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***THEORETICAL APPROACHES REGARDING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF  
A EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
EUROPEAN COMMON ARMY***

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*Abstract: This paper aims to present the manner in which the establishment of a European Common Army can contribute to the achievement of a common European identity.*

*The perspective that is considered this fact is the presentation of the main theoretical approaches to security issues, relevant to European integration and the establishment of a European identity. We take into consideration the fact that the approaches regarding the European and international foreign policy is in a continuous reformulation (since it was initiated the process of European political integration) and is almost simultaneous with the creation of a European identity. The selection criterion of these methods was the amplitude of the analytical field and its functionality according the research methodology.*

*In conclusion, we try to answer the research question if the establishment of a European Common Army helps the formation of a European identity. In order to demonstrate this we will use the assumption that the formation of a professional identity - in this case, military - can compete in stimulating the achievement of a European identity.*

***Keywords: European Common Army; European identity; European security; Realistic approach; Liberal approach; Constructivist approach***

## **Introduction**

The new developments of the international relations scene - generated, especially, by the globalization with its most negative form of expression: the economic crisis, conducted, within EU, to strong debates on the future of the Union. The debate "deeper integration" vs. "dissolution" takes dramatic accents in the context of resurgent anti-European current, amid the ongoing economic crisis in the European states. Adoption by European lawmakers of a package of economic measures designed to curb the economic mess at least, partially attenuated the exacerbation of anti-unionist current occurred at the national states. To all these developments is added the increased insecurity in the entire European continent, as a result of conflicts in the close vicinity: Ukraine and the Middle East. All these oblige the European leadership to initiate debates and to elaborate EU security policies from all perspectives: military, political, economic, and social and, not at least, environmentally friendly. Unfortunately, the new developments in the Eastern European area require more than ever ensuring the military security of the Union confronted with the Russian military impetuosity.

Even if the integration of the EU Member States military structures will inevitably lead to loss the privileges related to national sovereignty, we consider that, the acceleration of setting up joint military structures and than, the establishment of a Common European Army might be the decisive step to ensure the security of the Union according to a military perspective. One of the consequences of establishing such a common structure will influence, in a significant manner, the fundamental basis for a common European identity.

This study aims to examine whether the establishment of a European Common Army can be a determining factor in the formation of a common European identity. We try within

this analysis to assess whether European integration led to the shaping of a European identity and whether developments in the military field, in the early twenty-first century, can be considered a tool for achieving a European identity.

## **CHAPTER 1 – The main theoretical approaches of security issues, relevant to European integration**

In this chapter we will try to present some of the most relevant theoretical approaches with impact on European security issues. The presentation is not exhaustive, but wants to present the theoretical perspective of European security issues. We appreciate that, from this point of view, the most important theoretical approaches are: realistic, liberal-institutionalized, globalist and socio-constructivist paradigms.

### **1.1. Realistic approach**

Realism is the traditional approach of security studies, focusing almost exclusively on military power as a means of achieving national security. Realistic analysis of security results directly from the manner in which the realists imagine the international politics as an arena in which states pursue profit opportunities from other states, so they have little interest to trust others. Normal politics is seen as a power struggle, in which the state aspires to become not only the most important actor in the system, but also the element which is confident that no other state can reach this goal<sup>1</sup>. Security becomes the classical realist conception, the balance of power and thus power politics. We might appreciate that the realism is focused on what power means, generally speaking, and military power, particularly speaking. The realistic approach considers that an international actor (State Alliance) is secured enough if it has enough power (military, economic, political, cultural, informational, etc).

Neorealist orientation, initiated by Kenneth Waltz, and structural realism developed by authors such as Barry Buzan, Charles Jones and Richard Little depart from the realist tradition by supporting a structuralism<sup>2</sup> perspective regarding the international system and a broader definition of the concept of security in this context. Security, the national one, mostly focused on military power for realists, becomes a systemic dimension for neorealist. Barry Buzan defines the "*security complex*" in *People, States and Fear* based on the finding that "all states are concluded into a global network of security interdependence. As a result, the "insecurity" is often associated with the "proximity".

In conclusion we can say that the main landmarks of realistic approach regarding the international security are the followings: the state remains the main actor in the security field - the state is seen as an individual actor, accumulating power (meaning classical realism), or the system state (meaning neorealist orientation). Power is perceived either as an end in itself (classical realism), or as a maximal objective after ensuring, in advance, the survival of states within an anarchic environment (neorealist or structural realism).

Referring to the role that it can play a realistic approach in terms of an ongoing European integration process, focusing on security sector, we appreciate that it can be used to

<sup>1</sup> Hans Morgenthau, "Six principles of political realism", in *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, ediția a 5-a, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1978, pp. 4-15.

<sup>2</sup> Stuart McANULLA, "Structure and Agency", in David Marsh, Gerry Stoker (ed.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Palgrave, Houndsmill, New York, p. 275

initiate discussions around the establishment of common military structures, having as main argument the need to increase the military power of Union, confronted with military risks and security threats, including the forms of manifestation of terrorism.

### 1.2. Liberal approach

Within the security studies, liberalism is considered to be a paradigm that denies the unique and unitary characteristics of “state as a player” in the security field, and also introduces into the security equation “non-state actors” such as international organizations, NGOs, transnational corporations. Within the liberal-institutionalism paradigm, “non-state actors” become as important as the nation-state is, in order to define the international security<sup>3</sup>. International security can be achieved rather by balancing the interests of different actors, through negotiations and establishing of international security regimes than using weapons and the arms race<sup>4</sup>.

Western Community launched the idea of "common security", which was the basis of several concepts such as: partnership, cooperative security, mutual security, etc., all based on the principle of preserving the peace, not using of force and cooperation between former enemies and current enemies. Moreover, subsequent mutual dependence theories are rooted into the confirmed hypothesis of Occidentals: a high level of interconnection of societies means a powerful deterrent to war, as a strong factor of settling international relations<sup>5</sup>. Key-elements of the liberal approach path can be reached along the whole European construction, and it is preferred that liberal theorists towards cooperation and common security will provide models for institutional constructions with security role within EU.

### 1.3. Constructivist approach

According to Nicholas Onuf, "Constructivism is not a theory; it is an approach of social research. It is particularly relevant and appropriate as a tool of criticism of empirical and normative theories widespread<sup>6</sup>.

According to Alexander Wendt, "*Constructivism is not a theory of international politics. Like the Theory of rational choice (constructivism, n.tr.) is substantially unrestricted and applicable to any social forms - capitalism, families, countries, etc.- so, if we want to say something particular, we must specify which actors (units of analysis) and structures (levels) we are interested with*"<sup>7</sup>.

We can estimate that the importance of constructivism in the development of security studies lies not only in the new ideas that it brings, but the criticism that launches upon the dominant paradigm<sup>8</sup>. Constructivism aims to study, in the field of security studies, the relationship between security, identity and interests Promoter and exponent of constructivism has become the Copenhagen School, which claims that “the security of human collectivities is

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<sup>3</sup> Dacian DUNA, Teza de doctorat, Politica securității europene la începutul secolului XXI. Uniunea Europeană și noua geostrategie a Estului, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p.67

<sup>4</sup> MAKARYCHEV, A., SERGUNIN, A., International Security, Teaching International Relations Online, Berlin, 2002, articol

<sup>5</sup> Dacian DUNA, op.cit., p.68

<sup>6</sup> Onuf apud KOŁODZIEJ, E. A., Security and International Relations, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005. p. 259

<sup>7</sup> Alexander WENDT, Social Theory of International Politics, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, p.193

<sup>8</sup> Dacian DUNA, op.cit., p.78

affected by factors in five major sectors: military, political, economic, societal and environmental (ambient)<sup>9</sup>. This sectorial approach of security was found in his subsequent discussions with scholars from *Copenhagen Peace Research Institute*. We consider that the constructivist approach, reported to the need for integration and for European institutional construction, can be the best support for the arguments related to the need for security in all its dimensions. Moreover, Buzan declares that the increase of the density of international system changes the profile of threats and security vulnerabilities. This leads to increased awareness of non-military threats, and also, these threats are growing in influence, in spite of the decrease of military ones. However, according to the analysis of the Copenhagen School, the powerful states lose more and more fears of foreign military attacks, in part because they are included into "security communities". This fact can be the reason why they are reticent on further integration of European institutions.

## **CHAPTER 2. Common european identity. Identity army - european identity**

According to Alexander Herlea, the European identity is "a result of civilization and European culture, (...) is a complex concept that incorporates often conflicting issues (spirituality - materialism, freedom - responsibility, etc.) and consists both of which are common characteristics of different cultures, ethnicities, peoples included and of their specific features"<sup>10</sup>.

"We can say, without too much wrong, that European identity is rooted in Hellenism, Christianity and Roman law. Each of the three elements in part defines European civilization space, creating a common identity landing. All European countries have been deeply marked by these three factors, and of course, their historical evolution being influenced by them.

To this aspect it was added later another one, characterized by providing primordial identity rights and fundamental freedoms, political pluralism, social participation, respect for diversity, free and fair competition, and the rule of law. However, we can not say that these levels are enough to drive, in time, to the strengthening of a common European identity. Ethnic and religious diversity, territorial fragmentation (often diverging interests between nation states) will continue to undermine this construction. The enlargement of the EU common space can still be brought under the same "dome" of the most European countries, in order to ensure a "shared living space" for the development of European nations. European unification philosophy is based exactly on elimination of differences between European countries, in order to ensure the European security according to all aspects of this concept. Although, the institutional structure has come to ensure coherence in EU manifestation; it can be observed, however, that national interests continue to block the acceleration of European unification, even under the concept of "unity in diversity".

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<sup>9</sup> Barry BUZAN, *People, States, and Fear: An Agenda of International Security Studies in the post-Cold War Era*, Longman, Londra, 1991, p 79

<sup>10</sup> Herlea Alexandru, *Comunicare în cadrul colocluiului România în UE post Tratatul de la Lisabona – identitate, interese și conduită (studiu de caz privind tranziția postcomunistă în Europa de Est)*, Institutul de Studii Internaționale, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, 15-17 aprilie 2010, <http://alexandruherlea.wordpress.com/2010/04/23/identitatea-europeana-si-largirea-spre-est-a-uniunii-europene-cazul-romaniei/>

Therefore, we believe that, the emergence of a common European identity assumed by all EU citizens will depend on developments in culture and politics fields. Globalization can be a factor which accelerates the consolidation of a European identity. Also the economic crisis - which pushes the European countries to adopt economic and political radical measures, under the patronage of the common European institutions in order to save the individual state, might be an important factor. Strengthening of free movement of people can create the conditions to strengthen a common European identity.

We believe that issues as currency, flag, political and economic institutions that shared a common identity, can contribute to the establishment of European security institutions. In this way, space and common interests could be defended by security institutions, such as ACE, Intelligence EU essential step in achievement a European identity. Extrapolating, we can estimate that the European Common Army could have a coagulant role in strengthening the common European identity. High tech modern armies will undoubtedly lead to a super-professional military staff. The specificity of military activity, in peacetime, will be accompanied by a large number of effective participation in international missions, most of them being peacekeeping and combat missions. This will undoubtedly contribute to the strengthening of the spirit from the military staff to the establishment of interpersonal relationships, checking in critical moments.

Establish an ACE concluded with professional corps of European citizens, recruited in such manner than the national component to be dimmed, dedicated to fight under the EU command, will undoubtedly lead to the formation of identity – first, professional - distinct. Using “the same language” within the professional activities, together with the deployment of units in European bases can be a stimulating factor in order to translate military and societal identity. It is obvious that we can not speak about the "colonization" of European edge provinces, but in time, millions of people gathered under the banner of ACE will effectively contribute to the consolidation of a European identity.

## Conclusions

Even if the increase in intensity of vulnerabilities, risks and threats to EU' security requires radical decisions, the European leaders - meaning the leaders of nation states - continue to bet on the “security card” - including national area, the NATO and the privileged cooperation with USA. Or, this fact blocks, most often, the dialogue and the establishment of real politics regarding the military cooperation, especially, the integration of European defense capabilities.

However, we appreciate that the European countries will have to pay an increasing attention to CSDP, seen as an essential factor to ensure safety.

Although, it is almost impossible to draw up a pattern, under which we can quantify which will be the influence of ACE in the establishment of a common European identity, it is clear that the emergence of viable European institutions - including a large number of European citizens - will undoubtedly determine an increasing number of EU citizens related to European citizenship, which represents an essential identity element.

Although the contemporary times exclude almost completely the role of "civilizing" that Army can play – having as model the ancient, the medieval and the modern patterns - it is

obvious that it has not disappeared. For example, the Western military intervention in the Middle East or in the Balkans influenced the local civilizations into an irreversible manner. Moreover, taking part in common military missions, far away from Western civilization area, conducted to the establishment of a community with strong ties, within its members were mutually influenced. Long time missions carried out by Western soldiers within the conflict areas, led unquestionably, to establishment a common professional identity: *that of soldiers who participated in peacekeeping missions in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan*. Their return home not means breaking that community, denying that identity. On the contrary, it has strengthened this evidence by their return within the common professional area: the theater of operation. The explanation regarding the compulsoriness of mission is not conclusive, as long as all soldiers could legally refuse the mission, and a serious risk could play a significant role in making such a decision.

An example that comes to sustain this fact is given by Romanian soldiers aware to participate in these missions, having also as motivational support the desire to reintegrate into the community that it shares the mentioned values.

Although it seems difficult to extrapolate this example, it is obvious that, if we speak about ACE, its manpower would vary around the number 1 million troops, but the number of persons that would be in direct contact with them could be at least triple (family suppliers population near military bases, etc.) – about 0.6% of the population. The result could be an impressive number of people who would have the same model of civilization and, especially, the same identity.

Therefore, we consider that the establishment of ACE will undoubtedly hasten the construction of a common European identity.

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