: analysis of the contemporary state], in “Новая и новейшая история”, 2000, No. 4, с. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Ю. А. Левада, *Историческое сознание и научный метод* [Historical consciousness and scientific method], in *Философские проблемы исторической науки* [Philosophical problems of historical science], Москва: Наука, 1969, с. 186-225.

<sup>8</sup> В. М. Вашкевич, *Исторична свідомість студентської молоді: ціннісно-світоглядні орієнтири. Навчальний посібник* [Historical consciousness of student youth: values and worldviews. Tutorial], Київ, Світогляд, 2010, с. 31.

Pocheptsov,<sup>9</sup> Larysa Bryukhovets'ka,<sup>10</sup> Serhiy Bezklubenko,<sup>11</sup> Mykyta Katsuba.<sup>12</sup> The problem of the cinema influence on collective memory is studied in the research by Ol'ha Hontars'ka.<sup>13</sup> These topics are also analysed in the works of such Russian authors as Galina Prozhiko,<sup>14</sup> Aleksandr Fiodorov,<sup>15</sup> Kiril Razlogov.<sup>16</sup> Among the foreign researchers are John E. O'Connor,<sup>17</sup> Alison Landsberg<sup>18</sup> and Marc Ferro.<sup>19</sup> However, certain features of the use of the cinema as part of a comprehensive strategy of information warfare, in combination with other media, which in particular, can exert influence on the historical consciousness of the target audiences, requires more detailed analysis.

### MODERN FILMS AS MEANS OF INFLUENCE ON HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Vast opportunities for contemporary consumers of audiovisual products (viewers) to choose materials for viewing have significantly changed the direction

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<sup>9</sup> Г. Г. Почепцов, *Від Facebook'у і гламуру до Wikileaks: медіа-комунікації* [From Facebook and glamor to Wikileaks: Media Communication], Київ, Спадщина, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Л. І. Брюховецька, *Найцікавіша історія в Європі. Екранні версії* [The most interesting history in Europe. Screen versions], Київ, Задруга, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> С. Д. Безklubenko, *Кіномистецтво та політика* [Cinema and Politics], Київ, 1995.

<sup>12</sup> М. О. Кацуба, *Художнє кіно як засіб формування масової політичної свідомості* [Art cinema as means of shaping mass political consciousness], in "Політичний менеджмент", 2013, No. 1-2, p. 136-144.

<sup>13</sup> О. Гонтарська, *Історичне кіно в дослідженнях пам'яті в Україні часів трансформації* [Historical Cinema in Memory Studies during Ukraine Transformation], in *Історичні і політологічні дослідження. Спеціальний випуск*, Вінниця, 2018, с. 97-102.

<sup>14</sup> Г. С. Прожико, *Концепція реальності в екранном документі* [The concept of reality in a screen document], Москва, ВГИК, 2004.

<sup>15</sup> А. В. Фёдоров, *Трансформації образу Росії на западному екрані: от епохи ідеологічної конфронтації (1946-1991) до сучасного етапу (1992-2015)* [Transformations of Russia's image on Western screen: from the era of ideological confrontation (1946-1991) to the modern stage (1992-2015)], Москва, Інформація для всіх, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> К. Э. Разлогов, *Мировое кино: история искусства экрана* [World cinema: history of screen art], Москва, Эксмо, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> John O'Connor, *Image as Artifact. The Historical Analysis of Film and Television*, Melbourne, Robert E. Krieger Publishing Co., 1990.

<sup>18</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic memory. The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Marc Ferro, *Cinema and history*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1988.

vector of information influence using the potential of film production. The viewer can choose specific content from a massive amount of the available material, which is precise to their taste and does not conflict with previously formed beliefs. Until very recently, the Soviet audience, including in Ukraine, viewed only films available to them. In other words, the ones that were censored and sufficiently consistent with the government's information policy. Otherwise stated, if previously the cinema was able to form beliefs, then in modern conditions, the film production mainly deepens and reinforces beliefs which have already been created – and in this field, contemporary cinema is a potent tool.

The audience's ability to give feedback on the viewed movies also gains pronounced importance in current conditions. Recently the viewer had an opportunity to comment on the viewed pictures only in personal communication with acquaintances, to read the official (in the vast majority – pro-government) reviews, which specified what and how the visual material should be understood. Nowadays, the possibilities of feedback are much more significant, and anyone has an opportunity to comment on any product (even on films that have not been watched) – from a simple statement "liked – disliked" to detailed reviews describing their own experiences, opinions, conclusions. And the modern viewer *en masse* reads reviews and feedback on the selected movie before watching it, which determines, firstly, the choice of the film to watch, and secondly, lays the foundation for a mental response to the content of the film. In fact, in some cases, the conclusion is ready before watching; all that remains is to "approve" it at a conscious level. The process of compiling reviews of film products in the Russian Federation is organized and adjusted by the apparatus that plans and carries out the information warfare, including that with Ukraine.

When talking about cinema, as a tool to influence historical consciousness, the phenomenon of "prosthetic memory" described by Alison Landsberg is widely used.<sup>20</sup> This type of memory does not coincide, and sometimes contradicts the collective memory (public memory), when the audiovisuals from the first-person perspective (through the eyes of the characters of the film, with which the viewer involuntarily identifies) communicates a specific view of past events, following the plan of film producers. Faced with a conflict of memory types, the viewer tries to eliminate the internal dissonance and adjust their collective memory attitude. Such transformation sequences alter (slowly but inevitably) the conditional image of collective memory in a necessary direction for the movie sponsors.

Therefore, the question raised by the historical cinema researcher Robert

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<sup>20</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic memory...*, p. 2.

A. Rosenstone becomes hugely relevant: "Does a Filmic Writing of History exist (...) meaning the process by which we transform the remains of the past into what we call History?"<sup>21</sup> Rosenstone himself cannot give an unequivocal answer to such a complicated question, primarily because of the ambiguity of the perception of the term "history" in the modern world. However, if we interpret history as "prosthetic memory" that gradually transforms "public memory" (and through this transformation inevitably creates the historical consciousness of a specific target audience required by the sponsors), the answer will be quite positive. Rosenstone cites the prophetic words of the American director and founder of cinema as an art, David Wark Griffith, as an argument: "The time will come when children in public schools will be taught almost everything, with the help of moving images. Surely they will not have to reread the story. To learn about Napoleon, people would not have to wade laboriously through a host of books, and ending up bewildered, confused at every point by conflicting opinions about what did happen".<sup>22</sup> The new environment – Rosenstone argues – will change what we mean when we use the word "history". The world in which we see the past, in which we see stories, live them, attach our emotions to people and evoke long-ago events. Perhaps in such a world, factual details are less important than the emotion of immediacy, identification with our predecessors – all-powerful elements, kinaesthetic feeling, or even knowledge?<sup>23</sup>

### IMAGE OF UKRAINE AND UKRAINIANS IN RUSSIAN FILMS

Under a scrupulous analysis, the map of emotional imprinting (fixation in the mind of signs of objects to form stereotypes of "their behaviour"), which is applied using film products, is similar to the one used against the Ukrainian people by Russian information machine employing other means. We think that the pattern applied to Ukraine and history of Ukrainians by Russian propaganda can be formulated as follows: every Ukrainians' attempts to realize their strategy on the historical development and state formation are inevitably inept, inhumane and dangerous in the perspective of civilization. Simultaneously, in most squares,

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<sup>21</sup> Robert Rosenstone, *Reflections on what the historical filmmaker does (to history)*, in Jennie M. Carlsten, Fearghal McGarry (eds), *Film, history and memory*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, p. 184-185.

<sup>22</sup> Melvyn Stokes, *D. W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation. A History of "The Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time"*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Rosenstone, *Reflections on what...*, p. 186.

in the background, the picture of a typical Ukrainian is created and consolidated. This picture is almost indistinguishable from the one that was successfully developed in Russian literature over a century ago. In an open letter to Russian writers, Volodymyr Vynnychenko describes it as follows: "a little stupid, somewhat crafty, certainly lazy, melancholic, and sometimes kind-hearted. ... Whatever the figure, it is either a clumsy fool, or a stupid, lazy person, or a lazy rascal. It is very seldom a short-sighted, sentimental, good-natured dupe like Maxim Gorky's *khokhol*."<sup>24</sup> With a correction to the modern worldview, the image of a Ukrainian, by and large, is translated as follows: "A Ukrainian is a so-called wrong Russian: either funny, or disgusting, or dangerous". For example, Russian political scientist Andrey Okara said: "In Soviet times, a Ukrainian was a joyful, cheerful, somewhat limited "khokhol" in films, a kind of a colourful character – albeit not the main hero. If before it could be an army sergeant, or a representative of the grassroots, now in the movies "White Guard", TV series "Autonomka", movies "Match", "We are from the future-2", "Brother-2", "Admiral" the image of a Ukrainian is not a cool funny khokhol, but a vicious collaborator and a traitor".<sup>25</sup>

The Austrian researcher Andreas Kappeler describes the Russian society's attitude to Ukrainians as follows: "The position of Ukrainians in the Russian state's socio-political system in the 19th century was ambiguous. The tsarist government and Russian society thought of them as khokhols, Little Russians, or Mazepites. Ukrainian peasants, who continued to live in the traditional Ukrainian-speaking world, remained friendly, submissive, and colourful in their dances and songs, but generally uncultured, stupid Ukrainians. [...] Most Russians still see Ukrainians as Little Russians, part of the Russian nation, and do not understand why Ukrainians are trying to maintain their language, culture, and state. Despite urbanization and industrialization, Ukrainians are still considered to be underdeveloped peasant people, the khokhols. However, linguistic, cultural and historical proximity has led to the fact that there are almost no ethnic antagonisms between Russians and Ukrainians. True 'friendship of peoples' is possible only when the Russians recognize the Ukrainians as an equal nation."<sup>26</sup>

The extreme form of Russians' attitude towards Ukrainians is demonstrated

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<sup>24</sup> В. К. Винниченко, *Открытое письмо русским писателям* [An open letter to Russian writers], in "Украинская жизнь", 1913, Vol. 10, p. 29-30.

<sup>25</sup> Росбалт. *Политолог: Образ украинца в российском кино меняется*, in <https://www.rosbalt.ru/ukraina/2012/04/17/970677.html/> [Accessed on 20.12.2019].

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



by the LDPR faction leader in the State Duma of the Russian Federation Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, speaking on one of the television shows: "Ukraine – there is no such country, and there are no such people. We will execute them."<sup>27</sup>

As we can see, in a hundred years, only the technical means have changed, but the mental maps and templates that are communicated by them have remained virtually unchanged.

A typical example of the history of Ukraine as seen in Russia was the film "Project Ukraine", shown on the channel "Russia 24". The authors of the script were Andrey Medvedev and Tat'yana Salomadina, and the director was Vitaliy Maksimov. The film was shot by the All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company with the financial support of the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications of Russia, i.e. by order and at the expense of the Russian government. The category of the film in the annotations is defined as "documentary". This film is a collection of characteristic ideologues, the main of which is Ukrainian statehood's artificiality. Accordingly, it is continuously emphasized that in the late Middle Ages and early modern times, the concept of Ukraine did not exist. The Moscovite political movement that really existed in the Ukrainian lands, which were part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, was suppressed by the Ukrainophilia movement artificially created by the Austrians to counter Polish and Russian influence.

At the same time, modern Ukraine is allegedly strongly influenced by Western Ukrainian ideas, as well as Galician ideology, which has little in common with the mentality of the inhabitants of Central Ukraine, and even more so the East and South of the country. Thus, Ukrainian statehood appears on the one hand as an artificial project. On the other hand, it seems feasible, but only in alliance with Russia, without which it will be a derivative of Galician nationalism, which poses a clear threat to Russia and Ukraine itself. The film contains propaganda clichés such as "Ukrainians are an artificially created nation," or "the Ukraine project was created to harm Great Russia."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Е. Клименко, *Нет такой страны и такого народа: Жириновский пригрозил расстрелом всех украинцев* [There is no such country and there is no such nation. Zhirinovskiy threatens to shoot all of the Ukrainians], in <https://replyua.net/putin/68756-net-takoy-strany-i-takogo-naroda-zhirinovskiy-prigrozil-rasstrelom-vseh-ukraincev.html> (Accessed on 29.01.2020).

<sup>28</sup> А. В. Гуштин, *Образ Украины в современных Российских СМИ и публицистике в контексте Российско-Украинского кризиса* [The image of Ukraine in modern Russian media and journalism in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis], in <http://regional-dialogue.com/ru/image-of-ukraine> (Accessed on 21.12. 2019).

One of the typical manipulative techniques used in the film "Project Ukraine" is an expert's use as an authority. For example, the film uses excerpts from an interview with the world-famous Polish film director, screenwriter, and producer Krzysztof Zanussi, who enjoys considerable public prestige in Poland and Ukraine. Krzysztof Zanussi expresses moderate and well-founded ideas, mainly about Ukrainian-Polish relations. At the same time, other little-known experts involved in the film, introduced as scientists, historians, political scientists, offer the viewer rather dubious, and in some cases completely unacceptable conclusions: "Nobody knows where the term 'Ukrainian lands' came from. Today this term is so widely used, so popular around the globe, fascinated by the idea of Ukrainian people, Great Ukraine, which has never actually existed"<sup>29</sup> (Szczepan Siekierka, leader of the Wrocław Association for the Commemoration of the Victims of the Crimes of Ukrainian Nationalists /Poland/). "In the Tsardom of Muscovy, the Orthodox lived freely"<sup>30</sup> (Andrey Marchukov, a senior researcher at the Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences). "In 1654, the Pereyaslav Rada was signed (as in the movie text), a document on unification a part of Western Rus including Kiev and the territories of the Zaporozhian Host with the Moscow state [...] Historians knew perfectly well that the state of Ukraine in 1654 did not exist. These territories were called Little Russia."<sup>31</sup> Such pseudo-historical information is brought to the audience by one of the script's authors and the host of the film Andrey Medvedev.

"Ukrainian separatism has grown into a civil war, which we are now witnessing"<sup>32</sup> – informs the audience Pavel Kuzenkov, associate professor of history at Moscow State University. The term "separatism" in this quote is applied to an independent state's policy, and the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine recognized by international institutions (the UN General Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe) is called a civil war. Pavel Kuzenkov, who was mentioned earlier, states the following<sup>33</sup>: "So far it has been a fratricidal war. We also bear our share of guilt, and this guilt is primarily ideological. We did not deal with this issue at all. We let everything go. We thought that only through the pipeline (obviously, gas supply to Ukraine), we would control the

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<sup>29</sup> Виталий Максимов (режисер), *Проект "Украина"* [Vitaliy Maksimov (Director), Project "Ukraine"], Москва, ВГТРК, 2014, time: 05:35 – 06:02.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, time: 13:47 – 13:53.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, time: 14:42 – 14:55 and 15:08 – 15:18.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, time: 1:25:15 – 1:25:21.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, time: 1:26:02 – 1:26:20.

whole situation. This is an extremely profound mistake". In his view, the mistake is the lack of control over an independent state and independent people.

Another typical example of cinema's use as a means of information confrontation is the documentary film "Crimea. The way Home". Sergey Kraus directed the film, the author and host of the film was the Russian journalist Andrey Kondrashov. The film premiered on 15 March 2015, on the channel "Russia 1". According to the Russian research company TNS Gallup Media, it demonstrated a too high interest of the Russian viewers. By January 2020, the YouTube version had garnered more than 13 million views, and the video was classified as "Unacceptable or Offensive to Some Audiences". The film was a nominee in the category "TV Event of the Season" at the 19th annual TEFI awards, and won a special jury prize "For the Comprehension of Contemporary History". However, the IMDb international rating of the film is extremely low: 2.8 out of 10. The documentary covers the preparation and implementation process of the Crimean Peninsula annexation by the Russian Federation and the implementation of "secret evacuation" of President Viktor Yanukovich by Russian secret services. A significant part of the plot represents the interview with Russian President Vladimir Putin, in which he states that he led the action to seize Crimea. Notably, one can observe changes in the Russian President's position on the events in Crimea: on 4 March 2014, he claimed that it wasn't the Russian military who took part in the operations, but "local self-defence forces". On 17 April 2014, he said that the Russian military "were behind the self-defence forces", whereas on 13 November he told about the blockade of Ukrainian military units by Russian servicemen.<sup>34</sup> In the film, the President of the Russian Federation calls Russia's actions in Crimea a "special operation", and talks about a covert survey of Crimean residents carried out by representatives of his administration, about the readiness to use nuclear weapons in the event of third party intervention. The film's primary purpose is to demonstrate to the Russian audience the power of Russia and to the world audience – the readiness to transgress any norms for the sake of imperial ambitions.

The film "Crimea. The Way Home" transmits some Russian propaganda myths, especially one of the so-called "Korsun Incident". Eyewitnesses and participants of the events allegedly claim that dozens of Crimean Anti-Maidan activists returning home from Kyiv on 20 February 2014, were stopped and killed

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<sup>34</sup> А. Сеницын, *Владимир Путин обозначил новый этап и уровень самоизоляции России* [Vladimir Putin outlined a new stage and self-isolation level of Russia], in <https://www.vedomosti.ru/newspaper/articles/2015/03/16/ot-redaktsii-putin-idet-na-rodinu> (Accessed on 28.01.2020).

at a checkpoint near Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy, in Cherkasy Oblast, Ukraine. Although the authors of the film refer to the data provided allegedly by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine about seven dead and more than 20 missings, no human deaths were confirmed, and no names of those killed or missing in the events were published. In February 2014, the Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in Cherkasy Oblast and the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in Crimea denied information about the dead and missing.<sup>35</sup> Besides, talking about this incident, the authors of the film do not mention the three hostages in one of the buses – residents with traces of physical violence, one of them with a knife wound, who were taken hostage at a previous checkpoint in the village of Myronivka.<sup>36</sup> Russian President Vladimir Putin cites the case as an example of an "outbreak of extreme nationalism", a proof of a threat to Crimean residents and a reason for "not leaving them in the lurch".

It is necessary to emphasize that such a technique as "Shuffle Tracking" or "accentuation" means one-sided selection and conscious presentation of only positive or negative facts with the simultaneous omission of the opposites ones.<sup>37</sup> Thus, in the Russian films, the plot of which (in one way or another) covers the activities of the *Hilfspolizei* (Auxiliary Police in the Third Reich during the Second World War in the occupied territories), the employees of such organizations are mostly Ukrainians, regardless of the location. Simultaneously, in films, their national or pseudo-national differences (usually language, clothing) are often hypertrophied. The material selected and presented in this way creates a conviction in the viewer: most police collaborators were Ukrainians, and the Russians were not involved in their crimes. Therefore, Ukrainians (as a nation) are associated with an openly negative phenomenon: the collaboration with the Nazis in the occupied territories. Moreover, the type of such a police officer selected in most cases is frankly negative.

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<sup>35</sup> *Ошибки в фильме "Крым. Путь на родину"* [Mistakes in the film "Crimea. The Way Home"], in <https://www.stopfake.org/ru/oshibki-v-filme-krym-put-na-rodinu> (Accessed on 28.01.2020).

<sup>36</sup> Д. Д. Буныкина, *Черкашани: "Корсунський погром" – вигадка російських пропагандистів* [Cherkashchany: "Korsun's Incident" is a hoax of Russian propagandists], in <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/26904323.html> (Accessed on 28.01.2020).

<sup>37</sup> Г. В. Грачев, И. К. Мельник, *Манипулирование личностью: организация, способы и технологии информационно-психологического воздействия* [Personality manipulation: organization, methods and technologies of information and psychological impact], Москва, Алгоритм, 2002, p. 84.

The most typical example is the film "Match", a historical drama produced in 2012, written by Tymofey Sergeytsev, Igor' Sosna and Dmitriy Zver'kov, and directed by Andrey Maliukov (since September 2014 the film has been banned from showing in Ukraine as propaganda). One of the police collaborators' roles in this film is played by the People's Artist of Ukraine Ostap Stupka. The actor himself explains his role in the anti-Ukrainian film as follows: "I honestly played the characters I was offered. Artistically I was interested in such heroes because there are scoundrels and scums in every nation. But then I did not feel that I was being used in anti-Ukrainian propaganda. This was out of the question. Besides, it was unwise to sit and wait until Ukrainian films were made because every artist is greedy for work."<sup>38</sup> Indeed, each nation has its own negative and positive images, but the trick of shuffle tracking is to choose this image among all and reproduce it as much as possible. When asked by the journalist why he wore a blue-and-yellow band on his sleeve in the film, since the policemen did not wear them, Ostap Stupka answered that he did not care who wore what at that time.<sup>39</sup> Ukrainian politician and Verkhovna Rada deputy Andriy Parubiy describes the film as follows: "It is a kind of propaganda of the Russian world, where all these things are at the background. The main thing is to show that if a person is wearing a Ukrainian embroidered shirt, he or she is a collaborator. The film shows that if there's a Ukrainian flag and the people speak the Ukrainian language, they must be the Nazis' aides. My opinion is that this film incites ethnic hatred."<sup>40</sup>

### UKRAINIAN COUNTERMEASURES TO INFORMATION INFLUENCE OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN FILMS

When developing a strategy to counter information influence in the field of the cinema, it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that cinema as a means of persuasion is a component in the more extensive complex system, which envisages synchronous work of all elements involved – online sources, media,

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<sup>38</sup> Л. Фесенко, *Остap Ступка, актер театру і кіно* [Ostap Stupka, the actor of theater and cinema], in <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-culture/1963956-ostap-stupka-aktor-teatru-i-kino.html> (Accessed on 21.12.2019).

<sup>39</sup> *Синдром Юди* [Judas Syndrome], in [https://ktm.ukma.edu.ua/show\\_content.php?id=1369](https://ktm.ukma.edu.ua/show_content.php?id=1369) (Accessed on 21.12.2019).

<sup>40</sup> *Парубий: фільм "Матч" - это пропаганда русского мира* [Parubiy: the film "Match" is propaganda of the Russian world], in <https://www.obozrevatel.com/politics/74350-parubij-film-match-eto-propaganda-russkogo-mira.htm> (Accessed on 21.12.2019).

television and more. Accordingly, the strategy to counter such influences must consider appropriate measures agreed in time, content and direction to neutralize information attacks in all related areas.

If we consider the activities mentioned above of the Russian Federation against Ukraine in the field of cinema as information and psychological influence, i.e. organized targeted intervention in the consciousness (subconsciousness) of the target audience; obviously, the need arises for information counteraction, which is a purposeful information process carried out by one side as an adequate response to information activities against it by the other side. In this case, we are talking about counteracting information and psychological influence – targeted measures aimed at preventing information interference by social engineering methods into the consciousness (subconsciousness) of the target audience to correct its behaviour and (or) worldview, change its moral and psychological state.<sup>41</sup>

The former United State Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has described in a speech the best method of information countermeasures: "Some take the view that, to encourage tolerance, some hateful ideas must be silenced by governments. We believe that efforts to curb the content of speech rarely succeed and often become an excuse to violate freedom of expression. Instead, as it has historically been proven time and time again, the better answer to offensive speech is more speech. People can and should speak out against intolerance and hatred. By exposing ideas to debate, those with merit tend to be strengthened, while weak and false ideas tend to fade away; perhaps not instantly, but eventually. Now, this approach does not immediately discredit every hateful idea or convince every bigot to reverse his thinking. But we have determined as a society that it is far more effective than any other alternative approach."<sup>42</sup>

It is clear that in cinema as a means of influencing consciousness, the most effective strategy of counteraction is to create your own quality cinema for both Ukrainian and world viewers. At the same time, cooperation with representatives of the world film industry is also critical. It should be noted that in recent years there have been significant achievements in this area.

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<sup>41</sup> Система стратегічних комунікацій держави у воєнній сфері. Терміни та визначення [The system of strategic communications of the state in the military sphere. Terms and definitions], in <http://stratcom.nuou.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Система-стратегічних-комунікацій-держави-у-воєнній-сфері.-Терміни-та-визначення.pdf> (Accessed on 06.07.2020).

<sup>42</sup> U. S. Department of State, *Internet Rights and Wrongs: Choices & Challenges in a Networked World*, in <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/02/156619.htm> (Accessed on 02.06.2020).

Thus, in September 2018, a Ukrainian historical and biographical film "The Secret Diary of Symon Petliura" was released. It was directed by Oles' Yanchuk and written by Mykhailo Shayevych, and became the first full-fledged film (in the years of independence), dedicated to one of the most famous and controversial Ukrainian statesmen – Symon Petlyura. The movie aims at a wide range of viewers. It can hardly be considered a documentary since the plot is based on Petlyura's fictional diary and has some historically contradictory issues. The film attempts to highlight the human qualities of the controversial political figure of the Chief Ataman of the Ukrainian People's Republic, head of the Directory and organizer of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, to reveal the heavy burden of responsibility of a politician for his actions. The authors of the film draw discernible semantic parallels with the present.

The picture received mixed reviews in Ukrainian society. Audience feedback on online resources is mostly positive.<sup>43</sup> Most Ukrainian critics generally evaluate the work positively but point out specific problems and downsides in this form of presenting historical material. For example, Ol'ha Petrenko-Tseunova concludes her review as follows: "In general, Oles' Yanchuk's film is definitely worth watching and not just to support the Ukrainian producer. However, to avoid disappointment, we should bear in mind that the 'Secret Diary of Symon Petlyura' says much more about the present than about the events of a century ago. It shows that history has not yet been lived or talked through."<sup>44</sup> At the same time, there are frankly negative comments from Ukrainian critics who, characteristically, are mostly Russian-speaking. Thus, Dariya Bad'or, the editor of the "Culture" section of the "Left Bank" online resource called her review: *Shameful movie: what's wrong with the 'Secret Diary of Symon Petlyura'*. The film is described as follows: "Yanchuk's film fully corresponds to his current nomenclature biography – it is so full of Soviet clichés with stale air and loud slogans about how to love the homeland."<sup>45</sup> In another similar review by Mykola Mylinevs'kyi on the Internet

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<sup>43</sup> Фільм "Тайный дневник Симона Петлюры" [Film "The Secret Diary of Simon Petlyura"], in <https://kino-teatr.ua/film/tamniy-schodennik-simona-petlyuri-49568.phtml> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

<sup>44</sup> О. Петренко-Цеунова, "Таємний аккаунт Симона Петлюри": минуле й сьогодні в художньо-історичному творі ["The Secret Diary of Symon Petlyura": the Past and the Present in historical fiction], in <http://litakcent.com/2018/09/17/tayemniy-akkaunt-simona-petlyuri-minule-y-sogodennya-v-hudozhno-istorichnomu-tvori/> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

<sup>45</sup> Д. Бадьор, *Стыдное кино: что не так с "Тайным дневником Симона Петлюры"* [Shameful movie: what's wrong with "The Secret Diary of Simon Petlyura"], in

portal "Vesti.ua" the following opinion was expressed: "The film was shot as if it was the 70<sup>th</sup> (of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – author's note) – and it's about one of the Bolsheviks, who faltered, but was true to the idea, and in the history of the country, he justifiably took a worthy place."<sup>46</sup> The "Secret Diary of Symon Petliura" was not shown in Russia and did not create a corresponding resonance in Russian society.

Another landmark premiere in Ukrainian cinema is the film "Forbidden", which covers the life and mysterious death of the famous poet of the sixties, human rights activist, Hero of Ukraine – Vasyl' Stus and his struggle against the Soviet system. The film was directed by Roman Brovko and written by Serhiy Dzyuba and Artemiy Kirsanov. The original titles of the movie "Bird of the Soul" and "Stus" were changed into "Forbidden". According to the State Agency of Ukraine for Cinema, the decision to leave out the poet's name belonged to the creative team that considered the film as a biography of a particular person, as an image of time, and a personification of the struggle against the regime.<sup>47</sup>

The film's production is connected with a loud scandal in Ukrainian society regarding the exclusion from the script of a court scene featuring a well-known Ukrainian politician, former Head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine Viktor Medvedchuk, who acted as a lawyer in the Stus trial. According to Ukrainian lawyers Roman Tytykalo and Illa Kostin: "Actually, defender Medvedchuk became an accomplice to the prosecution, acting contrary to the rule of law and the requirements of professional ethics... Confirming the guilt of his client in court (when the defendant himself denied the guilt), lawyer Medvedchuk compromised his professional duty, in reality, refused to defend Stus, which grossly violated the latter's right to defence in court."<sup>48</sup> It is noteworthy that Viktor Medvedchuk played a similar role in other dissidents' trials – Yuriy Lytvyn and Mykola Kuntsevych.

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[https://lb.ua/culture/2018/09/11/407259\\_stidnoe\\_kino\\_taynim.html](https://lb.ua/culture/2018/09/11/407259_stidnoe_kino_taynim.html) (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

<sup>46</sup> Н. Милиневский, *Смерть Петлюры, которой трудно дождаться - рецензия на новый украинский фильм* [The death of Petlyura, which is hard to wait for - a review of a new Ukrainian film], in <https://vesti.ua/kultura/302099-smert-petljury-kotoroj-trudno-dozhdatsja-retsenzija-na-novuj-ukrainskij-film> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

<sup>47</sup> *Фільм про Стуса вийде в прокат під назвою "Заборонений" - Держкіно* [A film about Stus will be released under the title "Forbidden" – Ukrainian State Film Agency], in <https://ua.interfax.com.ua/news/general/560811.html> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

<sup>48</sup> Р. С. Титикало, І. П. Костін, *Стус без шансу на захист: ведмежа послуга Медведчука* [Stus without a chance for defense: Medvedchuk's disservice], in <https://www.pravda.com.ua/cdn/graphics/2016/08/stus/> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).



Actor Henadiy Popenko allegedly announced that the court scene was taken out from the script at the request of Viktor Medvedchuk himself, later this information was also confirmed by the film's producer Artem Denysov. Still, he stressed that the scene disappeared from the script due to the film's timeline. When this information was disclosed, it caused a significant resonance among Ukrainian society both in social networks and media. Later on, the then Prime Minister of Ukraine Volodymyr Hroysman stated that the Ministry of Culture and the State Agency for Cinema should check whether the Ukrainian poet's life story and Soviet dissident Vasyl' Stus in the feature film was accurate.<sup>49</sup> Apparently, as a result, the scene with the lawyer did appear in the movie, but the lawyer's name was not mentioned. Medvedchuk himself commented on the public response to the coverage of his role in the Stus case in the program "A Great Interview with a Great Politician" on the 112 Ukraine TV channel: "This is a provocation. One of the stages of what Americans are doing today. We have proof of that. I mean, they are constantly provoking. [...] this is another provocation, which, unfortunately, has a place today. And we will get over it too. In the case of Stus, which was 38 years ago, I am glad that in 38 years the Americans have not found anything new. The story is distorted."<sup>50</sup>

The film "Forbidden" has received mixed reviews from Ukrainian critics. Among a significant number of positive reviews, there are also negative ones, a considerable part of which are again from the Russian-speaking audience. For example, the feedback of the already mentioned Daria Badior entitled "*Forbidden*: a film about Vasyl' Stus, not worthy of his hero."<sup>51</sup> The main negative points mentioned in the reviews are the excessive amount of chronicles used in the movie, poor directing and acting, unnaturalness, stereotypical staging in general. Instead, the viewers' feedback is almost entirely positive. The film's audience rating on the Ukrainian portal Kino-Teatr.ua is 9.0 out of 10, and as of January 2020, it ranks

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<sup>49</sup> С. Серета, *Скандал навколо фільму про Стуса: сцену з Медведчуком повернуть* [Scandal surrounding the movie about Stus: Medvedchuk's scene will be returned], in <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/29427655.html> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

<sup>50</sup> *Медведчук назвав історію з фільмом про Василя Стуса "провокацією американців"* [Medvedchuk calls the story of the film about Vasil Stus a "provocation by the Americans"], in <https://detector.media/infospace/article/140468/2018-08-26-medvedchuk-nazvav-istoriyu-z-filmom-pro-vasilya-stusa-provokatsieyu-amerikantsiv/> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

<sup>51</sup> Д. Бадьор, *"Заборонений": фільм про Василя Стуса, недостойний свого героя* [Forbidden: the film about Vasil Stus is not worthy of his hero], in [https://lb.ua/culture/2019/09/06/436622\\_zaboroneny\\_film\\_pro\\_vasilya.html](https://lb.ua/culture/2019/09/06/436622_zaboroneny_film_pro_vasilya.html) (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

4th in the overall rating of all movies on the portal. The IMDB world rating is also relatively high – 7.2, which indicates that Ukrainian historical cinema can be popular both in Ukraine and in the world.

The history of Ukraine has also been a source for the world film industry. For example, in February 2019, at the 69th Berlin International Film Festival, Polish director Agnieszka Holland's film "The Price of Truth", written by Andrea Halupa and starring Jason Norton and Vanessa Kirby, won the Golden Bear Award. In English, the film was shown under the title "Mr. Jones". The movie tells the story of British journalist Gareth Jones, who was one of the first to publish in the world press the information about the mass famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933 and its causes – forcible seizure of food from peasants, the policy of collectivization and dekulakization. An illustrative example of the feedback is the comment of one of the viewers on the IMDb website entitled "Who said that we care more about the truth than 90 years ago? No, we don't care", which contains the following conclusion: "Sure, many will insist that all the horrible stuff the movie is about is firmly in the past, but I am afraid we are born to repeat history and this tragic story in particular. At least some can tell the truth whatever consequences. Watch it, and you will have your answer."<sup>52</sup>

In October 2019, a joint Ukrainian-American historical feature film "Zakhar Berkut" directed by Akhtem Seitablayev and John Wine starring Robert Patrick was released. This picture is a film adaptation of the historical novel with the same name "Zakhar Berkut" by Ivan Franko. Director Akhtem Seitablayev, with the Ukrainian State Film Agency's support, has started shooting the iconic film "The Battle of Konotop".

In the genre of the documentary film, it is worth mentioning such works as "Maidan" and "Process" directed by Serhiy Loznytsya and highly praised by both Ukrainian and world critics; "Volunteers of the God's Ranks" directed by Serhiy Loznytsya and Leonid Kanter; "Ilovays'k. Knights of Heaven" and "Pisky. Knights of Heaven" led by Kateryna Strel'chenko. It is worth noting the project "Documentary", in which director Taras Khymych made several documentary films: "Golden September: The Galician Chronicles 1939-1941", "Silver Land: The Chronicles of Carpatho-Ukraine 1919-1939", "The Ukrainian Insurgent Army: Chronicles 1942-1945", and "Legion. Chronicle of Ukrainian Galician Army 1918-1919". These films differ from the typical examples of Ukrainian documentaries due to the "Discovery" format, which involves modern perspectives and technical

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<sup>52</sup> *Who said we care more about the truth now than 90 years ago? No, we do not*, in [https://www.imdb.com/review/rw5293495/?ref\\_=tt\\_urv](https://www.imdb.com/review/rw5293495/?ref_=tt_urv) (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

means during the shooting process, making the film close to a feature film. The movies rely on archival documents, materials and eyewitness memoirs. The mentioned films are freely accessible on the Documentary Project website, and the premieres were shown free of charge at the Kinopalats cinema in Lviv.<sup>53</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The vast opportunities offered by the cinema as a means of influencing the collective consciousness can be used, and are being used by the Russian Federation in the information war against Ukraine. One of the critical areas of influence is historical consciousness as an integral part of Russian and Ukrainian peoples' public consciousness. At the same time, the use of cinema, as any other modern weapon, is effective only in combination with other available means within the framework of a carefully planned flexible strategy, which provides for adjustment of the influence taking into account the feedback received during the use of all involved tools.

Thus, modern cinema as a source of audiovisual media is an essential tool used in modern information warfare to create prosthetic memory, which, in turn, gradually transforms the public memory in the direction necessary for the initiator of conscious influence. Simultaneously, the effective use of cinema as a means of information warfare, including the impact on historical consciousness, is possible only in a comprehensive strategy engaging all modern mass media on that front.

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<sup>53</sup> Документалістика [Documentary], in <http://www.documentary.org.ua> (Accessed on 21.01.2020).

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**LANDMARKS OF THE VIRAL-METAMORPHIC THEORY.  
A NEW INTERPRETATION  
OF RIGHT-WING TOTALITARIANISM (I)**

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**Abstract.** *The viral-metamorphic theory offers a new way of interpreting right-wing totalitarianism, in the context in which not even a single vision of this phenomenon has yet been achieved. Although the definitions of generic fascism, regarded as Ideal-type, are incredibly numerous and diverse, there is no unanimous opinion about its true nature. The path we chose is circumscribed by the comparative analysis of this type of totalitarianism's ideational origins, returning thus to its theoretical, philosophical and political foundations. We do not claim by any means to fully solve such a vast problem– and, if we did, of course, we would leave the sphere of historical reality and enter a world of fantasy, speculation and utopia. Within the bounds of our intellectual and spiritual possibilities, we have designed a new model of analysis of the interwar far-right, which we have called viral-metamorphic, appropriating and adapting concepts from geology (metamorphism), biology and computer science (virus/ viral), along with the wide synonymic range of the above-mentioned terms.*

**Keywords:** *metamorphic, theory, right-wing totalitarianism, comparative analysis, fascism, ideal type, viral.*

**Rezumat. Repere ale teoriei viral-metamorfice. O nouă interpretare a totalitarismului de dreapta (I).** *Prin teoria viral-metamorfică, încercăm să oferim o nouă modalitate de interpretare a totalitarismului de dreapta, în condițiile în care, nici măcar până în prezent, nu s-a ajuns la o viziune unitară asupra acestui fenomen. Deși definițiile fascismului generic, privit ca ideal-tip, sunt extrem de numeroase și diverse, nu s-a ajuns la o părere unanimă asupra adevăratei sale naturi. Calea aleasă de noi se circumscrie analizei comparative a originilor ideatice ale acestui tip de totalitarism, întorcându-ne așadar la bazele sale teoretice, filosofice și politice. Nu avem pretenția că vom reuși să lămurim în totalitate o problematică atât de vastă – iar, dacă am face-o, desigur că am părăsi sfera realității istorice și am pătrunde într-o lume a fanteziei, speculației și utopiei. În limitele posibilităților noastre intelectuale și spirituale, am creat un model nou de analiză al extremei drepte interbelice, pe care l-am numit viral-metamorfic, preluând și adaptând concepte din geologie (metamorfism),*

biologie și informatică (virus/viral), precum și larga sinonimie a termenilor mai sus amintiți. În prezent, cuvântul metamorfism are reverberații cu precădere în domeniul științelor Pământului (geografie, geologie, geochimie ș.a.), desemnând transformarea în stare solidă a rocilor (mineralogică, chimică și structurală) sub influența căldurii (metamorfism de contact termic), a presiunii (m. dinamic), a soluțiilor metamorfozante (metamorfism metasomatic) sau acțiunii combinate a presiunii și temperaturii (metamorfism dinamometric sau regional); după astfel de procese iau naștere rocile metamorfice.

## INTRODUCTION

The proposed new interpretation of right-wing totalitarianism attempts to provide a holistic and integrative view of the variations of the ideological, political, social and economic fascist phenomenon. The far-right lacks the ideological cohesion that communism enjoys, manifesting itself as a trans ideology, which tends to become an independent ideology, parasitising older political currents, which it transforms or destroys. The concept of viral metamorphism has been chosen because of this fact. Initially, the use of the term was made with strict reference to the sphere of ideology.<sup>1</sup> It has been observed that the fascist *Ideal type* acquires a metamorphic character when it comes into contact with established ideologies (liberalism, conservatism,<sup>2</sup> socialism, communism), i.e., it shows a tendency to

<sup>1</sup> About the conceptual sphere of ideology, see: Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction*, Londra-New York, Versus, 1991; Teun A. Van Dijk, *Ideology. A Multidisciplinary Approach*, Londra – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi, SAGE Publications, 1998; Daniel Șandru, *Reinventarea ideologiei. O abordare teoretico-politică* [Reinventing ideology. A Theoretical-political Approach], Iași, European Institute, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph de Maistre, *Essai sur le principe générateur des constitutions politiques et des autres insitutions humaines*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1833, p. 3; Anton Carpinschi, *Conservatorismul, doctrină a autorității și restaurației* [Conservatism, the doctrine of authority and restoration], in Alina Mungiu-Pippidi (coord.), *Doctrina politice contemporane. Tipologii, dinamică, perspective* [Contemporary political doctrines. Typologies, dynamics, perspectives] Iași, Moldova Publishing House, 1992; Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Conservatorismul anglo-saxon* [Anglo-Saxon Conservatism], Bucharest, All Publishing House, 1994; idem, *Conservatorismul* [Conservatism], in Alina Mungiu-Pippidi (coord.), *Doctrina politice contemporane. Tipologii, dinamică, perspective* [Contemporary political doctrines. Typologies, dynamics, perspectives], Iași, Moldova Publishing House, 1992; Robert Nisbet, *Conservatorismul* [Conservatism] Bucharest, Du Style Publishing House, 1998; Norberto Bobbio, *Stânga și dreapta* [Left and Right], Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1999; Joseph de Maistre, *Istorie și providență* [History and Prov-



transform or destroy them, or takes over some of their features, which it alters most of the times; at the same time, it self-replicates, thus becoming a *mutant ideological entity*.

Currently, the term virus has at least three meanings: biological - pathogen, invisible to the naked eye, which multiplies only inside living cells and causes various infectious diseases; figurative - agent of contagion, source of moral evil; computer - a computer program that can self-replicate, intended to disrupt computer functions. The word virus also has a relatively diverse synonymy: destructive factor, disease, misfortune, infection, condition, contagion, contamination, corruption, defilement etc. Its derivative (*viral*) refers to something that can infect or infest a being, an object, a process or a phenomenon. Starting from the definition of the virus from a biological point of view (a non-autonomous pathogenic organism that multiplies into the DNA of other creatures, which it infects) - it has become clear that the ideology of the far-right behaves somewhat similarly to the classical ideologies of modernity.

Analysing the *lack of conceptual autonomy of generic fascism* (the *fascist minimum* - that is, all standard features of fascism, Nazism, and other resembling European fascist movements), and trying to answer the fundamental question: *Is this a self-contained ideology or not?* - a seemingly strange and contradictory conclusion emerges: *It is not an entity similar to other ideological systems, but rather a new type of ideology, characterised by viral metamorphism*. Furthermore, by investigating the conceptual and theoretical meanings and implications of ideology in general, one can find that right-wing totalitarianism is indeed a *system of beliefs*, but not a coherent and consolidated *axiological* (value-related) *system*.

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idence], Bucharest, Anastasia Publishing House, 1997; Noel O'Sullivan, *Conservatorismul* [Conservatism], in *Enciclopedia Blackwell a gândirii politice* [The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought], Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2000; Daniel Louis Seiler, *Partidele politice din Europa* [Political parties in Europe], Iași, European Institute Publishing House, 1999; Sorin Bocancea, *Conservatorismul* [Conservatism], in Eugen Huzum (coord.), *Teorii politice și ideologii* [Political theories and ideologies], Iași European Institute Publishing House, 2013; Mihai Zodian, *Conservatorismul* [Conservatism], in Mihaela Miroiu (coord.), *Ideologii politice actuale. Semnificații, evoluții, și impact* [Current political ideologies. Meanings, evolutions and impact], Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 2012; Antoine Compagnon, *Antimodernii. De la Joseph de Maistre la Roland Barthes* [Anti-moderns. From Joseph de Maistre to Roland Barthes], translation from French by Irina Mavrodin and Adina Dinițoiu, Bucharest, Art Publishing House, 2008, pp. 12-48.

Unlike fascism, left-wing totalitarianism has robust universalist features, which gives it greater ideological and doctrinal continuity.

Having decided to critically examine the *dogmatic assertion* that *totalitarianism is the opposite of democracy*, and aiming for a considerate answer one must first turn towards the origins and multiple meanings of the political regime defined as the *people's power*. It became evident that the two systems of government are devoted to the same goal – *the Demos' good*; it is, therefore, a different view of the same problem. As such, the preliminary conclusion is that both types of totalitarianism (left and right) derive and are not the opposite of democracy; they are revealed to us, therefore, only as *mutations* of democracy. Along with the logical-explanatory approach of viral metamorphism, it turns out that a fundamental role in the birth and ideological development of the far right was played by "infecting pluralistic political thought" with *an irrational mentality* (consisting of existentialism, intuitionism, vitalism, nihilism, symbolism, and the restoration of magical, archetypal, mystical, mythical, and taboo thinking).

One of the most challenging issues that this study has attempted, at least partially, to solve, is the relationship between totalitarianism and modernity, based on the political and social principles of the Enlightenment. The reaction to the *Enlightenment philosophy* and the liberal model of government led to the "premature birth" of a *dimorphic organism* (with the ability to take two forms/shapes). Communism was according to the *one-dimensional theory of political parties* – on the far left of the political spectrum, while fascism/ Nazism and fascist movements were positioned to the far right. Although we formally accept this classification, one must recall its *relative* nature. It would seem that fascism and Nazism were, in fact, only *transmutations (transubstantiations)* of socialism, produced under the particular conditions of redefining Italian and German nationalisms, respectively, after World War One. The two movements called themselves "the third way", so they did not want to be associated with either the left or the right. Both communism and *generic fascism* were characterised by intense *polymorphism*.

The term has mainly three directions of definition: *chemical* – the property of certain substances to be able to appear in two or more distinct crystalline forms; *biological* – the characteristic of a species to exist in several morphological aspects; *philological* – the coexistence of numerous forms, phonetic or grammatical, with the same function in the system, in a particular language or idiom. This study will refer to it concerning its synonymy. Thus, polymorphism can also mean diversity, diversification, heterogeneity, multiform, multiplicity, variation, variety, variability, multitude, conglomerate, fluctuation, dissonance, mixture, miscellaneous,

multilateralism etc. This article will use it in connection with the following fields: ideological, political, social, economic, cultural, anthropological etc.

Despite the doctrinal consistency offered by Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Ilich Lenin, Leon Trotsky, etc., Bolshevism has retained its polymorphic features. Although it calls itself an evolved and superior democracy, the negationist relationship of left-wing totalitarianism with liberal political principles (equality, liberty, individualism, social contractualism, etc.) shows its true despotic nature ("dictatorship of the proletariat" masked by populism, terror "motivated" by the "class struggle", "the creation of a new man" or an egalitarian and better society).

Due to the absence of universalism, right-wing totalitarianism is characterised by a more pronounced *polymorphism* than communism, taking the most varied and paradoxical forms. It *often appears as revolutionary, extreme and radical conservatism*. It is not by accident that fascism was metaphorically called *a conservative revolution, a reactionary process, or a militant reaction*. Consequently, this suggests that a comparative analysis of the two ideological trends would be more than welcome, given that most researchers claim that the far right was anti-conservative in the interwar period.

### **RIGHT-WING TOTALITARIANISM AS A "CONSERVATIVE REVOLUTION"**

Both conservatives and fascists have adopted a fundamentally pessimistic view of human nature, considering it fallible, imperfect and corruptible. Although the former accepted the idea that emotions, impulses, instincts often drive man, they did not give the same importance to irrational influences on human behaviour. Although many of the representatives and followers of conservative thinking have been influenced by racial or anti-Semitic prejudices, nowadays politicians of this ideological standing reject these concepts, labelling them as undemocratic and anti-humanist. The two sides agree that genetic and hereditary backgrounds generate natural differences in talent and abilities, meaning that some individuals would be better suited than others for political leadership.

Both the conservative and the extremist right-wing ideology have traditionally been strongly nationalist. For example, Benjamin Disraeli argued that it was essential to promote national unity as a means of securing the economic progress and imperial expansion of Great Britain. He believed that by importing cheap raw materials, the average living standard would improve considerably, including for lower social classes. At the same time, he wanted to

undermine the rise of socialism through a series of reform policies, "orchestrated" by the conservatives themselves.<sup>3</sup> In practice, however, the European imperialist expansion at the end of the 19th century was achieved rather by force of arms. This attitude was embraced completely by Nazism and, to a lesser extent, by Mussolini's Italy. Militarism was accepted and supported by both Italian and German nationalist conservatives, though not with the same intensity of fascist and, respectively, national-socialist brutality. The conservative view of human nature has led followers to support economic inequality, especially in terms of income distribution and wealth. Thus, genetic differences in talent and skills ought to result in wealth inequality, at least if the government does not restrict the freedom of individuals to convert their talent into economic advantage. Therefore, in keeping with the conservative view, economic equality is incompatible with individual equality.<sup>4</sup> Right-wing totalitarianism extended the principle of inequality across society,<sup>5</sup> its hierarchy being made according to the model of castes (closed and self-sufficient social categories).

Conservatism aims to build a fairer history and society, relying on traditions and customs. The far-right prefers to exploit history, traditions, customs, and social habits to create a closed, hierarchical, statist and racist society. At the top of such a structure are the people who limit attributions and control the state's functioning. In contrast, at the bottom of it, there are massed individuals totally subordinated to it. Conservative thinking states that the people's welfare can only be achieved by maintaining the traditions, customs and social habits established throughout history.<sup>6</sup> Generic fascism is grounded in exploiting the elements outlined above, not in the Demos' best interest, but in that of the new totalitarian

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<sup>3</sup> Regarding the conservative vision of Benjamin Disraeli, see: Angus Hawkins, *Disraeli and Conservatism, 1874-1880*, in *British Party Politics, 1852-1886*, London, Palgrave, 1998, pp. 178-190.

<sup>4</sup> Roger Woods, *The Conservative Revolution in the Weimar Republic*, London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996, pp. 111-115.

<sup>5</sup> Dante Germino, *Preliminary Reflections on the Open Society: Bergson, Popper, Voegelin*, in Dante Germino, Klaus von Beyme (eds.), *The Open Society in Theory and Practice*, Haga, Martinus Nijhoff, 1974, pp. 1 – 4; Eric Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol. II, *The World of the Polis*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1957, pp. 1 – 5; K. R. Popper, *Societatea deschisă și dușmanii ei* [The Open Society and Its Enemies], vol. I, *Vraja lui Platon* [The Spell of Plato], translated into Romanian by D. Stoianovici, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2005, pp. 121-126.

<sup>6</sup> Russel Kirk, *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Eliot*, Revised Edition, Chicago, Henry Regnery Company, 1960, pp. 2-9.

elite. For followers of conservatism, observing the principles of the past is equivalent to creating the social good. In their view, this is because we already know that these rules work and, as such, we cannot guarantee the efficiency of new ideas. The fascist oligarchy interprets in its way the principles of the past, their vision gaining the value of absolute truth; it conveys to the obedient masses what can or cannot be preserved from these "immutable" rules of the past. People must be told what is right for them by the conservative government, and in the case of the far-right, by the fascist leaders. Generally, conservatism is regarded as a paternalistic theory, whereas fascism is considered a messianic theory, mainly because of its political religion nature.

Conservative political theory maintains that the government always has better ideas than private individuals; right-wing totalitarianism leaves no room for interpretation by proclaiming that *the Leader can never err*. Conservatives embrace the idea that governments are only useful as long as they promote loyalty to history, traditions and customs because they are superior forms of individual thinking. Manipulated knowledge of history is apparently superior to independent thinking as it derives from the fascist totalitarian elite's mindset. The conservative political trend has regularly theorised the inferiority of individual thought concerning the wisdom of historical generations. In contrast, the far-right independent thinking loses its validity because the fascist elite interprets the wisdom accrued by generations following the world's utopian vision. Thus, conservatives consider knowledge acquired through the ages to be more reliable and closer to the truth than individuals' mere accumulation of knowledge. Hence, it has to go through the difficult test of time. The cognisable domain has no intrinsic value unless it is "validated" by the intensely ideologized totalitarian elite. Conservative ideology states that people should be aware of their limitations and admit that they cannot, by themselves, create their own institutional, political and social patterns; this is the task of the government.<sup>7</sup> Right-wing totalitarianism offers this "responsibility" to the fascist elite. In the first case, power must be handed down to generations – past, present and future – to determine what is good or bad at the societal level. In the second case, the exercise of power becomes an extension of totalitarian ideology and action. Conservative ideology states that people are limited in their rights and freedoms as dictated by history, traditions or customs; under right-wing totalitarian regimes, people lose their rights and

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<sup>7</sup> Regarding conservative ideology's variations, see E.H.H. Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism. Conservative Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 3-17.

liberties as the fascist elite dictates. Conservatism accepts that sometimes power can cause pain and suffering, while the far-right regards the two elements as history *constants*. If the former ideological trend highlights power's non-violent nature, the latter gives violence a rationalised and institutionalised form.

### **THE PERVERSION OF DEMOCRATIC AND LIBERAL PRINCIPLES BY RIGHT-WING TOTALITARIANISM**

Generally speaking, the relations of the totalitarian right-wing ideology with liberalism have been organically opposite, but in some cases, they were characterised by temporary cohabitation or collaboration. The opposition between *generic fascism* and the liberal trend is more visible in the political and economic sphere. It became manifest in the context of the crisis of European democracy in the first decades of the twentieth century. The far-right tried and partially succeeded in undermining the Enlightenment foundations of liberalism: pluralism, tolerance, individualism, rationalism, justice, separation of powers in the state, natural rights, egalitarianism, straightforward progress, freedom, social contractualism, resistance to tyranny, multi-party system, etc.

*Pluralism* is one of the fundamental features of democratic systems. It is defined, in the broadest sense, as the belief in diversity or multiplicity. Politically, it refers to multipartyism, a multitude of ethical and moral values or a variety of cultural beliefs. As a normative term, pluralism suggests the idea that diversity is healthy and desirable because it defends the principle of individual freedom and contributes to the fair distribution of political power. The *unilateral tendency* of totalitarianism, the conceptual, ideational and institutional overlap between the state and the single party, the elimination of the system of rights and liberties, the ideology and parasitism of thought due to irrational elements have all destroyed this foundation of liberal Enlightenment democracy. Pluralism offers flexibility, mobility and adaptability, both ideationally, politically, socially, and decisionally, but at the same time, it displays several systemic flaws: uncertainty, ambiguity, instability. Right-wing totalitarian regimes have employed these weaknesses against the liberal model of democracy; thus, they proposed a more straightforward social restructuring *logic*, mostly, Manichean. Both authoritarian individuals (potential totalitarian leaders) and the massed individuals adopted predefined behavioural frameworks, a simplistic (black-and-white) worldview, and a stereo-

typed language,<sup>8</sup> devoid of semantic nuances. The anti-democratic mentality eliminates autonomy of reason, relying on unconditional submission to authority, respect for hierarchy, and a messianic outlook on the world.

*Tolerance and diversity.* Liberal social ethics is characterised by the will to accept and celebrate political, cultural and moral diversity. Pluralism, or diversity, originates in the principle of individualism and in the assertion that human beings are unique creatures. The preference of liberal thinking for diversity has often been associated with tolerance. The latter presupposes the will to allow people to think, speak, and act in ways that one generally tends to reject. Tolerance is both an ethical ideal and a social principle.

On the one hand, it is a goal of personal autonomy; while, on the other hand, it imposes a set of rules on how people should behave with their peers. The principle of tolerance would have to be extended to all religious, moral or private life issues. Of course, it is very closely linked to the concept of *negative freedom*. In totalitarian systems, tolerance is destroyed by prejudices, the *scapegoat theory*, and the permanent conspiracy of internal and external enemies. Diversity becomes impossible in such political regimes because individuals and social groups are forced to replace critical, rational thinking with a mentality *steeped* in irrationalism (myth, magic elements, taboos, archetypes). Diversity and tolerance thus become the *natural enemies* of the new utopian vision of the world. They cease to be factors of social cohesion, being swiftly replaced by intolerance. This stands for lack of respect for one's peers' beliefs and practices and does not accept the idea of difference or diversity, underlying racism,<sup>9</sup> anti-Semitism, xenophobia, etc. It can often lead to generalised, rationalised, and institutionalised violence.

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<sup>8</sup> J. W. Young, *Totalitarian Language: Orwell's Newspeak and Its Nazi and Communist Antecedents*, University of Virginia Press, 1991, pp. 23-26; Béatrice Turpin, *Victor Klemperer et le langage totalitaire d'hier à aujourd'hui. Compte-rendu du colloque de cerissy-la-Salle*, în „Hermès”, nr. 58, 3/2010, pp. 63-67; Victor Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich. LTI – Lingua Tertii Imperii. A Psychologist's Notebook*, translated by Martin Brady, Londra-New York, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013, pp. 10-16; Vlad Gafița, *Totalitarian Language through the Lens of the Viral-Metamorphic Theory*, in „Meridian Critic”, no: 1 (volume 30), 2018, pp. 55-62.

<sup>9</sup> About racism, see: Marius Turda, *Eugenism și modernitate. Națiune, rasă și biopolitică în Europa (1870-1950)* [Eugenics and modernity. Nation, race and biopolitics in Europe (1870-1950)], translation into Romanian by Răzvan Pârâianu, Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 2014; M.A. Livingstone, *The Fascists and the Jews of Italy: Mussolini's Race Laws, 1938-1943*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014; John Rex, *Rasă și etnie* [Race and Ethnicity], translation from English into Romanian by Dan Pavelescu, Bucharest, DU Style Publishing House, 1998.

*Individualism* represents the belief in the individual's supreme importance in relation to any social group or community. *Methodological individualism* suggests the formation of society from single autonomous human entities. From an *ethical* point of view, individualism states that society should be built according to moral norms that protect the person's interests, rights, and needs. The anti-liberal reaction of the far-right became manifest in replacing individualism with *collectivism* (the belief that people's collective effort has more significant practical and moral value than the individual action). The *supreme good* of the collective entity (nation or race) is invariably situated above the *individual good*; thus, collective egoism consumes individual selfishness.<sup>10</sup> People, therefore, become *collectivist entities* by *massification, disintegration, de-individualisation and atomisation*. They are integrated or assimilated to the national, state or racial community, losing or surrendering more or less voluntarily their system of liberties and rights.

*Freedom* is the fundamental political value of liberalism and the unifying principle of this ideology. Initially, it stood for a natural right as well as an essential prerequisite of human existence. Freedom has allowed individuals to pursue their interests and to be able to choose between various solutions. Later, it was regarded as the sole condition by which people can develop their skills and talents or reach their full potential. The abolition of individualism and the adoption of a collectivist and organicist view by the far-right ideology have metamorphosed freedom (in fact, abolished it) into responsibility, obligation and duty. The fascists rejected any form of personal liberty, considering it abstract, universalistic *nonsense*, utterly disconnected from reality. By contrast, "genuine freedom" means, in its totalitarian sense, obedience to the *Will of the Leader* and the individual's absorption into the national, racial, and state community.<sup>11</sup> Freedom of the individual is lost to the will of the community or of the masses.

*Rationalism*. The libertarian principle is inextricably linked to the belief in reason. Liberalism has been and has remained an integral part of the Enlightenment project. The central theme of the Enlightenment coincided with the desire to release man from the superstition and ignorance "prison", as well as

<sup>10</sup> The methodological individualism is analyzed in books as: Lars Udehn, *Methodological Individualism. Background, History and Meaning*, London-New York, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2001; Francesco di Iorio, *Cognitive Autonomy and Methodological Individualism. The Interpretative Foundations of Social Life*, Heidelberg-New York-Dordrecht-London, Springer International Publishing Switzerland, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Will Dudley, *Hegel, Nietzsche and Philosophy. Thinking Freedom*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 4-11.



the opening of *the age of reason*. The rationalism of the Enlightenment influenced liberalism in many respects. Firstly, it has consolidated confidence in individualism and freedom; secondly, it offered the liberals the *rectilinear* progress pattern. The liberal trend has implemented this "pattern" by the expansion of knowledge, the scientific revolution and the rejection of dogmatic thinking. Rationalism is linked to the belief that the world displays a rational structure that can be decoded by critical research. As a *philosophical theory*, it stems from the idea that knowledge derives more from reason than from experience, thus opposing empiricism. As a *general principle*, rationalism is based on human beings' ability to understand and explain the world, to find solutions to various problems with the help of intellect. Although it does not dictate the ultimate purpose of human behaviour, it indeed suggests ways to reach it.

*Irrationalism*<sup>12</sup> is a viral-metamorphic form of "infecting" rationalist thinking. Although fascist and fascism-resembling movements were generally born after World War One, they synthesised a pre-existing ideational background dating as early as the end of the nineteenth century. The far-right used irrational ideas and theories circumscribed to the *anti-Enlightenment*. A series of thinkers began to reveal human reason limits, drawing attention on and emphasising elements such as feelings, instincts and atavistic impulses. Friedrich Nietzsche said that people are motivated by strong emotions, oversizing the role of the *will* to the detriment of reason, especially the "will of power."<sup>13</sup> In his book *Reflections on Violence* (1908), the French trade unionist Georges Sorel highlighted the importance of *political myths* and, in particular, the *myth of the general strike*. He did not view them as passive descriptions of political reality but as expressions of Will, emotions and action.<sup>14</sup> The intuitionist philosopher Henri Bergson advanced the *theory of vitalism*, based on the idea that living organisms develop specific features with the help of a *universal vital force*.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of human existence is, therefore, to express this particular type of energy.

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<sup>12</sup> Regarding irrationalism, see: William Barret, *Irrational Man. A Study in Existential Philosophy*, New York, Anchor Books, 1962, pp. 69-78.

<sup>13</sup> See: Henry Hazlitt, *The Way to Will-Power*, Auburn-Alabama, Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2008; Jean-Etienne Joulié, *Will to Power, Nietzsche's Last Idol*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

<sup>14</sup> George Sorel, *Réflexions sur la violence*, deuxième édition, Paris, Librairie Des Sciences Politiques et Sociales, 1910, pp. 91-122.

<sup>15</sup> Henri Bergson, *L'évolution créatrice*, Paris, Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1959, pp. 9-15.

Although anti-rationalism per se is not proto-fascist in character, right-wing totalitarianism has provided a political expression to the most radical forms of anti-Enlightenment thinking. This trend of thought has influenced fascism in many ways. First, it induced a pronounced state of anti-intellectualism, reflected in the tendency to despise abstract thinking and to emphasise the role of action. Intellectual life was devalued by the far right, which mainly concerns feelings, emotions, and instincts. Fascist ideology has a rather weak coherence and rigour, but it has always sought to discover a *mythical aura*. The great ideologues or leaders (Hitler, Mussolini) were first and foremost propagandists, interested only to a small extent in theories and ideas. They wanted to exercise power through action, as an emotional response to the reaction of the masses. At first sight, *generic fascism* (cf. R. Griffin) seems to be an *anti-philosophy* (due to features such as anti-rationalism, anti-Enlightenment, anti-liberalism, anti-conservatism, anti-capitalism anti-communism etc.) or a form of nihilism, because it has consistently rejected most of the classical moral and political principles, depicting Western social tradition as a system of perverted values (*an upside-down system*). In fact, the far-right manifests itself as a *viral-metamorphic form* of Cartesian rationalism or as an *infection of democratic political thinking* with Enlightenment origin. This "pathology of modernity" (H. Arendt), in contact with liberalism, has (partially and temporarily) destroyed its conceptual, philosophical and humanistic foundations.

*Justice*. In democratic regimes, it is based on a particular type of moral judgment built around a *reward-punishment* system. The idea of *social justice* refers to the distribution of material and symbolic benefits within the societal space. The *liberal theory of law* is based on the principle of equality. Thus, through individualism, justice acquires egalitarian grounds (human beings are born equal in that each person has a set of natural rights and liberties, enjoying the same formal status in society). Liberals disapprove of any privilege or advantage based on such elements as gender, race, skin colour, faith, religion or origin. Rights cannot be *reserved* for a particular person or social class; their distribution being made in keeping with the principle of equality before the law. The political liberal trend also adheres to the idea of *equality of chances*, relying on the belief in *meritocracy*. The latter possesses both moral and economic foundations.

Right-wing totalitarianism has destroyed the humanist and liberal foundations of justice. The latter ceased to be one of the three autonomous forces in the state because the principle of separation of powers is nullified or metamorphosed into a formal hypostasis of democracy. Judicial power becomes a mere extension or punitive instrument of the regime, meant to apply rationalised and institutionalised violence. Justice no longer proceeds as a factor in regulating

social tensions but as an element of control over a *closed* (cf. K. R. Popper) and *massed society*. Through ideologisation, judges lose their immovability, being forced to respect, first of all, the *immutable principle of the Leader* (the *Führerprinzip* type), and not to deviate from the official line imposed by the *state-party*. The relations of the judiciary with the executive power are invariably relations of subordination.

### THE SOCIALIST ORIGINS OF RIGHT-WING TOTALITARIANISM

The far-right can be considered a *viral-metamorphic variation of socialism*, impregnated by *palingenetic populist ultranationalism*. Thus, *generic fascism* or the *fascist minimum* is not the opposite of socialism, but a *mutant* form of it. Both Mussolini and Hitler *portrayed* their ideas as particular hypostases of socialism. The former had been an influential member of the Italian Socialist Party and the editor-in-chief of the official gazette "Avanti". The latter conferred German socialism a paradoxical (ultranationalist) characteristic. The initial causality of this attitude was, of course, linked to the cynical and pragmatic attempt to obtain the electoral support of the industrial proletariat.

However, despite the formal ideological rivalry between fascism and socialism, followers of the interwar far-right displayed apparent affinities to specific ideas and socialism positions. The lower strata of the middle class frequently expressed their disgust for capitalism and, above all, for the industrial, financial and banking big bourgeoisie. The leftist roots of some *satellite organisations* of NSDAP (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, the Nazi Party*), such as the *Storm Troopers (SA, Sturmabteilung)* were more than *transparent* (the social structure of most members). Like socialism, the far-right adhered without reserve to collectivism, anarcho-syndicalism – at least in its incipient phase, until they came into power – openly opposing the "bourgeois" value system. Often, the Nazis "trumpeted" slogans such as "The Common Good before the Private Good". The partisans of the far-right despised "bourgeois materialism" considering that the desire to get rich must be subordinated to the idealist vision of national regeneration<sup>16</sup> and the creation of a *new utopian order (Weltanschauung)*. Fascist and regimes resembling fascism have often practised a socialist economic style to regulate or control the liberal economic system (for

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<sup>16</sup> See Zeev Sternhell, Mario Sznajder, *The Birth of Fascist Ideology*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1994; Emilio Gentile, Robert L. Miller, *The Origins of Fascist Ideology, 1918 – 1925*, New York, Enigma, 2005.

example, economic planning, exacerbated statism, corporatism, autarchy etc.). When not replaced by the corporate model (applied in Mussolini's Italy, Franco's Spain, or Salazar's Portugal), economic liberalism was subordinated to totalitarian ideological objectives (for example, after 1939, H. Göring reorganised German capitalist economy under the title *Four-Year Plan*, inspired, of course, by USSR's five-year plans). However, the notion of "fascist socialism" has some clear limitations: leftist elements within the right-wing extremist movements (the SA troops in Germany, the Sorelian syndicalists in Italy) were quickly marginalised after taking power, in hopes of attracting the "big finance" support.

Most of the time, the fascist ideas of organising economic life were vague and inconsistent. In many cases, pragmatism was more important than ideology. The revolution predicted by the far-right was not a social revolution, but rather a revolution of the psyche (individually and collectively) or the spirit, aimed at creating a new type of human being (always understood in masculine terms). The *New Man* or the *fascist man* had to be a hero, motivated by honour, duty and self-sacrifice, ready to "dissolve" his personality into the collectivist entity <sup>17</sup> (*Community/ Nation/ Race*). Finally, we notice the prominence of the anti-communist attitude within the fascist or movements resembling fascism in relation to anti-capitalism. One of these organisations and parties' primary objectives was to remove the proletariat from the "ideological umbrella" of Marxism and Bolshevism, but also to replace the *class struggle* with an integral and holistic vision of the nation, state, and race.

### SCIENTIFIC COMMUNISM AND GENERIC FASCISM MIRRORING

The two forms of totalitarianism (left and right) can be regarded as *distorted mirrors of democracy*. Both are *collectivist, reactive and viral-metamorphic* forms – anti-Enlightenment and anti-liberal. Communism remains universalist, a utopia, while *generic fascism* stands out in its denial of universalism, managing to assume only dystopian forms. The two ideologies can only exist under dictatorial, non-pluralistic and one-party regimes. Both show a *tendency to One* (unifying): the communist ideology proposes the creation of a classless society (in fact, the existence of a single class – the proletariat), while the far-right rallies to the idea of a closed, super-hierarchical and monolithic society (the syncretic synthesis between Nation-State-Race). Communism has generally been characterised by

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<sup>17</sup> Dan-Ioan Dascălu, *Personalitatea totalitară* [Totalitarian Personality], Bucharest, Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House, 2002, p. 89.

ideological expansionism, whereas fascism, Nazism, and fascism-resembling variations by militarist expansionism. Although both are *viral-metamorphic or polymorphic mutant entities*, we must recall that the far left is a trans- and post-modern phenomenon, while the far-right maintains its anti-modernity.

The philosophical origins of communism are medieval, if reference is made to the work of the English Catholic thinker Thomas More, suggestively entitled *Utopia* (1516). In the modern age, this political trend is associated, of course, with the work of Marx and Engels – *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). The two thinkers proposed a system in which the property is jointly owned by an atheistic society devoid of social classes, thus eliminating the differences between labourers and the privileged classes (the bourgeoisie). They supported the creation of a state that would eliminate all societal problems caused by inequality and exploitation, guiding humankind to *the highest levels of progress*. However, Marx and Engels did not describe the practical ways of achieving their utopian vision.<sup>18</sup>

The far-right was based on the deification and glorification of the nation. Its origins can be found in the nineteenth-century nationalist movements. French thinkers Charles Maurras and Georges Sorel theorised *integral nationalism*, namely the radical anarcho-sindicalist action, suggesting the creation of an organicist model of society. Fascist and fascism-resembling movements were formed in different ways for each country, managing to assert themselves in Italy, Germany, Spain, Portugal, or failing to accede to power in France or the United Kingdom.

Despite its polymorphic hypostases, the interwar far-right shared a series of common "values": militarist and expansionist ultranationalism; opposition to parliamentary democracy; conduct of conservative and autarchic economic policies; faith in a natural social hierarchy and the domination of elites; the desire to create an organic national community in which the interests of individuals are subordinated to the "general good of the nation", and the synthesis between propaganda and *the will of the people*.<sup>19</sup> As far as the *social structure and hierarchy*

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<sup>18</sup> Regarding the analysis of Marxist-Leninist view in western historiography, see: J. A. Jordan, *The Evolution of dialectical Materialism: A Philosophical and Sociological Analysis*, London, Macmillan, 1967; David Mc Lellan, *Marxism after Marx*, London, Macmillan, 1980; Jorge Larrain, *Marxism and Ideology*, London-Basingstoke, The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1983.

<sup>19</sup> Integral nationalism was represented in France by *Action Française*, a proto-fascist organization, and in Portugal by *lusitan integralism* sustained by Salazar's regime; see: Michel Leymarie, Jacques Prévotat (eds.), *L'Action Française. Culture, société, politique*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2008 ; Diamantino P. Machado,

are concerned, the Communists proposed the abolition of all hierarchical forms of organisation of society by imposing state control on private property and industry. In opposition to the classless society's Marxist concept, *generic fascism* supported the development of a strict, closed and self-sufficient class structure, making sure that each individual has a predetermined, specific, and unchangeable role. For example, women's role in the totalitarian right-wing society was limited to domestic and family life, which can be explained by its high degree of masculinisation. Both the far right and the far left opposed the process of democratisation, but with some differences. Some leaders, such as Hitler and Mussolini, had participated in elections before they came to power, but after taking office, they opposed universal suffrage, becoming dictators for life. The Communists used democracy as a way of gaining access to the government but ultimately destroyed the multi-party system, replacing it with the quasi-total domination of the single party.

At the *economic level*, the far left is based on the equal distribution of wealth, with members of society receiving the same share of the benefits from labour or production. To ensure that economic equality is respected, all means of production are owned and controlled by the state. By planning, the latter coordinates all decisions concerning investment, production, or allocation of resources. The far-right allows the existence of the private property, but its economic system is put, almost exclusively, in the service of consolidating and glorifying the state. Both fascist Italy and Nazi Germany set self-sufficiency as their fundamental economic goal so that each of these states could survive without commercial exchanges with other states.

Both forms of totalitarianism undermined or destroyed *individual rights*. In the case of communism, religion and private property were eliminated, with the government controlling or limiting freedom of choice in both education and labour. As far as the *outlook on war* is concerned, the communists considered it right for the economy but stated that, in general, it should be avoided. The far-right followers regarded it as a positive element, both for strengthening individual character, the nation's moral development, and the good of the state.<sup>20</sup> The *worldview* of communism is based on its nature as an international movement, the

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*The Structure of Portuguese Society. The Failure of Fascism*, Westport-Connecticut, Praeger Publishers, 1991.

<sup>20</sup> A very interesting comparison between left wing and right-wing totalitarianism is made by Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism and Communism*, in "Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions", I, 2000, No. 3, pp. 1-15.

ideological solidarity of the communist parties in various countries, and the rejection of capitalism or distrust of nationalist leaders and peoples. Fascist or fascism-resembling regimes are invariably ultranationalist, identifying only with similar state and political systems. They reject *a priori* the idea of internationalism as well as the concept of international democratic legislation. In theory, the Communist society rejects the notion of statehood, social classes, since the government is provided directly by the people.

Although most of the *key concepts* of the two ideologies and political systems differ, there are several significant similarities: centralised government, planned economy, opposition to the model of liberal democracy, anti-individualism, projection of the *new man*, collectivism, massification, cult of personality, ideologization and politicisation of all social spheres, destruction of pluralist civil society, monopartism, etc.

### **TOTALITARIANISM AS A VIRAL-METAMORPHIC MUTATION OF DEMOCRACY**

Along with modernity, *democracy* becomes an abstract, universalist concept, away from concrete political, social, and economic reality. Since its creation, the term has been restrictive, referring to a particular social, political or economic category. Democracy, as a form of the political organisation of society, proclaims the principle of power held by the people and takes several historical forms: slave democracy (the citizens from Greek *poleis* and Roman cities, according to Marxist terminology); bourgeois or liberal democracy (a format specific to capitalism that seeks to secure freedom and equality of citizens before law); popular democracy (a paradoxical expression specific to Marxist terminology); internal party democracy (an organisational principle of the Communist Party according to which all members hold the right to participate in solving the problems of the political entity effectively).

The semantic and conceptual opposition between democracy and totalitarianism is apparent because, in reality, only the attitude towards politics and the manner of exercising power differ. The liberal approach considers that politics is a matter of judgment or error, recognising human action's spontaneity and autonomy. Totalitarian thinking is based on the assumption that there is only one truth in politics that takes the form of messianism, postulating a harmonious and perfect scheme of social space. Totalitarianism ultimately recognises a single plane of existence, the political plane, but metamorphosed into a pseudo-religion.

Both schools of thinking, the democratic-liberal and the totalitarian refer to the supreme value of freedom, but differently. While pluralist systems seek and find the essence of liberty in spontaneity and the absence of coercion, non-pluralist regimes consider that freedom can exist only in the pursuit and attainment of some absolutized collective goals.

Liberal Democrats say that through individual freedom an idealised state of harmony can be achieved. At the same time, totalitarianism followers view the state of freedom as a challenge for action or as the result of an upcoming event. The so-called "totalitarian democracy" is placed under the sign of the "paradox of freedom".<sup>21</sup> It is related to the question: is human freedom compatible with an exclusive social existence model, even if this way of thinking ultimately aims at social justice and security?

The answer cannot be definitive if reason and will do not always guarantee freedom. That is why the extreme forms of the sovereignty of the people become subordinate to objectives that are often more transcendent than concrete. The particular problems and antinomies of "totalitarian democracy" result from the difficulty reconciling the ideas of freedom and definite purpose. This problem can only be solved if we regard the human being not as he/she is, but as he/she will be.

Totalitarian political messianism is often considered to have its origins in the eighteenth century, with the emergence of the "schism" between traditional religion and democratic secular religiosity. Both forms of democracy are found in the phenomena and processes specific to the emergence of modernity. With the French Revolution, a real decline of traditional order in Europe occurred: Christianity began to lose its intellectual and emotional control over society; the highly hierarchical feudalism began to disintegrate under the impact of social and economic factors; the old concept of a status-based community was replaced by the idea of an abstract, individualised and universalised human being.

The decline of religious authority involved the liberation of human conscience and the replacement of the ethics subordinated to religion with a form of secular morality. The rejection of the values of transcendent justice of the Church has imposed that the state remained the only form of improvement and sanction of morality. Politics begins to be considered as inseparable from ethics. The decline of the social status idea coincided with the rise of liberal individualism, the rejection of privileges. This process also involves some totalitarian potential. Thus, although empiricism is the ally of freedom, and the doctrinal spirit is the

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<sup>21</sup> J. L. Talmon, *Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*, London, Secker & Warburg, 1952, p. 2.



"friend of totalitarianism", the idea of a man regarded as an abstraction, independent of the historical context to which he belongs, would later become a powerful "vehicle for totalitarianism".

The eighteenth-century has never clearly distinguished the difference between the person's right to expression and the person's right to social action. Freedom Enlightenment theorists have regularly referred to the human attribute called virtue. It was to become one of the essential foundations of social harmony. However, the Enlightenment thinkers did not offer a coherent explanation for the inevitable conflict between freedom and virtue. When the secular religion of the eighteenth century (democracy) had to resolve this conflict, a new schism of the modern political world emerged. Thus, liberal democracy chose to move away from the spectrum of force, promoting a philosophy based on the trial-error pattern. At the same time, totalitarian messianism developed a doctrine based on the right of domination and coercion against those who refused to be "free and virtuous" (reference is made to the radical forms of the French revolution such as the Jacobin terror).

Another cause for the schism was the property issue. The democratic-liberal vision of it was dominated by the economic side, while the totalitarian political messianism was rather ethical and political. There were some exceptions in the eighteenth century: the case of the physiocrats who combined absolutism in politics with the economic theory of *laissez-faire*.

The modern so-called "totalitarian democracy" was, in fact, a dictatorship based on widespread enthusiasm, utterly different from the absolute power based on the divine right of the monarch. This dictatorial form revolved around a pseudo-democratic ideology of the masses, expression of a paradoxical and contradictory synthesis between the idea of natural order and the exercise of the right to self-expression advocated by J. J. Rousseau.<sup>22</sup> Often the concept of a common will promoted by the Enlightenment is ambiguous, a priori, combining the immanence of man's Will, unanimity, strength, or contradictions and antinomies that cannot be resolved in the real world.

The *confusion between majority and consensus* appears both in pluralistic-democratic regimes and in authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.<sup>23</sup> In the former

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<sup>22</sup> See John T. Scott (ed.), *The Major Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The Two Discourses and the Social Contract*, Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 2012, pp. 60-77.

<sup>23</sup> On the nuanced differences between democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian systems, see: Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems. A Framework for Analysis*, Cambridge,

case, it manifests itself as a tendency to stabilise existing tensions in the social and political environment. The relative or absolute majorities obtained by parties in the elections induce the necessity for negotiation or compromise in the "power game" to reach a consensus. The latter is a form of legitimising the winners, securing the continuity of the democratic regime. In authoritarian or semi-totalitarian systems, a consensus is often the result of force or coercion imposed by the Leader or the oligarchic circles of power on the population. In this case, there is a certain pseudo-legitimation resulting from a revolution, coup d'état, or the election of a relative majority. Left and right-wing forms of totalitarianism assert the idea of consensus through the perverted language of propaganda, overlapping the Leader's Will with the ideological will of the proletariat, nation, race, or state.

The elitist character of the notion stands out since the appearance of the concept in antiquity. The demos of ancient Greece was a tiny category of citizens (males of legal age), excluding barbarians (foreigners), slaves, women and, of course, children. Political liberties, privileges and responsibilities belonged only to this category; thus, the current meaning of democratic freedom would never have applied to the world of Greek poleis. Rome took over the Hellenic model and transformed it while bringing some improvements to the law system. The extremely low number of Roman citizens during the Republic and the Empire meant that a multitude of social, ethnic, and racial categories did not benefit from the rights and liberties of Roman civilisation. Starting with the third century AD, the extension of the right to citizenship to all Latin inhabitants throughout the empire and among some barbarians led to the decline of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century. The so-called "Roman democracy" was an illusion just as *Pax Romana* represented only a consequence of militarist policies and new territories and peoples' conquest. In the Middle Ages, democracy was masked ideationally through some thinkers' utopian prospects, and with the Renaissance, it took the form of humanism. Thus, the man was partially restored, starting to compete with the divinity.

Starting with modernity, democracy has become an abstract, universalist concept, moving gradually away from realities and the concrete historical context.

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Cambridge University Press, 1976; Giovanni Sartori, Giacomo Sani, *Polarization, Fragmentation and Competition in Western Democracies*, in Hans Daalder, Peter Mair (eds), *Western European Party Systems: Continuity and Change*, Beverly Hills, Publishing House Sage, 1983; Robert A. Dahl, *Despre democrație* [About Democracy], Iași, European Institute Publishing House, 2003.

The transfer of sovereignty from the monarch to the people through the social contract eliminated the divine character of power in the process, desacralizing it and making it immanent. Although democracy was intended as a substitute for religion with the Modern Age, its path remained incomplete. Its limit was represented by man or society; therefore, its religious character is rather insubstantial. Totalitarianism does not deal with the human being as an individual entity, but as a collective or collectivist form of man; in comparison with liberal democracy, totalitarian forms of thinking aim to transcend humanity's limits. It also aims at a "re-sacralisation of the individual" or some human groups (proletariat, race, people, nation). The radicalisation of democracy does not improve it. Still, it transforms it into tyranny, while the exacerbation of freedom and equality within a community leads to a reduction in its members' importance and role. Often, authoritarian, despotic and dictatorial forms of power require legitimacy from the people and claim to act on behalf of the people to solve a particular crisis. As a matter of principle, dictatorships have emerged as provisory ways of stabilising and re-harmonising society. However, absolute power cannot be controlled primarily by those who exercise it, as it creates a psychological corruption in their minds, which, after all, is human in nature.

The positive character of democracy is, in fact, a deception, an illusion, since totalitarian regimes also assert their origins in the democratic model (relating to the people, working through the people and for the people). Democratic relativism is transferred to totalitarian forms of leadership through the semantic ambiguity of the term people, as well: *Who are the people? What are the limits of its action? Why would people hold the absolute good or truth?*

There is often a numerical confusion, a social confusion, or a confusion between the relative and the people's absolute character regarding the concept mentioned above. The modern notion of democracy is based on a preconceived idea – that it is always supposed to be fair, righteous, progressive, etc. However, history often contradicts democratic positivism, which is revealed to us as self-sufficient, closed, ossified, etc. We also observe a certain monopolisation of the truth by democracy. Still, the latter cannot become a religion because of its lack of transcendence (as already mentioned, its limitation is the man himself since any religion worships supernatural forces that overcome, dominate and rule over the human being). Totalitarian regimes are critically accountable to the set of natural rights and freedoms: they either deny them by antinomic positioning or turn them into perverted elements that bear no connection with the original. Thus, the general Enlightenment and democratic will are transformed in contact with totalitarian thought into the will of power of mass groups or communities.

Individual freedom is diluted within the totalitarian collectivist entity, turning into obedience, absolute loyalty, and spirit of sacrifice.

In totalitarianism (especially the right-wing one), egalitarian principles become hierarchical forms based on pyramidal inequality aesthetics. The Man undergoes an anthropological revolution by acquiring the appellation of 'new' (metamorphosing into an entity lacking morality, consciousness, critical reason, and personality). Democracy is based on two postulates: 1) through democracy, the people discover good naturally; 2) by definition, anything people want or do is right. Therefore, the people create good; in other words, through the voice of the people, the voice of God is heard (*Vox Dei, Vox Populi*). Also, the voice of the people must be listened to as the voice of God, that is, the people is God (*Vox Populi, Vox Dei*). These democratic postulates are reduced by totalitarianism to a single "legitimacy": the Leader is one and the same with the people, thus being mistaken for the divinity. Through totalitarianism, democracy succeeds in becoming a "religion". It can be said that the democratic idea is a *legal fiction*, according to which the majority simultaneously holds the force – the justice – the wisdom – the truth.

Democracy contains in itself, a priori, totalitarianism. Monarchies, oligarchies, aristocratic regimes have not directly turned into totalitarian forms. They were compelled to go through the transitional phase of democracy. Unfortunately, the latter is based on the number of voters and not on their quality (the "dictatorship of the majority"). Thus, its character resurfaces as restrictive, closed and univocal. The relationship between the two notions is often inversely proportional. Absolute equality can only be achieved by suppressing freedom. Also, the radicalisation of freedom induces either inequality or anarchy. Thus, not all democracies are revolutionary, and not all revolutions are democratic.

Although it is claimed that sudden changes in society, economy, or politics have, as a matter of principle, the people's support, they are in most cases the result of the thinking of elites who impose new or original directions. The "intelligence" of the masses, inferior to most individual ones that constitute the collectivities, cannot emit or create ideas, or concepts with a high degree of abstraction. Even in the case of the left, socialist or communist, it was the intellectual elites who devised the models of society's revolutionary transformation. In the natural world, minorities – that is, predators – dominate, not majorities or herds. The transfer into the democratic language of a liberal or socialist the idea of natural law has no cover even in the real world, be it of nature or society. It manifests itself through the absence of a hierarchical organisation (it is more likely to encounter this structuring mode in traditionalist societies, based on conservative principles as well as on the idea of

evolution, and not of revolution). In fact, democracy never really worked. The Athenian form was based on slavery, and the modern forms of liberal or socialist orientation are nothing more than oligarchies or masked bureaucracies. In an authoritarian regime, we must obey the state authority, but we can have freedom of conscience. In a totalitarian system, we must think the same way the administration does, but in an absolutized democracy, we can only think the way the legal authority thinks. This is the reason why ideas such as obedience or disobedience become obsolete and outmoded.

The ethics of pluralistic systems is relatively thin. It displays a certain degree of intolerance because it does not accept a regime other than the democratic one. Totalitarianism is a result of the crisis of democracy, using its imperfections to create mutant forms. Relying on a negationist ideological approach, it destroyed previous paradigms of thought (liberal, socialist) or transformed them by integrating revolutionary or reactionary attitudes (as is the case with conservatism). Sometimes it uses techniques specific to liberal democracy (elections, referendums, but for a limited time and with the hidden (masked) objective of total takeover of power and destruction of the system from within. Both the far-left and the far-right consider themselves stages of evolution, clearly superior to previous ideological and political forms (liberalism, social-democracy, conservatism, socialism). In fact, totalitarian systems planned and partially succeeded in perverting democracy by inserting a particular ideology termed *viral-metamorphic*.

The far-right separates itself from conventional political thinking by radically rejecting egalitarianism. Hence, it is profoundly elitist and patriarchal, based on the belief that an elite and leadership with absolute powers are both natural and desirable. Human beings are born with different abilities and characteristics, which leads to the conclusion that some people are destined to govern, while others are destined to follow and obey. Followers of right-wing extremist movements and parties believed that society is generally made up of three categories of people: the first and the most important class is that of future leaders, whose authority cannot be challenged. The second is the exclusively male "warrior" elite (militarist or militarised), which, unlike the national elites, is distinguished by heroism, vision, and self-sacrifice capacity.

At first glance, fascist elitism<sup>24</sup> does not differ much from the conservative

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<sup>24</sup> António Costa Pinto, *Introduction: Political Elites and Decision-Making in Fascist-Era Dictatorships*, in idem (ed.), *Ruling Elites and Decision-Making in Fascist-Era Dictatorships*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2009, pp. XV – XX.

version of this trans-ideology. In reality, however, there are significant differences. Thus, conservative elites are a consequence of a long and natural evolution of society. They can easily fit into a democratic and pluralist regime, contributing to the economic, intellectual and scientific progress of the world in which they live. They also guide their ideas and actions according to rational principles and, on rare occasions, ideological criteria. Instead, the elites in right-wing totalitarian regimes result from actions with revolutionary implications, aimed at transforming the state, society, economy and human beings into mutant *viral-metamorphic* or *polymorphic* entities. In the Third Reich, the prototype of the elite was represented by the SS, whose members have initially been Hitler's bodyguards, and later became a genuine "state within the state". Nazi *protection troops* stood above the law between 1933 and 1945, being accountable only to the Führer. The third category of people was the masses, seen as weak, inert and ignorant; their destiny revolved around the idea of obedience. Such a pessimistic view of ordinary people's capacities has placed *generic fascism* in opposition to the concepts of liberal democracy. In any case, the idea of an absolute and quasi/pseudo-divine form of leadership appears to us today as an inverted (perverted) form of the democratic model of government. The fascist or fascism-resembling approach to leadership was influenced by Nietzsche's Superman (Übermensch) concept – that is, a person endowed with extraordinary qualities, superior power and Will. In the book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1885), Nietzsche portrayed the Superman as a person capable of rising above the "herd instinct" and ordinary (conventional) morality, and who lives only according to his own will. The most influential leaders of the far-right took the titles of Il Duce, Führer, Caudillo, Captain, etc., to detach themselves and emancipate from any form of legal or constitutional government. This way, the concept of legal power was turned into an expression of charismatic totalitarian authority that emanates from the *Great Leader* himself.

While *legal-rational authority* (in Weber's terms) operates within a set of laws and rules, charismatic power is potentially boundless. Given that the totalitarian Leader was portrayed as an individual with unique and supernatural qualities, his authority must therefore be absolute. For example, at the massive demonstrations in Nuremberg, the Führer's followers exclaimed: "Adolf Hitler is Germany, and Germany is Adolf Hitler" ("Die Partei ist Hitler. Hitler aber ist Deutschland, die Deutschland Hitler ist" – proclaimed Rudolf Hess). The Italian fascists incessantly repeated that "Mussolini is always right" ("Mussolini ha sempre ragione!"). The *Leader's principle* (*Führerprinzip*) means that the whole authority derives directly and unequivocally from the Leader. The intermedia institutions (parliament, parties, free election system) were either abolished or

weakened to prevent any challenge to or distortion of the *will* of the totalitarian head of state. The principle mentioned above was rooted in the belief that he possesses the *monopoly on ideological truth*.

## FINDINGS

The idea of authority has different perspectives according to the criterion of ideology: *Liberals* believed that power manifests itself "from bottom to top" with the governed's consent. Therefore, it stands for an ontological requirement, having a rational, objective and limited character, constituting a *legal-rational scale* between the public and the private space. *Conservatives* believed that authority stems from a natural necessity, exercised "from top to bottom", by virtue of the unequal distribution of experience, wisdom and social position. Authority is as beneficial as it is necessary because it commands respect, loyalty and promotes social cohesion. Usually, *socialists* were suspicious of the idea of authority, which they regarded as a symbol of oppression, connected to the interests of the powerful and privileged. However, societies built upon socialist principles are based on and respect the collectivity's authority, which they use as a counterweight to individualism and greed. *Anarchists* regarded all forms of power as destructive and useless, assimilating them with oppression and exploitation. *Fascists* regarded authority as a manifestation of personal or charismatic leadership that emerged among individuals with unique and exceptional qualities. Such power can only be absolute and incontestable, becoming implicitly or explicitly total or totalitarian. The far-right ideology often overlaps with the concepts of authority and power. Suppose liberalism, socialism, and communism have desacralized power. In that case, fascism seeks to *re-sacralise* it, transforming its ideology into a political religion and the Leader into a quasi-divine entity of immanent nature. The totalitarian form of power displays several distinct features: reactive character and opposition to liberal democracy, socialism and communism; glorification of primary emotions, feelings and instincts; anti-intellectualism, the appeal to Will and intuition, considered driving forces of human actions; contempt for democratic pluralism (seen as a source of the decadence of modern society) and parliamentarism (seen by the ideologues of totalitarianism as useless, empty speech); blurring or abolition of the principle of power separation within the state; replacement of egalitarianism with the principle of hierarchy and inequality, and promotion of elitism in all areas of public life; fetishization of the concept of individual freedom and its replacement with collective responsibility.

New approaches to developing the *viral-metamorphic theory* must be explored in the future by delving deeper into its implications. And, first of all, further investigation into the difference between "classic" right-wing totalitarianism (Italian fascism and German Nazism) and the fascism-resembling regimes in Spain, Portugal, Romania etc. deserves a thorough analysis.

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## SOCIETAL PERSPECTIVES: GENDER EQUALITY IN CENTRAL ASIA, BETWEEN DESIDERATUM AND REALITIES

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**Abstract.** *During the years of independence, Central Asian countries joined the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). They developed national mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality. However, despite the claimed policy, numerous articles, studies, dissertations, conferences, round tables, and the creation of gender research centres, there are still significant problems in promoting an idea of gender equality. In the Central Asia region persist a substantial difference between men and women in such spheres as politics, economics and public services careers. Gender inequality is still present in political representation. In addition, there is a problem of female students underrepresented in higher education institutions in several countries of the Central Asian region (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan). Moreover, the traditionalization of the social dimension of life in these societies is becoming more pronounced. Under the guise of the policy of preserving national customs, the constraints imposed by traditional rites extend.*

*However, the politics of promotion of gender equality have perspectives for development since the governments are interested in this issue management. Instead, the traditional part of society shows a particular resistance to the ideology of gender equality. Nevertheless, sustainable socio-economic development of the region is impossible without the achievement of gender equality.*

**Keywords:** *Gender equality, sustainable development, modernization, higher education, employment opportunities, cooperation, professional gender segregation.*

**Rezumat: Perspectivă societală: egalitatea de gen în Asia Centrală, între deziderate și realități.** *După obținerea independenței, țările din Asia Centrală s-au alăturat Convenției privind eliminarea tuturor formelor de discriminare împotriva femeilor (CEDAW) și au dezvoltat mecanisme naționale pentru promovarea egalității de gen. Cu toate acestea, în ciuda*

*politicii proclamate, a unui număr impresionant de articole, studii, teze, conferințe, mese rotunde și a creării unor centre de cercetare a problemelor de gen, există încă dificultăți în susținerea ideii egalității de gen. În regiunea Asiei Centrale persistă diferențe semnificative între bărbați și femei în domenii precum politica, economia și cariera în serviciile publice. Inegalitatea de gen apare și la nivel politic. În plus, există o problemă de subreprezentare a femeilor-studente în instituțiile de învățământ superior din mai multe țări aparținând regiunii Asiei Centrale (Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan). Mai mult, tradiționalizarea dimensiunii sociale a vieții devine tot mai pronunțată în aceste state. Sub paravanul politicii de prezervare a obiceiurilor naționale se extind constrângerile impuse de riturile tradiționale.*

*Totuși, politica de promovare a egalității de gen are perspective de dezvoltare, întrucât guvernele sunt interesate de gestionarea acestei probleme. În schimb, segmentul tradiționalist al societății manifestă o rezistență deosebită la ideologia egalității de gen. Cu toate acestea, dezvoltarea socio-economică durabilă a regiunii este imposibilă fără realizarea egalității de gen.*

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization has brought new opportunities for development and new challenges and threats for Central Asian (CA) region. Significant concerns are caused by the negative impact of existing problems in the area, especially the risk of economic lagging, transformation into raw materials providers for the developed countries, decreasing living standards, decreasing education level, and lack of technological progress. The most actual problems are "brain drain", social polarization of society and gender inequality.

There is a strong correlation between sustainable development and gender equality. Sustainable development implies the satisfaction of current needs without threatening future generations' ability to satisfy their own needs. All member-states of the United Nations, including the CA region countries, joined UN sustainable development goals in September 2015. Here, 12 out of 17 goals are gender-sensitive. Consequently, gender equality has become an essential issue for all countries in the CA region.

During the years of independence, all Central Asian countries joined the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW): Tajikistan joined in 1993, Uzbekistan in 1995, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan in 1996 and Kazakhstan in 1998. Later, these countries' governments developed national mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality. Consequently, there were attempts to reinforce gender equality in the region. For instance, Kyrgyzstan was the first post-soviet country that adopted "Об основах

государственных гарантий обеспечения гендерного равенства в Кыргызской Республике”<sup>1</sup> law in 2003. The new version of the law, “О государственных гарантиях равных прав и равных возможностей для мужчин и женщин”<sup>2</sup> was adopted in 2008. Tajik government adopted “О государственных гарантиях равноправия мужчин и женщин и равных возможностях их реализации”<sup>3</sup> law in 2004. Kazakhstan in its turn has adopted two main laws with regard to gender: “О государственных гарантиях равных прав и равных возможностей мужчин и женщин”<sup>4</sup> and “О профилактике бытового насилия”<sup>5</sup> in 2009. Turkmenistan adopted “О государственных гарантиях обеспечения равных прав и равных возможностей женщин и мужчин”<sup>6</sup> law in 2015. Some countries of the region introduced quotas for promotion of women into the political sphere. For example, a 30% quota for women in parliament was introduced in Uzbekistan (2003) and Kyrgyzstan (2007). Nevertheless, the CA region still faces the problem of significant difference in positions between men and women in political, economic, cultural and social spheres.

Achievement of gender equality is a pressing issue for the worldwide society as a whole. However, gender issues of the CA region countries are strikingly different from those in other parts of the world. Despite the claimed policy, numerous articles, monographs, dissertations, a significant number of conferences, round tables, and the creation of the centres of gender research, there are still significant problems in promoting an idea of gender equality. Also, society itself shows some resistance to the ideology of gender equality. The term "gender" has never been fully understood by society, but political institutions, and even scientific communities of the region. For the most part, the term was strongly associated with the word "woman". Gender aspects of inequality were considered relatable only to women.

In the Soviet Union (USSR), women of Central Asia and Kazakhstan had broad access to professional-technical education and represented a significant share of society's employed part. At the same time, women did not have adequate

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<sup>1</sup> *On the basics of state guarantees for gender equality in the Kyrgyz Republic.*

<sup>2</sup> *On the state guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women.*

<sup>3</sup> *On the state guarantees of equality between men and women and equal opportunities for their implementation.*

<sup>4</sup> *On the state guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women.*

<sup>5</sup> *On the prevention of domestic violence.*

<sup>6</sup> *On the state guarantees of ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men.*

access to governing processes and resources. An unwritten rule of the Soviet regime was "culture management" by women.<sup>7</sup> Besides, the implementation of the ideological principles was managed by women, who usually were nominated for the communist party third secretary's post. The guiding principle of an active industrialization, urbanization and scientific and technical revolution during the Soviet modernization was the equality of men and women in economic and social spheres. At the same time, women still had to carry out their roles as housewives and mothers. This is evident because there was strong support for women in maternity leaves and taxes for having no children<sup>8</sup>. Women committees addressed women's issues, and some laws were adopted regarding the provision of equality between men and women in educational and professional spheres. Women represented the majority of jobs like teachers, doctors and engineers.

### RETRADITIONALIZATION OF SOCIAL LIFE

The year 2020 marks the 25th anniversary since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing +25) representing a comprehensive plan for worldwide gender equality provision. On the 6th March, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) proposed The Gender-Social Norms Index (GSNI), which allows measuring the extent to which existing social prejudices and stereotypes interfere with women achieving success in politics, on the labour market and education. Seventy-five countries were analysed, based on the Index with the global population coverage of 80%. It was discovered that 96% of Kazakhstani population have prejudices against women.<sup>9</sup>

In general, Central Asian countries and Kazakhstan succeeded in the improvement of the status of women. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the nations of Central Asia experienced dramatic changes, which changed the traditional woman's life. One of the most important events of the 1920s was Hujum – attacking old traditions and emancipation of women. Local women were exempted from an obligation to wear

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<sup>7</sup> Г. А. Хасанова, *Гендер, политика, демократия* [Gender, politics, democracy], Алматы, Институт Развития Казахстана, 2002, с. 14.

<sup>8</sup> J. Cleuziou, L. Direnberger, *Gender and nation in post-Soviet Central Asia: from national narratives to women's practices*, in "Nationalities Papers", 2016, Vol. 44, No. 2, p. 195-206.

<sup>9</sup> В Казахстане 96% населения имеют предрассудки в отношении женщин [90% of Kazakhstani population believes in stereotypes about women]. <https://www.kz.undp.org/content/kazakhstan/ru/home/presscenter/announcements/2020/march/in-kazakhstan-96-per-cent-of-population-are-biased-against-women.html> (Accessed on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

paranja – traditional cover (similar to the burqa). For this important event, some women paid with their lives. Only during this period, women understood that they could participate in the country's social production and social-political life. On the one hand, Hujum was a part of the Soviet political intentions regarding the modernization of the region. On the other hand, re-traditionalization of social life in the post-Soviet Central Asia is a victory of patriarchal and fundamental foundations, expressed in an increased number of women wearing paranja.

Krumm mentioned the following: "In the east woman is dashing between contemporary reality and traditions. In this context, the government's task is to create such conditions so that a woman has the right to choose. This is not an assessment of what is good and what is bad. It is a search for how a woman can voluntarily choose her place in society."<sup>10</sup> The roots of social life re-traditionalization are lying in the historical past of society. Even though during the years of early Soviet modernization the laws against crimes on "remnants of family life" were adopted, these crimes did not disappear decisively. As a French researcher – Habiba Fathi – stated: "The post-Hujum generation, which had to represent a perfect ideal of woman free from prejudices, is actually faithful to its traditional values, which were saved during repression years as an inevitable part of life."<sup>11</sup> In turn, Saktaganova argued that pressure of ideology and repressive measures cultivated a "sacrifice syndrome" among Soviet women, which strengthened during the war period.<sup>12</sup>

In the Russian State Archive of Social-Political History, there is a memo by O. Mishakova, the Secretary of the Central Committee of VLKSM,<sup>13</sup> to the Secretaries of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) "about the revival of remnants of the feudal-bai attitude towards women in the Uzbek, Turkmen and Tajik SSR" dated from 11th January 1946. This memo states that "there are facts of reviving feudal-bai attitude towards women in all republics

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<sup>10</sup> R. A. Ubaydullaeva, R. Krumm (eds.), *Women of independent Uzbekistan: findings of sociological survey*, Center for the Study of Public Opinion "Izhtimoy Fikr", Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Tashkent, 2004, p. 156-157.

<sup>11</sup> М. Тохтаходжаева, *Утомленные прошлым. Реисламизация общества и положение женщин в Узбекистане* [Exhausted by the past. Reislamization of society and status of women in Uzbekistan], Ташкент, 2001, с. 164.

<sup>12</sup> Z. Saktaganova, K. Abdrakhmanov, S. Yeleukhanova, B. Dosova, Z. Karsybayeva, K. Tleugabylova, *Women's labour and everyday life in the great patriotic war years*, in "Opción", Año 36, 2020, Especial No.27, pp. 1168-1183.

<sup>13</sup> All-Union Leninist Young Communist League – a political youth organization in the Soviet Union.

of Central Asia". Many women were wearing paranja, including young women with higher education, teachers and agronomists. The plurality was widespread; there were many facts of infanticide, abortions, and suicides of women. For example, there were 64 cases of women's self-immolation in a Mary region of Turkmenia during 1944-1945. When in the kolkhoz named after Voroshilov a young woman did an act of self-immolation, local party organization decided that "self-immolation should be counted as a voluntary act, without other kolkhoznik's fault and to judge no one". Consequently, the commission found that kolkhoz farm chair, forced this girl cohabit and forced her to leave when she got pregnant. One more tragic occasion happened in the same kolkhoz when 13 years old girl "doused herself with kerosene and burned herself in the stove" when she knew that her parents decided she would marry an old man. The teacher from the Kara - Yab village also committed suicide due to systematic beatings and mockery of her husband. O. Mishakova described these cases of suicide as a passive resistance, which turned out to be acts of self-immolation. There also were cases of women suicide due to domestic violence in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.<sup>14</sup> O. Mishakova was not a sentimental and soft person, but she was so struck by these cases that she raised these questions with the higher party management: I. V. Stalin, G. M. Malenkov, A. A. Zhdanov.

There are different opinions proposed by regional researchers, which give much attention to these problems. According to Kyrgyz anthropologist A. Kochkunov, the post-Soviet period revealed that ethnocultural traditions with a long history survived throughout the time, are likely to reborn under favourable conditions. These become socio-political, family-related, cultural and household development factors, also become a component of mentality and national-ethnic stereotype.<sup>15</sup>

Researchers from Uzbekistan state that traditionalization acquired hypertrophied forms; ritualism was reborn and was stimulated by religious apologetics.

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<sup>14</sup> Докладная записка секретаря ЦК ВЛКСМ О. Мишаковой секретарям ЦК ВКП(Б) Сталину И. В., Маленкову Г. М., Жданову А. А. об оживлении пережитков феодально-байского отношения к женщине в Узбекской, Туркменской и Таджикской ССР [Memorandum by the secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee O. Mishakova to secretaries of the Central Committee of the CPSU(b) Stalin I. V., Malenkov G. M., Zhdanov A. A. about the revival of remnants of the feudal-bai perception of women in Uzbek, Turkmen and Tajik SSR], The Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI), Fund M-1., O. 4, D. 108, f. 22-29.

<sup>15</sup> Айдарбек Кочкунов, *Этнические традиции киргизского народа (социокультурные аспекты и некоторые вопросы генезиса)* [Ethnic traditions of Kirgiz people (socio-cultural aspects and some genesis issues)], Бишкек, 2013, с. 302.



Rituals and ceremonies developed an increased connection with people's personal life and even labour activity. Simultaneously, the rise of traditionalism was an inhibiting factor and led to confessional isolation of some parts of society.<sup>16</sup> Over the last years, there is a tendency for local media to represent returning to the traditional value system. Such a trend, coupled with social instability, weak social institutes and unemployment is a way to disguise the reality of competition in the labour market and consequent reduction of the preschool system and not a revival of national identity during the post-Soviet period.<sup>17</sup>

Great attention is paid to preserving national and cultural traditions in the Central Asian region, especially those connected to the restriction of women's rights. For example, the Academy of Education of Tajikistan introduced gender education. Nevertheless, the head of the Academy stated the following: "Even if the stereotypes of the man and women could be erased, we should not forget about the mentality of Tajik people. It was developed throughout centuries, and we should not destroy all the good things it possesses. Some of the things are accepted in Europe, but not in Central Asia. In other words, some things should not be destroyed and should stay the same. Women should be feminine. And each woman should define her role at home". Noriko Igarashi and Kazuhiro Kumo consider that even if the Head of Academy working on the gender education program believes that Tajik traditions should be preserved or, in other words, that the gender situation would not change easily.<sup>18</sup>

Understanding the purpose of gender and gender norms is taught to children in Central Asia almost from the moment they are born. It means that parents communicate with their child differently based on gender. Parents lay on their children different aims and tasks, emphasizing differences and disregarding children's social behaviour and personality.

The unfolding developments in the post-Soviet countries can be examined in the context of so-called patriarchal pullback, a phenomenon of a ubiquitous nature. The retreat was linked to the men's fear regarding feminism and concerns about the possibility to lose their women, to possess less collective authority and

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<sup>16</sup> М. Тохтаходжаева, *op. cit.*, p. 27-28.

<sup>17</sup> М. Эргашева, *Время расцвета: деловая активность женщин как одна из составных частей дальнейшего развития Узбекистана* [Time to unwind: business activity of women as one of the main parts of the development of Uzbekistan], Ташкент, Издательство Национальной библиотеки Узбекистана им. А. Навои, 2004, с. 19.

<sup>18</sup> Норико Игараси, Казуhiro Кумо, *Голоса женщин. Гендерное исследование в Таджикистане* [Women's Voices: Gender Survey in Tajikistan], in "Japanese Slavic and East European Studies", 2016, Vol. 37, pp. 63-87.

to allow women to have greater access to positions and roles previously owned by men exclusively. Moreover, this pullback is connected with a rise of religious and ethnic fundamental movements, which places control over women as a central issue of their symbolic social order ideologies.<sup>19</sup>

During the post-Soviet period, ideas of gender equality are perceived as the project of the Soviet regimen. Therefore, the renouncement of these ideas is a symbol of negation of the Soviet past.

The processes of rebuilding national identity intensified after the USSR collapsed. Here, appeal to "motherhood and 'traditional' femininity" was a significant part of local nationalism processes.<sup>20</sup> Usually, this implies a hierarchy by gender and age, where women, especially younger ones, take a subordinate position, or the lowest place in this social scale.<sup>21</sup> Also, politicians argued that liberating Soviet policies were destroying women's femininity, with most of the women agreeing with the argument.<sup>22</sup> That is why it was important to revive femininity. One of the most important features was attributing femininity to a private or invisible space represented by the house and domestic duties. For example, according to Tajik society norms, men are usually the head of households, putting women in submissive and dependent position concerning decision-making and finance.<sup>23</sup> Women also tend to justify violence from their husbands to themselves, which is also an indication of women obeying the tradition of putting their husbands in a dominant position.<sup>24</sup> These all reinforced by the fact that, in general, the strongest national attributes are masculine. The significant figures from the past of a nation are usually men. The local objects are mostly defined by names of significant figures of men.<sup>25</sup> In this way, during the post-Soviet period, some countries of the region enhanced discrimination norms against women in marital relations. Traditionally,

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<sup>19</sup> Н. Юваль-Дэвис, *Гендер и нация* [Gender and Nation], Москва, ELPA, 2001, с. 196.

<sup>20</sup> J. Cleuziou, L. Direnberger, *Gender and nation...*, p. 196.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Mary Buckley, *Victims and agents: gender in post-Soviet states*, in M. Buckley (ed.), *Post-Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 3-16.

<sup>23</sup> Jane Falkingham, Angela Baskieri, *Gender, poverty and transition in Central Asia*, in Sylvia Chant (ed.), *The International Handbook of Gender and Poverty. Concepts, Research, Policy*, Cheltenham – Northampton, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2010, p. 186.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> N. Megoran, *Theorizing gender, ethnicity and the nation-state in Central Asia*, in "Central Asian Survey", 1999, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 99-110.

women are considered to be fully prepared for motherhood and child-rearing earlier years, compared with men. For instance, in accordance with Article 15 of the Family Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan “брачный возраст устанавливается для мужчин в 18 лет, для женщин в 17 лет.”<sup>26</sup> It is worth noting that “... при наличии уважительных причин, в исключительных случаях”<sup>27</sup> it is possible to decrease marriageable age, but not more than by one year.<sup>28</sup> Currently, Uzbekistan considers an opportunity to increase of marriageable age.

Following Article 13 of the Family Code of the Republic of Tajikistan (13th November 1998), the marriageable age for both males and females is 17 years. There also was an opportunity to decrease marriageable age, but again, “no more than by one year”.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile, the norms of two international conventions (“Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women” and “Convention on the Rights of the Child”) state that minors under age 18 are considered children. The January 2011 amendments to the Family Code of the Republic of Tajikistan changed marriageable age from 17 to 18 years.<sup>30</sup> In Turkmenistan<sup>31</sup>, Kyrgyzstan<sup>32</sup> and Kazakhstan<sup>33</sup> marriageable age is set to be 18 years. At the same time, it is possible to decrease marriageable age “не более, чем на один год”.<sup>34</sup> The most significant control over the decrease of marriageable age is exercised in Kyrgyzstan based on the commission decision of territorial subunits of

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<sup>26</sup> “marriageable age is set to be 18 years for males and 17 years for females”.

<sup>27</sup> “in occasion of a valid excuse or exclusive event”.

<sup>28</sup> *Семейный Кодекс Республики Узбекистан*, <http://www.lex.uz/acts/104723> (Accessed on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>29</sup> *Семейный Кодекс Республики Таджикистан* (2006) [Family code of the Republic of Tajikistan], <https://minjust.gov.ru/uploaded/files/5tadzshikistan.doc> (Accessed on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>30</sup> *Семейный Кодекс Республики Таджикистан* (2016) [Family code of the Republic of Tajikistan], [http://www.afew.tj/images/files/pdf/semeynyy\\_kodeks\\_rt.pdf](http://www.afew.tj/images/files/pdf/semeynyy_kodeks_rt.pdf) (Accessed on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>31</sup> *Семейный кодекс Туркменистана* [Family code of Turkmenistan], <http://www.turkmenbusiness.org/content/semeyny-kodeks-turkmenistana> (Accessed on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>32</sup> *Семейный кодекс Кыргызской республики* [Family code of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan], <http://www.ombudsman.kg/images/files/news/2018/zakonodatelnayabaza/semeynij-kodeks-kg.doc> (Accessed on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>33</sup> *Кодекс Республики Казахстан о браке (супружестве) и семье* [Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan about marriage (matrimony) and family], [https://online.zakon.kz/m/document/?doc\\_id=31102748](https://online.zakon.kz/m/document/?doc_id=31102748) (Accessed on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>34</sup> “no more than by one year”.

authorized state bodies for the children's protection. In the event of its violation, that person will be responsible, according to the Kyrgyz Republic's legislation.

Particular importance is accorded to women's purity. Here, a sheet is checked after the wedding night to ensure a woman's innocence before the wedding. For this reason, women from conservative, traditional families have restricted freedom of movement. Cult of marriage and purity in Turkmen society started developing as well. Thus, "chastity" and a search for a virgin for marriage are central issues in current discussions among youth.<sup>35</sup> Although some aspects of gender equality could be observed at the beginning of the 1990s, the conservative ideology has developed and expanded since the 2000s, supported by patriarchal traditions and religious institutions.

An increased influence of religion in the post-soviet region contributed to the increasing pressure on women. It also reinforced females to have a subordinate position in society. One more feature of this region is the traditional cult of elders and an institution of mother-in-law. In this regard, young females, and especially daughters-in-law, take increasingly dependent positions. Young employed women usually are not allowed to manage their salary and cannot decide during family budget distribution. At the same time, by introducing certain social stereotypes to the consciousness of people, local communities of the region are capable not only to assist with solving some social and domestic problems but also to revive and cultivate the burdensome traditional ritualism as well as resurrect the prejudices and discrimination against women existing in the society.<sup>36</sup>

In several states of the region, especially in rural areas, a tradition of bride kidnapping persists, when females are kidnapped and given in marriage against their will.<sup>37</sup> It is important to note that this tradition is not related to traditional sharia norms at all. The burdensome ritualism persists, manifesting itself in arranged marriages, the price of the bride, etc. There are cases of suicides among

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<sup>35</sup> А. Яйлымова, *Один шаг вперед, два шага назад: 25 лет прав женщин Туркменистана* [One step forward, two steps back: 25 years of women's rights in Turkmenistan], in М. Ларюэль, А. Курманова (ред.), *Центральная Азия - 25: Мысли о прошлом, проекция будущего. Сборник эссе из Центральной Азии*, Вашингтон, 2017, с. 57.

<sup>36</sup> R. Zharkynbayeva, A. Abdiraiymova, K. Santaeva, K. Smagulov, *New Independent States of Central Asia: Mobilization Experience of Local Communities*, in "Codrul Cosminului", 2019, Vol. 25, Issue 1, pp. 159-180.

<sup>37</sup> Е. Ларина, О. Наумова, "Кража невест – это вечный наш обычай: умыкание невесты у российских казахов" ["Bride kidnapping is our perpetual custom: kidnapping of brides by Russian kazakhs"], "Среднеазиатские исследования. Этнографическое обозрение", 2010, No. 5, сс. 3-20.

young women living in the region; some are closely tied to the bride kidnapping tradition. For instance, 270 self-immolation cases were reported in Uzbekistan between 1986 and 1987, and 13 self-immolation cases in the five months of 1989 in the Samarkand region.<sup>38</sup>

At the same time, some supporters of traditionalism in mass media allow themselves to express their offensive judgments: "Women manipulate men in other ways, and to express their anger, they choose another method: they attempt suicide... that is why death is the result of such attempts is 3-4 times less than the attempts committed by men. Out of 10 attempts, only 1 has a fatal result."<sup>39</sup>

According to Akhmedova, the most significant number of suicides among Uzbek women are committed in rural areas. One ethnopsychological feature is expressed in suicides by self-immolation. Self-immolation has a strong emotional impact on witnesses. At the same time, it allows emphasizing "self-sacrifice" and a demonstrative way of passing. This author states that the relatively low cultural level of relationship between spouses and the legacy of patriarchal-feudal traditions is an impetus for the suicide of young Uzbek women.<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, sociological research conducted during the end of 1980s and beginning of 1990s and 2000s illustrated self-immolation as the most common way of committing suicide. In line with this, the Republican Burn Center's statistics reported 48 patients with self-immolation diagnosis in 2003, 73 people in 2004, 63 people in 2005, and 7 in 2 months of 2006. As Hushkadamova notes, women attempted to attract attention to their numerous problems by these acts of suicide. The reasons are diverse: an unrequited love, prohibition of education, a conflict with husband's family, extramarital affairs, conflict with management at work, domestic violence, etc.<sup>41</sup>

It is also worth noting that increasing education levels among women would contribute to the higher woman's status in the family and the achievement of gender equality. There is a strong correlation between a woman's level of education and the probability of tolerating domestic violence. The higher woman's education level, the less likely she would accept domestic violence. Generalizing this

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<sup>38</sup> Д. А. Алимова, *Женский вопрос в Средней Азии. История изучения и современные проблемы* [Women's question in Central Asia. History of studying and modern problems], Ташкент, 1991. с. 120.

<sup>39</sup> М. Тохтаходжаева, *Утомленные прошлым...*, с. 28.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> О. Х. Хушкадамова, *Самосожжение женщин как социальное явление* [Women's self-immolation as social phenomena], "Социологические исследования", 2008, No. 5, сс. 125-134.

tendency and representing the consecutive direct effect of this relationship, it should be emphasized that to increase the level of education in Tajikistan could significantly change women's status in the family.<sup>42</sup>

The report on women's status in Uzbekistan (1999) states that cases of forced early marriages and prohibition to work outside the house violate women's rights. The report also provides examples of discrimination. Family tensions concerning parents' intolerance of their daughter's opinions and commitment caused the young woman to commit suicide by jumping out the window of a building with nine floors. In another case, a girl died from severe stab wounds. She stabbed herself because her parents did not allow her to cut her hair. Sometimes young women are forced into marriage, which is harmful to health, especially mental health, particularly in early and unwanted pregnancies.<sup>43</sup>

These facts of women's rights violation characterize all states of the region to varying degrees. Re-traditionalization and archaization of social life contribute to the reanimation of discriminating traditions (violent bride-kidnapping, arranged marriages, wearing a hijab, and polygamy). According to Kyrgyz researchers, a significant part of the society, especially Muslims, considers the traditions mentioned above to be indigenous and do not perceive them as discriminating. Even though these traditions are not supported at the governmental level, they persist and are passed across generations.<sup>44</sup>

The relationship between men and women are influenced by culture, traditions and a variety of other factors. Cultural heritage is valuable for each nation; nevertheless, it should not be used as a tool for restricting society's freedoms and rights.

## POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Independence announced in 1991 did not really influence attempts to

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<sup>42</sup> Норико Игараси, Казухиро Кумо, *Голоса женщин...*, p. 84.

<sup>43</sup> *Женщины в Республике Узбекистан. Краткий информационный доклад* [Women in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Short informational report], Азиатский Банк Развития, 2001, с. 23, in <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/149311/women-uzbekistan-ru.pdf> (Accessed on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020)

<sup>44</sup> Б. Г. Тугельбаева, А. Д. Хамзаева, С. Д. Хамзаева, *Исторические предпосылки и современные причины сохранения дискриминирующих женщин обычаев в Кыргызстане* [Historical premises and modern reasons for preservation of customs which discriminate women in Kyrgyzstan], "Вопросы российского и международного права", 2018, Vol. 8, No. 1A, сс. 7-15.

achieve gender equality in the political sphere. Discontinuation of the quota system for political representation caused a significant reduction of woman's eligibility for local and republican levels.

The changes can be observed through the following statistics of women eligibility changes in the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan. During the first convening of the Parliament (1996-1999) there were 67 deputies, but only nine were women. During the second (1999-2004) and the third (2004-2007) convening of the Parliament, women deputies were 8 out of 77 deputies. During the fourth (2007-2011) and the fifth (2012-2015), there were 107 deputies or more specific 17 and 26 women deputies. During the sixth convening (2016-present) out of 107 deputies, there were 78 men (73%) and 29 women (27%).<sup>45</sup>

The dynamics of woman's eligibility in the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic by percentages are as follows: 3.6% during the first convening of the Parliament (1995-2000), 6.7% during the second convening (2000-2005), 0% during the third (2005-2007), 25,5% during the fourth (2007-2010), and 21% during the fifth convening of the Parliament (2010-2015). On 1st January 2018, only 16,7% of deputies were women (20 out of 120).<sup>46</sup>

In Turkmenistan, Turkmenistan Women's Union was created in order to increase the participation of women in social, production and cultural life. During the first five meetings of the Parliament of Turkmenistan, there were no Union representatives among deputies. Only during the sixth convening (2013-2018), 16 representatives of the Union were deputies out of 125.<sup>47</sup> It is also worth noting that, since 2000, the Women's Union's Central Council's Chair has been elected as the Chairman of the National Trade Union Centre of Turkmenistan.

Regarding the Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan, during 2010 there were 33 women deputies, which makes 22%. At the same time, the representative

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<sup>45</sup> *История развития парламентаризма в Казахстане* [The history of the development of the Parliamentarism in Kazakhstan], <http://www.parlam.kz/ru/history> (Accessed on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020)

<sup>46</sup> *Женщины и мужчины Кыргызской Республики, 2013-2017* [Women and men of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017], Бишкек, 2018, с. 36, <http://www.stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/20232a59-bc04-4b2f-b8da-5220d4afbecc.pdf> (Accessed on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020)

<sup>47</sup> *Союз женщин Туркменистана* [Union of Turkmen Women], [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A1%D0%BE%D1%8E%D0%B7\\_%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%89%D0%B8%D0%BD\\_%D0%A2%D1%83%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A1%D0%BE%D1%8E%D0%B7_%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%89%D0%B8%D0%BD_%D0%A2%D1%83%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0)

bodies of the regions consisted of 15% of women deputies.<sup>48</sup> In 2014, 24 out of 150 elected deputies were women (16%).<sup>49</sup>

Women political participation in Tajikistan is also low. For instance, in 2015 only 19% were deputies of the Parliament.<sup>50</sup>

Several factors can explain this tendency for women underrepresentation. First is the removal of the quota after the collapse of the USSR.<sup>51</sup> Even if the percentages were reintroduced in the independent republics, the numbers have not changed significantly, as evident from the above. The second factor is the so-called "double burden"<sup>52</sup>, which implies that women are responsible for the domestic sphere and have their employment duty. Here, it is complicated for women to take additional burden of political activity. Also, politics is considered part of the realms of men, thus discouraging the participation of women.<sup>53</sup> When it comes to women's participation in political activities, the argument is: "women should return to the home."<sup>54</sup> This attitude is a consequence of attributing women to private, home space. It is worth noting that the number of seats in the Parliament, that women take does not reflect the real degree of women's political participation.

### OCCUPATIONAL GENDER SEGREGATION

The occupational gender segregation defines economic opportunities of men and women by the most part. During the USSR regime, about 40% of women were employed in highly feminized sectors of the economy, such as banking and insurance (90%), healthcare and social welfare (83%), information and accounting (82%), commerce (80%), education (79%) and culture (75%). Only 30% worked in

<sup>48</sup> *Гендерная оценка по Узбекистану* [Gender evaluation of Uzbekistan], Азиатский Банк Развития, 2014, с. 98

<sup>49</sup> ЦИК: *По итогам выборов в нижнюю палату парламента Узбекистана избраны 150 депутатов* [СЕС: As a result of elections 150 deputies were chosen for the Lower House of Parliament of Uzbekistan], <https://uzreport.news/politics/tsik-po-itogam-vyiborov-v-nizhnyuyu-palatu-parlamenta-uzbekistana-izbranyi-150-deputatov> (Accessed on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020)

<sup>50</sup> *Страновая гендерная оценка: Таджикистан* [Gender evaluation of the country: Tajikistan], Азиатский Банк Развития, 2014, с. 123

<sup>51</sup> Armine Ishkanian, *Gendered Transitions: The Impact of the Post-Soviet Transition on Women in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, in "Perspectives on Global Development and Technology", 2003, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 475-496.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Mary Buckley, *op. cit.*



the industrial sector. Women wage level constituted, on average, two-thirds of men's wage level.<sup>55</sup> The reforming of an economy led to a considerable decrease in the labour market's women participation rate. As growing poverty, weakened welfare, and social support affected society as a whole, women's impact was higher due to the reproductive role, family responsibilities, and strengthening traditionalism.

There is a common feature of the CA countries present regarding occupational gender segregation. Women represented more than 70% of employment in the spheres, which have traditionally been perceived as "women's occupations": education, healthcare and social sphere. Another domain, service sector, is also represented by the high percentage of women. Men dominate in the manufacturing sector, extractive industries, transport and construction industries, electricity, gas and water supply sectors, recycling. Men dominating industries are usually considered more profitable with a higher salary level.<sup>56</sup>

The right to equal remuneration for work of equal value is a part of the International Labour Organization ideology. However, in the region, the average women's salary is lower than men's salary. For instance, the women to men's wage ratio in Kyrgyzstan in % is as follows: 71,1% in 2014, 75,5% in 2015, 75,3% in 2016, 72,5% in 2017 and 71,6% in 2018.<sup>57</sup>

UN statistics present a similar trend in other CA countries. The women to men's wage ratios in 2005 were 0.63 in Turkmenistan, 0.66 in Uzbekistan, 0.62 in Tajikistan.<sup>58</sup> Evaluation of an income ratio of men and women's main activities, according to OECD Gender, Institutions and Development database, provided following numbers: 58% in Tajikistan, 60% in Uzbekistan, 64% in Turkmenistan.<sup>59</sup> The situation in Kazakhstan is quite similar. The women to men's wage ratio was

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<sup>55</sup> Программа развития ООН, Региональное Бюро по Странам Европы и СНГ, *Нищета переходного периода* [Poverty of the transitional period], Нью-Йорк, 1998, 248 с.

<sup>56</sup> Р. С. Жаркынбаева, *К вопросу о гендерной профессиональной сегрегации в постсоветской Центральной Азии* [About the question of gender occupational segregation in post-Soviet Central Asia], in "Primo aspectu", 2016, No. 2 (26), сс. 16-29.

<sup>57</sup> *Отношение заработной платы женщин к заработной плате мужчин* [The ratio of women's wage to men's wage], <http://www.stat.kg/ru/opendata/category/332/> (Accessed on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>58</sup> *Доклад о развитии человека 2005. Международное сотрудничество на перепутье: помощь, торговля и безопасность в мире неравенства* [Human Development Report 2005: International Cooperation at a Crossroads - Aid, Trade and Security in an Unequal World], Москва, Издательство "Весь мир", 2005, с. 325.

<sup>59</sup> *The Political and Economic Status of Women*, 2009, <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=GID&lang=en#> (Accessed on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

67.8% in 2013, 67.0% in 2014, 65.9% in 2015, 68.6% in 2016 and 67.8% in 2017.<sup>60</sup> It is worth noting that Kazakhstan is considered to have the greatest ratio of the unexplained difference in wage level in the region, which implies an assumption about the persistence of gender inequality.<sup>61</sup>

There are several reasons for the underrepresentation of women in more profitable jobs. The public sector is perceived as more flexible from the standpoint of a combination of professional and family responsibilities. Gender stereotypes also play a significant part, so that a small number of females get technical education. In addition, the CA region countries' feature is a list of occupations prohibited for females (see Appendix A). Women's rights advocates call for the abolition of the list. Therefore, there is gender, occupational segregation in the region, expressed in a significant difference in the wage level and the list of occupations prohibited for women, which are discriminatory norms.

## EDUCATION

The soviet education system stressed the importance of equality between men and women in education. Despite the proclamation of the equal access of women to formal education in post-Soviet countries, gender inequality in education is still an important issue.

After the proclamation of independence, impoverishment and increasing gender inequality, they have significantly affected the declining the women's enrollment rates in secondary schools. This trend is especially noticeable in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and partly in Kyrgyzstan. Often in rural areas, young girls have induced too early marriages or to drop out of schools because of the housework. For example, the majority of girls in Tajikistan left school before the 9th grade. This situation provoked the Tajik Ministry of Education to conduct research on two schools in Dushanbe, one school in Hisor and another in Vakhdat district. The study concluded that girls quit school due to three main reasons: poverty, priorities of family expenses and gender socialization.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> *Женщины и мужчины Казахстана: 2013-2017* [Women and men of Kazakhstan: 2013-2017], Астана, 2018, с. 140.

<sup>61</sup> Азиатский банк развития, *Республика Казахстан. Гендерная оценка по стране* [The Republic of Kazakhstan. Gender evaluation of the country]. Азиатский Банк Развития, 2013, 71 с.

<sup>62</sup> *Доклад о человеческом развитии в Центральной Азии. В будущее без барьеров: Региональное сотрудничество в области человеческого развития и обеспечения человеческой безопасности* [A future without obstacles: Regional cooperation in the

There is a downward trend in the number of women acquiring education in Tajikistan since 1991, even though legislation provided necessary women's rights. Comparison of the Republic of Tajikistan's statistical data with an indicator in other Central Asian countries reveals that enrolment in secondary education of Tajik girls is less than that of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, especially in 10th and 11th grades. An opportunity to obtain an education in lyceums, gymnasiums, schools with intensive studying of different subjects is available to less than 10% of children and adolescents. The educational institutions are concentrated in urban areas, and girls' enrollment is about 1,5-2 times less than that of boys.<sup>63</sup>

Considering the 2016-2017 academic year, the enrollment in primary school (1-4 grades) is relatively high for both genders, and girls constitute about 48,3% of students. In secondary school, the number of girls represents a declining trend constituting 46.4% of students.<sup>64</sup>

In Uzbekistan, there is no difference between boys and girls in access to education in primary and secondary schools. At the same time, women's share is declining in high school (10-11 grades), vocational colleges and higher education institutions. Early marriages explain such a tendency by the most part, and gender stereotypes, especially in rural areas, which impedes an opportunity to obtain full education.<sup>65</sup>

In Kyrgyzstan, the enrollment in secondary education (10-11 grades) shows a downward trend. Here, the enrollment of girls is decreasing more rapidly than that of boys. For instance, from 2008 to 2012, registration of men in 10-11 grades decreased from 56.1% to 48.8%, while for women from 65.3% to 55.6%. The factors that affect the situation are early marriages and early motherhood: more than 12% of girls in Kyrgyzstan are getting married before they reach 18.<sup>66</sup> In this way,

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sphere of human development and security], Братислава, 2005, с. 181, [https://www.un.org/ru/development/hdr/central\\_asia\\_2005.pdf](https://www.un.org/ru/development/hdr/central_asia_2005.pdf) (Accessed on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>63</sup> *Национальная стратегия развития образования Республики Таджикистан до 2020 года* [The national strategy of the development of education of the Republic of Tajikistan till the year 2020], с. 13, in [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/youthpol/en/equest.fileutils.dochandle?p\\_uploaded\\_file\\_id=511](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/youthpol/en/equest.fileutils.dochandle?p_uploaded_file_id=511) (Accessed on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>64</sup> *Образование в Республике Таджикистан. Агентство по статистике при Президенте Республики Таджикистан* [Statistical agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan], Душанбе, 2017, с. 29.

<sup>65</sup> *Образование в Узбекистане: баланс спроса и предложения-2007* [Education in Uzbekistan: Equilibrium of the demand and supply-2007], Ташкент, 2007, 204 с.

<sup>66</sup> *Женщины и мужчины Кыргызской Республики: 2013-2017*, Бишкек, Национальный

low-income families and families that are living in rural areas prioritize education for men.

The higher education system of Central Asia holds a special place in the issue of sustainable development. The governments of the region have reformed the higher education system significantly over the last 28 years. Turkmen and Uzbek governments continue to monopolize the education sphere, and the government ideology has a substantial impact on education programs and scientific freedom. In contrast, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan made institutional changes regarding decentralization of higher education over the last years, stimulating the development of private education and scientific freedom. The number of people enrolled in higher education institutions increased two times, and in Kyrgyzstan – 2.5 times from 1991 to 2002, while in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan the number of students decreased by 3.7 and 1.9 times respectively.<sup>67</sup>

However, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have issues with gender imbalance in different specializations. High level of women's representation among students is mostly due to the high concentration of them in "traditionally specializations": education, journalism and information, humanities, service sector. For example, in Kazakhstan at the beginning of the 2017 /2018 academic year, women's representation by groups of specialists is as follows: education - 72.3%, humanities and art - 62.7%, social sciences, journalism and information - 79.6%, healthcare and social wellness - 63%.<sup>68</sup> The trend was similar in Kyrgyzstan at the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year. Here, women's representation by groups of specialization was as follows: humanities - 76.8%, education - 86.6%, journalism and information - 79,8%, service sector - 66.6%.<sup>69</sup>

In Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan gender imbalance in the educational sphere is increasing.

According to official data, enrollment in higher education in the Republic of Tajikistan in 2015 was relatively low - only 18% of the whole population of the corresponding ages, which is 2.5 times lower than in developing European countries and other Central Asian countries.<sup>70</sup> Since 1997, the President of Tajikistan

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статистический комитет Кыргызской Республики, 2018, с. 99, in <http://www.stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/20232a59-bc04-4b2f-b8da-5220d4afbecc.pdf> (Accessed on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020).

<sup>67</sup> Доклад о человеческом развитии в Центральной Азии. В будущее без барьеров..., с. 173.

<sup>68</sup> Женщины и мужчины Казахстана: 2013-2017, с. 72.

<sup>69</sup> Женщины и мужчины Кыргызской Республики: 2013-2017..., с. 97.

<sup>70</sup> Национальный обзор Республики Таджикистан по осуществлению Пекинской декларации и Платформы действий (1995 года) ... в 2015 году [National overview of

has introduced a quota for higher education for women from rural areas. In 2006, the percentage was changed so that it covers talented men from rural areas as well. From 2010 through 2013, within the framework of State programs, a series of activities were carried out to encourage women's education. Stipends and other forms of financial aid were introduced to stimulate women to obtain an education.<sup>71</sup> The number of women students decreased over the ten years (1991-1992 - 2002-2003 academic years) from 34% to 25%.<sup>72</sup> However, there is an increase in women's ratio in higher education institutions, from 25% in the 2002-2003 academic year to 29% in 2010-2011. In the next two years, there was a decline to 28%, and then the ratio of women slowly increased to 35% in the 2016-2017 academic year.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, despite the efforts, only in the 2016-2017 academic year, women students' ratio reached the 1991-1992 academic year level - 35%.

According to the World Bank, the general enrollment in higher education institutions of Uzbekistan decreased from 17% to 9% between 1991 and 2011, and remained the lowest for the regional and international standards. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan's degree enrollment was 40% and 49% respectively. At the levels of primary and secondary education in Uzbekistan, the enrollment of the school-age population is close to 100%<sup>74</sup>

At the same time, for higher education, women have fewer opportunities than men. For example, the ratio of women among students constituted 40% in 2007. Possible reasons for families not to allow girls to study are remoteness of higher education institutions, usual for Muslim families wish not to allow women

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the Tajik Republic of the implementation of the Beijing declaration and Platform for Action (1995) ... in 2015], с. 8, in [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/13205Tajikistan\\_review\\_Beijing20.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/13205Tajikistan_review_Beijing20.pdf) (Accessed on March 15th, 2020).

<sup>71</sup> *Национальная стратегия развития образования Республики Таджикистан...*, с. 8.

<sup>72</sup> А. Куватова, А. Байзаев, *Национальный отчет о реформах в системе высшего образования и состоянии гендерного образования в Республике Таджикистан* [National report about reforms of the system of higher education and status of gender education if Tajik Republic], Душанбе, 2005, с. 5, in [https://studylib.ru/doc/3995050/nacional\\_nyj-otchet-o-reformah-v-sisteme-vysshego](https://studylib.ru/doc/3995050/nacional_nyj-otchet-o-reformah-v-sisteme-vysshego) (Accessed on March 15th, 2020).

<sup>73</sup> *Высшие учебные заведения, 1991-2017* [Higher education institutions, 1991-2017], <https://www.stat.tj/ru/database-socio-demographic-sector> (Accessed on March 15th, 2020).

<sup>74</sup> *Узбекистан. Модернизация системы высшего образования* [Uzbekistan. Modernization of the higher education system], Июнь, 2014, с.16, in <http://pub-docs.worldbank.org/en/695391484721687603/Uzbekistan-Higher-Education-Report-2014-ru.pdf> (Accessed on March 15th, 2020).

to leave their house, marriage before finishing the educational institution, inability or reluctance of families to provide opportunities for daughter's education and lack of motivation among families with low and middle income to invest in daughter's education.<sup>75</sup> The situation did not change over the five years, as in 2011, the ratio of female students studying in Uzbek higher education institutions was only 39%.<sup>76</sup> Nick Megoran provides a case study of Ferghana University and states that the University space offers more freedom and opportunities to learn behavioural patterns different from those adopted at home.<sup>77</sup> As the author found out, these have different effects on Uzbek girls. Some of them could persuade their parents to study abroad, while others had no right to do so. There was a case with a girl who was forced into a marriage, not to let her go studying abroad. Although the example of a university is not representative of all students in Uzbek higher education institutions, it does provide some guidance on how traditions discourage women from obtaining higher education.

Even though primary education is available for Turkmen girls, opportunities for continuation of education are scarce. Higher education in Turkmen universities is not accessible for many women, even though the situation was different during the Soviet period. Large families prefer to invest in the education of their sons, rather than daughters. However, society started accepting as a norm, an opportunity for women to obtain higher education abroad after the family's permission, which contrasts the tradition of not allowing girls to leave home before marriage.<sup>78</sup>

There are no open data for Turkmenistan. External data provide information only regarding the situation in the year 2014. Here, the ratio of women students in higher education institutions was 38.5%. The gross enrollment ratio in higher education of the whole population in 2014 was 8%, while in 1991 it was 21.7%.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, the population's low enrollment ratio is a characteristic of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, while Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have higher rates of enrollment.

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<sup>75</sup> *Образование в Узбекистане: баланс спроса и предложения-2007* [Education in Uzbekistan: equilibrium of demand and supply-2007], Ташкент, 2007, с. 110.

<sup>76</sup> *Узбекистан. Модернизация системы высшего образования образования...*, с. 52.

<sup>77</sup> N. Megoran, *op. cit.*, p. 105-108.

<sup>78</sup> А. Яйлымова, *op. cit.*, с. 56.

<sup>79</sup> *Туркменистан – Учащиеся женского пола* [Turkmenistan – female students], <https://кпоема.ru/atlas/Туркменистан/topics/Образование/Высшее-образование/Учащиеся-женского-пола> (Accessed on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

Numerous international and national studies emphasize social and economic costs, related to women education deficit. Deprivation of women from getting education contributes to social isolation; the political and economic dependence of women negatively affects sustainable development in the region. Regional governments should consider every obstacle that prevents young people from getting an education and take all necessary measures to resolve them.

It is necessary to ensure gender equality at all education levels: primary, secondary, higher and graduate. Development of educational system might contribute to the empowerment of both men and women in other spheres. It is also imperative to continue working on eliminating gender stereotypes in education and resolving the gender issue of concentration in the traditional specializations. On the one hand, it is possible to reinforce non-traditional occupations' popularization among women through mass media and organize professional events to promote technical profiles among women. On the other hand, governments could develop policies to stimulate men to study pedagogical and humanities.

### **CONCLUSION**

The peculiarity of the region is that even though the government is concerned with promoting gender equality, society strongly resists this ideology. Resolution of issues connected to inequality and the practical realization of gender policies is impossible without understanding the importance of gender equality within the CA societies.

The region's current situation can be described as a disparity of the growth of intellectual, socio-political, spiritual and creative potential of women with a low level of realization of this potential. This issue acquires particular importance in Central Asia's current context, especially in the context of re-traditionalization of social life. Re-traditionalization revives and promotes burdensome traditions, maintains existing prejudice and forms of discrimination concerning women and results in social and economic insecurity.

Despite the relatively high legal provision of the national legislature of the Central Asian countries, the mechanism that provides equal rights to men and women are not sufficient. Some legal provisions are declarative solely, what discredits the idea of equality itself. The greatest obstacle for gender equality is the lack of awareness among women regarding their rights. Another issue is the influence of existing cultural stereotypes, representing women primarily as upholders of family values.

It is traditionally believed in the Central Asian region that the social roles of men and women are defined biologically, and form a basis for gender discrimination. On the other hand, despite the traditionalism supporters' opposition, women become more active, which provides an opportunity for higher representation in politics, business and civil society, even though to different extents than men.

Therefore, countries of the Central Asian region are on their way to achieve gender equality. Achievement of gender equality is more perceived as "norm-aim", the perspective aim of the movement rather than the real result. Persistent patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes in the region decelerates the achievements of equality. Increasing gender inequality in the sphere of education, an emerging digital imbalance will significantly affect the welfare of the society, economic and social development of the countries in the long run, as well as a deterrent factor for sustainable development of the region.

#### **APPENDIX A. LIST OF PROHIBITED OCCUPATIONS FOR WOMEN**

The list of prohibited occupations for women in Kazakhstan can be found by the following link: <https://tengrinews.kz/zakon/pravitelstvo-respubliki-kazakhstan-premer-ministr-rk/trud/id-V070004916/>

The list of prohibited occupations for women in Kyrgyzstan can be found by the following link: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/7182>

There is no available information about such lists for other countries of the Central Asian region. The list of prohibited occupation for women in Uzbekistan was repealed: <https://regulation.gov.uz/ru/document/3173>

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## KEY EVENTS OF THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE ARMED CONFLICT IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE (05. 09. 2014 – 30. 04. 2018)

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**Abstract.** *The article aims to structure the accumulated factual material about the Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine, which began on 20 February 2014 and developed a historical periodization variant. The research's main result is that the authors prove that the Russian Federation's armed aggression caused the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine. The authors set out the actual course of the main events in chronological sequence and determined the Russian-Ukrainian armed confrontation's key milestones at the beginning of the 21st century. According to the nature of military operations, military-political results and the consequences of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine, it is divided into periods within which stages are distinguished, qualitatively different in purpose, nature and content of combat (special) operations. To repulse and deter this aggression, Ukraine used the forces of the security and defence sector. The form of these forces employment from 14 April 2014 to 30 April 2018 was the Anti-Terrorist Operation, and after – the Joint Forces Operation. This military-historical study creates the basis for further scientific research on the study of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine. Such research is necessary to have a clearer understanding of the nature and essence of Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine, a more in-depth analysis of its evolution, and broader dissemination of lessons learned in the course of countering hybrid threats in the military sphere.*

**Keywords:** *armed conflict, East of Ukraine, hybrid war, Russian Federation, Ukraine, armed aggression.*

**Rezumat.** *Principalele evenimente ale celei de-a doua perioade a conflictului armat din estul Ucrainei (05.09.2014 – 30.04.2018). Articolul își propune să structureze materialul acumulat privitor la agresiunea armată a Federației Ruse împotriva Ucrainei,*

care a început la 20 februarie 2014, și să dezvolte o variantă a periodizării sale istorice. Principalul rezultat al cercetării este că autorii dovedesc că în estul Ucrainei conflictul armat a fost cauzat de agresiunea armată a Federației Ruse. Autorii au stabilit cursul evenimentelor principale în ordine cronologică și au determinat etapele cheie ale confruntării armate ruso-ucrainene la începutul secolului XXI. În funcție de natura operațiunilor militare, de rezultatele politico-militare și consecințele conflictului armat din estul Ucrainei, acest este împărțit în perioade, în cadrul cărora se disting etape, calitativ diferite ca scop, natură și conținut ale operațiunilor de luptă (speciale). Pentru a respinge și a descuraja această agresiune, Ucraina a folosit forțele din sectorul securității și al apărării. Forma de angajare a acestor forțe a fost Operațiunea Antiteroristă (din 14 aprilie 2014 până la 30 aprilie 2018), iar ulterior Operațiunea Forțelor Unite. Prezentul studiu militar-istoric creează premisele pentru dezvoltarea cercetărilor științifice privitoare la conflictul armat din estul Ucrainei. O astfel de cercetare este necesară pentru a avea o înțelegere mai clară a naturii și esenței războiului hibrid al Rusiei împotriva Ucrainei, o analiză mai profundă a evoluției sale și o diseminare mai vastă a lecțiilor învățate în cursul contracarării amenințărilor hibride în sfera militară.

## INTRODUCTION

The Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine that began on 20 February 2014 and had a hybrid nature led to the occupation of Crimea and caused an armed conflict in the East of Ukraine. In the second issue of the "Codrul Cosminului" for 2018, the authors highlighted the first period of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine.<sup>1</sup> Then we promised to continue our study.

The article aims to offer the scientific community a variant of the armed conflict periodisation in the East of Ukraine, structure the accumulated factual material and create a basis for further scientific research on this phenomenon's study. It helps researchers build a clear understanding of the nature and essence of Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine, analyse its evolution, and generalise the lessons learned in the course of countering hybrid war in the military sphere.

A military historical analysis of Russian armed aggression anticipated a sequence of successive research stages.<sup>2</sup> The knowledge building on a historical process begins with a chronological fixation of past events and their description.

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<sup>1</sup> Mykhailo Hrebenuk, Valerii Hrytsiuk, Oleksandr Skriabin, *The Main Events of the First Period of Armed Conflict in the East of Ukraine (April - September 2014)*, in „Codrul Cosminului”, XXIV, 2018, No. 2, p. 377-408.

<sup>2</sup> Владимир Бережинский, *Методология и структура военно-исторического исследования* [Methodology and structure of military-historical research], Київ, Видавець

However, the chronology itself is purely descriptive because the task of carrying out a meaningful analysis of the considered phenomena and processes is not assumed at that stage. The chronologic description captures the events dispassionately in the flow of time, and it does not establish causal relationships and does not provide an assessment of historical trends and patterns. Nevertheless, relying on a reliable and complete historical chronicle of events related to the aggression of the Russian Federation, and applying a scientific methodology, one can not only find cause-effect relationships but also reveal the objective laws which stand behind these relationships and determine that they acquire new stable qualities, becoming the objective laws themselves.

### ARGUMENTATION

Military historical science considers periodisation as one of the methods for studying military conflicts. It allows dividing wars and armed conflicts into specific time extents (periods, phases, stages), which qualitatively differ in military-political objectives, the nature and content of military operations. The boundaries of the period are determined by events that mark the turning points in military conflicts. Each period covers a certain number of military campaigns and operations.<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that military operations are planned and conducted to achieve designed objectives. In turn, during military-historical research, the processes describing past events are usually considered in stages.<sup>4</sup> In Ukrainian military-historical literature, the terms "phase" and "stage" are actively used for the historical processes' periodisation, in particular, to denote the substructural components of a period.<sup>5</sup>

Historians use different types of periodisation of military conflicts, especially, to distinguish between strategic and historical periodisation. Strategic pe-

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Олег Філю, 2015, 64 с.; Василий Логин, *Диалектика военно-исторического исследования* [Dialectics of military-historical research], Москва, Наука, 1979, 169 с.; Иван Ковальченко. *Методы исторического исследования* [Methods of historical research], Москва, Наука, 2003, 486 с.

<sup>3</sup> Д. О. Рогозин (ред.), *Война и мир в терминах и определениях* [War and peace in terms and definitions], Москва, ПоРог, 2004, с. 77–78.

<sup>4</sup> Н. В. Огарков (ред.), *Военный энциклопедический словарь* [Military Encyclopedic Dictionary], Москва, Воениздат, 1983, с. 836.

<sup>5</sup> *White Book of Antiterrorist Operation in the East of Ukraine in 2014–2016*, Kyiv, Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, 2017, 162 p., in [https://nuou.org.ua/assets/journals/bila\\_knyga/white-book-ato.pdf](https://nuou.org.ua/assets/journals/bila_knyga/white-book-ato.pdf) (Accessed on 11.06.2020).

riodisation is established during the planning of the war and is implemented during its development. This involves the breakdown of the war into several successive parts (campaigns), each solving specific problems through the employment of a particular array of military forces. Simultaneously, military historians use periodisation, which divides the war by actual progress according to the results achieved. Historical periodisation is determined by the sequence of actions, each of which has its name following its characteristic content.<sup>6</sup>

The periodisation of the Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine, the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine and the anti-terrorist operation/the Joint Forces Operation have already become a subject to some studies<sup>7</sup>, diversified in terms of issues under consideration and form.

In the project developed by "Information Resistance" group and titled *The Invasion of Ukraine. The Chronicle of Russian Aggression*, the armed conflict events are presented through the authors' analysis of Russian aggression in 2014-2016, which is conditionally divided into 11 stages. Because the book appeals to a broad audience, the armed conflict periodisation is more popular than scientific.<sup>8</sup>

In his scientific work *The War in the East of Ukraine: the first phase (1 March - 24 August 2014)*, Pavlo Guy-Nyzhnyk, a Ukrainian historian, divides the events of the Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict into five periods. Giving the names for the periods, the author uses the style of large-scale periodisation of big wars ("position war", "frail war"). Still, instead of using military terminology, he fails to avoid the use of literature cliches (like "Front without resistance", "Minsk trap", "Norman odds", etc.).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Д. О. Погозин (ред.), *Война и мир в терминах и определениях*, с. 77-78.

<sup>7</sup> András Rácz, *Russia's Hybrid War in Ukraine. Breaking the Enemy's Ability to Resist*. FIIA Report 43, Helsinki, The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2015; Artis Pabriks, Andis Kudors (eds.), *The War in Ukraine: Lessons for Europe*, Riga, The Centre for East European Policy Studies, 2015; Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska, Richard Sakwa (eds.), *Ukraine and Russia. People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*, Bristol, E-International Relations, 2016; Michael E. Aleprete Jr., *Minimizing Loss: Explaining Russian Policy Choices during the Ukrainian Crisis*, in "The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review", Vol. 44, 2017, No. 1, p. 53-75; David R. Marples, *Ukraine in Conflict. An Analytical Chronicle*, Bristol, E-International Relations, 2017; etc.

<sup>8</sup> Вячеслав Гусаров, Юрий Карин, Константин Машовец, Дмитрий Тымчук, *Вторжение в Украину: Хроника российской агрессии* [Invasion of Ukraine: A Chronicle of Russian Aggression], Киев, Брайт Стар Паблишинг, 2016, 240 с.

<sup>9</sup> Павло Гай-Нижник, *Війна на Сході України: перша фаза (1 березня - 24 серпня 2014 р.)* [The War in the East of Ukraine: the first phase (March 1 - August 24, 2014)], in *Війна на Донбасі. 2014-2017 рр., зб. наук. праць за матеріалами III Всеукраїнської*



Volodymyr Vilk's work intituled *Periodisation of the Russo-Ukrainian Hybrid War: 2014-2017*, despite its stated name, defines only the so-called information-psychological periodisation war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine in 2014-2015.<sup>10</sup>

The representative of Lviv Military History School, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Olesia Kutska divides the anti-terrorist operation into two periods within which the researcher allocates 14 stages "to identify and isolate indirect changes in studying the experience of using the Armed Forces and other paramilitary formations of Ukraine (*emphasised by us because the term is not precise*) within the framework of the anti-terrorist operation in 2014 – 2018."<sup>11</sup> However, the researcher does not explain why there is the gap between the second (21. 05 – 06. 07. 2014) and third (07. 07. 2014) stages of the manoeuvring period (*emphasised by us*), and does not take into account that the beginning of active actions of the anti-terrorist operation forces accounts for 1 July 2014 – following the decision of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The place of the Debaltsevo operation (February 2015) in the periodisation remains unclear. The author indicates the date of completion of the ATO - 23. 02. 2018. In fact, a large-scale anti-terrorist operation in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts lasted from 14 April 2014 to 30 April 2018. On that last day, on the Presidential Decree, the format of the East of Ukraine's anti-terrorist operation was changed for the

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*наукової військово-історичної конференції (Київ, 19 квітня 2018 р.)* [War in the Donbass. 2014-2017: From the materials of the II All-Ukrainian Scientific-Military-Historical Conference (Kyiv, April 19, 2018)], Київ, Національний військово-історичний музей України, 2018, с. 29–34.

<sup>10</sup> Володимир Вилко, *Періодизація російсько-української гібридної війни: 2014 – 2017 роки* [Periodization of the Russian-Ukrainian Hybrid War: 2014 - 2017], in *Війна на Донбасі. 2014–2016 рр.: зб. наук. праць за матеріалами II Всеукраїнської наукової військово-історичної конференції (Київ, 20 квітня 2017 р.)* [War in the Donbass. 2014-2017: From the materials of the 2nd All-Ukrainian Scientific-Military-Historical Conference (Kyiv, April 19, 2018)], Київ, Національний військово-історичний музей України, 2018, с. 218–222.

<sup>11</sup> Olesia Куцька, *Антитерористична операція на Сході України (2014–2018 рр.): етапи та їх характеристика* [Anti-terrorist operation in the East of Ukraine (2014-2018): stages and their characteristics], in *Людина і техніка у визначних битвах світових воєн XX століття: збірник доповідей Міжнародної наук. конф. (Львів, 25–26 червня 2019 року)* [Man and technology in the outstanding battles of the world wars of the 20th century: a collection of reports of International sciences. Conf. (Lviv, June 25-26, 2019)], Львів, Національна академія Сухопутних військ імені гетьмана Петра Сагайдачного, 2019, с. 16–18.

Joint Forces Operation.<sup>12</sup>

The Scientific Centre for Military History of the Ivan Chernyakhovsky National Defence University of Ukraine worked out the scientific and journalistic publication *White Paper of the Anti-Terrorist Operation in the East of Ukraine (2014–2016)*. The cooperative involvement of various structures of the security and defence sector made it possible to comprehensively explore the Ukrainian defence forces' role and place in counteracting the aggressor. The authors carried out a historical periodisation of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine, dividing it into major periods and distinguishing the stages in them that are qualitatively different in purpose, nature and content of hostilities. The authors covered the actual course of the significant events in chronological order and highlighted the Russian-Ukrainian armed confrontation's key milestones at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The periodisation was agreed by the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and approved by the Minister of Defence of Ukraine. The book's English-language version was presented at the NATO-Ukraine Partnership and Collective Security Committee meeting held at Alliance Headquarters in November 2017. The *White Book of the ATO* materials, including the ATO historical periodisation, has been published with the NATO support and, on the authors' opinion, should be taken into account in the coverage of the events of the Eastern of Ukraine' armed conflict.<sup>13</sup> However, this version of periodisation of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine was not complete enough as it was limited by the events of 2016.

We expand and deepen these positions on the pages of "Codrul Cosminului". The previous publication *The Main Events of the First Period of Armed Conflict in the East of Ukraine (April - September 2014)* covered the main events of the first period of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine.<sup>14</sup>

In this article, we call the second period of armed conflict in the East of

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<sup>12</sup> Про рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України від 30 квітня 2018 року "Про широкомасштабну антитерористичну операцію в Донецькій та Луганській областях": Указ Президента України від 30 квітня 2018 р. № 116/2018 [On the decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of April 30, 2018 "On a large-scale anti-terrorist operation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions": Presidential Decree # 116/2018 of April 30, 2018], in <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/116/2018> (Accessed on 11.06.2020).

<sup>13</sup> *White Book of Antiterrorist Operation in the East of Ukraine in 2014–2016*, Kyiv, Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, 2017, 162 p.

<sup>14</sup> Mykhailo Hrebenuik, Valerii Hrytsiuk, Oleksandr Skriabin, *The Main Events of the First Period of Armed Conflict in the East of Ukraine (April - September 2014)*, "Codrul Cosminului", XXIV, 2018, No. 2, pp. 377–408.

Ukraine as "Conflict Localisation in Certain Districts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts (5 September 2014 – 30 April 2018.)". We divided the second period into consequent stages, considering the existence of the three stages in the first period.

**Stage Four.** *Stabilisation of the Confrontation Line in the East of Ukraine (5 September 2014 – 14 January 2015.)*

Since early September 2014, at the fourth stage of the anti-terrorist operation in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, ATO forces were to move onto the defensive due to Russian troops' invasion. This stage's characteristic feature was the beginning of large-scale construction of the defence barrier in the East of Ukraine, which started in September 2014. Two defence lines were created: the first one – on the confrontation line with the Russian occupation troops, and the second one – at 15-20 km from it. Their basis was a system of strongholds with checkpoints, trenches, shelters, communication trenches, and firing positions of armoured combat vehicles and other firearms.<sup>15</sup> As of the end of 2014, ATO forces performed the tasks of isolating the crisis area by covering positions and conducting defence at 94 checkpoints, three observation posts, 110 platoon strongpoints, 30 company strongpoints, and one battalion defence area.

Russian hybrid warfare occupation forces continuously committed acts of provocation aimed at stirring up the armed conflict.<sup>16</sup> Thus, from 5 September 2014

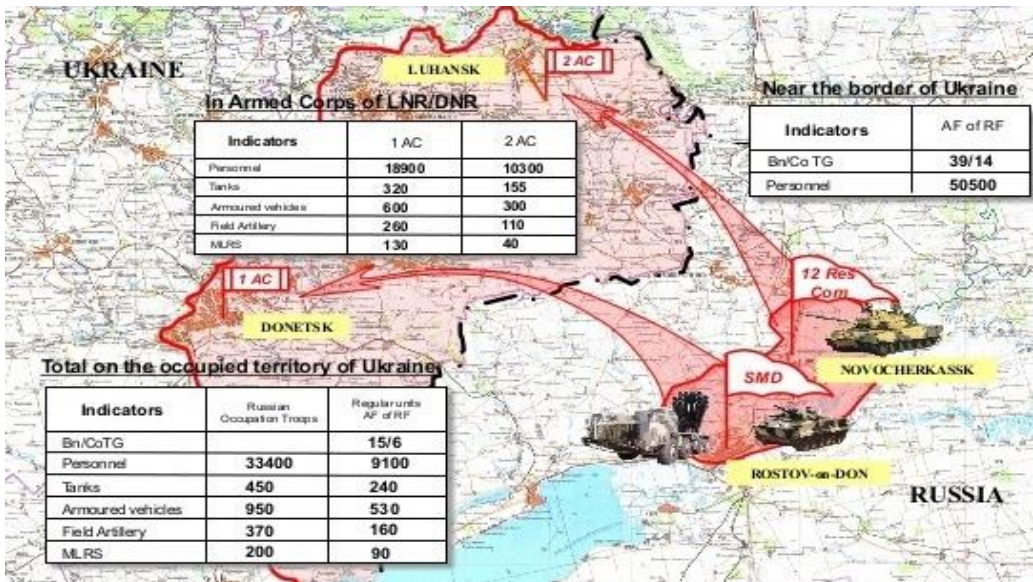
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<sup>15</sup> The authors believe that to name such hostile to Ukraine armed groups like "pro-Russian", "militias", "separatists" is not correct (although such a practice still exists). Politicians and military, scientists and the media in various countries cannot find the right terms to describe the occupation of Crimea and the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. These difficulties are not accidental but a result of hybrid warfare techniques. Seeking to create the illusion of a civil war in Ukraine, Moscow's political technologists tried to provoke the Ukrainian side and especially the international community to use distorted and ambiguous terminology to form misconceptions and negative attitudes of their society and state institutions towards the events in Ukraine. International security organizations (UN, PACE and others) have recognized the occupation of part of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. It is "occupation", not "annexation", "invasion" or something else.

After analysing a large array of documents and materials that reveal the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the enemy group in the occupied territories of Ukraine, the authors introduce a new term: "Russian hybrid warfare occupation forces".

<sup>16</sup> The Law of Ukraine "On Peculiarities of State Policy to Ensure State Sovereignty of Ukraine in the Temporarily Occupied Territories in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts" (Про особливості державної ... | від 18.01.2018 № 2268-VIII (rada.gov.ua)) confirms that the Russian Federation temporarily occupied part of the territory of Ukraine with the help of armed formations of the Russian Federation consisting of regular formations and units

to 15 January 2015, Ukrainian troops were shelled 21 250 times.<sup>17</sup> Due to the enemy forces' insidiousness and the negligence of the Minsk agreements by the Russian leadership during the ceasefire, the armed confrontation in the East of Ukraine acquired the features of the protracted 'frozen' conflict. The so-called 'regular armed forces' of the 'DPR' and 'LPR' ('1st and 2nd Army Corps') were formed from the various illegal armed groups of Russian mercenaries and local collaborators, under the leadership of Russian cadre officers (see **Figure No 1**). The share of the local population in the mentioned units did not exceed 35%. These forces were controlled and supported from the Russian Federation territory.<sup>18</sup>



**Figure No. 1.** Total Strength of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Army Corps of DNR/LNR and Russian Troops on occupied territories near the southern border of Ukraine<sup>19</sup>

subordinated to the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, units and special formations subordinated to other law enforcement agencies of the Russian Federation, their advisers, instructors and local collaborators, criminals, militants of irregular illegal armed formations, armed gangs, financial gangs and mercenary groups as well as with the help of the occupation administration of the Russian Federation. The latter is consisted of its state bodies and structures functionally responsible for the management of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, and controlled by the Russian Federation governing bodies that perform power functions in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

<sup>17</sup> *White Book of Antiterrorist Operation in the East of Ukraine in 2014–2016*, p. 34-35.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Created by the authors and based on *Збройна агресія Російської Федерації проти*

**Stage Five.** *Repulse of the Second Offensive of the Russian Occupation Forces (15 January – 20 February 2015).*

The winter of 2015 proved to be no less 'hot' than the summer of 2014. In January, the enemy began to implement a plan to expand the controlled territories, which involved simultaneous offensives in the Luhansk, Donetsk, Debaltseve, and Mariupol directions.

One of the 'hottest' places in the ATO was the Donetsk airport, which became a symbol of courage and heroism of Ukrainian fighters, whom the enemy called 'Ukrainian cyborgs'. It became a kind of 'pain in the neck' for Russian invaders. It is not a coincidence that elite Special Forces units of the Russian Armed Forces were involved in the seizure of this objective. The 242-day defence of the airport involved not only holding of the terminal buildings and the control tower. The fighting also continued for the control of Avdiivka, Pisky, Opytne, and Vodiane localities. The Ukrainian units' sustained defence at this sector of the confrontation line between the warring parties provided a reliable cover for the whole Donetsk direction.<sup>20</sup>

In the history of victories of the Ukrainian army, the days of January 2015 are filled with tragedy and sacrifice of Ukrainian soldiers. On 15 January, the enemy began the assault with artillery and mortar fire at the new Donetsk airport terminal. Exploiting fires' effects, the enemy assumed the offensive, seized part of the airport and blocked the Ukrainian paratrooper units in the 'new terminal'. Since the Russians blew up the terminal, the construction's main elements collapsed, burying its defenders. On 22 January, the last small group of Ukrainian fighters left the terminal ruins in which there were no longer any walls that could be defended.<sup>21</sup>

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*України. Інформаційно-довідковий матеріал* [Armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Complementary material], Київ, Національний університет оборони України імені Івана Черняхівського, 2015, 14 с., in <https://mon.gov.ua/storage/app/media/zagalna%20serednya/metodichni%20recomendazii/2019/06/materiali-inform-hromologia-2019.doc> (Accessed on 11.06.2020).

<sup>20</sup> *Аналіз бойових дій на сході України в ході зимової кампанії 2014–2015 років* [Analysis of hostilities in eastern Ukraine during the 2014-2015 winter campaign], <https://www.mil.gov.ua/news/2015/12/23/analiz-bojovih-dij-na-shodi-ukraini-v-hodi-zimovoi-kampanii-2014%E2%80%932015-rokiv--16785/> (Accessed on 11.06.2020)

<sup>21</sup> *Біла книга-2015. Збройні Сили України* [White Book-2015. The Armed Forces of Ukraine], p. 88-90, in [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1a/WB\\_2015.pdf](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1a/WB_2015.pdf) (Accessed on 11.06.2020).

Late in January, Russia's hybrid occupation forces launched an offensive on the Debaltsevo bridgehead, trying to surround and destroy the Ukrainian troops located there. For this purpose, the enemy concentrated significant forces of the Russian Federation's regular troops and the most combat-ready illegal armed formations of self-proclaimed "republics" (see **Figure No. 2**). The strength of enemy troops reached 7-9 thousand people, supported by up to 120 tanks, 180 artillery systems, 60 multiple launch rocket systems.<sup>22</sup>



Figure No. 2. The Debaltsevo Pocket<sup>23</sup>

The total number of personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine units, which performed tasks directly in the Debaltsevo bridgehead area in February 2015, amounted to about 4,7 thousand military personnel. About 500 people more were involved from the National Guard of Ukraine, the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine

<sup>22</sup> Аналіз Генерального штабу ЗСУ щодо бойових дій на Дебальцівському плацдармі з 27 січня до 18 лютого 2015 р. [Analysis of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine as for the combat actions on Debaltsevo bridgehead from 27 January – 18 February 2015], in <https://www.mil.gov.ua/analitichni-materiali/analiz-generalnogo-shtabu-zsu-shhodo-bojovih-dij-na-debalczevskomu-placzdarmi-z-27-sichnya-do-18-lyutogo-2015-roku.html> (Accessed on 11.06.20).

<sup>23</sup> The Debaltsevo Pocket, in <https://bigtalksmalltalk.wordpress.com/2015/01/25/the-debaltsevo-pocket/> (Accessed on 18.12.2020).

and the Security Service of Ukraine. There were 50 tanks, 40 artillery systems, 15 multiple launch rocket systems at the disposal of Ukrainian troops in the Debaltsevo area. A significant advantage of the enemy in human resources and equipment became apparent.<sup>24</sup>

Fighting under the direct threat of encirclement, 2 678 defenders of the 'Debaltsevo offset' held the line. The ATO command conducted an action to withdraw them from the area under enemy attacks. To uphold the taking out of the Ukrainian forces the operational order of battle was built with a system of areas, lines and positions, and mobile armoured groups (as reserves) in the rear. As a result of the Debaltsevo manoeuvre, the aggressor's plans were frustrated. Debaltsevo defenders showed the examples of tenacity and endurance. 2 629 soldiers exited the encirclement.<sup>25</sup> Ukrainian troops managed to keep the barrier line on the Luhanka River and gain a foothold on Luhanske, Troyitske, and Popasna. The losses suffered forced the enemy to abandon further offensives.

With the completion of the Debaltsevo operation (27 January – 18 February 2015), a shaky truce began in Donbas. The results of the winter campaign greatly influenced the further development of the military-political and military-strategic environment. During the operations, the Ukrainian troops accomplished all their tasks, were withdrawn from the enemy strikes to new areas with minimal losses and took the advantageous operational position. The adversary advance into the depth of the territory of Ukraine was stopped.

Following the results of lengthy negotiations on 15 February 2015, a joint declaration was adopted by the Presidents of Ukraine, the French Republic, the Russian Federation and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany to support the package of measures for the legal implementation of the Minsk agreements. According to this document, the ceasefire regime was to come into effect, and from 24 February the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the contact line was to begin.<sup>26</sup>

However, the aggressor insidiously violated these agreements, like the previous ones. In 2015 alone, starting on 15 February, ATO forces were fired at more than 16,4 thousand times; 205 armed clashes took place. The Ukrainian units opened fire in response to the enemy's provocative actions mainly during armed clashes, providing the information to the leadership of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission accordingly.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Біла книга-2015. Збройні Сили України, р. 90.

<sup>26</sup> *White Book of Antiterrorist Operation in the East of Ukraine in 2014–2016*, р. 36-37.

<sup>27</sup> Біла книга-2015. Збройні Сили України, р. 13.

*The sixth stage. Strengthening the Defence Line in Eastern Ukraine (21 February 2015 – 20 September 2016)*

In order to provide the militaries with favourable conditions for conducting defence operations, the first task was to establish a line of defence in the East of Ukraine, equipped with powerful fortifications. The efforts and resources from all regions of Ukraine were involved in this task.

After the second offensive of the Russian occupation forces was repulsed in January – February 2015, the construction of a fortified defence line in the eastern regions has become the priority goal of Ukraine. In the spring and summer of 2015, 20 regions of Ukraine contributed to the construction of a fortified line of defence in the ATO area. The total volume of building materials used in the construction course was 35 thousand railway cars, 12 thousand concrete structures were installed in the ATO area. Three defensive lines were erected, at which about 300 strongpoints were equipped and connected by 600 km of fortifications.<sup>28</sup> The Armed Forces units and detachments occupied the first line of defence, and the objects of the second and the third lines were taken under the protection of the National Guard units.

The construction and improvement of the defence line in Eastern Ukraine continued throughout 2015 and after. Due to the construction of protective structures, the number of military casualties was reduced.

Thus, through joint efforts of the grouping of forces and means of the anti-terrorist operation, the authorities of state executive power and local self-government, fortified defence belts were built.

The construction of the defence line in the East of Ukraine became a significant step towards improving the Ukrainian territory's protection system. Consolidated fortifications increase personnel's security and create better conditions for military units and detachments to perform combat missions. The experience of warfare has shown the utmost importance of the fortification equipment of checkpoints, strongholds, base camps and control points to ensure the maintenance of life of personnel and skilful cover by engineering barriers to prevent sudden attacks by illegal armed groups.

Simultaneously with the creation of the defensive zone, a high level of professionalism was acquired by Ukrainian servicemen. In the second anti-terrorist

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<sup>28</sup> 600 км фортифікацій і 300 оборонних споруд. Зубко відзвітував про лінію оборони на Донбасі [600 km of fortifications and 300 strongpoints. Zubko reported on the line of defense in Donbas] in <http://www.slovoidilo.ua/2015/07/21/novyna/bezpeka/600-km-fortyfikacij-i-300-oboronnyx-sporud.-zubko-vidzvituval-pro-liniyu-oborony-na-donbasi> (Accessed on 22.12.20)



operation period (05.09.2014 – 30.04.2018), the sector's forces' primary efforts were focused on stabilising the confrontation line, repelling attacks by Russian occupying troops, preventing the displacement of anti-terrorist operation forces from occupied strongholds and bypassing them. Defence actions of tactical groupings were planned and carried out.

A demonstrative example of troops' employment in military operations was the defensive battle of the 2nd Battalion Tactical Group of the 28th Separate Mechanized Brigade near Marinka in summer 2015. This locality in the outskirts of Donetsk was always a fighting ground. On 3 June, intensive artillery and "Grad" MLRS salvos were fired at ATO forces' positions. The enemy tried to break through the Ukrainian defences in a narrow area, where considerable infantry and armour forces were sent. Tank units supported the assault. To avoid devastating fire, Ukrainian defenders had to abandon some positions. ATO forces used artillery units to repel the enemy's offensive and thus the opponent's advance was stopped. (see **Figure No. 3**). The enemy retreated towards Donetsk.<sup>29</sup>

Since 2015, a system of military-civilian administrations was established and operated in the area of anti-terrorist operation as temporary state authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk regions' territory. They became part of the Anti-Terrorist Centre under the Security Service of Ukraine.

A civil-military cooperation system was introduced in the Armed Forces of Ukraine to prevent social tension in the area of anti-terrorist operation. The civilian population was supported by military and non-military personnel and assets in addressing their vital issues. These activities made it possible to minimise the effects of hostilities on civilians and enhance the ability to counter the negative Russian information influence on the population in the state.

In the face of significant threats to national security, Ukraine was forced to take several measures to localise the conflict in some districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In particular, in cooperation with other entities of the nationwide counter-terrorism system, the Security Service of Ukraine introduced and monitored the movement of persons, vehicles and goods across the confrontation line within the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

In 2016–2018, the Russian Federation's hybrid war against Ukraine continued, and the force component remained an essential means of achieving its political goals. The Russian Federation's leadership sought to form a militant group in the occupied territory of Donbas that would pose a significant military threat to

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<sup>29</sup> Серж Марко, *Хроника гибридной войны* [Chronicle of the hybrid war], Київ, Альтерпрес, 2016, с. 139-140.

Ukraine in the eastern region. Numerous facts of issuing Russian passports to Ukrainian citizens living in the occupied territories reinforce Russian aggression's hybrid nature.<sup>30</sup>



**Figure No. 3.** *The situation in the Eastern Regions of Ukraine in September 2015 (from the daily official report on MOD website)<sup>31</sup>*

Russian military units with a total number of about 6,5 thousand troops remained in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In parallel, the Russian Federation tried to make maximum use of local collaborators and foreign (mainly Russian) mercenaries to confront the Ukrainian power structures in the Donbas.

<sup>30</sup> Alice Underwood, *Citizenship without Borders: Russian Passports for Ukrainian Citizens*, in <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/citizenship-without-borders-russian-passports-for-ukrainian-citizens> (Accessed on 20.12.20).

<sup>31</sup> *The situation in the eastern regions of Ukraine as for 14 September 2015*, in [https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/1884162-situation\\_in\\_ukraines\\_eastern\\_regions\\_map\\_334324.html](https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/1884162-situation_in_ukraines_eastern_regions_map_334324.html) (Accessed on 18.12.20).

Taking into account the forces and means of the so-called "1st and 2nd Army Corps", Russian occupation troops in the Donbas in the first half of 2016 reached the strength of almost 43 000 pax, more than 700 tanks and 1 330 combat armoured vehicles, nearly 750 pieces of artillery systems.<sup>32</sup>

In the context of a particular limitation of hostilities, Russia intensified the activities of special services, undercover agents, terrorist and sabotage groups in some areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions, and the adjacent areas of Ukraine. It increased the number of outreach and other activities aimed at destabilising the East of Ukraine's situation.

The forms and techniques of employment of Russian hybrid occupation forces in 2016–2018 changed significantly compared to 2014–2015. Having abandoned active offensive actions, the Russian troupes in the Donbas switched to tactics of "harassing" activities, the purpose of which was to exhaust and demoralise the ATO forces. The enemy tried to provoke the soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to an active response in order to accuse Ukraine of violating the Minsk agreements. As part of this tactic, the enemy typically resorted to shelling ATO forces, laying mines on roads and bridges and launching armed attacks by sabotage and reconnaissance groups.<sup>33</sup>

***The seventh stage. Separation of forces and military equipment of warring parties (21 September 2016 – November 2017).***

Since September 2016, the nature of the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation in the East of Ukraine changed significantly, mainly due to the Tripartite Contact Group decision, and to the signing on 21 September 2016 in Minsk on the separation of forces and assets of belligerent parties in the Donbas. The document provided for the withdrawal of troops by both sides from the positions they had occupied in both directions for the formation of 2 km wide and 2 km deep sections.<sup>34</sup>

The Russian occupation forces continued to violate the agreement, did not

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<sup>32</sup> Аналітична доповідь до Щорічного Послання Президента України до Верховної Ради України "Про внутрішнє та зовнішнє становище України в 2016 році" [Analytical Report to the Annual Message of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On Internal and External Situation of Ukraine in 2016"], Київ, НІСД, 2016, с. 33., in [https://niss.gov.ua/sites/default/files/2016-10/poslanya\\_new-cc2e3.pdf](https://niss.gov.ua/sites/default/files/2016-10/poslanya_new-cc2e3.pdf) (Accessed on 12.06.20).

<sup>33</sup> Біла книга-2017. Збройні Сили України [White Book 2017. Armed Forces of Ukraine], Міністерство оборони України, 2018, с. 16., in <https://www.mil.gov.ua/content/files/whitebook/WB-2017.pdf> (Accessed on 12.06.20).

<sup>34</sup> *White Book of Antiterrorist Operation in the East of Ukraine in 2014–2016*, p. 38.

comply with the "ceasefire". Throughout 2016-2019, the enemy focused on moving their units deeper into the no-man's-land called the "grey zone", while actively shelling Ukrainian troops' positions and observing the tactics of "waging a war of attrition". The use of snipers, sabotage and reconnaissance groups, artillery and mortar shelling of Ukrainian defenders' positions in the Lugansk, Donetsk, Mariupol directions acquired a systemic character. Adversary maintained constant pressure in the settlements of Krymskoe, Novotoshkovskoe, Zolotoe, Zhelobok, and Svetlodarsk Novoselovka, Avdeevka, Maryinka, Novomikhailovka, Starognavovka, Vodyanoye, Shirokino.

A significant event in 2016 was the fighting on the Svitlodar Arc. On 17-18 December, Russian hybrid occupation forces attempted to break through the line of defence and seize Ukrainian troops' positions by launching a surprise artillery attack at them. In these conditions, the Ukrainian defenders sustained, and then proceeded to active action and pushed the enemy from their positions south of the Luhanske village. From 19 December to 22 December 2016, the Russian hybrid occupation forces tried to regain their positions and fired at Ukrainian units from all weapons types. Still, they were not able to force the Ukrainian defenders to abandon their posts. On 23 December, the Ukrainian military units entered the village of Novoluhanske, which had remained in the "grey zone" for a long time.<sup>35</sup>

In the fighting in Svitlodar Arc, the Ukrainian troops successfully applied the tactics of "frog jumps", gradually taking up new positions and forcing the enemy to retreat. From the first days of January 2017, the anti-terrorist operation forces in the Svitlodar Arc exploited success. They occupied several major facilities that made the possibility to reduce the number of enemy shellings in the area and the risks of having units enveloped by the enemy. On 19 January, that situation enabled the Ukrainian troops to approach Vuglehirsk and Debaltseve which had to be controlled by Ukrainian side according to the Minsk Agreements.

At the end of 2016, the situation in the Donetsk area escalated. Avdiivka, located near Donetsk, Yasinovataya and Gorlivka was in the epicentre of attention. Avdiivka remained under the control of Ukraine according to the Minsk Agreements from 2014 until 2015. However, the Russian command brutally violated the signed agreements both in this area and throughout the front. The concept of the "Avdiivka industrial zone" became a symbol of severe fighting. As a result of a complex of effective actions, the Ukrainian Armed Forces units significantly improved their tactical situation without violating the Minsk agreements. During 2017-2018, Avdiivka

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

remained one of the hottest spots in the armed conflict zone.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, the seventh stage is characterised by the separation of forces and equipment of the warring parties, in accordance with the results of the Tripartite Contact Group decision. Simultaneously, throughout the perimeter of the armed conflict, the enemy was concentrating its efforts on advancing its units deep into the "grey zone". The most intense fighting took place in Svitlodar Arc (December 2016). The Ukrainian forces repelled the Russian occupation forces, exploited success and improved their tactical situation in the Avdiivka industrial zone (December 2016 - January 2017).<sup>37</sup>

At that time, the troops' main efforts were focused on stabilising the line of contact between the parts, repelling the attacks of the Russian occupation troops and preventing the displacement of anti-terrorist operation forces from occupied strong points and bypassing them. The defensive operations of tactical groups were planned and carried out.

***The eighth stage. The improvement of troops command and control system. Completion of the anti-terrorist operation (November 2017 – April 2018).***

It should be noted that Ukraine's confrontation with Russian aggression in 2014–2017 showed that the anti-terrorist operation, as a form of opposition to attack, had already gone beyond its intended purpose and had a military-defensive character. At the end of 2017 – beginning of 2018, the current challenge was to update the legal framework of using defence forces to protect the state from the Russian Federation's armed aggression.

On 24 February 2018, the Law of Ukraine "On Features of State Policy for ensuring state sovereignty of Ukraine in temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions" came into force and changed the previous format of the anti-terrorist operation and the procedure of using the Armed Forces of Ukraine, other military formations and law enforcement authorities. Therefore, the legal framework was created to launch the Joint Forces operation to ensure national security and defence, to repel and deter armed aggression in the Donetsk

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<sup>36</sup> Біла книга-2017. Збройні Сили України, с. 16.

<sup>37</sup> Що сталося в Авдіївці? [What happened in Avdiivka], "Дзеркало тижня", № 4, 4 лютого – 10 лютого 2017 р., in <http://gazeta.dt.ua/internal/scho-stalosya-v-avdiyivci-.html> (Accessed on 22.12.20); Хронологія загострення ситуації в районі н. п. Авдіївка 29 січня 2017 року [Chronology of exacerbation of the situation in vicinity of Avdiivka 29 January 2017]/Генеральний штаб ЗСУ, 3 лютого 2017 р. [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, 3 February 2017] in <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/732453826923877> (Accessed on 22.12.20).

and Luhansk regions.<sup>38</sup>

On 30 April 2018, the President of Ukraine signed a decree "On approval of the decision of the Council of National Security and Defence *On a large-scale anti-terrorist operation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions*". The same day, he (the President of Ukraine), as Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, signed the order "On the commencement of the Joint Forces operation to ensure national security and defence, to repel and deter the armed aggression of the Russian Federation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions". According to the order from 2:00 p.m. on 30 April 2018, the Joint Force Operation began.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, **the second period of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine** can be regarded as a positional one, that is characterised by the transition to predominantly defensive operations, the requirements for the withdrawal of heavy weapons by both sides from the delimitation line and the creation of security zones; stable holding of designated areas, boundaries and positions by the anti-terrorist operation forces; slow advancing of our units into the depth of the territory and taking under the control of certain localities of the so-called "grey zone"; constant violations of the Minsk Agreements by the Russian side, shelling of positions of Ukrainian troops by the Russian occupation forces and its adherence to the tactics of "war on exhaustion".

The proposed periodisation of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine has been tested on international and all-Ukrainian scientific conferences<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Про внесення змін до деяких законів України щодо визначення дати початку тимчасової окупації: Закон України від 15 вересня 2015 р. № 685-VIII [On Amendments to the Laws of Ukraine on Determining the Date of Temporary Occupation Commencement: Law of Ukraine of September 15, 2015 # 685-VIII], Відомості Верховної Ради України, 2015, № 46 (13.11.2015), Ст. 417, in <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/685-19> (Accessed on 12.06.20).

<sup>39</sup> Про рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України від 30 квітня 2018 року "Про широкомасштабну антитерористичну операцію в Донецькій та Луганській областях": Указ Президента України від 30 квітня 2018 р. № 116/2018 [On the decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of April 30, 2018 "On a large-scale anti-terrorist operation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions": Presidential Decree # 116/2018 of April 30, 2018], Ст. 174, in <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/116/2018> (Accessed on 11.06.20).

<sup>40</sup> В. М. Грицюк, О. Л. Скрябін, *Періодизація збройного конфлікту на Сході України* [Periodization of the Armed Conflict in the East of Ukraine], Програма Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції "Роль і місце національної спецслужби в історії українського державотворення (Київ, 17 березня 2017 р.)" [Program of the All-Ukrainian Scientific and Practical Conference "The Role and Place of National Special

## CONCLUSIONS

The Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine and occupation of the part of her territory testified that the application of the forces was mainly a departure from the traditional forms and methods of warfare and had elements of a hybrid nature. The Russian Federation's armed aggression initially led to the occupation of the Crimea and subsequently to an armed conflict in the East of Ukraine. To counteract and deter this aggression, Ukraine has deployed the security and defence sector forces. The form of employment of the security and defence forces from the 14 April 2014 was the Anti-Terrorist Operation, and from 30 April 2018, it is the Joint Forces Operation. In our opinion, the "Donbas War" is rightly classified as an armed conflict in the East of Ukraine, supported externally.

By the nature of the warfare, military and political results and consequences, the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine is divided into three periods. Within these periods, the stages are distinguished qualitatively in the nature and content of the warfare.

Along with this, many aspects of the ATO still need to be thoroughly researched by military scientists and representatives of various fields of knowledge. In particular, the conceptual categorical apparatus associated with the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, given its specific "hybrid" nature, still needs further clarification and improvement in the scientific works of researchers of this problem. In general, a comprehensive study of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine is necessary to have a clear understanding of the nature of Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine, to analyse the evolution of the conflict and, ultimately, to summarise the experience of counteracting hybrid threats in the military sphere.

The events of 2014-2018 were the most severe exam for the existence of the Ukrainian state. In this tumultuous time of trials, military personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, other military formations, representatives of law enforcement and volunteer formations displayed personal courage and heroism in defence of the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, selfless service to the Ukrainian people.

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## **THE IMPACT OF THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE IN 2014 ON MOLDOVA, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A HISTORIAN**

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**Abstract:** *This paper is an in-depth analysis of Moldova's relations with Ukraine, Russia, the European Union (EU), and the United States (US) during the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 to show the serious political impact and consequences the crisis had on Moldova by further polarizing an already highly polarized Moldova, which has been largely ignored by scholars. Moldova's pro-EU, pro-Western government, the Coalition for Pro-European Governance (CEG), initialled the EU Association Agreement (AA) in Vilnius in November 2013, along with Georgia. In order to prevent Moldova from signing the association agreement, Russia has resorted to the economic weapon, threatening to block imports of food and beverages from the Republic of Moldova and to deport a large part of the 500,000 Moldovans working in Russia and bringing money to the state budget. Despite these threats, Moldova signed the association agreement with the European Union on June 27, this being ratified by the parliament on July 2, 2014. Russia later retaliated with the support of two pro-Russian political parties, the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova and Renato Usatîi's "Patria" (Home-land) party. By their actions and official statements, these parties have embarrassed and continue to embarrass the pro-European and pro-Western policies of Moldova.*

**Keywords:** *Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, geopolitical dichotomy, EU Association Agreement, Eastern Partnership, Customs Union, Transnistria.*

**Rezumat: Impactul crizei din Ucraina (2014) asupra Moldovei, din perspectiva unui istoric.** *Lucrarea reprezintă o analiză aprofundată a relațiilor Moldovei cu Ucraina, Rusia, Uniunea Europeană și Statele Unite ale Americii în timpul crizei ucrainene din 2014, care arată impactul politic serios și consecințele pe care criza le-a avut asupra Moldovei, polarizând în continuare o țară deja extrem de polarizată, situație care a fost în mare parte ignorată de către cercetători. Guvernul pro-Uniunea Europeană și pro-occidental al Republicii Moldova format de Coaliția pentru Guvernare Proeuropeană, a inițiat la Vilnius în noiembrie 2013, împreună cu Georgia, Acordul de asociere cu Uniunea Europeană. Pentru a împiedica Moldova să semneze acordul de asociere, Rusia a recurs la arma economică, ame-*

*nințând cu blocarea unor importuri de alimente și băuturi din Republica Moldova și cu deportarea unei mari părți a celor 500.000 moldoveni care lucrau în Rusia și aduceau bani la bugetul de stat. În ciuda acestor amenințări, Republica Moldova a semnat acordul de asociere cu Uniunea Europeană pe data de 27 iunie, ratificat de parlament pe 2 iulie 2014. Rusia a ripostat ulterior cu sprijinirea a două partide politice pro-ruse, Partidul Socialiștilor din Republica Moldova și partidul „Patria” a lui Renato Usatfi. Prin acțiunile și luările de poziție publice, aceste partide au stânjenit și stânjenesc în continuare cursul pro-european și pro-occidental al Republicii Moldova.*

## INTRODUCTION

For the past six years, a global hot spot has been the crisis in Ukraine. Caught up in the middle of all of this is the former Soviet Republic of Moldova. Moldova, both halves, is one of the three principal historical homelands of the Romanian people in the northeast Balkans on the European end of the Eurasian steppes, along with Wallachia, and Transylvania. Modern day Moldova, to its present Western border, the Prut River, was first conquered by the Russians in the early nineteenth century (renamed Bessarabia) and remained part of Tsarist Russia until the end of the First World War. United with Romania during the interwar years, Moldova was reconquered by the victorious Soviets toward the end of the Second World War and remained a part of the Soviet Union until the USSR collapsed in 1991, when an independent Republic of Moldova was proclaimed. The resulting fusion of Romanian roots with a century and a half of Russian-Soviet rule, along with a wide-variety of minorities speaking their own languages and fluid political frontiers over the centuries, has resulted in a polarized country. This paper is an in-depth analysis of Moldova's relations with Ukraine, Russia, the European Union (EU), and the United States (US) during the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 to show the serious political impact and consequences the crisis had on Moldova by further polarizing an already highly polarized Moldova, which has been largely ignored by scholars. To date scholars and publicists have dealt with particular aspects of Moldova during the Ukrainian crisis overlooking the political impact the crisis had on Moldova that this study intends to rectify.

### BRIEF EXPLANATION ON MOLDOVA'S GEOPOLITICAL DICHOTOMY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

In order to understand Moldova's polarization a brief explanation of Mol-

dova's identity problem is necessary. "Who are the Moldovans" is a central question Charles King attempted to answer in his classical study *The Moldovans*.<sup>1</sup> Not surprising, being a new country, having only proclaimed independence in August 1991, Moldova has not yet developed its own distinct sense of national identity. According to Lucan Way, a scholar well-versed in Moldovan politics and history, Moldova has a confused, bipolar national identity, "divided between Russophile and more pro-European, Romanianist identities."<sup>2</sup> Because of Moldova's confusion over national identity, Oazu Nantoi, Moldovan political commentator, analyst, and politician, in an interview called Moldova "an artificial state."<sup>3</sup> In the November 2017 Barometer of Public Opinion (BPO) poll of the Moldovan Institute of Public Policy almost 22% of the respondents said they would vote for Moldova's union with Romania while 33% of the respondents would vote for Moldova's union with Russia.<sup>4</sup> A recent study of Moldova's national identity by Vladimir Baar and Daniel Jakubek concluded: "that there is no clear vision or political agreement in relation to national identity. The discourse of national identity is polarized between the theses of "Moldovanism" and "Romanianism," which are based on entirely different thoughts.... In the public domain these serve for political mobilization as well as for political agendas and political goals."<sup>5</sup>

Reflecting this dichotomy, Moldovans are divided over the country's geopolitical orientation. In a survey of Moldovans in 1998 by Jerry Hough and David Laitin roughly a third of Moldovans favoured closer ties to Russia, roughly a third opposed closer ties to Russia, and a third were neutral.<sup>6</sup> Moldova is a classic example of a Janus-faced country, part of the population face east the other west. According to BOP polls taken during the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 about forty percent of the respondents support joining the Russian led Customs Union (CU), since

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<sup>1</sup> Charles King, *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture*, Stanford, Hoover Institute Press, 2000, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Lucan Way, *Pluralism by Default*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Tomasz Grzywaczewski and Tomasz Lachowski, *A Playground between the East and West*, Interview by Grzywaczewski and Lachowski, in "New Eastern Europe", no. 1 (2016), p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> *POB: More Moldovans are for entry into EU than into Eurasian Union*, IPN Society, December 14, 2017, in [www.ipn.md/en/arhiva/88231](http://www.ipn.md/en/arhiva/88231), accessed December 14, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Vladimir Baar and Daniel Jakubek, *Divided National Identity in Moldova*, in „Journal of Nationalism, Memory, and Language Politics”, 11 (1/2017), pp. 88, 82.

<sup>6</sup> Ivan Katchanovski, *Cleft Countries: Regional Political Divisions and Cultures in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova*, Stuttgart, *ibidem*-Verlag, 2006, pp. 25, 181.

2015 the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), while about the same percentage support joining the European Union (EU).<sup>7</sup> “In a time of multiculturalism, when nationalism is starting to prevail,” warned Baar and Jakubek, “the problem of national identity divided into two camps is very dangerous.”<sup>8</sup> Moldova’s polarized identity provided Moldovan political parties a golden opportunity to win over their support. As Maia Sandu, the former Prime Minister of Moldova (June 2019–November 2019) and leader of the Party of Action and Solidarity explained: “It should come as no surprise that parties have long internalized this ethno-political cleavage and are exploiting it to the full extent ever since.”<sup>9</sup> According to Baar and Jakubek “the main factor in the formation of political parties is the antagonism of national identity.”<sup>10</sup>

### MOLDOVA AND THE EU ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT

The attention of the media at the Eastern Partnership meeting of the EU in Vilnius on November 28–29, 2013, centered on Ukrainian’s President Viktor Yanukovich’s sudden, unexpected refusal to sign the long, contentiously negotiated EU Association Agreement (AA), and within it the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreement (DCFTA). Yanukovich, a powerful, wealthy, corrupt Ukrainian oligarch, was under intense pressure from both the EU and Russia to either sign the AA and become more closely tied to the EU or not sign and join Vladimir Putin’s Customs Union (CU). Although the EU stressed that the AA was essentially a geo-economic agreement, it was abundantly clear that it was geopolitical as well. A week before the meeting in Vilnius, Russian threats of a severe reduction in Ukrainian exports to Russia finally forced Yanukovich to cave in. Although Yanukovich only agreed not to sign the AA in his bargain with the Russians not join the CU, several hours after his refusal to sign became public in Vilnius demonstrators began milling around in central Kiev’s Maidan (Independence

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<sup>7</sup> For an excellent recent study of polarization and the danger to democracies internationally see, Thomas Carothers and Andrew O’Donohue, eds., *Democracies Divided, The Global Challenge of Political Polarization*, Washington, Brookings Institution Press, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Baar and Jakubek, *Divided National Identity*, p. 84.

<sup>9</sup> Maia Sandu, *What Next for a Divided Moldova?* in „Moldovan Politics”, November 29, 2015, <http://moldovanpolitics.com/2015/11/29/what-next-for-a-divided-moldova/> accessed November 30, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Baar and Jakubek, *Divided National Identity*, p. 89.

Square), the site of the Orange Revolution in 2004. Popular discontent with Yanukovich had been growing for several years; his refusal to sign the AA was “the last straw.” Ironically, Yanukovich had lost his first bid to become Ukrainian’s president in the hotly disputed 2004 elections, as a result of the Orange Revolution; ten years later lightning struck again-Orange Revolution 2!

Unlike Ukraine, Moldova’s pro-EU, pro-Western government, the Coalition for Pro-European Governance (CEG), initialed the AA in Vilnius in November 2013, along with Georgia. For Moldova, the timing could not have been better. Suddenly, Moldova was bathing in the limelight of a grateful EU and Western media for standing up to the Russians. “Tiny” Moldova now became the “poster child” of the EU’s shaky Eastern Partnership. The refusal of Yanukovich to sign the AA was a tough setback for the EU in its bitter zero-sum game with Putin. Moldova and Georgia provided a fall back. German Chancellor Angela Merkel lauded the initialling by Moldova and Georgia “a very brave step,” while Jose Manuel Barroso, European Commission president, hailed it “an important milestone-it marks the start of a new phase in our relationship.”<sup>11</sup> Moldova’s enhanced status “was implicitly acknowledged” by a “brief, but high profile” visit by US Secretary of State John Kerry two weeks later. To drive the point home, Kerry skipped a long-anticipated visit to Kiev to fly to Chişinău to offer congratulations for initialling the AA.<sup>12</sup> The sting of Vilnius made the EU and the US all the more determined to prevent the Eastern Partnership countries, including Moldova, from succumbing to Russian pressure and hegemony.

Not everyone was happy about the Moldovan government initialling the AA. In spite of Putin’s “jubilation” in keeping Yanukovich from signing the AA and the Russian media proclaiming we “won,” Moldova, like Ukraine, also came under strong pressure by Moscow not to sign. In addition to the usual assortment of stepped up propaganda and threats of territorial dismemberment, in September 2013 Russia banned Moldova wine exports to Russia on allegedly “health grounds,” reverting to the strong-arm tactic on Moldovan wine the

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<sup>11</sup> *EU chides Russia, Moscow claims win*, in „Deutsche Welle News”, November 29, 2013, <http://www.dw.com/en/eu-chides-russia-moscow-claims-win/a-17262037>, accessed February 22, 2017. *Opening remarks by President Barroso at initialing ceremony of the Association Agreements with Georgia and Moldova*, European Commission -PRESS RELEASES, November 29, 2013, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-996\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-996_en.htm). See also Dominik Tolksdorf, *Die Ostliche Partnerschaft nach dem Vilnius Gipfel November 2013*, in „Sudosteuropa Mitteilungen”, 53 (6/2013), pp. 70-84.

<sup>12</sup> Congressional Research Service, Steven Woehrel, *Moldova: Background and U.S. Policy*, April 23, 2014, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS21981.pdf>.

Kremlin used from 2005-2007. To aid Moldova, one of the poorest countries in Europe, the EU finally abolished its restrictions on Moldovan wine entering the EU, but Russia still remained the main market for Moldovan wine.<sup>13</sup> Moldova's reaction to the initializing of the AA reflected the country's increasingly polarized society. Opposing the pro-EU, Pro-Western CEG government, the opposition Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM), dwarfing the rest of the opposition in size, took the lead. The Communists led opposition demanded that the AA be renegotiated, with Russia and Transnistria also invited to participate, or the country would suffer "serious economic, political, and cultural consequences." Also, the opposition insisted that the renegotiated agreement would need to be approved by Moldovans in a referendum. Not surprising, the Moldovan government "strongly criticized" the proposal. Ironically, Vladimir Voronin, the head of the PCRM and former president of Moldova, took the first serious steps to tie Moldova into the EU, topped off with the signing of a three-year Moldova-EU Action Plan in February 2005, as a result of his falling out with Putin.<sup>14</sup> By the end of Voronin's first term in office in 2005, European integration ranked as the primary goal of the Communist government.

### **TRANSNISTRIA, A GREAT GEOPOLITICAL TOOL OF RUSSIA AGAINST MOLDOVA**

When Voronin and the PCRM first came to power in February 2001, East-West relations were still fluid and collaborative enough on some issues to convince Voronin he could reach a solution with Putin to reintegrate Transnistria, the breakaway, unrecognized, self-proclaimed Transnistrian Moldovan Republic (TMR), with Moldova that would be agreeable to both Moscow and Chişinău. Especially tricky was the "near abroad," made up of independent states formally part of the Soviet Union, where Russia claimed a "privileged interest." This included Moldova. At the time Voronin took over the reins of government in Moldova, another sensitive issue involving Moldova, Russia, and Transnistria, going back to

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<sup>13</sup> Tessa Dunlop, *Why Russian wine ban is putting pressure on Moldova*, BBC News, November 21, 2013, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24992076](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24992076), accessed November 24, 2016; Denis Cenuşă and others, *Russia's Punitive Trade Policy Measures towards Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia*, Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) Working Document, no. 400 (September 2014), <http://regulation.gov.ru/project/17072html>.

<sup>14</sup> Paul D. Quinlan, *A Foot in Both Camps: Moldova and the Transnistrian Conundrum from the Kozak Memorandum*, in „East European Quarterly”, 42, no. 2 (Summer 2008), pp. 135-136.



the early 1990s, appeared to reach a settlement. In November 1999, at the Istanbul summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Russians finally agreed to a compromise whereby they would remove their troops, weapons, and munitions from Transnistria by the end of 2002. Despite numerous delays, as 2003 was coming to a close, with several stages still left, the Istanbul accord appeared a success. Enter the Kozak Memorandum!

In November 2003, Voronin stood on the verge of accomplishing his long-promised goal to reunite Moldova and Transnistria by signing the Kozak Memorandum, drawn up by Dmitry Kozak, a top adviser to Putin at Voronin's request, which would create an asymmetrical federated Moldovan-Transnistrian republic. But with the late addition to the memorandum by the Russians allowing them to keep their troops in Transnistria until 2020, having already conceded to giving Transnistria and Găgăuzia considerable autonomy and a veto that had the potential of leading to dire consequences for the functioning of the Moldova state, Voronin began to have second thoughts about signing the memorandum. He also came under intense pressure from EU and US officials not to sign. At the last minute, as Putin was getting ready to board his plane in Moscow to fly to Chişinău to witness the signing, Voronin refused to sign. According to William Hill, the head of the OSCE mission to Moldova at the time, the "Kozak Memorandum and the manner in which the process played out did near-irreparable damage to the fraternal relationship between Moscow and Chişinău." Putin was furious. For the Russians, it was not only "a personal affront to their president" but also "a denial of Russia's right to play an independent political and diplomatic role in a part of the world that had been theirs exclusively." For many Russian politicians and analysts, these events "remain an early and important part of a pattern they claim to discern in Western behaviour, which they find to be evidence of an internal campaign to weaken Russia and displace its influence even in Russia's neighbours, former imperial possessions, and traditional friends."<sup>15</sup> The fiasco of the Kozak Memorandum also brought an end to Russia's willingness to complete the Istanbul accord. On the heels of the Kozak Memorandum, the Rose Revolution in Georgia (November 2003), the Orange Revolution in

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<sup>15</sup> William H. Hill, *Russia, the Near Abroad, and the West: Lessons from the Moldova-Transnistria Conflict*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012, XII, p. 161. An excellent study of the Kozak Memorandum and the events surrounding it. Fedor Lukyanov, *Konservatory i revizionisty* [Conservatives and revisionists], *Gazeta.ru*, July 30, 2015, <http://www.gazeta.ru/comments/column/lukyanov/7662353.shtml>, accessed July 28, 2016.

Ukraine (December 2004), and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan (April 2005), a zero-sum option tragically settled in as the only solution for rectifying major geopolitical disagreements between East and West.

Toward the end of February 2014, as the clashes between the Maidan protesters and the authorities became more violent and riot police began deserting their posts, Yanukovych fled Ukraine. Although Yanukovych was the democratically elected president, the US and the EU were jubilant when he fled. Prior to this, the EU and the US tried to work out a compromise settlement between Yanukovych and the protestors but to no avail. For Putin, the above events called for a bold stroke similar to Georgia in 2008. Over the next several weeks, Russian troops, in unmarked uniforms, took over the Crimea. This was quickly followed on March 16 by a dubious 96 percent referendum vote declaring separation from Ukraine. The next morning the Crimean Parliament requested "accession" to the Russian Federation, which was duly granted by the Kremlin on March 18.

The Moldovan government was especially worried with the country's entire northern, eastern, and southern frontier bordering Ukraine, including a sizable part under the control of Transnistria. With the takeover of Crimea, Russia became almost a neighbour of Moldova. The Moldovan government sympathized with the Maidan protesters and publicly criticized Russia's taking over the Crimea, but many Moldovans did not agree reflecting the country's polarization. According to the March-April 2014 BPO poll, to the question do you support the Maidan protesters in Ukraine, 37 percent of the respondents said yes while 36 percent said no, with 18 percent supporting the protesters "to a small extent." To the question, do you support incorporating Crimea into Russia, 40 percent answered yes and 43 percent no.<sup>16</sup> Although census figures show Moldovans make up 76 percent of the population, and the official language of the country is Moldovan (a dialect of Romanian), the population speak Moldovan or Russian or both, helping to explain why the Russian mass media, especially television, plays such an influential role in Moldova. According to the above poll, the chief source of information for the Moldovan population is television, with a whopping 82 percent rating.<sup>17</sup> The same poll rated the mass media as the second most trusted institution in the country with a rating of 61 percent, surpassed only by the church's 85 percent, and among the mass media television has the highest trust rating.<sup>18</sup> Next to the Moldovan me-

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<sup>16</sup> Institutul de Politici Publice, *Barometer of Public Opinion*, March-April 2014, pp. 85, 89.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 30. According to polls, 80 percent of Moldovans are Orthodox Christians.

dia, the Russian mass media is the most trusted in Moldova, especially among minority groups, adding to the sharply contrasting political views of Moldova's population.<sup>19</sup> Transnistria's media also adds to the anti-EU, anti-West spin on current events.

Transnistria has been the dominant threat to Moldova's territorial integrity since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Transnistria was not part of the historical homelands of the Romanian people. In Tsarist time, Bessarabia only extended to the western banks of the Dniester River, although many Romanian settled in territory east of the river, often referred to as Transnistria over the centuries. In the 1920s, Moscow sliced off a long sliver of land along the eastern banks of the Dniester River from Ukraine, officially dubbed it the Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR), as a jumping-off point for the eventual Soviet takeover of Moldova from Romania. Looped onto the rest of Moldova at the end of World War II, the MASSR (Transnistria), reflexing its highly diverse cultural and ethnical historical background, developed into Moldova's industrial heartland.<sup>20</sup> In 1990, the Russian Transnistrian elite, with their dominance endangered with the emergence of Moldovan sovereignty concurrent with the rise of a Moldovan elite, were able to hang on to popularity and power in Transnistria. In the spring of 1992, thanks to massive amounts of Russian military equipment and direct intervention in the fighting by the Russian 14<sup>th</sup> Army stationed around Tiraspol, Transnistria succeeded in holding onto its de facto independence. Today much of the population still work in heavy industry, unlike in agriculture on the other side of the Dniester.

Encouraged by Russia's swift, forceful takeover of Crimea, on March 17, the day after allegedly 97 percent of Crimean voters supported Crimea joining Russia, the Transnistrian parliamentary speaker, Mikhail Burla, went to Moscow with a request to join the Russian Federation as well. Drawing on the Crimean referendum as justification, Burla pointed to Transnistria's similar vote in 2006 that also claimed a 97 percent vote favouring accession to Russia! To join the Russian Federation, in April the Transnistrian Supreme Soviet formally asked the Russian government "to recognize the Transnistrian Moldovan Republic as a sovereign independent state," to be followed by Transnistria's accession to Russia.<sup>21</sup> To further

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>20</sup> King, *The Moldovans*, chaps. 4, 5.

<sup>21</sup> *Obrashcheniia Verkhovnogo Soveta PMR k Prezidentu, Gosdume, Sovetu Federatsii RF, OON, OBSE, Prezidentu PMR* [Appeals of the Supreme Council of the TMR to the President, State Duma, RF Federation Council, UN, OSCE, President of the TMR], Sait

justify joining Russia, Burla argued that the Moldovan authorities had introduced “restrictive economic measures” against Transnistria and that the Association Agreement posed a potential economic threat to Transnistria’s “living standards.”<sup>22</sup> To show Transnistria’s “massive” support for accession, the Transnistrian nongovernmental organization (NGO), Soiuz russkikh obshchin (Union of Russian Communities), collected over 185,000 signatures in two weeks for a petition urging Putin to recognize Transnistria’s independence. As the plane containing the lists of signatures, being personally carried to Moscow by Dmitrii Rogozin, deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation, stopped over in Chişinău, Moldovan authorities confiscated most of the lists after a search of the aircraft. Tiraspol also emphasized that Transnistria was part of “New Russia” (“Novorossiia”), name designating areas of the former Tsarist southern Russia conquered by Catherine the Great that Putin resurrected in 2014.

Given the geopolitical situation of Moldova and Ukraine, it was inevitable that Moldova would be caught up in the vortex of events in Ukraine in 2014. In March, Ukrainian authorities began cracking down on the entry of Transnistrians and Russian citizens from Transnistria along the lengthy Ukrainian-Transnistrian border fearing some intended to aid Ukrainian separatists. Transnistria’s exports also came under tighter border control, especially goods headed for Odessa, the hub for Transnistria’s international trade. Furious, both Russia and Transnistria denounced Ukraine as imposing a “blockade” against Transnistria, allegedly to “change the current format” or at “least make some major adjustment” to the “5+2” negotiation committee of the Moldovan-Transnistrian peace settlement, charged with maintaining peace and negotiating a final settlement between Moldova and Transnistria.<sup>23</sup> At the beginning of May, a bloody clash broke out in Odessa, a predominantly Russian speaking city, between pro-Russian and pro-Kievan demonstrators, with an assortment of local thugs on both sides, that left forty two dead. Moldovan and Ukrainian officials discovered

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Verkhovnego Soveta Pridnestrovskoi Moldavskoi Respubliki April 16, 2014. <http://www.vspmr.org/News/?ID=8843>, accessed September 21, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Virgiliu Bîrlădeanu, *The Annexation of Crimea and the Secessionist War in Eastern Ukraine: A View from the Republic of Moldova*, in “Sudosteuropa”, 62 (3/2014), p. 364.

<sup>23</sup> Sergey Markedonov, *3 reasons why Moldova could become the next Ukraine*, in “Russia Direct”, April 21, 2014, <http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/3-reasons-why-moldova-could-become-next-ukraine>. The committee was made up of Moldova, Transnistria, Russia, Ukraine, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which chair’s the negotiation process. In 2005 the EU and the US were added, but with the status of “observers.”

that armed agents from Transnistria not only had been trying to destabilize Odessa but also involved in attempted assassinations.<sup>24</sup> In spite of the potential damage to Transnistrian-Ukrainian relations, which Transnistria's basket case economy could ill afford, the seemingly endless procession of "freedom fighters" from Transnistria to southern Ukraine continued throughout the spring and summer of 2014. Among them were such local luminaries as Vladimir Antyufeyev, a creator of the Transnistrian KGB, who became the deputy prime minister of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) between July and September, along with two of his colleagues from the ministry of state security, Andrey Pinchuk and Oleg Bereza, also appointed to high positions in the DPR, and Alexander Karaman, vice president of Transnistria 1991-2001. Speculation also abounded about Crimea and Odessa being part of Putin's "New Russia" scheme to connect Transnistria with Russia via southern Ukraine, creating a "corridor" cutting Ukraine off from the Black Sea. On the positive side of Russia's takeover of Crimea for Moldova, Moldovan-Ukrainian relations rapidly warmed, which had been perennially lukewarm at best, ultimately giving the young Moldovan republic more control of its own borders.

At the time, few in the West believed Putin would be satisfied just annexing Crimea. Several days after Crimea's accession to Russia, and Transnistria's similar request, US Air Force General Philip Breedlove, both US European commander and NATO's supreme allied commander, warned the German Marshall Fund that Russia has amassed a "very sizable" force on the eastern Ukrainian border and is "very ready" to make a "run" to Transnistria, and "that is very worrisome."<sup>25</sup> A G7

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<sup>24</sup> Simion Ciochină and Robert Schwartz, *Das explosive Erbe der Sowjetzeit*, in "Deutsche Welle News", December 1, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/de/das-explosive-erbe-der-sowjetzeit/a-18886510>, accessed May 21, 2016; Kamil Calus, *The Ukrainian Crisis: A New Context for a Transnistrian Settlement*, in "Turkish Policy Quarterly", 13 (Fall 2014), pp. 71-78; *Grenades Found in Odesa on Anniversary of Deadly Clash*, RFE/RL, May 2, 2016, <http://www.rferl.org/content/odesa-ukraine-commemoration-grenades/27711221.html>, accessed May 8, 2016. According to officials of the Moldovan Prosecutor-General's Office money was the "main incentive" for Moldovans to fight on the side of the Russian backed separatists in Ukraine in 2014, who were hired as mercenaries by Russian backed separatists and paid in Russian rubles. *Moldova Indicts, Sentences Individuals Who Fought as Mercenaries in Ukraine*, RFE/RL, February 12, 2016, <http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-mercenaries-fighting-in-ukraine-sentenced/27549194.html>, accessed February 16, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Adrian Croft and Aleksandar Vasovic, *NATO commander warns of Russian threat to separatist Moldova region*, "World News", March 24, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-idUSBREA2M09920140324>, accessed November 25, 2016.

group meeting of industrial nations was “hastily convened” for the next day. In Washington, President Obama met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. Ukraine also feared that Russia might be planning on using Transnistria as a staging ground to invade Ukraine.<sup>26</sup> A recent study shows that the Transnistrian army had “considerable military potential”: a roughly 7,500 Russian trained military force, plus various paramilitary units, along with about 2,500 members of the Russian military, 400 as peacekeepers.<sup>27</sup> Russia had also launched a new military exercise near Ukraine’s border shortly before involving 8,500 artillery men.<sup>28</sup> “Moldova’s fate, or maybe even its existence as a sovereign state, is literally hanging in the balance,” warned Dimitri Trenin.<sup>29</sup> Although Transnistria was now the center of attention, others speculated that Putin had southeastern Ukraine in his sights with its sizable Russian speaking population and directly bordering Russia. Ironically, much of the speculations about Putin’s future goal seemed to see him as following some kind of a blueprint, and not as a practitioner of Realpolitik, a tough, shrewd statesman with many arrows in his quiver and ready to pick the one best suited for the moment, which also included doing nothing. Polls in recent years have no longer ranked unification with Transnistria a dominant issue for Moldovans. In the March-April 2014 BOP poll, to the question of ranking priorities for Moldova, the settlement of the Transnistrian conundrum tied for sixth out of eleven options.<sup>30</sup> Evidently, one reason why the Moldovan government still rated settling the Transnistrian dispute a top priority was pressure from the EU, determined to avoid another Cyprus.

Moscow’s bold gambits involving Transnistria during the winter and spring of 2014 forced the Moldovan government to formulate “more reserved policies”

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<sup>26</sup> Marcin Kosienkowski, *Ukraine and Transnistria: A Troubled Borderland*, in „New Eastern Europe” (September 29, 2014), <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1342-ukraine-and-transnistria-a-troubled-borderland>, accessed November 14, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Klemens Buscher, *The Transnistria Conflict in Light of the Crisis over Ukraine*, in Sabine Fischer (ed.), *Not Frozen!*, Berlin, SWP Research Paper, September 2016, pp. 31-32, [http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research\\_papers/2016PO9\\_fhs.pdf](http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2016PO9_fhs.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Ari Rusila, *Pridnestrovie and Gagauzia in the Context of Ukraine*, in “Voltaire Network”, April 4, 2014, <http://www.voltairenet.org/article183141.html>, accessed November 25, 2016.

<sup>29</sup> Dmitri Trenin, *Russian-Western Confrontation: Prepare for a Long Haul*, Carnegie Moscow Center, April 4, 2014, <http://carnegie.ru/2014/04/04/russian-western-confrontation-prepare-for-long-haul/h72z>, accessed April 16, 2014; Pal Kolsto, *Transnistria is a bridge too far for Russia*, oDR, June 11, 2014, [www.opendemocracy.net/odrussia/pal-kolsto/Transnistria](http://www.opendemocracy.net/odrussia/pal-kolsto/Transnistria), accessed May 5, 2016.

<sup>30</sup> *Barometer of Public Opinion*, March-April 2014, p. 23.

towards the EU and the West.<sup>31</sup> As usual, the US strongly backed Moldova, although it centred primarily around economic aid and programs to further Moldova's democratic development. Moldova's road to democracy has had its ups and downs; in 1999, President Clinton described Moldova "as a model" of democracy in Eastern Europe. Not considered crucial strategically, in the spring of 2014, Moldova's geopolitical significance suddenly shot up as a result of the widespread fear that Russia intended to grab the entire Ukrainian Black Sea littoral.<sup>32</sup> To the beginning of March 2014, the US gave Moldova over 1 ½ billion dollars in aid. In 2012, the US Congress upgraded Moldova's trade with the US to the status of "normal trade relations" by exempting Moldova from the old Cold War Jackson-Vanik amendment. In March 2014, Prime Minister Iurie Leancă visited Washington, where he met with President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden and other high US government officials, making clear that his government was "deeply concerned" with the situation in Ukraine. "We are in a very difficult situation," Leancă told Bloomberg News.<sup>33</sup> In addition to the US promising Moldova more aid under a ray of programs, along with trying to restore stability to the region, the US reiterated its pledge of strong support for Moldovan membership in the EU. For a small country, somewhat out of the way, the coming and going of high governmental officials between Washington and Chişinău seems rather surprising. At the end of March 2014, Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland visited Chişinău again, followed by a sizable US Congressional delegation, including Senator John McCain, who, several weeks before, had called for "faster integration of Georgia and Moldova" into NATO.<sup>34</sup> In May, Vlad Filat, the head of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Moldova's largest pro-Western party, visited Washington.

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<sup>31</sup> *Moscow's aggression forced Government of Moldova to formulate more reserved policies, opinion*, IPN Politics, January 14, 2017, <http://www.ipn.md/en/politica/81526>, accessed January 14, 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Georgia 2008, Ukraine 2014: Is Moldova Next?* May 6, 2014, [www.worldcat.org/title/georgia-2008-ukraine-2014-is-moldova-next-may-6-2014-briefing-of-the-commission-on-security-and-cooperation-in-europe/oclc/921883199](http://www.worldcat.org/title/georgia-2008-ukraine-2014-is-moldova-next-may-6-2014-briefing-of-the-commission-on-security-and-cooperation-in-europe/oclc/921883199), accessed July 7, 2016. Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace*, New York, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018, p. 405.

<sup>33</sup> *U.S. offers over \$7m in transition assistance to Moldova*, in „Moldova's news”, March 4, 2014, <http://www.allmoldova.com/en/moldova-news/1249057741.html>, accessed March 4, 2014; Palash Ghosh, *To Russia With Fear: Ukraine's Tiny, Impoverished Neighbor Moldova Also Worries About Moscow's Incursions*, in „International Business Times”, March 6, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.com/russia-fear-ukraine-tiny-impoverished-neighbor-moldova-also-worries-about-moscows-1559887>, accessed January 17, 2017.

<sup>34</sup> McCain, *Wants Faster NATO Integration of Georgia, Moldova*, RFE/RL, March 12, 2014,

As in the past, Russia turned down Transnistria's plea for accession; Russia apparently gave no answer at all. The TMR could do virtually nothing about Russia's decision. Due to Russia, Transnistria *de facto* statehood continues to exist. For Putin, the TMR is a pawn in Russia's zero-sum game with the West over ultimate control of the "near abroad." Leaving Transnistria in its "frozen" state is central to Putin's overall strategy of establishing Russia's sphere of influence over all of Moldova, perhaps by updating the Kozak Memorandum. In a recent article, Klemens Buscher pointed out that "Moscow appears to exercise decisive influence in questions of strategic importance, while leaving other matters largely to the local actors."<sup>35</sup> In 2014, Moldovans numbered 32 percent of Transnistria's population, Russians 30 percent, and Ukrainians 29 percent.<sup>36</sup> Transnistria has a semi-authoritarian presidential regime and is dependent economically and financially on Russia to keep the country afloat.<sup>37</sup> In spite of the cost to Russia of providing Transnistria, in essence, with free natural gas, numerous Russian financial and social services to help keep the Tiraspol government and military running and Transnistria on a par with the living standards in the rest of Moldova, or higher, along with overlooking local corruption, and the almost complete lack of foreign direct investments in the TMR, except by Russians, Russia feels the gamble worth it.<sup>38</sup>

**RUSSIA, MOLDOVA'S ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT WITH THE EU  
AND THE RISE OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA (PSRM)**

Hoping to prevent Moldova from signing the Association Agreement, since

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<http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/25294893.html>, accessed March 30, 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Buscher, *Transnistria Conflict*, p. 30.

<sup>36</sup> Ministry of Economic Development Pridnestrovian Moldovan Republic, *Annual Report 2014*, <http://www.mepmr.org/pechatnye-izdaniya/statisticheskij-ezhegodnik-pmr>. For an interesting article on the different views of Transnistrians' and Moldovans' on a number of issues see John O'Loughlin and others, *Divided space, divided attitudes? Comparing the Republics of Moldova and Pridnestrovie (Transnistria) using simultaneous surveys*, *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 54 (April 2013), pp. 227-258.

<sup>37</sup> Kolsto, *Transnistria is a bridge*, oDR, June 11, 2014, [www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/pal-kolsto/transnistria](http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/pal-kolsto/transnistria), accessed May 5, 2016.

<sup>38</sup> Kamil Calus, *An aided economy: The Characteristics of the Transnistrian economic model*, OSW Centre for Eastern Studies/Commentary, no. 108 (May 14, 2013), [www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2013-05-16/aided-economy-characteristics-transnistrian-economic-model](http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2013-05-16/aided-economy-characteristics-transnistrian-economic-model), accessed October 4, 2016.



the fall of 2013, Russia had intensified its efforts to destabilize the political situation in Moldova and cause the collapse of the pro-European coalition government. As in Transnistria, Russian policy also included making use of the pro-Russian attitude of the Gagauz by stoking fear of Moldova becoming part of Romania and the EU. The Gagauz are an Orthodox Christian, Turkic-speaking people numbering between 150,000-160,000 thousand, who finally agreed to become part of the Republic of Moldova in 1994 in return for special legal status as an Autonomous Territorial Unit within Moldova. Găgăuzia, or Gagauz Yeri (literally “the Gagauz Land”), is the poorest region of Moldova, with an agrarian economy heavily dependent on exports to Russia, especially wine, remittances from Russia, and Russian widely spoken. On February 2, 2014, the local Gagauzian authorities carried out two simultaneous referenda, which the Moldovan government declared illegal. In the first referendum, 98.5 percent of the Gagauz supported Moldova’s integration with the Russian Customs Union instead of the EU. In the second, 98 percent voted for Găgăuzia declaring its independence if Moldova and Romania unified. Local fear that Moldova would sign the Association Agreement acted as a catalyst for the referenda, which the Russians took advantage of with propaganda and money. Certainly, Russian policy of stirring up Gagauz’ fear of Moldova unifying with Romania played a role in these events, but according to Kamil Calus, a discerning observer of Moldovan politics, the real reason to hold the referenda appeared to be “linked to a power struggle” between the two dominant Gagauz political factions that saw it as an opportunity to weaken the other.<sup>39</sup>

Moldova’s precarious position continued well into the spring until it became clear that Russia’s military strategy focused primarily on south-eastern Ukraine. Undoubtedly, expressing the sentiment of many pro-Western Moldovans, in a press interview while in Washington Vlad Filat stated: “We have many challenges and most of these challenges involve pressure from Russia.”<sup>40</sup> On April 28, the EU abolished the visa requirement for Moldovans to travel in the Schengen zone, a

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<sup>39</sup> Kamil Calus, *Gagauzia: growing separatism in Moldova?*, OSW Commentary, (March 10, 2014), <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2014-03-10/gagauzia-growing-separatism-moldova>, accessed November 24, 2016; *Gagauziya vozobnovila postavki vina v Rossiya*, REGNUM.ru, March 25, 2014, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/polit/1782456.html>, accessed February 18, 2016.

<sup>40</sup> Josh Rogin, *Is This Putin’s Next Target?*, in „The Daily Beast”, May 23, 2014, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/05/23/is-this-putin-s-next-target.html>, accessed November 11, 2014.

long, sought after goal of Moldova's pro-EU coalition government. This made Moldova the first member state of the six EU Eastern Partnership states granted this concession. According to the March-April BPO poll, abolishing the visa requirement was generally supported by Moldovans. In response to the questions will you travel more often to the EU and why, 40 percent of the respondents said "for sure," or "probably," with 61 percent saying for tourism, followed by 42 percent to visit parents, and 41 percent to work.<sup>41</sup> To the question is the abolishment of the visa requirement important for you personally, 50 percent of the respondents replied "very important" or "important."<sup>42</sup> Also 35 percent of the respondents gave the Moldovan government credit for getting the EU to abolish the visa requirement, including a sizable percentage of most minority groups.<sup>43</sup> An additional attestation of the popular backing for abolishing the visa requirement was the volte-face of the PCRM, which had criticized the government for trying to abolish the visa requirement only to jump on the winning bandwagon after the EU gave its approval.

Despite Russia's deepening military involvement in southeastern Ukraine, during the spring and into the summer of 2014, Russian pressure continued unabated to stop Moldova from signing the Association Agreement. A number of high Russian officials warned Moldova of the "severe consequences" if they signed, along with raising the possibility of deporting many of the roughly 500,000 Moldovan migrant workers in Russia, which would have been a crippling blow to Moldova's economy since the money they sent back home amounted to roughly 25 percent of Moldova's GDP.<sup>44</sup> Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov bluntly warned Chişinău that joining the EU would end any chance of getting Transnistria back.<sup>45</sup> Russia's geopolitical arsenal also included the use of gas pricing for political purposes, and Moldova's almost complete dependency on Russian gas made Moldova an easy target that Russia had taken advantage of in the past. Although well over half of Moldova's exports in 2014 went to the EU, followed by Ukraine,

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<sup>41</sup> *Barometer of Public Opinion*, March-April 2014, pp. 70-71.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>44</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *Country Report Moldova*, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (2015), p. 32.

<sup>45</sup> Lavrov justified his view by claiming that "if Moldova is changing its military-political status...from neutral, the Transnistrians have the full right to decide their future on their own, and we'll defend this basic position." *Lavrov threatened Moldova with separation*, „WORLD, Mirror Weekly”, October 20, 2014, <http://www.mw.ua/WORLD/Lavrov-threatened-moldova-with-separation-188.html>, accessed August 9, 2017.

with Russia third with 18 percent, the bulk of Moldovan exports to Russia consisted of agricultural products, many perishable, with wine accounting for 28 percent of Moldova's agricultural exports to Russia.<sup>46</sup> In addition to Russia, Moldova's beleaguered government was faced with the challenges of the country's own internal problems, many of the government's own making, especially with parliamentary elections scheduled for November 2014.

The debate over signing the AA epitomized Moldova's polarized electorate with both the pro-EU and the pro-Customs Union respondents tied with each side getting 41 percent of the vote according to the March-April 2014 BPO poll.<sup>47</sup> Looking back to 2011, the March-April 2014 poll must have been especially disappointing for EU supporters-in the May 2011 BPO poll 64 percent of the respondent favoured joining the EU.<sup>48</sup> In analysing the EU's poor showing in the March-April BPO poll, critics, including the EU, placed much of the blame on the Moldovan government for having "done a poor job... of explaining the advantages of European integration to average Moldovans in rural areas," along with combating widespread misinformation.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, the EU sponsored a caravan, called "Europe for Everyone," to travel to a number of areas of Moldova from the end of April to July informing the locals of the benefits of European integration by setting up information tents in the centre of town and sponsoring public debates involving local leaders.<sup>50</sup> Along the same lines, the Liberal Reformist Party (PLR) also traveled around Moldova informing the locals about the AA and the EU under the slogan "I'm European."<sup>51</sup> The Ministry of Education organized a thematic week, "Lets discover Europe," and encouraged educational institutions to organize activities

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<sup>46</sup> Dunlop, *Why Russian wine ban*, BBC News, November 21, 2013, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24992076](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24992076), accessed November 24, 2016.

<sup>47</sup> *Barometer of Public Opinion*, March-April 2014, p. 62.

<sup>48</sup> *Barometrul Opiniei Publice*, Mai 2011, p. 122. See also Paul D. Quinlan, *Moldova's Slow, Tortuous Transition to Democracy as Seen from the Bottom Up*, in „Journal of Eurasian Studies”, 4, no. 2 (April-June 2012), p. 77. [www.federatio.org/joes.html](http://www.federatio.org/joes.html).

<sup>49</sup> Robert Coalson, *Tiny Moldova Faces Its East-West Moment of Truth*, RFE/RL, April 23, 2014, <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/25359464.html>, accessed May 30, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> *EU launches 'Europe for Everyone' caravan*, in „Moldova's news”, April 30, 2014, <http://www.allmoldova.com/en/moldova-news/1249058121.html>, accessed April 30, 2014; *Reintegration of Transnistria implies acceptance of compromises, opinion*, „Moldova's news”, May 21, 2014, <http://www.allmoldova.com/en/moldova-news/1249058239.html>, accessed May 24, 2014.

<sup>51</sup> *PLR campaign 'I'm European' covered 300 settlements*, in „Moldova's news”, April 30, 2014, <http://www.allmoldova.com/en/moldova-news/1249058127.html>, accessed April 30, 2014.

along the same line.<sup>52</sup> For the pro-Western Moldovan government, it was too little too late to seriously counterbalance the “huge information campaign” Moscow organized in promoting the Customs Union, which had been going on since the summer of 2013.<sup>53</sup>

In spite of the potentially dire consequences, the Moldovan government signed the AA on June 27, followed by parliament’s ratification on July 2, with a vote of 59 in favour in the 101 seat parliament, a major step in what pro-Western Moldovans hope will be full membership in the EU. The PCRM protested by walking out of the assembly hall prior to the voting.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, Russian pressure continued unabated. Not wasting any time, also on July 2, Moscow announced it would begin limiting its imports of Moldovan meat. This time Chişinău retaliated by “suspending the broadcasting license” of the Russian television news channel *Rossia-24* for six months, along with sanctioning four Moldovan broadcasters for airing programs from Russian stations.<sup>55</sup> Several weeks later Russia announced a ban on Moldovan fruits and berries, followed shortly after by adding canned vegetables to the list. In spite of Russia’s intense pressure on Moldova, including the threat of the loss of Transnistria, which Russia only wanted as a last resort, Putin’s overall policy toward Moldova failed to achieve its goal-to stop Moldova from moving closer to the West by signing the Association Agreement. Consequently, the Kremlin changed its tactics. With the Russian led offensive in South-eastern Ukraine coming to a standoff against the rapidly rejuvenated Ukrainian forces, and Putin’s dashed hopes of having the Ukrainian prize snatched from his hands after having beaten out the EU not long before, the need to prevent Moldova from also slipping into the arms of the EU must have been intense. Utilizing the upcoming Moldovan parliamentary elections to derail the pro-EU government, Russia’s new policy centred around supporting those political parties that favoured joining the Customs Union, especially the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM). It was a risky gamble to say the least.

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<sup>52</sup> *Pro-European flash mob meeting at Chişinău Lyceum ‘Gheorghe Asachi*, „Moldova’s news”, April 30, 2014, <http://www.allmoldova.com/en/moldova-news/1249058125.html>, accessed April 30, 2014.

<sup>53</sup> *Moldovan Foreign Minister Says Ukraine Crisis Has Led to Reevaluation of CIS*, RFE/RL, April 19, 2014, <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/25355432.html>, accessed May 30, 2014.

<sup>54</sup> *Association Agreement with EU ratified*, in „Moldova’s news”, July 2, 2014, <http://www.allmoldova.com/en/moldova-news/1249058371.html>, accessed July 4, 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Daisy Sindelar, *Moscow To Kyiv, Tbilisi, And Chişinău: EU Deals Will Cost You*, RFE/RL, July 6, 2014, <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/25447256.html>, accessed July 15, 2014.

Before Igor Dodon and Zinaida Greceanii defected from the PCRM in 2011 and joined the PSRM, the PSRM was just one of numerous small political parties that dotted Moldova's political landscape, never even having enough votes to elect a single candidate to parliament since its founding in 1997. Luckily for Dodon and Greceanii, both former high-ranking members (Greceanii, prime minister) of Voronin's government, now at the helm of the tiny PSRM, Putin saw them as Russia's best hope for the November elections.<sup>56</sup> According to the March-April 2014 BPO poll, respondents to the question if parliamentary elections were held next Sunday, 24 percent said they would vote for the PCRM, but only 1 percent said the PSRM.<sup>57</sup> Asked the same question in the November 2014 BPO poll, with Russian now backing the PSRM, the PSRM jumped to ten percent, while the PCRM slipped to 21 percent.<sup>58</sup> Although PCRM, under Voronin, refused to vote for the AA and supported the Customs Union, because of his mercurial personality and checkered past, Voronin is not well liked or trusted by Putin. Putin made no secret of his support for the avowedly pro-Customs Union, pro-Russian PSRM in the November Moldovan elections. At the beginning of November, Dodon and Greceanii went to Moscow for a highly publicized meeting with Putin. Subsequently, the Socialists used the photo op with the Russian leader, along with the phrase, "Together with Russia," for maximum political benefit by featuring it on their political billboards. The PSRM relied heavily on Putin's immense popularity in Moldova; their "trump card" as Moldovan freelancer Veaceslav Crăciun put it. Dodon also relied on his

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<sup>56</sup> Shortly after Dodon defected from the PCRM the Socialists elected him chairman of the PSRM. Greceanii would eventually become president of the party after Dodon was elected president of Moldova in November 2016.

In 2000 Moldova became a parliamentary democracy making it clear that the prime minister was the head of the executive branch of the government and not the president, who was now to be elected by parliament and not by popular vote as previously. In April 2001, following a landslide electoral victory by the PCRM giving them a commanding seventy-one seats in the 101-seat parliament, the Communists elected their leader Voronin president of the republic. Voronin, who had tight control over the party, treating it as his own private fiefdom, preferred to use the title president instead of prime minister. For the office of prime minister, he simply filled it with one of his top lieutenants.

In 2009 a coalition of parties opposed to the Communist came to power forcing Voronin to step down as president. The new prime minister became the head of state per decree of parliament in 2000. In 2016, however, the Constitutional Court ruled the law adopted in 2000 unconstitutional reverting to the direct election of the president.

<sup>57</sup> *Barometer of Public Opinion*, March-April 2014, p. 48.

<sup>58</sup> *Barometrul Opiniei Publice*, Octombrie-Noiembrie 2014, p. 50.

“Russian friends” in helping him devise his strategy for the elections. How significant Russia’s involvement on the side of the PSRM would be for the Socialists in the election was a topic of much debate in the Moldovan media.<sup>59</sup> Some writers claimed Dodon was a “Russian agent.”

Adding to the intrigue of the upcoming parliamentary elections, billed as a “decisive election for the future of Moldova, absolutely and unquestionably,” was the entry of a new pro-Russian political party, “Patria” (Homeland), set up in April 2014 by political newcomer Renato Usatîi, a Moldovan who returned home after making his fortune in Russia. Usatîi conducted a Western-style campaign with his chief focus on fighting corruption and the political establishment, highlighted by concerts featuring some of Russia’s biggest pop stars like Iosif Kobzon. Critics labelled him a Russian tool and agent.<sup>60</sup> Usatîi’s popularity skyrocketed overnight. According to an unpublished poll by the US National Democratic Institute, 18 percent of the electorate said they would support him, while according to the November BPO poll, 10 percent said they would vote for Usatîi.<sup>61</sup> In any case, suddenly Patria was scratched from the ballot. Several days before the elections, the Moldovan Central Election Commission asked that the party be removed from the race for using foreign (Russian) funds (\$530,000) in its campaign, which is illegal, but common in Moldova.<sup>62</sup> The Appeals Court formally disqualified Patria the next day. The pro-Russian forces lambasted the government for its underhanded tactics, with the EU also sharing the blame, which the opposition saw working hand-in-hand with the government. Actually, the disqualification surprised and embarrassed the EU, suspecting the hand of the government being behind it. The degree of Russian involvement with Patria remains unanswered. The Moldovan government also came under sharp criti-

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<sup>59</sup> Veaceslav Crăciun, ‘Euro-integrationists’ Dodon and Putin, IPN, November 5, 2014, <http://www.ipn.md/en/integrare-europeana/65566>, accessed November 5, 2014.

<sup>60</sup> Valentina Ursu and Robert Coalson, *East or West? Divided Moldova’s Tense Election Season Comes Down to The Wire*, RFE/RL, November 27, 2014, <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/26713779.html>, accessed March 27, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> Marc Champion, *Russia’s Project Moldova*, in „Bloomberg View”, November 24, 2014, <http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2014-11-24/russias-project-moldova>, accessed November 28, 2014.

<sup>62</sup> Valentina Ursu, *East or West?*, RFE/RL, November 27, 2014, <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/26713779>, accessed March 27, 2015; Zarina Alimbaeva, *Moldova’s Elections as Tug-of-War*, “Transitions Online (TOL)”, November 27, 2014, <http://www.tol.org/client/article/24581-moldovas-elections-as-tu>. Accessed December 2, 2014.

cism for ignoring perennial problems. Leading the list was the government's alleged stalling in the adoption and implementation of reforms, especially judicial reforms, according to many because the government itself was corrupt. Critics also attacked the government for the bitter infighting among the leaders of the member parties of the pro-Western coalition government, government scandals, and the endless low standard of living of many Moldovans, especially those living in rural areas where grinding poverty was common. In many ways, the Moldovan government was its own worst enemy.

While the PSRM were expected to do well in the November parliamentary elections, the winning of more votes than any other single political party was a surprise. The PSRM recorded 20.5 percent of the vote, giving them 25 seats in parliament, slightly better than the LDP that received 20.2 percent of the vote and 23 seats in parliament. The PCRM went from being the largest political party in Moldova to placing third with 17.5 percent of the vote. The PSRM picked up a sizable number of votes from the banned Patria, along with many former PCRM supporters. The "Russian factor," no doubt, was a crucial reason behind the PSRM success. Nevertheless, the pro-Western government (including the pro-Western Liberal Party) still managed to receive a plurality of the popular vote and 55 seats in parliament, a loss of 4 seats in parliament won in the previous parliamentary election in 2011, allowing the pro-Western parties to continue their control of parliament. In addition to the PCRM, the EU also suffered a setback, especially as the PSRM openly supported the Russian Customs Union, rejecting the EU, in spite of the enormous amount of money and effort the EU had spent on Moldova over the previous decade.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, the unexpected size of the vote for the PSRM, making them the largest political party in Moldova, was a political "game changer," in that it marked not only the resurgence of the pro-Russian forces, but also a party led by a new pro-Russian political elite. Russia was a big winner. The Russians now have a political party they are counting on to eventually enable them to achieve a sphere of influence over Moldova, perhaps by updating the Kozak Memorandum, which they have referred to on a number of occasions since 2003 as the way to settle the Transnistrian conundrum. The Russians are no fools, and will adjust and differentiate their policies based on the reality of the situation on the ground at any given time. The PSRM is beholden to Russia, markedly more pro-Russian than

Voronin, as well as dependent on Russian support in the future. Concurrently, despite intense pressure and threats from Moscow and Moldovan pro-Customs Union supporters, the pro-EU Moldovan government stuck to its guns and signed the Association Agreement. By the end of 2014, with a rejuvenated pro-Customs Union party taking the lead, and the reenergized pro-EU forces after achieving a major victory with the signing of the Association Agreement, both sides were optimistic of their ultimate victory. As shown, the Ukrainian crisis had a serious impact on Moldova politically by further polarizing an already highly polarized Moldova. Polarization is dangerous, and should not be shrugged off as somewhat normal for a country, especially a new country, at least in the short run.

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## RISING MIDDLE POWERS: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MIKTA COUNTRIES

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**Abstract.** *With the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the structure of the liberal economic order and its institutions have undergone a great transformation. Since the global financial crisis in 2008, some Asian and Latin American countries draw attention with their rapidly growing economic performances raising big debates over "the West and the rest" discourse. On the other hand, the matter and the uncertainty of the conceptualisation and identification of these new rising powers have been generally ignored. In order to identify rising middle powers, not only their material capacities but also the roles they assign for themselves in international politics (identity definitions) and global policy behaviours are significant determinants. These countries have an important status in the international arena by combining their "positional" (material powers) and "behavioral" (ideological power, policies they pursue) powers. MIKTA members can play a more active role in foreign policy thanks to their material (military, economic, GDP, geographical location, diplomatic capacity...) and ideational (soft power, effectiveness) power capacities. However, after seven years of its establishment, the effectiveness, credibility, and legitimacy of the group have come under question by some analysts. In this backdrop, this paper attempts to compare the potentials of MIKTA countries with material and behavioural patterns that are related to middle power concepts and seeks to find trends in growth or decline in these five countries and to assess MIKTA's prospects on its sustainability.*

**Keywords:** *Rising Middle Powers, G20, MIKTA, economic performance, hard power, soft power.*

**Rezumat:** *Puteri medii în ascensiune: analiza comparativă a țărilor MIKTA. Începutul secolului XXI a adus cu sine mari transformări în structura ordinii economice liberale și a instituțiilor sale. Odată cu criza financiară mondială din 2008, unele țări asiatice și latino-americane au atras atenția asupra performanțele lor economice crescânde, generând astfel dezbateri asupra temei „Occidentul și ceilalți”. Pe de altă parte, problema și incertitudinea conceptualizării și identificării acestor noi puteri în ascensiune au fost, în general, ignorate. Factorii determinanți semnificativi în identificarea puterilor medii aflate*

în ascensiune se referă nu numai la capacitățile lor materiale, ci și la comportamentele politice globale sau la rolurile pe care și le însușesc în politica lor externă (privite ca definiții identitare). Aceste țări au un statut important pe arena internațională prin combinarea puterilor „de poziție” (materiale) și „comportamentale” (ideologii, politici) pe care le urmăresc. Membrii MIKTA pot juca un rol mai activ în politica externă datorită capacităților lor de „puteri materiale” (implicând aspecte militare, economice, PIB, de așezare geografică și capacitate diplomatică) și „ideatice” (exprimată prin soft-power, eficacitate). Cu toate acestea, la șapte ani de la înființare, unii analiști au pus sub semnul întrebării eficacitatea, credibilitatea și legitimitatea grupului. Într-un asemenea context, această lucrare încearcă să compare potențialul țărilor MIKTA cu tiparul material și comportamental specific unei „puteri medii”, identificând tendințe de creștere sau declin în cele cinci țări membre și evaluând perspectivele MIKTA referitoare la sustenabilitatea acesteia.

## INTRODUCTION

Recently, we have been witnessing a significant debate in the global arena on the continuing power transition arising in the international system on behalf of rising powers which have begun to play a substantial role from the dominant powers and to assume on new responsibilities in a major international organisation to change the international system following their values, plans and interests.<sup>1</sup> In this transformation process, the global financial crisis that emerged in the United States in 2008 deeply affected the global economy at short notice. It became a critical breaking point that has led to a diffusion of power from the Western powers to the global South and exerted immense pressure on the existing world order. Two significant trends have shaped the course of this transformation since the crisis broke out. First of all, some of the analysis claimed that the developed Western powers' ability to maintain economic growth and reflect their political and economic forces at the international level have begun to diminish. Second, the countries that managed to overcome the crisis with relatively mild damages and started to become more active in the global economy by increasing their share in world production became the worldwide economy's dynamo.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Emel Parlar Dal, *On Turkey's Trail as a "Rising Middle Power" in the Network of Global Governance: Preferences, Capabilities, and Strategies*, in "Perceptions", Vol. XIX, 2014, No. 4, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> Ziya Öniş and Mustafa Kutlay, *Demokratik BRICS Ülkeler: Küresel Yönetişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, 2011, p. 20, in [https://www.academia.edu/19557328/Ziya\\_%C3%96ni%C5%9F\\_ve\\_Mustafa\\_Kutlay\\_Demokratik\\_BICS\\_%C3%9Ckeler\\_K%C3%BCresel\\_Y%C3%B6n\\_eti%C5%9Fimin\\_Yeni\\_Akt%C3%B6rleri](https://www.academia.edu/19557328/Ziya_%C3%96ni%C5%9F_ve_Mustafa_Kutlay_Demokratik_BICS_%C3%9Ckeler_K%C3%BCresel_Y%C3%B6n_eti%C5%9Fimin_Yeni_Akt%C3%B6rleri), (Accessed on 12.06.2020).

In such circumstances, middle powers have taken the opportunities of room for manoeuvre and new status at regional and international arenas defined with several concepts such as "multi-multilateralism, minilateralism, and the rise of informals or the GX world".<sup>3</sup> Rising non-western states are more active in their foreign policies and strong in their region and can be role models. They are willing to increase their voice and presence in international decision-making mechanisms in line with their increasing economic weight.<sup>4</sup> Given the current developments, growth and potentials of these dynamic countries, according to many analysts, these countries will be the biggest rivals to the developed countries, especially to the hegemony of America-Western Europe in the coming years. Within this context, a new group of middle powers under the name of MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia) is an example of such informal gatherings.

This study aims to analyse various aspects of MIKTA. Within these frameworks, first, I will present a summary of how and why MIKTA was established. Following this, I will mention about general characteristics and basic facts about the group. Then, I will compare and contrast the group members within the scope of their material capability dimension. Finally, I will discuss the group's impact on the global scene and analyse their potentials and limitations in strengthening global governance and the grouping prospects.

## 1. MIKTA: RISE AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

MIKTA was initiated by the foreign ministers of Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia at the 68th meeting of the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2013. The group is considered as a consultation and coordination platform rather than as a formal organisation.<sup>5</sup> The South Korean Foreign Minister described MIKTA as "a middle-power grouping that has common basic values of democracy and free-market economy and desire and has the capacity to promote to the progress of the international community." They also share the view that

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<sup>3</sup> Stewart M. Patrik and Asley Feng, *MIKTA in the Middle: A Little-Known Multilateral Group Turns Five, 2018*, in <https://www.cfr.org/blog/mikta-middle-little-known-multilateral-group-turns-five> (Accessed on 18.05.2020).

<sup>4</sup> Ziya Öniş and Mustafa Kutlay, op. cit., p. 20; Gilford John Ikenberry, *The end of liberal international order?*, "International Affairs", Vol. 94, 2018, No. 1, p.19.

<sup>5</sup> Sook-Jong Lee, Chaesung Chun, Hyejung Suh, Patrick Thomsen, *Middle Power in Action: The Evolving Nature of Diplomacy in the Age of Multilateralism*. 2015, p. 7, EAI Middle Power Diplomacy Initiative (MPDI), East Asia Institute, <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/191150/30.04.2015.pdf> (Accessed on 22.06.2020).

strong political leadership is necessary to overcome core international problems in the coming years. In this context, they are unique to enable international negotiation and collaboration and bring new perspectives and offer solutions as key economic middle powers.<sup>6</sup>

MIKTA states are all the members of the G20, and they have a relatively similar GDP. All of MIKTA states, except Indonesia, hosted the G20 summits held after the 2008 fiscal crisis. South Korea hosted the G20 meeting in 2010; Mexico in Los Cabos in 2012; Australia in Brisbane in 2014, and Turkey in Antalya in 2015.<sup>7</sup> In this context, these new middle powers have the opportunity to gather around the same table with the developed states and bring new issues in the global governance discussions.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, MIKTA members state that they do not aim to form an exclusive bloc, but seek to develop interaction in social and cultural fields by first strengthening economic ties.

Although MIKTA does not have a formal status yet, the group members serve as bridges in several policy spheres, mainly between developed and developing nations; rather than being a threat, they deal with global issues and act as a representative of their regions or similar countries.<sup>9</sup> MIKTA states aim to work together with non-member countries, regional consultative groups and international organisations, and in the end, open up the opportunity of enlarging its membership. Briefly, four remarkable common characteristics of MIKTA countries can be concealed as follows:<sup>10</sup>

- They have an active role in their regions,
- They belong to the traditional and developing middle powers, none of them is a great or small power,

<sup>6</sup> Mo Jongryn, *Introduction: G20 Middle Powers (MIKTA) and Global Governance*, pp. 1-13, in Mo Jongryn (Ed.), *MIKTA, Middle Powers, and New Dynamics of Global Governance. The G20's Evolving Agenda*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Selçuk Çolakoğlu, *MIKTA's Role in the G20*, 2016, in <http://www.asianpacificcenter.org/mikta-s-role-in-the-g20.html> (Accessed on 19.05.2020).

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Fenton Cooper, Emel Parlar Dal, *Positioning The Third Wave Of Middle Power Diplomacy: Institutional Elevation, Practice Limitations*, "International Journal", Vol. 71, 2016, No. 4, p.523.

<sup>9</sup> Erdal Tanas Karagöl, *Kıtalar Arası Ekonomik İşbirliği: MIKTA*, "Seta Perspektif", 2014, No. 62, p.2; Jorge A. Sciavon and Diego Domínguez, *Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia (MIKTA): Middle, Regional, and Constructive Powers Providing Global Governance*. Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies, Vol. 3, 2016, No. 3, p. 496.

<sup>10</sup> Erdal Tanas Karagöl, *op. cit.*, p. 1.



- They adopt the open economic model structure,
- They are managed by a pluralist system despite having different regimes.

As of April 2020, the MIKTA group has held 16 meetings of the foreign ministers, 8 meetings of senior officials, and five speakers' consultation. MIKTA countries have adopted seven core areas of collaboration listed as follows: Good Governance and Democracy Counterterrorism, Trade and the Economy, Sustainable Development, Gender Equality, UN Peacekeeping Operations, Energy Governance.<sup>11</sup> The key strength of the group that can be operationalised to meet its objectives associate with its material capabilities mentioned in the mission statement of the group. They are democracies that can take advantage of being open economies with robust economic growth rates and are strategically situated and strongly connected to their surrounding areas in all extents.<sup>12</sup>

MIKTA members are important economic powers and play pivotal strategic roles and substantially affect their respective regions. In 2019, the combined GDP of MIKTA countries 6.1 trillion equalled approximately 7.3% per cent of the global GDP. All of them constitute a quarter of the biggest economy in the world within the G20. They range between the world's twelfth to nineteenth largest economies in terms of GDP, and they can raise their rankings in the future as they are growing at a faster rate than many in the top 10. For instance, Goldman Sachs has foreseen that Mexico may become the 5th largest economy by 2050, and a PWC report predicted that if current growth rates are continuing, Indonesia will be the 7th largest economy by 2030, and 4th by 2050; Turkey may rank among the top 10 as well as Australia and Korea.<sup>13</sup>

MIKTA countries totalise population 553 million that equals approximately 7.3% of the world's population as of 2019. Their population structures differ significantly, a determinant which will always influence each country's course of the economy. Indonesia is the most populous country among MIKTA countries and ranks 5th globally with a population of 270.3 million. Mexico has a population of almost 130 million; South Korea has a population of nearly 52 million, and Turkey has a population of 83 million. Australia is the fifth country with a total population of 25 million among MIKTA countries.

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<sup>11</sup> MIKTA, *New Innovation Partnership*, p. 7-8, in <http://www.mikta.org/web/viewer.html?file=/images/2020%20MIKTA%20Booklet.pdf> (Accessed on 06.06.2020).

<sup>12</sup> MIKTA Foreign Ministers, *MIKTA Vision Statement*, in <http://www.mikta.org/about/vision.php> (Accessed on 10.12.2020).

<sup>13</sup> Julia Bishop, *Address to MIKTA outreach event*, 2015, in <https://www.foreignminister.gov.au/minister/julie-bishop/speech/address-mikta-outreach-event> (Accessed on 06.06.2020).

As mentioned, MIKTA has its origins in the G20. Still, the five-member states do not only belong to G20, but they are also members of many other important international organisations, like the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank (WB), and the OECD excluding Indonesia who will join sooner. Only Turkey belongs to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the group. It must be highlighted at this point that five MIKTA countries have had non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council in the last decade. Their presence in such bodies indicates that MIKTA members have found the opportunity to cooperate with these multilateral organisations and have a voice in the decision-making procedures.<sup>14</sup>

The MIKTA members have different features and characteristics and are geographically far from each other. Australia lies between the Pacific and Indian oceans. Mexico is positioned between North and South America; Turkey is a bridge between Europe and Asia; Indonesia is a portal to South-East Asia's hotbed, and South Korea is situated between China and Japan.<sup>15</sup> Cooper states that MIKTA is located in a large territory, including the Asia Pacific, the Middle East, and the Americas.<sup>16</sup> With this diverse geographical reach, MIKTA countries have the chance to engage actively in chosen niche areas in distinct geographies.<sup>17</sup>

MIKTA states exemplify a multi-cultural character in terms of language, culture, and tradition as well. Indonesia and Turkey are members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and possess a predominantly Muslim social structure. Australia is widely regarded as Protestant, and Mexico has mainly Catholic population. Buddhism and Christianity are supposed to be prevalent in South Korea. Despite all these differences, they are consolidating democratic processes, and they are all free-market economies and conform the rules for fair global governance.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Emel Parlar Dal, Ali Murat Kurşun, *Assessing Turkey's middle power foreign policy in MIKTA: Goals, means, and impact*. "International Journal", Vol. 71, 2016, No.4, p. 614.

<sup>15</sup> Gilbert Rozman, *The Sino-U.S. National Identity Gap, Australia, and the Formation of an Asia-Pacific Community*. "Asian Survey", Vol. 54, 2014, No. 2, p. 364; Antonio Missiroli and Domhnall O'Sullivan, *BRICS - the next layer*, "European Union Institute for Security Studies", 2013, Vol. 38, p. 2, in [https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISS\\_Files/Alert\\_38\\_Next\\_BRICS.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISS_Files/Alert_38_Next_BRICS.pdf), (Accessed on 19.05.2020).

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Fenton Cooper, *MIKTA and the global projection of middle powers: Toward a summit of their own?*, "Global Summitry", Vol. 1, 2015, No. 1, p.109.

<sup>17</sup> Emel Parlar Dal, Ali Murat Kurşun, *op. cit.*, p. 614.

<sup>18</sup> Fahamu Networks for Social Justice. *MIKTA: A global vision of middle powers*, in

Although MIKTA members are entirely different from each other in terms of histories, contexts, demands, potentials and futures,<sup>19</sup> there are remarkable similarities in such a diverse grouping. They can still hold similar views underlining their common traits. Their political and diplomatic wishes and the similar perspectives that collaborating with other like-minded nations is the best bet to stand for their interests and influence critical global issues to increase their posture.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. ANALYSING MIKTA COUNTRIES MIDDLE POWER ROLES (2009-2019)

### 2.1. Material Capabilities Dimension

To understand better this group, the central common features and key differences will be analysed regarding economic potentials, international trade, and some soft power indicators. The required data will be derived from the World Bank, the United Nations and OECD datasets. As it is challenging to keep track of all available statistics, following economic dimensions will be used for analysing the comparative performances of MIKTA countries:

- Economic Growth
- GDP
- GDP per capita
- Inflation Rate
- Unemployment Rate
- International Trade (Imports and Exports)
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
- General Government Net Debt
- Human Development Index (HDI)

While these properties include economic dimensions of MIKTA countries, they manifest the systemic and domestic structures too.

#### 2.1.1 GDP of the MIKTA Countries

The MIKTA members have been called "rising middle powers" as they are

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[http://www.fahamu.org/ep\\_articles/mikta-a-global-vision-of-middle-powers/](http://www.fahamu.org/ep_articles/mikta-a-global-vision-of-middle-powers/),  
(Accessed on 07.06.2020).

<sup>19</sup> Ramesh Thakur, *How Representative are BRICS?*, "Third World Quarterly", Vol. 35, 2014, No. 10, pp. 1791-1808.

<sup>20</sup> Belma Engin, Gürol Baba, *MIKTA: A Functioning Product of "New" Middle Power-ism?*, "Review of International Law & Politics", Vol. 11, 2015, No. 42, p. 30.

not equal to the developed and biggest economies of the G7, but are remarkably more advanced than the developing countries.<sup>21</sup> South Korea is the 12th largest economy in the G20 and ranked 4th in Asia with a nominal GDP of \$1.64 trillion in 2019. The South-Korean society was among the world's poorest countries, but it has shown a spectacular rise and became a high-income country. Considering its small geographical area, scarce natural resources, and population size, South Korea has given particular importance to technological progress and innovation to ensure growth and become a hi-tech, an urban and industrialised country.<sup>22</sup> In terms of GDP per capita, with a value of 31846 U.S. dollars in 2019 above the world average (15222.64 U.S. dollars), South Korea ranked 31st among 176 countries.

Mexico is the second-largest economy in Latin America. It ranks 15th largest economy on the global map with a nominal GDP of 1268 billion US dollars as of 2019 and abundant natural resources. With GDP per capita of 9946 current US dollars, the country ranked 67th in 2019. Australia, the world's one of the significant energy and food exporters, is the 14th-biggest economy with a value of 1396 billion US dollars in terms of GDP. However, it is the wealthiest nation of Southeast Asia with a GDP per capita of 55060 US dollars as of 2019, and it achieved on average and ranked 11th in the world. Indonesia has a nominal GDP of 1.11 trillion. The country ranks 16th globally and is the largest economy in Southeast Asia and is the biggest economy in Southeast Asia. Although Indonesia suffered enormously from the 1997 Asian fiscal crisis, its economy has shown impressive growth over the last two decades. For GDP per capita, the value for Indonesia in 2019 is 4135 U.S. dollars. For comparison, among 176 countries, the country ranked 108th in 2019. Turkey is the world's 19th largest economy with its \$761 billion GDP. Concerning GDP per capita, the latest value of 2019 is 9126 U.S. dollars, putting the country on the 70th position among 176 countries.

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<sup>21</sup> Gordon Flake, Xu Wang, *MIKTA: The Search for a Strategic Rationale*, 2017, p. 8, in <https://perthusasia.edu.au/getattachment/Our-Work/MIKTA-The-Search-For-A-Strategic-Rationale/MIKTA-report-June-2017.pdf.aspx?lang=en-AU> (Accessed on 06.06.2020).

<sup>22</sup> Nordea Trade Portal, *South Korea: Economic and Political Overview*, in <https://www.nordeatrade.com/fi/explore-new-market/south-korea/economical-context> (Accessed on 12.06.2020).

Table 1: GDP of the MIKTA Countries in 2009-2019<sup>23</sup>

Country	Rank in World 2019	GDP (current price); \$ billion		Share in World GDP (%)		GDP per capita (\$)	
		2009	2019	2009	2019	2009	2019
Mexico	15	900	1268	1.49	1.44	8003	9946
Indonesia	16	539	1119	0.90	1.23	2261	4135
Korea, Rep.	12	943	1646	1.57	2.02	19143	31846
Turkey	19	649	761	1.07	0.91	9103	9126
Australia	14	927	1396	1.54	1.69	42772	55060
Total	--	3.958	6.190	6,57	7.29	--	--

### 2.1.2 GDP Growth Rate

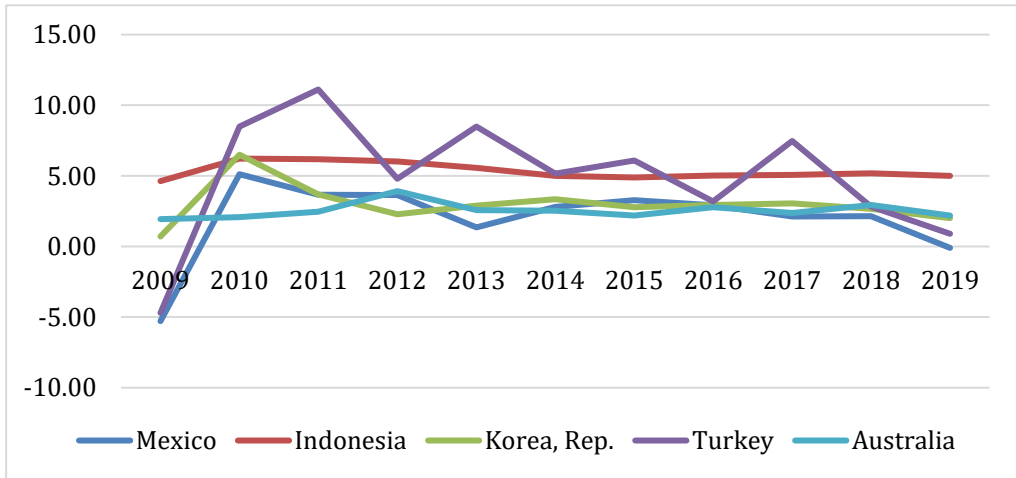
The MIKTA countries have experienced relatively fast GDP growth for over a decade. While most of the world countries were in the grip of the global financial crisis in 2009, three of the MIKTA members, Australia, Korea, and Indonesia were able to achieve growth. On the other hand, the crisis deeply affected Mexico and Turkey, but they made significant progress in the following years. During the global financial crisis in 2008, South Korea sustained a stable economy and even experienced an economic boost at the peak of the generalised decline. However, the country could not achieve its growth rates before the global financial crisis. The government managed the problem well and showed the fastest recovery among OECD members.<sup>24</sup> Mexico has underperformed in terms of growth, compared to similar countries over the last three decades. In 2019, Mexico growth rate was -0.15%, a 2.28% decline from 2018. The Australian economy grew by 2.2% between 2018-19. Indonesia's economic growth averaged 5.4 per cent a year, and the latest value in 2019 is 5%. Between 2009 and 2019, Turkey's annual economic growth averaged 4.9%. In 2019, the economy registered a 0.9% growth

<sup>23</sup> The World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, in <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators> (Accessed on 12.06.2020).

<sup>24</sup> Jong-Wha Lee, *The Republic of Korea's Economic Growth and Catch-Up: Implications for the People's Republic of China*. ADBI Working Paper, 2016, No. 571, in <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/183353/adbi-wp571.pdf> (Accessed on 15.05.2020).

below the world average. However, Turkey is predicted to participate with the trillion-dollar club as of 2023.

Economic performances of the MIKTA countries differ as Indonesia, Australia, and Korea have steady growth rates while Mexico and Turkey's growth seem to be mainly unstable. However, the gap and difference between growth rates of MIKTA countries have begun to decimate recently.



**Figure 1. GDP Growth Rates (%) of MIKTA Countries in 2009-2019<sup>25</sup>**

### 2.1.3. Inflation

One main difference among the MIKTA economies is that Turkey and Indonesia have comparatively high inflation (consumer prices) during the given period. However, Indonesia achieved relatively low levels of inflation rates since 2015. In 2019, the annualised inflation rate in the country was 3%. Turkey released the highest inflation rate, with 16.3% in 2018. The latest value for Turkey, in 2019, is 15.2%. Mexico inflation rate for 2019 was 3.64%.

The inflation in Korea climbed 1.5 per cent in 2018, that is the third-year inflation has hovered in the 1 per cent range. The latest value in 2019 is 0.4%. Considering the average for that indicator in 2019 based on 149 countries was 3.8 per cent, and South Korea's value below the government estimate of 1.6 per cent and the central bank's target of around 2.0 per cent, the country is efficacious in maintaining low levels of inflation. Inflation in Australia was reported at 1.6 % in

<sup>25</sup> The World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, in <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators> (Accessed on 12.06.2020).

2019. Although Australia's inflation rate fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to decrease through the 2000s.

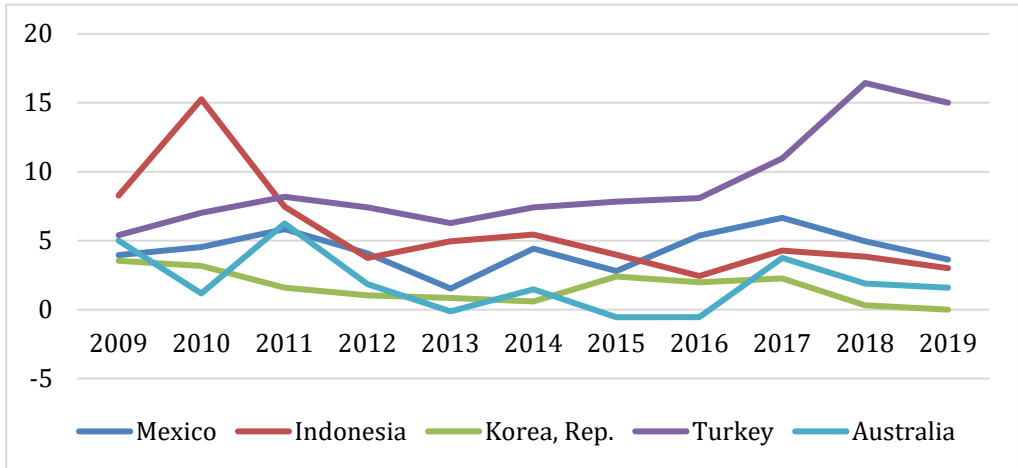


Figure 2. Inflation of MIKTA Countries in 2009-2019<sup>26</sup>

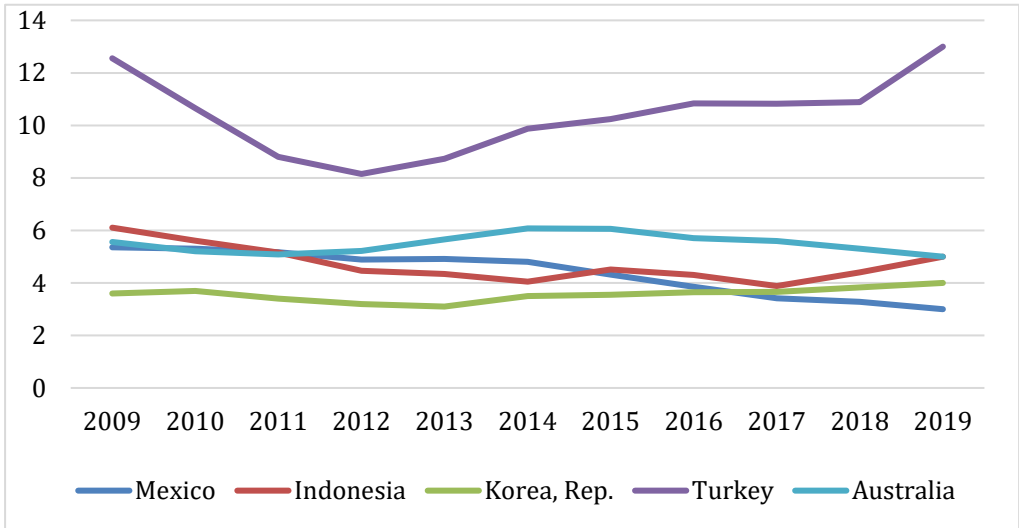
### 2.1.4. Unemployment

In 2009, when the global financial crisis reached its peak, Turkey, Australia, and Mexico encountered growing unemployment rates. Even though Turkey's unemployment rate has begun to recede below its pre-crisis level, the country has got to fight against relatively high inflation, as it was at a level of 13% in 2019. The unemployment rate in Indonesia has continued to decline, even during the time of the crisis. South Korea's average unemployment rate has been remaining at a level of 3%. The country's unemployment rate in 2019 was 4.15%. Given the average in 2018 based on 182 countries was 7.07 per cent, the unemployment rate was low in the country that ranked 128th. The unemployment rate in Mexico was accounted for 3.42% in 2019, slightly upper from the rate in 2018 (3.28%). Australia recorded a 5% unemployment rate in 2019. The unemployment rate in Indonesia was 4.69%.

### 2.1.5. International Trade

International trade is a significant factor for the economies of the MIKTA countries as they all are important traders in the world. Nevertheless, the structure and management of trade among MIKTA countries are different. Australia and Indonesia mainly export agricultural products. Korea and Mexico import

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



**Figure 3. Unemployment Rates of MIKTA Countries in 2009-2019  
(% of Total Labour Force)<sup>27</sup>**

farming goods. Korea and Turkey import fuels, minerals, and commodities while Australia is a crucial exporter of them. Korea and Mexico exports also manufactured goods. South Korea is among the world's top ten importers and exporters. The country imported 542 billion US\$ worth of goods and services in 2019 and shipped 503 billion US\$ worth of goods around the globe. The import of Mexico in goods and services from around the world is valued at US\$460 billion as of 2019. The United States purchased nearly half (44.1 %) of Mexico's total imports by value in 2019. On the other hand, Mexico exported US\$467 billion worth of goods and services. The top three export destinations of Mexico are the United States, Canada, and China. On the other hand, as Mexico is a key exporter of oil, it is a market open to the world. Australia shipped an overall US\$270 billion worth of goods around the world as of 2019. 67.9% of products exported from Australia were bought by importers in China (38.7% of the global total), Japan, Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Australia's imports totalled US\$221 billion in 2019. Indonesia shipped US\$167 billion worth of goods around the globe, and the country's imports totalled US\$170 billion in 2019. Turkey's exports of goods and services accounted for US\$180 billion, and its imports of goods valued at US\$210 billion in 2019.

Trade openness measured by the sum of imports and exports as a percentage of GDP indicates that all MIKTA members are open economies with the values

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*



ranging from Indonesia's 37.30% to Mexico's 78.18%. Compared to 2009, the relative trade openness of only Turkish and Mexican economies has increased. In 2019, Mexico and Indonesia reported trade deficits. On the other hand, Mexico, Indonesia, and Australia managed to retain generally balanced commercial patterns despite small trade deficits considering their current account balance ratio to GDP. Although Turkey's trade deficit is at the bottom of the heap, there is no significant difference from the others in a broader international context.

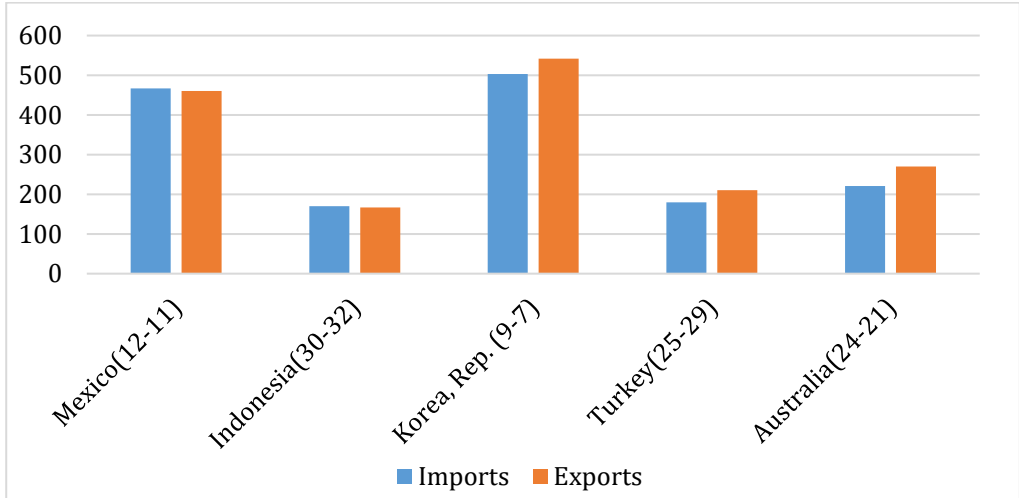


Figure 4. Imports and Exports of Goods and Services (Billion USD, 2019; World Rank /Import-Export/)<sup>28</sup>

Table 2. Trade of MIKTA Countries (% of GDP, 2009-2019)<sup>29</sup>

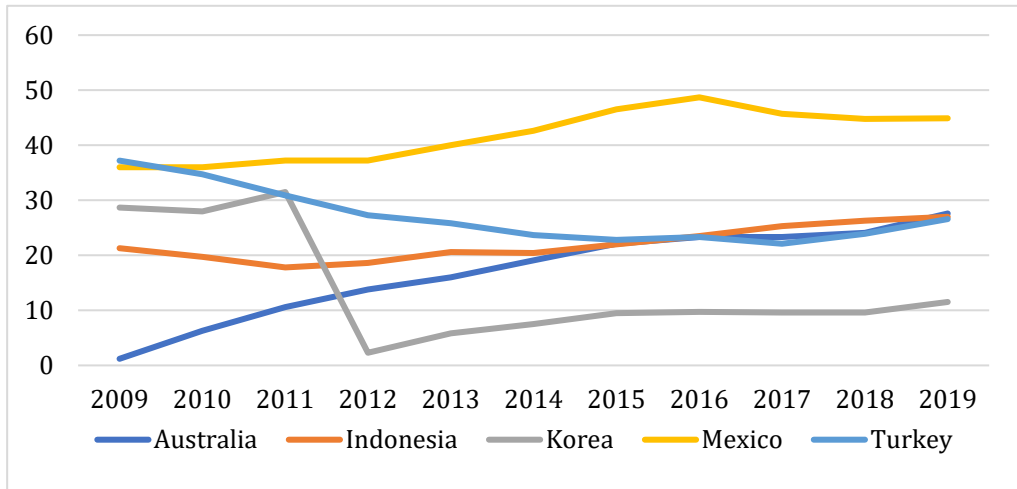
Country	Exports		Imports		Current Account Balance		Trade Openness	
	2009	2019	2009	2019	2009	2019	2009	2019
Mexico	27.15	39.3	28.81	39.11	-0.87	-0.19	55.97	78.18
Indonesia	24.16	21.0	21.35	18.90	1.97	-2.72	45.51	37.30
Korea	48.19	44.0	40.95	36.88	3.51	3.65	86.13	76.71
Turkey	22.57	31.61	23.36	29.78	-1.76	1.15	45.93	61.39
Australia	23	24.13	22.79	21.56	-5.27	0.51	45.80	45.69

<sup>28</sup> WTO (World Trade Organization), *World Commodity Profiles*. 2019, in [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/trade\\_profiles\\_list\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/trade_profiles_list_e.htm) (Accessed on 06.06.2020).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

Table 3. Trade Partners of MIKTA Countries, 2019<sup>30</sup>

Country	Major export destinations	Share in total import (%)	Major import sources	Share in total export (%)
Mexico	United States	76.1	United States	44.1
	EU	3.5	China	17.8
	Canada	3	EU	10.4
Indonesia	China	16.7	China	26.3
	United States	10.6	Singapore	10.1
	Japan	9.5	Japan	9.1
South Korea	China	25.1	China	21.3
	United States	13.6	United States	12.3
	Vietnam	8.9	EU	10.3
Turkey	EU	43.1	EU	32.4
	United Kingdom	6.2	Russian Federation	11
	Iraq	5.6	China	9.1
Australia	China	38.7	China	23.8
	Japan	14.8	EU	15.9
	South Korea	6.6	United States	11.9

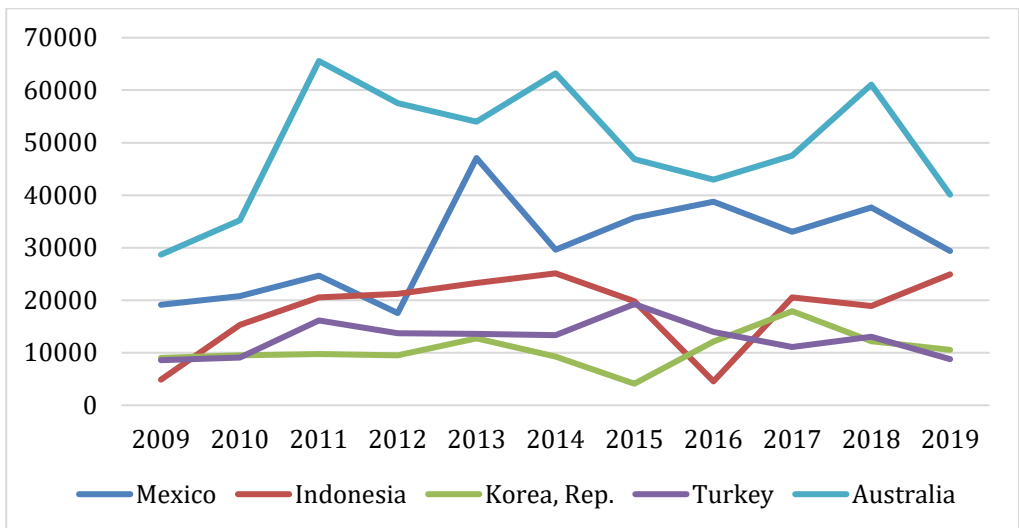
Figure 5. General Government Net Debt of MIKTA Countries (% of GDP, 2009 – 2019)<sup>31</sup><sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>31</sup> IMF, *World World Economic Outlook Database*, in <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2020/October/weo->

**2.1.6. Deficit and Debt Sustainability**

Figure 5 shows the general government's net debt (% of GDP) of MIKTA countries. In 2019, general government net debt for Korea was 11.5%; Turkey 26.6%; Indonesia 27%; Australia 27.6 % and Mexico 44,9%. The debt ratio for Turkey has been on the decline for the given period. The debt ratio of Mexico, Korea and Indonesia are increasing at a slow rate. The general debt condition of MIKTA countries can be described as steady in general.

**2.1.7. Foreign Direct Investments**

FDI in developing economies has been instrumental in contributing to the overall economic growth of a country. Therefore, nations struggle to fulfil the conditions to encourage more FDI inflows into their economies.<sup>32</sup>



**Figure 6. Foreign Direct Investment, Net Inflows (BoP, Current US\$, Millions)<sup>33</sup>**

Net FDI inflows for South Korea was 10566 million US dollars in 2019. Though South Korea's net FDI inflows fluctuated considerably in recent years, it tended to increase through the 2000s. The country was the 29th recipient of FDI

report?c=193,536,542,273,186,&s=GGXWDN\_NGDP,&sy=2009&ey=2019&ssm=0&scsm=1&sc=0&ssd=1&ssc=0&sic=0&sort=country&ds=.&br=1 (Accessed on 20.12.2020).

<sup>32</sup> Provi Jadhav, *Determinants of foreign direct investment in BRICS economies: Analysis of economic, institutional and political factor*, "Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences", 2012, No. 37, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> The World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, in <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators> (Accessed on 12.06.2020).

inflows in the world in 2019. Mexico is the world's 15th largest FDI recipient. In 2019, FDI inflows for the country was 29360 million US dollars. While flows remained comparable to levels seen in the given period, they were substantially below the all-time high of USD 47195 million in 2013. For that indicator, Australia ranked 10th with a value of 40075 million U.S. dollars in 2019. Indonesia ranked 17th with a value of 24947 million US dollars in 2019. Turkey ranked 34th with a value of 87870 million US dollars in 2019.

### 2.1.8. Human Development Index (HDI)

HDI, which combines social and economic indicators, is also utilised as evaluation criteria of MIKTA countries. Australia is the most developed country in terms of HDI among MIKTA grouping with a score of 0,944. The country ranked 8th in HDI world rank among very high human development category. South Korea also shows very high human development ranking 23rd among in 2019 with a score of 0,916. Mexico ranked 74th with a score of 0,779 in the high human development category. Indonesia's HDI value is 0.718, positioning it at 107 and Turkey ranked 54th with the HDI value of 0,820 in 2019.

**Table 4. Human Development Index of MIKTA Countries, 2009-2019<sup>34</sup>**

Country	2009		2019	
	HDI	Rank	HDI	Rank
<b>Mexico</b>	0.745	56	0.779	74
<b>Indonesia</b>	0.593	108	0.718	107
<b>South Korea</b>	0.872	12	0.916	23
<b>Turkey</b>	0.674	83	0.820	54
<b>Australia</b>	0.935	2	0.944	8

MIKTA countries are relatively similar to each other concerning their comparative hard and soft power performance. Table 5 represents a summary of all selected variables (↑ highest value and ↓ minimum value) mentioned above, according to their average scores during 2009–2019. Although

<sup>34</sup> United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2020, The next frontier Human development and the Anthropocene*, in <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf> (Accessed on 21.12.2020); United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2010, The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development*, in [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/270/hdr\\_2010\\_en\\_complete\\_reprint.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/270/hdr_2010_en_complete_reprint.pdf) (Accessed on 21.12.2020).

Indonesia has the highest growth rate among MIKTA countries, it ranks 5th in terms of GDP per capita, which describes the standard of living of a population and shows its economic performance and strength. Turkey has the highest unemployment and inflation rates, which are among the most serious macroeconomic problems. Turkey is also at the top in terms of imports and general government debt. While Australia is the first country which encourages foreign direct investment, Turkey ranks 5th among MIKTA countries. As the study suggests, MIKTA countries together represent an intermediate position. More specifically, Australia and South Korea have a high profile, whereas Indonesia and Mexico show worse performance even they tend to increase their hard and soft power capacities.

For Turkey, these indicators put the country into a "middle position" among MIKTA grouping. In line with Turkey's objective to raise its international status, in 2011, the Justice and Development Party government issued 2023 vision document of the country. This strategy was expressing Turkey's aim "to be among the top economies of the world in terms of the GDP, to maintain a stable reduction in inflation and keep interest rates to a single digit, to increase exports to 500 billion dollars per year, to increase per capita income to \$25,000, to reach annual GDP of 2 trillion dollars, to reduce the unemployment rate to 5%, and to increase the present employment rate to at least 50%."<sup>35</sup> In the light of Turkey's low profile and poor performance in key economic indicators, it needs to increase research and development expenditures and decrease high consumption rates and energy dependency of the country, resulting in a reduction in the country's massive imports. All of these may positively affect the general government debt and current account deficit and may even contribute to a decrease in inflation caused by reductions in costs. So, Turkey can obtain a more robust profile and rate among more developed and prestigious groupings of the world. Based on its role in MIKTA, Turkey has had the opportunity to acquire a more exact point of view, identifying those countries its performance can be compared with, and what aims it can hold practicable in economic development and global issues governance.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> AK Party, *Political Vision of AK Party 2023: Politics, Society and the World*, in <https://www.akparti.org.tr/parti/2023-siyasi-vizyon/> (Accessed on 21.11.2020).

<sup>36</sup> Selcuk Colakoglu, *The Role of MIKTA in Global Governance: Assessments & Shortcomings*, p. 281.

**Table 5. Evaluation of MIKTA's material and soft power indicators  
(average value of 2009–2019)**

Country/ Indicators	Mexico	Indonesia	Korea	Turkey	Australia
<b>GDP growth</b>	↓	↑			
<b>GDP</b>				↓	↑
<b>GDP per capita</b>		↓			↑
<b>Inflation</b>			↓	↑	
<b>Unemployment</b>			↓	↑	
<b>Exports</b>			↑		↓
<b>Imports</b>			↑		↓
<b>General government debt</b>	↑				↓
<b>FDI</b>			↓		↑
<b>HDI</b>		↓			↑

## 2.2. Behavioural Factors: Effectiveness, Challenges and Prospects of MIKTA

It is emphasised that middle powers' material capacities are significant for global governance and what they do and achieves with these capacities are also noteworthy. To make it clear, middle powers tend to pursue multilateral solutions to international debates; favour coalition building, and adopt good international citizenship notions to conduct diplomacy.<sup>37</sup> Within this context, it must be underlined that MIKTA grouping enabled middle powers to increase their voice higher on the need to reform the United Nations and multilateral institutions and played significant roles in serving as a bridge between developed and developing nations in the G20 sessions.<sup>38</sup>

Middle powers also give weight to niche diplomacy, which implies concentrating resources in specific fields<sup>39</sup> to scale up their capacity and status and gain a competitive advantage in global politics. In the case of MIKTA, Australia

<sup>37</sup> Gareth Evans, *Middle Power Diplomacy, Lecture in Chile Pacific Foundation, Santiago, 2011*, in <http://www.gevans.org/speeches/speech441.html> (Accessed on 21.12.2020).

<sup>38</sup> Radiye Funda Karadeniz, *The Middle Power Moment' Revisited in Global Governance: A Chance for MIKTA's Legitimacy Crisis in Post-Pandemic World?*, "Marmara University Journal of Political Science", Vol. 8, 2020, Special Issues, p. 26.

<sup>39</sup> Gareth Evans, *op. cit.*

is a crucial example for niche diplomacy in the realms of human rights, environmental goals and leadership on non-proliferation; Korea has concentrated on settling research and development capabilities and technology transfer to contribute to other MIKTA members and on a larger scale.<sup>40</sup> In the same manner, Mexico has invested in global environmental politics, and Turkey has achieved great success in humanitarian diplomacy.

Before the MIKTA's establishment, five countries set their political aims based on their priorities or the allies' and partners' objectives. Although they are instrumental in shaping global policy processes within the G20, their efforts were brought into disrepute, many times, by the G7 and BRICS groups. As they are named as "second-tier" countries within the body of the G20, they have been unable to wield their influence in global governance. For this reason, the foundation of MIKTA has enhanced its members' activism in the G20. The five MIKTA members expend energy on reducing their differences and maximising their commonalities and internal harmony.<sup>41</sup> Since the creation of MIKTA, various global and regional issues have become the focus of its agenda. However, there is a degree of uncertainty and confusion about what MIKTA has been achieved or solved so far.

MIKTA is a group that is already in progress. Some analysts alleged that MIKTA is "a waste of time"<sup>42</sup> and "its only success may be that it still exists"<sup>43</sup> The MIKTA group is not being considered as a prestigious and leading model of global governance for middle powers because of their internal political problems turning their attention away from the institutional empowerment of cooperation throughout this informal grouping.<sup>44</sup> Concerning the volume, the group has

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<sup>40</sup> Ziya Öniş, Mustafa Kutlay, *The dynamics of emerging middle-power influence in regional and global governance: the paradoxical case of Turkey*, "Australian Journal of International Affairs", Vol. 71, 2017, No. 2, p. 169.

<sup>41</sup> Selçuk Çolakoğlu, *Has MIKTA augmented the global governance role of middle powers?* "The Global", 2018, in <https://theglobal.blog/2018/05/29/has-mikta-augmented-the-global-governance-role-of-middle-powers> (Accessed on 12.12.2020).

<sup>42</sup> Jeffrey Robertson, *Where next for MIKTA?*, "The Interpreter", 2020, in <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/where-next-mikta> (Accessed on 12.12.2020).

<sup>43</sup> Jeffrey Robertson, *South Korea's quandary: What to do about MIKTA?*, "The Interpreter", 2018, in <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/south-korea-quandary-what-do-about-mikta> (Accessed on 20.12.2020).

<sup>44</sup> Gonca Oğuz Gök, Radiye Funda Karadeniz, *Emerging Middle Powers in Global Political Economy: Preferences, Capabilities and their Limitations*, in Dal Emel Parlar (eds),

undoubtedly achieved as much as any other informal unit.<sup>45</sup> However, MIKTA could not be identified just based on economic ranking and material capabilities. There is also a fundamental political factor that is moving beyond immediate neighbour. The MIKTA members are far more constrained in showing such an approach.<sup>46</sup> However, it must be underlined that there are symbolic and material barriers related to local issues for MIKTA members to go global.<sup>47</sup> For instance, while Mexico has carried out various policies considering migration, Turkey is concerned with security-related matters and refugees. As a senior member of ASEAN, Indonesia tries to build and redefine the community's values. Australia is experienced in balancing China and the United States' relationship, while South Korea is dealing with peninsular issues.<sup>48</sup>

MIKTA's heterogeneity reveals both its strengths and weaknesses. Although MIKTA attracts each of its members for several reasons, their own political and economic interests vary from country to country. They also adopt diverse attitudes toward current order – ranging from revisionist in Turkey's case to *status-quo* in Australia's case. As it is mentioned, five MIKTA members followed a vision statement and specified seven priority issues they differ in how they interpret and how they are eager to reach these purposes.<sup>49</sup> Because all members of MIKTA had to focus primarily on their domestic political or economic issues, they did not have enough energy and time to deal with global governance issues. For example, 2016 and 2017 were considered missing two consecutive years for the sustainability of MIKTA because of the internal process of establishing the programme of five Member States and national policy concerns.<sup>50</sup> In 2010, six premiers succeeded one another in Australia. Turkey had to clash

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*Turkey's Political Economy in the 21st Century*. International Political Economy Series. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, p. 163-194.

<sup>45</sup> Jeffrey Robertson, *Where next for MIKTA?*

<sup>46</sup> Andrew Fenton Cooper, *MIKTA and the Global Projection of Middle Powers: Toward a Summit of Their Own?*, "Global Summitry", Vol. 1, 2015, Issue 1, p. 107.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>48</sup> Selçuk Colakoglu, *The Role of MIKTA in Global Governance: Assessments & Shortcomings*. "Korea Observer", Vol. 47, 2016, No. 2, p. 277-278.

<sup>49</sup> Stewart M. Patrik, Asley Feng, *MIKTA in the Middle: A Little-Known Multilateral Group Turns Five, 2018*, in <https://www.cfr.org/blog/mikta-middle-little-known-multilateral-group-turns-five> (Accessed on 18.05.2020).

<sup>50</sup> Selçuk Çolakoğlu, *Is MIKTA sustainable as a middle power grouping in global governance?*, "Diplo", 2017, in <https://www.diplomacy.edu/blog/mikta-sustainable-middle-power-grouping-global-governance> (Accessed on 17.12.2020).



against the effects of the coup attempt in 2016. The president of South Korea was detained in 2018, while Indonesia and Mexico also had presidency elections. In this respect, it can be said that questions on the legitimacy of MIKTA in world governance have arisen.<sup>51</sup>

The effect of this grouping remains uncertain at the global level. This uncertainty is the result of its lack of subject specificity that makes it challenging to clarify the purpose of the MIKTA. At the beginning of 2020, MIKTA has paid attention to Covid-19. Various challenges associated with COVID-19 must be addressed by global governance. Five MIKTA states shared their respective countries' experiences in coping with the pandemic during its global infection and examined ways to enhance collaboration amid its members in the fields of health and disease prevention.

Reminding that MIKTA is a cross-regional and new innovative partnership, MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Joint Statement on the COVID-19 Pandemic and Global Health stated that MIKTA would continue to play a leading role in promoting global health, protecting public goods, and strengthening global governance.<sup>52</sup> However, the collaboration of MIKTA states on COVID-19 has raised question marks in minds with the worry of facing unexpected risks for MIKTA bloc, which have already concerned with various issues.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, there is an expectation that MIKTA will stand in the breach as countries such as the US, China and Russia are not signing the World Health Organization initiative to provide equitable access to vaccines.<sup>54</sup> As a result, the battle against COVID-19 may increase MIKTA's global governance role in the future.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Radiye Funda Karadeniz, *op.cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>52</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Joint Statement on the COVID-19 Pandemic and Global Health*, 9 April 2020, in <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/covid-19-a-iliskin-mikta-bildirisi-hk.en.mfa> (Accessed on 18.12.2020).

<sup>53</sup> Beginda Pakpahan, *Can Indonesia Help MIKTA Thrive?* 2018, in <https://thedi diplomat.com/2018/04/can-indonesia-help-mikta-thrive/> (Accessed on 18.12.2020).

<sup>54</sup> Maria Siow, *Mikta who? Covid-19 injects five 'middle power' countries with new sense of purpose*, 2020, in <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3104456/mikta-who-covid-19-injects-five-middle-power-countries-new-sense> (Accessed on 18.12.2020).

<sup>55</sup> Stephan Klingebiel, *MIKTA: What's in a name? The potential of middle power cooperation to strengthen global governance*, 2020, in [https://www.undp.org/content/seoul\\_policy\\_center/en/home/presscenter/articles/](https://www.undp.org/content/seoul_policy_center/en/home/presscenter/articles/)

Beyond a doubt, all MIKTA members encounter certain limitations in their potential contribution to strengthening global governance. To meet these constraints, MIKTA needs to construct a more coherent collective identity<sup>56</sup> and set specific targets that are not necessarily related to general issues of global governance. Moreover, as MIKTA has only held meetings on ministerial-level mainly during the annual UNGA opening or at the G20, MIKTA draws criticism for being only a talk shop and "staying below the radar" of international debate. Therefore, MIKTA needs to summit at the leader's level.<sup>57</sup> Within this background, the extent to which five MIKTA states will succeed in creating a shared vision and strategic position upon their mutual benefits in global governance will shape the MIKTA's future and affect its sustainability as a successful middle power bloc in changing international order.

### CONCLUSIONS

In the 2000s, considered as the information age, countries have made significant changes in their political, social and economic understanding at national and international levels. This transformation led by the developing countries has led to the disintegration of the significant powers system. The practices of Western or developed countries that dominate the world politics and economy through organisations such as the EU, UN, G8, IMF and World Bank have led the developing countries to seek new political and economic cooperations. States that came to the fore in economic progress, especially after the 2008 global financial crisis, seek to strengthen their development within the new structures. Within this context, Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia have recently made an informal alliance under the acronym of MIKTA.

MIKTA members are all open economies; have robust internal markets; moderate inflation, and grow purchasing power populations. They are building up resilient economies and have the potential for high growth rates, and they are making efforts for accelerating democratic transition processes. They are all "bridge countries" in their respective regions. They aim to league together against regional and international problems and promote stability and welfare by supporting multilateralism and global attempts. They also seek reforms in global

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2020/mikta--what\_s-in-a-name--the-potential-of-middle-power-cooperati.html  
(Accessed on 18.12.2020).

<sup>56</sup> Andrew Fenton Cooper, *MIKTA and the Global Projection of Middle Powers...*, p. 108.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

governance structures. They also have the willingness to develop their new roles and status within the international system.

The main obstacle for MIKTA states to focus on the grouping and therefore, the most significant risk for MIKTA is an economic downturn in its members. As mentioned in the study, they have to struggle with low growth rates and high unemployment numbers, especially in recent times, as they are trying to prevent the spread of Covid 19 pandemic with several precautions. It is seen that the political and economic upheavals lead countries to tackle mostly with their internal politics. Nevertheless, in the political vacuum due to preconized US withdrawal from WHO, middle powers may get more space to affect the future of global health governance with their relatively successful performances and joint initiations during the crisis. However, MIKTA, for the moment, is far from being a prestigious and more leading model of global governance for middle powers as a result of several domestic political and economic problems among its members causing them to lose concentration on the institutional empowerment of cooperation within this informal grouping.

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## INFO-ANALYTICAL SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIAN-POLISH CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION. THE EURO-REGIONS CASE STUDY

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**Abstract.** *This article discusses the cross-border collaboration between the territorial communities and local authorities in Ukraine and Poland in terms of cooperation activities focused on the objectives of their economic, social, scientific, technical, environmental and cultural relations. The authors study the Euroregions as the primary form of cross-border cooperation (CBC). The interpretation of the information support for CBC has been determined in the context of its activities. Furthermore, it has been examined within the framework of the "Carpathian" and "Bug" Euro-regions through the following elements: the organisational and legal system (agreements, Programs, etc.); institutions that help collect, process and disseminate data on the CBC (websites, blogs, etc.); info-analytic products of the Euro-regions (articles, media reports, etc.). The authors highlight issues related to the information support for Ukrainian-Polish CBC and formulate the recommendations on how to improve the informational component of Ukrainian-Polish CBC within the "Carpathian" and the "Bug" Euro-regions.*

**Keywords:** *information support, cross-border cooperation (CBC), projects, Ukraine, Poland.*

**Rezumat. Suport informațional-analitic pentru cooperarea transfrontalieră ucraineană-poloneză. Studiu de caz: Euroregiunile.** *Acest articol analizează colaborarea transfrontalieră între comunitățile teritoriale și autoritățile locale din Ucraina și Polonia din perspectiva activităților de cooperare axate pe obiectivele relațiilor lor economice, sociale, științifice, tehnice, de protecție a mediului și culturale. Autorii au cercetat euroregiunile ca forma principală a cooperării transfrontaliere*

*(CBC). Interpretarea suportului informațional pentru CBC a fost realizată în contextul activităților desfășurate. Mai mult, în cadrul euro-regiunilor „Carpatică” și „Bug” au fost examinată următoarele elemente concrete: sistemul organizațional și juridic (acorduri, programe etc.); instituțiile care ajută la colectarea, prelucrarea și diseminarea datelor privind CBC (site-uri web, bloguri etc.); produsele informațional-analitice ale acestor euro-regiuni (articole, rapoarte media etc.). Autorii evidențiază problemele legate de sprijinul informațional pentru CBC ucraineano-polonă și formulează recomandări cu privire la modul de îmbunătățire a componentei informaționale a CBC ucraineano-polonă în cadrul euro-regiunilor „Carpatică” și „Bug”.*

## INTRODUCTION

Each country has its own unique and emblematic history. The peoples belonging to the modern states have lived on different parts of their borders for centuries. Still, the common elements of their languages and similar cultures, customs and traditions have been preserved. The past, present and future of each nation are intertwined as the neighbouring countries have uneven development in border regions. The European Community pays particular attention to the development of programs initiated by its border regions. At the same time, it supports interstate and external cooperation within the framework of partnership initiatives with its neighbours.

As part of the state policy, the current cross-border cooperation (CBC) occupies an important place in the system of priorities of socio-economic development or in the European integration processes of Ukraine. Ukraine has excellent growth potential due to its favourable geopolitical position. Its 19 out of 25 regions are border regions, and the external state border is the longest in Europe, including 1,390 km of borderland with EU member-states. The particular aspects of Ukrainian cross-border cooperation lie in the fact that they occur at the EU borders and borders with Russia, Belarus, and the Republic of Moldova. The main form of Ukrainian-Polish CBC includes the activities carried out by the "Carpathian" and "Bug" Euroregions.

In the first instance, the framework of categories and concepts that characterise the cross-border cooperation system must be defined. Thus, any inter-territorial cooperation is treated as a coordinated activity aimed at the relations initiated by two or more contracting parties' territorial communities and authorities. Exceptions are given by cross-border cooperation relations between neighbouring powers, including agreements between local and



regional authorities and state authorities.<sup>1</sup>

The legal bases of inter-regional cooperation outline territories that rank second after the central ones (Ukrainian regions and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kyiv and Sevastopol, and concerning Poland – its voivodeships, etc.).

Various relationships, such as trade, economic, cultural, scientific, tourism, are maintained and developed within the system of cross-border cooperation. Cross-border cooperation relations are the basis and an integral part, as a subsystem, of the structure of modern international relations. Simultaneously, cross-border collaboration is a specific area of international and interstate relations implemented and developed according to precise criteria and principles.<sup>2</sup>

### THE EUROREGION AS THE MAIN FORM OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

As defined by national law, any cross-border cooperation is carried out under the territorial communities or authorities' jurisdiction. It has been found that the term is used in the scientific literature to cover territories of intensive cross-border cooperation in all spheres of life. These are the aggregate border territories of two or more neighbouring states that have cross-border cooperation, with a high or potential level of access.<sup>3</sup>

The Euroregion can simply be defined as a territorial unit formed by two adjacent sub-national units belonging to two separate states.<sup>4</sup> This does not necessarily imply any compromise for cooperation and can even be considered as a simple geographical definition. However, as the same authors have pointed out, this concept is primarily used in the context of the CBC activities. It implies a certain degree of institutionalisation, as demonstrated by agents' interaction

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<sup>1</sup> *Protocol No. 2 to the European Framework Convention on Cross-border Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, Concerning Inter-territorial Cooperation* (1998, 5.05), Strasbourg.

<sup>2</sup> Євген Кіш, *Проблеми транскордонного співробітництва України і Євросоюзу* [Problems of the Cross-border Cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union], in <http://www.politik.org.ua/vid/magcontent.php3?m=1&n=63&c=1412> (Accessed on 12.02.2020).

<sup>3</sup> Дмитро Стеченко, *Розміщення продуктивних сил і регіоналістика* [Productive Forces Deployment and Regionalism], Київ, Вікар, 2006, 396 с.

<sup>4</sup> Markus Perkmann, *Cross-Border Regions in Europe: Significance and Drivers of Regional Cross-Border Co-operation*, in "European Urban and Regional Studies", 2003, 10(2), p.153–171.

on both sides of the border. Similar definitions proposed by other authors focus on the idea that can be seen in Eduardo Medeiros's work.<sup>5</sup> This can undoubtedly be one common feature of each Euroregion, even though some entities labelled as Euro-regions may have more work to do in the field of European interregional cooperation.

When considering the main reasons behind CBC initiatives, Kramsch & Hooper<sup>6</sup> have presented additional arguments in favour of the above explanation, revealing the real purpose of the Euro-regional structures. However, according to them, the attempt to rewrite border areas once considered marginal and peripheral to nation-states' territorial projects concerning those at the very heart of Europe. It differed from them by some centrality dynamism is common among Euroregional initiatives. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the Commission itself refers to its cross-border regions as "laboratories for European integration."<sup>7</sup> In addition to the common purpose, the institutionalisation shapes, territorial dimensions, geographical profiles, and the pursued objectives can considerably vary across different structures.

A cross-border cooperation agreement may stipulate a cross-border cooperation body<sup>8</sup> (e.g. Euroregion, as a structural subdivision of public authorities, etc.). Additionally, an important aspect of the regional development is interregional and cross-border cooperation, born among border regions and territories, and resulted in the creation of the Euroregions in their progressive form, involving collaboration among administrative and territorial units carried out under bilateral or multilateral CBC agreements.

Currently, the Euroregions have a cross-border space management system covering all border regions along the state border perimeter. It must assume absolute coordination of the cross-border areas that are developing within the regional governance system and ensure their competitiveness internally and globally, outside it. The Law of Ukraine "On Cross-Border Cooperation" gives the following definition of the term: "The Euroregion is an

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<sup>5</sup> Eduardo Medeiros, *(Re)defining the Euroregion Concept*, in "European Planning Studies", 2011, 19(1), p. 141–158; Eduardo Medeiros, *Euro-Meso-Macro: The New Regions in Iberian and European Space*, in "Regional Studies", 2013, 47(8), p. 1249–1266.

<sup>6</sup> Barbara Hooper, Olivier Kramsch (eds.), *Cross-border governance in the European Union*, Taylor & Francis, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Antoni Durà Guimerà, Francesco Camonita, Matteo Berzi, Andrea Noferini, *Euroregions, Excellence and Innovation across EU borders*, in "A Catalogue of Good Practices", Barcelona, Department of Geography, UAB, 2018, 254 p.

<sup>8</sup> *Additional Protocol to the European Framework Convention on Cross-border Cooperation between Territorial Communities and Authorities*, November 9, 1995.

organisational form of cooperation, carried out by administrative and territorial units of European states under bilateral or multilateral agreements on cross-border cooperation."<sup>9</sup>

Experts from the "East-West Institute" Centre have extended this interpretation. According to them, the Euroregion is a form of cross-border cooperation between territorial communities or local authorities of border regions of two or more states, having a common border. Such partnership aims to coordinate mutual efforts and their implementation, agreed in various spheres of life according to national and international laws, either to solve common problems or for the benefit of the people inhabiting its territory on both sides of the border.<sup>10</sup>

Today, there are between 120 and 183 Euroregions in Europe, but some of them have just declared their creation. Moreover, there are more than 100 Euroregions in Western and Central Europe. Most Euroregions are located at the borders with Germany (31), France (15), Sweden (16), Finland (10), as well as Poland (18), Czech Republic (13), Bulgaria (14), Hungary (15) and Romania (13).<sup>11</sup>

The Ukrainian and Polish sides actively support the creation of such forms of cross-border cooperation. Since the early 1990s, two Euroregions have been established at the borders of Ukraine and Poland, the "Carpathian" Euroregion involving Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania (1993) and the "Bug" Euroregion consisting of the Polish, Ukrainian and Belarusian regions (1995).

A special institutional level of CBC between Ukraine and Poland was developed in the first half of the 1990s during the emergence of the "Carpathian" and "Bug" regions as important centres of Ukrainian-Polish intensification and development of interregional and cross-border cooperation. The "Carpathian" Euroregion, involving participants from the Ukrainian side (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Transcarpathia, and Chernivtsi regions) and the Polish side (the Subcarpathian Voivodship),<sup>12</sup> was created on February 14, 1993, and signed in Debrecen (Hungary) by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Poland and

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<sup>9</sup> Закон України "Про транскордонне співробітництво" [Law of Ukraine "On Cross-Border Cooperation"], in <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1861-15> (Accessed on 12.02.2020).

<sup>10</sup> *На шляху до Європи. Український досвід євро-регіонів* [On the way to Europe. Ukrainian experience of Euro-regions], К.: Лорос, 2000, с.94-95.

<sup>11</sup> AEBR, in [aeb.eu](http://aeb.eu) (Accessed on 28.07.2020).

<sup>12</sup> Euroregion "Karpaty", in <http://euroregionkarpaty.com.ua> (Accessed on 12.05.2020).

Hungary. It was founded on the Declaration for the Cooperation of Communities Residing in the Carpathian Region and the Statute Instrument of the Inter-regional Association – "Carpathian" Euroregion.

The Agreement on the Creation of a Cross-Border Association "Bug" Euro-region<sup>13</sup> was signed on September 29, 1995, in Lutsk, between Volyn region and the former Chełm, Lublin, Tarnobrzeg and Zamość Voivodeships of the Republic of Poland (now, the Ukrainian side is represented by the Volyn region, Zhovkiv and Sokal districts of Lviv region, and the Polish side – by the Lublin Voivodship).<sup>14</sup>

### **INTERPRETATION OF INFORMATION SUPPORT IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROREGION ACTIVITIES**

An important and integral part of cross-border cooperation is its informational support. All CBC solutions in European countries with a long history of cross-border processes and developed legislation receive appropriate information support. They have information support corresponding to their needs. Without such support, any CBC can be risky and lead to unexpected and negative results. According to the authors of the study, Ukraine lacks such experience in providing information. Therefore, research on the development of general principles and generalisation of experience in implementing various aspects of the information support for CBC becomes relevant.

A clear and unambiguous understanding of the information support content has not yet been achieved. Noting the "information support" in the title of research materials, their authors replace it with such concepts as "information", "information processing methods", "mass media", "press", etc. As a rule, the information support is considered a set of organisational and technical measures or actions. Its aims at generating certain information, sufficient or necessary for taking managerial decisions, narrowing it down to only one aspect – organisational, which is precisely the biggest problem of any information support.

As P. Bieliienkyi, N. Mikula and Ye. Matvieiev points out that the importance of information support for cross-border cooperation is to "stimulate the information infrastructure development, especially in border and cross-

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<sup>13</sup> Euroregion "Bug", in <http://euroregionbug.maps.arcgis.com> (Accessed on 12.05.2020).

<sup>14</sup> Інформаційне забезпечення транскордонного співробітництва України: методичні аспекти [The Information Support for Cross-Border Cooperation of Ukraine: methodological aspects], Луцьк, Вежа-Друк, 2015, 252 с.

border areas. It covers the arrangement of legal, economic, technical conditions for the practical information exchanges between the subjects and participants in cross-border cooperation and informs the business community and the public on cross-border cooperation issues and provides the feedback in return."<sup>15</sup>

One can only agree with the position proposed by Serhii and Anna Tovkanets<sup>16</sup> that an influential factor improving the market organisation is the introduction of information systems opened for participants involved in cross-border cooperation. These systems will contribute to the formation of virtual organisational structures, characterised by the advantages of external (market) and internal (within the firm) interactions and will save time and money on finding partners and concluding deals. "The present open systems include communication tools (official sites of the 'Carpathian' and 'Bug' Euroregions), regional promotional sites, microsites, information and analytical products (articles, messages, videos, audio stories in the media, etc.)."

Therefore, it is advisable to consider the information support content in a broader context – primarily in socio-political, as well as in economic, technical, etc. plans. Thus, the cross-border cooperation information support is considered a targeted activity of stakeholders associated with the gathering, recording, processing, collecting, protecting and use of messages and any other data necessary for the full and effective operation of these entities, to implement cross-border cooperation functions. These include organisational and legal systems (agreements, programs, etc.), institutions collecting, processing and disseminating the information concerning the CBC (websites, blogs, etc.), information and analytical products of the activities of the Euroregions (articles, messages, video, audio in the media, etc.). In general, there are two subsystems in the information support system: information communication (information exchanges through communication channels and tools), and info-analytic subsystems (whose role is to develop fundamentally new data for the decision-making process, and statistics).

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<sup>15</sup> Петро Беленький, Надія Мікула, Євгеній Матвеев, *Конкурентність на транс-кордонних ринках* [Competitiveness in cross-border markets], Львів, 2005, с. 33.

<sup>16</sup> Сергій Товканець, Ганна Товканець, *Інформаційне забезпечення міжнародного бізнесу в рамках транскордонного співробітництва* [Information support of international business in the framework of cross-border cooperation] in *Актуальні проблеми економіки* [Current problems of the economy], 2010, 10 (112), с. 282.

**STRATEGIC INSTRUMENTS AND PROGRAMS  
AS THE BASIC INFORMATION SUPPLY  
FOR CBC ORGANIZATIONAL AND LEGAL SYSTEMS**

The evaluation of the strategic documents relative to Ukrainian and Polish interstate policies and the institutions responsible for their implementation has shown that only a few of them are actually functioning and having some influence on the CBC policy despite their considerable number, in general. Currently, the Ukrainian-Polish contractual framework includes about 200 agreements, treaties, and other bilateral international instruments. The agreement on local border traffic, the Polish Card law, and many others are among them.<sup>17</sup>

The Ukrainian-Polish inter-regional cooperation's main legal instrument is the Intergovernmental Agreement "On the Interregional Cooperation", concluded between Ukraine and the Republic of Poland, which is in force, but what it needs is vision. Separate CBC strategies in Lviv, Transcarpathia, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Volyn regions as well as in Poland (Subcarpathian Voivodship) are absent therein. Instead, there is a "Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy for the Lublin Voivodship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Regions for 2014-2020", which is mostly formal.

The ENI Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-Border Cooperation Program (2014-2020)<sup>18</sup> is the document that defines the most important issues of the Program implementation, its content, objectives, and operability. This document outlines the interest areas of joint Projects, which will be implemented through four thematic objectives and the respective priorities. The achievements of the Program are evaluated through objectively verified indicators. Some of the product indicators are based on "Common Product Indicators" of the CBC European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), developed by the European External Action Service (EEAS) with the help of the Interactive Instrument – the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), to facilitate the verification and disclosure at instrument level.

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<sup>17</sup>Żanna Osikowicz, *Współpraca transgraniczna Ukrainy i Polski w strukturze stosunków międzynarodowych na przykładzie wybranych euroregionów (zarys i problematyka)* [Cross-border cooperation of Ukraine and Poland in the structure of international relations on the example of selected euroregions (outline and issues)], in "Zarządzanie Kulturze" [Management in Culture], 2017, 18, z. 2, s. 237–249.

<sup>18</sup>ENI Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2014-2020, in <https://www.pbu2020.eu/en/pages/251> (Accessed on 12.05.2020).

ENI supports sustainable development at the EU external borders, helps to equalise its residents' living standards and solve common problems across borders. In terms of budget, the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Program is the most extensive ENI CBC Program at the EU borders: € 165 million allocated to projects aimed at protecting and promoting the cultural and natural heritage of border areas, the transport infrastructure of regions, the improvement of border checkpoints, in particular their infrastructure, and the development of health and public safety services.

The present Program Strategy has been adopted at the request of the Managing Authority, according to the realised socio-economic analysis. The analysis has identified common national and regional priorities of the member countries and their relevant regions. It has also been based on the previous programming experience. Moreover, the Program Strategy has considered the different views of parties on the common needs and problems of the Program area. Besides, it reflects decisions on thematic areas, where member-countries can solve their problems and control common assets.

Both the creation and the implementation of common strategies relative to regional development are essential factors for the activation of such cross-border regions. The practice of an identical approach used for regional strategic governance, regardless of location at national borders, is quite common. The priorities of their development are unilaterally formulated, taking into consideration the states' interests and goals, developing a strategy, without coordinating with the priorities of the cross-border partners. Therefore, it is necessary to create designs, sharing common goals, priorities, guidelines, and specific actions, using the cross-border potential to enhance the competitiveness of neighbouring border regions. The Polish state strategies, given below, are an example of such instruments.<sup>19</sup>

Concerning the Polish Strategies (Krajowa Strategia Rozwoju Regionalnego 2010-2020<sup>20</sup>, and Strategia Rozwoju Województwa Lubelskiego<sup>21</sup>),

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<sup>19</sup> Bohdana Korop, Andrzej Miszczuk, *Czynniki peryferyzacji i aktywizacji regionów transgranicznych z udziałem Ukrainy – próbaujęcia typologicznego* [Peripheral factors and activation of cross-border regions with the participation of Ukraine – an attempt at a typological approach], in “Wiadomości Statystyczne” [Statistical News], 10 (689), 2018, p. 5-20.

<sup>20</sup> *Krajowa Strategia Rozwoju Regionalnego 2010-2020* [National Strategy for Regional Development 2010-2020], in [http://www.mrr.gov.pl/rozwoj\\_regionalny/polityka\\_regionalna/ksrr\\_2010\\_2020/Strony/Krajowa\\_Strategia\\_Rozwoju\\_Regionalnego\\_2010\\_2020.aspx](http://www.mrr.gov.pl/rozwoj_regionalny/polityka_regionalna/ksrr_2010_2020/Strony/Krajowa_Strategia_Rozwoju_Regionalnego_2010_2020.aspx) (Accessed on 12.02.2020).

<sup>21</sup> *Strategia Rozwoju Województwa Lubelskiego* [Development Strategy of the Lubelskie

their focus is mainly on their regional balance with other regions, on the building of their territorial unity, and the marginalisation processes, combating the problem areas. The Polish region competitiveness is achieved via the strengthening of large cities' role and the development of human resources, intellectual and social capitals. Moreover, the Poles need to find support for the localisation of external investments, expand possibilities to absorb innovations by enterprises and regional institutions, develop the business environment, guarantee the energy efficiency, react to climate changes and cultural heritage usage, and provide help for Polish regions to stay competitive.

The development strategy for the Subcarpathian Voivodship for 2007-2020 highlights that the proximity to Ukraine of the present Voivodship allows intensifying cooperation with Ukrainian regions. Institutional frameworks have been created there for collaboration through several economic missions and business meetings. As a result, closer cooperation has been established with the signing of cooperation agreements with Lviv, Volyn, Ivano-Frankivsk and Odesa regions.<sup>22</sup>

Additionally, Poland has a Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of Eastern Poland until 2020.<sup>23</sup> Since 2004, the EU's border has passed along the eastern frontier of Poland; thus relations with its eastern neighbours, including Ukraine, have impacted Poland's international image in the European Union and mainly in Europe. Furthermore, the Strategy states that if Ukraine becomes a candidate country for the EU membership in the nearest future, the number of funds, allocated by the European Union to develop cooperation with its neighbours, will increase and facilitate the evolution of further relations between Ukraine and Poland. Therefore, Poland will stimulate the processes of mutual approach between the European Union and Ukraine. The regional development supported along the border with Ukraine is one of such a strategy's key priorities.

Therefore, it should be pointed out that the cross-border cooperation information support involves international agreements with the Central Bank of

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Voivodship], in <http://www.-rpo.lubelskie.pl/front/page/get/281/.94> (Accessed on 12.02.2020).

<sup>22</sup> *Strategia Rozwoju Województwa Podkarpackiego* [Development Strategy of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship], in [www.podkarpackie.pl/strategia/strat\\_woj.pdf](http://www.podkarpackie.pl/strategia/strat_woj.pdf) (Accessed on 12.02.2020).

<sup>23</sup> *Strategia rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczego z Polska do 2020 roku* [Strategy for socio-economic development from Poland to 2020], in [http://www.polskawschodnia.gov.pl/Dokumenty/Lists/Dokumenty%20programowe/Attachments/93/Strategia\\_PW\\_po\\_RM.pdf](http://www.polskawschodnia.gov.pl/Dokumenty/Lists/Dokumenty%20programowe/Attachments/93/Strategia_PW_po_RM.pdf) (Accessed on 12.02.2020).



the Russian Federation (CBR), agreements on the creation of Euroregions and agreements among regional bodies of administrative and territorial units of neighbouring states. They all have a systemic nature and set the main goals, objectives and principles of inter-regional and cross-border cooperation between the state-partners. They have become the normative and legal basis for developing multi- and bilateral relations among Ukraine, Poland and the EU countries.

### **UKRAINIAN-POLISH CBC COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS: INFO-ANALYTIC SUPPORT**

Information support requires the coordination of the conditions to exchange targeted information and build and disseminate data. Four functions are performed by the information support for CBC between Poland and Ukraine: informational, ensuring the setup of an "information base" that reflects the image of the CBC event; normative, responsible for the socialisation process associated with CBC; an organisational group set to manage a set of material relations to ensure the reliability of data functions; and an intermediary (medial), establishing ties among society structures.

All information support for cross-border cooperation is provided by cooperating with the subjects and objects of the CBC informational support system with various specialists, the public, and the media. Several specialised institutions, developed in multiple organisational forms, play an active and creative part in this process.

Therefore, such structures include the "Infostat" cluster. The partnership agreement on the creation of the scientific information and statistical cross-border "Infostat" cluster, with the participation of the Ukrainian and Polish parties, signed on March 20, 2013, has become a typical example of cooperation within the Euroregions in the area directly related to information support of cross-border cooperation between Ukraine and Poland. It has been concluded by the Institute for Regional Studies of NASU, the Main Department of Statistics in Lviv region, Ivan Franko Lviv National University, Lviv Regional Union of Economists of Ukraine on the Ukrainian side, and by the Statistical Office of the Subcarpathian Voivodship (Rzeszow), Rzeszow University, the Centre for Statistical Research and Education of the GUS of Poland, on the Polish side.<sup>24</sup> The purpose of the cluster is to facilitate cooperation in the field of scientific, information and

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<sup>24</sup> *Статистичний кластер* [Statistical Cluster], in [http://www.lv.ukrstat.gov.ua/CBC/ua/project/project\\_all.php?u=4&l1=1](http://www.lv.ukrstat.gov.ua/CBC/ua/project/project_all.php?u=4&l1=1) (Accessed on 12.02.2020).

statistical support for the development of the Ukrainian-Polish cross-border regions, to create a system of regional statistics to monitor the socio-economic phenomena, to conduct scientific and statistical surveys in border areas, as well as to develop the Ukrainian-Polish cross-border region web portal.

The CBC public administration information mechanism, involving Ukraine and the EU countries, allows the development of cross-border statistics, information dissemination through official sites, communication events, and social networks. However, the conducted analysis proves that the present system of collecting and monitoring statistical data in CBC in Ukraine has not been sufficiently developed. Collection, processing, and analysis of statistical information in Poland are performed by a special department of the Central Statistical Office of the Centre for Research of Cross-Border Regions and Euroregional statistics<sup>25</sup>, which constantly monitors such cross-border processes. Executive and local self-government bodies often use roundtable discussions, workshops, conferences with a small number of participants, to disseminate information. Less than 50% of regional authorities use social networks to communicate any cross-border information. Therefore, the inefficient CBC information support at the state level causes the weak activity of the CBC bodies and does not allow a qualitative assessment of the situation on the cross-border markets and take effective decisions.

To improving the information support, it is required to ensure openness and easy access to any information on existing cross-border projects and financial resources, allocated for their implementation. Public awareness of government initiatives on both sides of the border is aimed at solving cross-border problems, as well as at the governmental organisational tools that will be used for this purpose (e.g., diplomatic institutions and their activities, visits to regions of foreign countries and international delegations, etc.). The availability of the information portals, where interested professionals and civic activists will be able to receive information on current educational programs, future conferences, and seminars that will take place in the field of cross-border cooperation both in Ukraine and abroad, as well as the information on exhibitions and fairs, are considered as significant elements, too.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Ośrodek Badań Obszarów Transgranicznych and Statystyki Euroregionalnej* [Centre for Research of Cross-border Regions and Euro-regional statistics], in <https://rzeszow.stat.gov.pl> (Accessed on 12.05.2020).

<sup>26</sup> Анастасія Стрижакова, *Механізми державного управління розвитком транскордонного співробітництва між Україною та країнами Європейського Союзу* [Mechanisms of Public Administration for the Development of Cross-border

Any information support has great importance for the CBC socio-economic efficiency since it stimulates information exchanges between its subjects, enhances and deepens good neighbourly relations among territorial communities and authorities. Any information asymmetry in CBC is unacceptable when uneven informational support of subjects occurs.<sup>27</sup>

As evidenced by research, the systems collecting and processing statistical information in Ukraine and Poland are significantly different and create obstacles in effectively using cross-border statistics. However, aspects of the CBC and the need to develop it to monitor specific problems of cross-border territories within the cross-border region are essential to reform its economy and improve its citizens' welfare successfully. The needs of CBC require, mainly concerning programming and monitoring, an updating system, a complete and credible economic database, and the social information on Ukraine's and Poland's border regions. It is necessary to establish and develop contacts among local authorities of border regions located in Poland and Ukraine. Some systematic statistical information exchanges among the regions of Ukraine and the neighbouring areas of the EU member-states are significant for this purpose, too. Moreover, it is essential to identify barriers that hinder entrepreneurship in the cross-border region beyond EU standards and create common regional development strategies and CBC plans in various spheres, promoting the Polish-Ukrainian cooperation in the cross-border areas.<sup>28</sup>

Simultaneously, the critical priorities regarding the informational support for the CBC of Ukraine with the EU neighbours are the establishment and support for business relationships between entrepreneurs, public, educational, governmental and non-governmental agencies in border regions of Ukraine and Poland, as well as the development and extension of CBC in the cultural sector, business, and its institutional evolution.<sup>29</sup> These tasks are

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Cooperation between Ukraine and the Countries of the European Union], Мaріуполь, 2017, 248 с.

<sup>27</sup> Святослав Жуков, Іван Чучка, *Проблеми та перспективи інформаційно-маркетингового забезпечення транскордонного співробітництва* [Problems and Prospects of Information and Marketing Support for Cross-border Cooperation], in "Актуальні проблеми економіки" [Current problems of the economy], Київ, 10, 2007, p.74-81.

<sup>28</sup> *Інформаційне забезпечення транскордонного співробітництва України: методичні аспекти* [Information support of cross-border cooperation of Ukraine: methodological aspects], Луцьк, Вежа-Друк, 2015, 252 с.

<sup>29</sup> *Wybrane aspekty współpracy transgranicznej polskich samorządów w kontekście przemian prawa Unii Europejskiej* [Selected aspects of cross-border cooperation of

solved, in particular, within the framework of measures, foreseen by the CBC Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Program. In particular, in 2008-2010, the Volyn Regional Support Fund in cooperation with the Podlasie Promotion Centre (Bialystok, Poland),<sup>30</sup> Lublin Development Fund – Local Development Agency in Holm (Poland), the Department of Physical Culture, Sports and Tourism of Grodno Regional Executive Committee (Belarus) and the "Bug" Euroregion office (Ukraine) have developed a macro-project. The present Project under the name " Strengthening Cross-Border Cooperation in Business Services, Providing Easier Access for Entrepreneurs ", among others, was created by the Volyn Investment Attraction Agency. The information support for small and medium-sized start-ups has focused primarily, on innovative technologies and high-tech products.<sup>31</sup>

The "Bug" Euroregion geoportal<sup>32</sup> is an IT tool for conducting spatial analysis, visualising data, and providing accessible disclosure via the Internet. For the first time in the history of the "Bug" Euroregion cross-border association, the information platform for the Ukrainian-Polish-Belarusian border territory of these three countries was developed. It contains tourist and economic information (tourist centres, hotels, restaurants, recreation places, campsites, historical and cultural monuments, reserves, infrastructure, investment and land sites, etc.) relative to Volyn and Brest regions, and Lublin Voivodship. The geoportal is beneficial for investors: it shows the vacant land plots of the Ukrainian-Polish-Belarusian border-zone. This will increase investors' potential interest in the allocation of financial resources in the territory of the Euroregion "Bug" including the Volyn region. Descriptions of all the tourist sites with brief references to them are available on this geoportal, giving opportunities for quick navigation of the path from one cultural and historical monument to another, saving time in preparing for holidays, excursion programs, and inspiring new travel ideas. The general concept of development of the Euroregion "Bug" up to 2020 is an attempt to create a basis for planning the border

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Polish local governments in the context of changes in European Union law], Łódź, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Doctrina, 2016.

<sup>30</sup> *Centrum promocji Podlasia* [Podlasie promotion center], in <https://poranny.pl/tag/centrum-promocji-podlasia> (Accessed on 12.02.2020).

<sup>31</sup> Іван Артёмов, *Моделі і механізми регулювання єврорегіонального співробітництва України* [Models and Mechanisms of Ukraine Euroregional Cooperation Development], Ужгород, Гражда 610, 2013, с.545-594.

<sup>32</sup> *Euroregion "Bug"*, in <http://euroregionbug.maps.arcgis.com> (Accessed on 12.05.2020).

area's development. This document contains detailed information about the Euroregion "Bug" society, economy, environment, and infrastructure.

Within these macro-and micro-projects, aimed at the information support for entrepreneurial projects, in particular, "The Creation of Ukrainian-Polish Virtual Exchanges by Innovative Projects and Proposals", "Development of Cross-Border Business Cooperation in Border Regions", "The Development of Eco-Tourism and Positive Tourist Image of the Border Region" are implemented in the cross-border dimension.

This list is supplemented by Projects such as "Development of Cross-Border Cooperation in Improving Access to Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises to the Market of Financial Services", and "Improvement of the Investment Climate in Border Regions". The examples concerning the information support for CBC activities and resources, implemented through program projects, involve the training on "International Technical Assistance Programs", the international information and presentation workshop "Volyn Virtual Exchanges by Innovative Projects and Proposals". The Regional Innovative Centre website for transferring the latest technologies and the virtual exchanges by innovative projects and proposals was created. Even though the site, indicated herein, did not work as of December 2016, at the same time, it was noted that as a result of the Project, "hundreds of entrepreneurs from the Ukrainian-Polish border gained their experience in the formation and development of own business and in the management of innovative projects."<sup>33</sup> Another example of the cross-border activity relative to the information support in the entrepreneurship field was the Project "The Development of Cooperation between Volyn and Lublin in the Field of the Entrepreneurship Support." It enabled entrepreneurs to use the premises, telephones, workplaces, computers as well as consultations by lawyers, economists, and accountants. For business needs, the "Polish-Ukrainian Catalogue of Entrepreneurial Ideas on Business Development in Border Regions and Rural Areas" was published. It was focused on cross-border business projects.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, the conclusion is that an important role in the information support system is assigned to subjects and objects, the combination of which

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<sup>33</sup> *Інформаційне забезпечення транскордонного співробітництва України: методичні аспекти* [Information support of cross-border cooperation of Ukraine: methodological aspects], Луцьк, Вежа-Друк, 2015, 252 с.

<sup>34</sup> Natalia Hrynokh, Vitalii Dmytruk, Lidiia Diachenko, Anna Kniazevych, *Social and economic aspects of cross-border cooperation of Ukraine and Poland in the field of tourism*, in "Journal of Geology, Geography and Geoecology", Vol 28, No 3, 2019.

depends on the level of the CBC organisational and legal forms. Based on the subject/object's status, on each side of the border, they are divided into two groups: direct participants and cross-border cooperation entities. The first group is mainly functioning at the local and regional levels. The latter represents CBC at all possible levels – international, national, regional and local. As a rule, issues concerning the cross-border information support interaction are treated by specialised structures of the regional authorities.

### ISSUES TO BE SOLVED AT ONCE

For three years in a row (2013-2015), the Department of International Communications and Political Analysis of Lesya Ukrainka Eastern European National University has conducted a study on the topic "Cross-Border Cooperation Information Support" by Order of the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sport of Ukraine. Research findings have resulted in the publication of three monographs. One of them ("The Information Support for Cross-Border Cooperation of Ukraine") outlines findings on informational support for a SWOT analysis of cross-border cooperation between Ukraine and its nearest neighbouring countries in three aspects: theoretical, practical and methodical.<sup>35</sup> The study of results shows that authors have concluded that the factors listed below impact the effective information policy in the field of CBC:

- Public awareness levels concerning the opportunities and perspectives of cross-border cooperation tools, and applicable to their professional and domestic activities, including the intensity of the reporting about the cross-border cooperation problems in the regional media;
- the levels of development of the institutional infrastructure of cross-border cooperation, as well as the staff training for the cross-border cooperation system;
- Communication infrastructure development levels (levels of access to cross-border cooperation participants to telephones and Internet resources while communicating with each other).

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<sup>35</sup> *Інформаційне забезпечення транскордонного співробітництва України: теоретичні аспекти* [Information support of cross-border cooperation of Ukraine: theoretical aspects], Луцьк, Вежа-Друк, 2013, 268 с.; *Інформаційне забезпечення транскордонного співробітництва України: практичні аспекти* [Information support of cross-border cooperation of Ukraine: practical aspects], Луцьк, Вежа-Друк, 2014, 288 с.; *Інформаційне забезпечення транскордонного співробітництва України: методичні аспекти* [Information support of cross-border cooperation of Ukraine: methodological aspects], Луцьк, Вежа-Друк, 2015, 252 с.

The following points should be taken into consideration to enhance the information support for cross-border Programs with the aim to:

– make cross-border Projects more effective on the official web pages of regional, district, and city administrations by publishing the list and conditions for the relevant EU technical assistance programs, information dealing with Twinning and TAIEX activities, as well as their regional development strategy for CBC. The purpose of work in this direction is to harmonise Projects with regional, national and European priorities to achieve the coherence in the Project implementation in different periods and with various funding sources;

– disseminate any information on Projects through the network of Ukraine diplomatic and consular institutions in neighbouring countries within the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) (up to 2014 – the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument – ENPI) to find partners. In particular, the successful implementation of the present Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-Border Cooperation Program (2014-2020) will be particularly effective despite the low awareness of the ENP instruments; and the great interest of potential European collaboration to implement them.

The CBC news information support should be provided with the active media participation on both sides of the border, including television, radio, mass media, and online resources, providing significant opportunities for the cross-border region to present it as a particular economic, socio-political and cultural community. Informing residents from the cross-border areas on cultural and economic differences and common features helps remove communication and social barriers. Special attention needs to be given to the prospect to create scientific parks in Ukrainian-Polish cross-border regions, focused on a combination of intellectual and innovative operational monitoring of socio-economic processes between regional statistical offices. The creation of common cross-border information centres should become the key organisational mechanism.

To increase the project implementation efficiency, it is necessary to place the terms of relevant EU technical assistance programs and their regional strategy for the development of CBC, on official web pages of regional, district, and city-state administrations. This is done to coordinate projects with regional, national and EU priorities and achieve consistency with different funding sources.<sup>36</sup> The expansion of CBC informational support can be achieved through the promotion of CBC benefits and positive effects among the population of the

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<sup>36</sup> *Współpraca transgraniczna. Aspekty prawno ekonomiczne* [Cross-border cooperation. Legal and economic aspects], Białystok, FundacjaPrawo i Partnerstwo, 2010.

border regions, the informational support for the formation of initiative groups to promote CBC in its various forms and manifestations: border associations, cross-border non-governmental organisations, international business associations, multinational cultural societies, etc. Also, the creation of regional consulting organisations, information centres, and structures for the proper preparation of the CBC staff should be stepped up in the border regions.<sup>37</sup>

According to A. Strizhakova,<sup>38</sup> the creation of information networks and governance structures as new forms of cross-border cooperation is, organizationally, advised:

– *Information centres, and their activity*, providing the information systematisation and dissemination for the cross-border cooperation participants on major CBC areas, innovative forms, cross-border projects, changes in legislation, individual programs, etc.

– *Regional development agencies* in regions, formed to maximise some legal, informational, and methodological support for cross-border cooperation target groups. In this case, any information and involvement of professionals, cross-border cooperation public, media and other target groups can be carried out by conducting relevant training and discussions, workshops, hearings, round table talks, working meetings with the direct participation of experts and public representatives.

– *Specialised GIS* (geographic information systems), which are used or can be implemented in the fields of the design, urban planning, sustainable territorial development, in the monitoring of the environmental systems and technogenic and ecological safety. Geo-information systems are varieties of information systems that provide the collection, storage, processing, access, display, and distribution of geographically coordinated (spatial) data.

– *Cross-border cooperation centres* (CBCC) as active forms of information support, executing the so-called outreach activities, promoting a scientific potential (higher education institutions) abroad, among academies, informing and providing personal consultations to the university staff on possible

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<sup>37</sup> Віталій Маркович, *Соціально-економічна ефективність транскордонного співробітництва України в умовах європейської інтеграції* [Socio-economic Efficiency of Ukraine Cross-border Cooperation in the Context of European Integration], Вінниця, 2018, 225 с.

<sup>38</sup> Анастасія Стрижакова, *Механізми державного управління розвитком транскордонного співробітництва між Україною та країнами Європейського Союзу* [Mechanisms of Public Administration for the Development of Cross-border Cooperation between Ukraine and the Countries of the European Union], Маріуполь, 2017, 248 с.



cooperation areas mainly with partner organisations. Thus, such centres at Uzhhorod National University use opportunities to obtain extra-budgetary funding, hold presentations, workshops, and keep a coordinator of research information in the field.

Regional information-innovation-educational complexes aim to use the Internet technologies for interactive remote events, which allow holding educational and methodological, informational and discussion meetings in studios, specially equipped for it, on the principle of TV bridges, simultaneously in several regions.

– The *Scientific, Technical and Economic Information Centre* (CSTEI), able to perform the functions of a regional information-innovation-educational complex, with a regional information portal, created in its structure. The purpose of such a portal is to provide informed analysis and advisory electronic information channels for regional scientific and business circles, to form the innovative culture in the population, to monitor innovative processes, to search for new technologies and to implement them, as well as to promote the intellectual property commercialisation processes. The portal database's updating possibilities are substantially expanded through the precise coordination of the innovative proposals, received from research institutions, higher educational institutions, industrial enterprises, small and medium-sized businesses, and other economic entities of CBC member states.

The conduct of research in this study focused mainly on the Ukrainian side, primarily paying attention to the fact that the current political situation in this country led to a decrease in the bilateral relations between Poland and Ukraine, and, as a result, the close ties with the eastern border regions turned into a great loss. Most companies did not cope with the problematic situation due to their economic and political problems in Ukraine. Small institutions and enterprises, operating within the cross-border business field are in an even worse state. A significant challenge is that the areas in both countries with the most substantial international economic ties are located far from the border.<sup>39</sup> Polish researchers confirmed some revival of the cooperation during the Euro 2012 football championship, where Poland and Ukraine were the countries of the final matches.

However, Ukraine remains Poland's leading strategic partner among the

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<sup>39</sup> Bogdan Kawałko, *Wybrane problemy polsko-ukraińskiej współpracy transgranicznej* [Selected problems of Polish-Ukrainian cross-border cooperation], in "Barometr Regionalny" [Regional Barometer], Nr 2(24), 2011.

non-EU countries. One can only agree with O. Charucka's opinion<sup>40</sup> that the current state of cooperation in the Polish-Ukrainian border area cannot be characterised as effective cooperation. Its development is hampered by economic, legal, and other social factors. Despite the destabilisation in Ukraine, current Polish companies experience better times and stay in the Ukrainian market because of its vast potential, ranging from heavy industry to chemicals and agriculture. According to the World Bank data, this potential is developing and growing, while Ukraine is not the best suited for business. Further cooperation promotion depends on the progress of Ukraine's European integration processes and its local governmental reforms.

The huge problem, caused by the coronavirus pandemic, has also adjusted CBC structures' operability, including the information focus on the Programs. In particular, the Joint Monitoring Committee of the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine CBC Program 2014-2020 approved the allocation of an additional 3 million euros to finance 12 Projects (7 PL-BY, 4 PL-UA, 1 PL-BY-UA) in the field of health care, to support them in the fight against the Covid-19 outbreak.<sup>41</sup>

Various forms of the work online within the programs stay relevant. In connection with the cancellation of training on the Project implementation for beneficiaries of the conventional and large infrastructure projects in Poland, Belarus and Ukraine, all the training materials, prepared for these events, have been published on the site. The competition among journalists of different media types for the best publications concerning the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Program in the mass media is planned. This competition is organised on the 30th anniversary of INTERREG. Its purpose is to promote the results of all three periods of the Program (2004-2006, 2007-2013 and 2014-2020) by demonstrating the Projects implemented under it in the form of text, audio, video, and television materials. Due to the competition, the support for the participants involved in the Project will be provided in the implementation of their information and promotion activities. Besides, the competition also aims at the integration of the journalistic environment from Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine.

Due to the epidemic situation caused by the COVID-19, the Cross-Border

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<sup>40</sup> Olga Charucka, *Współpraca międzyregionalna i transgraniczna Polski z Ukrainą* [Interregional and cross-border cooperation between Poland and Ukraine], in "ZNUV Vistula Zeszyty naukowe" [Vistula Scientific notebooks], 2016, 47(2), p.34-59.

<sup>41</sup> Програма ТКС Польща-Білорусь-Україна 2014-2020, надасть 3 млн. євро для боротьби з Covid-19 [The program Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 will provide 3 million euros to combat Covid-19], 2020, in [https://galinfo.com.ua/news/programa\\_tks\\_polshchabilorusukraina\\_20142020\\_nadast\\_3 mln\\_ievro\\_dlya\\_borotby\\_z\\_covid19\\_343005.html](https://galinfo.com.ua/news/programa_tks_polshchabilorusukraina_20142020_nadast_3 mln_ievro_dlya_borotby_z_covid19_343005.html) (Accessed on 12.05.2020).

Education Campaign for Schools has been cancelled this year, and the final event in Brest (Belarus) cannot be organised. Therefore, this campaign has been replaced by an online competition for teenagers under the same slogan "Together for Greener Tomorrow!"

## CONCLUSIONS

Thus, cross-border cooperation has a systemic effect, aimed at the economic, social, scientific, technical, environmental, cultural, and other relations, established and deepened between the territorial communities, local executive bodies of Ukraine and the territorial communities and relevant authorities of other states, within their competence and national legislation. The cooperation across borders will help attract foreign investors, give some impetus to the production development, and provide a mechanism for implementing the idea of transport corridors. It is becoming more extensive, more inclusive and meaningful, encompassing more and more economic activities. With the formation of cross-border associations, there are ample opportunities in the economy, transport, environmental protection, energy, culture, development and modernisation of infrastructure, entrepreneurship, and disaster management. Opportunities are being created for a quick response to the market needs, mainly through appropriate cross-border integration.

Euroregions, cross-border cooperation participants and parties primarily tend to act within the framework of joint Projects and Programs, as sets of activities aimed at the development of cross-border cooperation which recently received state support and assistance under the EU Programs. A significant number of agreements and programs have been signed between Ukraine and Poland, which provide informational support to the CBC's organisational and legal systems. These programs' main problem is that more attention should be paid to common issues and positions of all the parties involved in the cooperation process.

The CBC information support for Ukraine and Poland is extensive and multilevel but remains unsystematic and ineffective within the framework of the "Carpathian" and the "Bug" Euroregions and their operability. There is a need within the functioning of the Ukrainian Euroregions, to improve the quality of the existing non-systemic informational interaction of regional entities, to ensure constant and continuous information to the public on both border sides, about the goals, principles, programs and specific projects of such cooperation. An important area of CBC development in the field of information support is the formation of specific cross-border statistics and the integration of monitoring

systems. They are needed for the socio-economic processes between the regional statistical offices on both border sides. This may be achieved through the creation of joint cross-border information centres. Both the implementation and maintenance of cross-border statistics will enable the assessment of CBC development, will allow the analysis of the context of cross-border markets, conduct studies, and make management decisions on the regional development promptly.

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## UNIVERSITIES - ACTORS IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION BUILDING. STUDY CASE: ROMANIA-UKRAINE BORDER

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this paper is to explore different expressions of the universities' involvement in cross-border cooperation across the European countries or international, as a way to strengthen the role in the extended community for the ones near a border. Moreover, it aims to identify specific actions and networks, as good practices where universities are the leading players in building cross-border cooperation. The first part of the research is based on several cases illustrated in scientific literature or promoted directly by different universities in Europe or around the world. At the same time, the second part also uses the official data on cross-border projects, official statements and documents, and the partial results of field research that we did in the cross-border area Romania-Ukraine. Therefore, we found that, in the pursuit of a sustainable path, universities found various ways to anchor in networks among themselves or with community actors. The ones near the border used the incentives offered by the cross-border programmes to build long-term partnerships and good practices in the benefit of the academia and also of the community.*

**Keywords:** *universities, cross-border cooperation, partnership, sustainability, multiculturalism, Romania, Ukraine.*

**Rezumat: Universitățile – actori în construirea cooperării transfrontaliere. Studiu de caz: granița România-Ucraina.** *Scopul acestei lucrări este de a explora diferite expresii ale implicării universităților în cooperarea transfrontalieră în țările Europei sau la nivel internațional, ca modalitate de consolidare a rolului în comunitățile extinse pentru cele aflate în apropierea frontierei. În plus, lucrarea își propune să identifice acțiuni și rețele specifice, ca bune practici în care universitățile sunt principalii jucători în construirea cooperării transfrontaliere. Prima parte a cercetării se bazează pe diverse cazuri ilustrate în literatura științifică sau promovate direct de diferite universități din Europa sau din lume, iar în partea a doua sunt utilizate date oficiale despre proiecte transfrontaliere, declarații și documente oficiale, precum și rezultate parțiale ale unei cercetări de teren pe care am realizat-o în zona transfrontalieră România-Ucraina. Prin urmare, am identificat existența posibilității ca, în căutarea unei căi sustenabile, universitățile au găsit variate moduri de a se ancora în*

*rețele între ele sau împreună cu actori din comunitate, iar cele din apropierea frontierei au utilizat stimulentele oferite de programele de cooperare transfrontalieră pentru a construi parteneriate pe termen lung și bune practici în beneficiul academic și al comunității.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the frame of continuous and updated promotion of the territorial cooperation inside the European Union (EU) and friendly neighbourhood relation with the partner countries, the cross-border collaboration was activated in different forms along the time. There are mainly two approaches: by the Council of Europe – the soft approach through policy papers and Euroregions, and European Union – the more in-depth approach through policies, regulations and programmes that finance projects with a mandatory cross-border partnership. The already traditional role of the universities as poles of a regions' development was extended, if we consider the communities along a common border as a region with a shared history, culture or traditions.

The purpose of this paper is to explore different expressions of the universities' involvement in cross-border cooperation (CBC) across the European countries or international, as a way to strengthen the role in the extended community for the ones near a border, and to identify specific actions and networks. In these as good practices, universities are the leading players in building cross-border cooperation.

For a proper understanding of the paper, we would like to review some of the concepts and frames that are part of the core of our research. Local communities and authorities living along borders face challenges and issues originating from the presence of the state frontier, fact that showed during the time an effective solving of such problems involves the development of joint cross-border approach and strategy. Therefore, the essence of cross-border initiatives is to overcome the peripheral positioning of border areas.

The term 'cross-border cooperation' has several different scientific and political definitions. One of the earliest bases for the concept of cross-border cooperation was established in the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, Article 2: "For the purpose of this Convention, transfrontier cooperation shall mean any concerted action designed to reinforce and foster neighbourly relations between territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose. Transfrontier cooperation shall take place in the framework of territorial



communities' or authorities' powers as defined in domestic law."<sup>1</sup> The European Union (EU) institutions apply this term with the meaning of cooperation among regions near the border to foster the integrated regional development and to tackle common problems through the implementation of joint initiatives, programmes and projects across borders. As we notice, even if the Council of Europe uses the term 'transfrontier cooperation', basically it has the same meaning as the one used by the EU institutions. Both it refers to cooperation on a regional level between communities divided by an international border.

In the EU approach, the cross-border cooperation is one of the various forms of territorial cooperation. The latter is a broad term referring to any horizontal cooperation at a subnational or regional level between local communities, regions and/or cities. The purpose of the territorial cooperation to reduce disparities between areas, to strengthen cohesion and to foster local economic and social development. There are considered three primary forms of territorial cooperation in the EU: transnational cooperation, interregional cooperation and cross-border cooperation. Transnational cooperation relates to large connected areas of several countries and involves national, regional and local actors that, in collaboration, tackle at a particular issue. Interregional cooperation operates at a pan-European level and includes collaboration between regional and local authorities based on exchanging of experiences, information and best practices. It could also refer to cooperation between remoted regions or networking between many areas<sup>2</sup>.

In a unifying approach, we can use the definition promoted by the Cross-border cooperation toolkit. "Cross-border cooperation (CBC) is a concerted process of building neighbourly relationships between local stakeholders and authorities on either side of a border, intending to overcome such problems and foster the harmonious development of neighbouring communities. Its success should be built on clear concrete objectives and the willingness to cooperate."<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, we refer to the cross-border regions (CBR) that are territorial units who participate in territorial cooperation and include CBC initiatives. These are also defined as a regions with common geography, history, economic possibilities, culture, but crossed by state borders. They act as 'playground' for the actors

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe, *European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities European*, Madrid, Treaty Series – 106, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> Rafal Sadowski, *E-Platform for Neighbourhood*, 2017 (retrieved from <http://www.eufor-neighbourhood.eu/e-platform/e-learning-platform/>, accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>3</sup> Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, Council of Europe, *Crossborder Cooperation Toolkit*, 2012 (retrieved from [http://slg-coe.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Toolkit\\_Cross-border-co-operation.pdf](http://slg-coe.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Toolkit_Cross-border-co-operation.pdf), accessed on 01.03.2020).

involved, including universities.

Still, in some of the references and examples we found, the authors or the actors involved use a broader sense for cross-border cooperation, as across the borders, more appropriate to transnational cooperation concept. We accept those cases as relevant for the role of universities beyond the one within national borders, as creating the flows for education, knowledge, research, therefore added value. Most of the universities are also connected with other universities in the neighbourhood, across the border. Therefore, the benefits of being part of a transnational network significantly contributes to the CBC and the regional development of CBR.

The second set of information that should be reminded for a better understanding of the paper is related to the frame of CBC programmes. These represent the main incentive that drawn the universities in the Romania-Ukraine border into the CBC. Moreover, these funds acted as the seed for long term cooperation and for autonomous initiatives, beyond the grants supplied by CBC programmes.

When launching of the Cohesion Policy in 1988, the European Communities considered the need to mitigate disparities on a regional level, as a strengthening of the regional development approach, and created the context for CBC to emerge as an instrument for fostering regional development and cohesion with European and subnational influence. In the current state, there is CBC inside the EU's territory, as part of European Territorial Cooperation, which is part of Cohesion Policy, and CBC with EU direct neighbours. For the latter, it can be distinguished two groups of neighbours – those in the process of accession to the EU or with an EU's membership perspective, and those with whom the EU just develops partnership relations. In the case of the CBC inside the EU's territory, the focus is mainly on the economic and social cohesion. In contrast, in the case of the EU's external CBC programmes, the priority is related to maintaining security at European borders by fostering prosperity and deepening economic and social ties between the EU and non-EU actors.

Even if there are several programmes targeted to the relation with neighbours, we will focus on the ones with an EU's membership perspective, as Ukraine is included in this group. A first programme, which aimed to support candidate countries' border areas through CBC with EU regions was a PHARE-CBC Programme established for Central Europe in 1994. The programme intended to reduce the marginalisation of border areas mainly through the implementation of infrastructure schemes and programmes stimulating economic development, while also intended to prepare the concerned regions to join Cohesion Policy and

Interreg programme after they had become EU members. In the case of the Romania-Ukraine border, there was Romania-Ukraine Neighbourhood Programme 2004-2006, and the programme was implemented until 2010. The programme was replaced by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) in 2007, and it was followed by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) in 2014. Both instruments were established in order to support the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The policy encompasses all 16 EU's neighbours in the east and south. The ENPI and the ENI include CBC programmes, for the Romania-Ukraine border we consider: the Joint Operational Programme (JOP) Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova and JOP Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine (for 2007-2013), and the JOP Romania-Ukraine and JOP Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine (for 2014-2020).

### **UNIVERSITIES INVOLVEMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION: SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE AND EMPIRICAL EXAMPLES**

In this section, we present several cases of cross-border activity of universities as proofs of varieties or forms of involvement, with no assessment on efficiency or effectiveness, while it is not the purpose of the paper.

In our endeavour of review of few cases that illustrate the involvement of universities in CBC, we mention two provisions of policy approach. The first provision refers to inclusion of the development of education, research and innovation, and innovative communication technologies in the EU's Common Strategic Framework of the Common Provision Regulation document. The long-term aim is to improve the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises as the core of territorial cooperation (it includes the cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation).<sup>4</sup> It proves the vital place of education and research in the cross-border cooperation and the opportunity for the universities to play a significant role in CBR. The second provision gives orientation on possible activities that may be developed by universities in the educational field in the CBR: universities twinning, exchanges and cross-border visits, awareness campaigns on the neighbouring communities languages, history and culture in university programmes, arrangement of bilingual teaching programmes, access to university across the border, establishment of cross-border educational entities, programmes and/or

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<sup>4</sup> European Parliament and the Council, *Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development*, Bruxelles, 2013.

curricula, mutual accreditation systems. Both provisions give a policy encouraging background for universities involvement in CBC.

As mentioned above, we found in literature cases where the cross-border concept is wider perceived with a more substantial transnational dimension. One is a specific approach of cross-border education that ease access and promote innovation and responsiveness of higher education, constituted as a movement of education programs and providers, that needs to be structured and regulated<sup>5</sup>. A similar case is one outside EU, but an exciting illustration of possible actions, the Cross-border Education Research Team (C-BERT) that designed a Hub for Cross-border Education as the source of information regarding college and universities with a multi-national presence. The site is hosted at the State University of New York at Albany and Pennsylvania State University and maintains a comprehensive list of international branch campuses and also tracks other aspects of cross-border higher education<sup>6</sup>. The third is focused on the cross-border university networks as a development strategy with a possibility to develop longer-term activities which would exceed the capacity of the individual institution and would promote more sustainable relationships than twinning projects between universities<sup>7</sup>. In this paper, the authors study three cases of multi-university networks, one in Africa and two in Asia, their experiences showing that networks can be a useful mechanism to promote a social and educational agenda in parallel with the capacity strengthening of involved universities.

Going on the specific meaning of cross-border cooperation, we found several cases, both in literature and in the online platforms of different universities across EU member states. An example is the European University Viadrina, located on the German-Polish border, founded to promote the 'growing-together' of Europe. The case of Viadrina University serves as an example of how to facilitate intercultural competence by a course programme, giving the possibility to students to experience, discover and discuss the diversity of values and worldviews in special workshops<sup>8</sup>. In another paper, a group of researchers reviewed several

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<sup>5</sup> Jane Knight, *Crossborder Education: Not Just Students*, 2015 (retrieved <https://ejournals.bc.edu/index.php/ihe/article/download/7499/6693/>, accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>6</sup> C-BERT.org, *Hub for Crossborder Education*, Crossborder Education Research Team, 2019 (retrieved from [www.c-bert.org](http://www.c-bert.org), accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>7</sup> David W. Chapman, Amy Pekol, Elizabeth Wilson, *Crossborder university networks as a development strategy: Lessons from three university networks focused on emerging pandemic threats*, "International Review of Education", 2014, Issue 60, p. 619–637.

<sup>8</sup> Gundula Gwen Hiller, Maja Woźniak, *Developing an intercultural competence programme*

cases on inter-university cooperation at the external border of EU and the contribution to the ENP, detecting several results and potential on both border sides and marked the opportunity of the university networks to open the borders in a figurative sense<sup>9</sup>. Based on a previous work on development poles with cross-border potential, we identified that the universities are important centres in a partnership network for cross-border regions<sup>10</sup>. They play a significant role in local/regional clusters and part of a theoretical frame<sup>11</sup>, reason for us including aspects related to universities in our recent field research. Part of the results are described in the next section of the paper.

We extended our investigation for examples of universities involvement in CBC across Europe by looking at some of their websites, and we found several ways of contributing to the cross-border cooperation. We do a short presentation of few of them that we considered relevant to consider, trying to group the cases on education, research or general networking, depending on how the main focus is, as presented online. In the field of education, we identified a Joint Master in Borderology, initiated by Bodø University, Norway, in partnership with Murmansk State Technical University, Russia. As the site presents, the study programme "explores how collaboration in border zones can develop tools for solving conflicts locally, nationally and globally - thereby creating a new type of international dialogue largely neglected in traditional state diplomacy". Usually, the seminars are held in Northern Norway and the Murmansk-region, Russia (Nord University, 2018).<sup>12</sup> In the area of research, we found more examples with a different structure or form of organisation. A first example is the International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU) founded in 1989 as part of the Geography Department at

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*at an international cross-border university*, "Intercultural Education", 2009, 20(1), pp. 113-124.

<sup>9</sup> Sorin Şipoş, Mircea Brie, Florin Sfrengu, Ion Gumenăi, *Cooperarea inter-universitară la frontierele externe ale Uniunii Europene și contribuția la politica europeană de vecinătate* [Inter-university cooperation at the external borders of the European Union and contribution to the European Neighborhood Policy], in "Frontierele spațiului românesc în context European", Oradea/Chișinău: Editura Universității din Oradea/ Editura Cartdidact, 2008, pp. 440-459.

<sup>10</sup> Marcela Slusarciuc, *Noi arhitecturi ale polilor de dezvoltare cu potențial transfrontalier*. București, Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, 2016

<sup>11</sup> Marcela Slusarciuc, Gabriela Prelipcean, *Clusters - a potential model of development for crossborder areas*, "Romanian Journal of Economics", 2014, 2(48), pp. 148-160.

<sup>12</sup> Nord University, *Borderology - Joint Master Degree*, 2018 (retrieved from <https://www.nord.no/en/studies/borderology-master#&acd=StudyAbroadHeader>, accessed on 01.03.2020).

Durham University. It is designed as a Centre for Borders Research and "seeks to facilitate enhanced understanding of border areas, contribute to the peaceful resolution of boundary disputes, and engage with broader geographic questions concerning the changing nature of sovereignty, territory, citizenship, and the political organisation of space".<sup>13</sup> A different example is EconPol Europe – a European network for economic and fiscal policy research that includes 14 policy-oriented university and non-university research institutes across 12 countries. They have a contribution in scientific expertise to the discussion of the future design of the European Union. Their topics cover: sustainable growth, best practices, reform of EU policies, the EU budget, capital markets, the regulation of the financial sector, governance, and macroeconomic policy in the European Monetary Union.<sup>14</sup> A case with a conflictual context where the university involvement in cross-border cooperation was strongly needed is represented by the Centre for cross-border studies. It was created in the context of the island of Ireland conflict mitigation in the frame of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. As they present on the website, the Centre has a role in contributing to the increased social, economic and territorial cohesion of the island of Ireland. They issued different high-quality research and analysis, with an increased focus on applied research and policy, that should support the Centre's advocacy for the promotion of cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland.<sup>15</sup> A different case that we consider relevant, even if it is not a university but a research entity, it is Cross-border Research Association, CBRA, formally established in Lausanne, Switzerland in 2005, as an independent research institute that works on domains as: advanced supply chain security, crime prevention, risk management, trade facilitation, cross-border trade and logistics, and public-private cooperation research, training and consulting. As presented on their website, they made several key trade facilitation studies, as for example: *Improving the Border Agency Cooperation Among the OIC Member States for Facilitating Trade* (2016), commissioned by the Secretariat of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC); and *The Import VAT and Duty De-Minimis in the European Union - Where Should They be and What Will be the Impact?* (2014), study mandated

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<sup>13</sup> Durham University, *IBRU - International Borders Research Unit*, 2019 (retrieved from <https://www.dur.ac.uk/ibru/>, accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>14</sup> EconPol Europe, *EconPol Europe*, 2017 (retrieved from <https://www.econpol.eu/index.php>).

<sup>15</sup> Centre for Crossborder Studies, *Centre for Crossborder Studies*, 2019 (retrieved from <http://crossborder.ie/>, accessed on 01.03.2020).

by the European Express Association (EEA), Belgium.<sup>16</sup> The interest on cross-border research is not only in Europe, as illustrated by Cross-border Institute at the University of Windsor, dedicated to research, education, and public outreach related to the movement of people, goods, and funds across borders. As stated in their online page, they have a partnership with public agencies, private firms, industry groups and community groups. They advance the cause of making a better Canada – US border and they also work with institutions in other countries to address the global challenges of border management and cross-border commerce.<sup>17</sup> In Romania, we found the Cross-border Institute of International Studies and Criminal Justice, throughout the Centre for International Studies and Human Rights. Their stated objectives are to promote performant applied and fundamental research, to establish a link between academic researchers and practitioners of international law, political studies, international relations and human rights, economics and public administration, regional and security studies. The center is set up by "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați, and they issue the Cross-border Journal of International Studies. The journal has a transdisciplinary approach, focused on tackling neuralgic points of cross-border cooperation in the globalised international society, aiming to analyse a series of issues specific to the area and the EU external border region. We found no proofs of recent activity to detect if they are still in place.<sup>18</sup>

The example we consider the most complex out of the ones we found is the University of the Greater Region (2016). This is a network of six universities (the University of Kaiserslautern, the University of Liège, the University of Lorraine, the University of Luxembourg, Saarland University and Trier University). They are located on the cross-border area of the Greater Region (Germany - Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland; Belgium - Wallonia, French and German communities of Belgium; France – Grand-Est Region /Lorraine, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg). As the information on their page, this is "a cooperation project bringing together six universities in four countries to improve the mobility of students, researchers and teachers, enriching courses and research profiles, while enhancing the reputation and attractiveness of the partner universities and the region". In terms of figures they state, the network

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<sup>16</sup> Crossborder Research Association, *Crossborder Research Association*, 2014 (retrieved from [www.crossborder.org](http://www.crossborder.org), accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>17</sup> Crossborder Institute, *Crossborder Institute at the University of Windsor*, 2019 (retrieved from [www.cbinsitute.ca](http://www.cbinsitute.ca), accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>18</sup> Dunărea de Jos University of Galați, *The Crossborder Institute for International Studies and Criminal Justice*, 2017 (retrieved from <http://www.cbinsitute.ugal.ro/>, accessed on 01.03.2020).

includes more than 135.000 students, near 7.000 PhD candidates, more than 10.000 lecturers and researchers, and they use three teaching languages (French, German, English) offering good mobility to all within the network.<sup>19</sup>

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

On the border we investigate, Romania-Ukraine, the CBR includes on the Romanian side five administrative units (counties): Satu Mare, Maramureş, Suceava, Botoşani, Tulcea; and on the Ukrainian side - four administrative divisions (oblasts): Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi, Odesa. A map of the CBR may be seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Map of the Cross-border region Romania-Ukraine**

Source: Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020<sup>20</sup>

In our work, we used three categories of data. The first ones are the data on the projects approved within CBC programmes where the universities are leaders or partners. The second category include the data collected on the field, where a questionnaire was applied with two questions related to the university involvement in the CBR. The third category is represented by data about different CBC events or other types of activities promoted in the media or on the universities'

<sup>19</sup> University of the Greater Region, *University of the Greater Region*, 2016 (retrieved from [www.uni-gr.eu](http://www.uni-gr.eu), accessed on 01.03.2020)

<sup>20</sup> Managing Authority Romania, *Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020*, 2015 (retrieved from [www.ro-ua.net](http://www.ro-ua.net), accessed on 01.03.2020)



websites. In the following, we describe each type of used data.

In the investigated region, the first relevant CBC programme was Neighbourhood Programme Romania-Ukraine 2004-2006 that had four calls for proposals and ended in 2010. The projects had a mandatory partnership between Romanian and Ukrainian non-profit entities, but the leadership, the budget and activities management were on the Romanian partner<sup>21</sup>. The eligible area was the one described above as the research area for our paper. The second generation of programmes was 2007-2013 when the border was split: JOP Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova (Romania: 3 counties - Suceava, Botoşani, Tulcea, Ukraine: 2 oblasts - Chernivtsi, Odesa), JOP Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine (Romania: 2 counties - Satu Mare, Maramureş, Ukraine: 2 oblasts - Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk). In this generation, the partnership was also mandatory. Still, the conditions differed from one programme to another. For JOP Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova it was compulsory to have a Romanian entity (as Romania was the only member state in the programme). In the case of JOP Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine it was mandatory to have a Ukrainian entity (as Ukraine was the only partner country in the programme). The leadership could be on any of the sides; the budget and activities were shared among partners. The programmes ended in 2018. The third generation, the actual one is 2014-2020, where the eligible area went back to bilateral JOP Romania-Ukraine. The partnership is mandatory as in the first generation, and the application, team, budget and activities should be jointly prepared and managed. In the case of the last programme, there was only one call for proposals, and the results are not published yet. Therefore, we do not have official data on the universities' involvement, but only on the types of activities, they could apply for grants.

The field data are from a survey conducted in spring 2018, with the support of Regional Office for Cross-border Cooperation Suceava, as the questionnaire was applied to potential applicants of JOP Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020 that attended the information events organised in the border area. The questionnaire had several questions, most of them open, and was returned by 124 respondents, out of which 58 Romanians and 66 Ukrainians. Regarding the structure of the respondents and issues of representativity, the following tables show the distribution of respondents as a type of entity and coverage of the administrative units from Romania and Ukraine (Table 1 and Table 2).

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<sup>21</sup> Marcela Slusarciuc, *Financial instruments for crossborder economic development. Shaping the new tendencies at the european level – PhD thesis*, Suceava, Universitatea Ştefan cel Mare, 2013.

**Table 1: The number of respondents per type of entity**

Type of entity	No. of respondents
Local Public Administration	46
Regional Public Administration	6
University	14
Business Organisations	0
Firms	3
Non-governmental organisations	32
Other Public Institutions	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>

Source: Own calculation.

**Table 2: The number of respondents in each administrative unit**

Administrative unit Romania	58	Administrative unit Ukraine	66
Satu Mare	12	Zakarpattia	12
Maramures	11	Ivano Frankivsk	9
Suceava	16	Chernivtsi	36
Botosani	8	Odesa	9
Tulcea	11		

Source: Own calculation.

The questionnaire was structured on different issues, and it was applied both in Romanian and Ukrainian language. The two questions of interest for our paper are one dichotomic (yes/no/no answer) and one open, namely: 'Does your institution/organisation cooperate with the university/universities in the area?' and 'If yes, name the university/universities and the cooperation fields.' It is significant to mention, as not to lead to inaccurate interpretation of data presented that it could be more respondents from the same entity. The questionnaire was distributed to events with no limitations regarding the participants from one entity where we had no control on the distribution or collection of questionnaires.

The last type of data was focused on identifying if there are any other CBC activities besides the ones granted within the CBC programmes, where the universities are involved. As there is no centralised information, we considered that the universities own activities promoted on their websites or through general media would be an input. In the cases we found, we noticed that the same information was also reflected on the universities' websites and media or on the websites of more universities in cases where more universities are involved. Therefore, we

decided to use as reference just one source, regardless in how many sources there is the information. Relevant for our paper is the type of activities as qualitative information and not the quantitative information related to the CBC activities awareness in the public space.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The CBC programmes were a useful "incentive package" to encourage cooperation among communities along the border for all the potential applicants, not only universities. Those programmes were designed to act specifically on the needs of the communities along the border, in a subsidiarity manner. On the other side, the universities have complementary access EU programmes where can strengthen or enlarge the cooperation with the partners on the other side of the border (for example, Erasmus – previous and actual format, research programmes – FP7 or Horizon 2020). In the earlier generations, even if the steps were smaller, but it was built trust and shared knowledge by the partners involved<sup>22</sup>.

The domains for projects where the universities were potential applicants changed across generations as we can compare in the table below (Table 3).

**Table 3: Project domains where universities were potential applicants in different generations of CBC programmes**

CBC programmes generation	2004-2006	2007-2013	2014-2020
Domains eligible for universities	Economy and tourism Infrastructure Environment People to people actions	Economic and social development Environment quality including emergency preparedness Border safety People to people	Education and research Culture, patrimony and heritage Accessibility – transport and ICT tools Safety and security - Health issues, emergency preparedness, organised crime and police cooperation

Source: Own work based on the programming documents.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>23</sup> Joint Managing Authority Romania, *Joint Programming Document*, 2006 (retrieved from [http://www.mie.ro/\\_documente/cbc/2004\\_2006/RoUa/programare/JPD%20update%20final.pdf](http://www.mie.ro/_documente/cbc/2004_2006/RoUa/programare/JPD%20update%20final.pdf), accessed on 01.03.2020); Joint Operational Programme Romania-

We notice that, if in the case of the first two generations of programmes the domains were general for an university, the capability of applying depending on the universities' fields of education and research, in the case of the actual generation there is a specific priority on education and research that gives an important opportunity for all the universities from CBR to develop partnerships and to cooperate on educational projects or research projects, regardless the academic field of interest.

In our search on the data available on the programmes websites we found several lists with the concluded contracts, and we identified on those lists the universities from Romania-Ukraine CBR, as defined previously, that were acting as leaders or partners in CBC projects. Even if in the case of the 2007-2013 generation there were more universities involved due to the larger eligibility area (JOP Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine and JOP Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova cover an eligible area larger than the area we refer in our research) we selected only the ones in our RT. As we already mentioned, for the actual generation JOP Romania-Ukraine was not informing yet the evaluation results, therefore we do not have data. Still, we have the data for the actual JOP Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine, which had already two calls for proposals, where we count only the projects and universities from our area of interest.

**Table 4: Involvement of universities from Romania-Ukraine CBR in CBC projects**

<b>CBC programme generation</b>	<b>No. of universities involved in CBC projects</b>	<b>No. of projects with universities involved</b>	<b>No. of projects where universities are leaders</b>	<b>No. of projects where universities are partners</b>
2004-2006	2	7	7	0
2007-2013	9	12	7	9
2014-2020	5	6	4	5

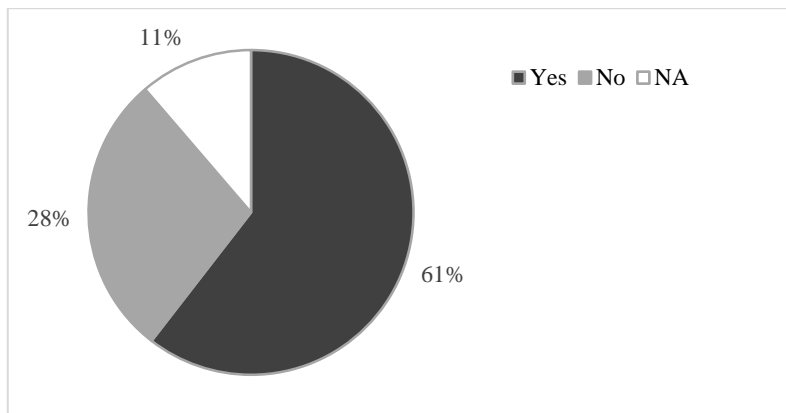
Source of data: for 2004-2006 – [www.mdrap.ro/www.brct suceava.ro](http://www.mdrap.ro/www.brct suceava.ro); for 2007-2013 – [www.huskroua-cbc.net](http://www.huskroua-cbc.net) and [www.ro-ua-md.net](http://www.ro-ua-md.net); for 2014-2020 – [www.huskroua-cbc.eu](http://www.huskroua-cbc.eu)

Ukraine-Republic of Moldova. *People, partnerships and development: ENPI CBC Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova*, Suceava, BRCT Suceava, 2016; Joint Managing Authority Hungary, *Joint Operational Programme Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine*, 2008 (retrieved from [http://www.huskroua-cbc.net/uploads/editors/JOP-HUSKROUA%2030092014-amended\\_final.pdf](http://www.huskroua-cbc.net/uploads/editors/JOP-HUSKROUA%2030092014-amended_final.pdf)); Managing Authority Romania, *JOP Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020*, 2015 (retrieved from [www.ro-ua.net](http://www.ro-ua.net), accessed on 01.03.2020).

As mentioned in the methodology section, in case of 2004-2006 only the Romanian entities were leaders of the project and we have no data about the partners from Ukraine as to check if there are any universities involved. Anyway, the role of Ukrainian partners was mainly formal and had less real involvement in the projects, only as participants. As for 2014-2020, we have only partial data we cannot compare with the previous generation at this time. We can notice that, since the shared management and budget (2007-2013 and 2014-2020), universities are involved not only in projects with some other universities but in projects where the leaders are different type of entity, fact that proves the role of the universities as an actor in the local/regional CBC network.

Related to the above, the perspective of universities included in partnership in the community with other actors, not only other universities, we present the data from the field research, resulted from the questionnaire application as described in the methodology section.

Out of all respondents, 61% cooperate with universities from their area, on the same side or the other side of the border, as illustrated below (figure no. 2). We consider that it could be interpreted as a sign of the importance of universities as actors in the local community.



**Figure 2: Cooperation with universities in the CBR**

Source: Own calculation.

As we can see in the table below (Table 5), the respondents cooperate with the universities from their administrative unit, with universities outside the border area but in neighbouring administrative units or with their branches located in the border region. Not all the respondents that mentioned existing cooperation with a university also named it, and other respondents named more than one university with which they cooperate, on their side of the border or the other side.

**Table 5: Named university by the respondents as a cooperation partner in the community (\*number of respondents)**

<b>Romanian respondents</b>	
<b>Romanian university</b>	<b>Ukrainian university</b>
"Al. I. Cuza" Univ. Iasi (1)*	"Yuryi Fedkovych" Univ. Chernivtsi (3)
"Babes Bolyai" Univ. Cluj Napoca (2)	State Univ. of Izmail (2)
"Danubius" Univ. Galati (3)	Univ. of Gas and Petrol Ivano Frankivsk (1)
"Dunarea de Jos" Univ. Galati (5)	National Univ. Uzhhorod (3)
Stefan cel Mare Univ. of Suceava (11)	National Polytechnical Univ. of Odesa (3)
North Univ. Baia Mare (1)	
Technical Univ. – Univ. Centre North – Baia Mare (6)	
West Univ. "Vasile Goldis" Arad - Satu Mare, Baia Mare branches (5)	
<b>Ukrainian respondents</b>	
<b>Romanian university</b>	<b>Ukrainian university</b>
Stefan cel Mare Univ. of Suceava (2)	Odesa National Academy of Food Technologies (2)
"Babeş-Bolyai" Univ. din Cluj-Napoca (1)	Construction College Storojineţ (1)
West Univ. "Vasile Goldis" Arad (1)	Pedagogic and Psychology Institute of the Pedagogic National Univ. M. P. Dragomanov Kiev (2)
	Storojineţ Institute of State Fiscal Service National Univ. (2)
	Agrarian National Univ. Odesa (1)
	Human Development Univ. "Ucraina" - Storojineţ Branch
	Medical State Univ. Bukovina Chernivtsi (10)
	Open Univ. for Adults Chernivtsi (1)
	Economic Univ. Odesa (3)
	National Univ." I. Mechnickov" Odesa (1)
	National Medical Univ. Ivano-Frankivsk (1)
	National Univ. of Forestry Lviv (1)
	"Yuryi Fedkovych" Univ. Chernivtsi (12)
	"Vasyl Stefanyk" Precarpathian National Univ. (4)
	Univ. of Gas and Petrol Ivano-Frankivsk (3)
	National Univ. Uzhhorod (5)
	National Polytechnical Univ. of Odesa (1)
	Univ. of seniors (1)

The results show an adequate involvement of the universities in their community near the border, the higher cooperation with the universities from the country of respondents is no surprise. The methodological aspects of the survey do not give enough room to conclude that Romanian entities cooperate more with Ukrainian universities rather than reversed. We have no additional information to connect and have a clear conclusion. Thus, it is easy to notice that on the Ukrainian part of CBR there are more universities and branches than on the Romanian part. Thus, we can conclude that there is a potential of networking for universities in the CBR, both with other universities and local/regional entities.

After two closed generations of CBC programmes, we notice that the exercise of partnership and cooperation between the universities from the Romania-Ukraine border area generated other initiatives for cooperation beside those programmes with the financial incentive. In a sketchy search on the universities' websites and some media channels, we found several examples and forms of initiatives out of which we resume some of them.

The larger representativeness as coverage of universities is in case of consortiums that act as networks with a core agreement. An example is Consortium Collegium Carpathicum that includes six members. Two of them are from Poland: East European State University in Przemysl and Warsaw University. Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine have each one university in the network (Catholic University Pazmany Peter of Budapest, Presov University, Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava - USV, National Precarpathian University "Vasyl Stefanyk" Ivano-Frankivsk. Besides at least yearly meetings, they have constant professors and lecturers' exchanges in various fields. Another one is Consortium of the Universities of the Republic of Moldova-Romania-Ukraine (the State University of Moldova, "Alecu Russo" University Bălți, "Al. I. Cuza" University Iași, Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Arts University "George Enescu" Iași, National University "Yuriy Fedkovych" Chernivtsi) that started in 2011 and had several activities along years: Romanian language lectorate of USV to National University "Yuriy Fedkovych" Chernivtsi, yearly meetings, educational projects development, research projects, artistic projects, students joint activities.

An interesting tool for promoting CBC in the area is represented by specialised academic programmes, as we also seen in the cases from the first section; therefore, it worth to mention the master studies in International Relation and Cross-border Cooperation held by Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava for several years already. We can also add here the Summer Schools for students

from neighbourhood countries, organised yearly and in association with national partners too.<sup>24</sup>

Another case of involvement alongside the local/regional actors in the CBR development is through debates concerning the common topics. We found the example of the Center for European Studies of the "Al. I. Cuza" University, who organised a discussion with the topic "University in society. Development and integration at EU's borderlines by dialogue and knowledge exchange". They intended to stimulate the interactivity between academic, non-governmental organisations, groups of experts, and decision-makers. The aim was to better connect in the cross-border area and to increase of awareness on the Romania-Ukraine and Romania-Republic of Moldova CBC programmes opportunities. The participants covered Euroregions, local and regional administration, cross-border cooperation offices, universities from the border area and non-governmental organisations from the border area.<sup>25</sup> Even if the initiative was outside CBR Romania-Ukraine, the inclusion of relevant actors and the exchange of experiences is suitable for our research area too.

For the cases where Euroregions are still active, and universities are included in the main stakeholders' group, they can play a useful role and support the governance within the Euroregion as a structured way for manifesting cross-border cooperation. We have the example of "Upper Prut" Euroregion, where, in a duplex meeting Suceava-Chernivtsi, attended the universities in the area with the relevant stakeholders in an endeavour to strengthen the role of the first one in the area. They promoted two types of specific activities: preparation of studies in the region as to identify the potential for new clusters starting or extension of existing ones, together with preparation of several studies as service offered to the local/regional stakeholders, and development of a Cross-border research centre that would promote knowledge, provide specialised assistance in developing strategies or projects designed for the region or local communities.<sup>26</sup>

The last example of initiative with impact on cross-border cooperation in the Romania-Ukraine area and with universities' involvement is through projects financed by other programmes. It is the case of Jean Monnet Network ENACTED –

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<sup>24</sup> Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, *Universitatea Ştefan cel Mare Suceava*, 2019 (retrieved from [www.usv.ro](http://www.usv.ro), accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>25</sup> Al. I. Cuza University, *"Al. I. Cuza" University*, 2019 (retrieved from [www.uaic.ro](http://www.uaic.ro), accessed on 01.03.2020).

<sup>26</sup> Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, *Universitatea Ştefan cel Mare Suceava*, 2019 (retrieved from [www.usv.ro](http://www.usv.ro), accessed on 01.03.2020).



European Union and its neighbourhood. Network for enhancing EU's actorness in the eastern borderlands (2017-2020), which associates research, lectures, debates on the EU role on the Eastern borders in a type of open academic network that brings together twelve partners, out of which nine are universities, mostly from border areas: "Al. I. Cuza" University of Iași, University of Oradea, Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Academy of Economic Studies of the Republic of Moldova, State University of the Republic of Moldova, "Yuriy Fedkovych" University Chernivtsi, State University Belarus, School of Economic Sciences Warsaw, Poland; University of Debrecen, Hungary.<sup>27</sup>

As a sum-up of the various data used and our perspective, we notice that there are several forms of partnership/cooperation that universities may use. The main forms are represented by research projects, CBC bilateral or multilateral projects, networks among universities, networks among actors in the CB region. Several types of activities put in practice the cooperation: events, academic exchanges of experience, students mobilities, students joint events, specialised training programmes on cooperation abilities, specialised educational programmes for undergraduates, master or PhD, studies for regional strategies. All forms can contribute to the cross-border cooperation and development of CBR.

The involvement of universities in CBC brings benefits as a share of knowledge, awareness of the other, cooperative approach building on a long term, capitalisation of various existent experiences, all necessary for a sustainable university that is marked by the peripherality due to near the border location. It needs a different type of data and research tools to investigate on a long term the manifest of the mentioned benefits and contribution to adjusting in a new frame of development for CBR.

## CONCLUSIONS

The cases and data presented show good practices as examples of how universities, especially the ones in the CBR, in a sustainable approach, can connect and build projects, partnerships and networks, among them and with the local/regional actors. The bases started with the by CBC programmes incentives through grants and developed further in separate initiatives that explore

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<sup>27</sup> Al. I. Cuza University, "Al. I. Cuza" University, 2019 (retrieved from [www.uaic.ro](http://www.uaic.ro), accessed on 01.03.2020).

other sources for funds and different innovative ways to make use of the advantages of cross-border location. Therefore, we found that, in the pursuit of a sustainable path, universities found various ways to anchor in academic networks or community networks. The ones near the border used the incentives offered by the CBC programmes to build long-term partnerships and good practices in the benefit of the academic field and the community field. The various forms of partnership/cooperation that universities use, and the types of activities contribute to the CBC and development of CBR, due to the benefits that bring. It worth to mention the share of knowledge, awareness of the other, cooperative approach on a long term, capitalisation of various existent experiences. On long term strengthen the universities to face shortcomings caused by the location near the border. Future in-depth research may include a complex sustainability index to measure the border (including economic) impact of CBC activities (education, research, and cooperation projects) of the universities located near the border, regardless the network of actors they are part – universities or community.

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## THE ROAD TO UNFREEDOM

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**Abstract:** *The author reviewed the volume "The Road to Unfreedom. Russia, Europe, America", published in 2018 under the signature of the renown American researcher Timothy Snyder. The main aspects analysed by Snyder, the concepts he proposed and the interpretations formulated on the events studied are presented.*

**Keywords:** *Timothy Snyder, book review, unfreedom, Russia, Europe, America.*

**Rezumat:** *Calea către nelibertate. Autorul a întocmit o recenzie la volumul "The Road to Unfreedom. Russia, Europe, America", publicat în anul 2018 sub semnătura reputatului cercetător american Timothy Snyder. Sunt prezentate principalele aspecte analizate de Snyder, conceptele propuse de acesta și interpretările formulate pe marginea evenimentelor studiate.*

*"Human freedom increasingly depends on who controls what we know and, therefore, how we understand our world. It depends on what information we are able to create and disseminate: what we can share, how we can share it, and with whom we can share it".*

(Rebecca MacKinnon)

Known to the Romanian public for the volumes *Bloodlands. Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (Humanitas Publishing House, 2012), *Black Earth. The Holocaust as History and Warning* (Humanitas Publishing House, 2018), *On Tyranny. Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (Trei Publishing House, 2018), Timothy

Snyder has relatively recently published a new book<sup>1</sup> on the civic and political dimension of contemporary Russian history and the implications of the internal developments of this state for Europe and America. The author of the book is a professor at Yale University specialising in Central and Eastern Europe's contemporary history. Also, he is a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna. Timothy Snyder speaks five languages and reads ten European languages.

Over the past decade, Timothy Snyder has published six volumes<sup>2</sup>, all of which have been received with interest by specialists and the general public. The central themes of his approaches are related to the phenomena of democratic decline, political and social violence, restriction of freedoms and human rights in the 20th and 21st centuries. In collaboration with other specialists in the field, Snyder coordinated the editing of volumes<sup>3</sup> connected to the same topics of tyranny, totalitarianism, and dictatorial slippage.

Exploration of the topic of this volume began in 2017 when Timothy Snyder published the book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. The author highlighted the threats to freedom that are increasingly emerging in European countries and the United States. Developing this idea in the study *The Road to Unfreedom*, the researcher points out that the world is affected by the regression of democracy at the beginning of the 3rd millennium. While in some Eastern

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Snyder, *The Road to Unfreedom. Russia, Europe, America*, New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2018, 359 p.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, New York, Basic Books, 2010, 524 p.

Tony Judt with Timothy Snyder, *Thinking the Twentieth Century*, London, Penguin Books, 2013, 432 p.

Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth. The Holocaust as History and Warning*, New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2015, 462 p.

Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny. Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017, 128 p.

Timothy Snyder, *The Road to Unfreedom. Russia, Europe, America*, New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2018, 359 p.

Timothy Snyder, *Our Malady. Lessons in Liberty from a Hospital Diary*, New York, Crown Publishing Group, 2020, 192 p.

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Snyder and Ray Brandon, *Stalin and Europe: Terror, War, Domination 1928-1953*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2014, 326 p.

Timothy Snyder and Katherine Younger, *The Balkans as Europe, 1821-1914*, New York, Boydell & Brewer 2018, 171 p.

European states there may be a rise in authoritarianism, in Russia under Vladimir Putin an ultra-centralised and kleptocratic regime has emerged. In the West, there is a deterioration of the rule of law. Timothy Snyder notes that these processes are interdependent. In particular, the democracy crisis in the US and the EU diminishes the arsenal of levers that can obstruct the rise of an authoritarian regime in Russia. On the other hand, the Kremlin is not reluctant to use any means to strike at the West's core values and inspire distrust in the liberal system at the level of Western public opinion.

From the perspective of internal developments in Europe and the USA, the author defines two different types of organisation of society, economy and essence of regimes. On the one hand, the United States and the states of Western and Central Europe are guided by the 'politics of inevitability'. At the same time, Putin's Russia, but not only this country, is shaped by the 'politics of eternity'. According to Timothy Snyder, in the second half of the 20th Century, the USA and Western Europe were guided by the 'politics of inevitability' thinking: capitalism is superior to communism, the free market is superior to the controlled market, and politics and ideologies are subordinate to the economy. Basically, it is inevitable that, sooner or later, the nations of the world take over the Western model. This idea of predestination is categorised as <a form of forgetting>, a West's vulnerability. At present, the idea that the market can be the absolute answer to national problems has led to inequalities that undermine people's confidence in the system. The new leaders, ignoring or minimising the importance and role of genuine democracy, invent external threats, draw an immaculate national past, and generate false problems to distract people from their real needs. On this path of democratic involution, some European states such as Hungary and Poland have come a long way. The United States, under Donald Trump's administration, has moved in a similar direction.

According to Snyder, sliding down the slope of authoritarianism in Western democracies is the transition from the first form of forgetting, to the second: "the politics of eternity." The author considers that the latter orientation promoters try to ensure their governance neither by promises of vital projects for the society, nor by their political achievements, but by nostalgia (p. 110). These politicians build the besieged fortress's image: an innocent nation under constant threat from outside forces. In this context, eternity politicians pervert and empty national history of truth and suppress documentary facts. Instead, the people are given a past consisting of crisis, threat, and defence. At the same time, eternity politicians

invent major problems or exaggerate existing ones, constructing goals that cannot be achieved, but which can be the pillars of the regime (p. 51).

In the case of Russia, Vladimir Putin undermined the democratic mechanism of elections. He destroyed society's trust that by resorting to the electoral instrument, the mistakes of the past can be repaired and a better future can be built. Timothy Snyder points out that the right choices generate the feeling of confidence in that options can be changed in the future and change - if desired - can occur. Thereby, "Democracy transforms human fallibility into political predictability and helps us experience time as a movement forward into a future over which we have some influence" (p. 249). Furthermore, "Democracies die when people cease to believe that voting matters" (p. 251). Restricting the nation's power to replace leaders, Vladimir Putin offered the masses the idea of a hermetic defence against external dangers, promoting the politics of eternity instead of the promise of a prosperous future (p. 273).

Timothy Snyder argues that Putin's foreign policy could be better understood if one analysed certain conservative Russian philosophers' works, especially those signed by Ivan Ilyin (1883–1954). Born and educated in Russia before World War I, with anti-Communist beliefs, he emigrated to the West in the 1920s. Teaching in Germany, Ilyin saw the "decadent" West as a threat to Russia and humanity. The philosopher promoted the idea of the "third way", considering that neither totalitarianism nor "formal" democracy is suitable for Russia. He also encouraged the "organic model" of Russian statehood, an idea shared by Putin who treats Ukraine as an inseparable part of the Russian state body (p. 112), and Russians and Ukrainians as "one people" (p. 113). Even though many of Ilyin's ideas are in line with the policy promoted by the Kremlin over the past two decades, it cannot be said, as Snyder asserts, that this philosopher's work underlies Putin's geopolitics (p. 19). Likewise, Alexander Dugin and the theory of Eurasianism are not the essential factors that were meant to shape the Kremlin's strategic thinking. Nor the assertion that the 2013 Russian Foreign Policy Concept was marked by "a series of changes corresponding to the ideas of Ilyin, the Eurasianists and their fascist traditions" (p. 99) is based on concrete data and substantiated arguments. Instead, we find that the ruling political elite is trying to capitalise on the entire conservative, ultra-Orthodox and anti-Western dowry that Russian intellectuals have produced over the past two centuries. The concepts of Ivan Ilyin or Alexander Dugin are only part of this ideational baggage.

At the same time, the development model chosen by Russia (economy controlled by authority-approved oligarchs; dependence of the budget on exports



of raw materials; mimicking democracy; tight control by the centre over local issues, etc.) does not give Putin any chance to turn the country into a strong state and bring the Russian Federation closer to the level of development of Western Europe or the USA. Moreover, the strength and dynamics of the West pose threats (pp. 145-146) to the regime which is controlled by the Kremlin, and for these reasons, the power and influence of democratic states must be eroded. Instead of identifying solutions to the problems facing Russia, Putin prefers to export them (p. 249). Therefore, if you can show (and contribute, openly or by less visible means) that the European Union faces many problems and its unity can be broken, that American democracy is not perfect and you can bring a Russian puppet as president, that neighbouring states are free to choose their partners only within limits agreed by the Kremlin, then you can show Russian society that the rest of the world is no better than Russia. In support of his theory, Timothy Snyder provides conclusive examples. Thus, to destabilise the European Union, the Kremlin ordered the bombing of Syria, which led to the creation of large waves of migrants (p. 199); funded the political forces that promoted Brexit; provided financial and political support to extremist formations in the EU Member States (pp. 100-104). To prevent the Western model of social organisation from advancing to Russia's borders, Putin invaded Ukraine. To strike at the foundations of American democracy, the Kremlin was involved in the 2016 US elections. However, apart from a thorough analysis, the internal causes that generated the respective processes remain, the American researcher insisting on Russia's role and influence. Also, the notions of "Fascist Russia" and "Russian fascism" introduced by Snyder and often used throughout the book remain questionable and unproven.

Among the small inaccurate details – which do not change the big picture – is the author's assertion that Putin's career choice in the KGB was inspired by Max Stierlitz (p. 44), the main character of the Soviet series *Seventeen Moments of Spring* (1973), the equivalent of James Bond in Western culture. In fact, in the mid-1990s Putin himself claimed that his career choice was influenced by the story of Russian spy Conon Molody, the hero of the Soviet film *Dead Season* (1968). Also, the American researcher's statement according to which in the Brezhnev era the cult of Joseph Stalin was revived (p. 40) is not in accordance with the historical reality. But we agree with the author who highlights Putin's role in painting a positive image of Stalin, a picture of a strong leader and saviour of the homeland. Snyder's assertion that the American Confederate flag inspired the separatists'

flag in Donbas and the self-proclaimed Republic of Novorossia is also erroneous. (p. 148).

Certainly, other aspects can be identified that can generate historiographical debates, but the American researcher's work is as exciting as it is easy to assimilate. According to Timothy Snyder, his book diagnoses system vulnerabilities and is part of the treatment that should be applied to cure our political infirmity.

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2. Richard Little, Barry Buzan, *Sistemele internaționale în istoria lumii* [International Systems in World History], Iași, Editura Polirom, 2009, p. 62-63.
3. Richard Little, Barry Buzan, *Sistemele internaționale...*, p. 79.
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8. А. И. Деникин, *Путь русского офицера* [The Way of a Russian Officer], Москва, Современник, 1991, с. 58.

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