

mgr Dariusz Czekaj

**The army and the local community - mutual relations. Case study
based on the example of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade.**

Abstract

Civil-military relations constitute a part of the interests of sociologists as one of the areas where research on the army is conducted. Such research can be carried out at various social levels, from micro-, through meso-, to macro-sociological, all the more so that at each of these levels, multi-element social relations exist and consolidate.

The mezzo-sociological level gives the opportunity to conduct research in smaller, integrated military structures, such as sub-units or even units operating as military units in a given area. Then, the local community shall be understood in a definitional manner, as a community occupying a certain common territory, officially separated by administrative boundaries or unofficially in a natural way resulting from tradition and history.

Engaging into research in the area of the army and the local community results from the author's interest in this subject, as well as from his serving as an officer of the Polish Army. The examination and description of civil-military relations that occur between the army represented by the 21st PRB and the local community of the towns and cities in which its units are stationed, became the subject of his interests and encouraged to attempt and define them. The causes of engaging into empirical research resulted from cognitive and practical reasons, which may translate into the development of the sociological sub-discipline, which is the military sociology, sociology of the dispositional groups. The description of existing relations will enable their better understanding, making comparisons with the results obtained in other regions of the country and will become a starting point for practical activities.

This dissertation is divided into three parts: theoretical, methodological and empirical and includes six chapters.

The theoretical part of the dissertation is based on the literature on the subject and includes three chapters.

The first chapter presents selected theoretical aspects of the functioning of military public services in modern science. An analysis of the functioning of the army as part of the

military sociology, the sociology of war and the sociology of the dispositional groups has been made.

The second chapter is devoted to presenting the army in the light of various theoretical perspectives. Here, the author indicated the perspective of the analysis of the army as a social institution, and presented various ways of defining this concept in sociology and the features that it should possess. Afterwards, he indicated how the military fulfils the tasks as a social institution, and also what role it plays as an institution in society. Subsequently, the author presented the definitions and features of the social system in various concepts, and then made a systematic description of the army. The third approach taken by the author in this chapter is to present the army as a social organization with its structure, features and dependencies.

In the third chapter, the author presented the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade as a military unit. He illustrated the method of its formation and transformation that took place in it during its existence. He also introduced the issues related to the military traditions of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade, which it inherited and which it cultivates on a daily basis. He also presented the use of Podhale symbols specific to this formation, manifested in uniforms, signs and names of sub-units from the pre-war Podhale regiments and the highlander culture. In the following part he presented the formal structure of the Brigade and the tasks that its particular sub-units carry out. He also described the connections of this military unit and its sub-units with the local community.

The fourth chapter is entirely devoted to the presentation of the methodological basis of own research. It presents in detail both the subject and the objective of the research, both in the cognitive and practical aspects. The author conducts the operationalization of concepts, not discussed in the theoretical chapters. Next, he presents research problems and hypotheses accepted for the verification of research. He describes research methods and techniques, and then the course of conducted empirical research. In the last part of this chapter, he describes and characterizes the population covered by the research, both soldiers and residents of the towns and cities, dislocation of military units and research area.

In the fifth chapter, the author presented the results of the research obtained during quantitative and qualitative research on social aspects of the perception of the army by the local community, the evaluation of civil-military relations from the perspective of towns and cities dwellers in which the army is stationed and the social expectations regarding the military involvement in social life.

The sixth chapter constitutes a continuation of the presentation of the results of the empirical research. It focuses on the analysis of the results of quantitative research conducted

among soldiers, and is supplemented with the results of qualitative research. It characterizes the ties between the soldiers inside the unit and the ties with the local community, from the soldiers' perspective. The author evaluates phenomena conducive to the formation of social ties between soldiers and residents.