

## THE COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSION OF THE ROMANIAN SOLDIER'S ETHNIC PROFILE

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**Abstract:** *The Romanian soldier's ethnic profile modifies in relation with the general profile, due to the fact that representations and perceptions are conditioned by specific patterns and life experiences. Starting from the general characterological delimitation of the Romanian “individual” and relating to a study on the military students' ethnic profile, accomplished on a sample of 1,020 students, we observe a relation to the national identity influenced by the tendencies of “community” annihilation. The Romanian soldier is confronted with problems originating in the classical logic of integration/differentiation, which sometimes implies compulsions of the double compulsion. The communicative dimension of the Romanian soldier's ethnic profile is strongly emphasized by the polychronic and permissive structure and by a predisposition toward receptivity. But even this relational component involves the paradoxical approach by appealing to natural openness, doubled by the necessary precaution for protecting the Romanian identity, in the sense of subordinating to the paradoxical sign of “closing for openness”.*

**Keywords:** *ethnic profile, communicative dimension, national identity, axiological categories.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The ethnic profile of the Romanian soldier does not involve a category delimitation in comparison with the ethnic profile of a Romanian individual, but merely a passage of the perspective in the light of its own representations, a ‘decomposition’ of this self-perception into the frequency intervals of various states of mental, neural preparation and of various attitudes.

The profile thus constitutes a

self-description of one's beliefs/ convictions/ opinions, attitudes and behaviors in relation to everyday experience. Consequently, the ethnic dimension of the Romanian soldier entails an alteration as compared with the general profile because the array of representations that corresponds to the division instrument of the self-perceptions into frequency bands is ‘carved’ following a specific life experience and it comprises professional requirements and duties or perceptive limitations due to the systems' restrictions. As a result,

the theoretical expansion process does not appeal to an inductive reasoning, by analyzing particular stances/statements with regard to the ethnic profile of the military students. Instead, it is a deductive, argumentative process, passing from general stances/statements with concern to the ethnic profile of the Romanian individual toward particular stances/statements concerning the ethnic profile of the Romanian soldier. The role of the study "The Ethnic Profile of Military Students" [1] is of great importance due to its contribution to an outlining of the selection tools and division into attitude 'frequency bands', in the light of the representations array, adapted to the military environment (taking into account the military experience of the respondents, ranging between  $\frac{1}{2}$  - 7  $\frac{1}{2}$  years, in accordance with the type of high-school attended, respectively civilian or military, and the year of study). Therefore, it is important to identify the general frame of defining the Romanian being and the filtering instrument for perceiving this frame.

"The Romanian being" – a concept by which we also understand the opening/becoming into being [2] – distinguishes itself in the place of its becoming and the adjacent terms: fireplace, paternal roof and forecourt. The Romanian being cannot and must not be isolated from the context of its becoming - a space that animate it. It rather may be described by tendencies of becoming into being (by means of instrumental values, should we refer to the tools used

throughout the research on military students), and not by its facets, or various conditions and features, or articulations resulting from the field of theoretical pseudo-convictions. Moreover, even paradoxically, "related to the Romanian being, it can be asserted, yet not imposed, in the light of a crystallized ego and as a spokesperson of an animated space, that one may not start from general rules, deductively. But one may use abductions which take into account particular cases, concrete elements, seen or read about, resulting from the Romanian people's spirit. The abductions become verifiable within the sphere from which they have been taken out; in this case, during the invoked iteration process, they revolve around a hard core, solidifying similarly to galactic matter: (successive) places into being" [3]. Accordingly, the Romanian ethnic profile does not include the Romanian soldier's ethnic profile, in an inclusion or juxtaposition of other profiles. Instead, the Romanian soldier's ethnic profile is holistic, it includes the Romanian's profile and it represents an entity homeomerically made up.

## **2. THE DEFINING CONTEXT OF THE ROMANIAN SOLDIER'S ETHNIC PROFILE**

The Romanian soldier's ethnic profile, understood as a "prototype of the Romanian individual wearing a uniform", is structured following a set of modeling factors, starting with

the place filled with personality (“The Man brings glory to his place”) and continuing with the ethos, tradition, language, axiological attitudes and spiritual physiognomy. The ethnic profile of the Romanian military student constitutes a sum of elements gathered under an axiological attitude profile. As far as the diminished perspective over the study parameters is concerned, (nominal values in Rokeach’s table), respectively, an extension of them toward a sketch of spiritual physiognomy, by appealing to an interpretation of axiological categories with a high degree of generalization (level III, II and I categories), the Romanian soldier’s ethnic profile, cannot be investigated by taking as well into consideration such factors as ethos, place, tradition and language and by a preponderantly quantitative research. The spiritual physiognomy is rather, a good opportunity for philosophical speculations, than an analysis topic based on a methodology able to guide itself following the presuppositions and guiding lines of the Popperian philosophy.

Let us regard the individual identity – which does not involve a clear delimitation, a limited schematic definition - as a set of intermediary ranges between the individual identity and the anthropological identity of the species [4]. Otherwise, let us look at attitudes in relation with the abstract degree of their object, namely the nation, from the highest level – attitude toward the human being, and to the attitude toward self, with the

intermediary attitude stages – toward the nation and toward ethnical groups [5]. The object of our investigation is, then, one of the intermediary stages of identity, mainly, the one regarding the national identity, in relation to an intermediary leveled set of attitudes, in terms of generalization – attitude toward Romanians.

Given the situation in which the concept of citizen becomes unstable and void of meaning, and where the organic community (*Gemeinschaft*) is being replaced by the contractual community (*Gesellschaft*), the identity reference area (no matter the level at which it is accomplished) implies an unstructured mixture of arguments (*logoi*) and places (*topoi*). Inside this mixture, the quest for identity may lead to a total estrangement and to abandonment, and to the loss of references. Aware of the unstructured mixture *logoi-topoi*, “every time when a super-structure (nation, empire or else) disintegrates, we inevitably turn back to the primordial infrastructure, named *koinonía* by the Greeks, and the need for finding a *Gemeinschaft* comes again, a binding element which we “feel” and which – as we were saying- binds us and engages us” [6]. This is also the case of quests within a spiritualized space – the community-rediscovered in the genes of a nation germinating its own value systems as well. The evaporation of the community concept – no matter the type of contractual society imposing it- empire or corporation- does not occur in Romania, as long

as the reference element calls for the “eternal Romania” and not for “modern Romania”.

The moral portrait of the Romanian individual has become thinking topic starting with *Descriptio Moldaviae*, Cantemir's book, and continuing with valuable works in ethno-psychology, belonging to Drăghicescu, Ralea, Rădulescu-Motru, Vulcănescu or Noica. Still, these portraits are preponderantly drawn for indicating specific ethno-psychological features. In fact, we can mention a moralizing attempt (doubling the early moralistic manifestation of the Romanian ethno-psychology) that managed to justify the theoretical purposes of constituting the ethno-psychological references, so long as the normal state of a Romanian individual presupposes the absence of feeling of gravity. Apparently a deep-rooted people, steady in the wind, it encloses in the seed of its own nation the richness of future crops, a people that, even during hard times, is able to confine in its miraculous seed its culture, language and ethos and the warm place where the future germinates from. Thus, a feature not only of the Romanian being, but of its becoming into being becomes distinct, a feature of preservation, without alteration, of its own value systems and of the specificity of a place full of history. Maybe, in special manner, toward the common citizen, the Romanian soldier is confronted with problems originating in the classical logic of integration/differentiation or in the universal/

specific relation. The Romanian soldier perceives as paradoxical the normative framework requirements of the NATO and the genetically inherited loyalty requirements to the nation. The soldier is confronted with his own consciousness and asked to choose between the national identity, to which he is connected as to an umbilical cord, and the individual contract with a super-state institution, which he works for in the operation theaters. The soldier makes the distinction between the two statuses (in most of the situations, not contradictory), of a citizen of a country to which he is bound by oath and part of a contract with a super-state organization, mediated by the national institution that recruits him (regarded, this time, as a political entity and not a cultural one). Found himself in such a posture, the Romanian soldier will outline his own ethnic profile, in relation with the requirements of a double imposition, of the double restriction – the intrinsic one, in relation to his nation, the extrinsic one, in relation to his alliance. He will consider the differences and will activate latent potentialities that, in other circumstances, would have maintained their status. A soldier fighting for the free world's defense or acting on behalf of this concept is not a citizen of the free world. He is merely a citizen of a nation, whose culture has or has not the opening toward universal values. And from this perspective, he may take these values seriously or not, placing

himself in relation to the civilization's values, to a greater or lesser extent.

This is but a reference point of the outlining of the Romanian soldier's frame of deforming perception about self, as a Romanian ethnic. The changes undergone by the Romanian society and especially the internal changes of the military body were perceived via the same coordinates of confrontation in relation with the own consciousness toward national values and the super-state standards. The transit interval must be analyzed by the ethno-psychological research, in order to be able to outline the real dimension of the resistance to change or the capacity of adaptation to the transitory status to which the Romanian society subscribed. The ethnic profile of the military student constitutes a reference point as far as the opinion making is concerned.

### **3. THE MILITARY STUDENT'S ETHNIC PROFILE**

The turning of dimensions as "honor", "communicative power" and "responsibility" to good account constitutes an argument in favor of understanding the Romanian soldier as a Romanian ethnic – formed in the spirit of promoting the national values, but bearing the distinct mark of the military environment in which he was formed. "Honor" and "lack of honor" are elements included in the polar system of values, they represent the bipolar universe in which the Romanian's axiological consciousness exists [7], being

affected by a not very favorable image at the exterior. Selecting this element and considering it a definition means a rather compensating measure, or maybe an exaggerated one, intended to prevent against some rejection tendencies (perceived as "Romanian citizens", in accordance with the requirements of the working instrument, the IVP), tendencies of denigration or at least, of labeling as a result of a cognitive process (stereotypical labeling) or of an affective process (appealing to prejudices) on behalf of other citizens. "Responsibility" is the mark of the forming environment and not of the Romanian individual, in general (lacking the feeling of gravity, a human having plenty of water in his blood, as Cioran used to characterize him). "Responsibility" ranks 29 out of 40 in the model study, as far as intensity is concerned. The "communicative power", in turn, being a rank 2 value in our study and a rank 3 value in the model study, constitutes the reference element, the starting point of any studies in this area of ethno-psychology. Characteristics such as hospitability, sociability, the Romanian's happiness have their roots in this "communicative power" – defining the whole nation, and it is omnipresent and positively appreciated both from the self-perspective and from the point of view of hetero-determination. Furthermore, regarding the nominal values (Rokeach), the other positively valued characteristics, either come from the nation's spirit,

such as “intelligence”, “humanism”, “friendships”, “high spirits” or “imagination”, or are the mark of the modeling military environment able to leave its imprint upon the Romanian soldier’s future personality: “courage”, “tumult”, “involvement”, “support”, “politeness” or “self-confidence”.

Concerning the level III axiological values, it is noticeable a change of the valuing tendency, of the Romanian individual who acquires lazy habits. He tends to shift from a focus on effective values (effective faber, action relation and acquired satisfaction, and less on self-fulfillment, intangible as a result of the respondents’ lack of life experience) and does not preserve the disposition or orientation values. The outlining of axiological formulas, in a similar mode with those of the model study with regard to axiological categories, level II of generality, respectively the positive appreciation of the instrumental values in relation with the finality values, level I of generality, indicates the fact that the formation background is ethnical and not professional. The Romanian soldier must be regarded as a “Romanian” firstly and not as a military employee. Thus, the affective dimension comes first, the intrinsic motivation in relation with the country, on behalf of whom a soldier acts and accepts roles derived from contractual agreements or arrangements so long as the latter do not contradict the affective dimension. The ethno-psychological perspective

highlights the Romanian soldier as a representation, in the aimed identity/alterity relation, on the background of the already reflected results by the historical imagology, but also on the background of mutations occurring or on the verge of occurrence within the dynamic field of historical becoming.

The Romanian soldier – a normative identity element – meets both the myth of national identity, upon which the Romanian armed forces become clear in the collective imagination and represents the stability element in the ample adaptation process of external forms to the national reality.

#### **4. THE ROMANIAN SOLDIER’S ETHNIC PROFILE**

Research in this field is very necessary, due to the fact that within the deployment process of values of the traditional systems and the metamorphosis process of the post-modern axiological relief there is need for stable reference points. Regardless of the amount of post-modern mutations, the Romanians preserve a certain skeptical and negotiating mood, growing roots, existing and closing “gastropodically” (Blaga) “into opening” (Noica). In a culture of stability, the ethno-psychological reference indicates an answer to the German “*Sein und Zeit*”, the British “*Time is money*”, to the old Altaic or Semitic alienation or to the contemporary American estrangement (enumeration of some of the alterity references), the closing



within the all-embracing adverb “at home” (including the way to home, the military unit, the garrison). The contemporary Americanization or Europeanization are but hibernal impressions on a field with germinating seeds, of a nation insensitive to the history’s hardships, ready to bear fruit, within the relaxation climate of the “miraculous seed”.

The Romanian soldier is altruistic, intelligent, competent, happy but also contemplative, naïve or frivolous. He answers the necessity of cultural (spatial) hedonism, in contradiction with the temporal hedonism, induced by post-modernity, and does not move away from the categorical limits, imposed by characterological portraits of the Romanian people, which has been achieved by Romanian cultural celebrities. Categorically, the Romanian soldier manages to remain a reference point, despite ideological changes that have emerged to the surface, and despite the clothes worn by the type of nationalism (based on which the myth of the Romanian armed forces becomes distinct). In other words, the change of the reference framework modifies the imagological reference only at its surface, not being able to act in depth. The ethno-psychological achieves the adjustment of self-image, by relating it to the self, in the context of its imposed functioning, under the “idealized hetero-image” regime.

## **5. THE COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSION**

From a relation perspective, the Romanian soldier manifests his openness toward others, implicitly toward a foreign soldier. He is the representative of a polychronic culture, in which the “canonic distance”, specific to each type of relations, heads to a minimum, and which is characterized by openness toward the other. He is not the representative of a monochronic culture, specific to western peoples, and where all field of activity are characterized by planning, programming, fragmentation and selection, priorities and criteria for establishing the priorities [8]. This polychronic and permissive structure gives us the possibility of comparing the lines of the characterological portraits of Romanians, accomplished by an appeal to the Romanian philosophy, with elements of hetero-image. Searching the Romanian cultural pantheon, we discover that the “Romanian is naturally endowed with common sense, he has the compliance of the peoples suffering from many hardships, the obedience of an experienced individual” (Mihai Eminescu). With too unfortunate peoples, due to historical adversities – the case of our people, tested by all earthly evils – there appear a sort of spiritual hard shell, under which the soul takes refuge so as to remain intact” (Vasile Pârvan). ”Long and obstinate combativity does not characterize us. In all of his fights,

the Romanian individual prefers the transactional spirit [...]. The Romanian is never candid. His lucidity, his critical mind, his common sense and the feeling of realism do not allow him to be so" (Mihai Ralea). "We are a far too good people, too kind and too obedient" (Emil Cioran) etc [9], whereas the hetero-image is not discordant: K. Heitman, for example, observes that "the German invites you once, the Romanian invites you ten times", and Ruth Benedict believes that "life in Romania provides any human weakness with the chance of forgiveness" [10].

Constituting evidence of the Romanians' openness to the Other, through the cultural matrix, these aspects become cues of the Romanian soldiers' openness, in their multi-national relationships. We may characterize the relation dimension of the Romanian soldiers' ethnic profile, more precisely, the communicative dimension, by relation to the spiritual matrix in which they were formed [11]. And, since the intercultural communication depends on the spiritual matrix, it will also depend on the openness toward the Other. "The multi-sensorial universe of nonverbal communication remains open to contact, and barriers, preponderantly language limitations at first, are pushed toward their resistance limit. In fact, the place where the Romanian meets a foreigner, in the open zone allowing for a self-image comparison with the others' image of themselves, where the self-image is being built and from where cultural stereotypes

leave only to be disseminated, there is plenty of permission". [12].

The natural openness regarding the relation dimension of the Romanian soldier's ethnic profile does not represent the result of a sensitivity toward the other's values and, implicitly, their acceptance, but it lies under the precaution sign, signaled in the self-ethno-images plan by such references: "spiritual hard shell" (Pârvan), "gastropodical closing" (Blaga) or "closing for openness" (Noica). The Romanian's precaution is the one that activates the possibility of a temporary closing, of covering and regards the protection of own value systems and the interiorization, in collective mental structures, of the ethnic history. The precaution, (implicitly, the closing) are not in contradiction with the prefigured openness. The relation dimension of the Romanian soldier and his entire ethnic profile may be observed only by a paradoxical approach. We can distinguish, from this perspective, a surface behavior, oriented toward openness, toward contact, as a result of the open internal structure (see the results for the indicator "communicative power", in our study), curiosity and of the need for knowledge. It is doubled by a depth behavior, of closing, decrypted by means of the "track" metaphor [13] and by the model of holographic structure [14]. This perspective reveals the symbolical transfiguration of the whole, once the projection in any "trace" of the contact with the other has been established.



## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The placement under the paradoxical sign of the “closing into openness”, as a sign of the Romanian permeability in his contact with the other, presupposes, on the one side, a closing into knowledge of the external environment into the internal environment, and on the other side, the receptive permeability and the gradual broadening of the area of conventional meanings, through a “protection mechanism of own values that are highlighted once a common value zone has been discovered, a precaution mechanism regarding the approach during the contact with the other” [15]. Consequently, we can say that the relation availability is an attribute of the Romanian individual, in general, of the Romanian soldier, in particular, and that the structuring of an ethnic profile for the Romanian soldier contributes to the communicative profile outlining of the latter.

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