

## PATRIOTISM AND THE FINALITIES OF MILITARY EDUCATION

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***Abstract:** Should the individual live as a teleological being, then education, perceived as a specifically human activity, sets goals aiming at making a human prototype (personality model), able to correspond to social ideals and to demands related to social progress. In this context, the characteristics of military education come out from the particularities of the combatant's profile, whereas its final objective focuses on combat preparation. By correlating these two aspects there results a “combatant personality with a winner mentality” (Ch. Moskos), an already widely spread phrase of the specialized literature, which brings together the human model with the social and professional ones. Similarly, by transferring discourse within the context of globalization and postmodern armies' making up, one can raise the issue whether patriotism and self-sacrifice, reflecting the existential condition of any combatant, are still of current interest. To what extent the pluri-racial, pluri-cultural and pluri-religious structure of contemporary armies alters or not the approach to patriotism into an obsolete topic, since it should be a defining moral sentiment to a human being? Moreover, how does the military values system reconfigure itself under the impact of profound changes within the military organization or given the remodeling of military thinking and action? Is openness to alterity, through designing and forming the intercultural communicative competence, perceived as a substitute for patriotism and nationalism? In order to answer these questions, we made use of the findings of a quantitative research, accomplished in 2010, on a sample of 1.020 Romanian military students belonging to the Romanian armed forces.*

***Keywords:** patriotism, cosmopolitanism, military education, military values.*

### 1. CHALLENGES OF MILITARY EDUCATION

The military education's specificity results from the particularities of the military institution/ organization and the society that it assists. Although we witness profound and inevitable transformations within both the structure and the functioning modality of the contemporary armies, both the army's uniqueness and the preservation of its institutional characteristics come to be of equal importance.

Charles Moskos (2005), considered the most influent American military sociologist embraces this idea, strengthening it in his studies. Even though, under the pressure of the market economy, of the cultural utilitarianism and of material values' dominance, the occupational tendencies in the military environment, as a form of adaptation to

societal pressures, are obvious, there is need for prudence in managing changes and especially in relation with the process of professionalization of military personnel.

The terminological ambiguity of the specialized literature made the American politologist Samuel P. Huntington (1927 – 2008) apply the concept of profession, as a special type of vocation, to the military field. He also drew the conclusion that the military career accomplishes the major criteria of professionalism (expertise, responsibility, l'esprit de corps) to a great extent, thus approaching the ideal model the most.

In his paper, *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington (1981) makes distinction between the career-oriented soldier, enlisted mainly for material advantages, and the professional soldier/ officer, who puts his vocation to serve society. Consequently, the modern officer

needs to be a professional; similarly, the officers' corps should be a professional body.

In this context, even if the army has to adapt to occupational criteria, the officer should distinguish from the other agents of the professionalized human action from the social space. Holding the power and wisely managing it, in accordance with the specificity of military actions and missions, provides this professional profile with a definite structure. Different from the ordinary social actions, error and failure gain different dimensions within the military action plans, due to the catastrophic effects they may produce. All these aspects lead to a focus of the military education plans on values and norms able to embody them and which should constitute the core of military education, in its instructive-educational endeavors.

Although the "civilianization of the army" is more and more invoked, the American sociologist Harold Dwight Lasswell (1902 – 1978) identifies a distinct and defining ability of the officer – to manage violence. Accordingly, apart from designing a personality model based on a winner psychology and action abilities, military education holds as its major target forming and developing this complex intellectual ability, regardless of the cultural space where it takes place. Moreover, lest he should be a mere mercenary, the professional officer needs to be keen on his profession, to hold a high feeling of duty and social responsibility, to know and understand society and people whom he defend.

The same author, H. D. Lasswell, stated the military career "requires vast general knowledge so as to reach perfection" (Sava *et al.*, 1998:246), arguing that the action dimension of the military career is intimately connected with the social and the cultural pattern of society. If for the traditional army of institutional type, self-sacrifice, on behalf of duty and love for the country used to be intrinsic to the existential condition of a soldier, then, which is the moral support of his deeds given the conditions of globalization and diminishing of these moral feelings?

## 2. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CITIZENSHIP, PATRIOTISM AND THE FINALITIES OF MILITARY EDUCATION

The Byram model would be an adequate model for the Romanian cultural environment, with regard to intercultural competences development required by the design of the military model – a professional acting in a multi-dimensional, dynamic, digitized and multi-national battlefield. In this respect, Byram (1997) designed a forming model based on self- knowledge and knowledge of others, knowledge of interaction (*savoirs*), interpretation connection-making abilities (*savoir comprendre*), discovery and/or interaction abilities (*savoir apprendre/faire*), attitudes: relativization of self, value of the other (*savoir être*) and political knowledge, critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*). Cultural awareness, in Byram's acceptance is only possible by real engagement in interactions with others while preserving the spirit of self-awareness and the spirit of cognitive, evaluative and action-based orientation, accomplished by cumulating cognitive, affective and psychomotor achieved throughout previous stages. Political knowledge and critical cultural awareness do not entail limitation within the limits of any type of extreme patriotism. Similarly, they do not imply patriotic dilution, but an engagement in relation with the Other, while still preserving the coordinates of respect for national values and humanity values.

Within the military environment, the openness to alterity should not be perceived as alternative to patriotism and nationalism, as openness to common cosmopolitanism or as abandonment of the national culture's values to the detriment of civilization's values, which could annihilate the former. Patriotism and nationalism, implying affection and identification with a state (country), respectively with a nation, appealing to political reasoning and to the cultural existential reasoning of a state-nation, should not involve restrictive, exclusive or even aggressive forms. In its essence, patriotism offers the powerful motivation to act morally

(Alasdair MacIntyre, *apud* Primoratz, 2007:24)), which implies transcending any barriers for the openness to the Other, promoting human rights regardless of ethnicity, religion, race or gender and manifesting tolerance as a fundamental value of intercultural relationships.

After an ample and fine analysis of the evolution of patriotism throughout the mankind history, professor Maurizio Viroli warned against hidden effects of globalization on the human being, stating the necessity of a feeling of belonging and community: “for an individual to be able to perform his duty, he must belong somewhere” (Viroli, 2002:36), he needs roots. As citizens of the broad world, affection to an impersonal entity (such as the planetary village), even if this entity is based on the universal values of liberty and justice, loses its value. There are, still, other modalities of relating to the whole, of identifying with the whole, and one of the manners by which this relation is not possible is the very citizenship. Citizenship, initially aiming the belonging to a specific fortress, designating the inhabitants of the fortress and their relationships (rights, obligations derived from their statuses) with the fortress, has become a manner of a person’s relating to a state, this implying rights and obligations resulting from this relationship. Although the expressions “e-citizen”, “European citizen” or “global/world citizens” invoke an associated status, they are artificial. Considering the fundamental mutations in understanding the term ‘citizen’ throughout its historical path, marked by such periods as the Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the term has never estranged, in its meaning, from the relationships with the belonging group, regardless of its size. Nonetheless, by relating to an entity whose spread is hard to understand, such as an over-national or global organization, the term ‘citizen’ implies spread from the semantic area’s perspective, alongside with the weakening of its conceptual power (up to its contents annihilation).

In this instance of conceptual weakening of the term, from nomological perspective, alongside with its enrichment by significance adding, it is hard for a soldier, acting mainly in

a multi-national environment, to stay connected to a cultural system, in parallel with his relationship with an ideological system of over-state norms, and, implicitly, with some norms that, in many cases, become inoperable or even contradictory with his own cultural norms. To be a world-citizen means to be under a double bind, of cultural norms and of over-state impositions/ conventions. Consequently, the normative context of certain organizations such as NATO, the EU, the UN, or OSCE cannot be imposed as citizen normative context. This may lead to a perception of the kind: citizen obligations are in strict relation with the state, whereas contractual obligations, mercantile, in many respects, regard the relationships with these organizations, despite the existence and development of the concept of world-citizen.

Debates with regard to the opportunity of maintaining as valid such expressions as ‘world-citizen’ remain suspended, as well as those concerning the opportunity of educating in the sense of revealing strictly-contractual, mercantile relationships with over-state organizations (in this respect, there is clear distinction between the human rights and the citizen’s rights). Nevertheless, under these circumstances, there raises the issue of educating the military personnel in the spirit of human rights or of the citizen’s rights, in the spirit of relating to national values or to the whole world’s values, in the spirit of patriotism or cosmopolitanism?

### **3. PATRIOTISM AS FORMATIVE VALUE. REFLECTION OF PATRIOTISM IN THE MILITARY STUDENTS’ OPTIONS**

Although all military academic environments there are ethics codes promoting honor, courage, spirit of sacrifice and dignity, which are the standpoints and mechanisms able to activate these values? Charles Moskos concludes that the occupational tendencies within the armed forces also influence the motivational universe of a soldier: the intrinsic motivation that had been nurtured by an internalization of institutional values has become extrinsic motivation (especially

material), specific to industrial organization. All these issues highlight the fact that of all dimensions of military education, the fundamental component, and equally, the most vulnerable one, under present circumstances, is the formative component. Forming strong, honest characters, anchored in reality, animated by superior goals, has become the millstone of military education. In other words, the ethical constitution of the military career, in a society promoting ethical minimalism, has become problematic. The axiological void of the contemporary society is reflected by the multiplication, up to exhaustion of judicial laws, regulations and procedures that, aiming at strengthening social control, do nothing else but conceal values' and moral laws' weakness, or the moral crisis that erodes society.

How does the military values system reconfigure in this context? To what extent does the pluri-racial, pluri-cultural and pluri-religious composition of contemporary armed forces ("post-modern", Charles Moskos) transform or fail to the topic of patriotism as a defining moral feeling to the human being in an obsolete debate or not? Clarifications are needed especially in the post-communist space (Eastern Europe), where excessive and later on, abusive love for country (as an instrument of gaining political capital) nurtures a profound identity crisis. In this space, under the present conditions, patriotism is weighted in relation with the European Union's values, derived from freedom: decentralization, autonomy, free circulation, knowledge and understanding of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity, tolerance. Should patriotism, perceived in its aggressive limits, according to Eastern ideology, be currently face to face with the tolerance philosophy, proposing the equality principle between all people, regardless of their race, religion, nationality, then its fundamental objective would be to substitute force relationships with dialogue ones (Ilişoi, 2008:65). Therefore, it would be easy to understand the formative challenge regarding the Romanian military students. The analysis of relationships between Romanian values and European ones may be figured out in terms of the relationship between national

values and over-state organisms' values. Romanian values correspond to the national dimension of the political community and of the state form corresponding to it, whereas the European ones represent a sum of national values resulting from countries situated on the European continent, their diversity causing the difficult definition of the European cultural model (Dassen *et al.*, 1999:110).

Let us observe how patriotism is reflected in the Romanian military students' options. In a study aiming at identifying the ethnic profile of military students, accomplished by appealing to open items included in a WAY-type test (*Who Are You*), we post-codified data based on central values from the Rokeach table. The questionnaire was adapted to the topic under discussion, administered in December 2009 – January 2010, to 1.020 military students from military academies representing all branches (Lesenciuc, 2011:41-48), and was valid for 821 subjects (due to, mainly, elimination of non-answers and answers comprising general data or physical particularities). Apart from the 40 nominal values included in the Rokeach table, we also quantified answers sending to the dimension "patriotism", "pride of being Romanian", namely, we scored distinctly (outside the Rokeach table) answers aiming the dimension regarding the attachment to country and nation. In order to quantify the expressed options, we used an intensity scale in seven steps (Osgood type), in which we utilized a conventional score ranging between +3 to -3, in accordance with the intensity and meaning of the option, respectively, we also monitored the popularity indicator.

The two values were appreciated by the military students as follows: with regard to intensity: 1. patriotism (average +1,51 points, within the interval -3 to +3); 2. honor (1,41); 3. communicative power (1,34); 4. responsibility (1,31); 5. pride of being Romanian (0,98) ... 38. happiness (0,04); 39. utility (0,03); 40. inner harmony (0,03); 41. comfort (0,01); 42. Soul salvation (0,00); with regard to popularity: 1. honor 50,64% of total of valid answers; 2. patriotism (50,39%); 3. communicative power (46,27%); 4. responsibility (43,96%); 5. Pride of being

Romanian (31,88%) ... 38. wisdom (1,80%); 39. utility (1,54%); 40. Inner harmony (1,54%); 41. comfort (0,51%); 42. soul salvation (0,00%). The difference of rank for the value "honor" in relation with the value "patriotism" related to the indicator popularity is justifiable by a higher percentage of negative appreciations, which indicates that some of the investigated subjects considered that being "dishonest" was one negative trait of Romanians, whereas all respondents who related to the indicator "patriotism" considered only the positive dimension. As a result, defining the military student in his/her posture of Romanian citizen is achievable by appealing to indicators such as "honor", "patriotism", "communicative power", "responsibility" and "pride of being Romanian" (the topic of patriotism not being the most debated one, it cannot be negotiated, therefore there is only one meaning of its perception). Even though the ethnic profile of the Romanian military student cannot be achieved by a sum of characteristics, since it may lose its very essence by devaluation or by losing its intrinsic value, the presence of "patriotism" and of "pride of being Romanian" among values of maximum popularity and intensity constitutes a reflection issue in relation with its placement in the proximity of national values scale – values belonging to over-state organisms.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Participation at multinational missions raises specific issues associated with the combatants' relationships with their country of origin, with the accomplishment of their duty for the country and the utility of their actions to the country they represent. Intercultural education constitutes a manner of forming, in the sense of offering answers, received through a different perceptive channel, answers concerning the manner in which the Romanian soldier can resist globalist challenges, while being bonded through the oath of faith to the country. Additionally, intercultural education provides answers to destructive, unattractive forms of cosmopolitanism, such as aggressive

universalism, a cosmopolite strategy of destroying cultures and local institutions and of creating a global political and cultural system. Other forms include the hegemonic globalism, a version in which a sole country is able to create a united world and subsume other countries to its own jurisdiction (Nathanson, 2007:80). With the military environment, intercultural education is achieved within the limits of a moderate patriotism, characterized by forbidding any harm, irrespective of person, special requirements from the country of origin (we mean positive duties, such as assistance, support etc. of all). Added to these are an increased interest in own country and authentic interest in others, although in a higher percentage, moral constraints in accomplishing national goals and obligations, both towards the own country and towards other countries by their citizens (Nathanson, 2007:82). Thus, exaggerations with regard to obligations only to own country are abandoned, without any constraints in reaching goals, specific to extreme patriotism, or constraints concerning interests without any constraints in reaching cosmopolite goals, specific to extreme cosmopolitanism.

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