

ACADEMIC FOCUS

INTELLIGENCE IN THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

Bucharest, October 18-19, 2018

Intelligence in the Knowledge Society - the XXIV edition

The XXIV edition of the Intelligence in the Knowledge Society conference takes place in a highly dynamic international context, which challenges both intelligence organizations, as well as intelligence and security theorists and researchers. The hybrid nature of the current conflict, which is waged through both military and non-military means such as diplomatic, economic, cyber and information operations poses new problems for old concepts. The existence of fake news and manipulation demands that state and supra-national institutions adopt policies to counter misinformation, while intelligence agencies are forced to improve their analysis capabilities to attribute attacks which might seem uncoordinated. Furthermore, the Cambridge Analytica revelations showed, once again, the power of technology and of open source information, which, if properly processed and exploited, can represent both a useful intelligence asset and a threat to individual privacy.

The conference invites both practitioners and academics to weigh in on how intelligence, understood both as a process, as an organization and as an analytically validated product can address the current challenges. Contributions are expected to bring novel perspectives on intelligence analysis, history and theory, as well as strategic past and future developments. IKS represents a forum for conversation between academics and practitioners, where both perspectives are welcome and their inter-relations can be explored.

Topics:

1. *Patchwork quilt or common blanket?* Recent security developments in the European Union and beyond

While NATO remains the overarching framework for trans-Atlantic security cooperation, other bi- and multi-lateral security cooperation frameworks have also played an important role in the past decade. The Lisbon Treaty, for instance, allows for the initiation of a Permanent Structured Cooperation in the field of defense in the European Union. This has been officially operationalized in late 2017, allowing for member states who are willing to pool more of their capabilities. The EU is also becoming a hub for military cooperation, such as in the case of Operation Sophia, aimed at curbing

the arrival of illegal immigrants in the Mediterranean. Finally, bilateral and multi-lateral relations are being constantly updated and interrogated, such as in the case of the Intermarium initiative. The panel aims to explore the causes and consequences of these developments and to inquire into whether these are effects of the need to address new threats or whether they are part of the classical diplomacy tool. Furthermore, the panel looks at whether collective security remains a desirable goal or whether states are pursuing diverging interests in ensuring national security.

2. Understanding the hybridity of threat: implications for intelligence analysis

Countering hybrid threats and understanding their social, security, economic and political implications have been some of the most debated topics addressed by academics and practitioners involved in addressing hybrid warfare and its attribution. While in classical warfare, it was obvious who the aggressor was, those who employ hybrid tactics take great pains to increase deniability, even when direct military action is employed. Deniability and the confusion of the adversary are crucial especially when information operations are employed. These involve the creation and anonymous distribution of fake or misleading information which supports narratives aimed to subvert social support for the legitimate government and for a country's security policy.

Furthermore, given the complex nature of the tactics, designing appropriate responses is problematic since the adversary might employ proxies or cover his action with a set of media falsehoods.

In this context, intelligence analysts are hard pressed to tell truth from fiction and real intentions from strategic dissimulation. This panel aims to inquire into how the analyst is to tackle with: coordination between enemy actions, how to separate fake news from real events, how to become efficient in early warning, integration of technological innovation and multiple source exploitation.

3. Intelligence history - recurring patterns or new dynamics?

Current developments of the international security environment show, once again, that history is a cyclical process and that defining aspects of the previous century become relevant again. The normalization of power politics in inter-state relations, the reshaping of the global power relations, regional and international tremors caused by the clash of economic and security interests of old and new state and supra-national actors remind us of defining moments in the XX century.

The panel aims to debate defining action patterns in international relations from the perspective of intelligence studies, crucial moments, including those in the „secret war” which led to today’s developments. The panel thus represents a look over what is novel and what has been resurrected of the past.

4. Thinking and acting strategically in the age of uncertainty: what role for practitioners and academics in the process?

The dialogue between practitioners, experts, academics and policy makers has in the past decade proven difficult to engage and maintain, either due to the very different professional jargons or to the different outcomes they employ. In the field of strategic studies this problem has been particularly acute. While, academics aim to build models to understand the world, practitioners and experts desire to obtain an immediate solution to concrete problems and policy makers focus on identifying the right framework for the design and implementation of long term policy oriented architectures. In drafting strategic documents, professional categories should systematically engage in dialogue, with academics bringing theories, innovations and conceptual frameworks to the table, practitioners and experts identifying and evaluating the everyday problems that are to be addressed, and policy makers providing structural solutions for their implementation. With this aim in mind, this panel is meant to provide academics, experts, practitioners and policy makers with the right framework in which to debate on ardent problems they need to tackle mechanisms of cooperation

5. Security and freedom - contemporary European policies and future perspectives

The seemingly perpetual question of how to balance security and freedom has been given constantly different answers over the recent period. In the preamble of the European Security Agenda, the European Commission gives priority to fundamental rights and to the exercise of democratic accountability and control by national parliaments. At the same time, the actions it foresees represent a powerful move towards security: the strengthening of the European-wide databases such as: the Schengen Information System, the improvement of the Prüm framework and the implementation of the Passenger Name Record Directive. Conversely, through the *Digital Rights Ireland* and the *Tele2 Sverige* Decisions, the European Court of Justice has censured this view, and reminded Europeans that not all forms of data collection and processing respect fundamental rights. The panel looks for both empirical and theoretical papers outlining the debate and possible solutions for the dilemma of how to create security while maintaining individual liberty.

6. Intelligence theory – implications of contemporary developments on an old debate

Paradoxically, theory building in intelligence studies has been an area where a significant amount of work has been produced but little common ground has been found. Initially, intelligence theorizing belonged to practitioners, such as Michael Warner who debated among themselves on the meaning of the term. Within the next generation, the debate began to include academic language and theories, such as in the work of Stephen Marrin, who asked for a new conceptualization of the relationship between intelligence producers and intelligence consumers. Alternatively, Hamilton Bean, recommends the use of critical/postmodern theories to understand relations between the representation of intelligence and societal attitudes towards intelligence institutions. Finally, Jules Gaspard argues that a unitary theory of intelligence cannot be achieved since each author uses the term with a very different meaning and that “no essence” can be detected to the concept.

The panel invites authors to reflect on these issues and to criticize existing approaches in the field of intelligence theory building. Purely theoretical papers are encouraged, but also those reflecting on the impact of specific practices and overall theories are welcome.

* * *

Within this context, the “Mihai Viteazul” National Intelligence Academy invites both scholars and practitioners to submit paper abstracts for the 24th edition of its annual international conference ***Intelligence in the Knowledge Society***. The conference will take place in **Bucharest, Romania, on 17-19 October 2018**.

Those interested in participating are invited to submit the title and summary of their proposed presentation (abstracts of maximum 300 words) by **July 30th, 2018** at intelligenceconference@sri.ro. Acceptance notifications will be sent by **August 10th, 2018**, while final papers must be submitted by **September 25th, 2018**. In addition to requesting **no registration fee**, best papers will be selected for publication in the ***Romanian Intelligence Studies Review (RRSI)***.

Author guidelines and other organisational details can be accessed on the conference website – www.iksconference.ro and further inquiries can be addressed to Mr. Valentin Nicula, conference chair – email: intelligenceconference@sri.ro.