

## TRIDENT JUNCTURE 18: HOW DOES THE SPOKESPERSON'S INSTITUTION COMMUNICATE IN A SIMULATED POLITICAL-MILITARY CRISIS?

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**Abstract:** *Our analysis aims to identify the structure of the Spokesperson's institution in the military exercise preparation campaign that NATO has simulated between October 25 - November 7, 2018 in Norway. NATO exercise will be interpreted in our analysis from the perspective of answering the question "Who is communicating in the preparation for the military exercise?". By using Harold Laswell's simple communication model, we will only select in our analysis its grounding question "Who communicates?". Neither the effect nor the content of the message is of particular interest in our enterprise, whose purpose, we reaffirm, is to identify the structure and the dimensions of the Spokesman's institution in a political-military crisis situation. The question of the laswellian model has a special dimension in our analysis, in the sense that it applies in a political-military crisis situation simulated by NATO, in the largest military exercise since the Cold War. So, "Who communicates about NATO's simulation exercise of armed intervention by activating Article 5 of the Alliance?"*

**Keywords:** *crisis communication, spokesperson, NATO, Trident Juncture 18, military exercise.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION - TWO PEOPLE, ONE SPOKESPERSON?

In a hall where journalists are waiting, a woman, with a confident step, stops at a distance neither too big, nor too small from a tribune like those in the halls where a leader comes to tell people about who knows what important event. After the preoccupied and self-confident man occupies the place in front of the tribune, from which it is clear that he will address the journalists in just a few moments, the woman announces in a neutral, secure voice, without any emotion inflection, as if talking about anything other than the greatest NATO exercise since the end of the Cold War. The stake of the message is all the more important as this simulation exercise must be successful from start to finish – any small incoherence being a source of precious information for non-NATO members from the East, because it shows weaknesses and breaches to be exploited. The woman in a calm, firm voice, that leaves behind a halo of confidence and control instantly taken from the voice of the political leader, addresses the journalists:

*" - Good morning! The Secretary-General will inform you about the Trident Junction exercise, after which he will be at your disposal for answering your questions. General Secretary ...*

*- The Trident Junction exercise will begin in Norway tomorrow. Tomorrow is an important day because this is the most important NATO exercise since the end of the Cold War. The exercise is ambitious and demanding. Let me give you some figures ... "* (NATO, 2018)

NATO Secretary-General continues his message, with figures, data, grounds, and meanings about the military exercise, after which comes the time for questions. The moderator is sitting in the social space, but closer to the personal space than the speaker's public space, and it controls the session of questions, facilitating the NATO leader's interaction with the hall.

Technically, we could say it is the "moderator's" moment. Literally speaking, NATO's spokeswoman, because it is her we are talking about, facilitates as a sovereign gatekeeper, the interaction between journalists and a leader, such as the 19th century Royal guards where renowned for their loyalty towards those they were called to protect.

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This article aims to identify the *structure of the Spokesperson's institution in the military exercise preparation campaign* that NATO has simulated between October 25 and November 7, 2018 in Norway. The temporal sequence we are focusing on is *the preparation of the Trident Junction Launch Conference 18*– mainly October 2018, until the 24th, when the final press conference announces the start of the next day exercise on 25 October 2018. The comments and analyses made around the event from the summer of the year transmit various information in very different ways of interpretation – from information with simple presentation to messages that target a highly emotional impact, both positive and negative – depending on the political-ideological bias of departure, explicitly or implicitly assumed, as a manipulator, with the purpose of secretly influencing, used by the authors of the message. We will not discuss here either the importance of the exercise considered by some to be merely a test of NATO's military intervention capacity under conditions of activation of Article 5 of the Alliance, nor its effects interpreted by others as a direct threat to Russia, which has a border of nearly 200 km with the Russian Federation. NATO exercise will be interpreted in our analysis from the perspective of answering the question "*Who is communicating in the preparation for the military exercise?*". For whatever NATO intends to test and demonstrate to its own members or to non-member states, someone has to speak about the military activities being carried out. By using Harold Laswell's (Laswell, 1948: 117) simple communication model, we will only select in our analysis the grounding question "Who communicates?". Neither the effect nor the content of the message is of particular interest in our enterprise, whose *purpose*, we reaffirm, *is to identify the behavior, the structure and the dimensions of the spokesman's institution in a political-military crisis situation*. The lasswellian model is somehow chosen by us, to the detriment of a more complex model of communication, such as the one presented by the "public relations bible"– we are referring to the book published in 2010, *Effective Public Relations*, by Cutlip M., Scott, Center H. Allen, Broom M. Glen (Cutlip et al., 2010: 219-224). The question of the laswellian model has a special dimension, in the sense that it applies in a political-military crisis situation simulated by NATO, in the largest military exercise since the Cold War. So, "Who communicates about NATO's simulation exercise of armed intervention by activating Article 5 of the Alliance?" This is the question through which we customise H. Laswell's model in the analysis of the spokesman's institution using it to interpret, explain, understand and discover new meanings of its functioning in a simulated political-military crisis.

## **1. SPOKESPERSON - A SEMI-MATUSALEMATIC INSTITUTION**

"The Spokeswoman" was a few decades ago a person speaking on behalf of the government or an administration, often a sort of party or institution senior, called to fix or pull out a political leader, a party or an entire government from who-knows-what media mess. As an institution of public administration at the top of the state, *the traditional spokesman* did not have the function acquired today by the institution, namely to communicate regularly to journalists and the general public about the current activities of the government leaders at different administrative levels. The role of the *Spokes "Man"* - because the term was quite insensitive to the gender perspective until the early 1970s - is

often limited to "helping remove a government or a political leader from the deadlock." It was a kind of "spin doctor" for a government's crisis.

The character we are talking about has a semi-matusalematic age in the public environment and was called "Spokesman" without exception and without sensitivity of *political correctness*. Indulged in the fact that the Romanian legislation adopted it in the sense of a mandatory administrative institution only at the beginning of the third millennium (Law 544/2001), we could easily overlook the fact that the age of this public figure is over 500 years old. The etymological dictionaries tell us that around 1510, the term "Spokesman" was already used in the sense of "interpreter", not for a long time though (not later than 1530) to get the significance with which explanatory dictionaries propose it today: "The person that speaks on behalf of another person." Etymologists justify and explain today the path of forming the word derived from the past of the verb "To speak" ("Speakman" sounds weird, though) - "Spoke" - by analogy with other words related to crafts - "Craftsman", for example. The interesting part is that after a bit more than a century, the term "Spokesman" receives his gender correspondent - "Spokeswoman" (around 1650).

The history of the term recorded, in the geopolitical history paradigm in which we design our analysis, a noticeable change in form, but also in the content by which it defined the real, only in the early 1970s, when it became a name for a profession that today a public institution can not circumvent it - "Spokesperson. (Etymonline, Spokesman) We could say that since 1989-1990 we have entered in the "modern age" of the spokesman's institution, which lasted for about a decade of preparation and development, of legal conceptualization, and even of launching a case-law on institutional transparency and information on public administration activity, in particular, for which "Spokeswoman" becomes a key element. (HG 520/1994; HG 77/1998; Legea 544/200)

Since the 2000s, the Spokesperson institution has been moving into the "contemporary era" of its own history. It becomes essential for any public administration - regardless of the level at which institutions and administrative agencies operate. The House of Lords in the British Parliament did not need any jurisprudence for the Spokesperson, it is beyond any doubt. The countries where democracies were not the result of a slow evolutionary process, such as the Western stable democracies, which adopted a democratic regime through the "burning of stages" or by revolution (or coup d'etat), however *the law required* to create and transform it into a key agency for informing the public and keep the relationship with the media.

The spokesperson becomes in some cases – like the one of Romania for example - a mandatory institution for the agencies and departments of the Romanian state, being part of the Press Office ("information and public relations compartments"), as we learn from Law no. 544/2001 on transparency of information and free access to public information. At the international level, the history of the spokesman's institution is not only 500 years older like the Romanian one, but it also plays a kind of "modernity" 10 years before the leap of Romania, directly in the contemporary stage of the Spokesperson's history, with Law no.544/2001 on free access to information of public interest (Legea 544/200).

For example, we believe that the 1998-1999 period can be said to be a landmark in the history of the Spokesperson's Institution, when, in a political-military crisis in Kosovo, NATO introduces a new character that changes the meaning and role of the spokesperson - Jamie Patrick Shea who became an internationally acclaimed personality during the Kosovo War of 1999. The need for a "new spokesman" expressly signaled by the communication context during the Kosovo crisis is becoming even more evident in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when the amount of information and communication techniques, as well as those who communicate become more important than ever in the relationship with the media and the general public. The war as it once was in the theater of operations is not enough. Public opinion and the media must support it, to be declared as a necessity. Or, at least, it seemed to support it. And political and military leaders can not endlessly talk to journalists and to the public opinion. The Years 2000's may be a landmark in the history of the spokesman's institution, not only from the perspective of its modeling through adaptation to context and new communication strategies, from the type of event, media pressure and new technical forms of communication, but also from the perspective of scientific information. For example, M. Lee in *The Agency Spokespersons: Connecting Public Administration and the Media* (Mordecai, 2001: 101-130) concludes that spokespersons have already become essential elements in the government of administrative institutions. The role of these non-governmental characters in the new technological context and the increase in the demand for public information is to connect, first of all, public administration and the media. Moreover, if before the year 2000 spokespersons were most often institutions that functioned with political leaders and elected representatives, as evidenced by M. Lee's research, at the beginning of the third millennium, spokespeople became a "public good", not just for politicians, which accredit themselves as "institutions within the state and federal government agencies". In the history of the spokesman's institution, a movement is taking place from a fluctuating identity, of political campaign and communication for political leaders, to a stable identity, which will be forever accredited (we could speculate) as an equally stable and indispensable institution of all government agencies / institutions.

The historical experience of the last three decades shows that this "new spokesman", which has become an autonomous and necessary institution at any of the levels of organization of public administration, has an essential function for crisis situations, particularly for the contexts that we can call "a political-military crisis".

We can learn something from our era, looking for identity characteristics and structures in the context of simulated political-military crises, such as the "Trident Junction 18", linked to NATO's intervention in Norway between the 25th of October and 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2018, based on a fictional scenario according to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty (NATO, 1949), which obliges the Alliance to intervene in any situation where a member, of the 29 who are today, is being assaulted or attacked by another aggressive state outside the Alliance?

## **2. NATO AND RUSSIA ON THE TRIDENT JUNCTION 18 MILITARY EXERCISE: WHO COMMUNICATES?**

Other messages taken from the communications addressed by the Alliance representatives to the media and the public who's present in social media, *complete the message by which the institution speaks* to the public space to practice and take in the chapter "Lessons Learned" the elements necessary for a real situation. Who and What communicates in mass media in October 2018:

NATO: "It is a clear message addressed to all aggressors," Jens Stoltenberg said, hoping that Russia, invited as an observer to the exercise, "will avoid any dangerous behavior." (Traci, 2018)

NATO: "Russia is not a direct military threat to Norway (...). But in such a complicated security situation as today (...) an incident elsewhere could very well increase tension in the North and we want to prepare the Alliance to avoid any unfortunate incident. " [12]

NATO: "Land exercises will be conducted at 1,000 km from the Russian border and the air operations at 500 km away. Russia has no reason to worry. " (Traci, 2018)

NATO: The exercise aims at "demonstrating NATO's defense capability against any opponent (and) Not targeting a particular country." (Traci, 2018)

From the Russian Federation, a series of messages with a different communicator appear in the international media (as a status, institutional posture and importance in the state power hierarchy) than those in which NATO - an alliance of 29 states that cooperate with two other non-member states in the Trident Junction 18 exercise, communicates in the public space.

Who are these "in the mirror" communicators - spokesmen speaking in the name of Russia and transmitting the Russian version of the Trident Junction exercise 18 that NATO is conducting at 500 km from the Russian border?

Russia: "The main NATO countries are growing their military presence in the region, near the Russian border." (Spokesman for Russian diplomacy, Maria Zaharova, who says that you can already hear the "gunshots"). (PRESSTV, 2018)

Russia: "Such irresponsible actions will inevitably lead to the destabilization of the political and military situation in the North, increasing tensions", Russia having to provide "the necessary response measures" (Maria Zaharova) (PRESSTV, 2018)

Russia: Trident Junction 18 is an "anti-Russian" exercise that worsens Norway's relations with Moscow and could escalate tensions on NATO's northern flank. (Embassy of Russia in Oslo)

Russia: "Such an activity ... comes as provocative, even if you try to justify it as being of a purely defensive nature." (PRESSTV, 2018; TASS, 2018)

Russia: Moscow will take "retaliatory measures to secure its security." (Maria Zaharova) (TASS, 2018)

### **3. WHAT DOES THE IDENTITY OF NATO'S AND RUSSIAN'S SPOKESPERSON MEAN?**

Our analysis focuses on the *Source* - "The Transmitter" (in a classic and simple communication model) of this message released on Wednesday, October 24, 2018 to announce a major event starting the next day, with very different meanings for its

organizers and for the leaders of the Russian Federation. (TASS, 2018). The exercise is a NATO force demonstration that supports in the messages delivered to the media and the general public that the major event it simulates is peaceful, with no other meaning than *self-testing the Alliance's defense capability* by mobilizing forces after a scenario in which one of its members is attacked. (NATO, 1949) This is the message communicated by NATO.

The science of Communication has been teaching us since 1948, when Laswell published his study of the "communication model," *The Structure and Function of Communication in Society*. The Communication of Ideas, that such a situation forces us to raise a series of questions - all part of a theoretical model that has long been written about in the field of communication sciences: "Who is saying ?, What does he say ?, On what channel of communication ?, Who does he say it to? and What is the effect?" is communicating information about the grouping of 50,000 NATO soldiers at the Russian border to the general public and, in particular, to the media that will transmit and comment or analyze the information. (Lasswell, 1948: 117)

The first thing we are thinking about today, after learning about the "Press Office" and the "Spokesperson", is that such a statement is part of a message sent by the NATO *Spokesperson*. The response to Laswell's theoretical model of "Who is Communicating" is therefore that the NATO Spokesperson will communicate the message to journalists and the general public about Trident Juncture 18. Recalling the start of the 24 October 2018 press conference, announcing the start of the exercise NATO the next day, broadcast video and displayed on the NATO web site, we notice that there are *two emitters of the message*, although apparently only one transmits the actual message about the exercise of *Trident Juncture 18* in Norway.

At the press conference, we notice the participation of NATO's spokesperson, Simona Lungescu, the person who introduces the NATO Secretary General and directly subordinated to NATO, - they work together for any type of media communication of the Alliance leader, according to the attributions of the "main Spokesperson" of NATO.

The second emitter in the press conference - the one who effectively communicates the NATO message - is NATO's Secretary General Jen Stoltenesen, a Norwegian political leader before being appointed as NATO's Secretary General from 1 October 2014. (BBC, 2014)

As the main press conference in the pre-event communication strategy shows at the level of the surface structure, the Spokesperson's function is to be a simple *moderator* - Simona Lungescu leads the Secretary General to the desk, opens the conference and then closes it, inviting journalists to participate directly in Norway to the *Trident Junction 18 exercise*. The NATO message is fully transmitted by the Secretary-General. In this context, the spokeswoman seems to be greeted in her invitation to the press conference by the communicating leader. We think that the message the press conference is about to hear about the identity of the Communicator, is different from the one that emerged from the strictly mechanical analysis of the communication interaction presumed by the press conference. The implicit message, rather non-conscious, the emotional level of its reception suggests something else about the communicator's institution in the simulated political-military crisis situation that we are talking about.

The identity of the Communicator in the overall economy of the press event takes the form of a *Tandem Spokesperson* - A leader who seems to exist and can only be - he is, in fact, the *Whole* in which the *Parties* mutually advocate: after seeing the footage of the press conference, it seems unimaginable for the NATO Secretary General to come alone and sit down at the platform where he talks to journalists. As it seems unimaginable that the Secretary-General would conclude the press conference by saying to journalists that he was waiting for them to participate at the exercise in Norway instead of his spokeswoman.

If we take a look into the history of the political and military crises of the past 3 decades, we notice similarities and differences in the transmission of the message to journalists in important press conferences regarding various elements related to the personality of the Spokesperson. However, in political and military crisis situations, the main communicator is the Leader - military or political, in relation to which the spokesman's institution appears to "come into the shadows". The spokesman "disappears" only apparently, because in reality he becomes the withdrawn communication counselor and strategist at the forefront of communication, in order to be fully used in the context of the crisis, *the trust capital* of those holding the political and military power - of generals and leaders at the top of the power hierarchy. The simulation exercise of the NATO intervention takes over from the political-military crisis thus including *the structure of the communicating institution* - The leader of the organization is at the forefront, as in an imaginary situation of a post-modern art work, composed of two party identities, which rotates permanently on its own support to generate lights and shadows, and in which light finally rests on only one of its two components.

In the press conference in which NATO communicates to the press on October 24, 2018 *the tandem* is made up of the *political leader and the main spokesman of NATO*. Not the military uniform is now the guarantor of the message, but the neutral costume and the political-management (the command) trust capital of the political decision-maker. NATO is a political and military alliance, but the day before the launch of military operations, The "Spokesperson" is a complex character in which *the symbol of military power, dominates* communication with the press and the general public. This time - at the moment immediately prior to sending soldiers to the theater of operations - The communicator of the military alliance in action is made up of a tandem that moves in the game of perfect balance, where *the Leader's Trust Capital* cooperates with the *Spokeswoman's trust capital*, in an Yin-Yang building type, in which this press conference lights up - let's say - the Yang half of the character more, which is the identity of a political leader. At different times, Yin Yang's balance has other characters, as is the case of the Deputy Spokesman accompanying the generals commanding the NATO exercise on the field, as part of NATO's political-military crisis communications officer.

Thus, *the Military Leader* as the message carrier for NATO and the trust capital of the uniform of the "General", appear in a previous press conference in October 2018, carried out two weeks ago and will become the symbol of the press conferences in the theater of operations of the two weeks of the military exercise. When we invoke here the *symbolic force of the military uniform* we refer to the Press Conference held by Admiral James G. Foggo III on the 9th of October 2018 – Operations Coordinator, Commander of

the United States Naval Forces in Europe and for Africa, seconded by Lieutenant General Rune Jakobsen, the Commander of NATO troops in Norway. The October 9, 2018, conference is a briefing on the same military exercise that the Secretary-General will address on October 24, in tandem with NATO's Main Spokesperson.

The interest in our analysis is completed with the presence of the moderator of this press conference that lasted for about 8 minutes - Deputy Spokesperson - Piers Cazalet (NATO, 2018). In the two weeks prior to the launch of the NATO intervention simulation exercise, we have a context of communication specific to the political and military crises: *The spokesman is a second communicator and implicitly the political-military exercise is communicated by his leader - the NATO Secretary General and his subordinates in the hierarchy of the military alliance - the American and Norwegian generals.*

The spokesman has a "shadow" identity in both situations in which he plays the role of *moderator* for the Alliance leader and for the two generals who command the operations. The Generals commanding troops in the theater of war do not say different things from the NATO Secretary General – they prepare *the cognitive social field of the group of journalists and the audience* to whom they will convey. What is important for our analysis is that in both press conferences the *spokesperson* is present. As the NATO Spokesperson's institution appears in the month before the launch of the military exercise on the ground, she performs the role of *moderator-facilitator* in transmitting the message to the journalists present at the conference.

The context of this *simulated political-military crisis* shows that we are dealing with a behavior specific to the *real political-military crises* in terms of answering the question *Who is communicating?* The spokesman does not seem to exist in communicating the message – his role now *is not* the one of the Communicator, but a *Facilitator of communication* between political / military leaders and journalists. The symbolic context of the Power now calls for itself a Communicator like that Yin-Yang "Spokesperson" of balance, illuminated and half dressed, alternatively in the civilian costume of the *political leader* and the military uniform of *generals* and commanders.

The *civil* half of the Spokesperson remains discreetly in the shadows in this symbolic context of Power, *maintaining its partnership function* in the general economy of the Yin-Yang equilibrium by assuming the identity of the *Facilitator* for the transmission of the message. The half of the Facilitator of the Yin-Yang Character is not visible now. But if we know where and with what eyes to look, it's not hard to notice that it exists. The event we are discussing about has another meaning in terms of answering the questions *Who communicates?* and *What does it communicate?* of the Lasswellian communication model.

For the Russian Federation, statements that are coming from the Spokesperson, although it is clear to everyone that "Trident Junction 18" is a military exercise that "irritates the Russian neighbors very much," although they themselves were organizers of such military maneuvers a month before, and a major one, involving about 300,000 Russian, Chinese and Mongolian soldiers:

"The force demonstration in Norway is also an indirect message for Vladimir Putin. The Kremlin leader last month, in the far-off Far East, had a very different maneuver: 300,000

soldiers, mostly Russian, but also Chinese and Mongolian. These were the most important Russian military exercises since the end of the Cold War.” (Damian, 2018) The political-military crisis to which we refer is that of a *symbolic Military Power* - a demonstration of strength, cooperative capacity, coalition, reaction speed, precision in mission execution, determination, etc.

The real war is just simulated this time.

The crisis is imaginary.

And war moves, in fact, from the theater of operations of a real political-military crisis, into the *theater of communication operations*.

Because here is the true war. Here and not in the theater of operations, the symbol of Power that communication has about the operations becomes more important.

What were the stages of communication in the month before the symbolic warfare of the *Trident Junction 18* messages?

For the month of October 2018, we notice in the NATO Communication on the exercise a number of not less than 4 important press conferences - of the same rank - on the same subject. These are thought to be a demonstration of force in which the message carriers are either the NATO's Secretary General - 3 conferences, or the two General commanders of the Norwegian military exercise. The Spokespersons are not *simple moderators* of press conferences where the force messages are being transmitted, they now become the *facilitators* who prepare and control the field and the public for whom the political and military leaders communicate. (NATO, 4 C)

On Russia's behalf, which is directly concerned with this "mirror demonstration" of "the most important military exercise since the cold war", it's not the *political leader* doing the talking and even less the military leader.

Russia is now communicating through the Spokesperson.

In fact, it is not without interest that the main message carrier is not a *Spoksmann*, but a *Spokeswoman* – Maria Zaharova, the Spokeswoman for the Foreign Minister (we have to remind you that the main spokesperson from NATO is also a woman - Simona Lungescu). Her second message carriers are officials of the Russian state of medium importance in the state hierarchy - the Russian ambassador - and he is a character under the dignity of the Foreign Minister in the state hierarchy, not to mention that these spokesmen have rank far inferior to the President of the Russian Federation, who would be the correspondent of the NATO Secretary General in terms of symbolic "Power to Communicate".

In diplomatic logic, Russia's message on the international market wants to be a *disdain* for NATO - what we know is that Vladimir Putin had just humiliated, in unacceptable diplomacy terms, a senior American official he had received the day before in Moscow. (Rothrock, 2018) So "disregard" could be a term too diplomatically chosen for the real purpose of Russia's communication strategy on the NATO exercise in Norway; "Minimization" would be more appropriate when it comes to meaning for what the Russian Federation is pursuing in the communication exercise.

For the message carriers, NATO uses the military uniform and trust capital of the leader at the top of the institutional power position - the Secretary- the General. Spokespeople - The Main Spokesperson and NATO's Deputy Spokesperson play the

second role in transmitting the Alliance's message to journalists in this period before the start of the military exercise. They are the "shadowed part" of the Institutional Character that communicates and supports it with functions automatically taken over in the Yin-Yang *tandem, moderator and facilitator* of *centric communication* on the other half of this tandem – The Political and Military Leader.

Russia's attitude totally disrespects NATO's *Trident Junction 18* exercise in Norway, if not *humiliating* NATO, from the perspective of the message carrier – both tactics seeming to seek to *minimize* the message that NATO's military exercise sends. To the first 3 positions in the NATO hierarchy that communicate about the military exercise are answered by *middle-ranking* officials - towards the base of the pyramid of power in the *state hierarchy* of Russia - ambassador and spokeswoman for the Foreign Minister.

Corroborating the message about the identity of those who communicate for and from Russia with the fact that President Vladimir Putin had ironized (the day before the NATO Secretary General's conference) The United States, making unspeakable jokes and in a totally undiplomatic manner on the image of the US emblem, we believe we can say that Russia's intention from the perspective of the message carriers is ironic on purpose, tendentious and planned humiliation towards NATO and, in particular, to the United States, as a key element in the operation of *Trident Junction 18* (25 October-7 November 2018). The NATO-Russia messages on this political-military crisis simulation exercise transmit information not only through their content but also through the posture of the communicator.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS. RUSSIA - NATO: A MESSAGE COMMUNICATOR, TWO RADICALLY DIFFERENT IDENTITIES**

What we are particularly interested in in this simulated political-military crisis exercise is that NATO legitimizes itself in the mass media and in front of the general public through a *message carrier* composed of two communicating identities. It seems that we are in a Yin-Yang equilibrium situation in that the active Part (1) - *The political / military leader* sends the message, and the passive (apparent) part (2) - *The spokesman* automatically takes over in the "shaded" area of the scene on which the *message carrier* is presented, the function of *the facilitator* of communication with journalists. The constancy that interests us in the structure of the *Political-Military Crisis Communicator* institution is that, although in different communication contexts - NATO self-representation and Russia's critical attitude towards NATO's self-presentation message – *The crisis communicator* has the same dual structure, modeled by each social actor according to his / her own interests.

Thus, NATO is interested in focusing the message on the military exercise on *the trust of the political leader* - the Secretary-General, which concludes a series of messages based on *the trust of the military uniform*. On the other hand, Russia centers the *message of discrediting* and the *Crisis Communicator* on the spokeswoman of the Foreign Ministry. While the NATO spokeswoman fulfills her passive role in relation to the media, taking on the role of *Facilitator / Counselor of Communication*, the spokeswoman

of the Russian Foreign Ministry becomes the *main communicator* in discrediting and *de-legitimizing* the NATO exercise.

The institutional constancy is the *dual structure of the Crisis Communicator*. In this situation, the communication institution's variables are related to the identity of the Lead Communicator and the Spokeswoman of the Dual Structure Crisis Communication, *NATO's message of legitimacy* is centered on the trust capital of the political leader – the Secretary General and on the trusted capital of the military uniform - the generals responsible in the theater of operations. *Russia's delegitimization message* is centered on the Spokesperson, accompanied by secondary message carriers with semi-important positions in the power structure of the Russian state (eg. ambassador). Russia's cunning communication strategy is believed to be linked to the addition of another communication line with the function of de-legitimation of the NATO's exercise, a message line emphasized by President Vladimir Putin the day before the October 24th Press Conference of NATO for launching the exercise.

The interpretation that we are doing in this political-military crisis could gain the value of a *working hypothesis* for the communication behavior of both international political and military actors: Will NATO also use in other contexts the *Mam - Leader* (*political leaders, generals*) to legitimize its own international action and Russia a *spokesperson - woman* for the main message of attack against its rival? For the Russian spokesman's *discrediting message* is not broken by the media message of the President of the Kremlin – we need to remind you that during the press conference of NATO, President Vladimir Putin had just made some bad jokes, mocking the symbol of the United States emblem, in a context of public humiliation of the White House's envoy to Moscow. "Has the eagle eaten all the olives?" Asked Vladimir Putin about the US coat of arms in which the bald eagle holds 13 arrows in one claw, and on the other a branch of 13 olives, suggesting the "warrior" behavior of the US related to the intention of withdrawing from the 1987 *Nuclear Forces Intermediate-Range Treaty*.

We don't know if White House Secretary of Defense John Bolton's humiliating episode happened "by chance" precisely in the day before the announcement of the launch of the NATO's military exercise in Norway, the most important contributor in the Alliance being the US. The structure of the message and the moment of its launch in the media seem to tell us that Russia's spokeswoman, who discredits the NATO exercise, has not the ambassadors condemning the NATO exercise as "second", but President Vladimir Putin. Which means (in our Yin-Yang binary structure analysis of the Leader / Spokesperson *Crisis Communication* Institution) that Russia's response of using the Spokesperson's institution is radically different from NATO's. Thus, Russia offers the media Spokeswoman in the illuminated part of the Crisis Communicator, while on the shadowed side of the media crisis, the State President stresses the context of humiliation of NATO-US through serious violations of the diplomatic language and protocol.

We know for a long time that raillery is one of the few manipulation techniques that can not be answered. Given the context of the situation, Vladimir Putin's blasphemy on the US state flag may also be interpreted as a "throwned glowe" challenge to President Donald Trump. His response in the communication context of the NATO exercise would be centered on communicating in the international media anything other than NATO's

simulation exercise. Here, though, NATO's *political-military crisis* test provides interesting information both about the *Crisis Communication Institution* and about the the institution of the politico-military crisis spokesman tactics of international political and military actors in communicating messages to the media. [26]

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