THE METAMORPHOSIS OF COMMUNICATION IN MILITARY ALLIANCES

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Abstract: The article is analysing understanding the functioning mechanisms in communication and in interrelationship in military multicultural environment generating the necessity of understanding, adaptation and the creation of efficient mechanisms to adjust these relationships. Xeno-cultural images are resistant to change and seem to be cultural values, being part of the cultural nucleus of a nation that remain stable, with the changes coming gradually and the attitudes influenced by organizational policies. Language, the impact of national composition, cultural distances, the level of technological knowledge and stereotips are only some elements that are affecting communication in multinational military coallitions. The efficiency of the mission is proportional with the understanding linguistic and cultural knowledge, the harmonization of cultural differences and the cultivation of cultural aspects of military sub-cultures.

Keywords: xeno-cultural image; theater of operation; communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Moving from the brief approach of the biblical origin of communication to the effects of communication differences and finalizing with their own vision of the effects that technological evolution has on communication, this article expresses the personal and synthesized vision of communication metamorphosis. The emphasis is mainly on communication in the military environment, especially in multinational and multicultural military missions.

There are multiple testimonies of the manifestation of co-dependence, in the ancient world, between humans and gods. Sacrifices and construction are some ways people try to appease them to get the protection and welfare. Numerous archaeological evidence led to the general hypothesis that civilizations existing before the Biblical Flood were technologically advanced. After the Flood, according to Biblical writings, the survivors spoke a unique language and lived in a united community, which seems to have worked very well if it is to consider archaeological vestiges.

Referring to biblical texts and starting with Genesis, chapter 3, we find that after people have lost access to the spiritual space represented by the Garden of Eden, they have tried to regain it by offering sacrifices and constructions. Then in chapter 11 of Genesis says that God was angry with people and "confused" languages. The fact that the construction of the Tower of Babel meant "not to build a name for God but one for them" seems to have been the reason for the "confusion" of languages, so that people could not understand each other, the construction project failing (Walton, 2014).

Going further, in scientific evidence, the Anatolian common language, derived from Proto-Indo-European language, has undergone important changes throughout the eight thousand years of evolution (Jones, 2015). Elements of the evolution of communication can be found in the evolution of humanity in all its forms of social manifestation.

Of course communication is done in multiple forms, language being the fundamental, organized and systematic way of interaction.

2. XENO-CULTURAL IMAGES OF THE THEATERS OF OPERATIONS

Moving from assumptions, suppositions and legends to the reality of the modern world, all aspects of political, economic, social, and cultural life in this modern and globalized world interfere with varying degrees of influence on decisions, courses of action and implicitly communication

and inter- human relationship. What specially interests us in this article is the understanding of the mechanisms of functioning of communication and interrelation in the multinational and multicultural military environments and the effects these mechanisms generate.

With Romania joining different military alliances, the knowledge of the cultural and communication aspects that intervene during the process of interaction in the multinational environment has become an acute concern for the different categories of staff, specialists or just enthusiasts about the subject. This multicultural military co-operation has generated effects on various interactional plans, which implicitly generated the need to understand, adapt and create effective mechanisms to regulate these interrelationships.

The experience of multinational military co-operation is not a recent one. What has happened in the meantime is the accelerated technological evolution that implicitly implied an acceleration of communication, decisions and execution. Deficiencies in the communication process and its consequences can be dramatic in all stages of combat action. In my opinion the aspects of the communication process are very important in the military cooperation within multinational, multicultural coalitions.

Since 1995, Palin has noted that cultural factors play an active role in achieving this interoperability, in addition to the difficulties involved in political decisions and the interoperability of military equipment. Steward, Bonner and Verrall (2001), Leung and Bond (2004), William Hardy (2016) and other reputable researchers from the Research Task Group 120, studied the issue of cultural interoperability and how it affects the effectiveness of multinational military missions.

Of course, common courses and exercises create the conditions for acquiring and practicing NATO procedures, but the experience of operating theaters has proven that time is needed for the process of communication between military personnel of different armies to work effectively.

'Cultural Interoperability - Ten Years of Research in the First German-Dutch Joint Corps' (vom Hagen *et al.*, 2006:15-51) is a relevant research work because it is the only research conducted in the modern era with the participation of two NATO countries over a period of 10 years, 1995-2005.

René Moelker, Joseph Soeters and Ulrich vom Hagen wanted to determine whether cultural interoperability is feasible, what conditions would favor it, and in what direction it will develop. They focused on two well-known hypotheses of intercultural theory, arguing that the frequency of contacts, as well as mutual trust, are likely to favor sympathy between different cultures. It is a collaborative case study of peace, communication between the participants in the study being conducted in English and the procedures used were NATO.

The fact that military personnel from different NATO member states, apart from the German and Dutch states, was part of the 1st Corps Command in 2003, facilitated the creation of an international atmosphere where the model of integration through cultural interaction (instead of assimilation or separation) had more chances of success.

The conclusions of this study are many but we will only mention those that we consider very important from the perspective of influencing the cultural communication process: xeno-cultural images are very resistant to change and seem to be cultural constants, values and images that are part of the cultural nucleus of a nation remain stable, changes occur gradually, attitudes towards other cultures are prone to change and are influenced by organizational policies.

Although there was not much space for emotional identity among members of the various military cultures involved in this bi-national collaboration process, there is a common ground when talking about profession, goals and professional standards. In order for these standards to merge, it is necessary to increase the share of time spent together and, in particular, the one allocated to collective exercises and skills through permanent training.

Surveys conducted in theaters of operations have been difficult due to restrictions imposed by staff policies in making and publishing any type of work while military or civilian personnel work for the mission.

3. STUDY CASES

The first case study was conducted on the Warehause, Kabul base. The observations made on the staff of the German - Dutch Corps have mostly contradicted the conclusions reached at peace on the same Joint Corps. In 2003, the Corps headquarters took over the command of the Kabul mission for a period of six months. German-Dutch collaboration proved to be less successful in the theater of operations, although the opposite was foreseen in the light of previous positive

developments. Operational stress has accentuated logistical and personnel issues in the operational unit.

Generally, the Dutch criticized how the Germans led the mission and the tasks they had ordered to be fulfilled. In addition, the Dutch did not understand why Germans had better accommodation facilities and financial allocations different from their own. This situation did not improve even after the first turn of the Dutch units. The problems at Camp Warehouse resonated in Münster (Corps Command) and the ISAF Command in Kabul. After the return of military personnel to Münster (Moelker & Soeters, 2006:97-129), the Dutch and German commanders of the Corps felt the need to pay considerable attention to improving the relations between the personnel involved in the Kabul mission (von der Dunk, 2005). German-Dutch operational cooperation at Camp Warehouse ended in autumn 2003. In view of all these processes and results, we consider this case as an example of friction between nations in terms of military co-operation and joint pre-mission preparation, even if it is long enough to prove to be an important but not always sufficient element.

The second case study was also carried out in Kabul, the KAIA air base. Here we observe a very interesting aspect of communication, namely the effect that the standardization of technological communication has on inter-relationship in a multicultural and multinational military structure. The success of KAIA operations can be attributed to norms based on technology and professional isomorphism. It is an air base where the staff has extensive expertise in air communications and the procedures are internationally agreed. General personnel policies are the same as on all other bases, but national staff policies, national regulations and restrictions are added. Stereotypes related to national cultures are another factor influencing communication and interactions.

All these overlapping rules and policies sometimes create frictions in the communication process that takes place outside of the interaction in the work processes. KAIA soldiers are generally pleased with the mission and consider their work in Afghanistan to be "just another job." We consider this case as a good example of international military cooperation.

The third case study was carried out in 2010 by Joseph Soeters and Tibor Szvircsev Tresch (2010:272-287) on a multinational contingent of Canadian, Belgian, Norwegian and Hungarian military personnel who carried out their military mission Camp Julien. Fighting missions that have taken place only with national participation have gone very well, without friction, the operative groups being very effective in a critical number of incidents. On the other hand, the contacts between the soldiers inside the base were the ones that generated communication deficits and the efficiency of the Coalition's functioning decreased. The communication of Norwegian and Hungarian soldiers with Belgian and Canadian military did not create friction. Problems on this basis were only between the Belgian and Canadian military. The poll conducted by Joseph Soeters and Tibor Szvircsev Tresch among Belgian soldiers showed that more than half of them indicated that their relations with Canadian soldiers were "*very bad*" and that they were treated "*condescendingly*".

All these divergences and misunderstandings have been based on an acute difference in "customs and military rules." Canadian soldiers display a professional attitude alongside a high degree of discipline and guidance to strict adherence to regulations, which is based on substantial physical fines and penalties. In fact, Canadians often apply collective punishments, even if only one person or a very small number of people in a unit committed the offenses. The Belgians considered this behavior to be rude. In contrast to these Canadian practices, Belgians appear to be somewhat more relaxed and superiors react to deviations in a much less aggressive way. This is an example of how communication and differences between military cultures and subcultures affect inter-relationship in multinational coalitions.

The three studied cases offer three different facets of international military co-operation. None of them provide the picture of perfect co-operation. Even the second case, which seems to illustrate the most effective way of interaction, nevertheless shows the misunderstandings generated by isolation and the frictions due to the stereotypes generated by the interaction of different weapons and armies. The level of linguistic competence, the impact of national composition, cultural distances, stereotypes, technological knowledge and belonging to superspecialized units are just some of the elements that have affected the process of communication in the multinational military coalition.

Between 2012 and 2017, we conducted a comprehensive study at the Kabul Theater, Afghanistan, in the Headquarters Headquarters. The subject of the research paper is "Effects of cultural differences on the military mission in the

Afghanistan theater". A diverse bibliography has been studied in the research: from the perspective of organizational factors, operational issues, command and control, interaction in multinational military teams, communication, interaction between culture and technology, world values and common values military subculture.

At Headquarters level, the command structure is a multinational one with an ABCA majority. It was understandable that although this was the original intention, a multinational organization could not be set up to function with maximum efficiency because there are differences in training, doctrines, capabilities, linguistic level, procedures and logistics. These differences can generate frustration in the interaction between the quotas. One way to solve these frictions in practice was to allocate geographic areas and assign assignments to different contingents under a single command and a multinational general district. The only possible method of research, considering the restrictions imposed by the mission leadership, was the participatory and non-participatory observation, supporting the results of the study of the documents and the reproduction of the research results through the analysis of the items identified as important, plus the narrative rendering method of the case study analysis results.

Several countless conclusions have emerged from the research that I consider to be very relevant to the subject of this article as follows:

– By using the standardized language of communication, human interaction is reduced, emotional frictions, stereotypes, common history, English language deficiencies, differences in personnel policies, cultural differences, etc. are avoided. (KAIA case);

– The level of expertise and professional competence plus the level of linguistic competence vary among nations, which creates discrepancies in communication. The research results of Resolute Support Mission Command led to the conclusion that there is a significant difference between nations native speakers of English and other non-native nations in terms of understanding the intentions of the commander's actions carried out under stress;

– The common history and the feeling of belonging to powerful nations instigates a certain attitude among the militaries belonging to different nations. This attitude undergoes changes during the mission. At first, the military interact in an open, friendly, diplomatic manner. The stress level being low, the masking capacity is high. Time, along with confidence (or lack thereof) and respect (or

lack of) of the skills of coalition partners shape group behavior. If there are gaps in communication, then the phenomenon of separation occurs. If, against the linguistic level, training and operational experience, cultural knowledge, respect and trust combine, the phenomenon of group integration occurs with positive effects on both the psyche of the military and the efficiency of the group;

– There is a high probability that, in stressful situations, any cause (including historical conflicts between nations) could be used as a bailout, but in the Afghanistan theater of operations there were no exaggerated reactions of "historical baggage" which the military of the various nations came to the theater;

– Preparing pre-mission, operating in multinational structures, division by area of responsibilities, informal meetings are just a few of the equilibrium elements in this aspect of collaboration;

– Affiliation to different political, social and military systems generated differences in procedures, technique, very different values of the "distance to power" dimension, differences that reduce interoperability. The consequence of the formation of personnel of different nationalities in totalitarian systems (especially the East European bloc) or in the long-term war zones (Afghanistan) has led to the development of a certain type of behavior that we have called "adaptive / survival behavior". The consequences of this behavior are: lack of trust in partners, respect only for persons with special military skills (strong leaders), caution in assertions, functioning in the already known and "verified" groups, the desire to fulfill the job requirements only as much as needed without initiatives and without making any effort to stand out. This attitude generates frustration at the coalition partners' waiting for active and active participation;

– Knowledge gained from the grouping of nations participating in multinational missions by category, based on Hofstede's cultural values and dimensions, indeed facilitates easier interaction between contingents and can avoid friction and increase the efficiency of missions but is not a sufficient condition;

– The factors that dramatically affect the effectiveness of co-operation in the coalition are the following: the level of linguistic knowledge, military training and international experience, cultural identity and value differences, housing and feeding conditions, codes of conduct, differences between management systems and forms

discipline, differences in political beliefs, salary differences and other benefits, the nature of the relationship between officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, how women are viewed in different cultures, values of national cultural dimensions, etc .;

– Education in terms of equality of conditions and risks speaks its word in the process of communication in theaters of operations. The military participating in the mission expects logistical support to be equal for all staff.

The overall conclusion was as follows: "In multinational military operations, the effectiveness of the mission increases proportionally to the level of linguistic knowledge, the level of cultural knowledge, the harmonization of cultural differences and the cultivation / strengthening of common cultural aspects of military subculture.

4. INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS. TOWARDS A LANGUAGE OF CYBERSPACE?

Current conflicts are at a different level and national armies will undergo major changes: the number of troops will decrease, the role of sophisticated technologies, the influence of the media and coalition armies will increase. The creation of a European, professional army is, in my opinion, how the defense can be effectively carried out in the post-modern era.

Technologically developed countries have understood the breadth of this technology in all areas of social life. Computer literacy has become the ultimate way of communicating intentions but, at the same time, the weapon of today's struggles. The future does not mean so much fighting with human forces but economic warfare, financial chaos and destabilization of state institutions. Cyber communication is the modern form of inter-human communication.

In classical wars, the opponent, the territory, the capabilities are (almost) known. The post-modern era brought about changes in the rules of the war through the cyber-revolution. In 2007, for example, even in the most technologically advanced countries, cyber war was not part of the list of possible sources of aggression, a threat to state security. In 2009, it appeared as a possible danger, but was somewhere at the end of the list as priorities. Now the cyber threat is at the forefront of lists with potential dangers to national security of developed countries. There have been identified three major categories in which cyber attack affects humanity, namely: theft of intellectual property, attacks that produce massive lifestyle

consequences, cyber attacks that can affect the capability of defending national territory, by cybernetic damage to the functionality of the defense. The most powerful states in terms of technology are also the most vulnerable to cyber attacks. When it comes to the defense capability of a country, the limited ability of national governments to dictate how private companies operate (electricity, water, financial services, communications) must also be taken into account.

Another aspect of cyberwar is represented by the huge space in which it acts and, more often than not, the victims even do not know that this is their position until after a certain period when the losses are already huge. For example, in 2008, it was fraudulently introduced into the military communications system of a highly developed state, a program that produced scandal over a period of 14 months until it was detected. This has led to the notification of cyber-protection services. Compared to classical wars in cyber war there is no time to alert the attack, and the response to it is often long, and attack attribution is most often the biggest problem.

A profound international impact has been the creation and use of the "STUXNET" virus in 2009. We believe that this was the time when the war changed its rules. It was the first time a cybernetic program, a virus, overcame informational barriers and manifested itself in the physical environment. As a weapon, it was considered a "brilliant and elegant" one that fulfilled its goal of halting Iran's nuclear program. s a precedent, it is a very dangerous one because it represented an attack on a national infrastructure, in peacetime, which can be considered as a declaration of war. Cyber weapons have become so sophisticated that it is difficult to detect in the initial phase. The fact that it was decided to approve the use of the cyber weapon only with the President's approval (we refer to the US) underlines the value of equality with the nuclear weapon.

Cyberwar does not just cause personal information to be at high risk but leads to insecurity of life in general. Cyberwar puts humanity under existential risk.

The leadership of the Ministry of National Defense has understood the need to create a specialized structure in the cyber war. The importance and financial support that has been given to this structure is a subject that is not well known to us.

The valency of the cyber war requires changes in national doctrines and policies, which, in my opinion, would need to be coordinated and agreed

upon internationally. As there are rules of classical war, it is necessary to set the rules of cyberwar internationally.

And, to close the circle of the evolution of communication and its effects on human relationships, we return to biblical writings that say *when all men speak the same language*, it will be the end. To be referred to the language of cyberspace?

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