

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ROMANIAN ARMY SPECIAL OPERATION
FORCES OFFICERS EDUCATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ROMANIAN ARMY SPECIAL OPERATION FORCES OFFICERS EDUCATION, by Major Roland-Albert Tirdea-Panescue, 101 pages.

Romanian Army Special Operation Forces (Romanian ARSOF) were created as a counter-terrorist unit in 2003 in response to a strategic partnership with the US and Romania. The unit's purpose is to deploy outside of Romania under NATO command as a niche capability to conduct SOF-specific missions in theatres of operation outside the national territory. But with the emerging Russian threat to Eastern Europe, Romanian ARSOF faces a different type of mission-set: national defense and integration with large maneuver forces in contested multi-domain environments. The problem to be examined is, in its current format, the current Romanian ARSOF officer education is not prepared to address these challenges. The study will address this problem by suggesting how to transform Romanian ARSOF officer education to address the complex challenges of today and tomorrow's operational environment? The author will analyze the challenges that current Romanian ARSOF officer education is facing in this new complex and dynamic environment and compare it to the US ARSOF PME in order to identify educational approaches and recommendations that might be suitable for the Romanian ARSOF case. This study is critical not only for the Romanian ARSOF present and future missions, but it could support other NATO and non-NATO countries efforts in addressing similar issues.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE THESIS APPROVAL PAGE	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
ACRONYMS	x
ILLUSTRATIONS	xi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Problem Statement.....	1
Primary Research Question	2
Secondary Research Questions.....	2
Background.....	3
Assumptions.....	3
Definitions	4
Limitations	5
Delimitations.....	7
Significance	8
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	10
Doctrine	11
Operational Environment.....	14
Army and ARSOF PME	19
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY	26
Primary Question Answer.....	28
Secondary Questions Answers.....	28
CHAPTER 4 ROMANIAN ARSOF OFFICER PME AND THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT	30
Understanding Romanian ARSOF PME	30
Field Grade Officer Education - Romanian National Defense University “Carol I” ...	34
Types of Evaluations Used in Romanian Army PME	36

The Access to PME for Romanian ARSOF Officers	37
Romanian ARSOF-Specific Education	38
Romanian ARSOF Officer Career	39
Past Romanian ARSOF Operational Environment.....	42
Current and Future Romanian ARSOF Operational Environment.....	45
 CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS OF USSF OFFICER EDUCATION	 49
Junior Officer Education.....	53
Field Grade Officer and Senior Leader Education	61
 CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	 69
Recommendations.....	74
Short Term Changes – DOTmLPf-p	74
Doctrine.....	74
Organizational	77
Leadership.....	78
Personnel.....	78
Long Term Changes – DOTMlpf-P	79
Doctrine.....	79
Organizational	79
Training	80
Material	81
Policy	81
Follow On Topics	82
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 84

ACRONYMS

Romanian ARSOF	Romanian Army Special Operation Forces
COIN	Counter-Insurgency
ODA	Operational Detachment Alpha
ODB	Operational Detachment Bravo
NDU	National Defense University
CSF	Command and Staff Faculty
OE	Operational Environment
CT	Counter-Terrorism
DSCA	Defense Support to Civilian Authorities
LFA	Land Forces Academy
NDU	National Defense University
USA SFQC	United States Army Special Forces Qualification Course
PME	Professional Military Education
TSOC	Theatre Special Operation Command
JFSOCC	Joint Force Special Operation Component Command
TTP	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
OPI	Oral Proficiency Interview
DLPT	Defense Language Proficiency Test
SOTF	Special Operation Task Force

ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Figure 1. Graphic Depictions of the Methodology to be Used	27

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Currently, the Romanian ARSOF officer's education is not fully able to address the complex and inter-related issues that conventional war, terrorism, Counter Insurgency (COIN) and grey-zones present to Romania's national security. With the rise of the terrorist threats after the fall of the Iron Curtain, Romania decided to build its own Army Special Forces (ARSF), later to be renamed Army Special Operation Forces (ARSOF). Their main mission is counter-terrorism, but incumbent to their position in the Land Forces, they also hold a crucial role in the conventional warfare. The Romanian ARSOF shaped and adapted their education to overcome the terrorist threat for many years, with regional and cultural approaches to all the aspects of education tailored to conduct operations in another country. But the emerging Russian threat paints a different type of battle: on our own territory, part of a large maneuvering force, across a large area, in contested multi-domain environments. This new type of political, social and military environment was not the one armies in Romania and most of Europe trained or prepared in the last few decades. This raises concerns on the preparedness of our military leaders – particularly for Romanian ARSOF officers. The Romanian ARSOF strategic orientated mission-set puts them in a crucial position, with the capacity to influence the Romanian Army missions and the political situation during their operations.

This study will analyze the challenges that Romanian ARSOF is facing in the new complex political, social and military environment, compared with the present day education system. It will present the way that the Romanian ARSOF officer education

came into existence, its driving forces and some of the critical influencers. Additionally, by analyzing other countries approaches to their ARSOF officer education, it will try to identify possible new challenges that the Romanian ARSOF officers might be required to address. The study will also analyze, discuss and compare the US ARSOF educational system with the current Romanian ARSOF, identifying the educational approaches and actions that might be suitable for the Romanian ARSOF situation. In doing so, this study would provide recommendations not only to the Romanian Army leaders, but to other regional army leaders, that are or might be confronted with similar issues and challenges.

Primary Research Question

What PME outcomes directly related to Romanian ARSOF core missions must Romanian ARSOF officer education integrate to address the complex challenges of today and tomorrow's operational environment?

Secondary Research Questions

1. What is the current Romanian ARSOF PME system, what is valid and what needs change?
2. What are the internal and external challenges that the Romanian ARSOF officers' education must address?
3. How is the current and future OE shaping Romanian ARSOF missions?
4. What is the impact of the increased requirements on the Romanian ARSOF officer's education approach?

5. How the USSF core tasks shape the officers PME and how can those USSF PME tasks that closely relate to Romanian ARSOF core mission requirements be used to support the Romanian ARSOF PME transformation?

Background

Romania has a very dynamic history, as a result of its geographical disposition placing it at the crossroads of continents and various empires. This shift of influences and continuous friction between Romania's desire for sovereignty and independence left an indelible mark on the way the military organization is built and functions. The defensive nature of the Romanian National Army was a defining line since it was first founded 1859 and it endures until today, with Romania being part of the NATO Collective Defense and European Defense Agency. The Land Forces comprises the majority of the personnel and resources of the Romanian Army and the officer corps has been historically the most influential of all the cores.

Assumptions

This thesis will assume that Romanian Army continues its current transformation process, with the aim of providing a streamlined and effective force, capable of accomplishing the principal mission of national defense, as well as maintaining its status as a trusted NATO partner.

NATO will continue to provide for its defensive obligations, within a transitional process from US-heavy sponsored organization towards an effective, European collective defense entity, with a reduced US troop presence.

Russia will continue to challenge NATO, and especially NATO's easternmost members.

Romania will maintain its national desire to train and prepare for resistance movement development, under a national responsibility, not under the NATO SOF doctrine – similar to the way Hungarian SOF are currently addressing the UW missions. The assumptions will consider that Romania will provide a complementary legal framework that resistance movement development missions will remain a part of the Romanian ARSOF mission spectrum. This assumption is based on the real possibilities that an attack on Romania resulting in a loss of territory will require building resistance movements by the Romanian ARSOF to support the defensive efforts.

Definitions

This paper uses the Romanian definition of education as being an ensemble of systematically applied measures that intends to establish and improve the intellectual, moral and physical capabilities of military personnel.¹ The Romanian PME definition has an academic and a vocational part.² The academic PME is covered by the military graduate and post-graduate schools (Land Forces Academy - LFA, National Defense University - NDU). The vocational PME is the practical side of the military education and is developed through a mix of graduate and post-graduate schools and the Army

¹ Romanian Academy, *DEX '16 - Romanian Language Explanatory Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Iorgu Iordan, Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2016).

² Brandusa Niculescu, and Mircea Cosma, *The Modern Officer – the Leader of the Military Organization* (Scientific Monograph of the 11th International Scientific Conference Human Potential Development – Innovative Trends and Conclusions for XXI Century, Higher Hanseatic School of Management, Slupsk, Poland, 25-26 June 2014).

Training Schools. The Training Schools curricula cover course specific to each Army specialty from platoon level, to company and battalion staff level.

This study will refer to *SOF* officers or SOF education as the equivalent of the US Special Forces, compared to the US SOF. The Romanian army adopted the NATO SOF doctrine that does not differentiate between Special Forces and Special Operation Forces, as in the US Army. The Romanian ARSOF are formed from those individuals in the Romanian Army that graduate the Special Operation Forces Qualification Course – the equivalent of the United States Army Special Forces Qualification Course (USSFQC). Romanian SOF are comprised also from designated airborne units, special reconnaissance units, ranger units and other similar special purpose units. For this study the ARSOF will refer only to the SF-equivalent forces in the ARSOF community.

Limitations

This study will not involve human subjects and it will be based only on the researched literature about ARSOF education in different armies and time periods. Another limitation is the unclassified character of the study, that limited the depth of the research and the details of the conclusions and solutions presented.

This study will analyze and make reference only to the direct-access officers (that enter the Romanian ARSOF by graduating the Military Academy) not including the indirect-access officers (commissioned after graduating a civilian university). The very small number of indirect-access officers in the Romanian ARSOF makes them negligible for this study.

This study will not address the Romanian ARSOF officers transferring from other services or branches of Romanian Military (Technical, Naval or Air) due to their statistical insignificant number compared to the Romanian Army sourcing.

This study will not cover the special mission units that Romanian Armed Forces had before 2003. The Army Special Purpose Units in the Romanian Army before the SOF units were constituted were basically Long Range Surveillance (LRS) units, specialized in behind enemy lines reconnaissance-specific operations. They had neither a SOF specific doctrine, nor a specific integration in the overall army structure, being constituted on the same principles LRS units functioned in US Army.

The paper will concentrate on core missions of ARSOF, for both US and Romanian ARSOF to accommodate the time and space limitation required to analyze all the SOF missions. The paper will make reference only to the FID/MA, SR, DA, CT and UW missions / similar in order to allow for a relevant analysis for the two organizations.

The research paper will not cover the Romanian ARSOF officers' education linked to the Defense Support to Civilian Authorities (DSCA)– focused mission because those missions are common for all the Romanian Army and the education requirements has no particularities for the ARSOF. Similarly, the author will not make reference to the Joint PME of the USSF because it does not correspond to the Romanian ARSOF system thus making the analysis not utilizable for the purpose of this paper.

For this paper, the author will only analyze the education for the USSF officers not including the warrant officers, because there will not be an equivalent of them in the Romanian ARSOF system. The Warrant Officers in Romanian Army are technical officers and in the Romanian ARSOF system they cannot hold leadership positions.

Similarly, the author will focus on the education paths that the majority of the USSF officers will follow, avoiding the specialized or very limited number of education branches due to the limited time and space available for the present research.

This thesis will not cover the USSF Joint PME (JPME) analysis due to the absence of an AR SOF JPME equivalent, but the study will try to suggest a further study to be conducted on the applicability, creation, development and implementation of a Romanian SOF JPME.

Delimitations

This study will limit its focus to unclassified materials published in English or Romanian language, by national and collective entities.

The research will focus on identifying the critical officer education aspects that the Romanian ARSOF needs to address in order to retain the initiative for the current and foreseeable challenges. By comparing other ARSOF officer education systems, it will present solutions to challenges, providing a starting point for future detailed researches possible with access to classified information.

The reason to pursue this study resides in the importance and the actuality of this subject in the current complex European and global environment, especially in the present day strategic context that Romania is facing. The combination of conventional territorial defense missions, continuing COIN operations and complicated political and social environment presents the Romanian ARSOF officers with challenges unlike any other before.

Significance

Romania's geographical position in the South Eastern part of Europe has always presented a place where strategic interests of different powers and systems have come into conflict. From the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires in the 16th Century to the present day frictions between Russia and NATO, the Romanian Army had, has and will have the difficult task of defending the country, in a national and allied context, as well as addressing the EU solidarity and reciprocal assistance requirements.³ In this complex geo-strategical context, Romania developed its Special Forces with the distinct role of providing a strategical assets in both conventional and un-conventional combat situations. Among the Romanian SOF, the ARSOF is the most numerous, oldest and most experienced of all the branches. The leaders of ARSOF, the officers, are the ones charged to make strategic decisions that can have effects not only at national level, but can influence the Regional, European and even global decisions. Romanian ARSOF was born in a COIN context that caused the officers education to be greatly focused on the counter-terrorism actions, aligned with the NATO and US Global War on Terror. But the rise of the Russian threat on the Eastern front, with a mix of hybrid and conventional warfare techniques, underlined the area where Romanian ARSOF currently need to focus their efforts, with the ARSOF officers being the main focus. Being a force multiplier, the ARSOF officers are not only the ones called to lead their forces, but are the ones that are called to provide specialized competencies to the conventional forces in a complex and

³ Romanian Land Forces, *Romanian Defense White Charter*, 2015, accessed October 9, 2017, https://www.forter.ro/sites/default/files/informare-publica/carta_alba_apararii.pdf.

hybrid environment. This is why it is important for a professional Romanian ARSOF officer to understand both the unconventional / irregular and the conventional aspect of the Romanian Defense requirements, as well as the National, Allied, Regional and Global implications of their actions. Only by transforming and adapting their education to the new threat environment challenges, Romanian ARSOF officers the proactive and efficient leaders that the Romanian ARMY will need to achieve deterrence and protect national and collective values.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research for this thesis revealed numerous articles addressing needed changes or transformations for the USSF PME, both for junior and field grade officers. On the other hand, there are little to no articles covering the Romanian ARSOF PME, as a separate system or as a part of the Romanian Army PME structure. This is the reason why the analysis in chapter 5 is a compare and contrast approach with the United States SF Professional Military Educations (PME). The USSF PME system was chosen due to the way the Romanian ARSOF PME system was initially envisaged to be developed, as an adaptation to the Romanian specifics of the USSF PME model.

Chapter 2 will present the literature overview, from a wide range of official documentation, materials, books, articles and official blogs referring to both the past, the present and the envisaged future with an influence over the Romanian ARSOF community.

The study will use as primary sources of literature public sector works, composed of official (released or assumed) national government or collective entities documentation (Romanian, US, NATO, EU) relevant to the topic: national, security, and military strategies, national and military visions, education programs and strategies. These documents describe relevant aspects in regards to both the political, social, and military context that Romanian is and will be facing, but also regarding the way the Romanian ARSOF will be called to respond to them.

This chapter will be structured in three main parts: doctrine, operational environment and Army and ARSOF PME. This construction will allow for a logical and

comprehensive overview of the literature and allow for a nesting from broad – doctrine to narrow – ARSOF PME documentation.

Doctrine

An analysis of the *2015-2019 Romanian National Defense Strategy*,⁴ the *2016 Romanian Defense White Charter*⁵ and the *2016 Romanian Military Strategy*⁶ provides details related to many subject that this thesis will cover: the current and future operational environment, the Romanian role in the South-East European region and the NATO Eastern flank, the roles, functions and missions of the Romanian ARSOF. The analysis of these documents reveal also the many challenges that Romanian ARSOF PME will have to address in order to successfully execute the assigned roles and missions: from integration with conventional forces to cultural awareness, from multinational missions to challenging and uncertain political operating environments.

To understand the place, role and mission of Romanian ARSOF and especially, to understand what areas of interest ARSOF education should cover, the 2007 Romanian Defense Minister *Romanian Army Transformation Strategy*⁷ details the strategic and military implication that the transformation of Romanian Army is currently undergoing.

⁴ Romanian Presidential Administration, *Romanian National Defense Strategy for 2015-2019* (Bucharest: National Monitor Publishing, 2015).

⁵ Romanian Government, *The Romanian Defense White Paper* (Bucharest: National Monitor Publishing, April 22, 2016).

⁶ Romanian Government, *The Romanian Military Strategy* (Bucharest: National Monitor Publishing, September 28, 2016).

⁷ Romanian Defense Ministry, *Romanian Army Transformation Strategy* (Bucharest: National Monitor Publishing, 2007).

Subsequently, the 2015 *Romanian National Security Strategy*⁸ defines the national interests and objectives, evaluates the threats at global, Euro-Atlantic and regional level, assesses the threats, risks and vulnerabilities and provides strategical guidance for the “way ahead.” Furthermore, the 2016 *Romanian Defense White Paper*⁹ describes and details how the national strategy is implemented and how the Romanian Government needs to support it.

The Romanian ARSOF requirements for national defense and for multi-national missions are a synthesis of the 1994 *Romanian National Defense Law no. 45*¹⁰ and the 2011 *Romanian Armed Forces participation in missions and operations outside the National Borders Law no. 121*,¹¹ corroborated with all the subsequent Romanian Government Executive Decisions. These aforementioned documents provide the basis of not only the AR SOF mission-set, but they also provide a way to envision how the current Romanian posture can be challenged by the new and complex threats rising on the Eastern borders.

In order to fully understand the Romanian ARSOF missions, the 2012 National Defense University, Center for Strategic Studies paper *Romanian Army Strategic*

⁸ Romanian Presidential Administration, *The Romanian National Defense Strategy Guide, Decree no.128 of The Romanian Supreme Defense Council (CSAT)* (Bucharest: National Monitor Publishing, December 10, 2015).

⁹ Romanian Government, *The Romanian Defense White Paper*.

¹⁰ Romanian Parliament, *Romanian National Defense Law no. 45*, in *The Official Monitor of Romania*, no. 172 (Bucharest: National Monitor Publishing, July 7, 1994)

¹¹ Romanian Parliament, *Romanian Armed Forces Participation in Missions and Operations Outside the National Borders Law no. 121*, in *The Official Monitor*, no. 427 (Bucharest: National Monitor Publishing, June 17, 2011).

*Missions within NATO*¹² describes the Romanian strategic roles within the Alliance, as well as discussing possible future roles that Romania might be called to fulfill. This will further support the description of the strategic and operational environment that Romanian ARSOF will be called to operate into.

To understand how and why the Romanian ARSOF missions changed, but also how those changes will need to trigger a change in the way the Romanian ARSOF PME is built, developed and updated, the author analyzed the 2013 Allied Joint Doctrine for Special Operations – AJP 3.5, comparing and contrasting it with the 2004 Romanian ARSOF doctrine. Analyzing the influence of AJP-3.5 on the Romanian ARSOF PME is important for this paper not only because it became the *de facto* ARSOF doctrine since 2013, but it also aims at leveling the mission-sets, requirements and capabilities throughout all the NATO countries, implying tasks and responsibilities for Romanian ARSOF PME that were not required before it was adopted. Additionally, the author used AJP-3.5 in his analysis of the *USASOC ARSOF 2022*¹³ and *USASOC Strategy 2035*¹⁴ to identify the similarities and differences between US and NATO points of view on similar missions and capabilities. The intent of this was to uncover gaps or overlapping of capabilities, missions, and interests that would point to why and how various strategic

¹² Petre Dutu, *Romanian Army Strategic Missions within NATO* (Bucharest: National Defense University Publishing, 2012).

¹³ Charles T. Cleveland, *ARSOF 2022* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013).

¹⁴ Kenneth E. Tovo, *USASOC Strategy-2035* (MacDill AFB, FL: Government Printing Office, 2016).

approaches can be utilized to support the Romanian ARSOF adaptation to the challenging and changing OE.

Operational Environment

Although Romania does not have a UW mission set defined for its ARSOF, its history points out that in different times and for different reasons, Romanian para-military forces organized and executed extensive resistance operations, which points out to a gap in the required training of Romanian ARSOF, the only ones that could be able to plan, organize and conduct these type of operations in a hostile or denied territory. The current Crimean situation is a perfect example of why such capabilities are needed for a country in the Eastern Europe, especially if we are analyzing current threat trends.

Romania has a long history of occupation by many regional powers starting with Roman times and ending with the Soviet occupation in the 20th century. Because of that, for centuries Romanians have resisted their foreign rulers. The *haiduci* are the oldest form of organized resistance that are mentioned throughout the Romanian history, organized groups under centralized command that planned and executed sabotage-type actions on occupiers' apparatus, undermining their credibility and affecting their combat power and moral. Detailed description of their organization, actions and geographical location, as well as their modus operandi are analyzed by the Dr. Daniel Dieaconu in his two books¹⁵ that cover extensively this subject.

¹⁵ Daniel Dieaconu, *Haiduci și tâlhari - Contribuții de mitologie și antropologie istorică* (Piatra Neamt: Editura Cetatea Doamnei, 2013); *Tâlhăria și haiducia la români: jefuitorii cu arme* (Iasi: Ed. Universitara, 2014).

The 20th century saw a more sophisticated and organized type of resistance movements in Romania, more similar with what today resistance movement will be identified in doctrine. The 1914-1917 actions conducted against German occupying forces in Romania describe fully what today it will be classified as a resistance force. Fueled by the opposition to the Nazi forces, many officers from the Romanian army have started resistance groups throughout the entire territory of Romania. The *Romanian Army and the National Unity: studies and dissertations*,¹⁶ describes the guerilla-type resistance movement in the South of Romania, organized by a former Romanian officer, conducted activities like subversion, intimidation, IO campaign aimed at degrading the German morale, armed raids, deceptions activities, recruitment activities and intelligence collections.

After the WWII, Romania fell under Soviet occupation and the resistance movement extended to the entire national territory. Former Romanian officers started this resistance in the Carpathian mountains, by former Romanian officers, as Cicerone Ionitoiu describes in details in his book *1944-1960 Romanian armed resistance against communism*,¹⁷ but it become an international sponsored effort. *Revolution and Resistance in Eastern Europe: Challenges to Communist Rule* by Stibbe, Matthew, and McDermott, Kevin describes how with US external support in training, weapons, ammunition, radios and many other assets, an extensive resistance network was developed in Romanian to

¹⁶ Marian Mosneagu, Petre Flores, and Cornel Tuca, *Armata română și unitatea națională: studii și comunicări* (Pitești: Delta Cart Educațional, 2008.)

¹⁷ Cicerone Ionitoiu, *Rezistența armată a Românilor împotriva comunismului, 1944-1960* (Viganello: Ed. Coresi, 1987.)

fight the Soviets, as part of a Eastern Europe effort to counter the Soviet occupation¹⁸ until the 1950s. The Romanian resistance – organized in underground, auxiliary, and maneuver forces - conducted the entire spectrum of resistance activities from infrastructure sabotage to intelligence collection on Soviet activities. With or without external support, resistance activities in Romania continued against the Soviet regime until late 1970s, proving their resiliency and determination.

To fully understand the current and future operational environment, different points of view must be considered to allow for a complete picture of the way the challenges are perceived by various actors on the international, regional and national area. By corroborating the concepts that Frank Hoffman analysis in his essays *The Contemporary Spectrum of Conflict: Protracted, Gray Zone, Ambiguous, and Hybrid Modes of War*¹⁹ and *Hybrid Threats: Re-conceptualizing the Evolving Character of Modern Conflict*²⁰ we can form an idea of the way the modern challenges are perceived by the US, from its distance positions vis-à-vis of the Eastern threat center. Hoffman sees difference between various types of new conflicts and provides a broad description of the particular challenges each one poses.

¹⁸ Matthew Stibbe and Kevin McDermott, *Revolution and Resistance in Eastern Europe: Challenges to Communist Rule* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2006), 83, accessed February 26, 2018, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁹ Frank G. Hoffman, “The Contemporary Spectrum of Conflict: Protracted, Gray Zone, Ambiguous, and Hybrid Modes of War 2016 Index of U.S. Military Strength,” accessed April 13, 2016, <http://index.heritage.org/military/2016/essays/contemporary-spectrum-of-conflict/>.

²⁰ Frank G. Hoffman, *Hybrid Threats: Reconceptualizing the Evolving Character of Modern Conflict* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2009.)

The conventional and non-conventional (hybrid, informational and cyber) warfare aspects are covered by a large number of academic works. By covering all aspects of the types of warfare Russia is capable of conducting, a holistic perspective on the threats, challenges, strengths and weaknesses can be developed. The latest conventional campaigns that Russia conducted in Chechnya and Georgia are discussed and analyzed by Major James A. Copp in his 2013 paper *The Russian Way of War: Post Soviet Adaptations in the Russian Military*.²¹ His focus was on identifying their new capabilities, as well as their strong and weak aspects. The latest Ukraine hybrid attacks, as well as a detailed analysis of the way Russia developed and employed the concept of hybrid warfare, with the infamous “little green men” is extensively covered in the 2015 USSOCOM published *The little green men: Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014*.²²

For a starting point in analyzing the major areas of concern for today’s Romanian ARSOF leaders, 2013 Harry Yarger’s JSOU monograph *21st Century SOF: Toward an American Theory of Special Operations*²³ successfully covers many of the challenges that SOF will have to address in the coming century. The NATO and European view of the

²¹ James A. Copp, “The Russian Way of War: Post Soviet Adaptations in the Russian Military,” accessed November 10, 2017, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a599655.pdf>.

²² United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), *Little Green Men: A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013–2014* (Fort Bragg, NC: US Government Printing Office, 2015).

²³ Harry R. Yarger, “21st Century SOF: Toward an American Theory of Special Operations,” accessed September 26, 2017. <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ADA591817>.

operational environment is depicted by Norbert Vaczi in his 2016 thesis *Hybrid Warfare: How to Shape Special Operations Forces*²⁴ by merging the new strategic challenges imposed by the territorial proximity to Russia with the existing European-specific issues – from economic frictions to territorial disputes, from immigration to financial issues. This gives an insight on the particular environment that the European region is facing and will face in the future, referring to both NATO and European Union.

The 2017 research paper *Romania and The New Cold War Security Challenges*²⁵ by Major Lucian Oancea explores the security challenges that Russia might present to Romania and Eastern Europe. The “New Cold War” and the way it can affect national and regional interests motivated Major Oancea to write his study on the way Russia envisage its use of instruments of national power to affect the Eastern Europe region and how Romania National Strategy tries to address them.

The future environment that Romanian ARSOF will be called to operate in presented by synthesizing the analysis of the Romanian National Defense and Romanian Military strategies, the latest strategical and operational military and security developments within Romania and NATO, as well as through a corroboration of the latest interviews and declarations of Romanian and NATO officials, referring to the future role of Romania within the South-Eastern region and on the NATO Eastern flank. Additional to the newly arisen threats and challenges, the long standing issues like terrorism, trans-

²⁴ Norbert Vaczi, “Hybrid Warfare: How to Shape Special Operations Forces,” accessed August 16, 2017. <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=AD1020415>.

²⁵ Lucian Oancea, “Romania and The New Cold War Security Challenges” (Master’s Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth KS, 2016).

national criminality, immigration, corruption and others are also covered, to complete the picture of the future complex, very dynamic and sensitive environment. To reinforce these new objectives, the Romanian President Klaus Iohannis in his speech on hybrid threats at the Global SOF Symposium in Bucharest in February 2018 pointed that the Romanian ARSOF have to develop a specific security profile in Central and East Europe, to rapidly transform and to be ready to execute the full-spectrum missions, anytime and anywhere, for national or collective defense missions.²⁶

Army and ARSOF PME

The current Romanian Army and Romanian ARSOF PME picture is described by corroborating the 2017 Romanian Land Forces Academy Institutional Programs for commissioning officers with the 2017 Romanian Military National University graduate and post-graduate level programs. This synthesis will allow for an understanding, at all levels, of the current educational framework, the characteristics and the limitations. Chapter 4 will provide a more detailed analysis of these structures.

For a deeper analysis of the current officer education, for both junior and field grade officers, analyzing and synthesizing from the 2006 Cosma Mircea *The formation of modern officer. From reality to necessity*,²⁷ 2015 Colibaba Cristinel *Educating and*

²⁶ Klaus Iohannis, *La Simpozionul Fortelor Pentru Operatiuni Speciale. Sa ne adaptam la razboiul hibrid* (Stirileprotv.ro.), accessed March 7, 2018. <https://stirileprotv.ro/stiri/actualitate/presedintele-iohannis-participa-la-simpozionul-fortelor-pentru-operatiuni-speciale.html>.

²⁷ Mircea Cosma, *The Formation of Modern Officer. From Reality to Necessity* (Sibiu: Romanian Land Forces Academy Publishing, 2005)

*Evaluating the Land Forces Structures in the context of Coalition Operations*²⁸ and 2015

Mandache Radu *The formation of the Land Forces Officer as a Leader in the Modern*

*Military Organization*²⁹ allows for a detailed picture of both the institutional and

educational problems that the current PME presents. Because the core of the ARSOF

officer PME is done through the *Big Army* education systems, knowing these issues will

allow for a better framing of the problems and the restrictions and limitations on the

possible solutions.

To understand how USSF is employing education as a tool to develop their officers and to accomplish their missions, the author started from understanding how the USSF officers PME is integrated into the overall PME of the US Army, how it is linked with the career development, assignments, personal and organizational positions. In 2017 the US Army published Army Regulation (AR) AR 350-1 – *Army Training and Development*,³⁰ and the Army Pamphlet DA 600- 3 – *Officer Professional Development and Career Management*³¹ which both detail the way US Army is addressing officers

²⁸ Cristinel Colibaba, “Educating and Evaluating the Land Forces Structures in the context of Coalition Operations” (Ph.D. diss., National Defense University, Washington, DC, 2015).

²⁹ Radu-Adrian Mandache, “The Formation of the Land Forces Officer as a Leader in the Modern Military Organization” (Ph.D. diss., National Defense University, Washington, DC, 2015).

³⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 10 December 2017).

³¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 600-3, *Officer Professional Development and Career Management* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 26 June 2017).

PME in general and USSF officers in particular while putting it into perspective of the career progression. In order to understand in more detail the USSF officers mission requirements, roles, characteristics and attributes the author corroborated the extensive description comprised in the 2014 DA PAM 600-3 – *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*³² with the vision, goals and objectives covered in the *USASOC ARSOF 2022*³³ and *USASOC Strategy 2035*.³⁴ The synthesis of these documents allowed the author to define the constants that the USSF PME is required to incorporate at all levels – junior (pre-commissioning and primary) and senior (intermediate, senior and flag) in order to develop the needed educated officer that will successfully accomplish any SF mission and task. Additionally, this education must also allow for a successful interface with joint, interagency, international and multinational entities, but also with the civilian environment.

The SOF community today is a joint and multi-national melting pot of capabilities, knowledge and education, but with missions and goals that can drastically differ even among allied forces. In order to understand some of the important area of concern for present and future day leaders, the 2013 JSOU *21st Century SOF: Toward an*

³² Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 600-3, *Personal – General Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 3 December 2014).

³³ Cleveland, *ARSOF 2022*.

³⁴ Tovo, *USASOC Strategy-2035*.

*American Theory of Special Operations*³⁵ provides a details discussion on the premises and principles defining modern SOF.

The specificity that a SOF officer must address in an Unconventional or Irregular Warfare environment is covered by Major Bryan Cannady in his 2008 thesis *Irregular Warfare: Special Operations Joint Professional Military Education Transformation*.³⁶ The paper analyzed the requirements that a ARSOF officer encounters in a UW-type operating environment, as well as the competencies required to be covered though his education in order to allow him to be a successful SF leader.

The language aspect of the USSF, part of the cultural awareness necessary for any successful SF operator, but especially for the officers working at a strategic level is the focal point of the 2008 Committee on Armed Services House of Representatives hearing on *Transforming the U.S. Military's foreign language, cultural awareness, and regional expertise capabilities*.³⁷ The hearing provides an insightful discussion on the way that language becomes an important part of the education, while planning and conducting SOF missions.

³⁵ Yarger, "21st Century SOF: Toward an American Theory of Special Operations."

³⁶ Bryan H Cannady, "Irregular Warfare: Special Operations Joint Professional Military Education Transformation," accessed November 10, 2017, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/u/?p4013coll2,1581>.

³⁷ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services. Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, Hearing before the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, 110th Cong., 2nd sess., September 10, 2008, *Transforming the U.S. Military's Foreign Language, Cultural Awareness, and Regional Expertise Capabilities* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010).

The 2017 U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School *Academic Handbook Fiscal Year 2017*³⁸ lays out in detail a current array of the Army SOF education pathways and details both the vision and the relations between various types of specialties in the SOF.

SOF education is looked from the perspective of the skills and know-how needed for Civil-Military Operations by James Powers in his 2006 JSOU monograph *Civil-Military Operations [CMO] and Professional Military Education*.³⁹ He covers the effects of the lack of integration of specific CMO training curricula, as CMO are an indivisible part of SOF current OE and will also likely remain an important portion of the future OE.

In order to understand how and why USSF officers PME is shaped in its current form, two other works delve deeper in the USSF PME paper focused on levels junior and senior. The junior level USSF officer education has a good point of reference in the 2009 Russell Howard's paper on *Educating Special Forces Junior Leaders for a Complex Security Environment*.⁴⁰ The senior level PME can be apprehended by compiling and analyzing the findings of and the 2017 Michael Meumann's report on *A Different*

³⁸ U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS), *USAJFKSWCS Academic Handbook Fiscal Year 2017* (Fort Bragg, NC: US Government Printing Office, 2017), 32.

³⁹ James F. Powers, Jr., "Civil-Military Operations and Professional Military Education," accessed August 17, 2017, <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ADA495472>.

⁴⁰ Russell D. Howard, "Educating Special Forces Junior Leaders for a Complex Security Environment," accessed August 01, 2017, <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ADA514491>.

*Approach to SOF Education for Majors*⁴¹ and the 2003 Mark Beattie *US Army SOF Advanced Education*.⁴² Their analysis of both junior and field-grade officer's education aspects allows for a broader understanding of the perceived historical approach and challenges suggested solutions in contrast with the present-day reality. This in turn allowed the author to see the way US Army and USSF perceived and addressed officer PME challenges and what solutions were found and which implemented, a good starting point for addressing the issues of Romanian ARSOF similar PME.

Looking back at the entire literature covered for this thesis, the author identified new emerging missions – resistance movement development, resulting from both the new threat streams in the region and from the analysis of the Romanian historical background. The new complex and dynamic environment, defined by the new Strategic documents and by the new approach to security that Romania is taking, points to a need of a transformation of the Romanian ARSOF approach, a closer CF-SOF interaction and an officer PME focused on the JIIM, not only national military OE. The author identified gaps not only in the way Romanian ARSOF officer PME is currently developed, but also in the length it covers – limited up to captain level, compared to the requirements by both career development, functions and positions. The new challenges presented by the hybrid and emerging threats underlined the requirements for the Romanian ARSOF officer

⁴¹ Michael Meumann, "A Different Approach to SOF Education for Majors," Technical Report, accessed September 25, 2017, <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=AD1022393>.

⁴² Mark A. Beattie, "U.S. Army Special Forces Advanced Education" (Master of Military Art and Science Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth KS, 2003).

education to expand outside the military-only focus, requiring a comprehensive, progressive, continuous and adaptive approach, able to address the rapid and new changes that the OE is experiencing in the present and certainly in the future. Most importantly, the study of the literature pointed out the need for the Romanian ARSOF PME to include the maximization of outer SOF officer PME, especially the USSF officer PME. This will allow for an immediate and progressive approach to developing a tailored ARSOF officer PME, drawing from the experience of other similar forces, while maximizing the cost-result ratios, given the current and forecasted budget restrictions and challenges.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This research will utilize a single-case study qualitative method to provide focus in managing the large amount of information that pertains to the subject and assist in distinguish between the relevant and irrelevant documents needed to answer the thesis research question. The research question examines the Romanian ARSOF officer education as it is today and it also questions if the current Romanian ARSOF officer education is capable of developing a leader for an operational and strategic-level force.

Due to the lack of previous papers that cover the Romanian ARSOF education, in general, and ARSOF officer education, in particular, this paper will conduct an analysis and synthesis of existing publications and papers related to the subject, with focus on the US Special Forces, but looking through the NATO and EU point of view also. The analysis will be made through the lens of the present and future requirements of the operational environments that Romanian ARSOF will have to conduct its actions.

The author used an Army Design Methodology (ADM) approach to analysis the problem at hand and to point to the conclusions and recommendations at the end of the thesis. The answers to the primary question are provided by looking at the current situation (the current Romanian ARSOF PME), defining the desired state (by analyzing how the Romanian leaders define in the national and strategic level documents the environment that Romanian Army and ARSOF, in particular, will have to operate in), frame the problem (by analyzing how the current Romanian ARSOF PME is able to address the current and future challenges that Romania is / will face and what are the gaps that it needs to fill in order to educate ARSOF officers to address the challenges of

the new and complex OE). The last part of this approach developed an operational approach (by analyzing how the USSF PME is currently set to address their core tasks and missions) and developed a plan (by providing a set of recommendations to address the identified issues, thus answering the primary question of the thesis).

The study will also help in determining how the US ARSOF is postured to address the current and future challenges. Additionally, it will assist to identify possible ways the Romanian ARSOF officer education can be changed, adapted or reshaped, based on the broader experience that the USSF enterprise provides. Figure 1 is depicting the way this paper plans to approach this thesis.

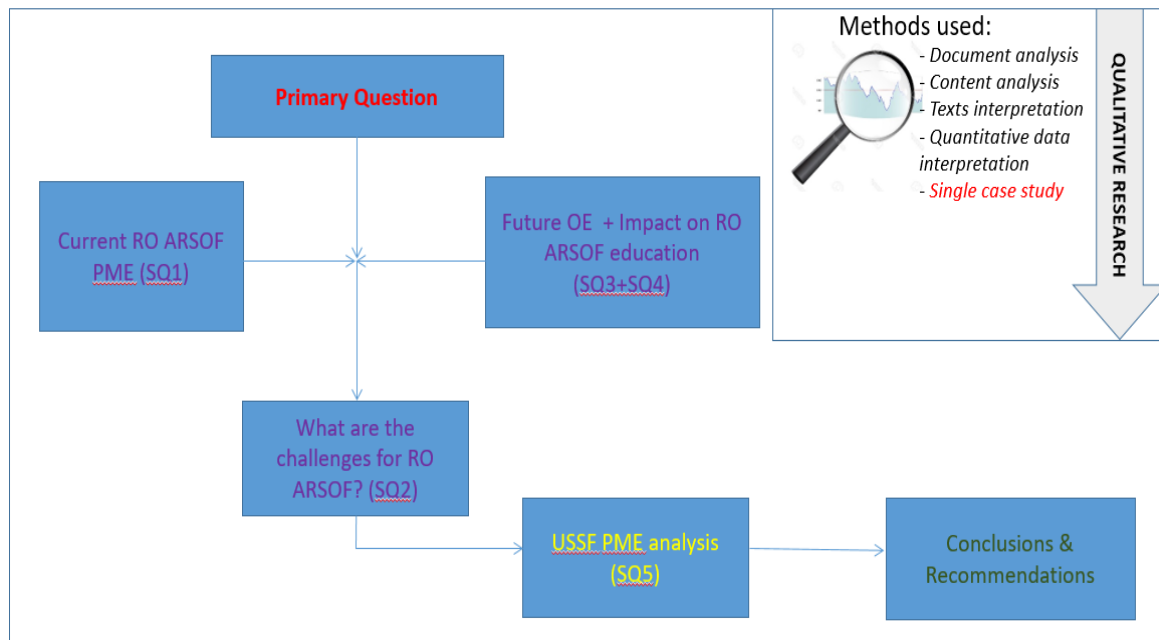


Figure 1. Graphic Depictions of the Methodology to be Used

Source: Created by author.

Primary Question Answer

In order to answer the primary research question - what PME outcomes directly related to Romanian ARSOF core missions must Romanian ARSOF officer education integrate to address the complex challenges of today and tomorrow's operational environment - several secondary questions were needed to properly nest and frame the way the analysis will be conducted.

Secondary Questions Answers

The first secondary question is analyzing and presenting what is the current Romanian ARSOF PME system, what is valid and what needs to change. The answer to this question is given by reviewing and synthesizing the content of the curriculum of both junior and field grade officer for their relevance and completeness.

The next question inquires about the internal and external challenges that the Romanian ARSOF officer education needs to address to remain relevant. The inquiry is made by comparing the past, present and future environment for Romanian ARSOF. The answers will be given by analyzing the national level strategic documents to identify the way the Romanian political leaders saw and see the environment that Romanian Army, in general, and Romanian ARSOF, in particular, will have to operate in.

The questions related to how the current and future OE will challenge Romanian ARSOF and what is the impact of the increased requirements on the Romanian ARSOF officer's education will be answered by comparing the current Romanian ARSOF PME with the current and future challenges that Romania is / will face and the requirements that Romanian ARSOF have to address in the new NATO, EU and global environment.

The final secondary question - how the USSF core tasks shape the officers PME and how can those USSF PME tasks that closely relate to Romanian ARSOF core mission requirements be used to support the Romanian ARSOF PME transformation? – will be answered by the analysis of the current USSF PME approach. The analysis will be done by using the lens of core mission requirements, organizational requirements and personal development. This analysis will provide the needed indicators and possible USSF solutions to the current and future challenges that in turn can be used by Romanian ARSOF as a starting point to address the needed changes to its own officer education.

CHAPTER 4

ROMANIAN ARSOF OFFICER PME AND THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

In order to appreciate this paper's importance and to fully comprehend the intent behind it, this chapter will comprehensively present and analyze the current Romanian ARSOF officer PME, framed within the Romanian Army officer career and the Romanian operational environment.

Understanding Romanian ARSOF PME

In the Romanian Army officer career there are two major education institution that offers PME: the Land Forces Academy (Academia Forțelor Terestre - LFA) and the National Defense University (NDU). The Academy is the equivalent of the US Military Academy of West Point and is the gateway to the Army officer profession. It provides both the Bachelor Degree (after a 3-year long Bologna Agreement-style education) and the commissioning as a second lieutenant. NDU, through its Command and Staff Faculty (CSF) covers the graduate level PME for field grade officers (equivalent of the US Army Command and General Staff College). CSF is a 2-year curriculum that ends with a Military Master, equivalent with the one awarded by CGSC or Naval Post-Graduate School. Beginning 2015, the Romanian Army Human Resources Directorate directed that for all the field grade officers, in order to be promoted to lieutenant colonel, must have a Master in Military Arts and Science (MMAS), eliminating the previous option of a similar civilian master program. This severely restricted the broadening opportunities for the field grade officers in their future education, forcing them to base their post-graduate education only on military institutions. Additionally, NDU, through its War College

section, provides post-graduate, operative and strategic level PME for lieutenant-colonels and colonels, similar with the US War College.⁴³

In addition to these two institutions, the Romanian Army has an array of training schools, at different levels and specialization that can be attended by officers depending on their personal options and the career requirements. These training schools cover officer basic courses, specialization courses, and captain career course.

The instructor positions in any of the Romanian Army schools (LFA⁴⁴ and NDU⁴⁵) are long-term positions, comprised in the school's MTOE. The selection criteria require only academic qualifications, but there is no direct and exclusive requirement to have combat, deployed or multinational functions on positions equivalent to those that the individual will instruct. As discussed earlier, the academic background trumps the practical military experience, thus decreasing the credibility of the instructor and of the education process. Additionally, the Romanian educational system requires that officers educate officers, thus causing the majority of the instructor positions in all the ARSOF officer schools to be officer position, usually a rank higher than all the students.

Junior Officer Education - Romanian Land Forces Academy "Nicolae Balcescu"

⁴³ Romanian National Defense University (PowerPoint Presentation), accessed October 21, 2017, <https://www.unap.ro/sesiune/en/pdf/NDU.pps>.

⁴⁴ Romanian Land Forces, "Methodology for Selecting Military Instructors in the Land Forces Academy," January 2017, accessed October 21, 2017, <http://www.armyacademy.ro/posturi/didactice/metodologiapmg.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Romanian National Defense University, "Methodology for Selecting Military Instructors in the National Defense University 'Carol I'," accessed October 21, 2017, https://www.unap.ro/ro/prezentare_generala/Metodologia%20de%20ocupare%20a%20posturilor%20de%20instructori%20militari.pdf.

The modern Romanian Army officer education concept was born in 1861, by order of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the first ruler of the unified modern Romania. He unified the *Wallachia Officer School*, founded by Grigore Bibescu in 1847 and Moldavian *Regimental Officer School*, founded by Grigore Alexandru Ghica in 1858⁴⁶ under a single curriculum. The school was started as a need to train competent officers that could be proficient at the art and science of war for the territorial defense of the newly born Romanian nation. The institution started to integrate the instructors' empirical experience, gained through generation of combat for territorial defense with modern pedagogical and methodical methods, focusing mainly on practical skills.

A new step for the officer education was made in 1879, when the school started to specialize infantry and cavalry officers, followed in 1886 by the artillery and engineer's branches. The curriculum sees a maturation, all the officers followed a common core until they chose their branch, further continuing on separate, branch-specific course in their respective application schools.

This *Soldier School (Scoala Osteasca)*⁴⁷ continued to develop its curriculum and adapt its structure, based on the needs of the days and the operational environment, with a focus on the practical side of the military profession until 1991 when the school became a superior education institution and underwent a radical change, including a name change in 1995 into the Land Forces Academy. This change slowly shifted the focus from the

⁴⁶ Romanian Land Forces Academy, "The History of the Institution," accessed October 05, 2017, <http://www.armyacademy.ro/istoric.php>.

⁴⁷ Ioan Parean, "From Soldier School to Land Forces Academy," 2001, accessed October 20, 2017, http://www.armyacademy.ro/reviste/3_2001/rev5s.html.

practical, military-orientated approach to the academic, faculty-specific one, in line with the overall military education reform of the day. This was especially visible after 2002, when the Academy was accredited by the Romanian Ministry of Education, thus requiring extensive changes to the content and approach of the military education to match the civilian education equivalent requirements. This in turn, reduced the time allotted to practical, military-specific training to allow for the academic compliance. The military education approach was changed from a continuous, day-by-day, interwoven military and academic life into a modular, successive academic and military approach. If the previous model engrained the military attitude into the students, the current one separates the military from the academic realms, removing the army-specific indoctrination. This shift can be noticed by analyzing the way the curricula was changed, more towards the student aspect and less on the military side,⁴⁸ by analyzing the institution's commanders interviews⁴⁹ and LFA own publications. Romanian LFA curricula focuses more on the academic, civilian-equivalent of the military education, diverging from the historical military-practice focus. The number of hours allocated to the military training compared to the ones for academic studies shows a trend towards valuing civilian equivalent education over the military required basic officer skills.

⁴⁸ Romanian Land Forces Academy, "2016-2019 Student Guides," accessed October 21, 2017, <http://www.armyacademy.ro/ghidfsm2016.php>.

⁴⁹ Odeta Vestemean, "Interview with Land Forces Academy Commander, BG Barsan Ghita," accessed October 21, 2017, <http://sibiu100.ro/cultura/10193-gl-ghita-barsan-rectorul-aft-sibiu-studentii-nostri-sunt-cei-care-vor-conduce-subunitati-de-lupta-pentru-asigurarea-securitatii-nationale/>.

Field Grade Officer Education - Romanian National Defense University “Carol I”

The ROU NDU was founded in 1889 under the name of Superior War School and, at the time, was the sixth staff school in Europe after those in Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Turin and Brussels. The Commandant, teaching staff and students assigned to combat units and deployed to the operation theaters of the First and Second World Wars, in doing so acquiring some combat experience that proved crucial in developing the school in the years to come. As for the LFA, the Superior War School was a practical orientated institution, using theory to enhance the utility of the military profession. The School was founded on a French inspired model, but during the years it acquired German and Soviet influences.

Currently the NDU has the following faculties: Command and Staff Faculty (CSF) – the equivalent of CGSC and the main pipeline for post-graduate level education for promoting from major to lieutenant colonel; the Security and Defense Faculty – offers graduate and post-graduate education for military and national security apparatus entities, but not equivalent to CFS as it pertains to the military career; the Regional Department of Defense Resources Management Studies – post-graduate studies for resource management branches; and the National Defense College (NDC) – career post-graduate education for colonels and above. NDU has also different other departments (Foreign Language School, Distant Learning Center, The Crisis Management and Multinational Operations Department, Centre for Defense and Security Strategic Studies) that offer

specialized education on different levels, not part of the career path required curricula for officers.⁵⁰

For the career specific education, both for the CSF and the National Defense College, the selection process is only based on a written exam from doctrine, with no requirements of previous combat experience or other off-country experience.

Distant Learning Center (DLC) in NDU although it offers a variety of specialized courses, none of them is equivalent to any of the career advancement specific courses, and none SOF specific. The courses offered by DLC are only awarded a certificate of participation and are not similar to the ones offered in the Military Specialized Centers.

NDU for both CSF and NDC has a long-standing standard curricula, with little changes made from year to year. The changes to the curricula have to not only be voted by the NDU Senate, after a lengthy analysis and debate inside each proposing branch, but also have to abide all the Romanian National Education Ministry requirements, regarding graduate and post graduate level credit equivalence. Correlated with the fact the instructors in NDU are long-term, semi-permanent positions, not required to incorporate own combat or other operational experience, it gives the NDU curricula a very inflexible and slow adaptive characteristic. The heavy bureaucratic Romanian educational system

⁵⁰ Romanian National Defense University, Carol I, *Evaluation Methodology for Students in Various Study Programs*, 2nd ed., accessed September 24, 2017, https://www.unap.ro/ro/prezentare_generala/Metodologia%20de%20examinare%20a%20studentilor.pdf.

also contribute to the overall difficulties to adapt the curricula to emerging topics, tactics or threat.⁵¹

Types of Evaluations Used in Romanian Army PME

For a complete understanding of the Romanian PME (this including the ARSOF specific PME), a discussion on the types of evaluations currently used throughout the various PME entities is required.

For the junior officer education, an analysis of the Land Forces Academy three-year cycle reveals that the preponderance of the educational methods is teacher-oriented, with the instructor presenting, explaining, or demonstrating. The evaluation methods used throughout the LFA years are only based on final or intermediate exams (written or oral), the contribution to class learning or the in-class participation are absent from the grading system. Even during the seminars, where debates and conversations techniques are used, there is no evaluation of the student's involvement.⁵²

For the field grade officer education, NDU uses the same teacher-orientated educational system as LFA, with no pre-class required readings that will build a minimum required knowledge of the subjects for the students. Students are evaluated based on their oral and written examinations, as well as by the grades for the required

⁵¹ Romanian National Defense Ministry, *MoD Strategic Plan 2013-2015*, 2013, accessed November 01, 2017, <http://www.anfp.gov.ro/R/Doc/2015/Proiecte/Incheiate/MAPN/Planificare%20strategica%20MAPN.pdf>.

⁵² Romanian Land Forces Academy, "2016-2019 Student Guides."

written products (sketches, orders, essays, thesis). There is no in-class participation, group or lesson contribution grade as part of the final grade.⁵³

The Access to PME for Romanian ARSOF Officers

Specific to the Romanian PME system, to attend junior officer education,⁵⁴ field grade officer education⁵⁵ or specialization course in the Training Schools,⁵⁶ especially the career required sequences, the access is made through a competition system based on examinations conducted by each respective school. The selection process has only a theoretical or a combination of theoretical and practical examinations, based on a pre-selected list of doctrinarian documents that the candidates must memorize and reproduce. The classification at the end of the examinations is constructed based on how exact the answer was reproduced compared to the given bibliography.

One other item is needed to be accepted at the selection process: the last three to four years' evaluation rating in the annual Officer Record Brief (ORB). This, however,

⁵³ Romanian National Defense University, "Students Evaluation Methodology for All Study Groups," 2016, accessed October 11, 2017, https://www.unap.ro/ro/prezentare_generala/Metodologia%20de%20examinare%20a%20studentilor.pdf.

⁵⁴ Land Forces Academy, "Nicolae Balcescu, The Methodology for Organizing and Conducting the Selection in the LFA for the Year 2017-2018," accessed November 02, 2017, <http://www.armyacademy.ro/admitere/licenta/2017/PROBELE%20ADMITERII.pdf>.

⁵⁵ Romanian National Defense University, Carol I.

⁵⁶ Romanian Army Human Resources Department, *IM 3/54 – Norms for the Selection for the Continuous Education Programs*, accessed November 01, 2017, http://www.cissb.ro/Documente/metodologie_admitere.pdf.

has no input in the selection classification, but is only one of the pre-requisite to be allowed to participate in the selection process.

Romanian ARSOF-Specific Education

For the specific SOF education, Romanian ARSOF currently have three options: The Romanian SOF Training Center (CIOS – Centrul de Instruire pentru Fortele pentru Operatii Speciale), foreign SOF schools and continuous training in the parent Romanian SOF units.

At present, the SOF-specific education is available in Romanian schooling system only up to Captain Career Course equivalent – provided by CIOS, no other SOF-specific education being available for field grade officers and beyond.

CIOS is the proponent for the Special Forces Qualification Course, SOF Officer Basic Course and SOF Captain Career Course. The CIOS is part of a bigger school for ISR, Airborne SOF and JTAC that cater education for the Romanian Army and the Military Intelligence Directorate. This school is subordinated to the Romanian Army version of TRADOC and has only collaborative relations with both SOCOM and the SOF Brigade.

Romanian NDU does not have a specialized branch for SOF, nor does it provide specialized, continuous education for the AR SOF officers attending CSF. The only way an ARSOF officer can continue, expand and perfect his SOF education in the Romanian NDU is by researching for a master thesis on a SOF-specific subject. But without SOF experienced instructors in the NDU, the level and cohesion of the works and education cannot be correctly quantified. With no formal framework in place to plan, prepare,

execute, and assess the requirements, needs, and future challenges to be addressed by the education system, the SOF education beyond field-grade officer level is limited.

Romanian ARSOF can take advantage of foreign school systems, made available through bilateral agreements with various countries (NATO and non-NATO), through the NATO SOF school system or various other similar agreements. Because the Romanian ARSOF partner of choice is the US SOF, the great majority of the SOF-specific education options are available through various US Security Cooperation Programs. These education opportunities cover Romanian ARSOF needs from junior officer to general officer level, most of them being equivalent, in some conditions, to the national education programs. Especially important are the SOF-specific field grade officer education are the ones provided at the US Naval Postgraduate School (within the Special Operation and Irregular Warfare curriculum) and US CGSC (if the student choses to attend the SOF-specific electives).

The continuous education is conducted in the parent units (brigade or battalion level) through a variety of partnered activities. The majority of these activities are provided by the USG, both using the military forces (US SOF and conventional forces) and civilian contractors (JSOU, CUBIC, etc.). These activities are meant to bridge the gap that exists in the current ARSOF education system, as well as to provide a continuous collaborative environment for US-Romanian ARSOF.

Romanian ARSOF Officer Career

Currently Romanian ARSOF career path can be long term or short term, depending on the officers' personal choices or the restrictions or limitations presented by the system.

For the long career path, a Romanian ARSOF officer starts as an ODA commander and will serve for at least two years. Next, he can choose or be appointed a battalion-level staff position (operations or intelligence) or as an ODB executive officer for another minimum of two years. If his rank is lieutenant, he will attend and graduate the Captain Career Course, in his own, initial MOS, or – preferable, in the SOF School or Military Intelligence School. Following graduation, he will return to unit to serve as ODA commander or staff officer until he is promoted to captain. Once a captain, the officer will attend the Staff Officer Course in his own MOS or the SOF specific school. He then will be appointed ODB commander and serve at least two years. The officer will be then selected as a chief of office in the operation or intelligence cell of the SOF battalion or as a staff officer in SOF Brigade headquarter. Once promoted to major, the officer will attend the Command and Staff Faculty (the equivalent of CGSC) or a similar course that upon graduation, will qualify him as promotable to lieutenant colonel.

While attending the two-year long CSF, the officer loses all the SOF-related specializations, being returned to his base MOS before he qualified as SOF, limiting his abilities to maintain contact and working relations with the SOF community. Additionally, at the end of CSF the officers are assigned to their next position based on an overall, course-wide classification, not based on their MOS, because the Romanian Army considers all the graduating officers as being command and staff officers and not necessary linked to their MOS.

If the officer manages to maintain or regain his required SOF pre-requisites (mainly the medical status and the airborne qualification), his next assignment will be chief of operations or intelligence in a SOF Battalion, battalion executive officer or chief

of staff, chief of office in operations or intelligence section of the SOF Brigade or staff officer in Romanian SOCOM staff for at least two to three years. The officer needs to graduate a National Defense College course to be eligible for promotion to colonel. Once promotable to colonel, the officer can be appointed battalion commander, brigade chief of operations or intelligence, brigade executive officer or chief of staff or chief of office in the Romanian SOCOM staff for at least two to three years. After graduating the General Officer-level course in NDU, a colonel is promotable to general officer rank and appointed SOF brigade commander.

The officers can graduate the required career courses in Romanian schools or in equivalent foreign schools. The Romanian Defense Human Resources Directorate issues regularly instructions regarding which of the foreign, partnered countries courses are deemed equivalent to national level ones and under what conditions.

The short term career of an officer can start at any of the points above the ODA commander level, as presented in the previous section. Because the officer does not have the required ODA commander experience he cannot be appointed ODB commander, the ODA level experience being a mandatory requirement. This in turn signifies that, in most cases, the officer cannot occupy a SOF battalion chief of operations or intelligence position later in the career.

At the SOF brigade and SOCOM level, officers can be appointed in any positions without passing through the ODA-ODB- Battalion requirements, because the SOF BDE and SOCOM subordinate more than SOF-specific forces (airborne, ranger, etc.). This allows for a larger selection pool for the staff and command positions. A long-term career SOF officer, on the other hand, has a net advantage when competing for the same

position with a short-term career SOF officer in the SOF Brigade or SOCOM, because of his longer experience in the SOF community and his values for the SOF structure.

Past Romanian ARSOF Operational Environment

Romanian ARSOF were created as a direct response to the lessons learned from the multinational participation of Romanian forces in TO outside the national territory. The strategic partnership between Romania and the USA made the USSOCOM as the preferred option in advising and supporting the creation of this new structure within the Romanian Army. Upon its creation, the Romanian ARSOF units were exclusively destined to be deployed in missions in TO with the mission sets, training and equipping to match the US SOF units.⁵⁷ The ARSOF doctrine at the beginning mirrored the USSF one, with all the primary (unconventional warfare -UW, foreign internal defense - FID, special reconnaissance - SR, direct action – DA, counterterrorism - CT, psychological operations - PSYOP, civil affairs operations - CAO, and counter-proliferation - CP of Weapons of Mass Destruction – WMD) and the secondary missions mentioned as a full-spectrum capability of them.⁵⁸

Although the main mission of the ARSOF units were Counter-Terrorism (CT), at the time the CT missions on the national territory were not specified under the DoD responsibilities Ministry of the Interior specialized units being the exclusive responsible

⁵⁷ Robert S. Berg, “Reform of Command and Control Structure in NATO Special Operations Forces” (Master of Military Art and Science Thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, June 2007).

⁵⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 3-05, *Army Special Operation Forces* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006).

for them. The main focus of the ARSOF on out-of-territory missions was a logical split of responsibilities and allowed for a proper chain of command and unity of effort for that timeframe and environment.

At the time of the Romanian ARSOF creation, the OE for Romania was vastly different than the present day one. The Romanian Defense White Paper of 2004 started to define Romania as a security contributor in the area, as well as a contributor in the crisis response situations. Romania was at the time a newly accepted NATO and an aspirant EU member state and started to actively march towards an Occidental orientated security policy, after the radical systemic changes caused by the Romanian Revolution in 1989. The full-spectrum, USSF-inspired mission continued to be valid, the 2008 Defense Strategy continued to mention inefficient governing of some nations as a contributing factor that can positively influence the trans-border terrorist organizations. This made sense when taking about specific ARSOF mission that were controversial for some NATO countries (e.g., UW).

The evolution of the OE in the following years has been reflected in the re-adjustment of the Romanian strategic and operational focus. The 2013 Defense White Paper continues to mention as the center of gravity of the international relation South-East Asia and their associated non-state actors, but also introduces as threats and risks the crisis points in Europe, Caucasus, Middle East, Nord Africa, Korean Peninsula, territorial disputes and states divisions, as well as transnational threats. This meant that the main focus of the Romanian ARSOF were the same AORs, because the risk of a major conflict in Europe was asset at reduced. The 2013 Defense Strategy, presented, on the other hand,

as emerging threat the cyber domain, with no direct mentioning of what forces or entities from the Romanian Army will address it.

The 2004-2013 OE presented as focus missions for the ARSOF units anti-terrorist (AT) missions, alongside counter-insurgency (COIN) and preventing conventional and non-conventional threats against Romanian national interests. While CT and non-conventional missions were the one the ARSOF were created to accomplish, the AT and conventional missions become an ever-increasing focal point for both joint-training and de-confliction, but also for real-life scenario planning. ARSOF began to be integrated in all major conventional forces national and international exercises, all the local, regional and national crisis and DSCA-specific activities and called to provide SME training to DoD and non-DoD units for various missions.

Additionally, the adoption of the NATO Joint SOF Doctrine AJP-3.5 in 2013 as the Romanian ARSOF doctrine, replacing the 2004-based document, removed UW as a mission set from the full-spectrum mission definition for Romanian ARSOF, defining the core NATO SOF mission as SR, DA and MA (the former FID in the former Romanian doctrine). The NATO does not utilize the UW missions most probably because the entire mission definition makes it a highly-sensitive political matter.

Another characteristic of the 2004-2013 timeframe is that in the defense strategic paper, except for the United States, there is no mentioning *by-name* of another country as a focus or strategic interest of Romanian Army. The OE in this timeframe is defined as looking to strengthen and develop bilateral relations in the extended region of Black Sea and the Balkans, with no country mentioned in particular. This defines the way Romanian Army is supposed to navigate the regional and international arena, emphasizing its role as

a regional security hub, while leveraging all of the relations it can to support of its national defense.

Current and Future Romanian ARSOF Operational Environment

The events that happened in Europe after 2008 triggered a change in the defense policies for all the NATO countries and NATO as a defensive alliance. The Eastern flank of NATO become very important for the alliance, especially after 2013 when the so-called Gerasimov Doctrine presented the way Russia is envisaging the war in the new century. Romanian Defense Strategy defines as one of the main threats to the defense and security of Romania the threats generated by state and non-state entities emanating from the country's Eastern part. Destabilizing actions in the Black Sea region and in the territories East of Romania, influences and distortions on the energetic markets, support for frozen conflict in the West Balkans, as well as cyber-attacks launched from state and non-state entities located East of Romania - all describe a major threat, not described in such detail in the previous Strategies. This is one of the reasons the new Defense Strategy introduces the term of Extended National Security.

These threats are further exacerbated by the fact that starting in 2015 Romania has been hosting on its territory Allied military equipment (Missile Defense System based at Deveselu) part of the NATO ballistic defense system, as well as the Headquarters for the Multi-National Division – South East (MND-SE) and NATO Force Integration Unit (NFIU), all part of the NATO effort to consolidate the Eastern Flank of the Alliance and allow for the C2 for operations under NATO Article 5 – Collective Defense. The international East-West effect of these have been perceived by Russia as a *direct threat* to

the security environment, making Romania a target for the Russian forces for conventional or pre-emptive strikes.⁵⁹

The Extended National Security concept presents a more complex and dynamic approach to the OE and brings forth the importance that the defense, given the current situation, be looked at as a strengthened combination of military, public order, information and counter-information, economic, infrastructure, and energy, diplomatic and crisis management, education, public health, demographics and natural environment, all in a European context.⁶⁰

This new context that the 2016 National Defense Strategy refers to has modified the way Romania Army defines its main missions. Its main missions will be orientated towards deterrence and defense against conventional, unconventional and hybrid aggressions until NATO intervene as well as to achieve the requirements as part of major operations under NATO Article 5 or in high intensity operations under EU (based on the reciprocal assistance agreements).⁶¹

Defining Romania as a regional security hub in the area (both for NATO and EU), implies that the Romanian Army will assume more proactive roles in providing security

⁵⁹ Andrew E. Kramer, "Russia Calls New U.S. Missile Defense System a "Direct Threat," *The New York Times*, May 13, 2016, accessed November 19, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/13/world/europe/russia-nato-us-romania-missile-defense.html>.

⁶⁰ Romanian President, Speech in the Romanian Parliament for the adoption of the 2016 Romanian Defense Strategy, June 22, 2015, accessed November 19, 2017, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/evenimente/klaus-iohannis-a-prezentat-strategia-de-aparare-romania-este-puternica-daca-institutiile-sunt-puternice-406936>.

⁶¹ Romanian Government, *The Romanian Defense White Paper*, 31.

in the region. The direct expression of this new role is the Defense Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative for Republic of Moldova and Georgia. These activities are also in line with the new Defense Strategy trend of increasing Romania's strategic profile in the Black Sea Region, in an Allied context, on land and sea that implies a tighter cooperation between the Romanian Army and Navy in achieving unity of effort during these missions.

In addition to intensifying the efforts to expand as a security hub in NATO, Romania desires a more active role in the EU structure, by increasing its contribution with forces and military and civilian capabilities to EU missions, with a special interest in participating in the EU rapid crisis response, including as part of the EU Battlegroups (EUBGs), under the EU Council control.

The new European defense challenges have redefined also the way Romania looks at its defense partners on the continent. In the new 2016 Defense White Paper, as part of the new *Smart Defense* approach, new European defense strategic partners are designated by-name: France, Turkey, and Poland. The Romania – Germany partnership is defined both in the Smart Defense context, as well as in the new *Framework Nation Concept (FNC)*. Germany is the lead nation for the FNC and the main goal for this approach is to enhance the force integrations and to ensure the necessary capabilities for the Alliance in the new security context.

As defined by the new Defense Strategy, the new Extended National Security concept is a whole of government approach to the national security, extensively emphasizing the requirement of close cooperation between the national institutions. For the Romanian Army, including ARSOF, the support of the local authorities in emergency

situations became more intensive than in the past, exacerbated by the environmental changes and the weather changes that affected Europe in last years. Forces in all cycles of training and readiness are to be directed to support the local authorities anytime a crisis arises, the stability of the civilian order becoming one of the main objectives of the new national defense concept. Ro Army forces, including ARSOF will have to execute missions from search, rescue and evacuate civilians from disaster areas, to providing basic services and relief in affected areas, to protecting cultural objectives and population centers.

For the Romanian ARSOF, this new OE as described in the national strategic documents are redefining not only their mission sets, but also the requirements for training and education. The new Eastern flank threats require new cultural awareness, language and doctrinal education. The new Extended National Security concept in the European context require a reassessment of the training, education, and relationships. The theatre-orientated mission, national defense missions as part of national conventional task forces, the coalition support missions and DSCA-type missions involve a complexity of the planning, preparation, execution and assessment previously inexistent. The new Defense Capacity Building missions and the Black Sea cooperation-related missions require not only a different approach to the MA-type missions, but has a profound joint and combined aspect, not present in any of the mission profiles to date. All these changes and challenges of the new OE, requires deep, rapid and critical changes to the PME of the officers in the Romanian ARSOF, because (as covered in the previous chapters), the officers are the principal leaders and stewards of the profession, the NCOs role still in the PME is still under development at this time.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF USSF OFFICER EDUCATION

Before beginning to analyze the USSF education, we have to be cognizant that USSF and the Romanian ARSOF have started in different situations and for different missions, although today many of them are very similar. While Romanian ARSOF started as a Counter Terrorist unit, the USSF traces its beginnings in the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS) with a mission set that was orientated towards UW-specific activities (guerrilla warfare, sabotage and subversion, evasion and escape, Ranger and Commando-like operations, long-range or deep penetration reconnaissance and psychological warfare)⁶². Although through time USSF added many other missions to reach the full spectrum mission-set they currently have, the fact that their first missions were orientated towards developing and supporting guerilla and resistance operations allowed for a rare skillset among SOF communities. Naturally this was an extension of the US policies and national interests that allowed this type of operations, policies that are different from many NATO member countries, thus the inexistence of the UW mission set in the NATO SOF doctrine.

One might wonder if the beginnings were so different, what is the value of analyzing the USSF education to provide solutions for the transformation of the Romanian ARSOF PME. There are a variety of reasons why this approach is useful: the Romanian ARSOF were created with a major input in know-how by the USSF, the US

⁶² Bradford M. Burris, “Army Special Operations Forces Professional Military Education for the Future” (Master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 2010), 10.

Army is the most important strategic partner to Romania, the NATO SOF doctrine was developed with a big input from the US SOF community, and the current and future SOF missions are and will be conducted in a multinational environment, making the interoperability one of the major advantage that will allow for a common effort against conventional, un-conventional and hybrid threats. Even if the size of the two Armies and their roles in the world are different, and their national policies are different (US has a pre-emptive approach, while Romania has a purely defensive one), the efficiency and effectiveness of a similar SOF education, as well as the long standing tradition of US – Romanian military cooperation, at SOF and conventional forces level, points at the USSF PME as the best solutions to the current and future challenges that Romanian ARSOF will face, especially towards its leaders, the officer core.

Additionally, even if the core mission of the USSF and Romanian ARSOF organization are different (USSF core mission is UW and Romanian ARSOF is MA), that does not exclude the value of using a long-standing and proven education system – like the USSF one - as an anchor point to further develop, refine and adapt the Romanian ARSOF PME (e.g.: even if Romanian ARSOF does not conduct UW, Romanian history has proven that resistance movement development activities have been conducted on national territory against oppressive regimes, thus pointing to a needed standing capability; the Romanian ARSOF MA, SR and DA missions have been designed after the USSF model and still successfully employed). As for the USSF, the FID capabilities employed are those inherent to its UW mission, with the only difference that UW focuses

on a resistance fighters while FID on supporting a government to defeat an internal threat.⁶³

To simplify the analysis process and maintain consistency with the Romanian ARSOF analysis in chapter 4, the author will look at the USSF education in two blocks: junior officers (O1-O3) and field grade (O4) and above. Both of them will be done through the lens of the USSF officers required characteristics related to the SF core mission, in order to have a frame of reference for the comparison with the Romanian ARSOF.

When analyzing the definition that US Army utilizes for PME⁶⁴ we can see that it looks at education as a progressive process that involves the environment, career, and assignments to define how it will be applied to develop the officers. That is the way the author will analyze the USSF PME also, progressively and looking how the PME satisfies the officers education needs.

In order to understand what the USSF education goals are for the officers compared to other US Army officers, we must conduct an analysis and a synthesis of their core mission requirements, their roles in the SF organization and the military, the specific SF characteristics and their positions and functions to be assigned to. Additionally, we have to be cognizant that the USSF officers still have to train, maintain and improve their skills as a SF operator throughout their career, while enhancing their education. The synthesis of those requirements for a USSF officer, regardless of its junior

⁶³ Headquarters, Department of the Army, (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 3-05-20, *Special Forces Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office), 42.

⁶⁴ HQDA, AR 350-1, 235.

or senior level positions, can be summarized as: a flexible, creative and critical thinker, proficient tactical, operational or strategic leader, able to provide SME advice on the full-spectrum SF operations in complex and ambiguous, hostile, denied or politically-sensitive JIIM environment, while maintaining an extensive cultural, regional and language expertise. USSF PME, at all levels, needs to satisfy all the aforementioned requirements, while always preparing the officers for their future assignments, incorporating at both junior and senior level the academic and organizational requirements with the officers' personal and operational experience.

USSF education focuses on developing and maintaining characteristics in USSF officers that will allow them to fulfil their missions throughout their entire career. Alongside the tactical and technical proficiency that the USSF officers must maintain as SF operators, they must be continuously educated towards specific and unique knowledge, beliefs, values and habits like: foreign language proficiency, in-depth knowledge of at least one region in the world, solving complex politico-military problems, have and develop personal and cross-cultural communication skills, create and develop cultural sensitivity, adaptive and creative thinker, have cognitive resiliency and moral courage.⁶⁵

SOF is designed to accomplish sensitive missions in complex environments. This demands that the way the leadership is trained and educated must be able to address not only the military side of the operations, but the broad external influences, from the local culture to the local political dynamics. The education of the SOF officers has to be

⁶⁵ HQDA, DA PAM 600-3, 167.

tailored and adapted in such a way that it provides a well-rounded and complete education, allowing for an efficient employment of SOF capabilities. The education of ARSOF officers, alongside the conventional, common core, military and doctrinal portions, has to incorporate cultural awareness, foreign languages and interagency relations. The ARSOF officer education has to incorporate not only the military aspect of the crisis and conflicts, but the local, regional and global dynamics, all because SF by definition are a strategic asset.

The need for a SF leader that is culturally sensitive and aware, with language proficiency and able to understand the political impact of the mission required not only by UW or FID/MA, but by other mission that NATO and Romanian ARSOF doctrine is not mentioning as requiring these characteristics. US JP 3-05 requires the DA and SR mission to be conducted in hostile, denied, or politically-sensitive environments, while NATO AJP 3.5 does not make reference to these characteristics of the OE. But, on the other hand, the NATO AJP 3.5 requires these mission to be conducted against targets of operational and strategic importance, without limiting the span of their area of operation, and, corroborated with the definition of the CT missions (that both SR and DA support) as offensive measures including counter-force activities, we can see that the Romanian ARSOF officer still need to be capable to operate in complex politico-military and sensitive environment and not necessary on national territory.

Junior Officer Education

USSF officer training and education starts before he candidate is even qualified as a SF operator. It starts with commissioning and basic branch training, followed by the first assignment in Key Developmental Branch Assignments. This time in a basic branch

of the Army is different that for the Romanian ARSOF officer, who can attend the Romanian ARSOF Qualification Course right after the military academy, without any exposure to the conventional army junior officer experience, especially infantry tactics.

The USSF restriction for an officer to access the SF community only after the first tour of duty in the conventional forces ensures the junior level leadership, initial army on-the-job education and the minimum required experience as an officer are met. It also supports the build-up of the core SF missions, especially when considering that DA, SR and CT missions develop from basic tactical knowledge, while FID and UW missions require interaction with conventional forces and the civilian apparatus.

Accession into USSF specific training and education system is made by volunteering to attend and pass the SF Assessment and Selection (SFAS). The SFAS is designed to select candidates that have the prerequisites to complete the SF Qualification Course (SFQC) and are suitable for service in the SF units. This activity and the structure of the SFAS is similar to the one that Romanian ARSOF employs.

After the completion of the SFAS, the officer candidates will attend the US ARSOF Captain Career Course (CCC).⁶⁶ The ARSOF CCC education centers on the technical, tactical, and leadership competencies needed for success in follow-on assignments “in applying the art and science of mission command at the company, battalion, and brigade levels by focusing lessons on Army doctrine, planning methodologies, training management, unified land operations, and maneuver, tied together through aspects of critical and creative thinking, resulting in agile and adaptive

⁶⁶ Special Operations Recruiting, “SF-Training,” U.S. Army, accessed August 3, 2017, <https://goarmysof.com/sf-training/>.

leaders ready to continue into the ARSOF Regiments.”⁶⁷ The ARSOF CCC is a new concept for the US ARSOF. Until 2012 all the future SF captains had to attend the Maneuver CCC in Fort Benning, Georgia. The idea behind all the officers selected to attend SFQC, regardless of their original branch, was to provide the best maneuver-oriented training through the lens of the SF instructors and also educate the future SF officers for the new requirements of SOF-CF interdependence, as stated in the USASOC ARSOF 2022 vision.⁶⁸ For efficiency considerations (financial, family protection and increase numbers of captains needed) the ARSOF CCC was developed both to address the SOF units’ requirements, but also to increase the cohesion between SOF officers - Civil Affairs, PSYOPS and SF.

The ARSOF CCC has an initial distance learning portion, followed by an Army common core curriculum and a maneuver curriculum. The distance learning portion further consolidates the self-development requirements that SF officers will require thorough their career. The course continues to develop the *train-the-trainer* attitude, by using the students, coming from various branches, as teachers for the classes, under the student-led, instructor-facilitated learning model.⁶⁹ This requires the officers not only to use the new concepts and information taught in the course, but also to exploit and integrate their own experience, gained in the initial tour of duty in the conventional

⁶⁷ USAJFKSWCS, *USAJFKSWCS Academic Handbook Fiscal Year 2017*, 32.

⁶⁸ Gordon Richmond, “Lost Opportunities with a New SOF Career Course,” *Small Wars Journal*, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/lost-opportunities-with-a-new-sof-career-course>.

⁶⁹ Shawn Stangle, “SOFCCC Special Operation Forces Captain’s Career Course,” *Special Warfare* 28, no. 4 (October-December 2015): 26.

forces. To ARSOF CCC also integrate cross-cultural skills, starting to develop the critical skill essential in missions like UW and FID, where basic tactics are utilized in an asymmetrical, dynamic, and culturally sensitive environment. Additionally, the US Army Learning Model is based on adult learning methods to develop knowledge retention skills.⁷⁰ This Course is different from the Romanian ARSOF CCC PME, where the attending officers have no initial conventional forces experience, thus no personal, branch-specific personal experience can be integrated into the teaching curricula.

The next step for USSF officers is the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) that is the cornerstone of the USSF operators. The SFQC focuses on the full operational spectrum of problem analysis and resolution design associated with SF core missions across the elements of national power spectrum. Different than the SFQC for Romanian ARSOF, which is more oriented towards the FID/MA and CT tasks, and emphasizes SR and DA, the USSFQC is built on a UW framework, with the other missions developed as interrelated fields of UW.⁷¹ The USSFQC starts with the introduction to UW and continues to build towards a full-spectrum operations capabilities for the officers. The USSFQC is looking at the UW as the most complex mission and the whole course is build towards enabling the officers to be able to properly employ all the other skills and missions during a comprehensive culminating exercise in conducting a near real life mission in a UW environment.

⁷⁰ Stangle, “SOFCCC Special Operation Forces Captain’s Career Course.”

⁷¹ Special Operations Recruiting, “SF-Training.”

The USSFQC not only trains the officers in the basic SF operators' skills for all the SF missions, but also educate them towards being more than a tactical leader, to understand the broader operational and strategic role and mission. That is the main reason that the SFQC integrates from the beginning fields of study like human dynamics, regional analysis, adaptive thinking, interagency operations, language, culture, information operations, the OPFUND management.⁷² This broad approach to educating the officers allows them to have a broader and comprehensive vision of the environment and dynamics in an area of operations. Through this broad education, the USSF officers are better equipped to conduct their mission even for the other core missions.

Because SF are inherently joint and they usually are employed in volatile and sensitive areas where a degree of political liability is to be avoided, educating the leaders of the SF starting at the lowest level (ODA) to conduct operations quantifying the DIME variables allows for a more adaptable, innovative, and autonomous forces, regardless of whether they are conventional or unconventional, covert or overt employment.

Into the USSFQC six-phase curricula are built several blocks that provide the SF officers with the initial education required for the most important missions: human terrain analysis and dynamics – needed both in FID and UW, as well as cultural, regional expertise and language (CREL) – critical in all missions executed overseas. Language courses are focused on mission-related tasks, enhanced rapport-building techniques, cultural mitigation strategies, interpreting and control of interpreter methods.⁷³ Unlike the

⁷² USAJFKSWCS, *USAJFKSWCS Academic Handbook Fiscal Year 2017*.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 38.

USSFQC, Romanian ARSOF SFQC uses language training courses external to the SOF community and does not have a dedicated department to cover the cultural and regional expertise although since 2006 has participated in foreign theaters of operations. The cultural training is conducted using in-house trainers, not having a structure dedicated to the development and tailoring of the curricula depending of the different environments ARSOF operates in.

For USSF, the CREL portion of the curricula will continue to be developed throughout the SF officer's career both through institutional education, but also through self-development. The language portion is continuously maintained and improved and it is also continuously tied into the regional focus of the SF units that the officers are assigned to. Setting aside the fact that the SF operators are incentivized to maintain and expand their mission-specific CREL capabilities, this continuous and progressive approach to these specific capabilities are tied seamlessly into the overall SF imperative of understanding the environment.⁷⁴

USSF capability for intercultural communications rests on four pillars: interpersonal skills, nonverbal skills, language proficiency, and area and cultural orientation. This is a critical portion of the education of the USSF, because it's the main contributor to the mission success or failure while operating in a foreign country or international environments.⁷⁵ The intercultural communication capabilities are educated

⁷⁴ USAJFKSWCS, *USAJFKSWCS Academic Handbook Fiscal Year 2017*, 7.

⁷⁵ HQDA, FM 3-05-20, 14-15.

starting SFQC and continues to be consolidated and developed throughout the officer career, recognizing that the higher on the hierarchy, the more critical these know-how is.

Linked to the joint inherent character of all SF operation, one important portion of the USSFQC is the interagency - operations and the face-to-face interaction with various agencies that the USSF is called to work. Educating the USSF officers from the beginning in interagency operations allows to visualize how all elements of national power are utilized in SF operations and how this supports unity of effort, maximizes use of national resources, and reinforces primacy of the political element. Due to the multinational character of most of the operations in modern time, interagency operations can include international organizations, agencies of foreign nations, public and private charitable agencies, and religious organizations.⁷⁶

The current Romanian ARSOF PME curricula does not address interagency cooperation, mainly because of its short existence and its focus on supporting NATO war on terror efforts. But current and future threats, especially the hybrid ones, require the Romanian ARSOF PME to adapt and educate its leaders on integrating efforts with other Romanian and international agencies as part of a whole of government approach and collective approach to national defense and international engagements. By looking at the new Romanian Military Strategy of 2016, as described in chapter 4, we can see that there is an increased focus on comprehensive approaches, integrating national and

⁷⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 8-42, *Combat Health Support in Stability Operations and Support Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1997), Appendix B.

multinational entities with the military, in the effort to combat terrorism, but especially to prevent and defend against conventional and hybrid threats.

After graduation, before the SF officers are assigned to their units they are exposed to the reality of SF missions during the Detachment Leader Course (DLC). During this course, the SF officers will interact with senior leaders from the SF community and with various forward HQ and units. The goal is to refine their operational awareness and to better understand the OE in which they will operate. They also continue to build and maintain the SOF community spirit, because the DLC includes MISO and CA officers.⁷⁷ This will not only allow the officers to properly adjust their expectations and goals in their future units, but have the real-time updates regarding what are the dynamics of the OE and what the higher commands are focusing on. The USSF officers are also the ones fill instructor positions to USAJFKSWSC, further developing their leadership skills while providing operational experience back into the school environment.

Once assigned to their units, SF officers are required to continue their education by various means. The continuous education approach of the Army and SF is designed to maintain, develop and refine the officers' education. Language proficiency is maintained and improved by various methods (institutional and distance learning courses, cultural immersion, personal language teachers). USSF officers are also required to expand their

⁷⁷ U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS), *Quarterly Regimental Update, 2nd Quarter, Fiscal Year 2012* (Ft. Bragg, NC: USAJFKSWCS, 2012), 3.

knowledge on combined arms operations, in preparation for their future assignments and access to higher level institutional education.

Field Grade Officer and Senior Leader Education

The field grade PME course is the Intermediate Level Education (ILE) that prepares the Army majors for their next 10 years of service. The most common locale for ILE are Command and General Staff College (CGSC), Naval Post Graduate School (focused on the art and science of UW at tactical, operational and strategic level), Interagency Studies Program (focused on interagency cooperation) or National Defense University (focused on Strategic Security Studies on IW and International Security Studies). Additionally, they may be selected to attend a Sister Service or Foreign Equivalent or may be selected for advanced civil schooling where they spend two years attending the top graduate schools in the nation. This broad palette of options for ILE insures that the SF officers maintain their joint and multinational character at the advanced education level, but also provides a continuous influx of knowledge and perspectives from entities outside the Army and ARSOF community. But, except for the selected officer to attend other ILE institutions, the majority of SF officers attend CGSC.⁷⁸ In contrast, Romanian ARSOF officers have only the Romanian Command and Staff Faculty option (except for 2-3 officers a year, able to attend international ILE military schools), with only the option of attending on their Military Academy initial branch, not as ARSOF and with no option of attending civilian or interagency graduate level schools.

⁷⁸ Beattie, "U.S. Army Special Forces Advanced Education," 6.

The CGSC curriculum is *designed to educate, train and develop leaders for Unified Land Operations in a Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational operational environment*,⁷⁹ goals that matched perfectly the inherent joint character of the USSF and also their usual interagency and multinational interaction. Additionally, by following the same curriculum as all the conventional force officers, the SF officers accomplish the requirement of the optimizing SF/CF/JIIM interdependence, expressed in the USASOC ARSOF 2022 vision.

Because ILE is a higher-level educational institution, the USSF officers are called to integrate their knowledge of the SF and SOF operation in different a large scale unified land operations, that takes many of the USSF officers away from the usual set of missions that SF is called to accomplish. This requires them to understand Army doctrine at the operational level, while factoring the missions of the USSF and SOF throughout the area of operations. At the same time, the CGSC insures that the USSF officers continue their SF-specific education, by integrating SF and SOF-specific electives, designed to build on their personal experience as junior officers while integrating it with the Conventional Forces doctrine. For that purpose, CGSC maintains a SOF cell, manned by experienced SOF (SF, CA and PO) active and retired experienced officers, with a dual purpose: to ensure that USSF officers develop their SF-required education, and serve as instructors for the rest of CF students. The SOF instructors are specially selected and trained to the CGSC's demanding academic standards, with sufficient experience at operational and

⁷⁹ US Army Combined Arms Center, "Mission, Vision, Priorities, Principles, & College-level Learning Outcomes," U.S. Army, accessed March 4, 2018, <https://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/cgsc/mission>.

strategic level to be a SME for all the students. Their interaction with the non-SF officers has the advantage of exposing them to the entire SOF community capabilities, educating them in how to properly interact and utilize the SOF and SF on the battlefield.⁸⁰

The CGSC SF and SOF electives are designed to educate and expose future SF majors to the characteristics and requirements of command at battalion and above units, as well as of the operational and strategic staff particularities. The SF officers are educated on how full spectrum Special Operations are planned, coordinated, integrated and conducted in support of US strategy. The relevance of the education is maintained by exposing the SF officer to existing plans, emerging structures and TTPs, as well as continuing to educate on the different JIIM interaction at the operational and strategic level, from SOTF to JFSOCC.⁸¹

The CREL education continues to be improved in CGSC by improving the SF officers command of designated cultural and language skills. The requirement for a DLPT or OPI certification insures that the SF officers are meeting the requirements for conducting peacetime engagements or combat operations.⁸² The SOF community cohesive spirit initiated during US ARSOF CCC continues in CGSC by furthering the SF officers' education in how CA and PSYOPS are integrated at operational and strategic

⁸⁰ U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), "AY18 Enclosure 3 Course Description and MOD Information," February 16, 2018, accessed March 05, 2018, https://cgsc.blackboard.com/modules/_521_1/AY18%20Enclosure%203%20Course%20Descriptions%2016%20FEB%2018.docx.

⁸¹ Ibid., 334, 341.

⁸² Ibid., 336.

level. This enable the SF officers to be staff subject matter experts in CA or PSYOPS at TSOC, corps and above commands. Additionally the Interagency operational and strategic level education is provided by directly interacting with different agencies during various seminars and interactive activities.⁸³

After graduating from the prestigious CGSC, USSF officers are assigned to SF units in rank corresponding positons, where they continue to consolidate their education, especially through on-the-job and self-development methods, depending on the job requirements and their chosen career path. Until the rank of lieutenant colonel, typically an USSF officer will rotate between SF specific and broadening assignments, where they have the opportunity to serve in a Joint Staff or another Government Agency, corresponding to their rank. These assignments further enhance their education regarding the particularities of Special Operations in JIIM, but also maintains their awareness of the conventional forces operations and doctrine, allowing also for a better CF-SOF integration. In these assignments the USSF officers can apply and enhance their operational and strategic level knowledge of the full spectrum Special Operations, make suggestion to adjust SOF and CF doctrine to support Unified Actions at high level commands, as well as to support joint, interagency and multinational efforts from the operational level. Unlike the USSF, Romanian ARSOF has not implemented a method of broadening assignments at any level, although the Romanian Army human resource system allows for the possibility of lateral and vertical migration for temporary assignments at various level of staff, commands and branches.

⁸³ CGSC, “AY18 Enclosure 3 Course Description and MOD Information,” 338-384.

The USSF education system utilizes this extended operational and institutional expertise of the officers by selecting and assigning them to serve as staff in CGSC SOF cell or JRTC plans – as majors, or CGSC faculty – as lieutenant colonels. These educational positions make use of the entire SME expertise of the USSF officers, not only to maintain and shape the education of other USSF students, but be the SOF SME for the rest of the institutions, supporting the USASOC ARSOF 2022 effort of optimizing the SOF/CF/JIIM interdependence by embedding SOF doctrine in all Army PME programs.⁸⁴

A particular type of education is provided by the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), either in the Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) or the Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program (ASP3). Through these programs, SAMS provides post-graduate education to officers that will be called to solve operational and strategic problems in a JIIM environment. The whole focus of the SAMS matches the USSF officer characteristics, thus making it a prime choice for selected officers that will help senior leaders or be called themselves to fill positions as division and above commands or as strategic planners (G5) in SOF, joint or interagency headquarters. This distinct focus on operational and strategic level planning and the JIIM environment allows the USSF officers to not only become familiar with the higher echelons dynamics and their interaction with the political apparatus at national and international level, but also allows them the opportunity to become leading experts in

⁸⁴ U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), *ARSOF 2022* (Ft. Bragg, NC: USASOC, 2014), 20.

these fields, by supporting their acceptance as doctoral candidates.⁸⁵ These USSF officers accomplish the vision of the USASOC 2022 by having leaders appropriately educated that can fill positions of increasing influence in Joint, Army, Interagency and SOF commands.⁸⁶ For Romanian ARSOF this post-graduate level education is not part of the PME because until 2016 the highest level unit was a brigade. But starting 2017, with Romanian ARSOF becoming a standing branch-level command in the Romanian Army, the demand for operational and strategically orientated and educated ARSOF officers will become very acute.

By attending the Pre-Command Course (PCC), USSF Officers selected for command at battalion and group level have the opportunity to further expand, refresh and update their doctrinal preparation in both SOF and Army doctrine. PCC is created to cover not only the doctrinal education, but also on the leader development and the legal aspects of the future senior leaders. This is the initial step in educating the USSF senior officers as an influential part of the Army leadership, extending beyond the SOF branch, needed at the operational and strategic level commands.⁸⁷ In contrast, the Romanian ARSOF officers have no implemented mechanism of instilling for the future battalion and above commanders the SOF-specific requirements that will shape the way Army and

⁸⁵ United States Army Combined Army Center (USACAC), “School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS),” accessed February 21, 2018, <https://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/cgsc/sams>.

⁸⁶ USASOC, *ARSOF 2022*, 22.

⁸⁷ HQDA, DA PAM 600-3, 24.

JIIM entities are to be educated towards correctly employing and supporting SOF at operational and strategic level.

The next important institutional education that the USSF officers receive is the Senior Service College (SSC) that provides senior level education. For most USSF officers, SSC is provided by the US Army War College (USAWC), but they can opt for Sister Service equivalent schools or even various universities in the nation, provided the officer is already Joint Qualified. The USAWC educates the senior USSF officers in a JIIM environment as strategic leaders to serve in military and national security organizations on SF specific positions. The USAWC education is corroborated with the USSF officers continued requirement to pursue self-development to enhance their CREL abilities, with focus on expanding their regional orientation⁸⁸ to match with their future assignments, especially for the civilian, interagency and international assignments. The education at SSC level will not only support the research in SOF strategic issues, but also provide SF SME advice for military and national strategies. In contrast, Romanian ARSOF officers have only the possibility of attending the Romanian NDU courses, without any SOF specific or senior civilian or interagency curricula.

A very important source of strategic level education can be accessed by senior level USSF officers by attending the Advanced Strategic Leadership Studies Program (ASLSP) at SAMS. The selected USSF officers that will serve as theatre and strategic level command and planners, and general staff officers will be educated through a complex mix of interactions with military national and multinational commands, as well

⁸⁸ HQDA, DA PAM 600-3, 8.

as various defense organization, but have also the possibility to become the instructors for the future generations of field grade officers attending AMSP.⁸⁹ This way strategic level USSF officers are educated, while providing the opportunity to educate the next generations of operational and strategic planners on the SOF specific values, capabilities and requirements.

Another way USSF education is utilizing the vast operational, strategic and organizational experience of its senior level officers is by assigning them in staff and faculty positions at CGSC and USAWC, with similar effects with the assignments of majors and lieutenant colonels. Moreover, as senior leaders they can also coordinate the activity of the subordinate SOF instructors in those institutions, as well as contributing to embed the SOF doctrine in the Army PME curricula.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ USACAC, “School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS).”

⁹⁰ USASOC, *ARSOF 2022*, 20.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When the Romanian Army decided in 2006 to embark on the road to stand-up, develop and employ ARSOF as a unique, niche capability to counter the ever increasing terrorist threats and to respond to the new requirements as a NATO member, the operational environment was easy to visualize and address – the terrorist threats were the main opponent. But as time progressed, Romania saw the environment changing: terrorism became global and more than one major terrorist threat developed, hybrid warfare transitioned from a concept to reality throughout Europe, the neighboring Ukraine underwent a never-before seen attack and a loss of territory and the forgotten Cold War menace from the East become very present and worrisome.

In this complex operating environment, one of the key components that many of the Armies in the world identified as being critical are the ARSOF. Luckily Romania has these forces, but the question arises: are they ready to address these new challenges and complex threats? Are their leaders properly train and educated to comprehend and properly act in these situations? The author's primary question asks what PME outcomes directly related to Romanian ARSOF core missions must Romanian ARSOF officer education integrate to address the complex challenges of today and tomorrow's operational environment that will allow for those missions to be successful.

A question so broad cannot be answered simply and that is the reason the study started with an analysis of the current Romanian Army officer PME and how the Romanian ARSOF is arrayed into it. The research pointed that the current Romanian ARSOF officers, PME, although created based on the USSF model to junior officer level,

has no SOF-specific progression above that. It has no intrinsic exploitation of the personal and superior level experience, limited exploitation of operational experience, no SOF-specific senior level PME that allows analysis and solving of operational and strategic problems. In contrast, it also discovers that the Romanian ARSOF officers' PME must maintain its rooting in the Romanian Army PME in order to allow lateral transfer of officers at all levels as well as to maintain the alignment with the Romanian Ministry of National Education requirements.

Romania's geographical position in Europe, as well as its international and regional commitments have always determined its internal and external policies and it is the main determinant of its purely defensive posture. But its international commitments to the global efforts against terrorism had the side effect, as for many European countries, of making it a possible target for retaliatory actions of the global terror groups. But this is not the only issue facing Romania today. This is exactly what the second supporting question of the study explores how the current and future operational environment that the Romanian ARSOF has to accomplish its missions in. It results that the terrorist threats that initially they were created to address have not subsided, but expanded and become more complex, requiring not just simple surgical actions, but comprehensive, joint, interagency, international and multinational collective efforts.

Additionally, especially in the last years, the terrorist remained on the second place for the East European countries with Russia is renewed expansionist policies and its new preference for hybrid warfare and *little green men* tactics. This new environmental variable shifted the focus from small, low-footprint forces back to large combat forces, with the near-peer adversary and large scale land operations expression being present in

all international discussions. Yet against, the Romanian ARSOF were not created in that environment, not developed with the focus on integrating in large combat forces or operating in a possible occupied territory. But still, this is the reality of today and tomorrow's situation.

Amidst these radical external environmental changes, the national military strategy become more focused on the Army to become a hub of security in the Central and Southern Europe, to *export* military know-how to neighboring countries in a regional effort to address these new threats. It requires becoming one of the main European East flank defensive platforms, with a Multinational Division, a NATO Force Integration Unit and a ballistic missile defense facility stationed on its territory. All this in the context of Russia pointing at Romania as a future primary target in an eventual conflict.

These analyses of the operational environment lead to the answers to the third supporting question how these changes impact the Romanian ARSOF. The first and most important answer is that the ARSOF became a strategic command structure in 2018 and started an accelerated transformation process. The transformation is not only to address the structure and equipment, but missions and soldiers also. The initial main CT mission still remained of critical importance for Romania, but the newly adopted NATO SOF doctrine points to Military Assistance as the primary mission, followed by Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance. But what the NATO SOF doctrine does not cover is how a country will address a foreign occupation that does not trigger a NATO Article 5 response. Resistance movements comes into any Romanian military that knows their history, with examples even from these century being very fresh in memory. Looking at the required skillset and education, USSF UW activities are very similar, especially

looking back on how they were formed, as resistance building forces in occupied territories.

Looking past the foreign occupation threat or the new large combat operation and the mandatory CF-SOF integration at a level not thought before, the terrorist and hybrid threats are still present. Corroborating that with the findings from the secondary questions, pointing to the limitation in the Romanian ARSOF PME due to their close linkage with the conventional forces education and the requirements for a whole of government approach to deal with these complex threats, the conclusion that the Romanian ARSOF leaders PME need to educate them to navigate the new JIIM environment, to deal with denied or politically-sensitive areas of operations, with different culture and language that they have focused (like many other armies) in the last 15 years.

All these changes in the environment and in requirements to adapt and overcome them through a re-focused ARSOF PME will demand a phased approach. The answer to the fourth question on the impact of these concurrent requirements on the Romanian ARSOF PME points to the risk and challenges that it must overcome to accomplish its mission of educating the leaders to successfully meet their missions. Combining all the requirements imposed by the new OE with all the national refocus and expansion of goals and objectives results in a substantial impact on the future Romanian ARSOF PME needs. Not only the ARSOF PME has to address expanding missions, larger, complex and more dynamic areas of operation, has to optimize ARSOF-CF-JIIM efforts on both national and, possible, other nations territory, multi-domain battles, but it must maintain its close ties with the Romanian Army PME and to the required alignment with the

academic requirements, restrictions and limitations of the Romanian National educational system. All of these while staying in a 2% national budget, with increasing, multiannual spending on conventional forces.

To the answer of combating terrorism back in 2006, Romania looked for solutions that would satisfy its requirements both in terms of results and in terms of time and financial efficiency. The answer at that time was building the Romanian ARSOF, using the support, knowledge, and experience of the USSF. Since then, not only Romanian ARSOF have received advice and assistance from the USSF, but also most of the Romanian Army branches. The new 2016 National Defense Strategy points to Romania's desire to expand its strategic partnership with the USA, naming it as essential to its national security. All of this drove the study's last supporting question: How the USSF core tasks shape the officers PME and how can those USSF PME tasks that closely relate to Romanian ARSOF core mission requirements be used to support the Romanian ARSOF PME transformation to successfully answer all the challenges and requirements aforementioned.

The analysis of the USSF officer PME was made by focusing on the overarching, constant educational requirements that allows a USSF officer to accomplish his present missions while setting him up for success in his successive assignments and positions. The study analyzed the USSF officer PME in two blocks – junior and senior level PME, always comparing and contrasting the main objective of a certain education with the Romanian ARSOF one in order to identify the similarities and differences. The study acknowledges that the two forces, USSF and Romanian ARSOF are different in size, many missions, reach and strategic employment, but also realizes that the PME principles

that are looking to accomplish the same educational goals can be successfully utilized as a model for Romanian ARSOF, while factoring the national and regional characteristics.

Recommendations

The research structured the suggested recommendations for the Romanian ARSOF PME in two categories, based on their estimated implementation required time: short and long term. The short term changes require one to four years to implement and generate a relatively low impact on the overall structure and organization of the Romanian Army and the Romanian ARSOF. This time interval also matches the Romanian Army financial short-term planning window. The long term changes require more than four years to implement, require a combined effort from multiple structures outside the Romanian ARSOF and Ro Army, but provide enduring advantages to the organization.

Short Term Changes – DOtmLPf-p

Doctrine

Romanian SOCOM, as the proponent of the Romanian ARSOF PME should implement a Romanian ARSOF officers' education model focusing on the requirements resulting from an increasing CF-SOF integration, increase joint and multinational integration, implement an interagency component of the education starting from the Romanian SFQC and emphasize the need for a dual CREL education: one focusing on the areas where war on terror is conducted and one on the regional area of Romania. Additionally, Romanian ARSOF need to start the analysis and development of both of a

conceptual framework and an initial PME requirements – progressive and continuous throughout the military career – that will address the resistance movement development.

This new guidance will allow the initiation of an adaptation process of the current PME while identifying the priorities of effort for each unit. Additionally, it will allow a proper planning of the required PME steps within the Romanian Army educational system and the required annual slot allocation.

In order to address the lack of initial exposure of the junior ARSOF officers to the reality of maneuver units, due to the fact that the great majority of them joined the SFQC directly after being commissioned, a ARSOF wide requirement should be implemented for those without outside ARSOF experience to serve in a temporary duty assignment in deputy platoon positions in maneuver units. This can be delegated to each ARSOF battalion commander to ensure that their newly assigned junior officers in their first leadership positions request the mentioned assignment and be required as a key developmental position for the ARSOF officers. The temporary duty assignment will also address the challenges presented by a tour of duty in other CF units, by maintaining the ARSOF parent unit ownership over the officers, eliminating the possibilities of losing personnel during these assignments.

The implementation of instructors and/or staff positions in the SOF school as key developmental position for advancement within the Romanian ARSOF would be needed. This requirement would not only insure the integration of the personal and operational experience of the officers in the ARSOF PME, but it will also insure that there would be a bigger pool of instructors and staff available for assignments.

The Romanian SOCOM should initiate a project that should aim at identifying the needed Romanian ARSOF interagency cooperation requirements, identify the national and organizational restrictions and limitations, construct the curricula for bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements and initiate an initial dialog to define their implication and needed deconfliction for junior and senior level SOF education. Initiating this process as soon as possible and at the Romanian SOCOM level would allow for a better institutional communication, while giving the interagency education an increased credibility.

In order to address the lack of continuity of SOF-specific education at field grade level and above, Romanian SOCOM in cooperation with the Romanian SOF Training Center (CIOS), as part of the National Defense School System should be engaging the National Defense University in order to facilitate the initiation of an experimental complementary SOF-education curriculum for the Romanian ARSOF officers attending Command and Staff Faculty, through a SOF-cell similar with the one implemented in CGSC. The impact on the NDU curricula would be minimum, only the ARSOF officers would attend the classes outside of the normal, common core courses.

The foreign school opportunities should become a strong focus of the Romanian ARSOF, not only because they provide the fastest results for the ARSOF PME needs, at all levels – they take advantage of bigger armies experiences and educational systems, but also they contribute to officer's cultural and language expertise, but also it builds fast a base of selection for instructor and staff needed in various assignments in support of the new Romanian ARSOF educational redesign.

Organizational

CIOS, as a SME in the details and requirements of the National Defense Education System would be tasked to develop and deconflict the institutional dialog with NDU, while Romanian SOCOM would have to implement two supporting policies: one requiring all the Romanian ARSOF officers attending NDU CSF to attend and graduate the SOF courses and two requiring the development of a SOF-cell staff minimum qualifications and their utilization. Being inside the Romanian SOCOM structure, temporary assignments to these staff position for the selected officers would be a quick and efficient process. These staff positions would have to be defined as key developmental positions when the process is matured, allowing for a field grade level integration of the personal and operational experience.

The implementation of the SOF cell at NDU would provide not only a coaching and mentoring mechanism for the field grade officers in CSF, but also be an excellent venue of exchange of experience and a feedback mechanism for the previous PME steps, as well as a benchmark for the current SOF curricula. Additionally, being in NDU, the senior level SOF officers attending the National Defense College (NDC) can be integrated in the education process, enhancing its value and providing the bridge between the tactical and operational / strategic level.

Romanian SOCOM should identify where integrating ARSOF officers during large conventional forces (brigade and above) exercises are opportune and identify the correct level of representation. The ARSOF officers, even if not part of the exercise script, would still represent the ARSOF entities in the CF AO, forcing the CF to visualize the ARSOF presence on the battle field, especially during large scale defensive land

operation inside Ro territory. It will be an excellent educational moment, both for the ARSOF officers, complementing the lack of CF doctrinal and maneuver experience, while educating the CF leaders in how the ARSOF are meant to be utilized, their limitations and capabilities, and suggest the aspects of doctrine that need to be adapted for a proper CF-SOF integration.

Leadership

Romanian ARSOF leaders at all levels should implement a process of selecting and encouraging the best of the SOF officers to fill the instructor positions in all the schools. With the new Romanian SOCOM directive requiring instructor or staff in SOF-cells as key developmental positions would further support the leader development. The temporary assignments on these *teaching* positions would also address the current issues with instructors being assigned for years on the same positions, avoiding stagnation and encouraging the flow of knowledge throughout the Romanian ARSOF officers.

Personnel

While selecting instructors or staff for the SOF-cells in NDU, a base set of conditions should be met by them among the most important being their leadership skills, their personal and operational experience at a level at least above the one they teach in order to address the development needs of the ARSOF officers. The instructors in the ARSOF school should have practical operational background at tactical level while the ones in the NDU SOF-cell should have TO/ NATO positions experience at operational and strategic level.

Long Term Changes – DOTMlpf-P

Doctrine

Allow the access in the Romanian SFQC only for the officers in rank of captain, thus factoring the initial maneuver experience and junior leader experience. Additionally, a limitation to a maximum of two years on the initial leadership assignment (ODA) have to be implemented. This will satisfy both the required platoon level experience imposed by the Army, but also insure a predictable and continuous flow of junior officers in their initial command positions. This will provide the necessary maturity and conventional army experience for the SOF officers, as well as allow for a better selection pool for the SOF structures. This needs a change in Ro Army HR policy.

Romanian SOCOM, in direct collaboration with Romanian Army Doctrine Department, with inputs from ARSOF operational brigades should be the proponents for all the updates to the curricula for the ARSOF School and NDU SOF cell. This adaptation will require a change in the National Defense School System policies.

ARSOF School and NDU SOF-cell should include exchange programs with other SOF branches (Air Force and Navy) to allow for a cross-pollination and the development of a Joint Romanian SOF doctrine. This adaptation will require a change in National Defense School System policies, an Inter-Service Memorandum of Understanding and a Romanian General Staff directive.

Organizational

Romanian SOF Training Center (CIOS) should be directly subordinated to the Romanian SOCOM, to allow the adjustment of the curricula at the OE changes, provide sufficient manning and equipment depending on the schooling needs, and integrate the

other complementary educational requirements (CREL, JIIM courses, etc.). This adaptation requires a change in National Defense School System policy and a MoD decision.

The implementation of a SOF-specific education office at the NDU (both for CSF and NDC) that will coordinate the SOF-cell, provide academic guidance for ARSOF officers and be the SOF SME for the SOF related topics that the other branches during their academic development. This will require a NDU decision and update of their task organization. But both junior and senior officer PME should include and continue to build on the resistance movement development requirements, with different focuses linked to the education level they address (e.g. tactical for the junior officer PME, operational and strategic implication of resistance movement development activities at NDU level).

In order to address the CF-SOF integration, CIOS should develop a CF-specific branch, directly linked or in direct coordination with the Land Forces HQ Training and Doctrine. This will allow the direct integration of the army maneuver specific educational requirements in the Romanian ARSOF PME curricula and also allow for a better visibility for the Romanian ARSOF on the CF-specific focuses and allow the identification of deconfliction areas or points.

Training

ARSOF School should develop a focused language training program, based on the current and emerging operational requirements that will complement the Romanian Army Language Centers Courses. It will have to add the cultural and regional specific aspects that are required by the SOF, not of interest to most conventional forces. Additionally, the

language education should also be addressed while looking at the specific requirements imposed by resistance movement development activities, possibly by taking inspiration and adapting partner armies experience in addressing similar mission-sets (e.g. US DLI and USAJFKSWSC CREL related to UW)

Material

The development of a Romanian ARSOF School and Training Center to integrate both education (OBC and CCC) and training wings (language, physical training, medical training, methodical training, technical training). This will facilitate the internal allocations of resources, all belonging to the Romanian SOCOM, allow for flexibility and adaptability and allow for a quick transfer of experience and knowledge within the same institution. This requires MoD approval, budget allocation, and new task organization.

Policy

Romanian SOCOM should develop and promote a multi-annual concept of utilization of different CF SMEs teams – Mobile Training Teams (MTT), focused on filling the education gaps identified as CF-specific that the ARSOF PME is not suited to cover as an internal product. Having an Army level approved concept will allow for a proper financial planning within all the services, as well as an efficient sequencing of the MTT rotation planning and deployment. By planning to utilize MTTs from operational units, the Romanian ARSOF officers would be educated in both the latest CF doctrinal details, as well as on the latest OE-identified trends, challenges and solutions that the CF units are developing. The additional advantage of having this MTT-type mission with the CF is that it provides another opportunity to educate the CF on the specifics of SOF

missions, it creates interpersonal relations at all levels – junior and senior, and it develops the knowledge base needed for SOF to properly operate in both peacetime and crisis or conflict.

Romanian SOCOM should continue to develop and implement the concept of resistance movement development, by initiating periodic joint and interagency working-groups (WG) focused on the whole of government approach to this concept. At the same time, the Romanian ARSOF officer PME should include, at both junior and senior level, the detailed and comparative studies of Romanian historical resistance movements as well as the regional resistance movements, and integrate the lesson learned into the operational units training plans, as test concepts. This will allow not only the real-life testing of these concepts, but also identify the needed external support requirements that will feed into the joint and interagency WGs. Moreover, given the intention of Romania becoming a regional security hub, these type of activities should be discussed in regional WGs, with Coalition and Regional Security partners, to identify the dynamics and challenges that an Alliance support will pose to these type of national missions and how they have to interact to provide the maximum effect with the minimum of deconfliction efforts.

Follow On Topics

From an academic point of view, this thesis opens the perspective for further researches that are of crucial importance for Romanian ARSOF, but for the Romanian SOF in particular, and Romanian and regional armies in general. The subject of the ARSOF, SOF or Army PME is a subject that should be of critical importance for all the armies in the Southeastern Europe and, in the new Allied context, should be part of a

collective effort to make it as efficient and streamlined as possible. Many future studies can use this research as a starting point or as a reference. Critical for the Romanian ARSOF would be the researches that cover the transformation of the SOF Non-Commissioned Officers and Enlisted PME. Of more critical importance would be the research on the development and implementation of a Romanian SOF JPME and, more important, a Romanian Army overall JPME concept and how the SOF JPME can be integrated into it.

Other studies can focus on how the external PME capabilities can be leveraged to complement the existing or envisioned Romanian ARSOF PME or the Army PME, as a whole. To expand even further, future researches can concentrate on identifying ways that the Romanian Army PME can better utilize all the available resources – national, regional and global – to assist its adaptation to the XXI century operational challenges.

This thesis can also be used as a starting point for future researches on the way resistance movement development activities can be integrated into the national or regional SOF mission-sets, how the hybrid threats influence and shape the national and regional SOF missions and, more important, how the CF-SOF and Inter-Agency relations are adjusted to address them. Additionally, how the new regional European security entities (i.e. PESCO) will influence the dynamics in the region and how the entire European security apparatus will be changed by them.

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