

# ROMANIAN PRESIDENTIAL DOCTRINES IN THE BLACK SEA REGION. CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

LUCIAN DUMITRESCU<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The article examines the issue of change and continuity in Romania's strategy in Black Sea area. It works from the assumption that general Romania's strategy has always aimed at defending the status quo, even when its particular strategy for the Black Sea region evolved from a closed-sea perspective to an open-sea view. Three subregional initiatives are brought under scrutiny by employing neoclassical realism as a heuristic tool. Thus, the article scrutinizes not only systemic factors, but also those subsystemic factors, that account for the failure of Romania's subregional initiatives by the Black Sea area.

*Keywords:* presidential doctrines, the Black Sea, neoclassical realism, subregionalism, regioness.

## INTRODUCTION

The assumption of this article works is that geographic factors and a particular security milieu are the variables that best account for Romania's integration into the Euro-Atlantic community. A NATO member since 2004, Romania joined the European Union in 2007 but not out of good governance reasons but mainly for strategic motives, i.e., a riparian state in the Black Sea region and its proximity to the Balkans (Gallagher 2010). Whilst the latter had been a constant security concern for Western Europe since the early 1990s, the former made it onto the Western security agenda after the terrorist attacks of 9-11 and 3-11, when it became obvious that the Greater Middle East would be the most important source of security threats for both North America and Europe (Asmus et. Al. 2004, 17). Consequently, after it had been completely ignored in the 1990s, the Black Sea area suddenly turned into a strategic asset of massive importance for

---

<sup>1</sup> PhD researcher, Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations, Romanian Academy. E-mail: dulust@gmail.com.



Western Europe. By projecting their influence over the Black Sea area, Western states sought to address not only the security threats coming from the Greater Middle East but also the export of democratic values and institutions to the newly independent states in the Black Sea area. Also, European access to energy supplies of both the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea was a strategic objective of primary importance. Given that its geographic status, as a riparian state in the Black Sea area, turned out to be Romania's most important strategic asset for its integration into both NATO and the EU, I argue that Romania's security policies by the Black Sea should be brought under scrutiny not just as ordinary foreign policy initiatives but as presidential doctrines.

In the late 1990s, Romanian politicians initiated a series of subregional initiatives that aimed at increasing Romania's "regioness" (Manoli 2016, 33), that is, avoiding Romania's political marginalization among former communist countries. A Romanian state capable of creating subregional security structures would have been perceived by NATO officials as a security provider instead of a security consumer (Severin 2000, 111). For, once Romania had become a NATO member – this is how the argument went –, the Alliance would have gained access to a friendly neighbourhood. When Romania joined NATO in 2004 the question of regioness surfaced again on the Romanian politicians' agenda. But this time the issue of regioness regarded only the riparian states of the Black Sea. Moreover, in sharp contrast to its late 90's security agenda, that aimed at reinforcing its regioness by preserving the status quo, Romania's security agenda as a NATO member turned out to be a revisionist one, aiming at the internationalization of the Black Sea area.

The article explores two presidential doctrines by the Black Sea, namely, the Băsescu Doctrine and the Iohannis Doctrine. The Băsescu Doctrine refers to two subregional initiatives, namely the Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership (BSF) and the Black Sea Synergy (BSS). The former was launched in 2005 and the latter in 2006. The Iohannis Doctrine revolves around the Black Sea Flotilla (BSFt), a subregional initiative that was launched in 2016.

Previous articles that brought into relief the reasons why Romania's strategic initiatives by the Black Sea had failed, employed either a neo-realist view (Milevschi 2016; Angelescu 2011) or a constructivist perspective (Ciută 2008; Ivan 2016). I argue that neoclassical realism, especially when employed with the aim of explaining the security policies of a small state such as Romania, offers a broader perspective by bringing into play both systemic and subsystemic factors. Explanations for the failure of Romania's subregional initiatives by the Black Sea have covered so far a broad range, from Romania being a weak player (Milevischi 2016), and Romania not effectively capitalizing on its geopolitical position (Angelescu 2011) to Romania exporting regional initiatives of both NATO and the EU (Ciută 2008) and, thus, just mimicking strategic initiatives in the Black Sea area (Ivan 2016). The trouble with the abovementioned explanations is that they

lay emphasis only on the constraints of the international security environment and, therefore, they completely overlook the impact of subsystemic factors or micro-politics on security policies. Obviously, systemic factors, such as the Russian Federation and Turkey's opposition to Romania's subregional projects or the hesitations of both the U.S. and the EU in the region, are the overriding explanation for Romania's unsuccessful attempts to increase its regioness by the Black Sea. And yet the article demonstrates that subsystemic factors, such as misperceptions of the Black Sea's security milieu and personal political calculus of statesmen, led to tactical errors that explicate the failure of Romania's subregional initiatives by the Black Sea.

The article is organized as follows. The first section brings into focus the concept of presidential doctrines and argues that neoclassical realism is an appropriate theoretical framework to tackle such a topic. In the following, the article discusses the Băsescu Doctrine and then the Iohannis Doctrine, as revisionist security policies, that is, strategic attempts of internationalizing the Black Sea. The following section pithily addresses the evolution of Romania's grand strategy from status quo to revisionism. The last section employs neoclassical realism for explicating the failure of Romanian presidential doctrines in the Black Sea area.

#### **PRESIDENTIAL DOCTRINES AND NEOCLASSICAL REALISM. EXPLAINING CONCEPTS**

In a narrow sense, presidential doctrine refers to “a rational justification of a course of action, usually military in nature” (Lisiero 2008, 78). In other words, by bringing a presidential doctrine under scrutiny one seeks to explore the strategic narratives disseminated by a certain president in order to rationally justify war. For instance, in the early '50s, the term “strategic doctrine” was almost tantamount with the use of nuclear weapons (Michaels 2011, 465). In a broader sense though, a presidential doctrine presents to its audience not only a certain way of action but simultaneously the values that justify such a strategic demeanour. Therefore, every presidential doctrine comprises both the vision that is to guide the administration throughout its political mandate and the foreign policy action that a government is to undertake over its staying in power (Watson et. Al. 2003, 2). Every presidential doctrine is expected to use a “moralizing terminology” (Siracusa and Warren 2016, XIV), which is sometimes couched in an exceptionalist vein, like a vision, thanks to which, “an administration claim to be directing events, rather than being at the whim of history” (Boys 2015, 82). Yet, the vision part aside, every presidential doctrine “serve as axiomatic guide to policy” and contains “simple, concise, and lucid statements of purpose or strategy” (Siracusa and Warren 2016, XIV). Presidential doctrines are defined as “encapsulations of a president's foreign policy

strategy” (Dueck 2015, 1) or as an “intellectual toolbox” (Michaels 2011, 465) which contains, on one hand, a moralizing terminology for the public, and, on the other hand, security policy guidelines for the bureaucracy. Also, every presidential doctrine is based on public comments that a president usually make at a formal event. For instance, the Nixon Doctrine stems from the public statements President Nixon made in Guam on the evening of 25 July 1969 (Kimball 2006, 60). Thus, a presidential doctrine can be considered an exercise in strategic communication. Some authors have already come up with a pattern of analysing presidential doctrines. From this perspective, the analysis should explain “the targeted threat, political ideology, president’s world view, and the international environment” (Watson et al. 2003, 6). What the abovementioned model overlooks is the fact that a presidential doctrine is a strategic communication exercise, too. Therefore, the pattern of analysis that I put forward for the two presidential doctrines that I scrutinize comprises three aspects: “canonical” (Dunn and Neumann 2016, 94) presidential statements about the most important security aspects in the Black Sea area, the strategic vision or the moralizing principles for the public, and the security policies specific to each doctrine. In order to amass data for the abovementioned pattern of analysis I used different sources such as newspaper articles, the national defense strategies that were issued in Romania between 2004 and 2018, and the academic literature dedicated to the matter of interest. Obviously, in order to have a better understanding of the Romanian presidential doctrines by the Black Sea one also needs to look closely into the specific security environment of the area. To that end, I have employed neoclassical realism as an heuristic tool.

Neoclassical realism is a complementary – not competing – approach of neo-realism in scrutinizing states’ strategic behavior in international affairs (Layne 2009, 103). Like neo-realism, neoclassical realism works from the assumption that changes which occur either regionally or internationally are the most important determinants that explicate states’ strategic adjustments. Yet, unlike neo-realism, neoclassical realism places emphasis on subsystemic factors and posits the idea that an explanatory model that also takes *Innenpolitik* into consideration “achieve greater predictive and empirical precision” (Dueck 2006, 18). Regarding the subsystemic factors that neorealism has brought to the fore, they range from “cultural legacies and domestic politics of specific countries” (Dueck 2006, 18) and “elite perception and state structure (or strength of the state apparatus)” (Eder 2014, 86) to “the images and perceptions of state leaders, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutional arrangements” (Ripsman et al. 2016, 59). Moreover, by “bringing the statesman back in” (Devlen and Özdamar 2009, 138), neoclassical realism layered micro-politics into its explanatory model, which turned out to be a useful explanatory adjustment for neo-realism’s too general theoretical and empirical frameworks. First, in analysing Romanian presidential doctrines regarding the Black Sea area, I have taken a closer look at the three

subregional initiatives, that is, BSF, BSS and BSft, Romania came up with between 2006 and 2016. Second, in scrutinizing the abovementioned doctrines by using a neoclassical approach, I have paid heed to the both systemic and subsystemic factors, such as changes that occurred in the Black Sea security milieu, elite's misperceptions of Romania's security environment and the personal political calculus of both President Bănescu and President Iohannis. The following section is dedicated to the Bănescu Doctrine.

### THE BĂNESCU DOCTRINE

The guiding principle of the Bănescu Doctrine was posited on December 14, two days after Traian Bănescu defeated the former Prime Minister Adrian Năstase in the second round of the 2004 presidential elections. On that occasion, Mr. Bănescu made two important strategic announcements. First, he stated that Romania, a NATO member since 2004, had to speed up its integration process into the EU. Second, Mr. Bănescu contended that the most important foreign policy aspect continued to be the strengthening of Romania's strategic partnership with Washington and London. The "Washington-London-Bucharest Axis" (Mihăilă 2004), as Mr. Bănescu put it, proved to be the prevailing principle of Romania's foreign policy between 2005 and 2014. On the same occasion, Mr. Bănescu argued that "Romania had to be a stability factor" (Mihăilă 2004), namely, a strategic interface between NATO and the "new independent states".

The Bucharest-London-Washington Axis aside, the second most important principle of Romania's foreign policy was Bucharest's growing concern with the Black Sea (Ivan 2016). The canonical statement of President Bănescu, which illustrates the essence of the Bănescu Doctrine in the Black Sea area, was made in September 2005. Addressing the Romanian diaspora in San Francisco, President Bănescu stated that the Black Sea should not become a "Russian lake" (Ziarul de Iași.ro 2005). Almost a decade later, at the 2014 Newport NATO Summit in Wales, Mr. Bănescu restated the essence of his administration's policies in the region and stressed his intention to turn the Black Sea area into a "NATO lake" (click.ro 2014).

Regarding the vision that underpinned the Bănescu Doctrine, Romania's newly found role in the Black Sea was that of a security exporter towards Central Asia and the Caucasus (Ivan 2016, 159). President Bănescu stated that "we don't have only the political, but also the moral obligation to bring our contribution to the establishment of peace in the Black Sea, to the installation of stable and democratic regimes" (Ivan 2016, 120). On paper, Mr. Bănescu's vision was right. Romania was bound to become a country diffusing democracy to the East in order to enhance its own security. By exporting democracy, former Communist countries

have tried to mitigate the political and economic unpredictability of the former Soviet republics (Petrova 2014). Moreover, President Bănescu's vision was an appropriate way of strengthening his country's regioness, that is, to avoid Romania's political marginalization within both NATO and the EU, especially because Romania entered NATO and the EU mainly for its strategic assets and not for its good governance performance. Also, it was a good opportunity to prove that the international socialization process Romania had been through since 2004, started to produce effects on the Romanian political elites' ethos. In practice though, things proved to be more complicated. The trouble was the superiority status assumed by the Bănescu administration in the region. President Bănescu's vision revealed that Romania identified itself as a member of Western community of values, endowed with a civilizing mission in the Black Sea area. "This position is more of a patron than of an equal, which puts into question the viability of regional cooperation based on the premises. The official foreign policy discourse doesn't speak of as much of the need for an institutionalized cooperation, as of Romania's position As a facilitator of the relations between its Western partners and the Eastern, Black Sea neighborhood" (Ivan 2016, 160). What was really striking about Mr. Bănescu's vision, was its assertiveness, which turned Romania's foreign policy towards the Black Sea region from a reactive to a proactive one. Under President Bănescu, Romania started disseminating a Freedom Agenda-type security perspective in the Black Sea area, a vision that remained in place even after the Ukrainian crisis. In 2014, after the meeting President Bănescu had with US Senator Bob Corker, member of the Committee for External Affairs, the Presidential Administration issued a statement according to which Mr. Bănescu "reiterated the objective of increasing the role of NATO in the Black Sea area and the necessity of maintaining the open gate-policy for would be-NATO members in the Black Sea basin and the Western Balkans"(revista22.ro 2014). One important factor, maybe the most important one, that propelled the assertiveness of the Bănescu Doctrine was the U.S. support for Romania's policy in the Black Sea area. Undoubtedly, at least from a rhetorical perspective, Mr. Bănescu's policies in the Black Sea area benefitted from American backing. President George W. Bush attended the 2008 NATO Summit organized in Bucharest. The U.S. President depicted Romania as a leader of the Black Sea. "I appreciate your status of a leader in the Black Sea area. And I assume that is why you invited me here, for we talked about your leadership in the Black Sea area" (9am.ro 2008).

Formally, President Bănescu's vision about Romania's mission to export democracy in the Black Sea area was incapsulated into the 2006 National Security Strategy (NSS). The document stated that Romania, as a NATO member and as a border state of the European Union, was interested in having stable, democratic and prosperous neighbours, strongly connected to the Euroatlantic community. Such neighbours were of overriding importance for the emergence of a "pluralist regional community" (NSS 2006). Furthermore, the document depicted the Black

Sea area not just as a simple buffer zone but as a “connector of strategic importance” that linked the Euroatlantic community with the Middle East-Caspian region-Central Asia area. The 2006 NSS marked an important turn in Romania’s strategic vision on the Black Sea, from a closed sea perspective, that dominated the local strategic thinking in the Cold War era and throughout the 1990s, to the view of an open sea that Romania wanted to institutionalise as a NATO member. Also, the 2006 NSS brought to the fore the first subregional initiative that Romania came up with regarding the Black Sea area, namely, the Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership (BSF) that aimed at “promoting democracy and economic development, energetic security, trust building, and the strengthening of stability, peace and security” (NSS 2006).

I now turn to the operationalization of the Băsescu Doctrine in the Black Sea area, which comprised two subregional initiatives, namely BSF and BSS. Announced in 2005, BSF was the first subregional initiative of Romania by the Black Sea, whose objective was to create a common vision about the region. Initially, the BSF’s security agenda was dominated by hard security concerns (Manoli 2016) which were substantially diluted due to the opposition of the riparian states that attended the 2006 BSF summit in Bucharest. What distinguished BSF from regional initiatives was the involvement of civil society in discussions on security by the Black Sea. Therefore, the BSF’s objective was that civil society in the Black Sea states, and not the states themselves, should be able to develop and promote a common regional vision (Triantaphyllou 2010). From this point of view, the BSF was a form of “regionalism from below”, which had only limited success because it was underfunded and not politically supported by other states (Ivan 2016). It is worth mentioning that BSF was announced by Traian Băsescu during an official visit to Moscow in 2005, less than a year after winning the presidential elections in Romania. Although the statement was made in Moscow “in very bold political terms” (Ivan 2016, 161), President Băsescu’s initiative had no broad echoes by the Black Sea. The only edition of the BSF took place in Bucharest in 2006, but without the participation of the Russian Federation. BSF was perceived as an attempt, both strategic and normative, to undermine Turkish and Russian Federation Black Sea leadership, since the BSF was built around the values of liberal democracy.

Formally, BSS represented the first regional policy of the European Union by the Black Sea (Weaver 2016). Published in April 2007, BSS marked a change in the European Union’s vision – from bilateralism to regionalism. Informally though, BSS made it onto the agenda of the 2006 BSF summit that took place in Bucharest and it was another subregional initiative launched by the Băsescu administration. Due to the fact that Romania did not have the geopolitical clout to move BSS onto the European Commission’s security agenda, Romanian politicians entrusted this subregional initiative to Germany, which took over the presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2007. One important point on the BSS’s security agenda

was the prospect of the EU's involvement in solving the Black Sea frozen conflicts. Romania was specifically interested in the Transnistrian conflict and President Băsescu even stated that "we believe that the UE involvement in the region may bring its contribution to the solving of frozen conflicts in the Black Sea area" (dcnews.ro 2014). Therefore, through the BSS, the European Union not only competed with regional organizations with economic tradition by the Black Sea, such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), but also, through the BSS's declared objective of enhancing mutual trust at a regional level, it also aimed towards a resolution of frozen conflicts in Georgia, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan. For two years, BSS was stationary. It was not until 2009 that the European Commission and the European Council set out precise directions for regional cooperation. These dealt with the environment, energy and transport. Romania was entrusted with the development of the environmental initiative, while Bulgaria was given the key energy sector, while the transport sector was allotted to Greece (Weaver 2016). Eventually, BSS could not survive the competition with Eastern Partnership (EaP).

#### THE IOHANNIS DOCTRINE

In contrast to its predecessor, the Iohannis Doctrine does not contain too many novelties for at least two reasons. First, the security environment in the Black Sea area turned into a confrontational one after the 2008 Georgian War and the 2014 Ukrainian Crisis. Under such circumstances, certain aspects of the Băsescu Doctrine could not be taken into consideration anymore. Second, under Mr. Băsescu, Romania was a brand new NATO member. When Mr. Iohannis came into office at the end of 2014, Romania had been a member of the Euro-Atlantic community for almost a decade. Therefore, most aspects of Romania's NDS had already been settled. The guiding principle of the Iohannis Doctrine has continued to be the internationalization of the Black Sea. Yet, the most striking difference in comparison to the 2006 Băsescu Doctrine, is that the Iohannis Doctrine has made no mention about Romania's civilizing mission in the Black Sea area. This is hardly surprising, considering that President Iohannis took office at the end of 2014, that is, after the 2008 Georgian war and the 2014 Ukrainian crisis when the "European security system" was called into question by the Russian Federation's military actions (Hill 2018; Asmus 2010; Legvold 2016). Under such circumstances, Romanian officials have refrained from making statements about Romania's mission to export democracy in an already strained environment. Also, the issue of the Black Sea area seems to have slipped into obscurity under President Iohannis. For instance, the 2006 NSS devoted around three pages to the issue of the Black Sea, whilst the 2010 NDS addressed the importance of the Black Sea area in



a paragraph. In the 2015 NDS, the question of the Black Sea was singled out only a couple of times. On closer look though, the Black Sea area continued to be a very important objective of Romania's NDS, right after Romania's need to strengthen its position within NATO, the EU and its strategic partnership with the U.S.

The canonical statement that brought into relief the essence of the Băsescu Doctrine was made in 2005, when President Băsescu stated that the Black Sea should not become a "Russian lake". In the case of the Iohannis Doctrine, it has been difficult to identify such a public commentary. Nevertheless, considering that President Iohannis has kept insisting on a numerous military presence of NATO vessels in the Black Sea area, I believe that an appropriate tag for the Iohannis Doctrine could be "turn the Black Sea area into a NATO lake". Of course, this is hardly an original tag, considering that this is what President Băsescu declared at the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, but the Iohannis Doctrine has continued to stress Romania's mission to internationalize the Black Sea area. In stark contrast to its predecessor, Mr. Iohannis has not received, at least not publicly, strong American backing for Romania's leadership in the region. On the contrary, the 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw revolved around only the Baltic Sea and paid heed almost completely to the Nordic part of the Eastern flank (Joja and Manea 2018). In Warsaw, Romania fully supported the Baltic-centered vision posited by NATO in the hope that the Black Sea will make it on the security agenda of the Alliance. Eventually, the Alliance denied Romania's request of organizing a NATO military mission in the Black Sea area. It is worth noting though that Canada, the UK and Italy have agreed to assist Romania with air policing and military exercises since the annexation of Crimea. Also, a Black Sea center of command has occurred in between. And yet the military presence of NATO in the Black Sea continues to be rather scarce. That is why, in an attempt to increase its own capabilities, Romania raised its defense budget up to 2 per cent of GDP and already acquired Patriot batteries and HIMARS rocket launchers. It also invested in coastal defense and ponder over the buying of submarines (Joja and Manea 2018). But despite these efforts, Romania's capabilities in the Black Sea are no match to the ones of the Russian Federation. Therefore, considering that the U.S. remains the only real contributor to Black Sea security, President Iohannis has constantly asked for "a coherent, integrated, synchronized approach for the whole Eastern Flank. The underlying message is that of increasing NATO's incremental presence at the Black Sea shore and upgrading the tailored forward presence to the level of an enhanced forward presence" (Joja and Manea 2018).

Regarding the vision that has propelled the Iohannis Doctrine, it comprises the values of Europe's "sacred identity" (Risse 2010, 27), namely, constitutional democracy, state of law and market economy. But unlike President Băsescu, who made public statements about Romania's moral and political mission to export democracy in the region, Mr. Iohannis has toned down Romania's exceptionalism

in the Black Sea area. This is hardly a surprise, considering that the security milieu in the Black Sea area is fraught with tensions. In 2006, when President Bănescu brought both BSF and BSS to the fore, Russia had already left the West (Hill 2018, 282). And yet the security environment in the Black Sea had never been as tense as after the 2008 Georgian War and the 2014 Ukrainian Crisis. In other words, the important changes that occurred in the Black Sea security environment are what best account for the Iohannis Doctrine's apparent lack of assertiveness. I say apparent lack of assertiveness, for Mr. Iohannis also intended to turn Romania into an important player in the Black Sea area, but in a rather low-profile fashion, through personal diplomacy, and without organizing regional summits in Bucharest. Exactly as his predecessor, President Iohannis also paid heed to the issue of regioness. A telling example in this sense is the Black Sea Flotilla (BSFt), the subregional initiative that Romania launched in 2016. BSFt, although it eventually proved to be another failed subregional initiative of Romania, reveals a constant preoccupation of Romanian politicians. In terms of strategic communication, Romanian politicians, irrespective of the political party they belong to, have systematically strived to project an international image of Romania as a security provider and not only as a security consumer. Tellingly, after the resignation of Prime-Minister Ponta in 2015, due to a devastating fire that killed around 60 and injured another couple of hundreds in Bucharest, the interim Prime-Minister, Mr. Sorin Câmpeanu, stressed that "Romania has been and needs to remain a stability factor" (Ungureanu 2015) in a statement made chiefly for Romania's foreign investors and international creditors. Also, President Iohannis has constantly stressed the fact that Romania has always been a security provider in the Black Sea area (Cazan 2016). This constant preoccupation of Romanian politicians with Romania's international image of a security provider reveals an interesting fact. In contrast to Romania's "Eastness" (Kuus 2007), that constantly surfaced in the 90's mainly due to internal unpredictability – governments that were constantly overthrown by miners, endemic corruption, economic reforms that took place only on paper –, once Romania entered NATO and the EU, Romanian politicians strived to avoid political marginalization within the Euro-Atlantic community. In other words, Romania's subregional initiatives in the Black Sea were also meant to increase its regioness. A low-regioness Romania will maintain its status of border country of both NATO and the European Union. Thus, Romania will continue to be perceived in the West as not "fully or truly or not yet European" (Kuus 2007, 37) or as "Europe but not Europe" (Määkso 2010). In short, as a security consumer instead of a security provider.

Formally, the Iohannis administration's vision is encapsulated into the the 2015-19 NDS, which continues to pay heed to the Black Sea issue, although in a rather pitiful manner. This 2015-19 NDS does not devote as much space to the question of the Black Sea as its counterparts that were adopted whilst President

Băsescu was in office. And yet, despite the fact that the Black Sea is singled out only three times in the 2015-19 NDS, it continues to figure as an important national security objective, right after Romania's interest of strengthening its presence within the EU and its strategic partnership with the U.S.

BSFt was announced in January 2016 on the site of the Romanian Ministry of National Defense. The Ministry revealed the prospect of setting up a "flotilla" in the Black Sea under the name of Black Sea Flotilla (BSFt). Then, President Iohannis took over the initiative and stated that NATO could effectively exploit the Black Sea through a "multinational naval grouping" (Drăghici 2016). The Băsescu Doctrine sought to internationalize the Black Sea in two ways. First, by diffusing a Freedom Agenda-type security vision in the region. Second, by increasing NATO's naval presence in the area and, thus, by altering the provisos of the 1936 Montreux Convention. The Iohannis Doctrine has significantly toned down Romania's civilising mission in the region and also the modification of the 1936 Montreux Convention. BSFt sought to internationalize the Black Sea through a military mission of those riparian states that also were NATO members, that is, Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania. In 2006, Romania and Bulgaria endorsed the spill over of the Operation Active Endeavor into the Black Sea, whilst Turkey and the Russian Federation, as stark defenders of the status-quo in the region, opposed the plan. For BSFt, Romania gained Turkey's support, whilst losing Bulgaria's backing. After high-ranking Bulgarian officials, such as the Bulgarian President and the Defense Minister, had already hailed their support for BSFt, the Bulgarian Prime-Minister, Mr. Boyko Borisov, vetoed Romania's initiative. Under such circumstances, Romanian authorities announced that a wrong perception occurred regarding BSFt. BSFt was not meant to be a NATO fleet, but rather a naval cooperation between Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey for "joint exercises" under the aegis of NATO (Drăghici 2016). I now turn my attention to the question of change and continuity in Romania's grand strategy.

#### **ROMANIA'S STRATEGY IN THE BLACK SEA AREA. CHANGE AND CONTINUITY**

Throughout its modern history Romania has acted most of the time as a balancer that needed to defend its newly-formed state and its territorial integrity. This strategic behavior became more prominent after WWI, in the aftermath of which Romania nearly doubled its territory and population (Hitchins 1998; Gallagher 2004). The new territories, that were given to Romania by Western powers through the peace treaties signed between 1919 and 1920, came from the late Austro-Hungarian and Czarist Empires. Under such circumstances, there is

hardly a surprise that the two cardinal principles that have dominated Romania's foreign policy were "fear of the Russians and fear of the Hungarians" (Severin 2000, 10). Institutionally, the "Great Romania", that occurred in the aftermath of WWI, was a low capacity state that was at pains in two major respects, namely, turning its new population into a "community of citizens" (Schnapper 1998) and defending the integrity of its territory. Therefore, in order to defend the status quo, Romania balanced in the interwar period against both Hungary and USSR by looking for security anchors in the West. Therefore, I would say that another major guiding principle of Romania's foreign policy, complementary to the abovementioned ones, has been the effort to find security anchors outside its region, in order to balance against its revisionist neighbors (Watts 2014). This is what also happened in the Cold War era, especially after the 1956 Soviet invasion of Hungary. In the 60's, the communist elites tested two potential security anchors for Romania, namely, France and China (Niculescu-Mizil 2002; Beta 2008). Romania's external balancing in the 60's turned out to be an effective strategic behavior, considering that, after Ceaușescu's strong condemnation of the 1968 Soviet invasion of the reformist-prone Czechoslovakia, Romania was able to defend the status quo. After the Cold War era came to an end, Romanian elites continued to look for a security anchor in the West. And once Romania joined NATO in 2004, the U.S. became Romania's most important security anchor in the region.

Beside balancing against its revisionist neighbors through distant security anchors, Romania also initiated in the interwar period a series of subregional initiatives that aimed at checking local revisionism. The prevailing principle of these security initiatives, namely the 1920 Small Antanta and the 1934 Balkan Understanding, was Romania's peaceful relations with its neighbors, even with the revisionist ones. Nicolae Titulescu, Romania's Foreign Ministry that signed the Montreux Convention in 1936, advocated for the abovementioned foreign policy principle even in Romania's strategic interactions with the USSR. By promoting this principle, Titulescu signed the 1936 Montreux Convention which institutionalized a closed sea perspective, meaning that only riparian states were entitled to have military vessels in the Black Sea area. In the Cold War era, despite its soft balancing against the USSR, Romania continued to defend the closed sea perspective, in a time when the Black Sea area was completely dominated by the Soviet military. In the 90's, Romania's strategic gaze was directed towards West, and therefore the closed sea perspective remained in use rather out of strategic inertia. Therefore, Romania barely had a Black Sea policy over more than a decade (Tudoroiu 2014, 174). The subregional initiatives Romania came up with in the late '90s, in order to increase its regionness, aimed mainly at improving ties with those Central European countries that had a real chance to become NATO members in the Alliances's first enlargement wave.

Eventually, such initiatives turned out to be “ ‘mainly rhetorical’, ‘dormant’ or ‘defunct’ ” (Collins 2009, 265), despite an interesting “trilateral diplomacy” out of which would be-subregional partnerships occurred, such as Romania-Ukraine-Poland, Romania-Hungary-Austria, Romania-Bulgaria-Turkey and Romania-Bulgaria-Greece (Severin 2015). Mircea Malița, former Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Member of the Romanian Academy, contends that, traditionally, Romania has advocated for a closed sea perspective regarding the Black Sea, which is rather an Eastern security perspective (Malița and Dungaciu 2014, 336). The closed sea perspective has been consonant with Titulescu’s view, according to whom Romania is compelled to have good relations with its neighbors (Niculescu-Mizil 2002). Therefore, for almost a century, Romania has acted as a defender of the status quo in the Black Sea area. Yet things changed completely when Romania became a NATO member in 2004.

For the internationalization of the Black Sea, Romania requested the amendment of the 1936 Convention of Montreux. Romanian authorities depicted the Montreux Convention as being “not the *reason* but the *rationalization* for blocking NATO on the Black Sea” (Dungaciu 2015, 48). Two arguments were offered for the amendment of the Convention of Montreux. First, one of the contracting states, namely Yugoslavia, disappeared, while other new states emerged by the Black Sea. Second, the context had changed. Therefore, in line with the principle *rebus sic stantibus*, according to which a contract whose initial circumstances have changed may become obsolete, Romania is entitled to relax the provisions of the 1936 Montreux Convention. Romania’s revisionist undertaking, which was also joined by Bulgaria, was rejected by Turkey, which did not agree to U.S. naval presence in the Black Sea for at least two reasons. In the first place, it was concerned about changing the *status quo* of power by the Black Sea. Secondly, it implied that the U.S. naval presence in the Black Sea would produce increased anxiety in the Russian Federation, which could generate bellicose reactions with consequences for stability in the region (Triantaphyllou 2010; Henderson and Weaver 2016). President Băsescu has been the most vocal advocate for the internationalization of the Black Sea and the presence of American vessels in the region. Two arguments were offered in this regard. The first argument concerned Romanian naval capabilities. In terms of military capabilities, Romania is still far from the target of a “small well-trained navy” (Sanders 2014, 11) due to various reasons, such as delay in economic reform, corruption and political dissension. The second argument has targeted the Black Sea Force, about which it was said that it proved to be a rather ineffectual institution, which would require the presence of NATO ships (Dungaciu 2015). As such, Romania has requested the extension of NATO's Active Endeavour operation from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea.

**ANALYSING ROMANIAN PRESIDENTIAL DOCTRINES IN THE BLACK SEA AREA.  
A NEOCLASSICAL REALIST APPROACH**

I argue that the trouble with Romania's subregional initiatives in the Black Sea, especially the ones belonging to the Băsescu Doctrine, was that they did not fully take into account the characteristics of the regional security milieu. First, both Turkey and the Russian Federation traditionally viewed the Black Sea area as part of their legitimate spheres of interest. Therefore, Romania was perceived as a springboard for both NATO and the EU's strategic agenda and, thus, as an intruder. Second, riparian states view all security proposals in transactional, not transformational, terms (Legvold 2016, 37). Cooperation, if it occurs, is limited to a few specific issues, with no political guarantee that anything else will follow. From this perspective, Romania's security agenda to modify the 1936 Montreux Convention and thus to internationalize the Black Sea was a clear-cut transformational proposal. Third, in 2006, when Romania initiated its first subregional initiative in the Black Sea area, namely BSF, the Russian Federation had already left the West (Hill 2018), despite the 2001 reset (Stent 2014). The colored revolutions that had taken place in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan created to the Russian elite the impression that the West had already institutionalized a regime change policy in Russia's near abroad. Therefore, between 2006–2007, Russian politicians made the step from criticizing Western security policies to creating a "Moscow-centered system" (Hill 2018, 251), which brutally surfaced in 2008 and 2014, when Russia acted militarily against a "European security system" (Asmus 2010, 5). Through its subregional initiatives, especially the ones belonging to the Băsescu Doctrine, Romania strived to reinforce a European security system in the Black Sea area exactly when Moscow became fed-up with it. In explicating the failure of Romania's subregional initiatives by the Black Sea, one also needs to pay heed to Western systemic factors, such as the EU's hesitations regarding its regional policy in the Black Sea region. Launched in 2008, EaP, which was better financed and benefited from the political support of most of the EU's member states, proved to be a strong competitor for BSS. For this reason, Romania offered a "lukewarm welcome" (Angelescu 2011, 137) to the EaP, because its agenda paid little heed to the question of frozen conflicts, which was one of the main topics addressed by BSS.

I now turn my attention to subsystemic factors. Romania's subregional initiatives failed not just because Romania projected an "unnuanced" (Malița and Dungaciu 2014, 337) Western perspective on the Black Sea area. Other factor came into play, such as Romanian authorities' tactical errors and the unrealistic political calculus of Romanian Presidents.

"Elite perceptions" (Eder 2014, 86; Ripsman et al. 2016, 59) is a consequential subsystemic factor in the explanatory model that neorealism has brought to the fore. However, neoclassical realism has also brought into relief the

misperceptions (Ripsman et al. 2016, 20) of political leaders who fail to correctly assess the relative power of their state. In the case of Romania's subregional initiatives in the Black Sea area, misperceptions of the regional security environment led to a series of "tactical errors". According to Sergiu Celac, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, the very format of the BSF turned out to be a "tactical error" (Manoli 2016, 55). Conceived as a regional summit, the 2006 BSF was assessed by the riparian states as masking Romania's regional ambitions. Indeed, President Băsescu wanted to turn Romania into a regional leader by the Black Sea (Ivan 2016, 194-195). Celac, an experimented diplomat, does not delve into the matter and does not offer further details on how Romania should have organized BSF. Therefore, I bring to the fore the example of BSEC and the diplomatic actions undertaken by Turkey in the early 1990s in order to institutionalize this subregional organization. For the implementation of BSEC, Turkey had started negotiations with Bulgaria, Romania and the Soviet Union as early as 1990. These states received a "draft BSEC Frame Agreement" from Turkey (Manoli 2016, 57), and follow-up meetings were held throughout 1991 in Bucharest, Sofia and Moscow. "At these preliminary meetings a draft document determining the framework for subregional cooperation was prepared" (ibidem). From my perspective, even if Romanian authorities would have approached differently the organization of BSF, this subregional initiatives was doomed to fail anyway. For the most important tactical error was not the BSF format, as Celac put it, but its very security agenda. And this is another example of how misperceptions of the Black Sea's specific strategic milieu led to a tactical error. The initial security agenda of BSF was dominated by hard security concerns, such as "regional implications of the continuing 'frozen' conflicts", "the implementation of the 'Southern Flank' provisions of the CFE Treaty", "broader issues of regional cooperation, including the feasibility of major transnational projects" (Manoli 2016, 55). BSEC, that I have previously singled out, has turned out to be the most successful subregional initiative in the Black Sea area due to the fact that hard security matters have never appeared on its agenda. In other words, Turkey has systematically desecuritized BSEC and this is exactly what assured its long-term survival. The only type of high security concern that has ever made it onto the BSEC's agenda was the issue of organized criminality. Instead, BSEC focused itself on areas such as economy, transport, agriculture, which eventually generated the "cumulative effect" (Manoli 2016, 154) of stabilizing the region. Given that BSF's initial agenda securitized issues that BSEC had systematically desecuritized, pernicious effects were quickly felt. First, the Russian Ambassador to Bucharest did not formally participate at the 2006 BSF summit that was organized in Bucharest. By attending the BSF summit only as an observer, the Russian Ambassador did not discuss or sign any document (Manoli 2016, 55). Second, Turkey and Greece, although formal participants at the summit, considered that BSF was to duplicate BSEC. Thus, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Greece did not endorse Romania's subregional initiative.

Consequently, Romanian authorities came up with the proposal to dilute the initial security agenda of BSF. And thus a security agenda dominated by hard security concerns eventually turned itself into a low politics-type security agenda, that laid emphasis on the role of democratization and civil society in regional initiatives. This was another tactical error, which just showed the state of disarray Romanian authorities found themselves into. For BSF's final and diluted security agenda just duplicated Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN), a regional organization that was set up in the late 1990s (Aydin 2004). Consequently, due to all this tactical errors, that stemmed from misperception of the Black Sea's specific security milieu, the 2006 BSF summit in Bucharest was the first and the last of its kind.

Elite misperceptions that led to tactical errors is not the only subsystemic factor that accounts for the failure of BSF. By bringing back in statesmen and their personal political calculus, as another subsystemic factor, neoclassical realism proves its heuristic utility in the case of BSF. Seemingly, President Bănescu pushed hard for the organization of BSF out of personal political calculus. Labeled as a "foreign policy populist" (Tudoroiu 2014), President Bănescu instrumentalized BSF in order to capitalize on Romanians' hard feelings against the Russian Federation, which has been perceived by most Romanians as either an oppressor or an enemy. "For a time, the Black Sea-centered anti-Russian discourse helped Bănescu to increase his domestic popularity and strongly influence Romanian politics" (Tudoroiu 2014, 167). At the same time, President Bănescu hoped that his anti-Russian rhetoric and initiatives in the Black Sea area would convince the U.S. to politically support his authoritarian regime at home (Severin 2015, 371). Former Prime-Minister Adrian Năstase, President Bănescu's main opponent in the 2004 presidential elections, contends that the U.S. eventually supported Mr. Bănescu in 2012, when the government party organized a presidential impeachment referendum (Năstase 2012, 65). And yet the U.S. did not fully support the Bănescu Doctrine in the Black Sea area, despite the 2008 President Bush's statement, that stressed Romania's leadership in the region. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Adrian Severin argues that American authorities were taken by surprise when President Bănescu came up with the Black Sea's internationalization initiative. According to Mr. Severin, the U.S. had no intention to assume greater responsibilities toward Romania, other than the ones stemming from Romania's NATO membership (Severin 2015, 375). Therefore, at least according to Mr. Severin, the U.S. did not fully back BSF, an aspect that Mr. Bănescu did not factor in.

Tactical errors were also committed with respect to BSS. First, at the top of the BSS's security agenda was Romania's request for EU's involvement in solving the Black Sea frozen conflicts, that "Kremlin had planned to keep them frozen until NATO bore out its plans to continue its march to the East" (Tsygankov 2016, 201). Undoubtedly, Romania's request was in line with its strategic interests. But Romanian authorities should have already known that a high politics-type security



agenda had little chances of success in the Black Sea area. Eventually, and in a rather indirect manner, President Bănescu acknowledged his tactical error. “For the time being, in the Black Sea region we’ve noticed the need for a pragmatic approach, focused on cooperation on less sensitive areas, such as researches devoted to the environment protection, that at the same time may strengthen the current cooperation format” (dcnews.ro 2014). Second, Romania entrusted the BSS’s security agenda to Germany, which eventually put it on the 2007 European Commission’s security agenda. Tactically, it was a smart move, considering that Romania, as a new comer in the European club, had neither the expertise (Kuus 2014, 121) nor the geopolitical clout to influence the European Commission’s security agenda. And yet, to think that Germany would fully back a regional initiative that was at odds with the Russian Federation’s strategic interests in the Black Sea was another telling example of Romanian authorities’ strategic naivete. In 2003, Germany opposed the plan of sending to the Republic of Moldova a peacekeeping mission under the aegis of the EU (Popescu 2013). One year after BSS had made it onto the European Commission’s security agenda, Germany opposed NATO’s enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia at the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest,

I now move to the Iohannis Doctrine and to its main strategic initiative in the Black Sea area, namely BSFT. Undoubtedly, BSFT was triggered mainly by the 2014 Ukrainian crisis which aggravated Romanian elites’ external security dilemma in the Black Sea area, especially because Romania’s capabilities in the region are no match to the ones of the Russian Federation. By institutionalising BSFT, Romanian authorities hoped to militarily balance, at least to a certain extent, the Russian Federation in the Black Sea. Eventually, BSFT failed because the Bulgarian Prime-Minister, Mr. Boiko Borisov, vetoed Romania’s initiative, despite other prominent Bulgarian politicians’ willingness to back it. Even Turkey, a strong opponent of BSFT in 2006, endorsed BSFT in 2016. From my perspective, what best explicates the failure of BSFT are subsystemic factors, such as misperceptions of the Black Sea’s security environment and personal political calculus of statesmen, that led to tactical errors that Romanian authorities committed again. First, BSFT was another attempt to bring to the fore hard security issues. As I’ve already pointed out, the only subregional initiative that has survived in the strained security environment of the Black Sea is BSEC, because it has constantly desecuritized its agenda. And this is exactly what has assured cooperation under the aegis of BSEC for more than two decades. The fact that Romanian authorities don’t understand that desecuritization – not securitization – is the key for cooperation in the Black Sea (Malița and Dungăciu 2014) represents a telling example of elites’ misperception of a specific security environment. Second, Romanian authorities had no knowledge of an important principle of Bulgarian foreign policy, that is, “always with Germany, never against Russia” (Tudoroiu 2014, 171). In other words, Romanian authorities should have known better the Bulgarian public’s genuine sympathy towards

Kremlin and, consequently, the fact that, out of personal political calculus, Prime-Minister Borisov could not afford to alienate his own public. Moreover, Bulgarian politicians have done their best to link their country to would-be Russian energy projects, i.e., Burgas-Alexandropolis pipe line and South Stream gas pipeline. Whilst in the case of BSF, President Bănescu's personal political calculus explains, to a certain extent, the failure of this strategic initiatives, Mr. Borisov's political calculus is what best explicates the failure of BSFt. I argue that President Iohannis's personal political calculus did not come into play in the case of BSFt. In sharp contrast to its predecessor, President Iohannis has never been a "player-president" (Tudoroiu 2014, 165). Thus, BSFt emerged out of strategic concerns rather than reasons related to foreign policy populism.

### CONCLUSIONS

The emphasis placed by neoclassical realism on subsystemic factors shows that, at least in some particular cases, such as BSFt, personal political calculus more effectively accounts for the failure of certain subregional initiatives than systemic factors. In other cases, such as BSF and BSS, misperceptions of the Black Sea's specific security environment and also personal political calculus of different statesmen led to tactical errors that sped up the failure of Romania's subregional initiatives. Systemic factors' impact on the failure of both BSF and BSS proved to be more important than the influence of subsystemic factors. And yet, by bringing into play subsystemic factors, one will get a broader perspective on the reasons why Romania failed to improve its regioness in the Black Sea area.

Neoclassical realism is a useful heuristic instrument for the study of continuity and change in any state's grand strategy. In scrutinizing both the Bănescu and the Iohannis Doctrines by the Black Sea through the lens of neoclassical realism, one gets a better grasp on Romania's efforts to part ways with a closed-sea view and to institutionalise an open-sea perspective, which has marked Romania's strategic behavior as a NATO and EU member. This passing from a closed-sea perspective to an open-sea view compels Romania to alter the 1936 Montreux Convention, at least until external balancing will prove a more effective way to offset Romania's deficit of capabilities in the Black Sea area in comparison to an internal balancing strategy.

Both President Bănescu and President Iohannis sought to institutionalise a revisionist strategy for Romania by the Black Sea. On a general note though, Romania's grand strategy seeks to defend the *status quo*. The article has pointed out that there are some important differences between the Bănescu and the Iohannis Doctrine, despite the fact that both of them have placed emphasis on the internationalization of the Black Sea. First, following the 2008 Georgian War and

the 2014 Ukrainian Crisis, the Iohannis Doctrine completely dropped from its security agenda Romania's civilizing mission in the Black Sea area. Therefore, under President Iohannis, no Freedom Agenda-type security policies occurred. Second, personal political calculus played no role in the Black Sea security policies of the Iohannis administration. In other words, President Iohannis main subregional initiative by the Black Sea, namely, BSFT, was propelled not by reasons related to foreign policy populism, as in the case of BSF and BSS, but rather by the coercions of a strained security environment.

### REFERENCES

- ANGELESCU, I. (2011). New Eastern Perspectives? A Critical Analysis of Romania's Relations with Moldova, Ukraine, and the Black Sea Region. *Perspectives. Review of International Affairs* 19 (2): 123-42.
- ASMUS, R. D., DIMITROV K. and FORBRIG, J. (eds.). (2004). *A New Euro-Atlantic Strategy for the Black Sea Region*. Washington D.C.: The German Marshall Fund of the United States.
- ASMUS, R. D. (2010). *A Little War that Shook the World. Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West*. St. Martin's Press.
- AYDIN, M. (2004). *Europe's next shore. The Black Sea region after EU enlargement*. Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies.
- BETEA, L. (2008). *Partea lor de adevăr* [Their Part of Truth]. București: Compania.
- BOYS, J. D. (2015). *Clinton's Grand Strategy. U.S. Foreign Policy in a Post-Cold War World*. London: BLOOMSBURY.
- CAZAN, R. (2016). Klaus Iohannis: România, furnizor de securitate și pol de stabilitate în regiune [Klaus Iohannis: Romania, Security Provider and Stability Point in the Region]. *capital.ro*. July 1. <https://www.capital.ro/klaus-iohannis-romania-furnizor-de-securitate-si-pol-de-stabilitate-in-regiune.html> (accessed January 10, 2019).
- CIUTĂ, F. (2008). Region? Why Region? Security, Hermeneutics, and the Making of the Black Sea Region. *Geopolitics* 13 (1) : 120-47.
- click.ro. (2014). Traian Băsescu, la summit: O să facem Marea Neagră lac NATO [Traian Băsescu at the Summit: We Will Turn the Black Sea into a NATO Lake]. *click.ro*. <https://www.click.ro/news/national/traian-basescu-la-summit-o-sa-facem-marea-neagra-lac-nato> (accessed February 20, 2019).
- COLLINS, K. (2009). Economic and Security Regionalism among Patrimonial Authoritarian Regimes: The Case of Central Asia. *Europe-Asia Studies* 61 (2): 249-81.
- dcnews.ro. (2014). Băsescu, interviu în presa turcă [Băsescu, Interview in the Turkish Press]. *dcnews.ro*. February 5. <https://www.dcnews.ro/basescu-interviu-presa-turca-dorim-exploatarea-comuna-petrolului-si-gazelor-din-marea-neagra-resursele-energetice-fac-din-romania-un-potential-lider-regional-421690.html> (accessed January 10, 2019).
- DEVLEN, B. and ÖDAMAR, Ö. (2009). "Neoclassical Realism and Foreign Policy Crises." In *Rethinking Realism in International Relations. Between Tradition and Innovation*, eds. A. Freyberg-Inan, E. Harrison, and P. James, 136-63. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- DRĂGHICI, M. (2016). Iohannis: „O flotă la Marea Neagră este o prostie” [Iohannis: “A Fleet by the Black Sea is a Stupid Thing”]. *Gândul,info*. June 16. <http://www.gandul.info/stiri/iohannis-o-flota-nato-la-marea-neagra-este-o-prostie-15498477> (accessed January 25, 2019).

- DUECK, C. (2006). *Reluctant Crusaders. Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- DUECK, C. (2015). *The Obama Doctrine. American Grand Strategy Today*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- DUNGACIU, D. (2015). "Geopolitics and Security by the Black Sea. The Strategic Options of Romania and Republic of Moldova." In *Geopolitics, Development, and National Security. Romania and Moldova at the Crossroads*, eds. S. Văduva and A. R. Thomas, 23-52. London: Springer.
- DUNN, K. C., and NEUMANN, I. B. (2016). *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- EDER, T. S. (2014). *China-Russia Relations in Central Asia. Energy Policy, Beijing's New Assertiveness and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Geopolitics*. Wiesbaden: Springer.
- GALLAGHER, T. (2004). *Furtul unei națiuni. România de la comunism încoace* [Theft of a Nation. Romania since Communism]. București: Humanitas.
- GALLAGHER, T. (2010). *Deceniul pierdut al României. Mirajul integrării europene după anul 2010* [Romania's Lost Decade. The Mirage of European Integration after 2010]. București: ALL.
- HENDERSON, K. and WEAVER, C. (2016). *The Black Sea Region and the EU Policy. The Challenge of Divergent Agendas*. New York: Routledge.
- HILL, W. H. (2018). *No Place for Russia. European Security Institutions Since 1989*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- HITCHINS, K. (1998). *România 1866-1947* [Rumania 1866-1947]. București: Humanitas.
- IVAN, R. (2016). "Black Sea Regional Leadership in Romanian Foreign Policy Discourse." In *New Regionalism or No Regionalism? Emerging Regionalism in the Black Sea Area*, ed. R. Ivan, 155-74. New York: Routledge.
- JOJA, I. and MANEA, O. (2018). 2018 NATO Summit: Finally a focus on the Black Sea?. *realcleardefense.com*. July 11. [https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/07/11/2018\\_nato\\_summit\\_finally\\_a\\_focus\\_on\\_the\\_black\\_sea\\_113596.html](https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/07/11/2018_nato_summit_finally_a_focus_on_the_black_sea_113596.html) (accessed February 15)
- KIMBALL, J. (2006). The Nixon Doctrine. A Saga of Misunderstanding. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36 (1): 59-74.
- KUUS, M. (2007). *Geopolitics Reframed. Security and Identity in Europe's Eastern Enlargement*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- KUUS, M. (2014). *Geopolitics and Expertise. Knowledge and Authority in European Diplomacy*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
- LAYNE, C. (2009). "The Influence of Theory on Grand Strategy. The United States and a Rising China". In *Rethinking Realism in International Relations. Between Tradition and Innovation*, eds. A. Freyberg-Inan, E. Harrison and P. James, 103-35. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- LEGVOLD, R. (2016). *Return to Cold War*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- LISIERO, D. (2008). *American Doctrine*. New York: Lulu.
- MALIȚA, M. and DUNGACIU, D. (2014). *Istoria prin ochii diplomatului* [History through the Eyes of A Diplomat]. București: Rao.
- MÄLKSOO, M. (2010). *The Politics of Becoming European. A Study of Polish and Baltic post-Cold War Security Imaginaries*. London: Routledge.
- MANOLI, P. (2016). *The Dynamics of Black Sea Subregionalism*. New York: Routledge.
- MICHAELS, J. H. (2011). Dysfunctional Doctrines? Eisenhower, Carter and U.S. Military Intervention in the Middle East. *Political Science Quarterly* 126 (3) : 465-92.
- MIHĂILĂ, A. (2004). Traian Băsescu: vreau o axă Washington-Londra-București! [Traian Băsescu: I want a Washigton-London-Bucharest Axis!]. *9am.ro*. December 14. <https://www.9am.ro/stiri-revista-presei/Politica/1524/Traian-Basescu-Vreau-o-axa-Washington-Londra-Bucuresti.html> (accessed February 10, 2019).

- MILEVSCHI, O. (2016). "The Russian Factor in the Wider Black Sea Region. Inconclusive Status Quo or a Neo-Imperial Strategy?" In *New Regionalism or No Regionalism? Emerging Regionalism in the Black Sea Area*, ed. R. Ivan, 111-37. New York: Routledge.
- NĂSTASE, A. (2012). *Lumea, americanii și noi* [The World, Americans and US]. Geamăna: Tiparg.
- NICULESCU-MIZIL, P. (2002). *O istorie trăită* [A History that I have Lived]. București: R. A. Monitorul Oficial.
- PETROVA, T. (2014). *From Solidarity to Geopolitics. Support for Democracy Among PostCommunist States*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- POPESCU, N. (2013). *Politica externă a Uniunii Europene și conflictele post-sovietice* [EU's Foreign Policy and Post-Soviet Conflicts]. Chișinău: Cartier.
- revista22.ro. (2014). Creșterea rolului NATO în Marea Neagră ... [The Increase of the NATO's Role in the Black Sea ...]. *revista22.ro*. May 25. <https://revista22.ro/actualitate-interna/cresterea-rolului-nato-in-marea-neagra-8203a-fost-principalul-subiect-al-discutiilor-presedintelui-traian-basescu-cu-senatorul-american-bob-corker> (accessed January 10, 2019).
- RIPSMAN, N. B, TALIAFERO J. W. and LOBELL, S. E. (2016). *Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- RISSE, T. (2010). *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- SANDERS, D. (2014). *Maritime Power in the Black Sea*. Surrey: Ashgate.
- SEVERIN, A. (2011). *Locurile unde se construiește Europa. Adrian Severin în dialog cu Gabriel Andreescu* [The Places Where Europe is Built. Adrian Severin in a Dialogue with Gabriel Andreescu]. Iași: Polirom.
- SEVERIN, A. (2015). *România, subiect sau obiect al geopoliticii?* [Romania, Subject or Object of Geopolitics?]. București: Compania.
- SCHNAPPER, D. (1998). *Community of Citizens. On the Modern Idea of Nationality*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- SIRACUSA, J. M., and WARREN, A. (2016). *Presidential Doctrines. U.S. National Security from George Bush to Barack Obama*. New York: ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD.
- STENT, A. A. (2014). *The Limits of Partnership. U.S. – Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- TRIANAPHYLLOU, D. (ed). (2010). *The Security Context in the Black Sea Region*. Routledge: New York.
- TSYGANKOV, A. P. (2016). *Russia's Foreign Policy. Change and Continuity in National Identity*. Lanham: ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD.
- TUDOROIU, T. (2014). The Regional Foreign Policies of Black Sea "New Populist" Leaders. *Debatte*. 22. No. 2: 161-180.
- UNGUREANU, R. (2015). România este și trebuie să rămână factor de stabilitate ... [Romania is and Must Remain a Stability Factor ...]. *rador.ro*. November 5 <http://www.rador.ro/2015/11/05/romania-este-si-trebuie-sa-ramana-factor-de-stabilitate-a-declarat-prim-ministrul-interimar-sorin-campeanu/> (accessed February 10, 2019).
- ziaruldeiasi.ro. (2005). Basescu: Rusia tratează Marea Neagră ca pe un lac rusesc [Bănescu: Russia Treats the Black Sea as a Russian Lake]. *ziaruldeiasi.ro*. September 17. <https://www.ziaruldeiasi.ro/national-extern/basescu-rusia-trateaza-marea-neagra-ca-pe-un-lac-rusesc~ni3r7j>. (accessed February 10, 2019).
- WATSON, R. P., GLEEK, C. and GRILLO, M. (eds.). (2003). *Presidential Doctrines. National Security from Woodrow Wilson to George Bush*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- WATTS, L. L. (2013). *Cei dintâi vor fi cei din urmă. România și sfârșitul Războiului Rece* [Romania, the Clash within the Warsaw Pact & The End of the Cold War]. București: Rao.
- WATTS, L. L. (2014). *Aliați incompatibili. România, Finlanda, Ungaria și al treilea Reich* [Incompatible Allies. Romania, Finland, Hungary, and the Third Reich]. București: Rao.

- WEAVER, C. (2016). *The Politics of the Black Sea Region. EU Neighbourhood, Conflict Zone or Future Security Community?* New York: Routledge.
- 9am.ro. (2008). Băsescu încoronat lider la Marea Neagră [Băsescu Crowned as a Leader of the Black Sea]. *9am.ro*. April 3. <https://www.9am.ro/stiri-revista-presei/Social/88552/Basescu-incoronat-lider-la-Marea-Neagra.html> (accessed January 10, 2019).