

## ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES BETWEEN IMAGOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION AND ETHNO-PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

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**Abstract:** *In the context of a double change, at the political and social level, the armed forces and military profession imagological references remain almost unchanged. Because of the seeming transformation at the top of the military hierarchy and of certain non-favorable reports in mass media, the people confidence in army subdued to systematical erosion. Concerning globalizing and europeanizing issues, the state's institutions, included the army, began to relate to international standards. But the implementations of shapes without substances led to being aware of the fact that the axiological relief of the military organization culture is not shaped under the pressure of the Euro-Atlantic matrix if this relief is not drawn in an inner cartographic process. For knowing the local immovable from an internal perspective, a ethno-psychological relationship is necessary. The ethno-psychological reference lead to the adjustment of self-image in the context of imposed running in “idealized hetero-image” regime.*

**Keywords:** *social representation, confidence in armed forces, ethno-psychological perspective, hetero-image, self-image.*

### 1. SOCIAL REPRESENTATION OF THE ARMED FORCES. THE IMPOSED IMAGOLOGICAL REFERENCE

Before altering the value systems and transforming them in jigsaw puzzle structures, the cultural paradigm change of the contemporary society requires sketching out the size of the possible reconstruction, implicitly it requires the possibility of outlining the imagological reference points. Romania passed simultaneously from a political regime to another and from a cultural paradigm to another. This fact led to burning some stages, but also to erosion of some basis regarding the adoption of the new social and political horizons. The double change has been taking place slowly. The cultural behavior of the individual is changing by relating to a new ideological horizon - the only method of replacing an ideology based on certain principles by another one.

The change of the vision has as a guiding mark a controlled imagological reference: the postmodern liberal-democratic society. In spite

of the fact that the cultural behavior hasn't changed, the transition, more precisely the transitory stage of the entire society, still remains the natural result of attempts in gradual replacing of some cultural practices.

The standards have been replaced gradually. If in some systems the transitory running was short, in others the changes have been produced slowly, in the trend of the entire society's changes.

It is more relevant the fact that inclusively the large perception of phenomena has been related to the dynamics of changes in a particular rhythm of motion.

From the imagological perspective, the institutions kept their old references in identification. For example, the armed forces' institution has continued to relate to the rationalized myth of national identity. In the meantime, the officer profession kept the constitutive structure of organization on the base of three myths:

- of devotion, as a result of a superior motivation in accomplishing the tasks (even life risking),

- of professionalism come from the complex degree of training and  
 - of political equidistance, that led to the army configuration as a stable element among the state's institutions [1].

Maintaining the old references in identification of the military institution's imagological potential was the result of maintaining the old leadership structures. The changes at the top of the institution's hierarchy consist in a seeming replacing of the managerial corpus enclosed in inertia. But the new corpus was composed of elements of the old non-democratic and anti-liberal structures. This managerial structure adopted a false attitude of sustaining the transition process by practicing the control over the whole process and delaying the army reform and resizing in comparison with other state institutions (with mass/media, by example).

In this context, the cleavage between the managerial practice specific to other regime and the imaginary of the reform has increased considerably, contributing to the erosion of society's confidence capital in institution. If the early '90 was outlined by the print of two slogans: "*You told lies to the people / by television*" and "*Army is on our side*" that posed the initial positions of the two institutions - army and mass media - in the classification of the people's confidence, by extension of the multiform message of media the difference started diminishing. On the one hand, a considerable increasing of confidence rate in media - "*the guardian dog of democracy*", on the other hand, a slow erosion of confidence rate in military organization led to a percentage equalizing after 16 years, in 2006, and to a situation in the second position of society's options classification concerning the confidence capital.

Data referring to the population confidence rate in army represent the annual average scores obtained from the results published in Public Opinion Barometer, realized by The Gallup Organization, ordered by Open Society Foundation [2].

Protected by the "infiltrations" of media immediately after revolution, the army succeeds to keep the high score of confidence for seven years.

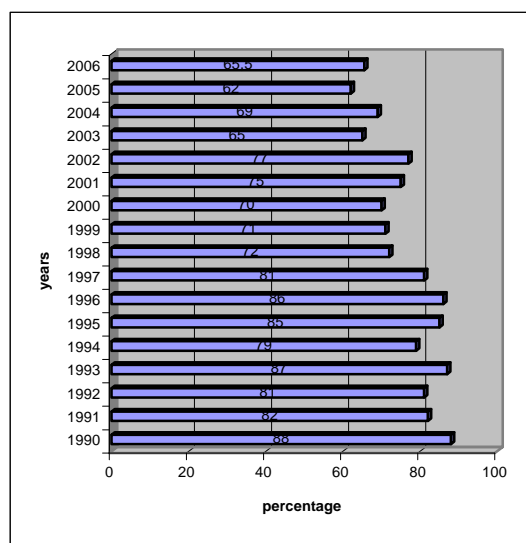


Fig.1 Confidence in armed forces

This period was marked by the lack of a certain coherent strategy in reforming the armed forces and by the lack of the conceptual outline in resizing the human resources management. After that, in the context of appearing in mass-media of a certain non-favorable reports and of estranging from the rationalized myth of united army as a stable element in the field of manifested tendencies of cultural unity in South-Eastern European area, ground by ceaseless fluctuations, army began to pay the tribute for some different standards in its resizing. Converting to Euro-Atlantic standards and reforming in this matrix created a dislocation on the imagological plan. The ideologists of the new conception are the people that changed the perspective, by replacing the false attitude concerning the change with the effective transformation of attendance horizon. The same as the imagological reference remains fasten in Romanian traditional values and targets the cultural unity, the ideologists of the new conception doesn't take into account of this fact and initiates a forced destabilization that determines the armed forces dislocation from the stable interval, 70-80% in confidence rate.

## 2. THE IDEALIZED HETERO-IMAGE. COPYING THE EXTERIOR SHAPES

In the context of transition social changes, the issue of relating to Europeanizing and globalizing (to *unitas multiplex*, translated in

*unity in diversity* in EU motto) [3] is deeply set off. Without coagulating the cultural substance dislocated in revolution, Romania mimes, through the agency of some political leaders shaped into the relief of some different systems of values, the approaching by *unitas multiplex* giving up at the chapter “*identity*” and choosing the standardization. Otherwise, the identity crisis defines the galloping postmodernity that surprised the Romanian people in the modernity forte of ’80’s Central and Eastern Europe).

With the exception of the clergy, where the issue of ecumenism requires a different approach – the dialog for a unified church, not the standardization by catholic rules, all the state’s institutions submit to international standards of various organizations and over-state structures.

Romanian armed forces follow the trend and adopt, in the manner of Maiorescu’s implementation of shapes without substance, standards that belong exclusively to the exterior environment, that aren’t native of organization culture and that couldn’t be related to imagological reference. In these conditions, the irresolute voices and sinuous transforming of the armed forces, the personal and group interests, the incoherence in application of some personal policies and the extension of transition / changes of reference environment led to gradual decreasing of people’s confidence in armed forces. The rates reflect a previous position and are influenced in a great degree by the trend. On the one hand, for reconfiguring imagologically the army, the civil society doesn’t react coherently.

The civil society, atomized by the previous regime, tries to coagulate itself around cores, emitting faint signals in recovering. Relating to the controlled imagological references, to the constructs without reference in military tradition or to the reflected image through the myth of national identity, civil society finds that the imported cultural model slides and doesn’t fold on the realities of the Romanian cultural model.

For all that, the people’s confidence is oriented toward the capability of Romanian society’s rebuilding, appealing to the clergy

and, in a little extent, appealing the armed forces. This fact means that the society is expecting of these institutions, assisted by mass media, to achieve their role in separation with the past. Differently, relating to the cultural mediation and to practices of “localizing”, the society keeps, in the mirage of the constructed imagological reference, the references of the previous guiding marks. There is the possibility to unite the practice of “localizing” with the marks of the “place”, supplying the substance necessary in the process of rationalized myths reconstruction systems of armed forces and military profession, subdued to the systematic erosion. In fact, this represents the first reaction to the abandon of the identity issue in the process of globalization.

The reply to the decisional incontinence in transforming the society, in the context of also mentioned double changes and of alleging of a stable cultural model, is done through the agency of the civil society, that keeps a high degree of confidence in army (despite the systematic erosion), maintaining the rationalized myth of national identity. It seems that society understood that the alleging of identity could be achieved by keeping the size of its own value systems in state of latency, in spite of the mutations generated by the transitory running. Moreover, society realizes that the axiological relief of the military organization culture is not shaped under the pressure of the Euro-Atlantic matrix if this relief is not drawn in an inner cartographic process.

As a result of these pressures, the military organization has begun to react in the direction of reducing the signal of error on the feedback way. Therefore, professionalism, enforcing the civilian expertise and resizing began to become real provocations of real needs, based on social order and not on demands without connection with the substance of the issue. Also, based on some plans and developing perspectives, there have begun the systematic restructuring process and the application of human resources policies, that gain in coherence in comparison with the chaotic manner of producing the similar phenomena immediately after the revolution.

### 3. ETHNO-PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CHANGING THE REFERENCE OUTLINE

The imagological perspective concerning military organism representation would be incomplete if it weren't doubled with the ascent on the ethno-psychology territory. The transformations that marked the Romanian society after revolution, caused by the paradigm and the ideological references' changes, respectively the army transformations in the same sinuous process of maintaining the autochthonous value systems and of entering the organization among the standards of some superstatal organisms, must be searched in a ethno-psychological manner, for outlining the real size of resistance offered to changes and of the capability of accustoming to transitory running.

In the context of mutations produced or being about to produce in the dynamic field of historical becoming, of results reflected yet by the historical imagology, in the relationship identity / alterity, the ethno-psychological perspective emphasizes the Romanian military as a distinct representation. The Romanian military is a construct on the basis of national identity myth, that also coagulates in the collective imaginary the foundation of Romanian army and that represents the element of stability in the ample process of adapting the external shapes to autochthonous substance.

The research in this field is as necessary as the stable guiding marks in the ample process of value dislocation in the postmodern jigsaw puzzle from the axiological system. Indifferent of the postmodern mutations wave, the Romanian – inclusively the Romanian military – remain skeptical and negociative, rooting, lasting, closing himself “gasteropodically” (Blaga) “thereupon opening” (Noica). In a culture of stability, the ethno-psychological reference points, as a reply to the German „*Sein und Zeit*”, to the British „*Time is money*”, to the ancient Altaic or Semitic uprooting or to the contemporary American uprooting (just a simple enumeration of

otherness references), the enclosing in the all-inclusive adverb “home” (the house within the limits of the way toward home, the barracks, the camp, the garrison). Contemporary americanizing or europenizing are only the hibernal prints over a field where the seeds are germinating – the “wondering seed” of a particular people, enclosed in the case of bad weather of history, but prepared to bear fruit, in a relaxation climate.

The Romanian military (as a representation in a social identity multistadial investigation) is unselfish, intelligent, competent, merry, but passive, naïve, unserious [4]. He is the appropriate replay to the cultural (spatial) hedonism, as the counterbalance of the postmodern temporal hedonism. He doesn't wander from the limits of the Romanian people characteriologic portraits, drawn by personalities of Romanian culture, as: Dimitrie Cantemir, Dumitru Drăghicescu, Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, Lucian Blaga or Constantin Noica. Certainly, in spite of ideological changes at the surface, of mutation concerning the guiding marks, and of nationalism model – whom the myth of Romanian army is built: of generation '48, hasdeian, eminescian, of generation '29, or of generation '80 - he succeeds to remain a reference.

Otherwise, the change of guiding marks causes changes only at the surface, without acting in depth. The ethno-psychological reference lead to the adjustment of self-image in the context of imposed running in “idealized hetero-image” regime.

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