

THE EVOLUTION OF MILITARY THOUGHT AND PRACTICE ILLUSTRATED IN THE JOURNALISM OF GENERAL STAFF

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Abstract: *The strategy is a component of the military art, as we learn from the books and specifics manuals. It is focused on the preparation, planning and execution of a military operation or a war.*

From Alexander the Great to the present day, the strategy used military force to achieve victory in an armed conflict. The old strategist is now the initiator of the current global security system. The revolution in military affairs, the Cold War, the Hybrid War, these are all tools of globalization. For all these achievements were needed a strategic thought, whose reverberations we feel today.

This article aims to present several elements of Romanian strategic thought, as they appeared in the journal „Military Romania”, published by the Romanian General Staff. Its purpose is to highlight some important aspects of Romanian history, combined with lessons learned from the universal history.

Key words: *education; command; globalization; strategy; history*

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a phenomenon rapacious. It captures and causes the most diverse areas, from economic, social to political, military and cultural, beyond the nation-state. Media is a significant part of globalization and it propagates through everything.

After the Second World War were set up two economic organizations – the International Monetary Fund and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and then, the World Trade Organization –, that have resulted in another aspect of the world. The new challenges, the other transformations. On the other side, our life, the citizens of this world, seems constrained, marginalized, lacking a sense of existence, almost uncertain. The war itself has taken a different physiognomy. We talk about the „Cold War” and the transition to another stage of development of society – the economic, deeply implicated in all other spheres of life.

The NATO Summit in Celtic Manor in Wales, two years ago, is considered by far the most important event of the Alliance at the end of the Cold War. Perhaps because Vladimir Putin has awakened the Cold War. He gave him a different face, by using unconventional tactics. Certainly, this year, at Summit in Warsaw, NATO will focus their decisions on choosing a political-military way to ensure the application to Art. V of the Treaty.

Today, we talk about asymmetric warfare, the „hybrid war”, which it has five dimensions: land, air, naval, cosmic and, possibly the most pointed, the cyber one. The recent attack in Brussels, in March, was a coordinated attack, with a strategy devised by the smallest details. Ruthlessly, the jihadist group Islamic State claims the terrorist attacks

in the heart of Europe. The „Soldiers of the Caliphate” doing their job. In addition, do it methodically.

The globalization has changed the entire world. In 2011, in Paris, during a seminar held by Société de Stratégie, a former defense minister brought into question the instability of strategic thought [5, p. 2]. He asked rhetorically whether the post-Cold War strategic thought can exist in the current geopolitical context in which, according to Bismarck, not intentions are important, but the ability?!

The globalization has covered the military field in his side less „militant”: in Romanian military doctrine and art. In this material, I try an „illustration” of moments in the evolution of military thinking, without formulate any value judgments, as they were presented, along time, in the „Military Romania” journal, issued by the General Staff of the Romanian Army, in a period of 175 years.

2. „THE MILITARY ROMANIA” – THE ROADMAP OF GENERAL STAFF

The journal appeared in 1864, under the impetus of time and experiences lived in France by a group of officers. They wanted to make a series of proposals to improve the moral status among Romanian army. The officers’ objective was „to spread the idea that our military training, organization and military education must be developed in relation to the nature, tradition, cultural and national aspirations of our people” [1, p. 38].

Near the beginning, the publication was independent, and then it appeared edited by the General Staff. In 150 years, the journal has been the roadmap of the conception’s structure of the army. It had several interruptions caused by the global conflicts, and the lack of money. Many and various studies of art and military history, military geography, military training, as well as reports from the front of the two World Wars were appeared in this journal. The development and dissemination of culture in the army was the mainstay of the publication. In this regard, Prince Charles I had a significant role. He coordinated the Romanian military culture and their publishers.

The journal re-appears after a break of 25 years. It had a new program, changed noticeably, more realistic as in 1864. The editors of the 1890s sought to develop „studies relating to the progress of science, arts and military equipment that were agitating spirit at that time the armies of the West” [1, p. 82]. As founding members of the journal from 1891, I mention a number of names with resonance in the indigenous military thinking: Gen. Ștefan Fălcoianu, Col. I. Lahovari, Maj. Al. Iarca and Capt. Al. Averescu. In 1908, the journal „Military Romania” was under the patronage of HRH Prince Ferdinand of Romania, the heir to the throne.

The journal has made good progress in intellectual activity, becoming an important journalistic organization in the development of our military activity. At that time, it was, among other things, that the physical movement must be entangled with moral, intellectual, to have a strong and courageous army: „Our journal military has a character completely distinctive and can even be considered as a state institution and as belonging to the army” [1, p. 174].

During 1891-1961, the culture has developed in every industries of the country. The number of those who wrote in the journal army has amplified considerably. The issues of concerning military organization, strategy and tactics, weapons and services, studies on land, military history, education, education the issues of concerning military organization, strategy and tactics, weapons and services, studies on land, military history, education, they have appeared in the pages of this journal. The dysfunctions of the military organization it also appeared. Thus, in 1913, General Averescu, on his leaving from the

General Staff, he said that the army is well prepared, but still has some shortcomings such as inefficient organization and command of the army on the front.

In addition, there have been many considerable discussions on the idea of organize our headquarters. The „Military Romania” stressed the importance of organizing the Romanian army not by the model of Italy, France and Germany, which were far from the aspirations of our country, but according to the country near the borders of Romania, that possibly we have any collision or have any alliances: „Romania must have a strong army, large, agile and lithe to lead the war of movement” [1, p. 197].

Starting from the fact that education is one of the fundamental issues training for the army, the editors of the „Military Romania” supported the personal development of each military, at the same time with the discipline in addition to troops, especially in battles. Beyond the words, a soldier must love his motherland. In this context, in one of the studies relating to disciplinary punishments, published in 1897, it shows that in military science, as in other branches of human activity, „nothing is final, nothing is constant. Everything is in constant transformation and evolution. As a result, also the methods for the development of education, instruction and maintenance of discipline in the army should not be based on immutable principles, permanent” [1, p. 208]. The structure of army must be most important in the state, as the editors wrote. The officers have a duty to prepare the nation in peacetime to the war. The moral power is given by an army loss, but also by the presence of discipline.

The military art, this „cornerstone of military life” [1, p. 221], was one of the issues most debated in the pages of the publication. In 1891, into the journal was debated the discovery of smokeless powder. Starting from the reality that all the armies of Europe sought to adapt the principles tactical to the new discovery chemical, the focus is on a number of qualities that commanders must have: an energy physical, intellectual, moral, leadership skills, and thorough research. However, one of the collaborators of the journal show that no matter how refined as powder and arms, because all infantry will be predominant [3, p. 212]. The instruction of troops evolves in relation to technical discoveries and improves weapons. As a result, the military regulations had changed and adapted to the specific time. In addition, they had to move from tactics to application code for the entire military doctrine: „The doctrine consists of principles and rules. The principles are so few, but so sovereign that were written in regulation, lose their value. The regulation was above doctrinal principles. Doctrinal principles are permanent, while the instructions are temporary” [1, p. 224].

Studying the theater of operations Austrian-Romanian, one of the editors show, in 1891, a number of situations in which the Romanian army would fight in a possible war [2, p. 46]. Coincidentally or not, these potential situations even occurred a few years later, in 1916! Thus, they mentioned:

- A war between Austria and Russia, when both countries would be in offensive;
- A war between Russia and Turkey, and Austria would be an ally to Turkey and Romania is ally to Russia;
- A war between Russia and Turkey, while Austria would be neutral, but it is an ally to Turkey and Romania – an ally to Russia.

The author described the theater as possible, the military importance of the land where they are held struggles morale population, geographic features. The author also came with a proposal to establish a railway line in the mountains, to facilitate the transport of army needed.

In the journal of General Staff appeared several pages on the command of the possible war. By 1916, the journal hosted broad debates about development and training arms and services in the Romanian army, about the criminal war in the mountains, focusing on

strengthening passers-by, the organization of artillery, cavalry, about the gun genius, about marine, and aviation. In this context, the aviation was considered both „a research tool in military operations and a combat element in the modern warfare” [1, p. 240].

A special chapter was about the study of military history. In this journal published several biographies of commanders of major units in order to know the material and moral problems that the army has gone over time.

Between 1920 and 1938, the journal has a new organization in step with the times. The Minister of War, General I. Rășcanu, was the one who claimed the recurrence journal as a natural necessity in the life of the military. Since 1921, the rubric about the frontline operations appears into the journal. So, they are debated the topics such as conducting battles, the military situation of the Eastern Front, and the reforms to be introduced in the Romanian military system. The studies are presented in connection with military legislation, the importance of aviation organization army, the war bacteriological, the war potential current and the future doctrines of war of the armies of neighboring countries, weapons, protection of individual and collective tactical applications of large, education military, the army officer role, the acts of war.

3. THE NATIONAL DEFENSE BY VISION OF POLITICIANS

In 1931, in the publication „Military Romania” appeared a material relating to national defense through the political factor. The General N. Alevra, the signatory of article, was a personality in Romanian art and doctrine. Through his studies and his opinions, he emphasized the importance of „armed nation” in developing a national military doctrine.

In „The politicians and national defense”, the author makes a comparison between the wars in the time of Napoleon and the World War I. Considering the fact that the state, in peacetime, is „more of an arbiter between producer and consumer” [4, p. 8], the author makes an analysis of the two military conflicts. The central idea is that there are significant differences between the concepts and methods of government in peacetime to the wartime. Is a *sine qua non* condition, which the political class must take into account when making the radical decisions.

In peacetime, the politicians must be taken to avoid threats to the country, proposing the solutions to remedy some adverse situations.

Napoleon said that to waging war, you need three things: money, money and money again [4, p. 11]! In World War I, almost all-warring States did not have a financial plan in place. It was one of the weaknesses of the political factor. General Alevra considers that the political factor should undertake studies for effective preparation of a financial plan, adapted to the conditions of war „requires a background of war with which to make ends meet them causes the mobilization of the army and the nation, and the first military operations” [4, p. 12].

From a strategic analysis to a military thinking is an incursion into the command of WWI. The General Alevra demonstrates in this material that, in addition to a strategy by land, air and sea, there must be a political strategy. Thus, he argues by example of Prime Minister English Lloyd George, who conceived a plan somewhat strange: he proposed reducing troop Franco-British who fought in France and create an armed us of one million people, with which to Austrian attack. In this situation, the Germans could attack the rest of the army from the French and, later, and the Austrians one. It was a plan with terrible consequences. The English General Staff thwarted him. This is an example of misunderstanding the political factor, the status quo in case of war.

Another example is Romania's entry into the Great War. The General Alevra praises the initiative of Prime Minister Ionel Brătianu. It was the period of neutrality. Bratianu was at the negotiating table with the Entente's participation. As a politician, he looked cool situation. However, over time, he had no way of knowing that the Allies would not keep his word. The material in „Romanian Military” presented the vision of Bratianu: the participation of our country in the Great War could not get the victory; I could just to support the Allies and immobilize as many enemy troops on our front. Nevertheless, as often happens, the politicians do not take into account military principles: firstly, we have defeated the enemy army, and then we have occupied their territory!

One of the author's advices is that politicians systematically study on the training and command of a war. In this regard, the author exemplifies with England, who, after the war, he established a department of military studies at the University of London.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In peacetime, the politics is the art of possibilities. In wartime, it becomes the art of realities. From strategic thought to practical military is a difficult road, often undefined and vague.

Eric de La Maisonneuve, in the *Reflexion stratégique et pensée militaire*, talks about a strategically political system. This means rethinking of policy analysis, using information technology, the emergence of triad: security – development – communication. The military thought has always existed. However, it must be adapted to the time. As always, the military has a primary mission to ensure defense of the national territory. In the current global context, the fight against terrorism, against crime is quite fragile and can turn into a real failure if we do not find their mechanisms. Here comes the political factor through its role as moderator of security.

Since 150 years, the writings of the journal „Military Romania” are „up to date” and pertinent. The war has not changed. Only his physiognomy. The methods are adapted to the 21st century, but the idea of supremacy is like a century ago: if we look in history, „the wars, without exception, were caused by a type of organization, from to the Macedonian phalanx to the nuclear deterrence, through the brothers artillery's Bureau and the Panzers of Guderian” [5, p. 8]. What kind of military organization shall prevail in this century? Is a question that calls us to reflection. So says us Eric de La Maisonneuve. Moreover, I think we should lean on that question.

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This article has not been published in another journal.

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