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THE ETHICS OF THE DISCOURSE OF POWER AND DE-GLOBALIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GREAT POLITICAL CRISES

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Abstract: *The present paper aims to unravel the discourse of power underpinning international media and political communication and to show that we are witnessing a discourse with compelling effects in determining the public to opt for de-globalization or exit. The theoretical perspectives used in the current study blend critical concepts and observations, from the analysis of finitude and power, the ethics of discourse and the problematics of the truth, the influence exercised through political and journalistic discourse, to hegemony and the symbolic power of discourse. Moreover, the risks of power are identified through case studies, which analyze the risks of globalization as well as critical theories of de-globalization.*

Keywords*: ethics, political discourse, globalization, power, media coverage*

Methodology

The analysis of the discourse of power and political ideologies, of domination through speech acts in social and political contexts, but also the analysis of power relations between world states follows the critical trajectory of political discourse. "CDA [Critical discourse analysis] focuses on ways in which discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominate in society" (Van Dijk 353). The framework for the critical analysis of political discourse, as it is developed by politicians, institutions or journalists, includes notions or concepts such as "power, dominance, hegemony, ideology, discrimination, interests, institutions" (354) and its objective is to examine the ways in which power relations dominate the public discourse through international mass-media and can control it. My corpus comprises twenty articles from the American, British and Russian press, selected in April 2018, during the time of the armed attack in Syria. The selection aims to encompass the political perspectives related to the political crisis, the politicians' discourse, the journalists' discourse, but also the "voice" of the public affected by political conflicts.

The ethics of discourse

Kantian philosophy adds value or morality to character including, at the same time, the concepts of "the good" and "duty" (Kant 23). Kant hints at love in the passages of the Scripture – "Morality leads inevitably to religion" (25) – and he admits that "well-doing out of duty ... is the practical, not the pathological love, and can be found in will, not in the propensities of sensation." "*Cogito* is connected to the good and duty, if your maxim becomes a universal law. If what you think for yourself can be applied to others, then we have the "condition of good will itself, whose value lies above everything."

Self-awareness (or awareness of the limits of the human being) is mentioned by Michel Foucault, in *The Order of Things* (*Les Mots et les choses*), in his analysis of human finitude. In order to have self-awareness, humans must be in possession of knowledge and judgement, to dissociate the imperfect from the perfect, balance from imbalance, illusion from objective truth, to know their limits, relying on "truth at the level of discourse" (Foucault 430). The analysis continues with the meaning of *cogito*. Pondering on the relation between being and thought, Foucault argues

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that *cogito* overrides "to be" or "to exist" (436). Reason would also not complete the meaning of *cogito* very well if empathy or the morality of things were missing and we would look at people in a different way, stripping them of their human rights, even at the level of discourse. Yet, Foucault adds another dimension to this concept because. As he states, "there is no possible moral for modern thought" and when the human being thinks, "it hurts or reconciles, it brings closer or it draws away, it tears apart, it dissociates, it binds or unbinds; it cannot help but liberate or avoid oppression" (Foucault 441). Hence, Foucault's meaning of *cogito* differs from the Kantian perspective, that of "the good" or "duty." In fact, *cogito* is self-centred thinking, which is based more on the conscience of the Self than the conscience of the Other, and Foucault cannot find any morality in the modern world. This is how ethics breaches can be explained, with all the knowledge a human being can possess.

It is perhaps that human and animal primitive instinct – "group territorial instincts," as Douglas Kellner (256) calls them in his analysis of the Gulf War –, which continued up to modernity, which marked its territory or marginalized the other, both physically and mentally. This is where we stray from what the moral character of the speaker involves, which Aristotelian thought pleaded for. We are situated in a discourse of hatred, at the extreme of evil, far away from what the Judeo-Christian principle or the Kantian categorical imperative entail. Thus, *cogito* represents just the conscience of relating to one's Self and not to the Other; the latter is excluded from the mathematics of moral thought. Social community and awareness are missing; individualism is on the rise, without the regret or intuition that the roles will be reversed.

Regarding the principle of the equality of opportunity, Bernard R. Boxill states, in his study "Equality, Discrimination and Preferential Treatment," that "the positions in a society should be distributed based on a fair competition between individuals" (366). Another aspect mentioned by Boxill is that individuals should have the same opportunities or the same advantages, "regardless of whether they are poor or rich, black or white, men or women, with or without disabilities" (366). In his dialogue with Umberto Eco, Carlo Maria Martini points out that the voice of conscience is revealed from moral experience and "establishes the main condition for a moral dialogue to be possible between people of different races, cultures, beliefs" (Martini 155). Regarding racial discrimination, Vittorio Foa admits that it is a pattern in the deep roots of hatred, a product of irresponsibility, an equivalent of intolerance. Foa regards ethnic war as a human product, not a natural one, thus finding the key to solving inter-human crises and conflicts just through human involvement: "we must acknowledge the victims and take, if possible, the weapon from the hands of the executioners" (129).

The discourse of power and domination during the great political crises

Populist authoritarianism implies the exercise of power, or power can be seen as "experimenting with authority" (O'Sullivan et al. 267). Analysing the concepts of *power* ("the probability of an actor in a social relation to be in a position of accomplishing his own will despite the resistance of others") and *domination*, Max Weber claims that the latter is more precise as it refers to the probability of complying with the given command. The three dimensions of power are theorized by Stephen Luckes as "the power of those who win in taking decisions," the power to exercise "control regarding the public agenda" and "the power of misleading" (qtd. in Stănescu 15).

Through ideology, the dominant classes extend their domination so that "their rules are accepted as natural and inevitable, and therefore legitimate and mandatory" (O'Sullivan et al. 166). Ideological discourses are in competition or rivalry, in clashing positions, even within "the dominant ideology," the objective being power. Thus, through legitimation, power and authority are "mobilized and constructed as if representing good" (O'Sullivan et al. 267). Foucault transfigures "the will to knowledge into a will to power which must be immanent to all discourses," and the

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order of truth is built by the politics of each society which accepts "certain discourses which makes them function as true" (Foucault, qtd. in Habermas 259). In Foucault's vision, the order of things is upended, power no longer depends on truth, and "the success of domination is ensured by the control system at all levels, political, social or economical" (ibid.). In "The Aporias of a Power Theory," Jürgen Habermas criticizes the fact that in these transformations of knowledge–truth–power, "the truth mechanism appears as one in several power mechanisms" (Habermas 259); he signals the subversion of all concepts due to "the hidden origin of the concept of truth in the concept of will to truth and knowledge" (259).

Ulrich Beck projects a rhetoric of globalization understood as "the escape of politics from the category sphere of the national state" and "the subversion of the foundations of national economy and of national states" (13-14). Yet these consequences or effects also follow a politics of the economy because, as Beck notices, globalization does not impose the dissolution of jobs and their creation in other countries which offer low salaries. As Beck concludes, we are witnessing a staging of globalization as a "threat factor" or as a cause of the weakening of nation-state politics. In fact, the threat comes from other directions, more specifically, from "politics oriented towards profit which destroys European life forms" (20) or from the politics of interest of firms. The effects are bizarre and somewhat paradoxical, and the risks also pertain to the small states: "the economic development eludes the control of national states, while its social consequences – unemployment–migration–poverty – accumulate in the collecting nets of the social national states" (29). The risks of globalization and the shock of globalization and denationalization have pushed the important states of the world (the United States, France and the United Kingdom) to the option of de-globalization. Perhaps one of the global failures is that there has not been sufficient regulation, as globalization refers to an "international-non-state," or "an international state with no international government" (Beck 28), and the big states have not managed to cover the rapid chain effects, such as migration and unemployment, but also global informational attacks which change perceptions in voting campaigns or referendums.

G. W. Kolodko raises numerous questions about the convergent or divergent systems, but also about the supremacy of one system over another: "the world in the style of the USA or China?" (74). Thus, we are witnessing a globalization of economy, information, the workforce, values, tastes and fashion, but also a globalization of terrorism, as Kolodko observes; therefore "the result might be both beneficial and unfavourable" (75). Another question would be whether globalization is a historical accident, but the author weighs in the benefits and their opposites, claiming that if we had more positive attributes, "it would be worth putting up with globalization" (74) rather than underestimate it.

Beck and Kolodko share a common opinion regarding economic globalization, claiming that "there should be one single currency, practically there should be the same regulations applied and only one governement in existence" (Kolodko 84). In Kolodko's opinion, politicians "should become regional, supernational and global," and stop being national; they should rely on a "participational globalization" instead of domination (89-91).

Henry Kissinger foresees two tendencies which could endanger international order: "a redefinition of legitimacy or a significant change in the power balance" (294). Kissinger alludes to the power imbalance at the borders of Europe, the dissonance regarding world order or the fact that international politics outlines the importance of borders, although the economy system seems to be global and ignores borders, aiming as it does at "eliminating obstacles from the way of goods and capital flux" (297). Thus, two concepts which seem paradoxical are being correlated because economy depends on globalization, yet "the process produces a reaction of a political type which more often than not goes against its goals" (297). What Kissinger finds odd is that even though nowadays there are the most numerous international multilateral forums in history (UN, NATO, EU), no cooperation solutions between powers or strategies and long-term resolutions have been found. In this regard, Habermas has been much more critical regarding the objectives and results of

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these alliances: "The Atlantic community of values which converges around NATO is just slightly more than a propaganda formula for the Ministries of Defence" (Habermas 342). The common cause of all crises, in Kissinger's opinion, would be "a systematic underevalation of risks," and the balance of world order can be achieved through "the reevaluation of the concept of power," internalizing and preventing risks, cooperation, or the diplomatic way between powers "in conformity with rules agreed upon" and assuming a "global, structural and legal culture" (Kissinger 299-301).

Coming back to the analysis of the international context of the great social and political crises, Heinrich Geiselberger (6-9) contends that "the weight centre of politics moves to the dimension of national belonging, the promise of safety and the recovery of that greatness of long bygone times" (6). This is all about the electoral pro de-globalization discourse of President Donald Trump, who fears the loss of economic sovereignty; he promises securing borders by building a wall at the southern border, stopping professional migration and establishing a tougher relation with China. Here is a random selection from the American President's statements:

> Our country has big issues. No one respects us anymore. We've become the laughing stock of the world. ISIS, China, Mexico outrank us. Everyone outranks us. Our enemies are stronger and stronger and we are weaker and weaker.
> When can we beat the Mexican at the border? They're laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now they're outranking us from an economic point of view as well. Believe me, they are no our friends. They're killing us from an economic point of view.
> I will end at once the illegal presidential decree of Obama regarding immigration.
> I will expel illegal immigrants. (Beahm 27-35)

"The exaggerated belief in the greatness and unity of a country" is typical of nationalist ideology, through foreign repression and economic isolation (Roskin et al. 64-65). At the same time, we can identify tendencies towards a new wave of protectionism – "the politics of excluding foreign goods in order to protect local producers" (Roskin et al. 368) – and isolationism – "the US tendency to minimize the importance of the external world" (370) –, which promotes anti-globalization movements and, implicitly, anti-immigration movements, both in the USA and in some EU states. The causes of protectionism and isolationism can be diverse and range from losing economic sovereignty, terrorist attacks and migration to informational attacks.

Since one of the risks of globalization is online misinformation, the European Commission recommended, in March 2018, through the panel of experts it collaborates with, self-regulation, education, codes of principles to which online platforms and social networks should adhere.[1] All these proposals follow a public debate launched in 2017, according to which "the choices and policies regarding migration" could be influenced through deliberate misinformation in the online media. Recommendations come too late and they cannot be applied through regulation. In April 2018, we learn that Cambridge Analytica, an American company which has obtained the data of 50 million Facebook users, following a psychographic segmentation. Not only was the data used in favour of Donald Trump during his electoral campaign, but it is also claimed to have influenced Brexit.[2]

Likewise, Arjun Appadurai, in "Democracy Fatigue," states that we are witnessing "the rejection at a global level of liberal democracy and its replacement with a sort of populist authoritarianism" (15). The author refers to Trump's USA, Putin's Russia, Erdogan's Turkey, the Orban government in Hungary, but also to the authoritarian right-wing leadership in France and Austria, using the word "regressions" to name the risks of neoliberalism, the ascent of abusive demagogues, the rise of social inequality, the return of sadism or contempt for women and

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/romania/tags/eurobarometru_ro.
[2] https://www.digi24.ro/opinii/scandalul-cambridge-analytica-explicat-901991

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minorities, the result of Brexit, and the failed coup d'etat in Turkey. The way in which the leading classes exercise their dominance, maintaining control "over the directions of economic, political and cultural development," hints at a hegemonic alliance of a political class or block of power (Gramsci, qtd. in O Sullivan et al. 160-161). Regarding the threats or risks to which Europe is subjected, Bruno Latour identifies three situations: "the countries who invented globalization skirting responsibility, the climactic change and the obligation to serve as a refuge for millions of immigrants and refugees" (129). As regards Brexit, Latour indicates the paradox of the country which "pushed the EU into becoming just a huge shop" and which nowadays "decides not to play the game of globalization" (129).

Case study: The media discourse on the attack of Syria

The list of the great regressions does not end here, but continues with the attack of the three great powers in Syria, even at the risk of breaking International Law and with no UN notice, which can be a sign of de-globalization as illegitimate as can be, as long as the stipulations of the international treaties are broken.

The objectives of the illocutionary acts of politicians broadcast in mass-media are perlocutionary, of action or influence over those who receive such messages. More often than not, the implicit message of the discourse acts with a much more intense force in media communication, with much safer success rates, as they appear subtler than the explicitness of verdictive or exertive acts. Moreover, within perlocutionary acts, there are "acts which have a perlocutionary objective (to convince, persuade) and acts which entail a perlocutionary result" (Austin 114). As J. L. Austin observes, "a warning can trigger the consequence of discouragement" (114), and the discouragement can produce alert, fear or panic.

Thus, there is the case of perlocutionary chain objectives, through "n" illocutions: the armed attack promised by President Trump opens not just the illocution of promise, but also the illocution of verdictives, threats of the type of interventionist politics through the use of military force, accusations and hatred against the Bashar al Assad regime: "Get ready for new and intelligent missiles!"; "You shouldn't be partner with an animal who gases his own people" (Roskin et al. 370). On the other hand, Putin claims that the coordinated attacks of the USA against Syria represent "acts of aggression" through which "the USA and its allies have attacked military and civil objectives in Syria, breaking the The UN Charter and International Law, without the approval of the Security Council"; "The attack on Syria has prevented the OPCW investigation."[3] We can read, moreover: "The USA attacked Russia by breaking International Law," with the subtitle "A Plot: the Missile Attack on Syria";[4] "An Attack in Syria: What happened. Why the information of the Pentagon and the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation differ significantly";[5] "The US attack on Syria struck Russia's reputation in the region."[6]

Although there was no permission from the British Parliament to attack Syria, Theresa May "reminds the British citizens that their country continued to be a global voice, even if separate from the rest of Europe." Bashar al Assad becomes the metaphor of evil in the Middle East, according to titles in the international press: "Strike in the heart of *evil*" (*Sunday Express*), "Counterattack against *evil*" (*Sunday Star*).[7]

[3] https://mir24.tv/news/16300769/putin-ataka-na-siriyu-pomeshala-rassledovaniyu-ozho accessed on 5.06.2018.
[4] https://ria.ru/syria/20180414/1518633755.html?inj=1 accessed on 6.06.2018.
[5] https://www.gazeta.ru/army/2018/04/16/11719003.shtml accessed on 6.06.2018.
[6] https://www.vedomosti.ru/politisc/articles/2018/04/15/766741-ssha-udarila-reputatsii-rossii-regione accessed on 6.06.2018
[7] https://m.digi24.ro/stiri/externe/mapamond/ce-scrie-presa-internationala-despre-atacul-din-siria-sunady-mirror-ruleta-ruseasca-a-lui-may-913048 accessed on 7.06. 2018.

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A comparative mirror analysis with the 1990 Gulf War indicates that only the characters are changed (George Bush vs Saddam Hussein), but the objectives, the framework, the scene and the effects are the same: "the president of Iraq, Saddam Hussein has a *bellicose* attitude, he will invade Saudi Arabia if they block the pipes which transport petrol from Iraq to the Gulf and there will be a bloodbath if the Americans don't intervene" (*Washington Post*), "Saddam Hussein only answers to force and does not take into consideration anything else" (Kellner 240-241), "Saddam Hussein [is] the second Hitler, *an embodiment of evil*" (Kellner 246). Bush claims that "The USA started a war against *the chaos and darkness* created by a *brutal dictator* who followed the law of the jungle" (*In These Times*, March 1991, qtd. in Kellner 248).

Douglas Kellner's study shows "the successful manipulation of mass-media," the way in which institutions followed the guidelines traced by the Bush administration and the Pentagon "which used images and speeches about the crisis then about the war to stimulate approval and military intervention of the USA" (Kellner 238-239). Noam Chomsky has also observed that, after the 11 September attack, Bush's doctrine was phrased as "free[ing] the world of evil" (Chomsky 77); the enemy is depicted as "the incorrigible wrongdoer" (Chomsky 21) through an offensive propaganda. "The global war against terror" (Chomsky 21) was the American justification for the invasion of Iraq (in 2002-2003); Chomsky points out, however, that "the invasion only succeeded in increasing the terrorist threat" (77). The motivation for joining the war oscillates between the attack against a country "which produces weapons of mass destruction" and "ridding the world of a tyrant who was connected to terrorists" (Chomsky 60). Chomsky argues that these motivations were not even believed by the ghost writers of Bush's speeches and that another motive was instantly produced, disseminated by the discourse of power: "we invaded Iraq to establish a democracy here, a real watershed for the democratization of the entire Middle East" (ibid.). The Iraq interventions are in fact related to the petrol resources "which lie exactly at the centre of world energy resources" (Chomsky 166) and which increase USA's strategic power. Another similarity between the attacks in the Middle East regards breaking agreements or resolutions of world organizations: the Iraq war began in August 2002, without consent from the USA Congress and "did not have UN approval." American arrogance is much older, dating back to 1960, a time when "the USA is by far the state which voted the most against the resolutions of the Security Council, followed by Great Britain" (45-46). Journalist Michael Smith published a series of secret documents in 2005, in *Sunday Times*, where there is the information that "Bush and Blair began their war in Iraq … six weeks before the approval of military action against Iraq could be offered by the USA Congress" (165).

Coming back to the context of the Syrian conflict (April 2018), *Tehran Times* accuses: "The USA, Great Britain and France leaders are criminals"; *Sunday Morning Post* states that "the airstrikes in Syria broke the principle of the UN." In the USA, hundreds of Americans protested and demonstrated in favour of peace, crying out in front of the White House: "Get your hands off Syria!"[8] The article "Why has Trump been threatening to attack Syria? (Hint: It's probably not about Syria") presents the Syrian attack as an interface for future elections. The journalists at *Washington Post* argument their point of view through the 2017 statistics, when the attack on Syria brought the Republicans 82% of votes.[9] In the same political context regarding the April 2018 attack, the journalists of *Washington Post* contended that "The president had no legal authority to order those airstrikes."[10] *Philadelphia Local News* posted an article, "Local protesters demonstrate against U.S. military strikes in Syria," about the local protest and the fifty people who gathered to show their discontent about the airstrike: "Yes to the refugees!"; "Stop Trump's war here &

[8] https://m.digi24.ro/stiri/externe/sua/video-protest-la-casa-alba-fata-de-atacul-din-siria-912943 accessed on 10.06.2018.
[9] https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/04/13/why-has-trump-been-threatening-to-attack-syria-hint-its-probably-not-about-syria/?utm_term=.2999d7333c5e accessed on 8.05.2018.
[10] https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/04/16/last-week-the-u-s-bombed-syria-but-not-much-changed-heres-what-you-need-to-know/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.4bdc4878284f accessed on 8.05 2018.

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abroad!"; "Not war"; "Health Care, Not War."[11] *TELESUR*, Venezuela's news channel, presented information regarding the "Global Anti-war Protests against US-led Aggression in Syria" in the USA, Chile, Mexico, Cyprus and Greece. The American protesters cried out: "NO WAR ON SYRIA."[12] In Chile, people waved Syrian flags and protested in front of the American Embassy. Some protesters were arrested. In Mexico, the activists gathered in front of the American Embassy demanded rights for everyone, regardless of the country of origin. In Greece, around 6,000-7,000 people participated in the protest, according to the Greek police. They cried out: "Americans, murderers of people." In Cyprus, people protested next to the British military base of Limassol. *The Wall Street Journal* presents footage of the American missiles and the public declarations of President Donald Trump, Prime Minister Theresa May, Lieutenant General Kenneth McKenzie and Secretary of Defence James Mattis, but also of the current situation in Syria. They declare that at least forty-three civilians died and another hundred were injured. Taking into consideration that the article does not contain declarations of the opponents (Russia, Turkey or Syria), we can consider it an article supporting American politics.[13] The *VOX* journalists raise questions regarding what will follow after this situation and present the true risk behind the bombing. They state that no American pilot was killed, and the number of local victims is still unknown. They present the declarations of the Secretary of Defence, James Mattis, who is concerned about the war:

> War is always unpredictable and dangerous; the war in Syria, which involves a number of regional powers and two nuclear-armed states, is exponentially more so. Indeed, Russia is already warning that Friday's bombing raid "will not be met without consequences," according to a BBC report. (James Mattis)[14]

Moreover, the *VOX* journalists claim that this was a symbolic war, "designed to signal loud and clear to the Syrian government that the use of chemical weapons would provoke American retaliation."[15] It is reiterated throughout the article that Assad decides the fate of this war: "But the escalation dynamic is entirely in Assad's control: If he wants to use more chemical weapons, the US will either have to respond yet again or be seen as giving Assad (and other dictators) a green light to use chemical weapons on their own people."[16] Hence, it is noticeable that the perspective of *VOX* supports American politics. They only present the declarations of American officials.

On the other hand, *The New York Times* presents in an objective manner footage of the damage produced by the armed attack, explaining from a geographical point of view the position of American targets on the map and also the reason why they were bombarded: they were the research centre of Damascus where chemical weapons were produced and two weapon storage units in Homs. *The New York Times* also presents satellite images of Syrian areas before and after the attack, but also video clips of the missile launches. The journalists inform that the American strike caused the death of more than forty people. Also, they have uploaded a video clip of the declarations made by the people responsible for National Defence (The Pentagon). Another clip presents objectively the declarations of Syrians regarding the attack, as they are concerned about the latest American actions, and consider that the primary methods of saving the country should be political, not military.[17]

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[11] http://www.philly.com/philly/news/syria-protest-attacks-assad-leftwing-kurds-rally-20180414.html accessed on 08.05.2018.
[12] https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/World-Protests-Western-Aggression-on-Syria-20180415-0008.html accessed on 08.05.2018.
[13] https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-u-k-launch-strikes-against-syria-1523668212 accessed on 08.05.2018.
[14] https://www.vox.com/world/2018/4/13/17236994/trump-strike-syria-russia-response-chemical-weapons accessed on 08.05.2018.
[15] Idem.
[16] Idem.
[17] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/13/world/middleeast/trump-strikes-syria-attack.html accessed on 08.05.2018.

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In France, the opposition has criticized President Emmanuel Macron harshly for intervening in Syria without a UN warrant. The Republicans think that "this concerted show of force risks fuelling terrorism and reinforces the idea that the Western world is hostile to the Arab world."[18] The president of the National Front, Marine Le Pen, "considers that France lost the opportunity of appearing on the international stage as an independent power."[19] Referring to the concepts of democracy and authoritarianism, President Macron declared in the European Parliament on 17 April 2018 that he opts for "the authority of democracy," not for an "authoritarian democracy": "Face à l'autoritarisme qui partout nous entoure, la réponse n'est pas la démocratie autoritaire mais l'autorité de la démocratie."[20] Regarding international conflicts, Macron mentions three types of contexts: the context of a European civil war, the context of the illiberal fascination and the context of geopolitical threats. Also, the French president is open to a "new European sovereignty" in which citizens are protected and thus he offers an answer to the "world disorder":

> nous pouvons dans ce cadre, et nous devons construire, une nouvelle souveraineté européenne par laquelle nous apporterons la réponse claire, ferme à nos concitoyens que nous pouvons les protéger, apporter une réponse à ces désordres du monde. (Emmanuel Macron)[21]

In the same context, we find out the reasons for the protection of European citizens: migration, insecurity, economic, social and environmental transformations:

> nous avons besoin d'une souveraineté plus forte que la nôtre, complémentaire et pas de substitution, qui seule permettra face aux grandes migrations, à l'insécurité planétaire, aux transformations économiques, sociales et environnementales d'apporter les bonnes réponses. (Emmanuel Macron)[22]

On the other hand, Macron promises a democracy which respects the individual, the minorities and fundamental rights, that is, a liberal democracy which does not allow the illusion of "power" ("*pouvoir fort*") or nationalism to set in.

The Romanian Member of the European Parliament, Maria Grapini, intervenes in the European Parliament with questions and observations for President Macron, criticizing the fact the politics of the great powers is narrowly focused and blatantly contradicts their statements: "Do you not think that your declarations about the fact that France and Germany should be the strong core and lead, implying the arrogance of being above the other states, leads to Euro-scepticism? How can we convince the citizens in my country, Romania, that they are equal at the table of negotiations if you declared that you want a two-speed Europe, that you want two states to be more state that the others?"[23] Although Emmanuel Macron replies that they are not closed to other states, he specifies that they rely, however, on the advancement of those who are powerful and ambitious": "In order to advance in Europe it is necessary that the most powerful, the most ambitious should advance, in the same way that Europe has always advanced. If Europe had always waited for the entire club, I'm sorry to say this, you would not be here!"[24] Maria Grapini's discourse is given right at the time of

[18] https://m.digi24.ro/stiri/externe/sua/video-protest-la-casa-alba-fata-de-atacul-din-siria-912943 accessed on 10.06.2018.
[19] Idem.
[20] http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/discours-du-president-de-la-republique-au-parlement-europeen/ accessed on 5.05.2018.
[21] Idem.
[22] Idem.
[23] https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/externe/ue/video-presedintele-frantei-certat-de-maria-grapini-raspunsul-lui-emmanuel-macron-923355 accessed on 5.05.2018.
[24] Idem.

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the armed attack in Syria and attacks the "arrogance" of the great powers and the abuse of power regarding the decisions made in the EU, hence the infringement of ethical principles, the annulment of the basic meaning of *cogito*, which does not include a possible moral as long as it relates only to the Self and not to the Other, as Foucault has asserted. "Two-speed" Europe excludes the other European countries; the monopoly excludes the ethics of political thought and action, as proven by the armed attack in Syria, which infringes on international treaties.

In the United Kingdom, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) opposed the British government decision, taken against International Law; the opposition parties and several NGOs condemned the Syrian attack: "Great Britain should play the role of a leader in seeking an armistice in this conflict instead of getting instructions from Washington to put the British soldiers in danger."[25] The main news sites of the United Kingdom offer a global image of the event, with briefings from both sides, on the one hand supporting the legitimacy of the attack by the US-UK-France alliance, but on the other hand, giving an official voice to Russia, Syria and China who condemn these acts, classifying them as "acts of aggression." *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian* and *BBC NEWS*[26] present the opinions of American, English, French, Canadian, but also Russian, Chinese, Scottish and Syrian officials. On the one hand, *The Telegraph* refers to Theresa May's declaration, who authorized the armed attack in Syria: "This evening I have authorised British armed forces to conduct co-ordinated and targeted strikes to degrade the Syrian Regime's chemical weapons capability and deter their use"; the statements of President Macron, who motivates the attack through a desire to stop the production of chemical weapons: "We cannot tolerate the normalisation of the use of chemical weapons"; and the statements of the Ministry of Defence of the United States: "It is time for all civilized nations to urgently unite in ending the Syrian civil war by supporting the United Nations backed Geneva peace process."[27]

On the other hand, *The Telegraph* publishes Syria's response to the armed attack, claiming a breach of International Law: "The aggression is a flagrant violation of international law, a breach of the international community's will, and it is doomed to fail," according to the state news agency SANA.[28] It quotes President Putin's reaction, condemning the actions of allied states and considering them violations of International Law:

> The Russian president condemned the overnight US-led missile attack on Syria and called for an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council, the Kremlin has said. Mr Putin said the US actions in Syria made the humanitarian catastrophe worse and caused pain for civilians, as well has damaging international relations.[29]

The Telegraph also mentions the position of Cyprus, which distances itself from involvement in the armed attack and suggests that these attacks be reduced in the case of Syria, as they do not bring a beneficial effect on the state:

> Cyprus distanced itself on Saturday from Britain's air strikes on Syrian targets, saying it had no prior briefing or involvement in the action launched from a British sovereign air base on the Mediterranean island. "We hope that it will subsequently be possible for military operations to be avoided in Syria and that sources of danger in this neighbouring country will be addressed with peaceful means and through dialogue."[30]

[25] https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/externe/sua/video-protest-la-casa-alba-fata-de-atacul-din-siria-912943 accessed on 10.06.2018.
[26] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43762251, accessed on 10.06.2018.
[27] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/04/14/syria-airstrikes-donald-trump-set-make-announcement-military/, accessed on 10.06.2018.
[28] Idem.
[29] Idem.
[30] Idem. *The Telegraph* quotes here Cypriot government spokesperson Prodromos Prodromou's statement.

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The Telegraph also publishes China's claims that the Syrian attack violates international legislation:

> China's foreign ministry has said that it believes a political settlement is the only way to resolve the Syrian issue and called for a full, fair and objective investigation into suspected chemical weapon attacks in Syria. Hua said that China has consistently opposed the use of force in international relations and that any military action that bypassed the United Nations' Security Council violated the principles and basic norms of international law.[31]

The *Telegraph* article includes the declaration of the supreme leader of Iran too. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei qualifies the Western attack against Syria as "a crime":

> "Today's dawn attack on Syria is a crime. I clearly declare that the president of the United States, the president of France and the British prime minister are criminals," Khamenei said in a speech, according to his Twitter account.
> "They will not benefit (from the attack) as they went to Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan in the past years and committed such crimes and did not gain any benefits, Khamenei said."[32]

In like vein, *The Guardian* structures the information chronologically and objectively, brings together the perspectives of all those involved, whether in favour or against the armed attack, and addresses the problematics of the attack's legitimacy also by publishing the Syrians' opinion about the armed attack: "This is a great step by President Trump by which he sends a hot message to Bashar Al-Assad that he can't continue killing his people by all kinds of weapons with the help of the Russians and Iranians."[33] *BBC News* analyzes the main problematics of the armed attack in Syria, presents the events objectively and offers space to all the voices involved, mentioning Russia's reaction:

> The US, UK and France have bombed three government sites in Syria in an early morning operation targeting chemical weapons facilities, they say. The move is a response to a suspected chemical attack on the town of Douma last week which killed dozens. Russian President Vladimir Putin said he condemned the Western strikes "in the most serious way."[34]

Conclusion: the new discourse of power and the media

My analysis of the press discourse, but also of the political perspectives reflected in the international media language, suggests that the politicians of the great states are nationalists and moreover that they rely on domination rather than participational globalization, in the USA, the UK and France. Globalization is construed as a threat factor (Donald Trump), the target being the supremacy of one system over another, and the generated effect is the power imbalance at the borders of Europe. Furthermore, we notice tendencies towards a new wave of protectionism and isolationism, promoting anti-globalization or anti-migration movements. Such apparent tendencies confirm, therefore, Foucault's theory that *cogito* relates exclusively to Self and not to the Other too.

[31] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/04/14/syria-airstrikes-donald-trump-set-make-announcement-military/.
[32] Idem.
[33] https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2018/apr/14/syria-donald-trump-announcement-chemical-attack-live accessed on 11.09.2018.
[34] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43762251 accessed on 10.05.2018.

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Although there is the promise of a democracy which respects the individual and fundamental rights, and which does not allow power to set in, we observe the opposite: the notion of "Two-speed Europe" or "the advancement of the powerful and ambitious," as President Macron declares, was criticized by the opposition in France in the contetxt of the attack policy in Syria. The armed attacks in Iraq and Syria (1990, 2002-2003, 2018) organized by the great powers (the USA, the UK, France) did not respect the agreements or resolutions of the world organizations (UN and NATO). On the one hand, power exercises control regarding public agenda through the mass-media. The global war against "evil" in the Middle East was the leitmotif of the armed attack both in 1990 and in 2018, supported non-ethically, with denigration, slander and insults, during Bush's and Trump's terms by a part of the British and American press: *Sunday Star* in 2018, *Sunday Express* in 2018, *Washington Post* in 1990, or *In These Times* in 1991. However, in 2018, *Washington Post* changes its approach to American politics and criticizes the Syrian armed intervention, signalling the illegitimacy of the attack. In the same critical approach, *Philadelphia Local News* and *TELESUR* announce American protests against the Syrian attack. *VOX* and *The Wall Street Journal* support the American politics without mentioning certain statements of the opposing parties, and *The New York Times* presents objectively the situation in international politics. In the United Kingdom, the opposition parties and CND are against the attack allowed by Theresa May. The UK press surveyed here (*The Telegraph*, *The Guardian* and *BBC NEWS*) may be said to present the Syrian attack objectively and respecting ethical norms, with sources from all the parties involved, including the position of Syrian, Russian and Chinese officials.

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