

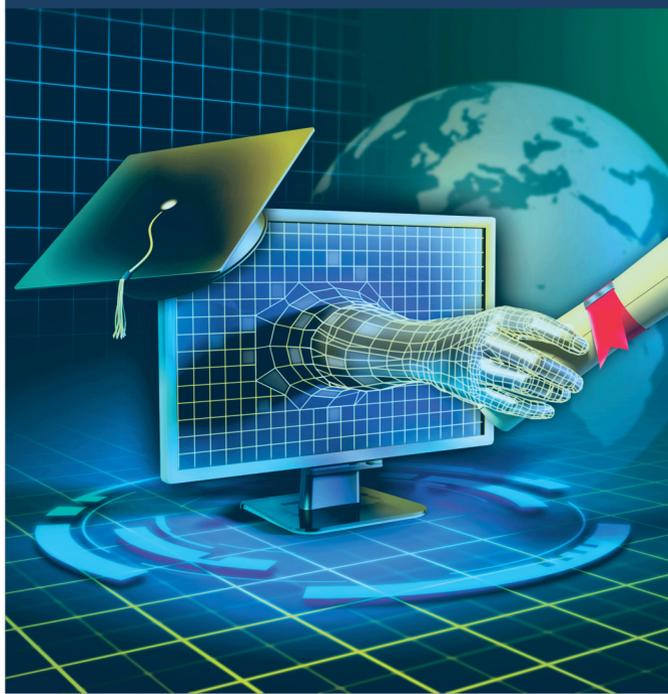


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ROMANIAN INTELLIGENCE STUDIES REVIEW



“MIHAI VITEAZUL”
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ACADEMY



ROMANIAN INTELLIGENCE STUDIES REVIEW

No. 28 - 2022

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2022**

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**THE FIRST MODERN ROMANIAN
INTELLIGENCE SCHOOL
MVNIA 30th ANNIVERSARY**

**The message of the Rector of the
“Mihai Viteazul”
National Intelligence Academy,
Professor Adrian-Liviu IVAN**

The first modern Romanian intelligence school¹ was established in August 1992, precisely 30 years ago! Its birth is closely related to the democratic course of the state and came as a natural continuation of the reformation and democratization process of the intelligence activity that began with the establishment of the Romanian Intelligence Service a year earlier, in 1990. Thus, in August 1992, through Government Decision the Superior Institute of Information (SII) was constituted, which was a higher education unit dedicated to intelligence studies. The beginning was not an easy one! Without a national or regional tradition of academic studies in the field, without a consolidated scientific foundation, SII was, in the 1990s, a pioneering, exploratory endeavour that sought to harmonize the practical training needs of intelligence officers with the aspiration to consolidate the field of intelligence as an independent field of scientific investigation, related to the disciplines of psychology and sociology. Only three years later, in April 1995, the Superior Institute of

¹ The message was firstly posted in Romanian on MVNIA's oficial website: <https://www.animv.ro/30-de-ani-de-la-infiintarea-scolii-romanesti-de-intelligence-comunicat-de-presa/>

Information became the National Institute of Information (NII), which gave it the desired scope of a military institution of higher education at a national level. The objective of the Institute at that time was to meet the national quality standards in university education and to give validity and coherence to the training efforts of the new officers.

Later, the Romanian school of intelligence sought to find its own identity by pursuing not only the quality standards specific to university education, but also the correlation with the new trends of scientific investigation in international relations, security studies, and intelligence studies, as they had been consecrated, in a much longer and more extensive tradition in the transatlantic landscape. The focus was then on the correlation of study subjects and university programs with research in the field. During those years, NII founded its first scientific review – Psychology and mass media – and started organizing scientific events, communication sessions, and conferences to encourage debates and the formation of a national knowledge hub.

Looking back objectively, we can say that, after this exploratory period, the real path of the Romanian intelligence school as a university with academic aspirations began in October 2000, with the establishment of the National Intelligence Academy (NIA), with the restructuring of the study programs and their alignment to European standards. The adoption of the Bologna Process regulations in 2007 and the rethinking of university training as a complete process, with bachelor's, master's, and doctoral studies brought along a maturing and growth process. A decade later, in 2010, NIA, which in the meantime, in 2009, became the “Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy (MVNIA), assumed a new objective, that of correlating university education with scientific research. The National Institute for Intelligence Studies was thus established, a dynamic research entity through which the Academy managed to become competitive in research and win

projects with European funding, alongside prestigious university consortia.

However, the path of the Academy has not always been linear and upward. Its accelerated modernization process, the development of graduate and postgraduate education programs, the pioneering years of the doctoral school meant both good practices and obstacles not always well managed and many lessons learned. Beyond these, however, we can say that the determination with which the Academy assumed the need for reform and the honesty with which it went through this process, not always comfortable, made it continue to develop. It is no coincidence that the last decade has been marked by progressive internationalization. Ten years ago, in 2012, MVNIA organized its first international conference and brought together at the same table the biggest names in the field of intelligence studies with practitioners from the region. A year later, the first international training program “Security in the Black Sea Region” was launched, organized together with Harvard University and the National Intelligence University in the United States.

This retrospective look at the path of the “Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy also allowed me to make my own retrospective. This year I started my second mandate as Rector of the Academy and entered my fifth year of university managerial activity here. The mission I received from the management of the Romanian Intelligence Service at the beginning of my mandate was to develop young officers in accordance with the profile of the world they live in. During all these years I sought to promote ethics and academic honesty, to strengthen quality assurance mechanisms in educational and research processes, and to encourage its internationalization course. The educational offer has therefore been reshaped into a new paradigm that adequately responds to the training needs of the intelligence community in an increasingly digitized, interconnected, and rapidly changing world. As far

as the Romanian Intelligence Service is concerned, the Academy has become in these years the only gateway to continuing education and training.

In 2020, we signed, on behalf of Romania, the Letter of Intent for the foundation of the Intelligence College in Europe (ICE). In parallel, MVNIA became a member of the European Security and Defence College, having in both cooperation forums an active role in the development of European training programs in the field of intelligence studies.

All these things make me look to the future with confidence. The Academy is in a European and international academic validation process, based on the quality of the educational processes and scientific results obtained. It has developed and it will continue to develop master's and doctoral programs in international joint supervision, through European framework programs. It will continue to initiate research projects aimed at increasing societal resilience to threats such as social polarisation, radicalisation, propaganda, and disinformation. At the same time, alongside the taking over of the presidency of the Intelligence College in Europe in 2023, we will continue the efforts to develop a common strategic culture of intelligence and security, in order to be able to strengthen cooperation and comprehensive knowledge of the threats that the European democratic society will face in the following years. It is an effort that the academic and research community must make in order to support the development of a European vision shared by all member states and to contribute through objective knowledge to an effective approach to threats.

On the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the first Romanian modern intelligence school, I want to thank all those who have contributed over time to this project and urge my colleagues not to lose their vision, their determination, and enthusiasm for the academic training of young officers.

**INTELLIGENCE
AND SECURITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF TERRORIST GROUPS. CASE STUDY: DAESH (2014-2017)

Mihăiță ENE*

Abstract:

The present paper will focus on analysing the sources of funding used by DAESH¹, mostly between 2014 and 2017. The objectives of the research are to document: (1) the funding sources that supported the development and maintenance of DAESH, (2) the factors that contributed to the strengthening of the funding lines and (3) the measures that can be applied to combat the financing of terrorist groups. The terrorist organization's success in gathering and managing funds has had a significant contribution to its rapidly growing influence and image among the other extremist-terrorist entities which claim legitimacy within Islam.

The current stage of knowledge will be presented and each relevant element will be analysed. In what concerns the research apparatus, analysis and quantitative methods will be utilized in order to highlight the causes that contributed to the development of DAESH's funding capabilities. Relevant aspects from literature, as well as conclusions drawn by several authors with expertise on the topic, will be mentioned and compared.

The newly resulted ideas will be synthesized through interpretation and development of current knowledge. The aim is to create a theoretical framework that provides solutions as potential measures that can be taken into consideration by national authorities in order to prevent such entities from gaining control over territories, becoming more attractive to activists, also developing funding networks comparable to those of some states.

Keywords: *challenges, DAESH, financing, Islam, terrorism.*

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¹ In this paper, the terms DAESH, Islamic State, ISIL, and ISIS will be used to define the same entity, according to bibliographic sources, to avoid further confusion.

Introduction

The financing of terrorism is a current topic because, now and in the foreseeable future, terrorist groups are active at a global level and they manage to keep under control territories or active cells through which they carry out attacks with different degrees of intensity and scale. Financing ensures the maintenance and development of these entities, a fact that requires the study, understanding and creation of countermeasures.

The working hypothesis is that combating the means of financing terrorist groups is an important measure that can be applied to prevent their development and, implicitly, to prevent the execution of terrorist attacks. The original research can have a national and international impact and will contribute to providing ideas and potential solutions to regional and international conflicts.

The present paper seeks to answer the following questions: (1) What were the funding sources used by DAESH? (2) What measures can be taken to eliminate the financing of terrorist groups? As research methods, analysis and quantitative methods will be utilized in order to highlight the causes that contributed to the development of DAESH's funding capabilities. Relevant aspects from literature, as well as conclusions drawn by several authors with expertise on the topic, will be mentioned and compared.

The research is structured in several chapters that distinctly present the sources of financing of terrorist groups – the general framework, the financing of DAESH – detailed on each source separately, the expenses of terrorist groups and conclusions. For each bibliographic source, the analysis and original contribution of the author of this paper is included.

The present paper aims to identify and study mechanisms for traceability of DAESH funding methods in order to understand extremist terrorist groups of Islamic origin (and not only). The challenge is given by the versatility with which groups of this nature adapt to technological developments and use various financing options. Often, state organizations that target such groups are restricted by the law and end up in situations that do not allow them to take offensive, challenging measures. The paper draws attention on the need for rapid evolution and

adaptation of the legislative framework to the current context so that the competent institutions have the appropriate tools at their disposal in order to effectively respond to the challenges of a dynamic environment.

The main sources of funding for DAESH that contributed to the development of the group are:

- sale of petroleum products;
- taxation and fraud;
- embezzling funds that were available in banks in conquered cities;
- ransoms for kidnapped people;
- antiquities trafficking;
- agriculture;
- human trafficking;
- donations.

The main expenses of DAESH are:

- maintenance of fighters and military operations;
- wages and social benefits;
- communications and media;
- infrastructure.

DAESH uses international banks, circumventing the means of detecting suspicious activity, which allows it to sponsor and move funds for terrorist acts (Bilger, 2014; Levallois and Causseran, 2017; Do, Shapiro, Elvidge, Abdel-Jelil, Ahn, Baugh, Hansen-Lewis, Zhizhin, 2017; Napoleoni, 2016).

The timeframe 2014-2017 was chosen because during this period DAESH controlled the largest territories and functioned as a pseudo-state/ghost state.

Sources of terrorist funding

Before specifically analysing the sources of funding for DAESH, the primary sources of funding for terrorism will be presented:

a. State sponsorships:

It is one of the main sources of terrorist financing. From the perspective of terrorist organizations, the funding received from the

states is advantageous in terms of the amounts and the simplicity of obtaining them.

The main downsides are generated by the pseudo-dependence on the financing state and the agenda of the political decision-makers in that country. At this level, cases have often been observed when states used such organizations to promote their foreign policy interests (e.g. Iran in Lebanon, through Hezbollah). Another disadvantage for terrorist organizations is the change in the policy makers or strategy of that state. For these reasons, there have been cases when terrorist organizations have supported certain individuals and/or political parties in the states where they obtained their funding.

To counter this type of financing, there is a need for increased traceability of financing, a need to digitize the financial system. It will not eradicate the phenomenon, but it will help reduce it. At the same time, states identified as financially supporting terrorist groups would need to be adequately sanctioned in order to be deterred. The present paper supports active economic sanctions and implementation of means of control of financial transactions. Continuously, interested states have offered funds to the terrorist organizations and the lack of real actions from the international community (UN bodies, NATO or other relevant organizations) has made them believe that no action would be taken.

b. Organized crime-type activities:

It is the most commonly used source of funding for the activities of terrorist organizations. The justification is given by the simplicity and efficiency of obtaining high revenues in short periods of time, against the background of carrying out illegal activities that increase the notoriety of the organization, implicitly increasing its legitimacy to the detriment of the state authorities where they operate.

Examples of illegal activities that fuel the budgets of terrorist organizations include but are not limited to: arms and human trafficking, drug trafficking, kidnapping, protection fees, products or money theft, piracy etc.

The disadvantages of this source of financing derive from the high level of risk of the aforementioned activities. The conduct of illegal actions will automatically attract the attention of state authorities which

will redirect significant resources to institutions which are responsible for national security and counter terrorist organizations. Another disadvantage is the inconsistency of revenue, because some of the actions require identification of targets. Another disadvantage is the need for human resources that are usually involved in these activities. The problem is not with their preparation for carrying out illegal activities, but with the level of trust that organizations can have in the new members, amid the suspicion that they may be undercover agents of some national security institutions.

This type of activity takes place in a state where the implementation of the law is not done properly and corruption thrives. Strengthening the rule of law in states where terrorist groups operate is a solution that responds to both measures to combat these entities and organized crime groups.

c. Legal activities:

Legal businesses are considered a good funding alternative with a high degree of security, given the fact that the activities carried out to obtain income are entirely legal and sometimes supported by the state where they are based. Regarding this last aspect, situations have often occurred when states financing terrorism have operated changes in their legislation in a discriminatory and illegitimate manner towards third parties, while given terrorist organizations specific advantages. For example, between 1992 and 1996, Al Qaeda carried out legal activities in a wide variety of fields, from agriculture to financial banking, investment firms (Burke, 2003, p. 145).

The disadvantages of this source of funding consist of the documentation required for its operation, the human resources required to manage it and the relatively low profits. Documentation refers to all documents and records necessary for the legal functioning of an entity on the territory of a state. Therefore, the legality of conducting business comes with the disadvantage of a transparency resulting from the documents they have to present to the authorities of that state.

The high levels of human resources should be considered from the standpoint of quantity and quality. Therefore, the operation of entities managed by terrorist organizations requires

professionals/specialists in those fields in order for them to produce profit. With respect to this, the profits obtained are usually below the expectations of terrorist organizations, which are looking for simple, efficient and fast ways to obtain constant and quantitative profits.

When a company/ economic activity is associated with a terrorist group, “stop” measures are necessary. It is not mandatory to close the company, because it is not excluded that most employees do not know who they work for, but it is necessary to remove the means that ensure the control of the terrorist group over the business.

d. Popular support

It is the source of funding transferred through donations from individuals who, for various reasons, choose to support terrorist organizations.

It is based on several motivations, but the ideological one is essential, because cases were often found when the investors were wealthy people who resonated with the organization’s ideology. The advantage of this source of funding is the security of obtaining it, while the disadvantage is the level of funding, which can vary depending on the financial resources available to funders. For example, if there is an economic or financial crisis in the country where the terrorist organization operates, it has been found that the level of financing of terrorist organizations by individuals has decreased.

In such situations, it is necessary to increase the level of information, to use people and entities to combat the ideology promoted by terrorist groups.

The transfer of funds in, between, and outside organizations can be done by using the legal/official banking system, informal/unofficial methods (e.g. hawala), money laundering through commercial transactions, donations, thefts and others. When certain information is available on the exchange of funds between groups and it is possible to intervene on the channels, authorities have to promptly – and legally – take the measures needed in order to prevent the continuation of the process.

According to Michael Freeman, the main criteria for evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of different sources of funding (Freeman, 2011) are²:

1. Quantity – “Terrorist organizations want as much money as possible. Sources that offer the largest amount of money are clearly the most desirable” (Freeman, 2011). *The more money they receive, they will be able to develop and carry out more attacks.*

2. Legitimacy – “Terrorist groups need legitimacy if they are to sustain themselves. If the ideology of a terrorist group is seen as illegitimate, they will have little popular support and few recruits (which is often the case)” (Freeman, 2011). *Legitimacy allows them to pose as a victim and they can use the ideology for recruitment and receiving money.*

3. Security – “Terrorist groups generally operate clandestinely, hiding from the security forces of the state to organize, plan, recruit, and train. Meanwhile, the state is looking for avenues to infiltrate the organization or gain intelligence on them.” (Freeman, 2011) *It is a mandatory request for every source of funding, currently each organization pays more attention to this element in order to prevent penetration.*

4. Reliability – “Sources of financing that are predictable and consistent are better for terrorist groups than those that fluctuate inconsistently.” (Freeman, 2011) *The predictability allows a terrorist organization the development planning.*

5. Control – “Money is often associated with influence and power. Different sources of financing can threaten or strengthen a terrorist group’s control over its members and operations. Terrorists do not want to be beholden to external sponsors because these sponsors (states, private donors) will often use their funding to influence the nature of the terrorist campaign.” (Freeman, 2011) *Especially, the state sponsorship creates lack of control on the terrorist organizations objectives.*

6. Simplicity – “Terrorists groups, like any organization, want their methods of financing to be as simple as possible. Methods that require fewer specialized skills, that require as little effort as possible,

² For more details, one can access: https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/47781/Freeman-The-Sources-of-TerroristFinancing_2010.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

that have simpler processes, and that have fewer inherent costs will be more desirable than other methods.” (Freeman, 2011) *In the same time, the simplicity can create breaches that security agencies may use in order to track down the terrorist organizations financing.*

The general data are useful for understanding the global phenomenon of terrorist groups financing, most of which apply to DAESH.

DAESH funding

The diverse sources of DAESH funding will be analysed, ranging from ransom money for abductees, zakat from residents and taxes from non-Muslims in controlled territories, donations from governments and private individuals, especially from the Middle East, revenues from oil trafficking, sale of weapons, blackmail not to attack refineries and power plants, sums of money brought by recruits from rich families. For example, in 2015, the author³ of the current paper obtained data on young people in the Kurdistan Region, Iraq, around the age of 20 who left home and joined DAESH, with amounts as big as \$150,000. Large sums of money were obtained by DAESH from the sale of oil to the Syrian and Turkish governments.

In what follows, the main studies on DAESH funding will be presented, and we will also deepen the main sources of funding, identify the causes that led some funders to provide large sums of money to this terrorist group and make an analysis of the level of religiosity/conservatism in the countries from where more funds came. It is necessary to understand correctly the sources of funding for DAESH in order to escape the rhetoric promoted by certain international actors who have constantly exaggerated the funds available to terrorist groups to motivate an increase in military spending, thus supporting the so-called war economy.

It is important to establish how the terrorist group managed to finance itself and to extract characteristics similar to other such entities. Funding ensured the development of a group, the creation of a strong

³ The author of this paper served in Iraq, as the head of the Romanian Consular Office/Embassy of Romania to Baghdad between 2013-2016.

leadership, which, with sufficient resources, could control and expand territorially. Measures to counteract the financing will also be proposed and, through an adequate understanding of the sources of income, viable measures can be identified to stop them, implicitly to reduce the influence and, subsequently, to eliminate the terrorist group.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF)⁴ in a 2015 report argued that in Syria and Iraq the ISIL group was funded from 5 major sources:

a) Illicit actions carried out in the occupied territories, such as extortion by kidnapping, theft, solicitation of commissions on activities carried out in the territory controlled by the group, taxes on fuel and vehicles, taxes on children's access to schools, all carried out under the pretext of protection (FATF, 2015, p. 12-18).

- DAESH allowed the banks to operate in the controlled territories, the state ones were considered to belong to the terrorist group and took over the identified funds, the private ones continued to operate in this capacity, and DAESH took over the transaction fees (5% of each cash withdrawal). Because the groups stated goal was to ensure *governance* in the controlled territories and to demonstrate the supremacy of the Islamic State and this form of organization that led to the maintenance of for-profit entities that did not contravene DAESH-promoted Islam.

- Human trafficking was an important source of income for DAESH, especially from the sale of members of the Yazidi community to the Government of the Kurdistan Region/ KRG, which took steps to recover them, KRG official Hadi Doubani said that “[our note: DAESH] are selling women in the slave market, some ISIL militants buy a girl for \$50 and sell her to us [our note: KRG] with \$2,000 - \$2,500. They turned all this activity into trade” (Yezdani, April 30, 2015). Of the more than 6,000 people abducted by DAESH, more than 3,000 were redeemed, some for up to \$10,000.

⁴ FATF (2015), Financing of the terrorist organisation Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), FATF, www.fatf-gafi.org/topics/methodsandtrends/documents/financing-of-terrorist-organisation-isil.html. FATF is an intergovernmental body specializing in the development and promotion of policies to protect the global financial system from money laundering, terrorist financing, the proliferation of conventional weapons and mass destruction. Further details on this body can be found on the website: www.fatf-gafi.org

- Controlling of gas and oil reserves, selling to local consumers, the Syrian regime and other intermediaries (FATF, 2015, p. 14-15). The group chose to use energy infrastructure to obtain resources, it controlled territories in Syria and Iraq which contained oil that it processed in existing refineries in controlled areas, processed products were sold locally and internationally, the Syrian regime being one of the main customers, which could be purchased from DAESH below the international market price. The international coalition's attacks on fuel truck convoys limited sales mobility and led local smugglers to reduce this activity.

DAESH obtained revenues from smuggling of petroleum products, resulting in an important conclusion that the members of the group were strongly connected and they shared a high level of trust in the relationship with the local community; in addition to foreign fighters, important DAESH leaders were members of the local community, from strong tribes, who controlled economic activities especially in the border area between Syria-Iraq-Turkey. If we follow in this key the evolution of the group in Syria and Iraq, it is easier to understand the resounding successes against the Syrian armed forces and opposition groups.

Spanish author Nuno Regeiro argues that between 2013 and 2014, DAESH was getting "2 million/day from selling oil, around 750 million in about one year" (2015, p. 164). The relevance is given by the fact that the terrorist group worked with state entities/ companies that received the approval of governments, which reflects the complexity of the phenomenon and major interests that stimulated the maintenance of territories under DAESH control, or rather outside state control, which allowed influential groups in the Syrian and Turkish governments to generate income that cannot be really tracked.

- The extortion of farmers, the taking over of some cultivated areas with wheat, barley, as well as the confiscation of the agricultural equipment of the locals. DAESH also took over the storage and distribution of agricultural products for the purpose of price control.

The terrorist group demanded zakat from farmers in their crops, set the selling price of agricultural products and controlled distribution. In Iraq, the group controlled about 40 percent of the country's farming

land, using strategies to flood out-of-control territories to raise prices and to affect Shiite farmers' crops in the south of the country.

- Take control and use of local industrial and service facilities (factories and other production units). Worth mentioning are the phosphate, cement, sulphur and salt factories, all of which had the potential to produce hundreds of millions of dollars.

- Sale of artefacts, especially unique ones, specific to local cultures. With a good knowledge of everything that is valuable in the controlled territories, as well as contacts at the level of regional smugglers, DAESH has sold tens of millions of dollars of artefacts from about 4,500 archaeological sites. In 2014, the group earned about "\$36 million from the sale of artefacts" (Regeiro, 2015, p. 168).

The fact that DAESH has managed to sell artefacts reflects the failure of international institutions to take appropriate measures to control this market, which often works in the black/ grey area. Business interests are at such a high level that the risk of securing funds for a terrorist group does not prevent the actions of different entrepreneurs, ready to take risks to get rich from this type of business. The lack of consistent punitive measures on those involved in this type of business determines its perpetuation, thus providing funding for terrorist groups.

- Illegal taxation of goods and money passing through the territories controlled by DAESH. The study shows that although the transit of goods and products decreased after DAESH took control, the group allowed the movement of trucks both for the supply of population and transit, charging each truck arriving from Syrian controlled territory and Jordan.

- Salaries paid by the Syrian and Iraqi governments to employed personnel who continue to live in DAESH-controlled territories. Although the terrorist group benefited from their taxation, the decision of the two governments was correct and gave hope to the inhabitants who were under the occupation of the terrorist group that they were going through a temporary stage of alienation, and the central government will restore normal life, known before DAESH control.

b) The kidnapping rewards were a major source of income for the terrorist organization that kidnapped locals, Syrians and Iraqis, as well as foreign nationals, especially from Western countries, for which

their governments paid large sums of money. Some of the abductees were released for rewards, and some were killed (often in abominable ways) for sending political messages. FATF experts estimate that in 2014 ISIL raised from 20 to 45 million dollars in kidnappings (FATF, 2015, p. 18).

The need for sensationalism has led many journalists and NGO's members to embark on adventures in Syria and Iraq, in territories controlled by the terrorist group, or they used intermediaries associated with terrorist groups, which led them to DAESH. It is a difficult phenomenon to control, but it can be diminished. Turkey's lack of cooperation has facilitated this easy access into Syria. Under the pretext of the very long border between Turkey and Syria, about 822 km, Ankara complained that Turkish authorities could not ensure adequate control, there were breaches that smugglers' groups used for the illegal transit of goods and people. Turkey has managed to secure very well the border territories inhabited by Syrian Kurds, an approach they could also take on the area bordering the Syrian Arabs. Turkey could also seek the support of NATO partners, but Ankara was directly involved in facilitating the entry of fighters, with the aim of removing Bashar Al Assad, regardless of who was fighting the Syrian government, DAESH, or other opposition military group (except Kurdish Syrians whom Ankara associates with PKK).

c) Donations received from / through NGO's, coming from private donors, especially from the Gulf countries (FATF, 2015, p. 18 – 19).

The main private donors of DAESH were from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, and Pakistan. The author of this paper used the platform provided by World Values Survey (<https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>) and correlated statistics from intervals 2010-2014 and 2017-2020 from Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey (for other countries, no data are available) on *Important in life: Religion* and *The only acceptable religion is my religion* to determine whether low tolerance for other religions and high religiosity explain why private donors in these states support a terrorist group, such as DAESH. *The website offers possibility for online analysis. This tool allows issuing original assessments trough combining the available data. Also, using the chosen correlation, the results can be replicated by each researcher.*

The results show the following:

For the interval 2010-2014

- The criterion *Important in life: Religion*, the average is 85, 6% for the answer *Very important*, ranging from 68.1% in Turkey to 98.9 in Qatar (Annex 1);

- The criterion *The only acceptable religion is my religion*, the average is 62, 7% for the answer *Very important*, ranging from 41, 9 in Turkey to 92, 9 in Qatar (Annex 2);

- The correlation of the two criteria shows a strong support for these statements (Annex 3), for the majority of respondents.

For the interval 2017-2020 (for this interval, data regarding Qatar and Kuwait are not available)

- The criterion *Important in life: Religion*, the average is 79, 8% for the answer *Very important*, ranging from 60% in Turkey to 95, 4 in Jordan (Annex 4);

- The criterion *The only acceptable religion is my religion*, average is 64, 1% for the answer *Very important*, ranging from 43, 7 in Turkey to 85, 3 in Jordan (Annex 5);

- The correlation of the two criteria shows great support for these statements (Annex 6), for the majority of respondents.

The analysis of the data shows that an increased degree of religiosity and lack of tolerance for other religions determine the emergence of an important segment of the population that is willing to support entities determined to fight people of another religion / non-religious. Thus, the paper extracts a useful measure in the fight against terrorist groups, namely the need for information, to promote tolerance, to determine the current opinion that religion is a personal matter, which does not need to have an impact on the relationship between two people and in any case, does not justify the outbreak of battles/ conflicts/ wars.

These funds were obtained by DAESH because the message was strong enough to reach the extremists, but also the zealots, who, in the first part of the conflict, had come to believe that the terrorist group promotes pure Islam. Lack of proper communication, sending the right messages and combating disinformation and DAESH propaganda has created many pitfalls for religious people.

d) Material support integrated into the organization from the personal resources of foreign fighters who have joined the organization (FATF, 2015, p. 20).

In addition to the financial resources they came with when they joined DAESH, many foreign fighters, but also locals (referring to Syrians and Iraqis) were people with good technical knowledge, some were good experts in their fields of activity and used this knowledge in favour of the terrorist group. To combat this type of funding, information and deradicalization measures are needed before leaving the country of origin; preventive measures are required, which entail consistency and continuity – do not start when fighters are already leaving to fight, do not stop when the terrorist group becomes weaker – because the recruitment pool is maintained if appropriate measures are not taken to combat ideology and mentality.

e) Fundraising through modern communication methods (FATF, 2015, p. 24).

DAESH has managed to adapt to technological developments and has attracted large sums of money through *crypto currency*, electronic transfers through bank accounts, through various applications, games, other tools that provide anonymization and the ability to pay without government intervention or monitoring.

Initially, DAESH's revenue came from private donors from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Indonesia, Pakistan, took over about \$ 400 million from the Central Bank in Mosul. Mark Bourrie pointed out that "At the beginning of 2015, the organization was believed to have between 1.3 and 2 billion US dollars. Every day, before the coalition bombings began to attack its tanker convoys and the price of oil fell, ISIS earned about \$1 million a day from oil sales. ISIS also obtains millions of dollars in ransoms received in exchange for the release of local or foreign hostages." (2016, p. 95-96) The Canadian author mentions that DAESH was able to obtain funds from various protection fees and to allow non-Muslims to live in territories controlled by the terrorist group.

DAESH seized every opportunity to raise funds: donations, trade, extortion, and protection fees, salaries still received by Syrian and Iraqi civilian employees. For a number of revenues, the Iraqi, Syrian, Turkish

authorities could not intervene to prevent the actions of the terrorist group, but especially for trade, the possibilities were clearly higher than what was achieved. The Syrian government has chosen to trade with DAESH, and the Turkish government has traded and allowed smuggling by the group.

The Syrian government's calculation was relatively simple and largely effective. Damascus needed oil and could get it cheaply from DAESH. The development of DAESH was seen as an asset to Damascus because it could eliminate other opposition groups, especially those with connections and Western support. If at the end of the day the only opposition group was DAESH, the Syrian regime was obviously becoming much more useful to the West, which was already fighting the terrorist group. In other words, the stronger DAESH grew, the more the Syrian regime became the only option for resolving the conflict in Syria.

Turkey has used DAESH to weaken the pro-Iranian-oriented central government in Baghdad, to fight Kurdish forces in Syria, to gain access to Mosul and to motivate the establishment of a military base near Sinjar, where the PKK was also active. Cynical, possibly immoral calculations, always put under the dome of political decisions and the national interest. Turkey continues to maintain Zilkam military base in Bashiqa district, which continues to be a target for pro-Iranian groups in Iraq, the latest attack took place on June 10, 2022 (Rudaw, June, 10, 2022).

Author Loretta Napoleoni states: "Because they wanted to bring change in the Syrian regime, Kuwaitis, Qataris and Saudi Arabs funded many armed organizations, one of which was IS. However, instead of engaging in war-through-intermediaries maintained by its sponsors, the Islamic State used their money to establish its own territorial strongholds in financially strategic regions, such as the rich oil fields in the east of Syria. No other armed group in the Middle East had ever managed to establish itself as the new leader of the region using the money of the rich supporters in the Gulf" (Napoleoni, 2015, p. 19). The Gulf countries have been actively involved in supporting groups in Syria, Libya, Yemen, with the aim of dominating the region and opposing the expansion of Iran and Turkey's influence. What the 3 states mentioned by Napoleoni did not anticipate is that the DAESH phenomenon will take on a global scale, and the terrorist group represents a threat to the 3

monarchies. The author presents some of the sources of funding of DAESH: sponsorships of the states in the Gulf, the takeover of oil fields, which according to figures from the US Department of Finance, these fields produced for the terrorist group revenues of over 500 million dollars/year.

Napoleoni states that “in addition to this money (our note: from oil), on the controlled territory, DAESH imposes taxes on business, but also on the sale of weapons, other pieces of military equipment and consumer goods, many brought on profitable smuggling routes crossing the borders of Syria from Turkey and Iraq” (2015, p. 28). This finding is relevant because it was made in a context of war, so most of the goods needed for several million people in the territories controlled by DAESH were brought from outside this territory because most of their capabilities of production were being destroyed/ without specialists/ without raw materials. Another relevant aspect is that the terrorist group had a small “bureaucratic apparatus”, the maximum number circulated (data collected by the author of this research from representatives of the government of the Kurdistan Region, Iraq) was 50,000 members, and most of them were totally engaged to the cause, the corruption was almost non-existent. The annual budget from a few hundred million dollars to a few billion dollars was managed by a small group. Significant sums were used for the war machine, expenses were limited, the group purchasing light weapons and ammunition, not having access to procure sophisticated military equipment, fighter jets, missile systems, anti-missiles, etc. the most sophisticated military equipment being taken from the deposits of the Iraqi army (those taken from the Syrian army were much lower quality and out-of-date technology).

Napoleoni considers that DAESH obtained “the largest ransoms ever received for the release [... of] hostages, between 60 to 100 million euros” (2016, p. 216-217). The author notes that the terrorist group used hostages to create rivalry between European states, so at first it released citizens of states that were known to pay rewards for their nationals (Spain), later it released the French, a state known to it did not pay rewards, but the strategy used allowed for the creation of strong internal pressure on the Paris government (the rhetoric promoted was: Spain can save its citizens, can't we?). The Napoleoni's assessment is consistent

with the findings presented in the House of Representatives of US: “For example, ISIS made nearly \$50 million last year [our note: year 2014] from kidnapping for ransom. Some estimates put kidnapping for ransom as high as 20 percent of ISIS’ revenue.” (House of Representatives, November 2015). Kidnappings may be considered as one of the tools used by the terrorist groups on the rise to get large amounts of money in a short time. Also, criminal groups are using this tool, mostly before scaling up their criminal activities and becoming a terrorist group. Also, kidnapping is used for political motivation, especially by the extremist/terrorist groups.

The kidnapping market in Iraq and Syria worked like this: usually, small terrorist or criminal groups carried out the original kidnapping (foreigners attracted under various motives from Turkey to Syria), after which they sold the victims to larger groups for money, weapons or other goods (Napoleoni, 2016a, p. 138-139). “Some countries, such as Italy, pay exceptionally well, while others, such as the United States, exchange hostages instead of captured terrorists. For governments, hostages are political commodities. They can represent percentages in opinion polls or can be tools for implementing foreign policy strategies.” (Napoleoni, 2016a, p. 180-181). ISIS has used kidnappings as a powerful propaganda tool and as a foreign policy tool, and “In Syria, ISIS has replicated the violent pattern of kidnappings, prolonged detention, torture and even the execution of journalists.” (Napoleoni, 2016a, p. 187)

The abductions accounted for some of the terrorist group’s revenue. Substantial amounts were obtained from the protection fees charged to migrants, as well as cooperation with organized crime groups for the transfer of refugees to Europe, so in 2015, only from the fees for moving to Turkey, “DAESH obtained about 500,000 USD/ day and traffickers paid 50% of revenues to the terrorist group” (Napoleoni, 2016, p. 236-237).

The subject of kidnappings is a challenge for every government facing such a situation, as mentioned above, the preventive solution is the one that can reduce the number of those who end up facing such an event. Constant, adequate information is needed to prevent people from falling prey to groups that will sell them to terrorists. If the abduction takes place, every government has a responsibility to do everything

possible to free the abductee. At the same time, measures can be taken against smuggling groups, those intermediaries who betray their customers for an additional payment.

Study of authors Stefan Heißner, Peter R. Neumann, John Holland-McCowan, Rajan Basra reflects the following important aspects (Heibner, Neumann, Holland-McCowan, Basra, 2017, p. 3):

- it is impossible to determine the exact amount available to the Islamic State;

- the main sources of income of the group are related to the controlled territory. These are: (1) fees and commissions, (2) oil, (3) robberies, confiscations and fines. Revenues from the sale of antiques and ransoms from the kidnappings, although difficult to quantify, most likely did not bring major revenues to the organization. An important conclusion is that the international community should take all the necessary measures in order to prevent extremist/terrorist groups to control territories in order to prevent their rise;

- since 2014, the group's revenues have fallen by more than half, from \$1.9 billion/ 2014 to \$870 million in 2016. The continuation of this trend will lead to the failure of the "business model" promoted by the Islamic State. The assessment has been proven by the history.

The present aligns with these authors that the model used by DAESH to obtain financial resources was doomed to failure, strictly in the long run. At the same time, in the short term, it allowed the group to self-finance and expand, through cells, globally, effectively promoting the model with a minimum of resources. To a large extent, the DAESH's system was also used by Al Shabab in Somalia, and there this entity, after taking root in the community, developed and is still strong, but the territory of the African country did not show enough interest for the international community to support the elimination of terrorist group from controlled areas. The territory that DAESH chose to use for its development, Iraq and Syria, was too important for international and regional actors to ignore and allow a non-state entity to control it, which is why it was a sustained intervention for removing control of this group. It is necessary that DAESH's actions to obtain financial resources not to be viewed in the abstract, but in context. Under these conditions, the model was successful because it financed large-scale military campaigns,

enriched many members of the terrorist group, for a short time, supported a form of pseudo-state organization (it supported medical, social insurance, educational systems, infrastructure investments), all in the conditions in which the entity was constantly attacked. The fact that, overall, the group's revenues from the sale of antiques and redemptions may not have made a very large contribution (evaluation also caused by the lack of data), but in the end, it is not a matter of having simple statistics, but of analysing correctly and completely all sources of income, which reflects the ability to self-overcome, highly diversified relationships / networking and the ability to access certain hidden and closed markets, where they could smuggled both antiques and sophisticated weapons, chemicals / radioactive substances / pathogens / biological weapons. Diversification means sophistication and proves, once again, if was needed, that DAESH is not a group of savages, but a well-organized entity, made up of people with a high level of intelligence, able to remove government control and take over and lead important territories, populated by citizens dissatisfied of the central governments.

The study by The Centre for the Analysis of Terrorism reflects the following sources of income (CAT, May 2016, p. 9-21) of DAESH: (1) natural resources (oil, natural gas, phosphate, cement, and agriculture), (2) income from criminal activities (extortion, kidnappings and ransoms, smuggling of antiquities), (3) donations. An important aspect reflected in this study is that "Due to economic diversity and adaptability, ISIS maintained a high level of revenue in 2015." (CAT, May 2016, p. 2) Adaptability has been a constant feature of DAESH, which managed to identify various resources and determine conditions by which it obtained income from controlled populations, as well as through its residents, using fear and manipulation, leaving the impression that economic activity is due to DAESH, which will naturally benefit from this arrangement.

For the consistency of the research, I checked multiple sources that analysed DAESH funding, most of the conclusions being similar.

Expenditures

In addition to income, it is useful to mention the expenses of the terrorist group (in addition to the aspects mentioned above), to

understand the motivation behind the need to identify various and consistent sources of income: the salaries of fighters, military equipment, security personnel, communication and propaganda, expenses for social services, hospitals, schools (CAT, May 2016, p. 21-22).

Terrorist organizations use relatively small funds to conduct operations. For instance, the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing cost an estimated \$19,000, while on the same target, on 11.09.2001, the costs were estimated at \$350,000 to \$500,000, mostly in because it required more attackers (19 people) and their training costs were higher, because also included aircraft piloting course (Passas, 2007, p. 31).

The major costs of the organizations are represented by the operational or administrative expenses of the controlled territories. These expenses include building training bases/headquarters, sheltering/feeding/training/retiring members, procuring equipment (weapons, ammunition, telecommunications, counterfeit documents etc.), bribing the authorities.

For example, Al Qaeda had an estimated annual budget of \$30 million (Passas, 2007, p. 32), Hezbollah between \$100 million and \$200 million, with the possibility of reaching a maximum of \$400 million (Levitt, 2005), and the Taliban Movement in Afghanistan reaches an annual budget of between \$240 million and \$360 million (Kenyon, 2010).

Most of the expenses of DAESH were determined by the administration of the controlled territories, with all the expenses involved in social payments, the salaries of the employees, especially those of the military structures.

Conclusions

The research showed the main sources of DAESH funding, the impact of resources on the capacity to act and the main expenditures of the group. The established questions were answered and the sources of financing of the terrorist group were detailed.

DAESH has managed to diversify its funding sources to a level never seen before for a terrorist group. It capitalized on the natural resources of the controlled territories (oil, agricultural products, other locally specific natural resources), benefited from taxes and extortion, captured funds from the banks of the conquered cities, maximized the

profit from obtaining ransoms for the abducted, had enough connections so as to obtain resources from antiquity trafficking, capitalized on the migration context to mediate and obtain money from human trafficking and migration facilitation routes, while managing to attract donations from state actors and private individuals.

Due to the diversity of funding sources used by DAESH, full control of them is difficult or even impossible. But, at the level of the international community, action can be taken to: strictly control donations and to implement traceability measures, from donor to beneficiary, monitor the activities of neighbouring states in conflict areas to prevent transactions that would produce resources for terrorist groups; eradication of smuggling; severe punitive measures for persons/entities identified as having traded with terrorist groups. Of course, these measures are necessary not to eliminate the possibilities of exchange/acquisition of goods that allows the captive population in territories controlled by terrorist groups to survive.

The financing of terrorist groups is a subject that needs to be deepened and to be correlated with the financing of organized crime groups because, as a rule, they intertwine. Joint actions against these types of entities, coordinated at international level, can have an appropriate impact and create the conditions to prevent the perpetuation of the financing of terrorism and organized crime. In conclusion, I also emphasize the need to constantly adapt the legislation with the evolution of the environment in which we work, so that the responsible institutions have the legal instruments necessary to combat and prevent the financing methods of terrorist groups.

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Database used:

World Values Survey (<https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>).

Annexes

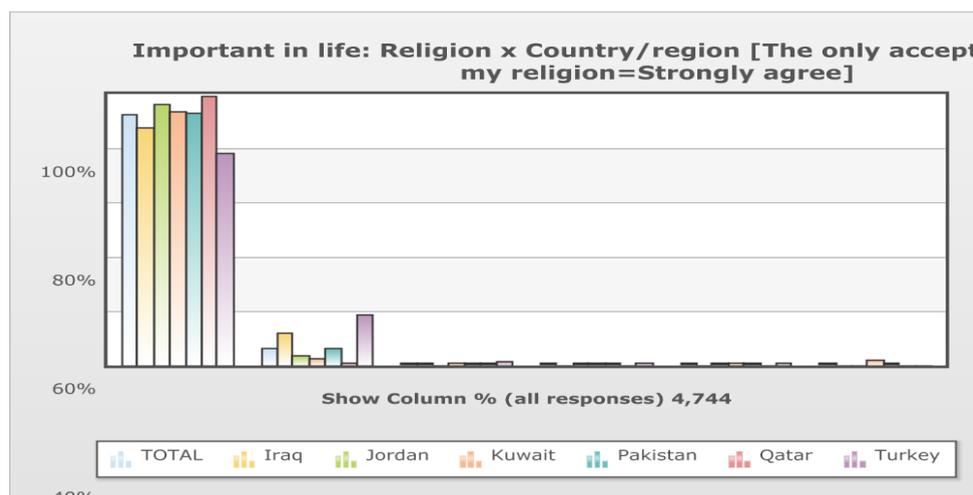
Annex 1: V9

World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014								
Important in life: Religion								
	TOTAL	Country/region						
	0	Iraq	Jordan	Kuwait	Pakistan	Qatar	Turkey	
Very important	85,6	84,7	93,3	86,5	89,5	98,9	68,1	
Rather important	10,9	12,8	6,2	7,4	8	0,9	24,6	
Not very important	1,8	2,3	0,2	2,1	1,2	0,2	4	
Not at all important	0,8	0,2	0,1	0,5	0,6	0	3	
Don't know	0,3	0	0,2	1,2	0,2	0	0,3	
No answer	0,5	0	0	2,4	0,5	0	0	
(N)	7568	1200	1200	1303	1200	1060	1605	
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Annex 2: V154

World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014								
The only acceptable religion is my religion								
	TOTAL	Country/region						
	0	Iraq	Jordan	Kuwait	Pakistan	Qatar	Turkey	
Strongly agree	62,7	45,8	78,5	62,2	65,4	92,9	41,9	
Agree	22,6	36,7	15,2	14,1	26	4,7	34	
Disagree	9,8	13,4	5,1	15,2	6,8	1,6	14,1	
Strongly disagree	2,2	2,7	0,8	3,5	1,1	0,5	3,7	
Don't know	2	1,5	0,4	2,5	0,6	0,4	5,1	
No answer	0,7	0	0	2,5	0,1	0	1,3	
(N)	7568	1200	1200	1303	1200	1060	1605	
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Annex 3: V9 & V154



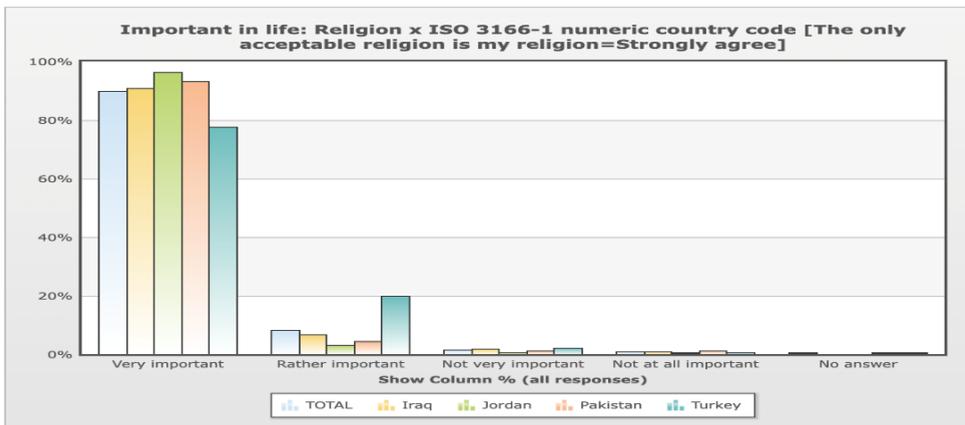
Annex 4: Q6

World Values Survey Wave 7: 2017-2020					
Important in life: Religion					
	TOTAL	ISO 3166-1 numeric country code			
	0	0 Iraq	Jordan	Pakistan	Turkey
Very important	79,8	87,6	95,4	89,6	60
Rather important	14,3	9	3,6	7	28,4
Not very important	4,8	2,5	0,8	1,8	10,4
Not at all important	1	0,9	0,2	1,4	1
Don't know	0	0	0	0,1	0
No answer	0,1	0	0	0,2	0,2
(N)	6813	1200	1203	1995	2415
	0	0	0	0	0

Annex 5: Q170

World Values Survey Wave 7: 2017-2020					
The only acceptable religion is my religion					
	TOTAL	ISO 3166-1 numeric country code			
	0	0 Iraq	Jordan	Pakistan	Turkey
Strongly agree	64,1	60,2	85,3	78,3	43,7
Agree	20,1	14	8,4	14,4	33,6
Disagree	10,2	14,9	4	4,5	15,7
Strongly disagree	3,3	8,6	1,9	1,5	2,8
Don't know	1,6	1,9	0,4	0,8	2,7
No answer	0,7	0,4	0	0,4	1,4
Missing; Not available	0	0	0	0	0
(N)	6813	1200	1203	1995	2415
	0	0	0	0	0

Annex 6: Q6 & Q170



**FROM “THERE WAS A COUNTRY” TO A “NATION UNDER SIEGE”:
EXPLAINING THE OXYGENATION OF INSECURITY
IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA***

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Tope Shola AKINYETUN*

Abstract:

The South East of Nigeria has been plagued with skirmishes of neo-civil war between the people of the region and the government. The “new war” in the Southeast is softly prosecuted as a “siege” which is meant to achieve two basic objectives: genocide and economic asphyxiation; typical of what was obtained in the civil war era. Rooted in the sheer perceived malignment of the region mostly populated by the Ibos, the activities of the security forces set up to execute the objectives have been met with stiff resistance from the people through various groups including the Independent People of Biafra (IPOB) in a struggle for survival. The paper adopts a qualitative approach that draws data from secondary sources such as textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles, newspapers and internet sources. It is concluded that prolonged injustice and marginalization occasioned separatist movements and fuel insecurity in South East Nigeria. The paper recommends the re-integration of the people into governance to combat alienation and exclusion. Government should also promote the de-sieging of the region and convoke a Sovereign National Conference that will involve critical stakeholders in the country to restore peace, engender social change and promote development in the region.

Keywords: Biafra, insecurity, marginalization, siege, South East.

* The ideas presented in the article reflect the authors’ view.

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Introduction

Apart from the ravaging insecurity in the Northern part of Nigeria, which has continued to claim the lives of citizens and security officers including immigrants, there is no other geo-political zone in the country more prone to insecurity than the South East. A once peaceful region, albeit with some pockets of criminal activities such as armed robbery and kidnapping, which are verisimilitude in all geopolitical zones of the country, has become a theatre of devastating violent crisis which has paralyzed economic activities and strangled peace required for meaningful development. The secessionist struggle of the Indigenous People of Biafra (hereafter IPOB), appears to have given way to the emergence of different violent groups such as unknown gunmen and a lesser extent, the Eastern Security Network (hereafter ESN) – a security wing of the IPOB that has been mostly fingered in the extant insecurity reality in the region. This is not to exclude the gruesome activities of marauding Fulani herdsmen who appear to have surrounded the bushes in most villages in the region, killing, kidnapping and maiming residents and destroying their farm yields and valuable properties, particularly in Imo, Enugu and Ebonyi States.

Historically, the region, which comprises five states – Anambra, Imo, Ebonyi, Enugu and Abia – is known for its enterprising nature and as a hub of economic activities in the country, including Lagos and Kano. However, the devastating civil war which shook the very foundation of Nigeria's existence threatened its growth as most businessmen from the region had their properties and businesses scattered all over the country, while some were either confiscated by the federal government or the indigenes of the states where the property and businesses were located (Ezugwu, 2018). The misfortune of the civil war was that it wasn't about material benefits, but nationality and by extension, religion. The war was loosely interpreted by religious clerics as a conflict between minority Christian Biafra and majority Muslim-dominated Nigeria (Heerten & Moses, 2018).

However, the contemporary complex violence in the region appears to be echoing past experiences while the reality of the war resonates in the mind of an average Southeasterner. Common attributions to the violent crisis visible in the region have been

documented by various authors and the media, locally and internationally as the region becomes characterized by perennial marginalization, injustice, socio-political neglect, ethnicity, political extraversion, the trauma of a lost war, militant herdsman attack, distrust of government and politics of divide and rule (Babalola, 2019; Bird and Ottanelli, 2017; Ebonine, 2021; Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2021; Elumoye, 2021; Ezemenaka and Prouza, 2016; Ibeanu and Orji, 2016; Ojeleye, 2010; Oloyede, 2009).

This paper, while not differing from the submission of these authors, elevates **the polemics of insecurity in the region to a psychological standpoint**. In other words, the intensity of the insecurity in the region cannot be explicated from the viewpoints expressed by the aforementioned scholars on their own. It should be viewed from the prism of neo-civil war intent and the interpretation thereof, arising from the deliberate sieging of the region by the federal government of Nigeria. Thus, as the paper argues, the various attributions to insecurity in the region are oxygenating forces, fuelling the interpretation of intentional sieging as a declaration of another war. Militarization of the region is akin to the 1967 civil war where the Nigerian forces invaded the region, raped, looted, killed and rendered many homeless. The extant number of military personnel and their activities in the region, which are synonymous with the manifestations of sieging, can be loosely interpreted as strategies by the federal government to actualize a two-pronged mission – genocide and economic asphyxiation. Since the region survives through commerce, suffocating their source of livelihood would be the first mission of weakening them while massive killings will likely propel their annihilation. Against this backdrop, what is regarded as insecurity in South East Nigeria is the struggle for the survival of a people who are conscious of the extent of their alienation and marginalization; similar to the civil war era. To this end, the paper adopts a qualitative approach that relies on data sourced from secondary sources such as textbooks, peer-reviewed articles, newspapers and internet sources to present a coherent discourse.

This paper is structured into nine sections. The introduction is followed by conceptual and analytical frameworks. Section three traces the history of ethnic division in Nigeria. The fourth section focuses on the

Colonial South East while the fifth section presents the discourse on the Biafran war. Section six is an attempt at a nuanced analysis of a taste of genocide and economic suffocation during Biafra war and the years that followed. This is followed by the seventh section which discusses the post-military South East as a region under siege. This is immediately followed by a section on insecurity in the South East while the conclusion of the study is presented in the ninth section.

“There was a country” and siege: conceptual and analytical frameworks

“There was a country” is a phrase that appears to be interpreted with varying degrees of associated meanings by three different entities in Nigeria. The first is Chinua Achebe, a playwright of international repute, who chronicled his civil war experience with the phrase (Achebe, 2012). The second is the *Ibos*, who continuously regard the phrase as a flashback to a lost war and territory of Biafra to the Nigerian government. The third is the Nigerian state, including the Nigerian armed forces and past and present leaders of the country, that often bask in the euphoria of the meaning associated with the phrase as an extinction of a rebellious nation (*Ibos*) which wanted to “prodigally” stray from the Nigerian project. In all of these meanings, the intersecting point is the Nigerian Civil War and the downfall of Biafra. The concept is used in this paper to capture these three associated meanings as indicated which combined reinforces the present insecurity reality in the South East.

The concept of siege is fluid and has been attempted by various scholars, albeit without a universally acceptable definition. What exists mainly in the literature is a string of descriptions of a siege situation. The difficulty in uniformity of definition is reflected in the inability of International Humanitarian Law¹ to proffer one. Kraska (2009, p.1) defines siege warfare as “an operational strategy to facilitate capture of a fortified place such as a city, in such a way as to isolate it from relief in the form of supplies or additional defensive forces.” This is supported by Gillard (2019) that a siege may not conform to a specific condition, it may

¹ This refers to a set of rules that seeks, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict.

however be used to compel an enemy to surrender or to gain control of an area. Thus, a siege may be used to ensure the isolation and encirclement of a perceived enemy for bombardment or to prevent its escape. Harrington (2005) notes that sieges often involve operations against permanent structures through direct fire to achieve a breach and weaken the stronghold of the besieged. In most cases, the besieging force employs isolation, starvation and bombardment against the besieged.

Siege or siege warfare is an old form of warfare, described as an “archaic” or “medieval” form of warfare. However, the modern form of warfare has seen the resurgence of sieges, particularly in the cities. Despite the renewed introduction of sieges in modern warfare, the international community has not stopped condemning it since 2013 (Nijs, 2021). The condemnation stems from the lethality of modern weapons which could wipe inter generations within a few seconds. The amorphous and ambiguous concept of siege concept of siege has been described by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as a “military blockade of a city or fortified place to compel it to surrender, or a persistent or serious attack.” Beehner, Berti and Jackson (2017, p. 78) see a siege as “any attempt by an adversary to control access into and out of a town, neighbourhood, or another terrain of strategic significance to achieve a military or political objective”. Fox (2018, p. 2) avers that the motive of contemporary sieges may not necessarily be to erect a blockade. Instead, it could be more of an “isolation of an adversary through encirclement while maintaining sufficient firepower against the besieged to ensure steady pressure”. To that extent, it could be terrain-based, enemy-focused or a combination of the two, which largely depends on the goal of the besieger and the besieged: achieving a decision, whether politically or militarily or slowly to destroy the besieged.

The provisions of the Geneva Convention (GC) are quite apt in adumbrating the rights of non-combatants in line with international humanitarian law. Some of these rights include: (1) Diplomatic agents and citizens of neutral states have the right to leave, save when the fight is in progress, (2) parties to the conflict must agree to allow sick and wounded civilian population, including pregnant women to leave the besieged city, and (3) there must be an agreement to allow humanitarian assistants free access into the besieged city (see GCI, Art, 15; GCII, Art. 18;

GCIV, Art. 17). To further strengthen the rights of the civilian population, Additional Protocol (AP) to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts contains some prohibitive clauses. Specifically, APII, Art. 14 prohibits the use of “starvation” as a weapon against the civilian population and APII, 18 (2) provides for relief material and other humanitarian assistance to the civilian population.

Alluding to the above, Gillard (2019) opines that sieges must comply with the relevant rules of International Humanitarian Law: rules regulating the conduct of hostilities; the prohibition of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare; and rules on evacuations. In the first instance, the besieger must take caution not to bombard civilians, direct attacks against enemies alone, prohibit indiscriminate attacks and avoid injury to civilians. To ensure the latter, the besieger must verify its target, measure the incidental harm and issue warnings. The second rule expressly prohibits the [deliberate] starvation of civilians. In this regard, starvation is broadly interpreted to include the deprivation of essentials other than food and water. More so, sieging must not impede the passage of humanitarian relief materials meant for civilians. The third rule relates to the evacuation of civilians from besieged areas to limit their exposure to hostility and starvation.

These rules when analyzed in the context of the Nigerian civil war and the present sieging of the region provide useful insights. In the first analysis, the rule on bombardment was broken during the Biafran war, as the Nigerian troops repeatedly bombed cities indiscriminately without prejudice against civilians. As Omaka (2014) submits, the Nigerian government committed heinous crimes against minorities in Andoni, Rivers and the Efiks where over 500 and 2,000 people were killed respectively. Meanwhile, the Nigerian Air Force arbitrarily bombed civilians in minority areas during the war. In recent times, the conduct of military operations and the mounting of roadblocks have had a psychological effect on civilians. In addition to attacking civilians, starvation became a prominent strategy of the Nigerian government – thus breaking the second rule. In what was referred to as an epidemic of starvation, Omaka (2014) asserts that no fewer than 1,000,000 Biafrans died from starvation and related diseases. Meanwhile, in recent times the

issues of deprivation and marginalization of the Southeast continue unabated. The evacuation of civilians was not only prohibited during the war, but civilians were also forcefully displaced and many were caught in the crossfires. Meanwhile, the people of the region, in recent times, remain subject to hostility from armed men.

The loose nature of the concept of siege in contemporary times has made securitizing actors use the concept even in non-violence situations, further expanding the scope of its understanding. For instance, Lai Mohammad, the Nigerian Minister of Information calls the rising menace of misinformation and hate speech in Nigeria a “siege” (Adeboye, 2017). It thus raises this fundamental question: Can a nation be under siege even without provocation from either side? Can sheer hatred of a people from a particular section of a country with concomitant violent attacks be termed siege? The Nigerian Senate allege that Nigeria is “under siege” following incessant attacks by bandits and terrorist groups (Umoru, 2021). If the use of the concept fits into these situations, then it is possible that the besieger can besiege a location, nation or even a state without provocation from the besieged. Once this is the case, the objective of the besieger becomes questionable even within the consideration of the International Humanitarian Law, particularly as it concerns the South East and the Northern-dominated federal government post-civil war.

The history of ethnic division in Nigeria

The “artificial construction” (Bacho and Abdul-Kadir, 2007) or in the words of Obafemi Awolowo, a “mere geographical expression”, (Awolowo, 1947) called Nigeria was made up of autonomous villages, kingdoms and empires that co-existed in peace amid well-structured and rigid checks and balances in the three regions (North, West and East) that existed (Ebonine, 2021). The incursion and subsequent subjugation of Lagos in 1861 by the British and the mandate of administering colonies following the Berlin Conference of 1884/1885 changed the political and economic landscape of what would later be known as Nigeria. The Jihad War led by Uthman Dan Fodio had before the advent of colonialism conquered and dominated Hausa caliphates following established trade routes, crossing the Sahara Desert and connecting Northern Nigeria to

Muslim North Africa, the Middle East, and Southern Europe, and eventually leading to the spread of Islam among the majority Hausa population between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries (Bird and Ottanelli, 2017; Oloruntoba, 2022).

The provenance of ethnic discord began to brew when the direction of trade routes and commerce changed in “favour” of the South (which comprised the East and West) as the Europeans in their commercial interest of slave trading faced Atlantic Coast while overlooking the Mediterranean coast even after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 as slave trading gave way for legitimate trading in palm oil and other resources mostly found in the Niger Delta Basin. The Royal Niger Company 1886 would help protect the commercial interest of the British in the newly found business centre until they suspend activities in 1900 (Achebe, 2012; Baxter, 2014). The adoption of the indirect rule system by Lord Lugard and the subsequent lumping of over 200 ethnic groups with diverse cultural, religious, educational, social and political leanings, in 1914, meant that the country was in for a total collapse. Regionalizing the country based on ethnicity further laid bare the animosity that was intrinsically imploding among the people. The British furthered ethnicity when it encouraged the Northern elites to jettison the acceptance of the Portuguese-led missionary schools that brought with its western education and which other regions embraced, save for the conservative North (Ebonine, 2022).

From 1922, following the introduction of party politics in Nigeria by the British, the political parties formed took ethnic and regional complexion. The Northern People’s Congress (NPC) led by Ahmadu Bello dominated the North, and the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) held sway in the East as Nnamdi Azikiwe steered the party while the Obafemi Awolowo-led Action Group (AG) dominated the west. However, the footprints of educational adroitness and sagacity were conspicuous in the activities of the parties led by Awolowo and Azikiwe, both boasting of intimidating academic records against their Grade II counterpart in Ahmadu Bello. Certainly, the seed of what would later result in the civil war was sown and grew faster in this period as the North continued to play catch up to the two other regions, particularly the NCNC which was seen by both NPC and AG as being too assertive and

demanding. Unfortunately, this ethnic divide that started before the colonial period still defines the socio-political landscape of post-military Nigeria and threatens its continued existence as a unified whole that incubates over 200 ethnic groupings.

The colonial South East

What is today known as South East Nigeria began following the regionalization of politics by the British. Sir Bourdillon has been credited with designating Lugardian protectorates as regions in 1939 before the outbreak of WWII. This designation was later upheld and formed the bedrock of Authur Richard's administration. The British intention of regionalization of Nigeria into North, West and East must have been to bring the government further nearer to the grassroots given the extent to which the people criticised the previous governments of Lugard and Clifford. However, the economic interest of the colonialists often beclouded whatever ingenuity their policies could have been during the period. The Ibo's resistance to the British presence in the coastal areas following the peak of the slave trade has well been documented by historians. As Dike (1959) posits, the Ibos migrated to the coasts partly for the slave trade and partly due to insufficient land for agriculture. During this period, they had massive trade contacts with the Europeans which appeared to have shaped their entrepreneurial skills till today. By the twentieth century, trade had become a source of pleasure for Ibos and markets were seen as "the breadth of life" (Green, 1947, p. 37).

By the 1930s and 1950s when the British realized that the people had fed up with their administration following the mountain of pressures from the educated elites, the British started a gradual devolution of power to the indigenes. The Ibos appeared to have grabbed the capitalist mode of production of the British and appeared ready to supplant the few foreign Indian merchants such as K. Chelleram and Sons, J. T. Chanrai and Co., Bhojson, Indian Emporium, and Inlaks in addition to British merchants at the time (Kilby, 1975). At the time, hunger for imported goods had been on a constant increase that in 1946, imports stood at £20 million, £62 million in 1950, £114 million by 1954 and £166 million in 1958 (Olutayo, 1999). This trend became appealing to Nigerian

entrepreneurs including those of Ibo extraction in that by 1965, about 200 entrepreneurs had emerged (Olutayo, 1999).

A significant reality during the period as earlier mentioned was a mass migration of the Ibos outside their territory. Given the triplet realities of the scarcity of lands, early contacts with the British capitalist system and no traditional cities except Enugu, Onitsha, Umuahia, Port Harcourt, and Aba, Ibos embraced migration. In 1921, there were 3,000 Ibos in the North. By 1931, the number had risen to about 12,000 and by 1952, the number had risen to 130,000. In fact, in the Lagos metropolis, they constituted more than half of the total non-indigenes there (Anber, 1967). The common struggle of the Ibos for survival during the period meant that they cultivated the “communal civic spirit” where they were domiciled. This communal spirit manifested in a well-structured apprenticeship that guaranteed economic progress. Verily also, the communal associations that followed the communal spirit meant that the Ibos were able to send their wards to school and numerically occupied strategic positions in the public service. Evidentially, by 1952, there were 115 Ibo students as opposed to 118 Yoruba students at the University College, Ibadan. By 1959, there were more pupils and teachers in the Eastern region than elsewhere. Even in the military, the Ibo occupied the highest echelon. Of the 431 senior posts in the Nigerian Railway Corporation in 1964, the Ibo are alleged to have occupied 270; 73 of the 104 senior posts in the Nigerian Ports Authority; and three-quarters of Nigeria’s foreign service; and they were heads of the universities at Ibadan and Lagos (Olutayo, 1999).

Economically, the communal associations had assisted the Ibo in building credit associations such that they had 68,220 individuals in credit associations, as compared to 5,776 for the west and 2,407 for the north (Olutayo, 1999). The credit associations were operating side by side with the apprentice system. The apprentice system was a system of trade indoctrination in which young apprentices mostly between the ages of 8 and 12 are enrolled in a particular trade, taught and guided by their master for a period of 5 and 10 years. After this, the master settled him and allowed him to set up his own business elsewhere as a free master required to train and raise another apprentice. Apparently, the cycle of Ibo dominance during the period revolved around this system.

The Biafran war

There have been different recorded accounts of the Nigerian Civil War. Given such different accounts, it is expected, just as it has turned out to be, areas of convergence and divergence; contentious points from not only writers but also the two sides of the federal government and the Biafran people. However, one undeniable fact remains that the war, just as Oloyede (2009) puts it, was just “politics of ethnic difference”. Regrettably, any civil war that assumes ethnic colouration is bound to be complex, combusting and debilitating, given that parties to the war tend to fight for ethnic superiority and predominance. This was exactly the case with the civil war of 1967. Many scholars have often fingered the superiority feud between Yakubu Gowon (The Nigerian Head of State) and Odumegwu Ojukwu (the leader of the Biafran Nation) as the smokescreen to the Civil War. This paper maintains that, although supremacy question did arise between the two gallant personalities as Ojukwu as well as other Northern military officers, chiefly including Muritala Mohammed questioned the ability of Gowon to lead even as a junior military officer (Bird and Ottanelli, 2017), the civil war undercurrent revolved around the protection of ethnic enclaves each of the two individuals was meant to represent. It was a glaring question of ethnic prevalence.

By the attainment of independence in 1960, Ibos had attained the level of business and educational sophistication needed to grab the chances that the newly-independent Nigeria presented to them. To be sure, by the mid-1960s, they had taken the rest region by storm by dominating every sphere of the country. Consequently, the *Ibos* became the envy of the people from other regions as the British government turned to the people of the East to provide the needed leadership capability as the country approached independence (Bird and Ottanelli, 2017). The envy grew in the same proportion as the resentment. Ibos began adjusting to the new reality of life – sheer hatred – until Kaduna Nzeogwu’s pogrom and the subsequent headship of General Yakubu on January 15, 1966, appeared to be the last straw that broke the camel’s back. The coup was highly regarded as an Ibo coup given the calibre of personalities that fell victims to it which included but were not limited to Tafawa Balewa (Prime Minister), Sir Ahmadu Bello (Premier of the North),

Samuel Akintola (Premier of the West) and OkotieEboh (Minister of Finance). More so, the sheer unwillingness of AguiyiIronsi to prosecute the masterminds of the coup including Kaduna Nzeogwu further fuelled the suspicion even as the government hurriedly adopted the Unification Decree that centralized administration including the civil service.

Yakubu Gowon's ascension to power on July 29, 1966, after overthrowing the government of Ironsi was meant to be for revenge. Consequently, violence that ensued, directed at mainly Ibos, led to looting, destruction of property, and the killing and massacre of several thousands of Ibos living in the Muslim North (Bird and Ottanelli, 2017). It was on record that a group of soldiers opened fire on innocent Ibos trying to board a plane at Kano even when the group was warned against acting. Amid this tension, the Gowon-led administration inchoately created 12 states, under which the East was broken up into three separate states, only one of which was Igbo-dominated which effectively cut off the Ibos from the oil-producing areas of the region and diluted the influence of an administratively unified East (Gould, 2012). The aggregation of all these resulted in the declaration of the state of Biafra by Odumegwu Ojukwu and the secession that followed afterwards.

The civil war that lasted for almost three years left so many injuries in the memories of the survivors in the entire country, particularly the Ibos whose loved ones were brazenly massacred by the dominant Nigerian forces. Nigeria as a corporate whole has recovered and the Biafran project, until recently, appears interred. To the Northern-led federal government and some extent the people of other regions of the country, the war was a sign of victory over a dominating, assertive and expanding region.

A bitter taste of genocide and economic suffocation

Unpacking the Genocide Question. Attempting to answer the genocide question of the Nigerian-Biafran war remains a justified academic exercise. If anything, the devotion paid to it by Wole Soyinka in *The Man Died* written in 1971 and Chinua Achebe in *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra* written in 2013 is symptomatic of its resurgence. To be sure, the Biafran propaganda pushed to the fore a genocide-by-famine plot which has in recent times attracted attention in

genocide studies (Heerten & Moses, 2018). The Biafran propaganda sought to make a comparison with the Holocaust, referencing Auschwitz – a known site of mass annihilation in Germany, and likening themselves to African Jews. Meanwhile, the claims of genocide were alluded to by public opinion in Tanzania and Senegal. The war suffered from the “politics of naming” – having been branded a Civil War by the government and genocide by Biafrans (Heerten & Moses, 2018, p. 5). The Biafran claims of genocide are driven by ethnic resentment at Igbo success, Igbophobia, fierce north and the Nigerian construction of an “Igbo problem”.

Heerte & Moses (2018) identified two phases of the genocide: the 1966 massacres and the war. The July 1966 pogrom expressed Northerners’ hate against the Easterners and their desire to annihilate them. The war was an attempt to exterminate the Ibos, especially in connivance with the British government for neo-colonial stakes.

During the war, there were recorded manifestations of genocide, particularly in Asaba and Calabar against the federal government with the British government aiding and abetting its commission. In Asaba, there was a shoot-on-sight order including those from Anioma (Bird and Ottanelli, 2017). *New York Times* writer Alfred Friendly gave an account that in Warri, 400–500 Igbos were killed by “civilian mobs,” with a similar number slaughtered in Sapele (Friendly, 1967, p. 1, 3). Similarly, the experience of Jack Shepherd of *Look Magazine* estimated in the Mid-West alone including Asaba, that over 8,000 Ibos were massacred – mostly of whom were civilians (Shepherd, 1968, p. 74). In Calabar, the atrocity was even bloodier. It was reported that the Nigerian forces “shot at least 1,000 and about 2,000 Ibos, most of them unarmed civilians”. In one of the accounts by *The Times of London* on August 2, 1968, “the Nigerian forces opened fire and murdered 14 nurses and patients in the wards” (Achebe, 2012, p. 137). The intentionality of the Nigerian forces to commit genocide was remarkable in the words of Colonel Adekunle when he said that “[Biafran aid is] “misguided humanitarian rubbish ... If children must die first, then that is too bad, just too bad” (Campbell, 1987). Similarly, the reports of Dr Mensah of Ghana revealed, “finally I am of the opinion that in many of the cases cited to my hatred of the Biafrans (*mainly Igbos*) and a wish to exterminate them was a foremost

motivational factor” (Ekwe-Ekwe, 1991). The use of starvation as a tactic ran throughout the war, one which Campbell (1987) estimated that about two million people died from starvation as the Nigerian government prevented food supplies to the region.

The horrors of savagery such as beheading, massacre, mutilation, eye gouging and other cruel acts circulated in the pamphlets were used by Biafra to spread its propaganda. This was interpreted as a pogrom or genocide. Just like the Hitler genocide against European Jews forced the creation of Isreal, the Nigerian genocide against the people of Eastern Nigeria necessitated Biafra (Heerten, 2017). In what was dispelled and downplayed as mere propaganda by Whitehall officials working at the behest of the British Government, the narratives of famine, starving children, humanitarian crisis and genocide purported by the media were dislodged. For example, as the Biafran propaganda brandishes the rhetoric of genocide, the Nigerian government also employed the services of international PR agencies to counter the claims of Biafra. The government tilted towards OAU and secured the support of member states, the Commonwealth and the United Nations. The government also invited international observers from Sweden, the United Kingdom, Poland and Canada into the country and reported from 1968-1970. The team in its report denied the genocide story in the country. The pro-Biafran sympathizers then changed their stance and labelled what was happening in Biafra “genoslaughter”, “hegemonocide” or “cultural genocide”.

According to Omaka (2014b), the injustice meted out against Biafrans took place in both the Northern region and Biafra minority homelands including Ibibio, Ijaw, Efik and Ogoja where the use of torture, molestation, humiliation, persecution and intimidation were popular. For instance, atrocities were committed in the Ikun clan (in present-day Cross River State) and against Ibibio men at Umahi for collaborating with Nigerian soldiers. Also, some men of Ibiobio origin were beaten to death at Umahia while about four hundred men were taken from Asang town in Enyong to an unknown destination. Meanwhile, in Ikot Ekpenyong (in present-day Akwa Ibom State), Idoro and Ikot Okpot, Biafran soldiers also shot many villagers. More so, the Biafran Organization of Freedom Fighter (BOFF) – a paramilitary and special operations group – was used

to target minorities in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States for undermining the Biafran government. Similar events were reported among minorities of Ogu, Onne and New Calabar in Rivers. These inhumane treatments were reportedly committed against minorities who agitated for separate states against the Biafran dream. Despite the propaganda of genocide brandished by Biafra and the international debate it garnered, the twentieth-century genocide studies conspicuously omitted the claims of genocide. Resultantly, scholarship has been refocused on the genocidal experiences recorded during the war for proper canonization in genocide studies (Heerten & Moses, 2014).

Meanwhile, much attention is not paid to the post-war actualities in the literature. Samuel Daly draws attention to the implications of the war for crime and insecurity in the region in the years that followed. As Daly (2020) argues, crime and insecurity became endemic in the post-war Eastern states. Cases of looting, victimization, law-breaking, dispute and enduring bitterness. The courts were overwhelmed with criminal cases while disputes over abandoned properties increased exponentially when tenants who held houses and businesses in trust or simply occupied abandoned properties refused to release them. In most cases, the courts sided with the squatters suggesting acts of retribution against the homeowners. Due to the proliferation of arms, an upsurge in theft and armed robbery became pervasive while revenge against “treasonable” friends was common. It was a general ambience of repression and paranoia as the reintegrated Igbo Nigerians greeted their harassment by civilians with aggression. To address these shenanigans, the state arrogated more powers of ensuring law and orderliness to itself thereby blurring the lines between guaranteeing public order and promoting police brutality. This transcended into subsequent civil life and shaped police-community relations in the decades that followed. As Daly (2020, p. 161) puts it “the siege mentality outlasted Biafra’s defeat”.

What became clear was that the preexisting bitterness of inequality became profound after the war given Nigeria’s pseudo-federal structure. Tensions between the East Central State and the minority groups became rife with the rhetoric of Igbo domination.

Economic Suffocation

Economically, the people's businesses were shattered and destroyed; the same as those that were into farming before the war. The orphans and widows joined the pool of unemployed youths and men after the Christian Missionaries had left. The federal government could only re-absorb 34,000 Ibos out of over one million into the civil service (Obi-Ani, 2009). The Federal Military Government made some unfavourable decrees meant to worsen the woes of the helpless people. The Public Officers (Special Provisions Decree no. 46 of 1970) summarily dismissed or retired Ibo officers that participated in the war. The Banking Obligation (Eastern States Decree) was a decree issued to all banks in the East to pay all account owners a flat rate of 20 pounds irrespective of the amount deposited in the banks before the war. The Indigenization Decree of 1972 was meant to give Nigerians a chance to partake in the country's productive enterprises and excluded the people from the East.

Unsurprisingly, the Ibos quickly recovered from the war and the economy began booming by the mid-1970s. Their industry and re-inventions coupled with the policy of import substitution meant that the economy re-invigorated. This was also echoed by Brautigam (1997) that despite the economic recession in the 1980s, the South East region was experiencing an economic boom amid mounting unfavourable state policies. More so, the "emergence of Nnewi, Onitsha, Aba and Enugu as veritable industrial centres was the product of the capacity for innovation and adaptation and extant social capital which produced low transaction costs" (Ukiwo, 2012, p. 4). Forrest (1995, p. 177) on his part argues that the quick recovery of the Ibo was rooted in the apprenticeship which promoted courage, perseverance and determination in the face of unfavourable incidents.

Post-military South East: a region under siege

Detractors can argue that sieging of the region if at all there is anything of such, is a function of the activities of the unknown gunmen, the Indigenous People's Republic of Biafra (IPOB) and the Eastern Security Network (ESN) which they argue have assumed the nature of

terrorism. However, the encirclement of the region had started way before the rise of these groups and their emergence as a result of the encirclement and the activities therefrom. The proscription of IPOB in 2017 (Asadu, 2017) was just a coy to further tighten the siege by militarizing the region. In more recent times, the narrative has changed. The siege takes the form of a heavy proliferation of military and paramilitary forces mounting check-points on every two kilometres of the five South Eastern states even when it is glaring that the region had been largely peaceful before the siege. Equally, some evidential run-ins can assist to elucidate this point.

In the year 2020 alone, investigations show that there were over 300 checkpoints in the South East. In the major cities of Aba to Umuahia to Owerri, Enugu to Abakaliki, Awka to Onitsha to Nnewi, the story is baffling. From Aba to Enugu, which is a distance of 150 km, there are no fewer than 12 army checkpoints and 16 police check-points. From Acho Nwakanma junction to Obikabia junction, a distance of 5 km, there are over 7 police checkpoints. Between Awka and Onitsha through the expressway, which is a distance of about 40 km, there are checkpoints at Amansea (Police), Aroma junction (Police), Umuopku (Road Safety), Umuopku (Police), Enugwu Agidi (Police), Dunukofia (Police), Awkuzu (Police) Awkuzu (Road Safety), NkweleEzunaka (Police), Borromew roundabout (Police) and Bridge Head (Police /Road Safety/Army). Along the old Enugu-Onitsha road, there are checkpoints at Amansea (Army), Mobile Police junction (Police), Zik's Avenue (Road Safety), Enugu Ukwu (Police) and Ugwunwasike (Police). On the Onitsha-Owerri road axis, there are also checkpoints at Oba, Ozubulu, Okija, Ihiala, Uli and Amorka (Vanguard, 2020).

In Enugu, as the report further reveals, there are heavy checkpoints mounted by both army and police along the Enugu-Abakaliki highway, Enugu-Aba and Enugu-Awka as well as those along Nsukka road and between Nsukka and Benue State boundaries. Similarly, there are checkpoints mounted by men of the Air Force at Penoks Bus stop and Emene, near the Akanu Ibiam International airport. The Orié Market day, the ever-busy day, seven police checkpoints are mounted between Ibagwa-Nike and OriéUgwuogo, a distance of 10 km. Between the same Ugwuogo and Opi junction in Nsukka Local Government Area, there are

another eight checkpoints including a military checkpoint that all collect tolls from motorists heading to the Ugwuogo Market. Still on the same Ugwuogo Market are the other four checkpoints that take care of commuters emanating from either NkwoNeke or other rural markets in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area. This runs throughout the major cities of the five states in the region.

The first objective: economic asphyxiation

The economy determines the survival of a state and its people. One would think of what life would look like had the economy not been in place. Put differently, once the economic activities of a people are suffocated, the people perish. This appears to be the case with Ibos against the rest in Nigeria. The marginalization indices such as poor financial allocation, poor health care facilities, bad roads, poor quality of education, poor representation in political appointments and stereotyping are all modern tactics of economic asphyxiation by the state. A known legal practitioner, Olisa Agbakoba from the South East understood this which made him sue the federal government for neglect of the region in the allocation of federal projects, non-maintenance of federal roads and bridges, non-development of oil and gas resources, abandonment of the Enugu colliery, poor development of ports and airports and over-policing that all negatively affect the investment in the region (Ukiwo, 2012). In more recent times, it appears that the state is in a confrontation with the people to achieve its objective once and for all. The siege is meant to confrontationally crumble the economy through the various activities of the military mostly through extortion. Evidence of this reality abounds.

In a research carried out by Ogundipe (2018), it was reported that the security forces through sieging extorted over N100 billion from commuters in the region in three years as they mounted their checkpoints. This act referred to as the “culture of checkpoint corruption” has blue and white-collar dimensions. The blue-collar dimension describes the direct extortion of motorists by the police, army and other paramilitary outfits, while the white-collar element captures direction extortion by civilian touts and proxies. These various extortion practices have continued in flagrant defiance of the ban on the mounting of

roadblocks. It is reported that a sum of N100 billion (i.e. \$550 million at the time of writing this paper) was generated from this model. The breakdown shows that the Nigerian Police Force pocketed N78.02 billion, the Army, Navy and Air Force in collection extracted N6 billion and the paramilitary (Customs, Road Safety, NAFDAC and NDLEA) privatized N16 billion. By implication, this amount is equivalent to the annual budget of some states in Nigeria such as Ekiti State. Moreover, one would imagine the effect of the investment of such an amount on the economy of the region whose overall budget for 2021 and 2022 stood at N890, 688 billion and N1,003 trillion respectively (Ndujihe, 2021). A breakdown of the extortion by states in the region is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 1: Official Statistics of Security Forces Extortions by State in South East Nigeria, August 2015 and August 2016 (Ogundipe, 2018)

State	Number of roadblocks	Estimate per roadblock (Daily) (N)	Daily estimate (N)	Monthly Estimate	Yearly Estimate
Anambra	250	40,000	10 million	300 million	3.6 billion
Abia	200	40,000	8 million	240 million	2.88 billion
Imo	150	30,000	4.5 million	135 million	1.62 billion
Enugu	100	25,000	2.5 million	75 million	900 million
Ebonyi	50	25,000	1.25 million	37.5 million	450 million

Table 2: Official Statistics of Security Forces Extortions by State in South East Nigeria, August 2016 and August 2017 (Ogundipe, 2018)

Anambra	500	40,000	20 million	600 million	7.2 billion
Abia	400	40,000	16 million	480 million	5.76 billion
Imo	200	30,000	6 million	180 million	2.16 billion
Enugu	200	25,000	5 million	150 million	1.8 million
Ebonyi	150	25,000	3.75 million	112.5 million	1.35 million

Table 3: Official Statistics of Security Forces Extortions by State in South East Nigeria, August 2017 and December 2018 (Ogundipe, 2018)

Anambra	800	40,000	32 million	960 million	15.36 billion
Abia	700	40,000	28 million	840 million	13.44 billion
Imo	500	30,000	15 million	450 million	7.2 billion
Enugu	400	25,000	10 million	300 million	4.8 billion
Ebonyi	400	25,000	10 million	300 million	4.8 billion

The first of this report from the intersociety in 2011 revealed that between 2009 and 2011 when the benchmark for the “toll fee” was N20 denomination as against today’s N50 denomination, the police officers made N53.4 billion in three years across the country. Out of this figure, South East had the lion’s share of N32.2 billion, South-South with N8.2 billion, South West with N 8.2 billion, North Central with N2.1 billion, North East with N1.2 billion and North West with N1.2 billion (Ogundipe, 2018).

Away from the economic impact of extortion, the industries in the region have been heavily hit. Thus, while some have moved out of the region, a few remaining ones are under-performing (AIEC, 2006) joining those that had long gone moribund such as Nkalagu Cement industry, Aba Textile Mills; Standard Shoe Factory Owerri; Niger gas; Niger steel Company; Glass Industry; Imo Rubber Nigeria Limited; Resin and Paints Industry; Avutu Poultry; Paper Packaging Industry and Modern Ceramics (Oforum, 2020). This view was equally expressed in the South East Summit in 2011, “the region has become de-industrialised. At the last count over 30 state-owned and private investments located in the region have gone under” (South East Summit 2011, p. 2). Indeed, this phenomenon cannot be attributed solely to sieging as there are other inducing factors such as low patronage, unfavourable foreign exchange, multiple taxations, unstable electricity, bad roads and other unfavourable technical and structural components. However, the insecurity-laden environment appeared to have caused more than those aforementioned indices. Following this, the poverty level has increased such that apart from the North, South East poverty rate has been

overwhelming with Abia State standing at 30.67 per cent; Anambra State at 14.78; Ebonyi State, at 79.76; Enugu State at 58.13; and Imo State at 28.86 per cent (NBS, 2020).

Regrettably, the activities of some criminal elements in the ranks and files of IPOB who appear to be colluding with the security forces in the region in the continued enforcement of compulsory sit-at-home every Monday further paralyze the economy and hastens the actualization of the objective.

The second objective: genocide

Genocide is simply a criminal resolution to erase a given group from existence. The sieging of the South East region based on the grand objective of seeing the Ibos off from the rest is meant to be finally put to rest through genocide. Thus, while economic asphyxiation as earlier argued is meant to be a *salami-slicing* strategy designed to incrementally but softly achieve ethnic extinction, the genocide appears to be a hard power strategy designed to finish off from where economic asphyxiation stops. Genocide is an international crime that has met serious and stiff vituperations from both national and international quarters. As earlier indicated, it was a very serious strategy employed by the Nigerian government during the civil war. The present reality shows that the Nigerian government has renewed the tactic through sieging.

Reports of extra-judicial killings are mind-blowing even as it is believed that the daily casualties are either not reported or under-reported. Amnesty International (AI, 2016) reported that innocent IPOB civilians were massacred in August 2015. Precisely on May 30, 2016, following the commemoration of Biafran Independence Day, the fearful-looking military opened fire on innocent civilians and killed at least 60 of them and took them to Barracks in various locations of Asaba and Onitsha. A day before, the military conducted house-to-house and church-to-church raids on IPOB members and killed them (AI, 2016). Similarly, on August 5, 2021, AI (2021) reported that the military killed about 115 innocent civilians in the South East (AI, 2021). The report of Intersociety in which the military was accused of killing over 1,000 civilians between October 2020 and December 2021 was on record (Sahara Reporters, 2022).

The menace of arms importation to the region meant to further actualize this objective is alarming. A Borno State Police Command arrested 28-year-old Clement Asuk who was transporting 126 anti-aircraft bullets, 222 of 7.62 mm of life ammunition, 517 of 7.62 mm by 51 life ammunition, 7.62 mm by 39 life ammunition, two empty magazines of Ak47, four rocket-propelled grenades (RPG), one hand grenade, and one anti-aircraft ammunition belt said to be used to fight IPOB from Maiduguri (Aruna, 2022). This is one of the many cases of arms race in the region. In a related development, the police intercepted about 753 live ammunition in Ebonyi State just as a truck laden with sophisticated weapons fell in Anambra State (Ayitogo, 2021). Arrests were said to have been made but prosecution of culprits has not been heard, further fuelling suspicion of genocide against the people of the South East region.

Insecurity in the South East: political objective vs. struggle for survival

The interpretation of these two objectives and the reaction towards them underlies the insecurity in the region. One known reaction is the vehemence of the IPOB to maintain their separatist agitations, the result of which has led to the arrest and trial of the IPOB leader, MaziNnamdiKanu (MNK). In fact, before IPOB's emergence, different separatist movements had risen in the region including the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in 1999 led by Ralph Uwazuruike, a lawyer (Ebonine, 2021). Though largely non-violent group, the recent observation of sit-at-home every Monday across all South Eastern States to commemorate the fallen Biafran heroes who died during the civil war has often turned bloody. Though the group has since announced a stop to its continued observance, it appears that some radical and criminal elements have hijacked the process to unleash mayhem on both the people and the security forces; taking advantage of the situation to achieve their parochial interests. Notwithstanding the activities of IPOB, Eastern Security Network and the unknown gunmen, it appears that their activities are in response to these mendacious government objectives. This perhaps explains the nature of their attacks,

visibly against security forces, government-owned property and those that are seen to be in support of the government's activities in the region.

It has been reported that more than 20 police stations were attacked in different parts of the region in the first five months of 2021 (Ojewale and Onuoha, 2022). In those attacks, personnel were killed, their operational vehicles burnt and stations vandalized. It was believed that attacks on prisons were meant to free inmates believed to be unjustifiably incarcerated by the security forces. In what looked like a move made by the Biafran people during the civil war where "Ogbunigwe" (locally made guns) were manufactured, the police alleged that they have discovered where explosives used in attacking police formations are made and some arrests were made (Al Jazeera, 2022) Beyond casualties, properties believed to belong to the state or federal government are also attacked. For instance, Enugu Electricity Distribution Company (EEDC) at UkwuNwasike, Ogidi, Idemili North Local Government Area was attacked and about 32 vehicles with other property were set ablaze. More so, the local government secretariat at Ogidi was partly burnt and the Magistrate Court was razed down all on May 16, 2022 (Onu, 2022). Earlier, following the preparation for the governorship election in Anambra State, the office of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was burnt. Notable persons have also become victims of attacks in recent times.

While this paper does not intend to lend its weight to the gruesome attacks and murder of innocent civilians including kidnapping and extortion by unknown gunmen, it is however imperative to know that these series of activities are the psychological resonance of perceived territorial acquisition by the government perpetuated by the security agents. As a result, the palpable fear in the region is the drum of war akin to the prelude to the civil war. Moreover, the events that occur in other parts of the country, particularly in the North wherein the Ibos and their businesses are attacked even when they were no part of the incidents further oxygenate the struggle back home. For instance, the recent burning of Deborah Emmanuel, a 200-level student in the Department of Early Childhood Education, Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto State, by a mob over alleged blasphemy took another arsonist angle against the Ibos who had no hands in the whole incident.

Their shops and goods were vandalized and looted by the angry mob (Suleiman, 2022). This clearly shows the height of hatred against a particular section of the country who appear to be victims of any catastrophe arising in any part of the country. Against this backdrop, the insecurity in the South East will continue until there is a genuine solution to the seemingly fragmented state.

Conclusion: de-sieging the South East for a lasting solution

The premise of this paper lies in the perceived injustice meted on a group of people whose memories of the past war are still alive. The paper argues that accentuated by differences in economic conditions, language and ethnic identity, the religious divisions between the groups in Nigeria have deepened hostility. The narratives of marginalization continue to fuel secessionism in Nigeria and the prevailing insecurity in South East Nigeria, this paper exhumes the events of the civil war which are very similar to the sieging of the region which is intrinsically meant to achieve two inter-related objectives: economic asphyxiation and genocide. The Ibos, as argued, are seen by others within the state as a problem that should be solved once and for all given their doggedness, enterprise and inventiveness. The interpretation of this resolution is what is described as “insecurity” in the region, which the paper simply describes as a “struggle for survival”. The birth of IPOB, ESN and unknown gunmen are just wings fighting for survival, albeit some criminal elements who are perceived to be working for their selfish interests are taking the opportunity of the “neo-civil war”.

The present agitations can be adequately appreciated given Ojukwu’s speech in his post-war interview: “It’s in the court of the Nigerians, it depends on how they play the ball back. If they play it in a friendly way then there would be no need for resistance. If of course, they play it back viciously then I am sure that our people will consider again whether this forced unity is worthwhile ... we must learn to be patient.” (*School of Oriental and African Studies*, 1970, p. 20)

Given the above, it would appear Ojukwu’s speech finds resonance in Carl Schmitt and Arthur Aughey’s friend-and-enemy philosophy. That is, the sieging of the Southeast is reminiscent of a vicious enemy to be crushed – the result of which is acute resistance

putting to test the worthiness of Nigeria's unity. It appears the people are out of patience and would rather treat the government as its enemy.

Against this backdrop, the paper recommends de-sieging as the only strategy to restore the peace previously enjoyed by all in the region. This strategy will be physical, genuine, reflective and introspective. De-sieging here is not synonymous with the total withdrawal of security forces. It is simply a remorseful and genuine stoppage of extortions and associated genocide. Once this is achieved, the number of security checkpoints will gradually fizzle away as they are mounted to achieve mendacious objectives. Further, de-sieging will connote proper reintegration of the people of the region into the governance system of the country. By this, narratives of marginalization, stereotyping and alienation will be interred through the genuine convocation of stakeholders' meetings that would comprise the federal and state governments, IPOB representatives, traditional rulers, women's organizations, youth groups, security forces and civil society organizations in the region. There is no doubting the fact that Ibos still live in the trauma of the loss of the civil war exacerbated by the failed promises of reconciliation, reintegration and rehabilitation. Consequently, any government that genuinely approaches the people and restores them to the position that they occupied pre-war would save the country from total collapse.

Summarily, the paper asserts that de-sieging here would take the shape of a three-concentric circle remedial, bottom-top approach. First, there should be a stop to unnecessary extortions and killings of the people in the region with the withdrawal of some military operatives and their checkpoints to allow free movement. This move will not only save the lives of the people in the region but also the lives of the security operatives who are receiving daily retaliatory deaths. More so, this would send a good signal that the government is serious about genuine reconciliation. Second, the government would convoke a genuine sovereign regional conference (SRC) where the people will be allowed to express their feelings which they were not allowed to express since the post-civil war. The government will not sit as an umpire but as a party that is willing to compromise for the sake of lasting peace. It is believed that there would be a political solution to the case of MNK which is also

a factor in the insecurity of the region. Thus, adequate compensation for victims of the civil war and siege, critical infrastructural intervention such as rehabilitation of schools, hospitals, roads and markets; creation of an additional state to bring the number of states in the region to six as it is with other regions; Ibo presidency and absorption of Ibos in the critical positions of governance is germane at this stage. Finally, a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) will be convoked by the government which will comprise critical stakeholders from each of the regions of the country to discuss the continued existence of Nigeria and the way forward. It should be a people's conference not hijacked by the government.

No genuine Nigerian seriously desires the disintegration of Nigeria. It is the level of ethnicity, the politicization of diversity of the state, corruption, dominance of a group in the governance system of the country, insecurity, insincerity of government, alienation, poverty, unemployment, lack of respect for human rights and zero-sum attitudes of politicians that spur people to aspire to secede. It is believed that once these things are discussed in SNC and addressed by the government, the unity of the state is assured. In addition, the paper recognizes that these things need time to address. Nigerians have always been patient with the government and will continue to be so long the government is sincere with genuine reconciliation of diverse groupings which should be seen as a blessing to the country given the abundance of human resources embedded in these groupings.

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INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS

THE INTRICATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIZENS AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES IN THE LIGHT OF INTELLIGENCE CULTURE*

Luca Guido VALLA*

Abstract:

Intelligence operations are often considered mysterious and concealed. This air of mystery has affected how citizens perceive what intelligence services are and do. The interest of intelligence services in understanding what citizens' think of them has considerably grown. However, there is a lack of consistent research on this topic. This article addresses the issues of citizens' perceptions of intelligence activities and citizens' trust towards intelligence services. Moreover, it proposes that the concept of intelligence culture.

Keywords: *citizens, perceptions, trust, intelligence, intelligence culture.*

Introduction

Intelligence services have shown increasing interest in investigating how people perceive national security threats and how citizens perceive what intelligence services do to combat these threats. However, the number of academic works exploring the applicability of such research in the intelligence sector is considerably lower than the

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number of studies related to other areas of inquiry such as, for example, intelligence analysts' perceptions of security issues (Evans & Kebbell, 2012; Heuer, 1999; Wastell, 2010). This lack of relevant literature on perceptions of security issues may be partly due to the almost exclusive focus of traditional security studies on military aspects. Nevertheless, highlighting the importance of citizens' perceptions for intelligence activities would align with the new understanding of security introduced by critical security studies and enriched by research conducted in the last few decades.

As shown later in the article, major issues such as citizens' perceptions of intelligence activities and trust of citizens towards intelligence services have been only rarely systematically studied and some results conflict with common beliefs about intelligence.

A particularly interesting notion which could be usefully adopted to systematize this stream of research is intelligence culture (Aldrich & Kasuku, 2012; Van Reijn, 2011). Intelligence culture can be conceived as an overarching concept including sets of traditions, practices and modalities governing the field of intelligence. Moreover, intelligence culture has been subject to conceptual evolution. The idea was originally associated with an in-depth analysis of intelligence failures (Davies, 2004), before being more recently included in an analysis of dimensions such as collective perceptions of intelligence services (Chiru, 2016). For these reasons, analysing the development of the concept of intelligence culture as well as its contemporary understanding is particularly useful to highlight the connections of two worlds that are only apparently distant: intelligence and citizens.

This article aims to present the main elements governing the relationship between citizens and intelligence. Moreover, by analysing the recent developments of the concept of intelligence culture, it aims to stimulate new research on this topic, which could potentially be of practical interest for the intelligence sector.

The article is organized in three main parts and the following topics are discussed: citizens' perceptions of intelligence operations, the issue of trust and the newest understandings of intelligence culture.

What do they do? Citizens' perceptions of Intelligence activities

June 2013 marked a momentous turning point in the history of intelligence. Indeed, several revelations were made about intelligence activities involving the US National Security Agency (NSA) carrying out domestic and foreign surveillance operations. This ground-breaking event led to a massive set of consequences at the political (Landau, 2013), social (Haim, Weimann, & Brosius, 2018), and legal levels (Wright & Kreissl, 2013). The revelations were extraordinary not only because information extremely sensitive for national security was made public but due to US citizens realizing they might have been monitored by the intelligence services of their own country. In the eyes of a naïve observer, this fact alone could irremediably undermine the trust of citizens in the intelligence services and possibly even towards the government. In fact, citizens' reactions to revelations of this kind have been less definite than one would think, and the entire idea of trust is further explored later in the article.

From that moment, several studies were published on citizens' perceptions of surveillance operations carried out by intelligence services (e.g., Kininmonth, Thompson, McGill, & Bunn, 2018; Kwon & Rao, 2017; Trüdinger & Steckermeier, 2017). Note that most existing empirical studies on the perception of surveillance are about domestic – not foreign – surveillance (e.g., Bromberg, Charbonneau, & Smith, 2020; Reddick, Chatfield, & Jaramillo, 2015). Only few studies have compared what citizens think of domestic and foreign intelligence activities. Previous research has suggested that the diverse emotional experiences originating from the perception of different types of threats to national security may lead to different perceptions of surveillance operations (Huddy, 2009). In particular, it was predicted that fear would lead to a wider acceptance of domestic surveillance operations (Rykkja, Læg Reid, & Fimreite, 2011), while anger would be directed to the broader support of intelligence operations beyond national borders (Jentleson & Britton, 1998).

Reddick et al. carried out an interesting multi-method study on citizens' opinions of NSA's surveillance programs using a critical discourse analysis of citizens' tweets on NSA's operations (Reddick et al.,

2015). Additionally, the authors conducted a logistic regression of survey data collected from a sample of Americans on information gathering by the government. Overall, results showed negative opinions towards NSA's surveillance programs. Similarly, a study conducted during the outbreak of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic on American's perception of surveillance operations carried out to limit the spread of COVID-19 showed relatively low support from citizens (Zhang, Kreps, McMurry, & McCain, 2020). On the matter of health security, it is worth noting the special issue of Intelligence and National Security in 2020. Such issue highlights the importance of sectors other than the military for national security, as Buzan and colleagues postulated (1998). Evidence also shows that factors such as gender, age and political affiliation influence support or opposition of surveillance technology (Bromberg et al., 2020). Previous research demonstrated that elements other than demographic characteristics are predictive of lesser or greater support for preventive policies, including surveillance of the population. For example, it was verified that the combination of low threats, limited previous exposure to threats to national security such as terrorist attacks and a high level of social trust correlates with less scepticism towards such policies (Rykkja et al., 2011). However, results in various contexts are needed, such as countries with a recent history of terrorist events or nations at war. A remarkable stream of research has examined how surveillance activities carried out by intelligence services are perceived, as well as how surveillance activities suppress a set of online activities (Stoycheff, 2016). Studies have also examined how surveillance practices suffocate the expression of minority political views and online political expression (Ping Yu, 2021).

The pessimistic attitudes and opinions of citizens towards intelligence operations that generally emerge from empirical studies on the topic may suggest a widespread negative attitude of citizens towards intelligence services. However, some research has shown that – to the surprise of the authors – a high number of participants stated that intelligence services should be allowed to hack the communications of fellow countrymen and foreigners (de Waal, 2013). These results indicate the existence of three elements to consider. First, timing is important: it is more likely that citizens would be more supportive of

intelligence operations after the occurrence of an event that undermines national security (Westin, 2003). Second, as some authors have suggested (Reddick et al., 2015), governments need to be more efficacious in communicating surveillance programs to citizens, and in a more transparent way, to achieve greater approval for intelligence operations. Third, gaining trust from the citizenry is challenging – especially considering sensitive topics such as privacy and national security – but it is vital for building a lasting relationship. Some research showed that complex psychological processes might occur when attempting to build a trust relationship between the government and citizens (Zhang & Kim, 2018). The trust relationship between citizens and intelligence services might involve processes even more articulated because of the aura of mystery that has frequently affected the narrative about intelligence institutions (Bennett, 2006). This occurrence is worth attention if trust is considered the first step of lasting relationships between social actors (Morrone, Tontoranelli, & Ranuzzi, 2009).

The issue of citizens' trust in Intelligence

A topic that has frequently been the subject of political discourse is the issue of trust from citizens. Interestingly, however, no comprehensive investigation on trust in intelligence services has been carried out to date, with the exception of Hribar and colleagues' recent work (2021). This scarcity of research could be in part due to the significant differences in investigating how intelligence services are perceived in various countries.

One of the major issues when examining trust is the number of intra-disciplinary definitions and interpretations of the concept, as well as the variety of meanings 'trust' has in everyday life (McKnight & Chervany Norman, 2001). The concept of trust has been studied in a several areas, such as its influence on the use of social networks (Varlamis, Eirinaki, & Louta, 2010) and on investment rates (Zak & Knack, 2001). The assessment of trust in the context of intelligence studies is more limited. Nevertheless, previous research has identified a number of factors affecting trust in the institutions, which could be usefully explored when considering citizens' trust in intelligence services, namely (1) competence; (2) a history of honesty, openness and

acting for the sake of the public interest; (3) sharing the same values as the individual (Science Communication Unit – University of the West of England, 2014). Regarding intelligence services, the last two points are particularly delicate. It suffices to think about how the activities of intelligence services in totalitarian regimes affected popular perceptions and attitudes towards them, even after those regimes have been put down. Nevertheless, although the perception of fairness and responsiveness of governments in critical situations generally makes citizens trust their governments (Anderson, 2010), it was found that even scepticism may have a positive effect in citizens' interest in finding answers to questions about the conduct of the government (Pinkleton, Austin, Zhou, Willoughby, & Reiser, 2012). It remains to be investigated whether this occurrence holds for intelligence services, as their activities are generally concealed from the population, and the evaluation of elements such as fairness and responsiveness is difficult.

It is possible, however, to hypothesize that the claim that emotions play a crucial role in guiding citizens' expectations towards the government (Reddick et al., 2015) may also be true for intelligence services. This theory would confirm the importance of studying citizens' emotional responses to national security threats and to the operations undertaken to tackle these threats. In addition, new security issues such as large-scale epidemics, or even pandemics, may require control systems that could be well or poorly tolerated by citizens. For example, it was shown that trust in institutions and one's state governor was associated with a greater support of surveillance policies in responses to the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak in the United States (Zhang et al., 2020), even if a relatively small percentage of respondents supported the use of contact tracing apps. Accordingly, future research on the topic might need to consider how emerging security issues and operations aimed at facing them could alter citizens pre-existing perceptions, attitudes and opinions on surveillance and other operations carried out by intelligence services. The picture is made even more complex by another element that is hard to conceal with the secretiveness intrinsically characteristic of intelligence activities: the communication of risks and threats. It was demonstrated that not providing citizens with proper information about possibly imminent security threats may lead to over – or under – reaction

from the citizenry in response to such threats (Rogers & Pearce, 2013). Withholding information on potential threats has repercussions on threat-related behaviours, particularly relevant nowadays, such as low uptake of vaccinations in response to epidemic outbreaks. In fact, the security sector must face new types of security challenges that might not be strictly related to the military sector but are nonetheless crucial for national security. This instance may require further academic investigation, given that intelligence services are trusted mostly when confronting terrorism or impending threats (Chiru, 2016). Moreover, classical theories on security place military aspects at the centre of the discourse. With the advent of critical security studies and, more recently, with studies that emerged in the last two decades, the scope of the discipline was enlarged to embrace new dimensions, such as political, economic, environmental and social aspects (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2020).

Most existing knowledge on the topic of citizens' trust towards intelligence services has been carried out within an inner circle of disciplines, namely intelligence studies and international relations (George, 2020; Phythian, 2005). In addition to academic research, the topic has been considered in media publications by stakeholders such as heads of intelligence services and politicians (Hribar et al., 2021). Therefore, the interdisciplinarity frequently advocated for security studies seems to not find fertile ground for this specific topic. In particular, the analysis of the influence of emotions on citizens' expectations (Reddick et al., 2015) and trust towards governments and intelligence services might have been hampered by some obstacles. Three impediments might have slowed the application of research designs and methods used in disciplines other than intelligence studies: resistance to empiricism, lack of time and the politicization of intelligence (Puvathingal & Hantula, 2012). The last impediment may prove to be particularly intrusive when planning research on the analysis of citizens' trust in intelligence services, given the political implications of possibly negative outcomes. Nevertheless, further research might shed more light on this dilemma, considering the relative scarcity of empirical research on the topic.

Although the study did not involve empirical research, Hribar and colleagues' work is the first – and only to date – thorough analysis of citizens' trust in intelligence services (Hribar et al., 2021). Their paper proposed a new definition of the concept of trust, which was conceived as a psychological state between two entities, the trustor and the trustee, in which the latter meets the expectations of the former. According to the authors, the trustors – the citizens – are willing to take risks and be vulnerable because they consider the trustee – the intelligence services – as “an appropriate entity”. This idea of trust of citizens towards intelligence services is partially in line with the concept of trust proposed by Kee and Knox (1970), according to which two parties are – to a certain extent – interdependent concerning the outcomes of their choices. One party is challenged with the choice of believing in the fairness of the actions of the other, at its own risk. The second party, in turn, is aware that it can betray the other. By translating this idea into the discussion about citizens and intelligence services, it transpires that the unbalanced relationship puts intelligence services in a position of either being trusted or untrusted and in turn, of being capable of acting in line with the expectations of the trustors or betraying them.

To coherently conceptualize this elaborate matrix, Hribar and colleagues proposed a three-dimensional model with the following entities at stake: (1) “citizens”; (2) “influential components” such as politics, the education system and the media and (3) “foreign intelligence services” (Hribar et al., 2021). The citizens were conceived by the authors as the lay public not having a thorough knowledge of intelligence services or issues. Therefore, if trust cannot be based on detailed information about the trustee's activities, the subjective assessment of limited available information becomes the yardstick against which the other party is evaluated. In fact, according to the authors, trust should not be intended as a given truth or objective reality, but rather as a product of the trustor's perception. The second element of the model, the so-called influential components, refers to the group of institutions and actors which, at different levels, mediate the trust of citizens in intelligence services. The influential components were categorized by the authors as follows: the national intelligence system, politics, oversight, the professional public, the education system and the media.

Such entities could potentially increase or diminish trust of citizens in intelligence services. For instance, the media may convey a positive or negative image of intelligence operations and citizens may adjust their trust in them accordingly. The third component of the model, the foreign intelligence services, were presented as a negative factor influencing citizens' trust. The interconnection of these three components is, in the view of the authors, the foundation upon which trust of citizens in intelligence services is built.

Notable works explored how the conduct of intelligence agencies, especially in the attempt to combat terrorism, might pose risks for democracies and highlight the necessity to develop oversight of intelligence activities (e.g., Gill, 2012). Such risks might inevitably hamper the trust of citizens in intelligence agencies.

Some critical empirical studies highlighted another potentially crucial factor: unresponsiveness or not an adequate response to threats and risks perceived by the citizens. Even this aspect might hinder the trust of citizens in the intelligence sector (Sandman, Miller, Johnson, & Weinstein, 1993).

New tools in modern intelligence: the use of the media

The relevance of the media in the security sector is explored in several security studies' works (e.g., Bjørkdahl & Carlsen, 2017; de Buitrago, 2013; Samuel-Azran, Lavie-Dinur, & Karniel, 2015). If the prominence of the media in the academic literature on security studies is well-documented, similarly, the intelligence sector's reliance on the media has been thoroughly analysed (e.g., Bakir, 2015; Hillebrand, 2012; Matei, 2014). The relationship between intelligence services and the media takes various forms, which can take the following forms: (1) the use of media to make the public aware of national security issues; (2) the use of media to create an enemy image; (3) the use of media to collect information.

The use of the media to present national security issues to the public can be ascribed in large part to the idea of securitisation, according to which a given fact is represented as carrying an existential threat to the referent object (Buzan et al., 1998). In the case of intelligence, the referent object is national security. Some authors have

argued that a necessary step to accomplishing a securitising move is gaining the assent of the audience – the citizens – through a narrative that highlights the imminence of an existential threat (Balzacq, Léonard, & Ruzicka, 2016). The concept of securitisation, intended as shifting a security issue from the political debate into the sphere of emergency politics by the creation of an existential threat (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2020), has sometimes been fused into the broader concept of security culture. An example of such occurrence is the attempt of American officials, since 2015, to put in place a securitising process in response to the alleged Eurasian alignment of China and Russia (Ambrosio, Schram, & Heopfner, 2020). This conduct might be considered a simple form of securitisation, except that this behaviour has been recurrent throughout the last few decades in response to actual or perceived threats to US national security. For instance, a securitisation move was carried out following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, similar to what happened during the Cold War. Indeed, the securitisation process not only involves framing an existential threat (Floyd, 2016) but even exposing to the public the source of a potential threat to the national identity and sets of values. This conduct emphasises the impact of cultural determinants of securitisation. This process concretises into the American attempt to preserve their primacy and the political order based on liberalism and democracy (Ambrosio et al., 2020). This example highlights the interdependency of the concepts of security culture and securitisation. In this stream of research, some authors further explored the idea of securitisation, which was described as a spiral process involving the articulation of an existential threat narrative by a securitising actor, the validation of such an existential threat through mass media, its sedimentation in the audience and the actions put in place to tackle such a threat (Gaufman, 2017). Two elements of this scheme are notable: the securitising actor and the media. Gaufman specified that the securitising actor can be not only the government but any other actor with positional power. In this context, the literature has documented intelligence services as actors using media strategies to manipulate information and cause psychological warfare (Magen, 2015). Similarly, past research has highlighted the role of the media as a vital element for the accomplishment of securitisation (Vultee, 2010).

The use of the media to convey a national security threat to citizens is related to another objective of government and intelligence institutions, which is the creation of an enemy image. This use of the media dates back to World War II and the Cold War (Moloney, 2006), when the propaganda of the opposing blocs strived to convey an image of the enemies as undermining their security, welfare and set of values. Using the media to depict the enemy as the source of existential threats remains investigated in the current literature (Bahador, 2015). Relevant studies often refer to classical social psychology theories, such as the Intergroup Threat Theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2017), to stress the role of emotions, intergroup conflict and stereotyping in a process demonising the enemy (Gaufman, 2017). In recent years, the relationship between citizens and intelligence services liaised by the media has taken the form of what some authors identify as social media intelligence (SOCMINT) (Omand, Bartlett, & Miller, 2012).

SOCMINT has some specific characteristics which make it more than a simple intelligence gathering method. Previous research has identified some new areas of application of information gathering from social media for the good of public security. In particular, SOCMINT does not only involve intelligence services gathering near real-time information, identifying criminal intent or better understanding the behaviour of groups of people targeted by intelligence services or the police. Social media can also ensure a better flow of information between the government and the citizens, particularly in emergencies (Omand et al., 2012). This bidirectional stream of information makes SOCMINT a fascinating case of how an intelligence-gathering method could be a way for government and citizens to know each other. Past research treated SOCMINT on a par with traditional intelligence gathering methods such as human intelligence (HUMINT), open-source intelligence (OSINT) and signals intelligence (SIGINT) (Dover, 2020; Şuşnea & Iftene, 2018), to be included in the intelligence cycle. However, the existing literature has highlighted another use of social media by intelligence services, that is, to attempt to create a public image and specific representations of intelligence services. For example, social media accounts of intelligence services make countless references to popular culture, share memes, and make self-referential jokes (Crilley & Pears, 2021). This effort to shorten

the distance that traditionally separates intelligence services from the population has led to engaging and informative content on social media pages (e.g., SRI – Serviciul Român de Informații, n.d.).

The attempt undertaken by intelligence services to build a new relationship with citizens is one of the founding elements of the new understanding of intelligence culture.

A new element in the discussion: the importance of cultural factors

The set of perceptions, trust (or lack of) and interdependency between the citizens and the intelligence services are only parts of a bigger framework regulating the nature of intelligence. The complexity does not reside just in terminology. Intelligence is not only defined differently in various parts of the world (Caddell Jr, 2019), there are also variations in how intelligence is conceived, how it operates, how its operations are perceived and what is expected from it. The complexity and richness of this framework partially reflects the advances through which the entire security sector has evolved from the classical conception of the two-party understanding of security. According to the classical idea of security, the military protected the other party, national security. The advent of new security sectors and actors (Buzan et al., 1998) motivated researchers in security studies to reconsider classical theories (Gruszczak, 2016). In particular, from the last decades of the 20th century, scholars began to cover cultural elements in intelligence studies (e.g., Porch, 1995).

The concept of culture has been extensively studied in a number of disciplines and several definitions have been provided. According to one of the most prominent, culture can be thought of as the shared set of knowledges and practices generated by people to perceive, decode and react to the social phenomena around them (Lederach, 1996). The use of the idea of culture was not new in security studies given that the concepts of political and strategic culture – which intelligence culture can be considered an emanation of – had already been advanced by important authors (e.g., Booth, 1990; Riley, 1983). The novelty brought by the notion of intelligence culture can be extrapolated from the idea of culture presented above. In particular, the study of intelligence culture

can be intended as the analysis of the knowledge of people in relation to intelligence that guides their perceptions, interpretations and responses.

A culture of Intelligence and the role of citizens

At the beginning of the 21st century, the issue of national security broke into everyone's lives. With major terrorist attacks occurring in the West, national security became a topic of widespread and immediate importance. The responses to terrorism provided by different states showed profound cultural differences in dealing with the problem (Rees & Aldrich, 2005). Indeed, the United States immediately declared a worldwide war against terrorism and allocated massive amounts of economic resources to the protection of national security. Instead, Europe's approach was different and attempted to stimulate dialogue and peacekeeping missions, as well as to try to reform the security sector to better tackle possible future security threats.

It is probably no coincidence that this framework of cultural divisions stimulated research on the influence of cultural factors in the intelligence sector. Indeed, in 2004, Davies published a ground-breaking paper in which he first introduced the concept of intelligence culture (2004). Subsequently, a detailed project was published on the US and UK's intelligence communities (Davies, 2012). The work was later expanded by including the analysis of intelligence culture outside the Anglosphere (Davies & Gustafson, 2013).

Davies' aim was not only to include an analysis of how cultural elements influence intelligence modus operandi but also how these elements shape the understanding of intelligence failures, which until that time were seen only as the outcome of a mechanism that at some point was jammed. Davies addressed two of the major issues affecting the concept of political and strategic culture: the vagueness of definitions and the lack of comparative studies. He affirmed that to provide a "value-added" impact to the intelligence studies literature, the idea of intelligence culture had to be applied through modalities and address issues that would help to better understand intelligence. In doing so, Davies asserted that the use of comparative studies serves the purpose better than case studies (2004). In fact, he carried out a comprehensive analysis of similarities and differences of the United States and UK

cultural elements of how intelligence is intended on the two sides of the Atlantic. Nevertheless, he fell into what Duyvesteyn identified as the Anglo-Saxon bias, that is, the unique analysis of intelligence culture in these two countries (2011). This methodological issue affected even subsequent research for a number of reasons, such as the use of the English language, the availability of information and the relative willingness of these two countries to discuss such sensitive topics.

Another bias affecting most of the literature on intelligence culture is the predominant focus on intelligence failures rather than successes (2011) or other dimensions. This focus probably derives from the easily assessable consequences of intelligence failures for national security, whereas intelligence successes are inevitably concealed from the public to protect sensitive information. For instance, the innovative work by Davies mentioned above was conceived as an analysis of cultural elements to explain intelligence failures in the UK and in the United States (2004). In particular, Davies argued that although intelligence services of different countries share common practices during operations, they might fail in significantly different ways. Consequently, the analysis of intelligence failures through the lenses of culture might allow researchers to understand the nuances of how intelligence is intended in different countries. Such analysis might not be so easily performed via other modalities, precisely from the reluctance of the intelligence sector to provide information about its functioning.

The analysis of intelligence failures offers some other points for reflection. For example, it was argued that a common practice often impairing the functioning of the US intelligence sector was the oversimplification of security threats. This oversimplification took the form of the transformation of complex threats, which comprised social, political and economic factors into simplistic rhetorical exercises (Duyvesteyn, 2013). Concurrently, in the intelligence sector, there has been an excessive reliance upon the so-called rational action theory, according to which people often operate in the most logical way in ambiguous situations. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, particularly when dealing with national security threats. Other factors, such as emotional processing of stimuli and previous experience, might come into play. These two biases confirm the importance of considering

multifaceted threats potentially undermining national security and the study of how people perceive them, emotionally and cognitively. A notable attempt to communicate risks, threats and activities carried out to tackle them was conducted by the directors of the MI5, MI6 and GCHQ. Such attempt might constitute a first step to shorten the distance between the public and intelligence sector (e.g., “MI5 Director General Andrew Parker gave a speech to the BfV Symposium in Berlin on 14 May 2018,” 2018).

The influence of people’s perceptions and behaviour on intelligence operations has one emblematic example: the Malayan emergency. At the end of World War II and for a period lasting several years, an insurgent war was fought between pro-independence fighters and the British Empire. Among other factors, this armed conflict has historical importance because it led to the creation of a specialized division of the police operating in this territory, which was called “Malayan Police Special Branch”. The police special branch acted following the “hearts and mind” strategy, according to which operations should be carried out not in a purely coercive manner but should strive to induce emotional reactions in the opposers to persuade them to pass to the other side of the dispute (Dixon, 2009). The Malayan Police Special Branch operated in synergy with the regular police and carried out collaborative, and in some instances forceful, tactics with the population. This strategy allowed for effective management of the counter-insurgency campaign, which traditionally repressive tactics had failed to curb. Other authors argued that an effective counterinsurgency should involve more institutions than just the special branch and comprises dynamic and evolving processes that rarely have been considered (Arditti, 2019). Current counter-insurgency practices have been paying increasing attention to the combination of intelligence gathering and the analysis of cultural elements. Nevertheless, As Duyvesteyn noted, minimal empirical evidence exists about the importance of cultural elements – as well as their antecedents and outcomes – in the intelligence sector (2013). A methodological loophole exists that has translated into a poor systematization of the issue. This gap could be in part be related to the legacy of the old tradition of security and intelligence studies, in which the focus was on impeding threats and less on long-term

phenomena concerning cultural elements. Indeed, the focus of some of the significant works on intelligence culture remains on intelligence failures and intelligence operations in general.

However, in the last few years, a new understanding of the concept of intelligence culture – and by extension of intelligence as a whole – began to gain ground. In particular, recent research has acknowledged the importance of citizens as beneficiaries, producers – and generally actors – of intelligence (Dumitru, 2014). This new understanding could potentially reform the foundational concept of intelligence by considering citizens' beliefs as new crucial elements of analysis. In fact, some recent publications suggested the inclusion of citizens as stakeholders in the intelligence sphere (Bean, de Werd, & Ivan, 2021). Citizens' perceptions, opinions, attitudes and behaviours constitute determinants of the new concept of intelligence culture (Matei & de Castro García, 2017). The new prominent role of citizens in intelligence brings a series of consequences, such as the need for them to be provided with information evaluations skills which until recently were reserved to intelligence practitioners (Ivan, Chiru, & Arcos, 2021). This new set of skills and trust that intelligence services can earn from citizens (Estevens & Rodrigues, 2020) set the foundation of the latest understanding of intelligence culture. Interestingly, this idea reflects the new concept of security proposed by the Copenhagen School of security studies, according to which new sectors and actors play a crucial role in the complex matrix of security (Buzan et al., 1998). It is worth noting other contributions that more specifically examined the role of surveillance in modern societies (e.g., Dandeker, 1994). In addition to the intelligence community, citizens and other actors, the new model highlights the importance of the media. Their role in explaining the activities carried out to protect national security is crucial, and they have the responsibility of properly conveying concepts to the public such as intelligence successes or failures (Dumitru, 2014). Within this framework, the media are essential as the primary source of information regarding intelligence, and they also have an educational call: to educate citizens as new security stakeholders about what intelligence services do.

This analysis is not constrained to academic research since some intelligence services have acknowledged the role of media in informing

citizens about intelligence issues. For instance, the Italian intelligence services created a journal called *Gnosis*, which is designed to discuss topics related to intelligence in an engaging and comprehensible manner. This journal has specifically addressed the topic of intelligence culture (Valentini, 1999). Moreover, their website includes sections on what the intelligence services are, how they operate and the challenges they must address (DIS, n.d.). This effort to inform citizens complies with an Italian law dated August 2007 where Italian intelligence services must promote and disseminate security culture and institutional communication (Italian Parliament, 2007). Current literature has investigated the importance of intelligence agencies' use of social media platforms. For example, Landon-Murray investigated the use of Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms by the US intelligence agencies (2015). However, it is worth noting that the use of social media platforms by intelligence agencies might lead to unintended consequences, such as conspiracy theories (McLoughlin, Ward, & Lomas, 2020).

Other countries have endeavoured to shorten the distance between intelligence services and the population. For example, Denmark organized a set of initiatives to sensitize people on radicalization and how to address it (Rietjens, 2019), and Spain has included intelligence topics in university curricula (Chiru, 2019). The latter case is an interesting example of the interdisciplinarity that has been advocated for in recent works on intelligence studies (Van Puyvelde et al., 2020).

Overall, it is fair to affirm that the concept of intelligence culture has greatly evolved in the last few years. The concept started as a theory attempting to explain intelligence failures under the new lenses of cultural determinants and evolved by highlighting the significance of cultural factors affecting not only intelligence failures but intelligence activities in general. Recently, it became a paradigm that elevated citizens to the role of security actors and their perceptions, attitudes and trust as crucial factors for the functioning of the intelligence sector.

Conclusion

This article discussed the importance of conducting research on citizens' perceptions of security issues for the intelligence sector.

It identified key issues such as citizens' perceptions of intelligence activities and trust towards intelligence services.

The article pointed out that the relationship between intelligence institutions and citizens starts with the very ideas of intelligence and citizenry. However, while there is widespread agreement about the classical conception of intelligence operations as collection, evaluation, analysis, integration and interpretation of information, vague interpretations of the very idea of intelligence have been provided. This occurrence might confound or even make the public sceptical about what intelligence institutions are. Future research might address this issue by systematizing the theoretical foundations of the concept of intelligence.

Another issue that arises from the literature review is the relatively scarce investigation of citizens' attitudes and perceptions of intelligence institutions and operations. Indeed, despite some events, such as the 2013 revelations on NSA, had enormous resonance on the news media, this general attention on intelligence issues did not translate into substantial empirical research on what citizens felt and perceived about these issues. Considering the importance of these dimensions, future research may bridge this gap.

Another dimension which should need more extensive coverage in the academic literature is the issue of trust. Indeed, although frequently referred to and advocated within the intelligence sphere, the concept of trust has received only one thorough analysis (Hribar et al., 2021). If trust is considered one of the pillars in social relationships and a topic frequently mentioned in intelligence studies, it cannot predict from a more comprehensive empirical assessment.

The last part of the article was dedicated to the exploration of the idea of intelligence culture. The concept of intelligence culture was firstly introduced as predominantly dealing with the idea of intelligence failures. However, in its latest understandings, this notion offers a theoretical framework within which issues such as citizens' perceptions, attitudes, behaviours and trust towards intelligence services can be systematized. Future research might look at this topic as a promising area of investigation within the intelligence studies literature. In general, the analysis of citizens' perceptions of security

and intelligence issues might help intelligence services strengthen their relationship with the public.

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HISTORY AND MEMORY IN INTELLIGENCE

THE ARES PENDULUM: AN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

The expansion observed, in the last half-century, in the theorisation of intelligence activity has magnetically attracted the need for an ethical topography of intelligence services' behaviour and states. Drawing on the fundamental concepts and theories of this discipline, the article applies a complex evaluation grid to a recent case, subsumed within a less popularized operation in the history of the intelligence service of communist Romania.

By accumulating evidence from open sources, books, studies and corroborating all available records in declassified archives, the paper presumes that the investigations and measures undertaken by the State Security Department (Securitate) in the sphere of the cinematographic environment are suitable for an analysis from an ethical angle.

Attempting to answer some fundamental ethical questions, the article includes a brief presentation of the main theories in the field of intelligence ethics, followed by a historical illustration of the main milestones in the issues addressed, during Ceaușescu's rule (1965-1989). Then, the combination of the two results in the ethical judgement, which is the fundamental subject of the article.

The ethical perspective is enriched by the author's proposal of a theoretical model for evaluating and deciphering the case under inspection. The model has an adjuvant role and does not imply its dissociation from the pre-existing theoretical foundation. Its purpose is to contextualise the ethical interpretation and create a scale applicable to the subjects and facts examined.

Keywords: *intelligence ethics, communist Romania, just intelligence theory, cinematography, censorship.*

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Introduction

A space naturally reserved for unrestricted expression (whether it be contrary to the orientation of the political system to which it belongs), art has become, under the auspices of totalitarian leaderships, a universe of significant utility for a regime based on consolidating the legitimacy and adherence of the people. Communist Romania of the 20th century faithfully reproduces this principle, in which the Department of State Security (hereafter Securitate) intrusively interfered in the creative process of local artists. Obviously, the pre-eminence went to that art form with the largest audience and, in many ways, the most accessible to en masse influence: cinematography.

There is a possibility that an investigation of the ethical dimension of the Romanian Securitate could appear absurd and useless to a public that, more than three decades after the fall of the communist regime and after the public release of some of the institution's archives, has already become aware of the monstrosity of that controversial governmental body. Nevertheless, the present article claims to offer a scholarly analysis of a marginal phenomenon in the machinery of the Securitate's operations, but whose framing within a modern theoretical framework can sharpen understanding.

After having outlined the main ethical theories that populate the current academic environment of intelligence activity (as well as considerations subscribed to ethics itself), I proceeded to briefly outline the main historical landmarks that marked the operations of the Securitate in the artistic and, more specifically, cinematographic field of communist Romania.

Alongside this axis, which governs the direction of the research, additional questions will be explored, designed to give depth to the theme: "Which of the major theories of ethics in intelligence can be considered programmatic for the behaviour of the Securitate? To what extent can this behaviour be analysed from multiple ethical perspectives? What might be the causes of intrusive behaviour in a seemingly innocuous field?"

In order to try and complete the current paradigm, the paper launches a theoretical model for further evaluation and decoding of the case at hand, whereby attention will be paid to clarifying possible unique

characteristics that segregate a category of state entities (totalitarian states) from typical ethical analyses – the ethical pendulum model.

In order to reach the detailed points and meet the main objectives of the paper, we mainly used qualitative methods; the focus was on collecting, analysing and integrating data and information from the areas of interest. The information used in the writing of the paper consists predominantly of secondary but also primary data, extracted from multiple scientific articles, books, research papers, journalistic investigations, historical analyses, archives.

Preamble in the territory of ethics. Ethics in intelligence work

The debate on ethics and non-ethics is highly nuanced – in fact, it is a conference of sketches and approximations. Invariably, any subject that is, voluntarily or not, derailed from its path to exhaustion in the realm of its ethos ends up oscillating between the two extreme points (the absolute ethical and the non-ethical counterpart), without, however, being able to reach them. The thesis that emerges indicates the alternation of evaluation; it is assumed that appreciation is periodically subscribed to a positive outcome (confirming the ethicism) or a negative one (disavowing the conduct). Such considerations, however, describe an ambiguous territory, not even subtly located in any perimeter of the real world. To delimit one behaviour or another in certain areas of judgement requires, first of all, the establishment of a reference map on which the cartographer can exercise the authority acquired through empiricism and knowledge.

In the world of intelligence, the discourse on ethics is rigid. This is only natural, given the particular stake of this subsystem that engages the vital functions of the state – national security. The literature in the field of ethics in intelligence work is abandoning the folds of a purely theoretical, disinterested consideration and focusing pragmatically on concrete dimensions, which it verbalizes with precision. Ethics itself has taken up an increasingly large space in the academic dialogue in the field as a direct result of the events of September 2001 and the war on terrorism, which generated a series of controversial measures justified by the need to preserve national security.

As a result of the multiplied interest, various definitions have been issued for the notion of ethics applied to espionage and intelligence. A recent conceptual delineation considers ethics in intelligence work as “an attempt to determine what forms of intelligence are morally permissible, under what circumstances, and for what purposes” (Vrist Ronn, 2016). Vrist Ronn’s definition does not disentangle the frequently invoked distinctions between ethics and morality, instead it addresses a triad of parameters that characterize intelligence work: object (what?), context (how?), objective (to what end?). These are linked and develop support for auditing the moral legitimacy, accountability, and ownership of both the intelligence officer and the organisation per se as a unitary entity.

Often regarded as an oxymoron, the phrase “intelligence ethics” does not describe an intangible desideratum; the general view that dissociates the moral upright from espionage omits the fundamental developments in this spectrum that have occurred over the last century. Unlike the practice of World War II, where recruitment itself was conditional on the candidate’s willingness to use forgeries and murder, today’s public discourse (including intelligence services) consistently adheres to international law, human rights, demonstrating a natural insertion of authorized institutions in ensuring national security within the common, regulated public apparatus (Omand & Phythian, 2012).

Despite the undeniable progress reported in an area often subjugated to the elusiveness and absence of external inferences, the difficulties have not reached a full resolution. The same Mark Phythian (2012) notes the divide between national security demands and (international) human rights as the most significant current ethical hurdle in intelligence work, which presses for a widening of public debate to set the conditions for “democratising dirty hands” (Omand & Phythian, 2012). Even in democratic states, where the fundamental unit is the citizen whose rights are guaranteed, intelligence services acquire, by strictly determined legal means and under delimited conditions, the ability to restrict the fundamental rights and freedoms of the citizen in order to achieve national security. The imperative of achieving a balance that satisfies the two opposing driving forces lies also in the adaptation of intelligence activity, which has become carnivorous – described by Charles Cogan as the transition from “gatherer” to “hunter” (Cogan,

2004). The anthropological association is a natural corroboration of Phythian's observation of the metamorphosis in the intelligence world – the intelligence officer becomes aware of the comparative advantage of undertaking active intelligence-gathering measures, even if they intrinsically involve intrusion into spaces previously considered inaccessible.

However, the priority is not only to establish a reliable security context but also to avoid the formation of the *social panopticon* proposed by Jeremy Bentham in the 18th century (Bentham, 1995) and revitalised by Michel Foucault at the end of the last century (Foucault, 1977). In other words, intrusive action requires a regulatory, limiting component that pre-emptively conditions and calculates the cost-benefit ratio that such a measure assumes. In relation to these issues, a set of academic theories emerges that demand exposure.

The contemporary architecture of intelligence activity is based, from an ethical perspective, on a tetra atomic structure, with each theory emphasising a distinct focus on the regime in which an operation can be justifiable or, quite frankly, ethical. The four prominent theories of intelligence ethics are represented by the realist theory, the utilitarian theory (consequentialism), the deontological theory, and the just intelligence theory.

The affiliation between the realist doctrine of international relations and its version of the ethical spectrum is undeniable. In fact, the adaptation is minor: ethical realism operates by virtue of an established mechanism, established through the contribution of Thomas Hobbes (1651/2020) and Niccolò Machiaveli (1513/1998) to the genesis of a *modus vivendi* that is still relevant today. Toni Erskine's exercise, therefore, as a theorist who has tackled the subject, is one of simply polishing a quasi-finished material. Essentially, the theory concludes that state interests are intrinsically justified and that the state is the main subject of international activity (Erskine, 2004). Defending the state and protecting it and its interests are the duties of *civitas*, in the name of an accepted social contract that provides for the use of aggressive means to achieve this moral obligation (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 1651/2020). The theory has drawn criticism from Vrist Ronn (2016, p. 769), who has complained about the absence of a proportionality angle that any state's

endeavour must account for, prior to the conduct of an operation, and the multiplicity of Hobbesian “moral duties”, which dissolve from the solidity of the obligation to protect the state.

Utilitarianism proposes a partial reframing of the perspective, absorbing some elements from Machiavellian philosophy – for example, a reconfiguration of the dictum “the end justifies the means”. The central idea of the utilitarian theory lies in the assumption that the optimal action is the one that produces the most good, placing the evaluative factor over the consequences (hence the term consequentialism). With a significant tradition in political philosophy, the theory has become the subject of academic objections because it legitimises permissive, indeterminate behaviour. Prompt intervention is given by the same Toni Erskine (2004). The Manichaeic view, which charts the verdict in proportions of right and wrong, is inevitably prone to error – not only the approximation, but the very definition of these concepts varies and can become the instrument of excess.

Fundamental to the deontological theory is the Kantian categorical imperative. Seen as a jarring contrast to utilitarian theory, Kant’s guiding statement is that some actions are intrinsically wrong, regardless of the consequences. In contrast to the former, the deontological theory is restrictive – the responsibility of the decision-maker arises from the acceptance of a set of immutable values that direct the verdict. Erskine argues that deontology faces an imminent paradox: on the one hand, it deliberates in the tone of a principle that condemns lying and sham behaviour (deception); on the other hand, the nature of intelligence implies the use of these tools routinely (Erskine, 2004). The position that I, through the present paper, advance emphasises the ultimate purpose of the deontological theory, which is not to determine a final, ultimate Decalogue that anchors intelligence activity, but to demarcate a range, a territory of the acceptable.

It is precisely this insufficiently determined restrictiveness that has been imputed to deontology that polarises with the fourth ideology coexisting in the dogmatic whole of intelligence ethics – the theory of just intelligence. Imposed by the acclimatisation of a theory of ethics applied in the military sphere to the sphere of intelligence activity, just intelligence crystallises through the transition from the original notions

of *jus ad bello* (justified initiation of war) and *jus in bellum* (ethical behaviour in the course of war) to the concepts of *jus ad intelligentiam* and *jus in intelligentia*.

Concretely, the theory proposes the determination of tangible parameters, a grid of principles that can become the benchmark of intelligence activity. Provoking the interest of outstanding academics in the field of ethics, the theory of just intelligence has sparked solid debates, especially in the difficult task of translating the agenda of principles proper to an extraordinary state – war – which honestly claims parameters of exception, towards a phenomenon placed in the continuum of state existence – intelligence activity (Omand & Phythian, 2012).

From the vast range of such adjustments that have been carried out (Bellaby, 2012; Omand & Phythian, 2012; Gendron, 2007), I will turn to Angela Gendron's synthetic exposition (the versions exhibiting similarities in the directions addressed), a vocal defender of the theory. Accordingly, the hexalogue of just intelligence is built on the following precepts:

- the principle of last resort – the ultimate spring of action being self-defence against a threat¹; the benchmark does not indicate strict adherence to overt, non-intrusive means, but a careful attunement to objectives, time-space and the permeability of the target to the methods employed;
- *right intention* – the presence of a constant and permanently aligned motivation to the initial objective;
- *proportionality criterion* – the decision-maker will engage in an analysis of the ratio between the ethical harm caused and the benefits of the operation;
- *probability of success* – operations should only be started in the context of a consistent indictment that signals timeliness;
- *attention to human consequences* – measures taken should start progressively from the least intrusive to the most intrusive;

¹ Of interest to this notion turns out to be the risky slippery slope that Drexel Godfrey's double standard describes: "What is unacceptable human behaviour at home or in one's own society can be forgiven when it occurs in foreign societies or with foreign representatives of those communities." (Godfrey, 1977-1978)

- *discrimination* – conducted voluntarily, between combatants and non-combatants, with any operations preferring to target the former in favour of the latter.

Adapting these principles and operationalising them has demonstrated a number of fractures that have prompted objections from specialists. On the one hand, it was considered that the theory was not definitive, and therefore ambiguous and unsatisfactory for current use. For example, the last criterion, that of voluntary discrimination, considered to be utilitarian in nature, has led to deliberations on the definition of the notion of combatant. In general, it has been accepted that this vulnerable category includes individuals who are not formally integrated into military or intelligence activity, but who take part in the 'national security game' (Pfaff & Tiel, 2004). The challenge lies in distilling the malign from the benign, as the major expansion of the national security arena in recent decades has marked the involvement of a broad portfolio of individuals with roles related to the security dimension. Phythian (2012) also points to the profiled discrepancy between the concept of last resort/last solution and the essential component of intelligence work – prevention and knowledge. In this respect, the just cause invoked by Gendron (2007) alleviates the confusion: the steps taken are not only required in the context of imminence, but as an assumed solution balancing the weight of the human rights codex with the paramountcy of the state's national security.

A final combative remark addressed to just intelligence theory derives from Sir David Omand's (2012) assessments. According to him, it is precisely the rigour and delimitative nature of the theory that generates an operational difficulty, described by the need for an equilateral triangulation of three competing and opposing principles. In the first instance, states have an active obligation to protect their citizens in situations requiring state intervention. One of the characteristics of the defensive act is the willingness, in some contexts, to resort to force or violence to ensure security (an appeal to the Weberian perspective which proposes the state entity as the wielder of the monopoly on legitimate violence). However, causing (physical) harm or damage is generally accepted as ethically wrong. The accumulation of these theses

creates a vulnerability that requires careful management in order to perfect the theory of just intelligence and its operationalization.

The four theories rival each other in acquiring primacy. The impossibility of establishing hegemony across this spectrum is due to the diversity of social, geopolitical and, security contexts in the global security environment – states can become consciously inconsistent with themselves and their own precedents in order to identify legitimacies for hostile actions taken. After all, the central column of ethics in intelligence cyclically returns to Admiral Stansfield Turner's motto as the universal rough test – the ability of the decision-maker to justify the operation to the citizenry, should it become public (Turner, 1985).

At the same time, some conjunctures call for additional clarifications to support the ethical theories put forward, precisely because of their local impracticality. In the final phase of the paper, such a model is proposed to unlock the unexplored regions of the case examined in the following chapters.

A panoramic view of political interference in post - 1965 communist cinema

The main subject of the present paper will oscillate over the territory of communist Romania. Naturally, the successive analysis will only constitute an extension of a metaphysically located superior pendulum that eludes the landmarks of longitude and latitude; the latter constitutes an electrocardiogram of the ethical valences that the content of the analysis exerts.

In order to contextualize the status quo of the period, whether it is focused on a single region of the entire amalgam of socio-political phenomena that took place during the period, a series of general observations on the climate existing in Romanian society during the Ceaușescu period is necessary.

Since his rise to power in 1965, Nicolae Ceaușescu has succeeded in crystallising his own policy of managing the main dimensions of the state. As far as art is concerned, the communist leader stood out both by continuing some of the directives taken on by his predecessor, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, and above all by the changes he made.

In the first sense, the similarity lies in the initial perpetuation, from 1965-1971, of the liberalisation tendencies that the Dej regime allowed in art, a liberalisation observed by various authors and also called “relaxation” (Cârnecki, 2000). Co-production agreements were concluded with major Western industries, visits were made by famous exponents of Western cinema (Kirk Douglas, Orson Welles), and filmmakers felt, for a while, the free rein allowed by the regime.

The second sense is highlighted by Ceaușescu’s much more open interference in the inner workings of the artistic world in general, but especially the cinema. Evidence of the existing interest abounds: the Communist Party meetings held under the agenda of discussing the future orientations of the film industry (23 May 1968, 5 March 1971), Ceaușescu’s explicit statements about the role of film in society (Jitea, 2021, p. 17) and, last but not least, the open treatment of the cinema issue through the July 1971 theses (point 13), which officiated the process of censorship towards the film creative act.

In the context of the absolute subjugation of the intelligence service by the political elite of the period and its exhaustive use in all areas of interest to it, an insertion of the means of the Securitate into the cinematic habitat was inevitable.

Perversion of the artistic impulse. Securitate’s investigations in the film world

In the spirit of the trajectory instilled by the Party’s political leaders, the Securitate did not shy away from developing its own version of mapping the cinematic phenomenon and setting its own objectives for the medium. Once the “target perimeter” had been clarified, the intelligence service began the necessary efforts to gain control and reposition the liberal movement in the only mould allowed by the party: the propagation of social realism and official message lines. Thus, the main milestones of the investigations carried out by the intelligence service in the film world were delineated: the files subordinated to the “Cinema” objective (Jitea, 2021, pp. 353-354).

The approach that the Department of State Security had towards the cinematic medium is totally dissociated from the possible artistic-subjective understandings that an ordinary consumer of the final

product – the film – might possess. An eloquent sample of the perception that the Securitate had towards the art of cinema emerges from Bogdan Jitea's (2021, pp. 355-399) excavations in the archives of the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (CNSAS). A May 1977 report by an officer (Nicolae Vintilă, lieutenant colonel at the time) renders the objectives of the Securitate in relation to the dynamics of cinema and the missions that both the art itself and the filmmakers perform. From Vintilă's radiography, it appears that the seventh art is exclusively a means of propaganda, "sanitizing" the film of any artistic valence: "an object of republican importance [...] which [...] makes a substantial contribution to the process of political-ideological education of the masses".

As for the themes explored by the Securitate in the cinematic environment, the same work reproduces, through an extract from the CNSAS archive, the overall vision assumed by the intelligence service: from exploring possible links with foreign citizens (a ubiquitous objective, which haunted the agenda of communist intelligence officers for decades) to directly influencing the content of the artistic act: "in order to prevent the appearance of political inadvertencies (misinterpretations of political events, leaving possibilities of interpretation)" (Jitea, 2021). Indeed, the film was stripped of any ability to suggest or stimulate in a less than obvious way a message that was not aligned with party rhetoric. In particular, a selection of categories of films demanded further efforts from the Securitate: those with political content or potential interpretations of such, those that were inappropriate because of an imagistic approach too bold or inappropriate for the political leadership, and those that were co-produced with foreign entities. Under this vague breakdown, the overwhelming majority of films created by filmmakers could be targeted.

Over the years, the Securitate opened numerous files on the subject of cinema. Some of these were of a general nature and were aimed at monitoring the whole (the "Art-Culture" film *Meandre* (1971, Săucan) by two Securitate officers (Filippi, 2017).

After the July 1971 theses, the resources of the Securitate were progressively expanded, by broadening the intelligence apparatus and the number of human sources. In a report from the summer of 1985, it is

highlighted how there were 329 human sources in the film environment, 88 of which were directly involved in the movie production environment (Jitea, 2021). In addition to the attempts to establish control over the entire environment, the Securitate's investigations included direct approaches to the main filmmakers involved in acts of dissidence (Dan Pița, Mircea Daneliuc), through which they were conveyed, in multiple forms, the consequences of continuing to behave in a way that was not in line with the regime's dogma. If the filmmakers did not respond positively to the Securitate's requests, they were expatriated, a solution that was often convenient both for the intelligence service (which removed from the equation a public, visible factor that could not be *tamed* by other methods) and for the artist (who had to relocate to an environment, usually Western, conducive to the development of his artistic expression).

As for those who did not leave the national territory, Jitea shows that the results of the Securitate's efforts oscillated between recruitment as informers (for example, Alexandru Tatos or, with a dose of uncertainty mentioned by the author, Sergiu Nicolaescu) or the total refusal to collaborate or to quell dissident tendencies (Mircea Daneliuc). Regardless of the final visible effect, the memoirs and diaries published in the post-communist period by filmmakers have highlighted the internal, psychological repercussions of the unmasked interference that the Securitate assumed in the cinema (Tatos, 2000; Daneliuc, 1997; Pița, 2005).

Ethical evaluation exercise

Both the Securitate archives and the testimonies of filmmakers who decided to publish their own experiences during their artistic careers testify to the persistent and determined involvement of the Securitate in influencing the artistic act and neutralizing any cinematic impulse that, even unintentionally, might evoke a message that was not wanted by the system. Quantitatively and qualitatively, the Department of State Security can be directly linked to several consolidated efforts in the film environment. In this historical context, a number of questions naturally emanate: how ethically legitimate is it to engage an intelligence

service in reshaping the fundamental parameters within which a vocational, artistic act is performed?

Ethics is a lax space, which does not admit the rigours of the intangible absolute – it admits the range of conduct, of benchmarks by which the individual and, by extension, the institution are guided. There can be no questioning the relevance of the fact that the Securitate was an institution subordinate to politics – in fact, it was an extension of the political will and an instrument that offered some of the most generous possibilities (Final Report, 2006). However, beyond this legal absoluteness, it does not avoid opprobrium and ethical analysis.

The ethical pendulum that now dominates its own ethical paradigm is significantly distinct from that which animated the communist vision of the 20th century. In fact, the current ethical exercise can be extended to other political systems and other similar societies of the period, especially as evidence of political police involvement in cinema existed in many communist states (Jitea, 2021). Physically, the forces projecting the pendulum into the realm of the communist non-ethical have led to a reconfiguration of the notion of the ethical. In fact, they have become permanent, they are fundamental parameters of the environment, without which it loses coherence; the pendulum never leaves the communist non-ethical half. One observes the re-segmentation of the previous non-ethical division into a new configuration, also dichotomous, but implying a new Rubicon – considered extreme by today's Westerners and the limit of the normal for the real followers of communist ideology. A new point of equilibrium, a new amplitude, is being established.

In reality, the feeling of the omnipresent enemy, the fear of dethronement, of losing power, the desire to avoid social instability have reorganised the ethical constitution that the intelligence service and its political leadership have accepted. The Western, democratic option was ruled out *ab initio*, as it was not compatible with the objectives and concrete coordinates of the doctrine governing the entire functioning of the regime.

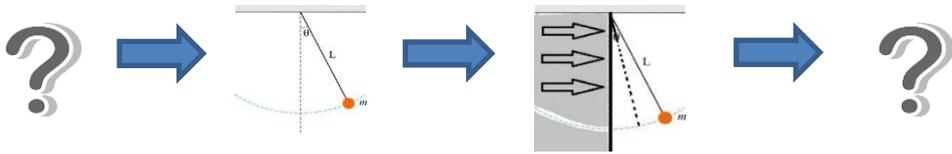


Figure 1: Graphical representation of the ethical pendulum as a theoretical model (diachronic perspective) (Source: author's idea)

Realism is a simple decoder that effectively but not completely exploits a broad context. From the point of view of the other permissive theory in the ethical framework delineated in the initial part of the paper – utilitarianism – overlapping manifests similar fits. In fact, investigative operations (including all measures, of varying degrees of aggressiveness) can be likened to an offensive strategy with defensive purposes (Lundy & al, 2019). In order to prevent the materialization of those perennial, often hypochondriacally risks, Securitate resorted to “prophylactic” measures, which provide a justification in compromising the independence of the artistic act and nullifying the creative impetus to achieve a quantitatively superior general good. The utilitarian angle is reduced to an examination of the consequences, and the avoidance of a possible national collapse under the influence of foreign agents (in Securitate’s most extreme assessments) overtakes in strategic and security relevance a possible approach which, assessed in the ether, is massively contested.

The Kantian perspective that generates deontological theory obviously has a disapproving verdict on a case such as the one under debate. The categorical imperative itself denies a series of actions that cannot be justified under any circumstances, and the invasive measures taken against persons not included in the war proper fall into this category of reprehensible actions.

The assessment that calls for the highest degree of complexity and meticulous analysis occurs when relating to the conglomerate of principles and doctrinal support of just intelligence theory. In this analytical paradigm, the tools are multiple and the conclusions exponentially more complicated.

A first point that can start the analysis from this angle relates to the hexalogue mentioned in the theoretical chapter of this paper. By consulting the facts available in open and official sources, and integrating them into the perimeter of the evaluation, it is concluded that there are fractures in the possible justification of the operation.

The first principle of the last (intrusive) solution is not fulfilled, since the enormous size of the Securitate's intelligence apparatus (328 sources in 1985, as we have shown) cannot be justified. Such an intelligence regiment does not lend itself to the reality that the cinematic environment offered during the communist period.

The criterion of correct intent is also invalidated, since the objectives of the Securitate, at their core, were to reduce the film medium to artistic irrelevance and to metamorphose it into a vehicle for propaganda. The assumptions on which the Communist intelligence officers relied were exploited as pretexts for gaining de facto control over the creative act and exploiting the films' mass appeal.

In terms of proportionality, a historical analysis of potentially "dissident" films cannot justify the measures taken. Films considered deviant represented, in the total economy of the industry, a harmless fraction of the vast mass of films that were amputated by the Securitate.

Gaining total control over the film environment, when examining the likelihood of successful operations, is unlikely, as the Securitate recognized the reluctance of filmmakers to collaborate with the Securitate (many of whom were connected to Western culture and the Western *modus vivendi*).

In terms of human consequences, the operation differed from others of a much more offensive or violent nature that the Securitate resorted to during the communist period; the archives reflect a relatively progressive approach, which often allowed for a common compromise between the objectives of the Securitate (elimination of dissidents) and the aspirations of the filmmakers (frequently to leave the country).

Under the lens of the latter condition, voluntary discrimination, it becomes clear that filmmakers cannot be assimilated to the combatant camp, and the unethical argument becomes particularly consistent with this criterion. The available archives have not revealed any involvement of filmmakers in espionage, and this is also due to the simple fact that

they do not constitute a category of people who are involved, even at a minimal level, in that “national security game” mentioned by Pfaff and Tiel. However, the belief of the system was that the enemy’s offensive was so broad that any individual could become a pawn in this battle that could be fought on infinite (often fictitious) fronts.

The conclusion of the analysis from a just intelligence point of view is that the Securitate operation of monitoring filmmakers and perverting the act of filmmaking does not stand up to an ethics test. Nor, as public opinion formulated after the fall of the regime proved, does it stand the Stansfield Turner test.

In the branching model proposed by Robert Frisk and Linda Johansson on the ethics of intelligence work and the eight strategies for action in security contexts, the Securitate procedure and the operations carried out in the cases in question fit a Spartan type O, P, U (Frisk & Johansson, 2020). The framing is argued by the obviously offensive character of Security (O), which allows causing harm to targets in order to accumulate influence, but by virtue of a dogmatic principle (P), but does not, in this case, resort to committing acts of violence in order to prohibit and prevent the manifestation of a risk (U). The succinct description that the authors offer for this type of approach – *Fighting as a way of life* – accurately reflects the dictum that the communist system publicly promoted in its discourse regarding the West.

Conclusions

Current ethical theories can explain, to varying degrees, the behaviour of entities operating in the international environment. Historical analysis and available precedents from related sources help to delimit possible generalisations, but the permanent changes of the contemporary world are pushing them rapidly into obsolescence. The theoretical model of the ethical pendulum that the paper has put forward is intended to supplement the degree of comprehension that a receiver can possess in the mission of elucidating the contrasts between one’s own referential system and the environment under analysis.

In the present study, an ethical analysis of the operation of the secret service of communist Romania regarding the cinematographic environment of the Ceaușescu period was carried out. After setting the

main theoretical considerations and framework ideas, the article continued by describing the main historical events, from a progressive perspective from the macro-dimensional plane of the political context of the period to the concrete situation of direct influence of the creative act in the film world. Following these factual observations, a personal ethical research exercise followed, in which the conceptual elements invoked by the academic world about ethics in information work were applied, adapted, and correlated. The innovative character of the article is based on the attempt to transplant concepts with a diversified degree of novelty to a situation currently investigated only from a historical perspective.

As to the extent to which the objectives outlined in the incipit have been met, it can be concluded that answers to the main topics and issues proposed have been identified. Naturally, these are not definitive, and the very variation between validating and invalidating behaviour (depending on the theory applied) confirms the absence of finitude. All four theories used have amply demonstrated their usefulness, but the greatest interest has been given to the just intelligence theory, through which advanced conclusions and observations could be dislocated.

The limitations of the paper are the native difficulty of adapting the case to a classical exercise of evaluating an intelligence operation. In general, such assessments are operated on situations where the offensiveness is of a higher order, often between separate state entities. Nevertheless, I believe that the article stimulates the investigation of the operations of the Romanian Securitate from a distinct perspective, of ethical analysis, which would participate in a more qualified evaluation of the activities of this intelligence service in the historical mapping of communism in Romania. Also, in the context of the theoretical developments that will be issued in the academic environment in relation to the theories invoked and operationalised in the paper, a revisiting of the ideational content and its adjustment is required.

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GAMES, EXERCISES AND SIMULATIONS

ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS IN ANALYZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSPIRACY THEORIES AT NATIONAL LEVEL*

Ileana-Cinziana SURDU*

Abstract:

The article presents the format of an exercise conducted within the Summer School "Strategic communication, governance and security within the European Union", organized in June 2022 by the "Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy, as part of the Jean Monnet EUSEGOV Module. The text emphasizes on the techniques of preparation and implementation, without disclosing neither the topic of the exercise, nor the results obtained during the summer school.

The present exercise introduces the reader in the alternative scenarios technique and in the field approached through the analysis- conspiracy theories, it presents the context of the premises of the topic, establishes the instructions for the participants, proposes instructions for the moderators, and highlights the analysis directions in the process of building the alternative scenarios.

The theme proposed makes the exercise accessible for a high range of participants, with educational and/or professional background in fields such as European studies, security and intelligence, public administration, academia, civil society, research, NGOs, mass-media and others. As such, the exercise is addressed to M.A. and PhD students, and also to experts interested in the theme and in the technique.

The steps and explanations included validate the exercise as a learning and as a teaching tool, as it can be replicated into conducting similar exercises.

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Keywords: *Alternative scenarios, four quadrant model, possible futures, conspiracy theories, digital social networks.*

A short introduction in the alternative scenarios' technique

The alternative scenarios technique is founded on the principle of designing possible types of future, based on predefined factors, which are used to create a four-quadrant model by intersecting them within a matrix (see Figure 1) (Globalytica, 2017; Bishop, Hines and Collins, 2007; Ogilvy, 2000; Van Notten, Rotmans, van Asselt, Tothman, 2003). The technique is also known as “the multiple scenarios technique”, as it results with four possible futures. The technique generates multiple explanations of developing a certain situation, in the presence of fundamental factors, which are essential for the topic analysed. (Globalytica, 2017) The scenarios are not predictions of possible outcomes, but potential developments of certain situations. (Jackson, 2011) Therefore, the alternative scenarios are the result of an anticipation process when analysing potential developments of a situation, stated on a certain set of variables; as such, the scenarios are coherent and consistent descriptions of the situations that may occur as a result of the intersection of the two main factors (Surdu, 2020). The alternative scenarios are built by taking into consideration past and present events and are useful tools in preparing for future challenges or for preparing strategic responses or actions for certain situations (Surdu, 2020).

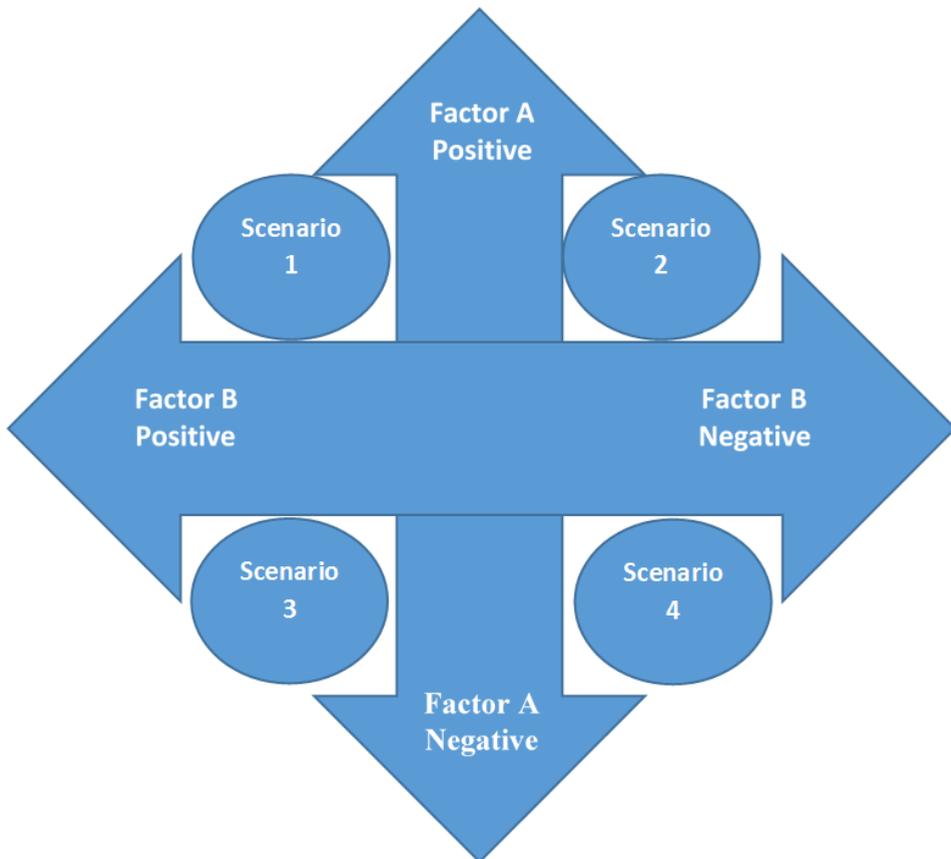


Figure 1: Alternative scenarios matrix (Source: Author's elaboration, adapted after Handbook of Analytic Tools and Techniques, 2016; Watts et. al., September, 2019; van Notten, 2006; Foresight Horizon Scanning Centre, October, 2009; Surdu, 2020)

The alternative scenarios are grouped after micro and macro characteristics by van Notten (2006): purpose, process of development and content. When discussing the purpose of the technique, we can identify scenarios that analyse gradual changes, respectively discontinuous ones; the process implies an exploratory analysis, and creative thinking, and it may fund strategic decisions. The process of

development can be intuitive – based on creativity, and analytical – based on quantification techniques. The content can be complex – by going through different stages of development, or it can be simple – by targeting only the final result (Van Notten, 2006).

Börjeson (Bishop, Hines and Collins, 2007) identifies three categories of scenarios. The first one is based on the analysis of what will happen; these are the predictive scenarios. The second category analyses what might happen; these are called exploratory scenarios. The third category implies a normative process, which analyses the steps that may lead to reaching a certain objective; these are the normative scenarios. The normative process does not imply the analysis of past events, but more of norms that apply in the certain field or situation, while the exploratory scenarios take into consideration past events (Kuosa, 2014).

The alternative scenarios are built by following a set of steps:

1. identifying a set of factors,
2. defining each factor,
3. grouping the factors in 2x2 sets,
4. describing the possible developments of the situations resulted by the intersection of the sets of factors,
5. selecting the relevant developments,
6. identifying the relevant indicators that describe the developments selected. (Globalytica, 2017)

Moreover, van Notten (2006) invokes both analytical and intuitive approaches in developing alternative scenarios. While the analytical process covers quantification techniques or content analysis, the intuitive one includes a set of steps to be followed:

1. identifying the problem,
2. identifying the relevant factors,
3. describing the relevant factors,
4. selecting the factors included in the analysis,
5. developing the scenarios.

Both approaches – analytical and intuitive – can be used as complementary methods (van Notten, 2006).

When building alternative scenarios by grouping 2x2 factors a four-quadrant matrix will result, and each of the four intersections

describe a possible future. Why is this the recommended model? Because one scenario may be received as a prediction, two scenarios may induce the idea of competition, three scenarios may lead to the perception that one might be the real version of the future, and more than four scenarios would imply a morphological analysis (Jackson, 2011). The two factors included in the model are selected by their impact relevance for the situation analysed (van Notten, 2006). The process of analysing the alternative scenarios implies the identification of the possible trajectories, by developing possible trends of the situation (Globalytica, 2017).

Alternative scenarios are successfully used to inform and fund decisions, plans and type of actions (Globalytica, 2017). As such, the technique is feasible in different fields, as a singular research method or as part of a mixed one, when it is used along with other techniques (Kuosa, 2014). Foresight Horizon Scanning Centre (2009) evaluates that successful scenarios must follow a set of principles: being consistent, using rigorous data and being convincing.

Alternative scenarios are usually developed within organized teams; practice demonstrated that not only the onsite format creates a productive context, but also the online one. The creativity and imagination of the participants are the key element here (Surdu, 2020). A Delphi approach can also be used; the method allows the individual contribution of the team members, which is discussed and agreed upon by the whole team (Wright et. al, 2013).

Conspiracy theories: theories and studies

Reality is affected by clandestine actions and covert operations of invisible networks that constantly manipulate information and present false versions of it. The power of such networks also manifests itself in the way the target audience perceives reality and makes decisions. Who is behind such actions? The brain itself, according to Brotherton's (2015) analysis, as people tend to accept the respective explanations as real, finding recourse in the information they have access to.

Conspiracy theories are found in all kinds of facts and actions, presenting plausible explanations for their existence or course, such as

the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the trip to the moon, Area 51 (Brotherton, 2015), or, among the most recent – COVID-19.

Conspiracy theories are based on real facts or a belief accepted by the general population, but also by scientists. These have experienced a process of expansion with the advent of the Internet and the digital age: “As the global networks of the information age have expanded, many of us are overwhelmed and undermined by an ever-present uncertainty.” (Dean, 2000)

A series of experiments on the elements that determine the credibility of a message identified internal conflict, general confusion, the disorder of the environment, or the clear way of visualizing a written message. Conspiracy theories also appeal to consumers’ fears and needs to determine acceptance and internalization of the promoted message (Brotherton, 2015). According to Lipset and Raab (1973), a successful conspiracy theory must have mysterious elements and a visible target group to disseminate it and make it tangible to the target population (Brotherton, 2015).

Anthropological and sociological studies analyse human behaviour from the perspective of symbolic activity, but also as structured activity through symbols. Conspiracy messages make use of symbolic mediation and representational practices, organized through specific languages and institutions.

From a psychological and sociological perspective, conspiracy messages can (also) be analysed through the lens of persuasive communication. Persuasion is the act of getting someone to think and act in a certain way (Chelcea, 2006). Persuasion aims to change the attitude and behaviour of the target audience, as a result of the change of opinion. This involves studying the target audience, structuring and supervising the communication process (Dobrescu and Bângăoanu, 2002).

The spread of events and information can have social polarizing effects. Polarization can be associated with either the process or the state by which attitudes are skewed toward extreme ideologies. (DiMaggio, Evans, & Bryson, 1996) Bias can result from exposure to “accidental” or “selective” information; while accidental exposure occurs while documenting about other topics, selective exposure involves selecting information according to people's interests (EPRS, 2019). Media sources

can help to increase the level of polarization if the public shows antipathy towards opposing views and, at the same time, the media can help to moderate attitudes in the presence of compelling arguments (EPRS, 2019). In terms of channels of propagation of polarization, some studies have shown that social media platforms can facilitate exposure to opposing views, especially on political topics, but with a lower impact on people with a high level of polarization (EPRS, 2019). Fletcher and Nielsen (2018) concluded from a 2017 study of *The 2017 Digital News Report* that search engines used for news expose people to different types of views, but did not indicate a clear impact on the level of polarization. Flaxman et al. (2016) indicated that people who use search engines for news are more ideologically dispersed and polarized than those who use social media platforms, or both social media platforms and search engines.

Conspiracy theories are of interest to global and European entities such as the European Commission. According to the agreed description, the European Commission considers conspiracy theories “the belief that certain events or situations are secretly manipulated behind closed doors by powerful forces with negative intentions.” (The European Commission) The European Commission promotes six characteristics of conspiracy theories, so that they can be more easily identified by the target audience: they represent a conspiracy, they involve a group of conspirators, they are supported by evidence, they claim that there are no coincidences, that nothing is as it seems and that everything is connected, they divide the world into “good” and “bad” and identify the culprits. Conspiracy theories may begin as a suspicion, identify possible beneficiaries of the situation, who become conspirators, develop through logical explanations and the gathering of evidence; anyone who could fight it can become suspected of being a beneficiary. Those who disseminate conspiracy messages may have various motivations, such as: the belief that they present real information, they want to manipulate the target audience, they have political, economic, social interests etc. (The European Commission)

Among the disruptive effects of conspiracy theories, the European Commission identifies: amplification of discrimination, justification of

hate crimes, exploitation by violent extremist groups, radicalization, determination of political apathy, determination of lack of trust in authorities, promotion of lack of trust in scientific information etc. (The European Commission)

Mere exemplification of effects and possible explanations do not describe what a conspiracy theory is. The Oxford English Dictionary defines conspiracy theories as “the theory that an event or phenomenon occurs as a result of a conspiracy between interested parties”. (OED, <https://www.oed.com/>) The Merriam-Webster dictionary adds to this definition the aspect of intentional influence of the parties: “a theory explaining an event or set of circumstances as the result of a secret conspiracy by powerful conspirators” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conspiracy%20theory>). According to Dexonline, the term “conspiracy” refers to a “plot directed against (leaders of) the state or public order”. For Richard Hofstadter (1964) conspiracy theories represent a “style” of explaining things. “A conspiracy theory is a proposition about a conspiracy that may or may not be true, which has not yet been proven.” (Olmsted, 2011, p. 3) Kathryn Olmsted, thus, highlights the fact that a conspiracy theory cannot be proven by its very structure, but does not lose its conspiratorial character once it is proven (Olmsted, 2011).

Conspiracy theories can include events or facts, from deceptive messages by corporations to attract customers, to acts of bribery, kidnappings, assassinations, terrorist attacks etc. According to Fenster (2008), conspiracy theories do not aim to describe events that happened, but highlight conspiracies, with the aim of persuading and alerting the population; thus, conspiracy theories are accompanied by the belief that the truth will never be known. At the same time, the conspiracy style implies that events or facts are not hidden from the consuming population, but that they are actively deceived and misled (Brotherton, 2015). Conspiracy theories are built around real facts, or logical arguments, that cannot be disputed. In the absence of official evidence, conspiracy explanations become (more) credible. Any attempt to debunk a conspiracy theory can be interpreted as disinformation (Brotherton, 2015).

Conspiracy theories work by referring to the assumption that there are two versions of reality: a real world and an illusion meant to

hide the truth (Wood and Douglas, 2013). Conspiracy theories can be perceived in a deeper way than official messages regarding the same event or phenomenon, they highlight anomalies that unify in a complete description, as they have the ability to present both official information, as well as those that are missing, but which provide additional explanations (Keeley, 1999). Rob Brotherton (2015) identifies six characteristics of a conspiracy theory: it relates to an unanswered question, it starts from the presumption that nothing is as it seems, the promoters are highly competent and malicious people, it is based on an anomaly, and it is unchallenged. These characteristics can also describe real facts. Conspiracy theories are the product of imagination, and their popularity is explained by aligning with the imagination of the target audience, respectively attractive and plausible ideas. The component messages are based on archetypal, well-structured narratives that train the moral faculties.

According to van Prooijen and van Vugt (2018), a conspiracy theory is based on at least five factors: it starts from the assumption that people, objects or events are causally interconnected, it believes that the promoters of conspiracy messages act deliberately, it involves a group of actors acting together, it refers to a threat and always contains an element of secrecy, which cannot be invalidated.

According to Daniel Pipes (1997), the promoters of conspiracy messages have the ability to foresee the way in which events will evolve from the moment they occur, thus, any entity that could benefit from conspiracy theories is perceived as promoting it. People who support the conspiracy character of an event or phenomenon generally have very advanced knowledge about it, so that it becomes very difficult to identify false elements in the information disseminated, promoting the conspiracy message as the only alternative to understand the course of events (Hofstadter, 1964). At the same time, the conspiracy style does not give equal importance to each argument used in promoting the credibility of the disseminated message (Brotherton, 2015).

Lewandowsky and Cook (2020) distinguish between conventional and conspiratorial thinking: while the former presents scepticism, it refers to evidence, it seeks coherence in arguments, the latter presents suspicions, interpretations of evidence and contradictions. The authors

assess that vulnerability and a lack of a sense of power contribute to the belief in conspiracy theories and their dissemination. Conspiracy theories appeal to the needs of the public, to the need to satisfy one's own ego, but also to the needs of social integration (Albarracín, 2021). Conventional thinking refers to real conspiracies – proven plots, and conspiracy thinking to imagined conspiracies. COMPACT Education Group (2020) The Internet and social media platforms facilitate the spread of false information, misinformation, sometimes by people who believe it to be real, who have malicious intentions, who have various benefits, and sometimes by fake accounts or bots (Lewandowsky and Cook, 2020).

Class exercise: Alternative scenarios in analysing the development of conspiracy theories at national level

- **The purpose of the exercise:** Analysing the possible trends of developing conspiracy theories at national level.

The exercise targets building alternative scenarios by using the four-quadrant model, on a 2x2 matrix. The scenarios will be developed within working teams, composed of minimum 4 and maximum 10 participants. Therefore, the exercise will result with four scenarios multiplied by the number of teams.

The matrix will be developed by grouping **the following two factors**, which were selected as being relevant for the situation – analysing the possible trends of developing conspiracy theories at national level:

- Evolution of the digital technologies related to digital social networks;
 - Number of elements that compose the conspiracy messages.
- **Actors involved in conducting the exercise:**
 - Team members: minimum 4 and maximum 10 participants on each team; the exercises foresee the necessity of organizing at least two teams.
 - A moderator: The moderator has the role of introducing the participants into the alternative scenarios' technique, of presenting the theme to the participants and the steps of the

exercise, of organizing the teams, of offering all the resources needed and of being the connector between all participants and the facilitators.

- Facilitators: one facilitator for each team. The facilitator has the role of reminding the theme and the steps of the exercise if necessary (within their teams), to determine the participants to be active without offering content ideas, to offer support into filling in the matrix and into identifying a team representative, to make sure that all the steps are being followed and that the team respects the time allotted.

- **Steps in developing the alternative scenarios:**

1. The alternative scenarios technique – short introduction to the participants (5 minutes);
2. Establishing the tasks for the team (10 minutes);
3. Working in teams, being assisted by an assigned facilitator for each group (60 minutes);
 - In case the exercise is conducted online or in a hybrid format (online and onsite participants), the teams can use an electronic document that can be viewed and edited by all participants in real time.
4. Presenting the results by a representative of each team (10 minutes x the number of teams);
5. Voting the scenario that mostly indicates an ascendant trend of developing conspiracy theories at national level (5 minutes).
 - The vote can be organized either online (for exercises developed online or onsite), or onsite (only in case the exercises are conducted face-to-face). The online version of the vote can be developed on an online platform which can be easily accessed by using a mobile phone, or a computer (for example: a Google form, polleverywhere.com etc.).

- **Resources implied:**

The moderator or the facilitators can have prepared:

- a printed/ electronic selection of information regarding the alternative scenarios' technique;
- a printed/ electronic selection of information regarding conspiracy theories;
- a printed/ electronic presentation of the exercise;
- only for online or hybrid formats of the exercise: an electronic document which includes the matrix with two factors; a document should be created for each team;
- for the offline format of the exercise: a flipchart or flipchart papers for each team, markers, pens;
- a form dedicated to the voting step –online or printed, considering the format of the exercise.

- **Instructions for the participants:**

- **Tasks:**

- Within your team, develop four alternative scenarios, using the four-quadrant model, which aim to analyse **the possible trends of developing conspiracy theories at national level**.
- When elaborating the four alternative scenarios, use a matrix with the following **factors**:
 1. Evolution of the digital technologies related to digital social networks,
 2. Number of elements that compose the conspiracy messages.

- **Stages of the exercise:**

- Only for online or hybrid formats of the exercise: Use the electronic document which includes the matrix with two factors, in order to contribute in real time to the development of the scenarios.
- Discuss as a team the **characteristics and implications** of the variables that describe each of the four possible scenarios, created by intersecting the minimum and maximum values of the two factors, using the diagram below:

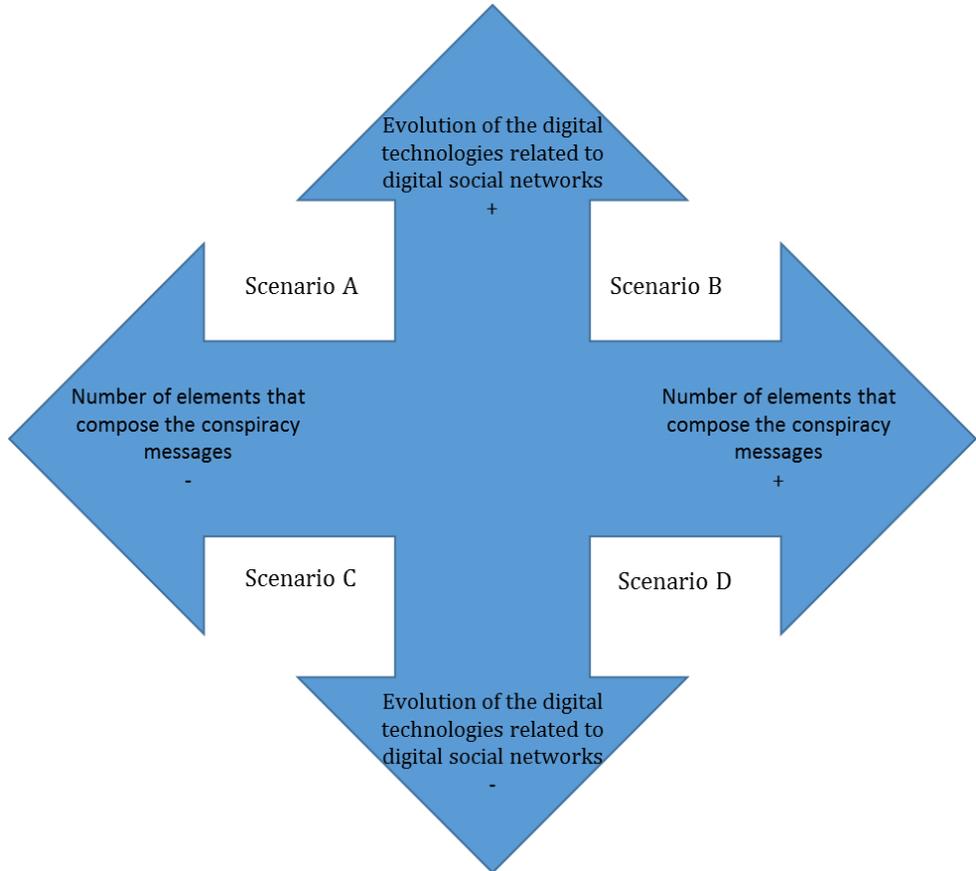


Figure 2: Diagram to be used in the development of the four alternative scenarios (Source: author's proposal)

1. Develop each scenario, created by intersecting the minimum and maximum values of the two factors;
2. Write down the characteristics and implications of the variables that describe them;
3. Give each resulting scenario a descriptive title;
4. Select a) the super pessimistic scenario, b) the pessimistic scenario; c) the optimistic scenario and d) the super-optimistic scenario among those created;

5. Select the indicators/characteristics to watch in the future that could indicate the fulfilment of the four alternative scenarios;
6. Choose a representative of your team to present the four resulting scenarios: characteristics and implications, title, fitting into one of the four categories from point 4, indicators to monitor (estimated time for presentation: 10 minutes).

Allotted time: 60 min

Instructions for the facilitators:

- Review the topic and steps of the exercise whenever you find it necessary (*according to the instructions for the participants*).
- Intervene only to get participants to be active, not to provide them with ideas for filling-in the matrix.
- Support them in actually filling-in the matrix if appropriate, or in selecting a representative to present the results.
- Intervene if necessary to get them to finish the entire exercise so that they fit within the allotted time.

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PRACTITIONERS' BROAD VIEW

HOW TO TAKE SECURITY SELFIES – *SELF INTEREST EVALUATION OF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ENTITIES*

Florin BUȘTIUC*

Abstract:

The pro-security attitude is stimulated by (self) asking questions such as: Have there been negative experiences regarding information security? Where is the institution's greatest security vulnerability? Where is the resistance to implementing security procedures (and why)? Is the need to protect the organization realized? Are employees within the structures on topic regarding their role and responsibility in protecting the organization's assets?

Through awareness it is possible to focus on threats – the identification of FIEs that created/can create the breach in the “security wall”. The security self-questioning restructures the individual's thinking system, which accepts, in its subjective reality, the existence of threats generated by FIEs that affect the economic, social, political or military interests of the state¹.

Keywords: *Foreign intelligence entities, FIEs, intelligence, counterespionage, targeting, access.*

Introduction

Foreign intelligence entities/FIEs are permanently active in gathering information – at any time, in any place, from any person of interest – which takes place under different “official covers”, such as those of a journalist, businessman, researcher, student, participant in a scientific event, member of a delegation etc., thus exploiting the

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¹ Some aspects have been taken from the doctoral thesis *Pregătirea contrainformativă a persoanelor cu acces la informații clasificate/nepublice* defended in 2021 at the “Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy.

legitimate activities of delegations, private companies, scientific institutes, and media organizations.

The principles of intelligence activity highlight that an adversary will use all means, ethical and unethical, legal and illegal, to obtain information. In order to achieve their objectives, the adversary entities identify, prioritize and select targets (persons, groups, organizations) according to their importance, capabilities, accessibility, intentions and vulnerabilities (NATO Standard AJP-3.9, 2016).

FIEs aim to make contacts that allow them to be inserted into relational circles in order to interact with people (targets) of interest (NATO Standard AJP-3.9, 2016) considering their access: a) directly to the data of interest; b) the areas where this information is circulated; c) people, such as colleagues, chiefs, friends who handle that data (Buștiuc, 2015, p. 15).

The first step of FIEs is to identify a person who has access to data of interest (or belongs to a specific relational environment) and to make a profile from CVs posted on the institution's page, articles published in magazines, dialogues with former/ current colleagues etc. (Loch, 2010, pp. 312-313) At this stage the most important and difficult step for FIEs is to answer the question *How to establish a connection?* (Sulick, 2007), and the pretext is a scenario with identity and functions, socio-professional roles specially manufactured for the purpose of accepting and building a relationship (Hadnagy, 2011, pp.111-112). A catalyst factor in building the pretext is the invocation of a common hobby, cultural, ethnic, religious similarity etc. (Ostrovsky and Claire, 1993, p. 213)

FIEs – as an individual – is a “sociable and friendly” person who carries out apparently “normal and natural” activities, disguising his purpose to obtain the information of interest; tries to capitalize on any “reasonable” situation that allows him to relate to persons of interest and constantly evaluates his “intelligence potential (access to information, persons, and locations)”.

Direct contact with a target is done undercover – salesmen, businessmen etc. – being a pragmatic way to determine strengths and vulnerabilities in the event of a recruitment (a personal connection is also built). The contact can also be indirect, through:

- a) employees from lower/middle levels (assistants, IT experts, etc.), who have information about other employees;
- b) people from outside the organization (consultants, spouses, friends etc.), who can provide (voluntarily or involuntarily) data of interest or signal potential problems of the target (Brown, 2011, pp. 67-68).

Direct access to information or systems is crucial, but people with indirect access can also be selected (consultants, lawyers, IT experts, assistants, archivists, Xerox operators, etc.), because they can access certain data without generating suspicion (Brown, 2011).

A significant amount of private information has become public, because the use of social media platforms requires the creation of an account associated with personal information – identity data, date of birth, geographic location, hobbies etc. (Social-media-privacy-issues, 2020)

In order to insert themselves into a social environment where they can identify potential targets (or make a contact), the FIEs study the “rituals” (activities and lifestyle) of the individuals and the group, respectively establish common places and interests that can justify the initiation of the relationship. So, FIEs observe the posts of people (targets) on the Facebook page, LinkedIn, etc., from where patterns can be figured out from various purchases, vacations, membership groups, etc. – for example, the photos from the home/hotel room and the selection wardrobes can become indicators of lifestyle (Brown, 2011, p.60).

Moreover, the existence of personal data on social networks (CVs, opinions, posts and comments, relational circle, photos, etc.) can facilitate the identification of a person who can be influenced to reveal information, ways to approach that person (common interests, motivation, etc.) or to outline vulnerable aspects (Brown, 2011, p.59). For FIEs, human sources represent the most valuable “tool”, and they will use covers that facilitate the presence in different situations and environments to identify and relate to “a target” (Buștiuc, 2015).

Targeting activities (identification of persons of interest who have access to data, environments, locations) are not geographically limited – an adversary will carry out such activities in his state (where it has more resources and has greater freedom of movement) but,

depending on the needs, also in foreign states where the person is living or traveling.

An objective of counterespionage is to identify the “antidote” specific to each of the clandestine information gathering techniques, developing measures to prevent the activities of FIEs. But the prevention effort must be a common one, assumed by counterespionage and by people who have access to information, environments, locations etc. (*Intelligence* no. 30) In this context, we appreciate that it is relevant for a person to have the possibility to verify through a questionnaire/test if he is a potential target of FIEs (“is targeted”), and in affirmative case to report this aspect to the competent institutions.

*

There are 27 sentences-statements related to **situations that can signal that a person is being targeted by FIEs**, considering the pretexts, behaviours and interests shown by the interlocutors. Determine which is true or false.

1. During some discussions, an unjustified interest appears for non-public subjects from various fields (political, military, economic, social, and administrative).

True False

2. The interlocutor requests that all meetings must be official and you should communicate them at your workplace.

True False

3. Intentionally false statements about some aspects of the professional field and the request for “detailed explanations”.

True False

4. The frequent approach of some subjects under the pretext that they are of common interest, but which are related to the professional field.

True False

5. Questions about income, professional satisfaction and rewards, personal problems, about family members, friends, colleagues, etc.

True False

6. Requesting personal points of view, in addition to official statements.

True False

7. At seminars, scientific congresses, delegations, etc., there are people who have incomplete, vague identification data on their badges or/and who have an interest in certain topics.

True False

8. Atypical, inexplicable, unusual difficulties or situations at the time of arrival/departure at the customs point (interviews conducted by non-customs personnel; under various pretexts, detention, checking of the phone, laptop, memory sticks, devices electronics, etc.).

True False

9. Difficulties or atypical / inexplicable / unusual situations during the trip abroad (obvious surveillance actions; acts of intimidation, physical restraint for various reasons; attempts to stage thefts, accidents, etc.).

True False

10. The request, outside the official framework, for consultancy, support for the writing of articles, reports, translations, etc., related to the professional activity, with financial reward.

True False

11. Requesting data that are circulated only within the institution, such as the organizational chart, staffing scheme, internal telephone directory etc.

True False

12. Unusual invitations to seminars or scientific congresses, exchanges of experience, etc., where all costs are paid.

True False

13. Repeated attempts to determine excessive alcohol consumption during meetings, associated with questions about the personal area and the professional field.

True False

14. Participation in conferences, symposia, workshops, delegations, etc. of people who are not familiar with the field and unconvincingly motivate their presence, but are very active in terms of social relations and availability for further contacts.

True False

15. It is found that the luggage, laptop, among the documents in the room were searched at the hotel.

True False

16. It is found that some people, compared to the functions and studies invoked, have a superior knowledge/training.

True False

17. An interlocutor hides the fact that he knows your language or other foreign languages.

True False

18. Re-contacting by people met in different contexts abroad, who claim that they currently work in a field related to your professional activity.

True False

19. During business trips abroad, frequently the host accommodates you at the same hotel and even in the same room.

True False

20. The request to borrow your computer, tablet, phone, storage devices for copying or accessing materials, programs.

True False

21. An interlocutor demonstrates that he has knowledge about aspects of your personal life and professional activity, but only in relation to those that appear in open sources.

True False

22. Unconvincing, unjustified requests from some individuals to be introduced at official or private events where colleagues or people who have access to data of interest (political, military, economic, social, administrative) are present.

True False

23. Receiving an email requesting data about the organization or the professional activity.

True False

24. During some meetings, it is found that the interlocutors are familiar with aspects that were not discussed in their presence.

True False

25. The interlocutor does not have a problem with the interpersonal relationship being known at work, in the family or in the circle of friends.

True False

26. Asking for explanations and details about topics and aspects that the interlocutor should already know through his professional and academic training.

True False

27. The interlocutor presents / has presented you with false facts about jobs, positions or studies.

True False

ANSWERS

How scores are calculated

1-T-0,5p	7- T-1p	13- T-1p	19- T-1p	25-F-0,5p
2-F-0,5p	8- T-0,5p	14- T-1,5p	20- T-1p	26- T-1p
3- T-1p	9- T-0,5p	15- T-1p	21-F-0,5p	27- T-0,5p
4- T-1p	10- T-1,5p	16- T-1p	22- T-1p	
5- T-1,5p	11- T-0,5p	17- T-1p	23- T-1p	
6- T-1p	12- T-1p	18- T-1,5p	24- T-1p	

How to interpret scores (the sum of the matching answers points-p)

1-9p – Only in obvious, atypical situations, which you did not initiate – for example, an incident at customs or while traveling – you have the feeling that “something is wrong”, but usually you ignore the red flags. As for interpersonal relationships, if the interlocutor is pleasant in communication and motivates you in any way for his requests, you stop paying attention to the fact that they may be unjustified or that the explanations are not convincing. The recommendation is to participate in a counterintelligence training to make you aware that targeting exists and that in some situations it is even possible to have/have had a FIEs as your interlocutor.

10-18p – If obvious, atypical situations arise, which you did not initiate - for example, an incident at customs or while traveling - then your alarm system is activated, you become more vigilant and you are attentive to subsequent events, noticing in most cases that “something is not right”.

In the case of social interactions, in most cases you notice that “something is not right” if the people are unknown. But if you have developed a relationship over time, then you fail to realize that there may be an interest, a hidden objective of the interlocutor. It is recommended

that you attend a counterintelligence training with practical exercises to practice your ability to recognize that you are the target.

19-27p – You are a person who pays attention to details, you have a very good ability to notice that “something is not right”. You have very well-developed prudence, you want details, you ask questions, you do not believe in the declared sincerity of the interlocutor. You have the ability to make correlations between various aspects and determine that there is an interest, hidden objective. In most cases you realize that you are a target.

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REVIEWS AND NOTES

**Ciprian Pripoae-Șerbănescu, *Subconștient, comunicare, sens*
(*Subconscious, communication, meaning*),
TopForm, Bucharest, 2018, 95 p.**

Review by Ionuț HOREANU*

The volume *Subconscious, communication, meaning*, published in 2018, by TopForm Publishing House, within the Psychology collection, represents a real contribution in the field of intelligence studies. The author Ciprian Pripoae-Șerbănescu successfully summarizes the concerns in the field of psychology, critical thinking and intelligence, with an emphasis on the persuasive role of communication. After all, the paper can be a starting point for future research, especially due to the interdisciplinary perspective.

The paper can be read following the structure of the three chapters: *Individual, public communication and social adaptation; The limits of rationality and the role of early experiences in information processing* and *The mind process of information*, and highlights the specific dimensions of a fairly efficient and logically cohesive study. Each chapter has several integrated subchapters, which contribute to the paper being unequivocally included in the category of works to research at least as a bibliographic reference.

Starting with the introduction, the reader is faced with a first challenge that he can foresee, either due to his curiosity or due to the ability to search for a thread according to the interest given by the

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opening of such a work. Thus, the first challenge that could arise would be if the author came to reveal the fine mechanisms, just thought out, for understanding the process of propaganda, influence, manipulation, etc. behind the phenomena. This curiosity of the reader can also emerge from the title of the paper. However, it cannot in any way be considered a work of disseminating information or a work for the general public, because the variety of concepts and the esoteric nature of the work, in the sense of a work for a small group, showing the capacity of the author, but also the burden of a task which can cause disappointment for the reader, which is not the case.

However, the most natural thing would be for the paper to be read as a significant study for the treatment or understanding of researched issues by other authors or as an action to clarify concerns, specific to the archaeology of research topics or concepts.

The author also emphasizes that he tries to define a line of understanding the communication, again, admitting a genealogy of the processes that dismantle the communication process, from “archaic or subsequent interactional experiences” or later, or the boundaries between real and unreal, between rational and unconscious residues.

In the first chapter *Individual, public communication and social adaptation*, the author tries to highlight two dimensions of communication, in two distinct subchapters. On the one hand, there is the binomial of communication – psychology as a way of emphasizing the psychological perspective for communication theories. On the other hand, the nuances that emerge from the communication process as a means of adapting the individual to society are analysed. In any case, the central stake of this part of the paper is to develop an itinerary for understanding, in particular, one’s own person in social organization, i.e. how subconscious psychic processes can contribute to the capacity for communication and social interaction.

The problem of communication and social adaptation shows that power and control are held by “those who control the spaces of passage” (p. 19). Furthermore, the author aims to find the means to reveal the connection between the individual’s identity, language and society. It brings up topics with meaning for self-understanding, showing the principles that define identity: continuity, uniqueness, the need to feel in control, the feeling of personal value, the need for meaning and the need for belonging (p. 23). Persuasion, respectively the influence can be increased through three psychic processes: internalization, identification and compliance, respecting the condition that the message is credible, attractive and strong (p. 24). It would have been interesting if these principles were also associated with forms of influencing the identity of the individual. However, it may be a later bet for the author or other researchers.

Also, due to these issues and objectives it is difficult for the reader not to be captivated until the last page of the last chapter, and some chapters can also be read as separate studies. Although the book is not easy to read, due to the abundance of concepts and various information synthesized in very small spaces (undeniable merit of the author), the curiosity of the topics does not leave you until you reach the end.

The work gains an important role and, from the appearance of a sterile subject, it acquires value through content. The need to give meaning to the inner psychic reality has an overwhelming role on behaviour, not the principle of reality. Moreover, some up-to-date information and recent cases (the Facebook – Cambridge Analytica scandal) are used to bring to light elements of the role and implications of the media on life.

You can judge the study that does not reach 100 pages, but the entry in the topic shows that it is more than that and removes the prejudices that may arise due to the small number of pages. We have

some important topics with multidisciplinary stakes. In fact, the main criticisms can be summarized here: a more than parsimonious synthesis of some themes. In this sense, we pay attention to the capacity of synthesis and integration of some recent topics, such as the paraconsistent logic.

Socially adapted communication leads to the mental plane as a topic debated in the second chapter “The limits of rationality and the role of early experiences in information processing”, which shows the path of the socially and culturally adapted individual to the recognition of ontological status, depending on reality. The author bases his analysis on the limits of formal logic in order to dismantle the unknowns’ specific to the analysis of thought and communication. From the established connection between thought and language, the author seeks to understand the way to “preserve the constancy and coherence of the individual’s identity” (p. 29); gives meaning to logic without bending over the meaning that can be formed or distorted; it makes sense only on a theoretical level, but articulated. Logic, for the author, has its relevance in the economy of the text in that it is intended to protect internal mental coherence. From this perspective he shows the limits of classical logic for the researched subject. Non-conscious assumptions are outside this formal logic. And here it touches on another aspect, that the availability or capacity of the receiver attempts the limits of logic in the case of persuasion. An example is the syllogistic cases of the entimema type, when the conclusion appears paraconsciously.

The paper has only a theoretical side, the practical one being found in a few examples. Sometimes examples are given. However, from the theoretical stakes drawn by Ciprian Pripoae-Șerbănescu, it is possible to reach exercises and applications in the sphere of communication reality, with an emphasis on persuasive implications. In this direction, one can consider the role of symbols for critical thinking,

respectively the limits of critical thinking shaped by the inability to self-analysis and reflection.

The author reaches a difficult realm of knowledge, of the subconscious as a reflection of the conscious. He makes an important bridge between the conscious and the subconscious, touching the issues of metacognition. But by the fact that reading raises dilemmas, the author saves the reader's time till the end. Metacognition and critical thinking can be two meaningful topics. It would have been interesting to debate the process of meta-knowledge regarding the emergence of creative thinking. In other words, let's see how creative thinking can be formed and influenced.

It is not far from a phenomenology of knowledge, emphasizing the difference between being conscious and doing something conscious. Here comes logic, but not to explain, but to show the right direction of reality.

The author proposes, in the second part of the paper, a propaedeutics in the field of communication with an insufficiently defined terminology by researchers, with significant emphasis on a meta-communication, but guides the research in an introductory framework through interdisciplinary explanations. The appeal to myth highlights the role of a logic of affections, explained by the myth of Baucis and Philemon. The significance of the myth lies in the fact that from a narrow gaze one can reach a wider one, due to the acceptance of the future's possible anticipation. In this context, it shows that, in the end, the analyst's ability also lies in the perspective of reporting to information, receiving it with the third ear, with attention suspended or freely floating (p. 54).

Destructing one's own prejudices can be a possible path through floating attention. The formation of certain perspectives of understanding certain situations or information in the mind of an analyst

can be caused by several variables and determined by particularities that he cannot exclude. The capacity to be objective has to do with the compromise caused by certain beliefs and the information that the source wants to put in the message.

Therefore, we are dealing in this part of the paper with an analysis that does not exclude the dimension of knowledge and self-knowledge, terms so dried of meaning, but very little exposed. The role of floating attention is thus to make possible the “empathic perception”, in the sense of increasing the ability to give meaning to messages and to create associations. Suspended attention acquires the role of a tool of knowledge. The logic of emotions can be exploited by putting the individual in situations of ambiguity and sprinkling with necessary messages to direct attention to a certain meaning or sense, if it is necessary, a process of persuasion.

It remains a “still” for the author, which may appear by the fact that the reader, who writes these lines, tried to save as much as possible the work – given the interest of the reader – or even the work deserves to be integrated and cited at least in reference studies in communication and rhetoric.

The paper is also part of the third chapter as a good starting point for the repression of the image to self-knowledge. It is important to note the distinction and, at the same time, the remark particularly important for the subject’s economy that thinking as a means of analysing reality cannot be strictly subject to the laws of logic. The author starts from such limits when he aims to show how the mind processes information, where the laws of a global nature demonstrate “the whole psyche” (p.59). Nor can he pursue his study in other paradigms, as a significant section focuses on the analysis of unconscious mechanisms of distorted thinking, influenced by the logic of affect and different from logical errors. If not a classification, at least a reconsideration of research on discursive

strategies, narratives in crisis situations, etc. may be the starting point for this study.

A series of deviations from reason that can be included in the pathological sphere can be ways for goals achieved, in accordance with the personality, in confusing situations. Combining cognitive distortions with logical errors can be the way to achieve goals. Distorted forms of thinking are the way to the perfection of the intended purpose, through the use of thinking errors. Errors can be intertwined with distortions (p. 64).

Through argumentative errors the mind can be oriented towards cognitive distortions. We show, by these, that we are not dealing only with a specialized work, but with the search for meaning for each one. The book can be a starting point for a rigorous analysis of the spectrum of any field as announced in the title.

With what errors, sophistry can be operated according to beliefs is a matter discussed in a separate section of the last chapter. Understanding the process of influencing opens up new perspectives on whether communication and the role of beliefs and belief networks will be integrated (p. 68). The author talks about the fact that the belief system may be impenetrable by logical arguments, but further consideration of logical errors would have been welcome. If the answer to such a question were the expected one, the significance of another perspective could also intervene: does operationalization with logical errors and distortions of thought break the architecture of beliefs? Mistakes must resonate with the expectations and beliefs of the "other." Sophism will have the task of intervening in the formation of the realities of the "other", without shaking them. The world is ordered even by the beliefs of the individual, which become the wall for the value of resilience.

The combination of the weapons of logic and those of effective logic find their most effective role in prejudices and stereotypes. Above these logics, used efficiently, in persuasive communication can lie the paraconsistent logic, where the incoherence can be as a false argument. Thus, the question can be asked: how can classical logic intervene in the sophistic of which paraconsistent logic could be used, when the value of truth is subject to contextual variables.

We consider that in this way, very important dimensions of the logic put in an unitary analysis can lead to the highlighting of the mechanisms encountered in the case of presuppositions. Paraconsistent logic can have the gift of provoking intentions, later “detecting beliefs” (p. 84). However, classical logic remains the role of modelling paraconsistent logic, precisely through the limits it can set for the rationality of communication.

Sometimes questions that may remain challenging to the reader can leave a lasting impression. However, they do not detract from the value of the study, as the objectives were pursued without shortcomings. For this reason, open challenges may remain: how do we show that classical logic can overlap and support even this type of logic of the unconscious for the path of propaganda, respectively of the will modelling. Again, another challenge may be: how sophistic logic can work with belief or belief systems.

At least for the fact that the study provokes questions and leaves room for open discussions on topics of particular relevance to the fields of communication, psychology and philosophy, we believe that the paper can be included among those with academic claims.

ACADEMIC FOCUS



**Empowering a Pan-European
Network to Counter Hybrid
Threats (EU-HYBNET)
H2020 Grant agreement
no: 883054
(May 2020 – April 2025)**

EU-HYBNET is a 60-month project (2020-2025), financed through the Horizon 2020, which started in May 2020. The project is being developed and implemented by a consortium of 25 partners, coordinated by LAUREA University of Applied Sciences from Finland. The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats and the Joint Research Centre are leading partners of the EU-HYBNET project.

EU-HYBNET bring practitioners and stakeholders to identify and define their most urgent requirements for countering hybrid threats, by undertaking an in-depth analysis of gaps and needs and prioritizing those that are crucial to address through effective research and innovation initiatives, including arranging training and exercise events to test the most promising innovations (technical and social) which lead to the creation of a roadmap for success and solid recommendations for uptake, industrialization and standardization across the European Union.

The project aims to build an empowered, sustainable network, which will:

- define common requirements that can fill knowledge gaps, deal with performance needs, and enhance capabilities of innovation endeavors;
- monitor significant developments in research and innovation;
- deliver recommendations for uptake and industrialization of the most promising innovations that address the needs of

practitioners, and determine associated priorities for standardization;

- establish conditions for enhanced interaction among its members;
- persistently strive to increase its membership and continually build network capacity through knowledge exchange.

EU-HYBNET address four core themes to ensure coherence in the project's results: 1) Future Trends of Hybrid Threats, 2) Cyber and Future Technologies, 3) Resilient Civilians, Local Level and National Administration and 4) Information and Strategic Communication.

Romania represents the consortium through "Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy (MVNIA). MVNIA incorporate the project's research findings and information into its MA & PhD research programs. As students come from diverse areas (security practitioners, legal, media, private business), the impact of exploitation of the information will reach a wide audience, and the EU-HYBNET training documents will also be employed to enhance capabilities of experts and practitioners in the fight against hybrid threats.

EU-HYBNET is a Pan-European network of security practitioners, stakeholders, academia, industry players, and SME actors across EU, collaborating with each other to counter hybrid threats.



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Jean Monnet Module
EUSEGOV (2020-2023)
621227-EPP-1-2020-1-RO-EPPJMO-MODULE



Jean Monnet Module EUSEGOV

*A common understanding of EU Security Governance
Teaching and researching the EU security policies and institutions
for a better academic and professional approach in the security
and intelligence field
(October 21st, 2020 – October 20th, 2023)**

“Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy (MVNIA) implements a three-year Jean Monnet Module grant: **EUSEGOV** – *A common understanding of EU Security Governance. Teaching and researching the EU security policies and institutions for a better academic and professional approach in the security and intelligence field.* The EUSEGOV module focuses on EU Governance, a subfield of EU studies that has received less attention comparatively with the study of other EU related issues. The module aims at educating students and at equipping them with the knowledge and necessary skills to become EU citizens and better security providers. The academic value of the EUSEGOV module is to deliver courses on EU Security Governance for security and intelligence studies students. The courses tackle specific aspects of EU integration studies: *Introduction to EU Security Governance and Strategic communication in EU Security Governance.*

* This Project has been carried out with the support of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The content of this Project does not necessarily reflect the position of the European Union, nor does it involve any responsibility on the part of the European Union.

The **specific objectives** of the Module are:

- Providing a coordinated series of MA compulsory and PhD summer courses aiming to familiarize students with the main trends and approaches in the field of communication and security governance in the European Union.
- Updating the teaching contents on the topic by research activities.
- Making aware students who do not automatically come into contact with EU studies of the importance of security governance by training them in using both the specialized language and methodology specific to subjects that pertain to the area of international relations, political sciences, as well as security studies.

The module's objectives will be achieved through the **teaching, researching and promoting** activities. To this respect, the EUSEGOV module includes a **two completely new courses**, one compulsory for MA students and one optional for PhD students, covering a major gap in the curricula i.e. the developments in the idea of European Security Governance. By bringing together academics and experts from various fields of knowledge, from civil society organizations and institutions, the interdisciplinary teaching and research approach of this Module provides the students with an in-depth and systematic understanding of key EU Security Governance topic. The EUSEGOV includes also research activities on the **Strategic communication in EU Security Governance thematic**. The research report will contain an extensive analysis of three aspects: *Strategic communication in EU – practices and official documents; EU Security strategic communication institutions; EU Security Governance future: alternative scenarios*.

A general dissemination campaign will be implemented to create a broad understanding of the importance and the particularities of EU Security Governance: two conferences, opening and closing conferences; a MA and a PhD round-table debates. The main output is represented by the training of a target group formed by master students and PhD candidates in security and intelligence studies that must better understand the direct and indirect implications of EU's security governance impact on the member states.



DOMINOES

Digital cOMpetences InformatiOn EcoSystem¹

ID: 2021-1-RO01-KA220-HED-000031158

The DOMINOES project aims to reduce societal polarization through combating the rapid spread of online disinformation among young people. In order to do achieve this result, the project aims to increase the capabilities of partner organizations to develop new and interactive online educational content, which is adapted to the specificities of the current and future, digitally skilled, generations of students. The project begins from two inter-related premises: that the digital ecosystem is undergoing a significant transformation, due to the emergence of new communication platforms and that higher education institutions need to develop curricula that teach critical thinking and digital skills holistically rather than in a disparate fashion.

The project targets two groups: current teaching staff and students of partner institutions, who will be future professionals in the

¹ This work was possible with the financial support of the ERASMUS + financial mechanism, through the project DOMINOES – Digital Competences Information Ecosystem, Contract Number – 2021-1-RO01-KA220-HED-000031158. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

field of security and intelligence. Selected participants from the two target groups will be helped, through several on-site classes, to acquire digital teaching skills, to produce innovative educational material and to use advanced digital skills for the detection and countering of online propaganda, fake news and information manipulation.

The project will elaborate a handbook on the topic of digital disinformation and fake news. This will include the most relevant and up-to-date information on the evolution of the phenomenon of fake news, the psychology of disinformation, the social factors supporting or arresting the dissemination of fake news, skills relevant to avoid online disinformation and policies and legal approaches employed to deter the phenomenon. Then, three on-site courses, each including 30 participants, will take place in the three participating countries. A mix of professors and students will be taught how to avoid online disinformation and how to teach others to do so, in an interactive and inclusive fashion. Finally, the information gathered for the handbook and validated through the face-to-face interactions will be used for the creation of an online course which will be accessible to a wide audience and will represent a sustainable product of the project. This course will include not only the theoretical material gathered for the elaboration of the handbook, but also a wide set of interactive exercises aimed at facilitating student engagement with the material.

The main outcome of the project will be an increase in the advanced digital skills and ability to spot fake news of the representatives of the target group. Participants in the on-site and online courses will improve their teaching abilities and their competences in addressing a young generation of digital natives.

At the end of the project, the partners will organize three simultaneous multiplier events, which will be addressed to persons from the wider target group, but who were not part of the initial on-site training activities. The main results of the project will be presented, with a particular focus on the online training course. This will allow participants to access the same information as those that were included in the on-site activities and further help achieve the project's objectives of reducing societal polarization and combating online disinformation.

Erasmus+ Mobility Projects at „Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy

Between June 2020 and May 2022, two Erasmus+ KA103 mobility projects were implemented within „Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy (MVNIA). The projects were funded by the European Commission, through the National Agency.

The objectives pursued by MVNIA within the the two mobility projects were in line with the specific objectives of Key-Action 1. Therefore, the Academy sought to:

- Support students in order to improve their knowledge, skills and competences;
- Favour quality improvement, excellence in innovation and internationalization by intensifying transnational cooperation with other higher education institutions and training centers;
- Improve the international dimension of education and professional training by promoting mobility and cooperation between higher education institutions;
- Increase the capacity to offer study programmes that better meet the needs of the students.

The mobility of staff and students sets the premises for improving professional knowledge and experience, developing linguistic and intercultural skills, as well as strenghtening European identity through the promotion of common values. Collectively, the 2 projects encompassed a number of 8 beneficiaries, students and professors alike, who took part in different tyes mobilities, as follows:

- 4 training mobilities
- 2 traineeships
- 1 teaching mobility
- 1 study mobility

MVNIA embraces cooperation and recognizes the importance of belonging to university networks for the development of competitiveness and institutional modernization. For this reason, strengthening existing partnerships and starting new projects are objectives of utmost importance in the process of institutional internationalization. Fortunately, the Erasmus programme has put at MVNIA's disposal all the mechanism needed to achieve this goal. As a result, throughout the implementation period, the Academy has signed three new inter-institutional agreements with the following institutions: University of Malta, the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and Matej Bel University in Banska Bystryca.

Even though the two projects have been completed, the Academy will continue to disseminate and exploit their results in new projects, scientific publications, and by developing new study programmes.

CALL FOR PAPERS ROMANIAN INTELLIGENCE STUDIES REVIEW

“Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy, via its National Institute for Intelligence Studies, publishes the *Romanian Intelligence Studies Review* (RISR), a high-quality peer reviewed and indexed research journal, edited in English and Romanian twice a year.

The aim of the journal is to create a framework for debate and to provide a platform accessible to researchers, academics professional, practitioners and PhD students to share knowledge in the form of high quality empirical and theoretical original research papers, case studies, conceptual framework, analytical and simulation models, literature reviews and book review within security and intelligence studies and convergent scientific areas.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Intelligence in the 21st century
- Intelligence Analysis
- Cyber Intelligence
- Open Source Intelligence (OSINT)
- History and memory in Intelligence
- Security paradigms in the 21st century
- International security environment
- Security strategies and policies
- Security Culture and public diplomacy

Review Process: RISR shall not accept or publish manuscripts without prior peer review. Material which has been previously copyrighted, published, or accepted for publication will not be considered for publication in the journal. There shall be a review process of manuscripts by one or more independent referees who are conversant in the pertinent subject area. Articles will be selected based on their relevance to the journal’s theme, originality and scientific correctness, as well as observance of the publication’s norms. The editor evaluates the recommendation and notifies the author of the manuscript status.

The review process takes maximum three weeks, the acceptance or rejects notification being transmitted via email within five weeks from the date of manuscript submission.

Date of Publishing: RISR is inviting papers for No. 29 and 30 and which is scheduled to be published on June and December 2023.

Submission deadlines: February 1st and July 1st

Author Guidelines: Author(s) should follow the latest edition of APA style in referencing. Please visit www.apastyle.org to learn more about APA style, and <http://www.animv.ro> for author guidelines. For more details please access the official website: **rrsi.ro**

Contact: Authors interested in publishing their paper in RISR are kindly invited to submit their **proposals electronically in .doc/.docx format at our e-mail address rrsi@sri.ro, with the subject title: article proposal.**

Appearing twice a year, the review aims to place debates in intelligence in an institutional framework and thus facilitating a common understanding and approach of the intelligence field at national level.

The target audience ranges from students to professionals, from the general public to those directly involved in intelligence research and practice.

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