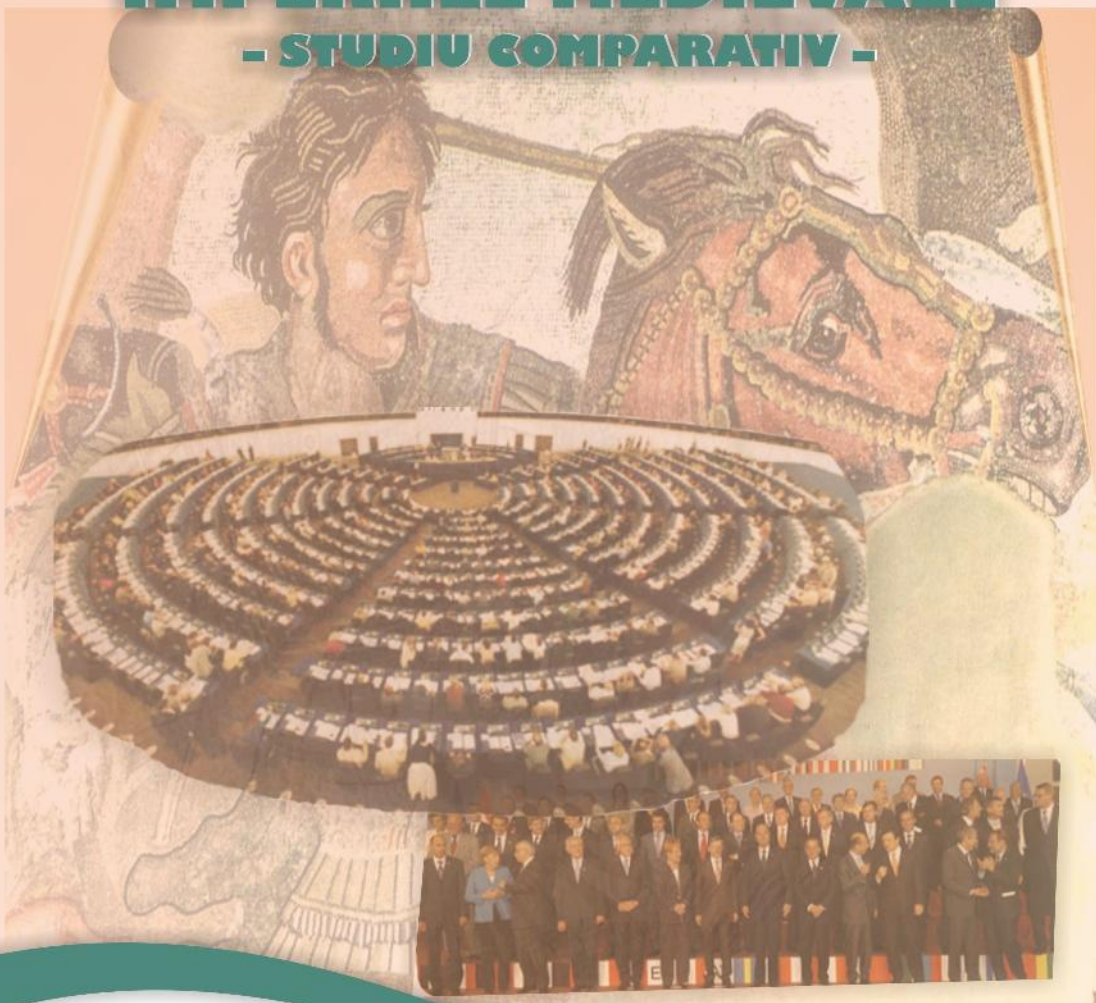


Mădălina Virginia ANTONESCU

UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ IMPERIILE ANTICE ȘI IMPERIILE MEDIEVALE - STUDIU COMPARATIV -



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Mădălina Virginia ANTONESCU

**UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ,
IMPERIILE ANTICE ȘI
IMPERIILE MEDIEVALE**

– STUDIU COMPARATIV –

Lumen

Iași, 2008

Mădălina Virginia ANTONESCU
Uniunea Europeană, Imperiile Antice și Imperiile Medievale
– studiu comparativ –

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DEDICAȚIE:

Închin această modestă lucrare Sf. Efreem Sirul, patronul scriitorilor, Sf. Nicolae, Arhiepiscopul Mirelor Lichiei și Sf. Filofteea de la Curtea de Argeș, patronii zilei mele de naștere, precum și Sf. Antonie cel Mare, patronul numelui meu, cu mulțumiri și laude pentru că am putut să termin de scris această carte.

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- “European Union – an Empire of XXI st Century? Towards an European – Unional Civilization?”, Ed. Cartea Universitara, Bucharest, 2004
- “European Union – a Modern Empire?”, Ed. Cartea Universitara, Bucharest, 2005
- “The Neo-Machiavelist Doctrine and its Incidence on the New American Concept of Security“, Ed. Lumen, Iasi, 2005
- “The European Union Institutions in the Post – Nice Stage. A Perspective of Constitutional Law”, Ed. Lumen, Iasi, 2007.

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FOREWORD

This paper, in its present, up-to-date variant, referring to the EU evolution from 1993 till present, in 2007, represents the first part from a set of books based on a personal theory about the EU imperial nature.

The object of this paper (which can be considered as a political essay, but also as a trans-historical study) is a comparison between EU, as a post-modern, original, contemporary kind of empire and the classic type of empire (a category including the antique and feudal empires). Obviously, this is not a comparison between EU and all antique and mediaeval empires, due to considerations of space and also, due to the fact that usually, the empires are following, as a rule, a specific pattern (concerning the modality of creation, the principle of their creation, the management of powers, the modality of extension, the causes of decline) that is a pattern specific to Martial empires (as empires created, extended and collapsed exclusively due to the use of military means).

The present book is continued by another book (published under the title “EU – a modern empire?”) in which the comparison between the old and the new types of empires is advancing, being concentrated on the analysis of the common points and the differences between EU and modern period’s empires (colonial type of empires and other types of modern empires), which are all representing classic empires (in our opinion). Meantime, another part of the present paper is based on the analysis of EU originality as a post-modern empire, from the perspective of a specific type of empires of the end of the XX-th century and the beginning of the XXI-th century: the type of empires-organization (like NATO, ASEAN etc.). Finally, into the 3rd book of this set (based on the premise of EU imperial nature, too), there are analyses of the main elements on which base the European Union can build a specific imperial civilization, one distinguished from the members states national cultures as types of states that generally, have built their old

empires (the paper exploring this scenario was already published in 2004, under the title “EU – an empire of XXI-th century? Towards an EU civilization”). This last book was centred on the analysis of EU as an imperial entity and also, on the conditions and capabilities necessary for a concrete edification of a genuine EU imperial civilization, as the quintessence of the European contemporary spirit.

These three books are the result of hard work, carried on between 1999-2000, when the European Union (as political entity officially proclaimed on the basis of the Maastricht treaty/1993) was on the beginning of its imperial evolution. During years, I noticed another elements, which, despite their specificity and their post-modern character, confirmed my theory about the imperial nature of Union.

At present, I could say that these three books based on this presumption can be considered as announcing the creation of an “academic school” (meaning a theoretic tendency, interested in analysing the EU imperial nature), as a beginning into studying this theory thoroughly, as an impulse for academics devoted to the study of European integration to be interested in this kind of approach, too, and to enrich it with their scientific contribution. I didn’t notice until now within the present literature about the EU political and legal nature, the creation of an imperial EU school of thinking. Nevertheless, it must be mentioned that European integration (in the EU stage) is something quite new, and that this school of thinking has all the time to be created (otherwise, I can say that, through this paper, I am launching a challenge to the birth of this kind of school of thinking).

On the other hand, we must perforce mention some approaches (still quite rare, some singular voices within the international relation theory) which associated EU with the idea of an empire: here one must mention authors like Jan Zielonka¹ or

¹ Jan Zielonka – “Europe as Empire. The Nature of the Enlarged Europe”, 2007. For this author, **EU is not changing into a state actor of Westphalian type**, but rather, **into a neo-mediaeval empire**, with soft, flexible, penetrable frontiers, with a multi-centered and multi-level

Thomas Diez and Richard Whitman² (which associated EU with a “post-modern empire”), Ole Wæver³ or Johan Galtung⁴ (which considers EU as a form of “joint imperialism”).

government, **an empire on concentric circles, with a fragile and foggy European identity**, without having a genuine *demos*, but having instead, **other soft forms of projecting the external power**. The “neo-medievalism” is used here to put into evidence the contrast between it and nation state. “Neo-medievalism” is a concept underlying the importance of the diversity characterizing EU and differentiating it in its relation to the Westphalian state. See “Europe as Empire”, conference given by Prof. Jan Zielonka, at HEI, on 30 March 2007, on the Occasion of the Doctoral Seminar of the International History and Politics Department (Seminary), <http://hei.unige.ch/sections/hp/documents/summaryirina.pdf>.

² Thomas Diez and Richard Whitman – “Analysing European Integration. Reflecting on the English School. Scenarios for an Encounter”, COPRI, Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, Working Papers, 20-2000, page 7. These authors **are clearly qualifying EU as a post-modern empire**, because, in their opinion, **EU is transcending the state system in order to develop a governmental system in which the separation between a clear internal hierarchy and an anarchical exterior order is not available anymore**. For these authors, focusing the analysis on EU international system, from the perspective of the English School of International Relations, is determining them to consider this international society (EU) as being structured as a **gradual empire**, having **a centre formed by the EU member states, with candidate states surrounding them into a circle**, until they join into the international European society. **The EU centre**, according to this opinion, **is able to impose its own system of government or parts of this, due to its hegemonic power, as an imperial centre, and also, to impose an identification of the candidate states to integration with its norms, values and interests**. But, due to its **gradual character**, the EU imperial power is decreasing as EU is coming near to its edges (*idem*, page 16).

³ Ole Wæver is analysing EU by starting with the Adam Watson’s study about the “Neo-Sumerian empire” and from the premise placing empire at the end of the hierarchy of its spectrum of international systems, as a social centre built on, **which is born due to the specific political will of having a centre** (see Adam Watson – “The Evolution of International Society”, London, Routledge, 1992). EU is not characterized, according to this vision, as having its own power, nor autonomy, and it is not capable of imposing its own will. For Wæver, **instead of being a “Neo-Sumerian empire”**, by the qualification of Watson, **EU seems to be rather of a “Neo-Medieval**

empire” type. In conformity with Waever, **the imperial metaphor can represent a point of start used to reflect the EU system of government.** Cf. Ole Waever – “Europe’s Three Empires: A Watsonian Interpretation of Post-Wall European Security”, in Rick Fawn and Jeremy Larkins (ed). “International Society after the Cold War”, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1996.

⁴ See its paper “The European Community: A Superpower in the Making” (Christian Ejlers, 1972). See authors like Jan Oberg – “Does the European Union promote peace?” Analysis, critique and alternatives, TFF, The Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, New Agenda, 2006:

2.<http://216.109.125.130/search/cache?ei=UTF8&p=Johan+Galtung++European+Union+%2c+a+form+of+joint+imperialism&fr=yfp-t-501&u=>

www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Oberg_EU_Promote_Peace.pdf&w=johan+galtung++european+union+form+forms+joint+imperialism&d=SGfTZrXiP7W4&icp=1&.intl=us.

This author considers that, among the EU objectives to promote peace and welfare of **its peoples**, **peace** represents one of the main EU objectives (that is, in my opinion, one of **EU imperial specific functions**, connecting in a political relation, the Union with the rest of the world). This kind of function, according to this author, is supposing **that EU should promote and protect its own values**, including the respect for cultural and linguistic diversity within its framework, **without mention** (in Lisbon treaty/ 2007) **any opening towards outer cultures**, nor the need of interaction or the cultural loan with these other cultures (it isn’t mentioned within the Lisbon treaty, as a treaty reiterating many of the European Constitution project disposals, **the importance of creating an intercultural dialogue**, as an EU specific imperial function, as post-modern, soft empire). In art. 2/TUE, modified by the Lisbon treaty, it is stipulated **a clear imperial function for the Union**, “to pursue the promotion of peace, of its values, and the welfare of its peoples”. In the align. 3 of the same article, the Union is engaging to respect the wealth of its cultural and linguistic diversity and to supervise the development of an European cultural patrimony – it is an internal specific function of this European empire –. This function of promoting and supporting its values and interests is interpreted by the above-mentioned author as a support of imperial values if these are put in danger or they are attacked or they are coming into opposition with values of the external space of empire. This author is underlying, nevertheless, that we are speaking about **EU values** and not about **the right of all peoples and cultures to fulfil their potential and their aspirations**. In art. 2/TUE modified by the Lisbon treaty, there are no references made either to **the exchange of cultural values between empire**

It must also be mentioned Robert Cooper⁵, with his theory about the forms of post-modern empire, and more recently, the

and the rest of the world, or to the promotion of a global ethical multiculturalism (as the European Constitutional project, rejected in 2005, the Lisbon treaty is not introducing in the art. 2 /TUE **the idea of intercultural dialogue**, of openness of the empire towards other cultures). If we are looking for the idea of **dialogue** as an inner component of the **democracy**, it is strange that EU as democratic empire, doesn't assume any function to contribute to the spread of democracy in the world, inclusively through the perspective of a dialogue with other cultures. Art. 2/TUE is based on the idea that **EU is promoting in an exclusivist manner the Western democratic model , the Western pattern of political thinking** , that would surely be registered as **imperialism**. Only in the align. 5 of this framework-article (for defining the imperial mission and functions of EU) the pillars of the general relation between empire and the rest of the world, are established but the **idea of intercultural dialogue is still missing**: "The Union is affirming and promoting its values and the interests and it is contributing to the protection of its citizens. The Union is contributing to the peace, security, lasting development of the planet, solidarity and mutual respect between peoples, free and equitable trade, the elimination of bareness, the protection of human rights especially of the children's rights, as well as to the narrow respect and to the development of international law, inclusively the respect of the UN Charter principles".

⁵ The author considers that there are **two types of post-modern imperialism**, from which the first one (which, in our opinion, can be applied in EU case), is the so-called "**voluntary imperialism**" of the global economy (IMF, World Bank) and its specific character, **that is the multilateralism**. These institutions are offering their support to the states which are willing to be integrated within the global trend of prosperity and investments. **EU looks like the most developed sample of a post-modern system**, representing security through transparency, and transparency through interdependence. EU, in this opinion, **is more a transnational system then a supranational one, a voluntary association of states and not a subordination of states under the central power**. Robert Cooper – "The Post-modern State", Sunday April, 7, 2002, in Mark Leonard (ed.) – "Reordering The World: The long-term implications of September 11" (Foreign Policy Centre: London, 2002), http://esiweb.org/pdf/esi_europeanraj_debate_id_2.pdf.

"The post-modern, European answer to threats is to extend the system of co-operative empire ever wider" said Robert Cooper, 2003, quoting also, Catherine the Great ("I have no way to defend my borders but to

President of European Commission, Jose Manuel Durao Barroso, with his association made between EU and the imperial idea⁶. Even taking this into account, we can not consider, despite (otherwise isolated) opinions⁷, courageous for using the association between EU and “empire” as a concept “compromised by the history”, that we are assisting to the foundation of a genuine European school about the EU imperial nature.

This fact is on one side understood, due to some reticence of the Europeans not to affect the European Union ideal, nor its democratic profile by associating it with a compromised political concept, considered to be repressive, non democratic, artificial, coercive, discriminating etc, attributes that are otherwise present into the most definitions about empire⁸”. From another point of

extend them”), and considering that “the European Union sometimes seems to be saying the same”.

⁶ “What we have is the first non-imperial empire... We have twenty-seven countries that fully decided to work together and to pool their sovereignty. I believe it is a great construction and we should be proud of it.” Jose Manuel Durao Barroso, conference with mass media, 10 July 2007, undertaken by James Lewis, American Thinker (dated July 11, 2007). Posted to Current World News & Trends, July 25, 2007 (EU), <http://www.ucg.org/worldnews/archiveAnalyses.htm>

⁷ Not all the literature about the “empire” is analysing it in a negative manner, as an obsolete, malign concept, which can not be applied to the present realities. For example, in a very interesting article (“Rethinking Empire in the Wake of Soviet Collapse”, [1http://www.princeton.edu/~mbeissin/biessinger.rethinking.empire.pdf](http://www.princeton.edu/~mbeissin/biessinger.rethinking.empire.pdf), page 6), Mark R. Beissinger considers that the study of international relations can not be exempt from analyses on **empire** inclusively regarded as a category of analyse, **the empire being interesting not only as a hegemonic aspiration, but as a result** (the acquisition of the hegemonic control, the implementation of coercive constant measures, a kind of dissipation of this imperial claim to the global level, its transformation into a strong framework of control regarding many nations).

⁸ A typical example of **negative definitions given to the empire** (the Marxist political doctrine) considers that empires, nowadays, are those colonial powers, regardless of their form of state organization, like the British Empire. An empire, according to this vision, has as characteristics the following: a policy of invasion, a metropolitan supremacy over the dependent territories,

view, this “gap” seems to be a paradox (we are referring here to the study of the EU imperial nature) in analysing EU politic profile, its objectives and way of working, while in the US case, for example, we can talk about the existence of a real imperial school of thinking (especially based on analysing imperial elements resulting from the US external policy).

Thirdly, it should be specified the fact that, in the present paper, it was quite difficult to operate a rigorous delimitation between “antique empires” and “mediaeval empires”. If some imperial structures were dominated in a specific period of the Antiquity, then, in what the historians are calling “Middle Age” as a period started, from a point of view, through the discovery of America by the Europeans, we do not always see the same empire (in its antique form) marking the stage of the mediaeval history. Instead, for other empires (that are more resistant, endowed with a bigger capacity to adapt themselves to the new regional political context or to the international context), we can speak, beside the “antique period”, about a “medieval period” of consolidation and imperial enlargement. Each empire is a dynamic entity, showing its efficiency to survive during the time, within a hostile political environment, and despite internal crises it can be able to regenerate and to project its power into a specific geographic region (or more). It is difficult then, to separate the empires in “antiques” ones and “medieval” ones (the relativity of the chronologic criterion), but in what the European Union is concerned, it can be said that EU remains a collective contemporary empire, a new, post-modern type of empire (especially at the level of the imperial principle of its working), that is the imperial classic type (Martial).

the oppression and the exploitation of the subdued nations, features which are, otherwise, at the origins of the “imperialism” concept – according to B.N. Ponomarev – “Political Dictionary“, Ed. Politica, Bucharest, 1959, pag. 285. Negative definitions about empire can be met nowadays, especially in the literature on the US imperialism after the Cold War.

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